

PRESS RELEASE

24th February 2009

CELEBRITY CHEF GETS TORBAY GRASSROOTS CHALLENGE OFF TO TASTY START

Celebrity Chef Mitch Tonks joined with local charity Devon Community Foundation on 24th February at the Royal Torbay Yacht Club to officially launch the Torbay Grassroots Challenge.

Almost 100 invited guests attended the launch of the Challenge, which aims to build a £0.25 million Torbay Grassroots Endowment Fund over the next three years to provide a permanent source of grants for local voluntary and community groups who are often in the front line in helping local people in need. Any donations made to the Torbay Grassroots Challenge will be matched £1 for £1 by the Foundation, thanks to over £130,000 of match funding available from the government.

The evening included a Torbay Taste Challenge event, with guests being invited to identify different produce. Prizes included meals for two at Mitch Tonk's Seahorse Restaurant and the Abode Restaurant in Exeter and tickets for the Cheltenham Gold Cup were provided by Arbuthnot Latham.

Guests also got a chance to find out more about groups already supported by grants from the Foundation in Torbay, including Swim Torquay which provides keep fit sessions for isolated elderly residents and the Legitt and Scarper youth group which helps young people with autism and other disabilities.

Mitch Tonks, who is currently appearing in the TV show Mitch & Matt's Big Fish and will launch his latest book, 'Fish' in March, comments, "Joining the Challenge is a fantastic way to get support to where it really matters for local people in the Torbay area. It's a great way for people to make their local giving go further, last longer and do more for local people."

Nigel Wollen of Hooper & Wollen solicitors, Admiral of the Royal Torbay Yacht Club and an Ambassador for the Community Foundation adds, "This is a great opportunity for Torbay to secure extra funding to help local volunteers who do such valuable work in the local community. We really need local people to get behind the Challenge or we will lose the match funding available."

Torbay Grassroots Challenge has already raised over £10,500 but needs to raise £30,000 by the end of September 2009 to secure the first tranche of match funding available.

Kathy Beechen, Assistant Director of Devon Community Foundation adds, "We'd like to thank everyone who has supported us tonight and hope it will inspire both companies and individuals alike to get behind the Challenge and take the opportunity to make their giving worth more to local people."

Anyone who would like to know more about the Grassroots Challenge or applying for a Grassroots Grant should call Kathy on 01884 235887 or visit the Foundation web-site at www.devoncf.com.

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Press enquiries to Sarah Gunn on 01752 509581 or 07703 317 759