

Multi-millionaire Ben Benson plans £1m giveaway in wealth book

Sep 7 2009 By Sam Casey

MULTI-MILLIONAIRE Ben Benson has put pen to paper on a book that he knows will leave him £1m poorer.



And he couldn't be happier about it.

The entrepreneur, who splits his time between luxury homes in Skelmanthorpe and London, has spent the last six years amassing a £60m property portfolio.

He has about 112 properties, a third of which are in Huddersfield and Halifax.

The 34-year-old believes his latest venture, a book called *The New Rules of Wealth*, will help make other people rich.

But it is guaranteed to cost him £1m.

Because 10 random readers will get £100,000 in cash, each – directly from Mr Benson's personal fortune.

It is believed to be the first ever giveaway of its kind, and has earned the book the moniker the 'million pound book.'

Mr Benson said: "Ten people are going to get that money, irrespective of how many copies of the book we sell.

"My motivation with the book is not to make money. If it was, I'd be using that £1m to start another company or buy a load of properties.

"The thing I really get excited about is helping people achieve what they want to achieve.

"We will sell a lot of copies of this book, but I don't necessarily count things in terms of pounds and pence anymore. I wanted to do something different.

"This has never been done before."

Mr Benson's own story is the archetypal rags-to-riches tale.

The son of divorced parents, he last saw his mother when he was five.

Forced to work to support his father and sister, he was employed on a market stall selling household goods in Milton Keynes from the age of 15.

He said: "My dad was the kind of person that would say: 'This time next year it will be different.'

"It never ever was.

"The drive I had not to end up in the same situation as my parents was so strong. I felt I had to break out of it and prove something to myself."

After working for a network marketing company for several years, in 1996, at the age of 21, he set up his own corporate training company. He sold it in 2001 for £2.4m.

"In my early 20s I found myself in a position where I never had to work again", he said.

"But I managed to spend it in 18 months – on cars, travelling, expensive suits and women. A lot went on women."

He had bought a house in Leeds, where he had friends, in 1997. It was repossessed in 2002 and he was left with nothing.

But he had a new-found affection for West Yorkshire and, after six months living with a friend in Warwickshire, he borrowed £5,000 on a credit card from his sister and put down a deposit for a house in Parkland Avenue, Longwood.

The move would be the start of what he calls "phase two" of his success story.

"From then on, I just went crazy buying properties, borrowing against one property to buy another", he said.

As well as Huddersfield and Halifax, his buy-to-let property empire now includes places in London and the surrounding area.

Fascinated by the what makes rich people tick, one day he was dared by his girlfriend to ask for a meeting with Sir Philip Green, the billionaire owner of the Arcadia clothing retail group.

And so began a quest to glean the advice of some of the world's richest people for a book about wealth.

Among the 200 entrepreneurs he spoke to were Jacqueline Gold, chief executive of Ann Summers, Simon Woodruff, founder of the Yo! Sushi chain, and Leeds property developer Kevin Linfoot.

The New Rules of Wealth, which has taken him seven months to write, explodes what he believes are the "myths" surrounding wealth and

provides rules for successful money-making.

Each copy of the book, which has not yet been printed, has a unique number. Mr Benson will announce one number online every two months and the owner of the corresponding book will get £100,000.

About 14,000 copies have already been ordered, at www.millionpoundbook.com

The book will also be available at Borders and Waterstones.