



Tyneside Cyrenians

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'Hairy Biker' Simon King helps Tyneside Cyrenians launch 'FareShare' in the North East

'FareShare Tyneside; a social solution to an environmental problem'

Newcastle upon Tyne - Tuesday, 22 April 2008

'Hairy Biker', Simon King, will tomorrow, Wednesday 23 April, launch Tyneside Cyrenians' latest venture in support of vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the region.

Working in conjunction with FareShare, the national charity which takes surplus food from producers and suppliers within the food industry, Tyneside Cyrenians will redistribute food to those most in need within local communities in Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside. The new venture will be called FareShare Tyneside and is one of ten UK franchises.

Simon King - cook, TV personality and co-author of The Hairy Bikers Cookbook - will be guest of honour at the launch. Well-known for his popular TV series 'The Hairy Bikers', Si has travelled the world from his home in Tyneside with fellow biker Dave Myers in his quest for authentic culinary and cultural experiences. Si explained that his passion for food and for sharing was kindled by his father:

'My Dad died when I was young, yet I vividly remember as a child of six helping him. We visited the Little Sisters of the Poor in Low Fell to deliver van loads of wonderful food. Armfuls of turkeys, sacks of onions and trays and trays of eggs stand out in my mind! We weren't rich by any means but we were comfortable and he was incredibly generous.

'My Dad's philosophy was quite simple *'if you have enough - you should try to share'*. I believe that view is more important today than ever before. As a society we've fallen into the habit of consuming for its own sake - I really believe that by respecting what we eat and the amount we eat we benefit both ourselves and society as a whole.'

Also at the launch, Tony Lowe, Chief Executive of FareShare National, explained the principles of FareShare and the problems of surplus and waste food in the UK:

"Without FareShare the good quality food here today and the many tonnes that will be delivered here over the coming months would have been destroyed probably as landfill. Instead the food will be now be redistributed to charities who will turn it into nutritious meals for some of the most vulnerable people in the local community.

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'FareShare provides this unique social solution to an environmental problem and we are really excited to be working in partnership with Tyneside Cyrenians. The organisation has an excellent reputation and is well known for its innovative approach and for getting things done. Our partnership will enable us to help vulnerable people in and around Newcastle by providing them with access to good quality food.'

Commenting on the new venture, Stephen Bell, Chief Executive of Tyneside Cyrenians said:

'FareShare Tyneside is a tremendous addition to the range of services we offer. The service itself is supportive of vulnerable people and the operation of it will provide additional employment opportunities from within for rehabilitation and re-integration into the workplace.

'We are grateful to all those who have supported this venture, in particular Newcastle Neighbourhood Renewal Fund who provided initial start up funding for the Project.

'I am particularly delighted to welcome Paul Lewney from Kavli here today. As food manufacturers and distributors they have a very enlightened approach and we are looking forward to working with them in the future.'

Paul Lewney, Deputy Managing Director of Kavli continued:

'Food manufacturing involves a careful balance between high quality, health and safety and customer service. Because some of the products we make are fresh products with a relatively short shelf life, balancing supply with demand is critical and we have to build a margin of error into our planning to ensure orders are met in full and on time.

'It is inevitable that from time to time we have an imbalance and we are delighted to be working with FareShare put these occasional surpluses to good use. The concept is excellent, we believe it will be of real value here in the North East and wish success to everyone involved.'

In **2007, FareShare nationally** saved over **2,000 tonnes** from being wasted, helping business **reduced CO2 emissions** by **13,000 tonnes**. This food was then redistributed, along with other food related support services, to a **community food network of 300 organisations**. This food contributed to over **3.3 million meals** each year –that is **20,000 disadvantaged people each day** in cities and towns across the UK.

