



**Press Release
February 4th 2011**

Investment Pays Off for Mrs Stone Store

Suppliers of building materials direct to the public have been weathering the recessionary storms, hoping for better times ahead. Some have taken a proactive approach and invested in strategies to support their long term ambitions and success. Among this group is Mrs Stone Store, a respected importer of Brazilian slate and Portuguese limestone, which is expanding to meet demand.

Libby Lloyd Jones, director, explains: "Mrs Stone Store is a family business which was set up in November 2007, building upon our 15 years' experience in the natural stone trade. Three years on we have a large stock of products to ensure swift turnaround for our growing list of retail customers."

Mrs Stone Store recently invested in a move to Hilton Business Park in Derbyshire, which offers easy transport links to the A38, A50 and national motorway network, a significantly improved working environment for its staff and 25,000 square feet of warehousing. Here, the firm processes orders for thousands of tonnes of stone for a range of customers. Demand has increased of late. Libby and her husband believe this is attributable to the growing number of homeowners and landlords who – finding themselves in negative equity as the average value of houses continues to drop – are investing in their properties rather than selling them.

Mrs Stone Store's programme of investment also includes an interactive, online presence which Libby believed would be helpful to the business, its customers and suppliers. The site www.mrs-stone-store.com not only acts as a 24/7 global shop window but also offer practical fitting advice, best for purpose information, best methods of installation and lots of other really useful functionality.

"Customers can visit www.mrs-stone-store.com at 0830 GMT and see our real time stock levels and place orders online, either from stock or as a future shipment from overseas," says Libby.

"Mrs Stone Store specialises in the import and retail of Brazilian slate and Portuguese limestone, holding approximately 30,000m² and 10,000m² respectively at any one time. We offer a variety of slate finishes, including brushed and honed, and have recently imported a new range of uniquely designed mosaics."

Asked to explain the popularity of Brazilian slate, Libby's husband, Simon, says that it is much less expensive than Welsh slate and far superior to slate from China. "Brazilian slate is also much easier to package and pallet because it has a flat surface unlike Chinese slate which often has ridges or clefts," he adds.

"We also offer a range of calibrate slate which is a consistent 10mm thick so that there is no need to sort the product into different thicknesses prior to fitting or tiling, thus saving time and effort.

Thinking about why they are bucking the trend, Simon goes on: "We offer a very unique approach to our customers. We provide our amazing 'Concept to Completion' support and I am pleased to say that many of our customers think of us as a project manager, shipping product – from one unique piece of material, such as a hand-split slate tile measuring up to 1200mm x 900mm, to a few tiles or a few crates."

"We continue to consider all avenues to make trading with us as straightforward as possible which, combined with our knowledge of natural stone and reputable supply chain, may explain our success to date and optimism about the future."

Ends



Mrs Stone Store
Unit 19H
Hilton Business Park
The Mease
Hilton
Derbyshire
DE65 5FJ
Tel: 01283 734 990
Fax: 01283 734744
Email: sales@mrs-stone-store.co.uk