

## All aboard for healthy, affordable food

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan joined social and food inclusion charity Be Enriched to officially launch the first-of-a-kind Food Bus.



Pictured (left to right), Fleur Anderson MP, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Be Enriched CEO and Founder Kemi Akinola, Marsha de Cordova MP, Deputy Mayor of London Jules Pipe CBE and Peter Mayhew-Smith, CEO, South Thames College

The Mayor met with the charity's team, as well as key delivery partners Feeding Britain, and supporters, to celebrate the innovative bus, and also took time to hear an exciting future product proposal for the bus, put together by business students from South Thames College. He was also joined by Fleur Anderson, MP for Putney, and Marsha de Cordova, MP for Battersea, who lent their support to the project.

For many years, Be Enriched has run Community Canteens and specific projects designed to bring people together to connect over food. Now it is taking affordable produce to those who are geographically disadvantaged using the specially converted double-decker. The bus includes a greengrocers on the ground floor, plus a café, and seating area on the top deck. It includes features

which reduces its air emissions, and even has solar panels to generate power as it moves around south London.

The project has been four years in the making and not without its challenges, including recently being vandalised. However, with funding from the Greater London Authority and the efforts of many in the communities it will serve, the bus is now on the road.

Be Enriched CEO and Founder, Kemi Akinola, explained: "From our work across Wandsworth and Lambeth we recognised that it can often be difficult to get to, or afford, healthy food. Equally, retail space is expensive for groups to take on. When I looked at the problem, I thought back to my life experiences buying food from a man in a van and I was inspired to see how I could use that to address the challenges facing many families.

"I am so amazed by all the support we have received to turn my vision into a reality. I am so grateful to all of the supporters, funders and partners who have made this a reality.

"I really hope that people will visit the bus when it stops in Stockwell, Kennington, Roehampton and Tooting to get hold of cut price healthy food, or even just get on board for a hot drink and a chat. The Food Bus is there for everyone who needs it."

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "Every Londoner should have the right to healthy, affordable food, no matter what their circumstances or where they live. The Food Bus is a brilliant initiative, providing vital support to families in need, including access to nutritious, affordable food. I'm proud that my Good Growth Fund is supporting this scheme, which is helping to tackle food inequality in the capital."

Rose Bray, Project Manager at Feeding Britain, added: "Feeding Britain are a national charity, working to tackle hunger across the UK. We are delighted to be working with Be Enriched on the Food Bus, bringing fresh, healthy food right into the heart of communities. This project is now paving the way for a fleet of food buses across the Feeding Britain network."

Chris Dodd, Head of Employability & Professional Training, South Thames College, concluded: "We were delighted to host the Mayor and the team from Be Enriched for the launch of this fantastic initiative. We look forward to seeing the project no doubt go from strength to strength."

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

#### Tuesdays

Danebury Avenue Green, 10:30am - 4pm

#### Wednesdays

Henry Fawcett school, 9:00am - 12 noon

Allen Edwards school, 12:30 - 4pm

#### Thursdays

All Saints Church 10:30am - 4pm

More information about the bus can be found at <https://www.be-enriched.org/the-food-bus>

Be Enriched also runs two Community Canteens, where volunteers turn surplus food into a three course meal for those who would benefit from it; a Healthy Holidays programme, ensuring youngsters get development opportunities and healthy meals when schools are closed; along with

Cooksforce, developing people's cooking skills. It also leads the Wandsworth and Lambeth Food Partnerships, exploring how to improve the good food pipeline.

The charity is celebrating its fifth year enriching communities through food, and has asked locals, and anyone who can help, to donate to allow it to go even further in the coming months. Donations are being match funded and more information can be found

at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/fifteen-years-of-be-enriched-and-bpk>

### **About the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund**

The Good Growth Fund is the Mayor of London's biggest regeneration fund and is delivered through the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP). It provides £70m of capital funding from sources including the Local Growth Fund and European Social Fund, as well as expert regeneration advice, design support and knowledge sharing opportunities. For more information on the Good Growth Fund,

see: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/funding-opportunities/good-growth-fund-supporting-regeneration-london/good-growth-fund-supported-projects>

### **About the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP)**

The London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) is the local enterprise partnership for London. The LEAP brings entrepreneurs and business together with the Mayoralty and London Councils to identify strategic actions to support and lead economic growth and job creation in the capital.