

Cess Holden

Little Spanners



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A love for cycling and care for bike safety brought along an opportunity for Cess Holden in 2025.

Before this, she spent over 20 years working in the banking sector while based in London. Here, she climbed the corporate ladder and spent much of her time overseas for work – travelling frequently to New York – and after some reflection, she decided to pursue something new to allow her spend more time at home.

She worked in web design for the following 17 years, which included a relocation from the UK to Glenties in County Donegal. Upon ending her time in this business, a time which coincided with a bad cycling accident, Cess enrolled in a bike mechanic course to gain a better understanding of how her accident might have happened. Obtaining her City & Guilds Level 2 qualification in Bicycle Mechanics in 2025, she began contacting local schools, encouraging children to take their bicycles to school and carrying out a free service on them during school hours.

Through that work and her love for cycling, she identified a gap in the market and founded Little Spanners, a business that provides a range of services primarily for children's bikes. She also offers bike safety workshops teaching practical skills such as fixing punctures, tightening brakes and making chains safe.

Cess is also developing a bike mart – a unique concept where locals can bring unused bikes along for assessment and repair in order to sell them on or gift them to others. It's hoped this new service will enable more children to take part in cycling, making use of bikes that may otherwise remain unused and wasted.

For Cess, the ACORNS programme was a valuable space to test ideas, harvest feedback from fellow participants and mentors as well as benefiting from the support of her peers.

She hopes to develop her plans to grow her bike marts and community workshops, with bike maintenance for children continuing as her main focus, ensuring they are roadworthy and safe.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine