



**CAREER CHANGE:** Trevor Crookell who has just launched his Barking Mad business

# Trevor's Barking Mad about his new job

## Doggie holidays for pampered pooches

IT could be said that Trevor Crookell has gone to the dogs.

But in his case it is because he has just launched his **Barking Mad** business.

Mr Crookell used to sell textiles from China to retail groups in Britain but decided to throw in the towel and look for something new.

He found it by buying into the Barking Mad franchise, which finds temporary host families for pampered pooches while owners are away.

Mr Crookell, who lives in Westhoughton, said: "After running my own textile business for 16 years, I decided it was time for a change and started to look for something totally different. "I found it at Barking Mad.

When a dog owner is planning a holiday, or a business trip, we offer the 'home from home' alternative to kennels by placing the pet into one of our carefully selected host families where the dog maintains its existing feeding and exercise routines.

"We collect the dog from its owners and, along with all its belongings, such as its basket, favourite toys, food and treats, take it to the host family for its own 'doggy holiday'."

He says many host families are retired people who have had dogs in the past but do not want to commit to the full-time responsibility of owning their own.

So Barking Mad can offer them the chance of caring for a dog when it suits them.

Mr Crookell said: "The whole concept works really well and there is nothing

more satisfying than seeing a dog completely settled with its host family, enjoying its own 'holiday' and then being returned to its own family.

"Many customers go on holiday a number of times a year and come back to Barking Mad each time showing how much confidence they have in the service we provide."

He has bought the franchise which covers Bolton and north-west Manchester and is currently looking for suitable host families.

Mr Crookell added: "Host families are people who have the time to devote to the animals for one or two weeks.

"Our key aims are to offer a caring, high quality and professional service to the much-loved pets and to ensure they are looked after to the owner's high stan-

dards." As an animal lover Mr Crookell came across the franchise while surfing the internet and immediately bought in.

He had previously been a successful middleman for businesses which wanted to import or export to China.

The 53-year-old had specialised in sourcing and importing embroidered bedding for UK retailers but the nature of the business changed and he began looking for a new career.

Now he is busy leafletting homes, vets, community centres and dog groomers, to let people know about the business and to establish a database of reliable hosts.

Barking Mad is keen to find new hosts in the area. Anyone interested should contact [trevor.crookell@barkingmad.uk.com](mailto:trevor.crookell@barkingmad.uk.com) or [trevor-888@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:trevor-888@tiscali.co.uk).