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Notes to Editors

Interviews and photographs available. For further information please contact:

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FareShare

FareShare is the national charity working to relieve food poverty by providing quality food and related life-skills training to organisations working with disadvantaged people across the UK. We have operations in Aberdeen, Barnsley (South Yorkshire), Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Dundee, Edinburgh, London, Newcastle, Sunderland

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The Issue: Food Poverty

- Over 4 million people in the UK cannot afford a healthy dietⁱ
- 1 in 7 people over the age of 65 are at serious risk of malnourishmentⁱⁱ
- 6.7 million people are affected by low income - perhaps the most critical factor leading to food poverty
- Food poverty is suffered by people with low or no income, with poor access to affordable nutritious food, who lack the knowledge, skills or equipment to ensure that food is safe and prepared properly.

The Issue: Food Waste

- A third of all waste produced in the UK is produced by the food sector. ¼ of this - an estimated 2.3 millions tonnes of food – has some potential for recovery and consumptionⁱⁱⁱ
- It is estimated that 125,000 tonnes of food waste disposed annually by food retailers is potentially suitable and capable of being captured and diverted for redistribution^{iv}.

FareShare – Supporting communities to relieve food poverty

Last year:

- FareShare redistributed 2,000 tonnes of food through its Community Food Network of 420 local charities
- This food contributed towards 3.3 million meals
- 20,000 people each day benefit from the FareShare service
- FareShare helped business reduce CO2 emissions by 13,000 tonnes
- The charity provided 250 work and volunteer placements
- £5 million was saved by the network, which was reinvested into the community.

As an organisation just 3 years old, there remain a huge number of people that still need our support.

FareShare's **National Impact Survey** shows the extent of food poverty in the UK:

- 82% of the vulnerable people who enjoy FareShare food eat their main meal of the day at a community organization
- 38% of the beneficiaries of FareShare food are vulnerable children or young adults
- Nearly a fifth (17%) of clients surveyed have gone up to a week without a meal
- 33% of clients surveyed who rely on projects for their main meal often have no where else to go to eat

The Hairy Bikers

Si (Simon King) and Dave (David Myers) aren't professional chefs but they are lifelong food lovers. They met through work on the set of a TV drama and ever since they've been heading off to far-flung corners of the globe in search of authentic culinary and cultural experiences.

Simon King is a big, blond-bearded biker from Newcastle, where he lives with his partner and three children. His infectious laugh and friendly charm have served him well for many years working as a first assistant director and locations manager for film and television, recently working on the Harry Potter films. Simon has a passion for food, encouraged from an early age by his father - who'd bring back exotic ingredients from his voyages with the Royal Navy. Luckily Simon's enthusiasm for food is matched by that of his children who are more than happy to experiment.

Dave Myers was born and bred in Barrow-in-Furness and his versatile skills have taken him to some unusual places. He worked as a furnaceman in a steelworks to finance his Master's degree in fine arts before joining the BBC as a make-up artist, specialising in prosthetics. He has worked on many feature films and television series, including 'Lives and Loves of a She Devil', and the BBC One hit 'Spooks'. His career has taken him from Hollywood to the African deserts and he's travelled extensively away from work too. Dave lives on Roa Island, in Morecambe Bay, where he's Club Champion of the boat club.

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Tyneside Cyrenians

Tyneside Cyrenians operates a 'Total Acceptance Policy' supporting vulnerable people with varied and complex needs. The charity was founded in 1970 and works throughout the region offering vital support to vulnerable people. This support is about much more than 'putting heads on beds' or providing a 'good hot meal'. Dealing with homelessness involves;

- o stabilising chaotic lifestyles
- o acclimatising people to training
- o helping them to establish routine
- o providing them with opportunities for progression
- o providing them with access to other support agencies
- o helping people to earn industry recognised qualifications
- o supporting them towards securing employment

for more information please visit www.tynesidecyrenians.co.uk

ⁱ "Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain", report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2000)

ⁱⁱ Report by the Malnutrition Advisory Group (December 2001)

ⁱⁱⁱ www.greenfinch.co.uk

^{iv} Study on the Economic Benefits of Waste Minimisation in the Food Sector, Integrated Skills (2007)