

Local charity delighted by support from Regeneration Specialist

Food and social isolation charity Be Enriched has been greatly assisted in its efforts to enrich the community through food by the generous support of Hadley Property Group, which has provided a secure location for The London Food Bus, after it was vandalised. Its teams are now volunteering at the charity's Community Canteens, helping to prepare and serve up free meals to disadvantaged individuals.



For many years, Be Enriched has been offering individuals the chance to come together with others and develop skills over a healthy meal. It then recognised the need to take nutritional produce to those who struggle to access it. The London Food Bus is a converted double-decker bus, which includes a shop and cafe, allowing people to purchase household supplies and get together with others from their local community. However, not all in the local area valued its arrival and the bus was covered in graffiti during the summer.

Although it was possible to clean up the vandalism, the charity was concerned about the potential for ongoing damage to the vehicle that means a lot to many. They were greatly relieved when Hadley Property Group stepped forward to offer use of space at CYCLE42, a sustainability-focused community hub which is operating from their development site in Colliers Wood, Merton. This enabled the bus to be left safe and sound when not in operation. All of this was provided free of charge to Be Enriched.

Hadley, and their long-standing partners Clarion Housing Group, then went one step further, bringing staff down to volunteer at the Graveney Community Canteen, with their teams taking over the kitchen and organising all the preparation and cooking of a three course meal for those using the service. They also remain in discussions with Be Enriched to see if any further assistance can be provided during the coming months.

Kemi Akinola, Be Enriched's CEO and Founder, said: "It's taken a lot to bring the London Food Bus from an initial idea to being out on the streets and we were all so devastated

when it was covered in graffiti. To have the bus behind a fence, covered by CCTV, put our minds at ease, especially as other options could have taken away funds from the delivery of our different projects. To then have Hadley and Clarion's teams come down and show more support for our work by filling our kitchen with volunteers is just amazing. We are very grateful to them for all their support to help those less fortunate in the community."

Matt Griffiths-Rimmer, Hadley's Director of Communications and Partnerships, said: "It's a privilege to be working with Be Enriched, who are working so tirelessly against food poverty across so much of south London. Kemi and the team bring such positive energy to the work that they do that you can't help but be inspired to get involved. We are very happy to provide a space to help shelter the bus until the team can find it a new, more permanent home. Here's hoping that these are the first steps in a longstanding partnership that makes some tangible difference to the communities we work in."

Nick Wood, Director of Development at Clarion Housing Group, said: "Working with like-minded partners such as Hadley, we're committed to not only building much-needed new homes but supporting communities. Be Enriched do such great work locally and we're proud to be able to assist them by volunteering in their Community Canteen."

The London Food Bus is open to anyone who can make use of its services and it will soon operate as follows:

Tuesdays

St Joseph's Church, 11am - 1pm
Danebury Avenue Green, 2pm - 4pm

Wednesdays

Henry Fawcett School, 11am - 1pm
Allen Edwards school, 2pm - 4pm

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Thursdays

All Saints Church 10:30am - 1pm
Rames Close, 2pm - 4pm

The Community Canteens are open on the following days:

Castle Canteen

Mondays, 1pm - 2:30pm

Graveney Canteen

Fridays, 1pm - 2:30pm

Volunteers, either as corporate groups or individuals, are needed before, during and after each Canteen session and all are welcome. For more information on how to get involved, including sponsor The London Food Bus or other Be Enriched projects, see <https://www.be-enriched.org/>

Note to Editors

About Be Enriched

Be Enriched is a charity, founded in 2013, focused on enriching the community through food. It runs several successful projects, including the Community Canteens (currently at Elephant and Castle, and Graveney) and The London Food Bus, as well as Healthy Holidays, a programme which provides youngsters with development activities and healthy meals when schools are closed.

About Hadley Property Group

Hadley Property Group, founded in 2003, is a privately-owned development company that specialises in progressive, sustainable approaches to the delivery of much-needed housing in Greater London and other major UK cities. They focus on residential-led mixed-use schemes, large-scale regeneration projects, usually delivered in partnership with local authorities.

About Clarion Housing Group

Clarion Housing Group is the UK's largest provider of affordable housing. We are committed to playing our part in tackling the housing crisis, both as a social landlord and developer of new housing.

More than 350,000 people call a Clarion home their home. Our mission is to provide and maintain good quality housing for our residents and to build communities through high quality design and placemaking.

We are a social business, reinvesting our profits into building new homes and providing support and opportunities to our residents through Clarion Futures, our charitable foundation.