

Leith Distillery cleaning up

During the height of the pandemic, many turned to making hand sanitiser.

One of those was Fraser Mair (24) who graduated from Northumbria University in 2019. He produced 15,000 bottles of handsanitiser and is now selling the product to fulfil industrial orders.

Fraser was concerned with the lack of sanitiser available for key workers he switched production at the family distillery to making hand sanitiser to the World Health Organisation (WHO) formula.

Fraser said: "We called it Leithal Santiser, after the old maritime town of Leith where the distillery is located.

"We were overwhelmed with requests. Most of our bottles went to frontline NHS staff, the police, ambulance and fire crews, care homes and elderly residents."

But as the UK re-emerged from lockdown, companies and organisations started placing large orders of sanitiser to ensure they would have adequate hand hygiene facilities in place to reopen safely. This generated almost £100,000 in sales last month, turning the charitable idea into a profitable business.

Those now buying the sanitiser commercially include councils, golf courses, pub chains and restaurants throughout the UK. Many have signed long-term deals, which means the new business

is set to continue well into the future.

“I’m determined to keep our prices ethical,” said Fraser. “For such an essential product, especially right now, it’s outright wrong for any company to be pushing prices up.

“Teaching students about ethical business practices is a big part of the curriculum at Northumbria, and I’m ensuring this is put into practice in this new project.”

A range of hand hygiene products are now available from the company’s website, including touch-free hand sanitising stations that can clean more than 5,000 hands before needing to be refilled.

Fraser has re-connected with the University, with Northumbria’s Graduate Enterprise scheme providing support and guidance.

Graham Baty, Head of Student and Graduate Enterprise at Northumbria University, said: “The opportunity identified by Fraser to support businesses in the effort battling the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as opening up new market opportunities for the family business, is an excellent example of the entrepreneurial mind-set and that Northumbria looks to develop in all its students and graduates.”

For more information about Leithal hand sanitiser visit www.leithalsanitiser.co.uk