



Weal secrets at the back of the shop

There's more behind the Spinning Weal crafts shop overlooking Clevedon Bay in North Somerset than the products on the shelves.

Behind the store there's a studio where qualified tutor Sarah Harris will be teaching knitting, spinning, wool dyeing with natural dyes, and silk screen printing on fabric.

A wider programme of classes and workshops with other tutors is planned later this year.

The shop opened in May with one of its objects to bring traditional crafts to a wider audience.

In addition to selling knitting, felting, quilting, braiding and peg-loom weaving equipment, Spinning Weal also stocks spinning wheels and accessories including fabric, buttons and yarns.

Some equipment is handmade especially for the shop by a small woodworking company in Wales.

The shop is aimed at creative people who appreciate and like to make beautiful things.

There's more behind the name than a pun on wheel. The word weal comes from the Old Norse word for health or well-being. It found its way into English through the word wealth.

'The soothing, meditative rhythm of spin-

ning contributes to a sense of well-being and helps to relieve stress' explains Sarah.

She runs with business with her husband David. They live on a smallholding and breed rare Portland sheep the wool from which they plan to sell in the shop under the name House White.

They are also looking to source wool from other breeds, locally where possible, together with more unusual fibres like bamboo, silk and yak hair.

In addition to home-grown materials, wool from Rowan and Lorna's Laces is available along with unusual crafts like Kumihimo Braiding, lucets and Cork bobbins.

Spinning Weal is five minutes drive from Junction 20 on the M5, close to Clevedon's listed pier and Victorian promenade.

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