

How to turn a compact space into a practice of your dreams

Husband and wife team **Roheet Pindoria** and **Tulsi Patel** share their experience of building Marston Dental from scratch, their small but perfectly formed practice

Dr Roheet Pindoria

Co-owner of Marston dental practice



Dr Tulsi Patel

Co-owner of Marston dental practice



had little idea of the processes involved in planning, building and setting up a squat practice.

With Tulsi pregnant and both keeping an eye on a carefully considered budget, the couple was keen to launch their business as soon as possible.

Finishing the project

So, did they end up with the practice they'd envisaged?

It seems success is often achieved with dedication – and Marston Dental, a minimalist but fully-functioning practice, is testimony to this. Roheet takes up the story.

'We were learning as we went along. The Samera dental course, whose business advisers and accountants offer advice on purchasing squat clinics, was a great help.

'So too was our dental fitting company, Anglian, and the contacts we'd made through our accountant who assisted us with our CQC application.'

As first timers, they came up with an estimate of what they thought the project would cost, setting aside some extra in the pot 'just in case'.

And, as often happens, the extra was needed, but Roheet says, 'we didn't go severely over budget'.

'The extra expenses were primarily spent on branding and equipment – and only on the equipment we thought was more important.

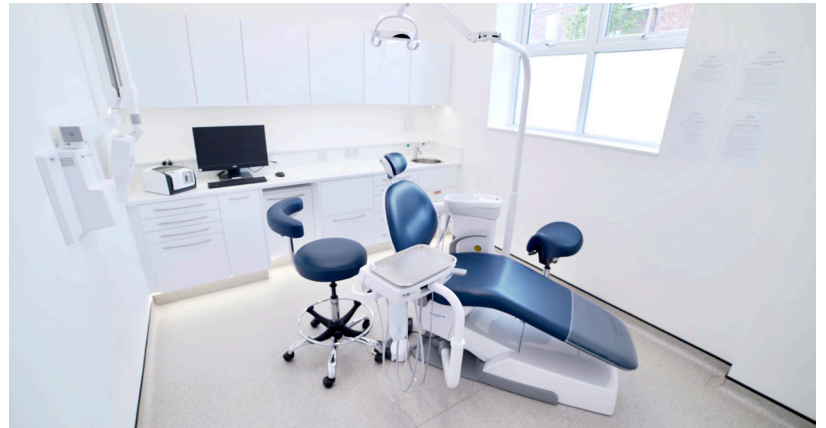
'We asked all the companies we worked with to give us low-range, mid-range and high-range options where they could.

'We then decided on what equipment and materials needed to be of a higher quality.'

The project was completed within 12 weeks and they agreed on a programme with Anglian that involved regular update meetings so decisions could be made quickly.

Simple materials and equipment were used throughout to keep costs down while still achieving quality appearance and doing the job efficiently.

A simple extraction system, for example, was installed to provide on-demand 'ventilation' to a rate of 10 air changes per hour at a significantly lower cost than alternatives.



very easy and comfortable to use.

'We also had a budget to consider and felt that the chair gave us the technical specifications we were looking for – a high-end look and comfort for patients within our price range.'

The practice looks clean and fresh and is beautifully simple.

The reception area looks high end. And it's here where Roheet and Tulsi felt they needed to create a great first impression, with bespoke cabinetry and a beautiful solid surface reception desk that certainly has the 'wow' factor.

Roheet says: 'We wanted it to be modern and inviting.'

'With the big window frontage, we needed the reception area to effortlessly draw people in, so we made the reception desk area a feature.'

'We also wanted our practice to be a part of the community. We knew it had to have "Marston" in the name and we wanted our logo to reflect the community, too.'

'That is why we used the Marston Vale Forest as our inspiration in terms of logo design and colours.'

Making it work

With Tulsi expecting a child throughout the project, finding the right balance between business and baby was a prime focus.

'Most of the planning and big decisions were done before our son was born, but the building work started the week our son arrived. It was a little difficult at times,' Roheet says.

'However, our dental fitting team was very understanding and managed the project very well, which took the pressure off.'

'I think the hardest part was organising, stocking and preparing the practice for the CQC inspection and interview. But, with family support, we succeeded.'

So, how is the patient base developing?

'We're attracting patients of all ages, some are moving over to Marston Dental due to locality, others have visited because they've struggled to get an appointment with their usual dentist due to the Covid-19 backlog, and a few are attending for one-off emergency appointments.'

'We've been open three days a week for five months now and our patient list is growing steadily to the point where we're considering opening an additional day at the end of year, which we didn't think would be happening so soon.'

We're very happy! **D**

Seeking to close a gap in an area in high need of local dental care was the main driver behind husband and wife team Dr Roheet Pindoria and Dr Tulsi Patel's choice of location for their first newbuild dental practice.

Tipped off by Tulsi's father, a pharmacist whose own business was in a neighbouring area, the couple chose Marston Moretaine as the practice's home-to-be, a village that sits between Bedford and Milton Keynes.

Choosing a location

Roheet recalls: 'After visiting the village and the surrounding areas, Tulsi and I agreed that, with its new housing and increasing population and without a local dentist to serve their needs, this was a good place to set up a practice.'

'We already knew what type of practice we wanted to build and create – a down-to-earth, family-orientated general dental practice, which would become part of the community of Marston Moretaine and surrounding villages for years to come.'

Next, they settled on a new-build shell of a building of approximately 65 square metres that was essentially just four breeze blocks and a concrete floor. There were no electrics or gas.

Faced with this complete and compact blank canvas, they now had to build a reimagined vision for their business, taking into consideration the constraints this small area placed upon their project.

Undaunted, they were determined to transform it into a highly functional two-surgery practice with space for CBCT, a decontamination room, storage area and a staff room.

But the biggest challenge was their inexperience – this was a first for both of them, and they

