



## GMB CONGRESS 2017

# CONGRESS LOCAL GIFT: NORTHERN REGION THE PEOPLE'S KITCHEN – NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE



### Our Story

Our mission is to seek to offer high quality and relevant services for existing and new clients (our Friends) – 46% of whom have no friends or family to support them – and to develop and deepen those services to help move people towards independent living. Our 'Your Futures' programme aims to go one step further, working in conjunction with other welfare agencies for our service users' benefit and to signpost client services available from other providers.

Recent developments at The People's Kitchen include the refurbishment of the Alison Centre which included the re-decoration and the development of communal spaces; the establishment of an dedicated clothing warehouse and a brand new off-site food warehouse.

### Our Founder

Thanks to one woman's principles and determination, The People's Kitchen has been supporting the homeless and disadvantaged in the Newcastle area since 1985.

Spurred on by an article in the Evening Chronicle about the death of a homeless man, Alison Kay (then in her 70s) decided to set up an organisation to support those in need. Within a year, Alison had 40 helpers and they inaugurated the first People's Kitchen next to the railway arches by Dean Street offering food, clothes, a warm fire and welcome to anyone who came in peace.

The work was made possible through the generous support of volunteers and sponsors recruited by Alison and over thirty years later the tradition continues even though the organisation has grown significantly. For her work, Alison received an Honorary Degree from Newcastle University in 1997.

Alison Kay died in 2001 aged 91, but inspired by her example, The Peoples' Kitchen remains true to its principles over thirty years later providing "friendship and food" to anyone who needs our support.

### Our Vision...

is to play a unique role in the City's efforts to meet the needs of homeless and vulnerable people.

#### *Food and Friendship*

Founded in 1985 as a soup kitchen, we have now evolved to offer a range of services all with food and friendship at their heart during the evenings and weekends when professional support is not available.

#### *Signpost to Support*

From drug and alcohol advice to health and wellbeing, we work with professional partners in the City to signpost to other support to help our Friend's physical and mental wellbeing.

#### *Hot meals*

Around 140 hot meals are served every single night that The People's Kitchen is open. Add this to the meals we serve on the streets from our outreach team and you get over 40,000 hot meals every year.

#### *Volunteer-led*

We are run completely by volunteers. Our 200 volunteers work over 11 separate shifts giving up over 35,000 unpaid hours every year to offer a vital lifeline for our Friends.

#### *Clothing and Bedding*

We make life a little more bearable on the streets by providing sleeping bags, blankets and warm clothes. We've also installed hot showers into the Alison Centre for our Friends who are living on the streets.

#### *Local Partnerships*

We work closely with local businesses, charities and trusts, and are loyally supported by churches, schools, community organisations and individuals.

**National Office and Regions will send contributions to Northern Region for a presentation to be made after Congress**



THE PEOPLE'S KITCHEN  
We're not here to see through one another  
we're here to see one another through