



PRESS RELEASE

SoupFest Bedford 2018

11.30am – 6pm / Tuesday 27th November

On Tuesday, 27th November, SoupFest returns to Bedford town centre for its second year. SoupFest is an annual festival of soup, showcasing Bedford's talented chefs, and working closely with local businesses and volunteers to raise money to help the homeless. The initiative, organised by well-known Bedford businesswoman Emma Garrett was inspired by a similar event in Jersey, and last year raised over £4,500 for Bedford's homeless. "The joy of SoupFest is that anyone and everyone can be involved in the run-up and on the day, but even if people only have an hour to spare, that will make a difference. They simply need to turn up on the 27th November and pop £3 in the pot as a donation in exchange for soup, bread and some live musical entertainment."

As well as raising money, the event brings Bedford's small businesses together. Local businesses such as 'Made by DBM' who create animations and 'Mediafix Online' who are behind the graphic design donate their time and services free of charge. The organising committee is made up entirely of volunteers and Chefs and Restaurants, for example Phil Fanning of Paris House, Paul French of the Horse and Jockey in Ravensden, 'Chilli Olly' from the Pavilion in the Park, as well as catering giant Sodexo donate soup, with local bakeries such as Companions and Delices, as well as the major Supermarkets all donating bread. Live musical entertainment is provided by Kris Wilkinson-Hughes, who will curate a programme of music on the Harpur Square stage throughout the day including sets from the 'Living it Up' Band 'Song Squad' and the local Rock Choir.

Sponsorship for SoupFest 2018 comes from a large number of local businesses such as Sharman Solicitors, LPH Concerts, Bedford Calor Gas Centre and Sycal - but Emma is loath to single any one out "we have had so much encouragement and support from all manner of organisations - from A-Z quite literally: AB Fruits to Zoedale, and this makes the planning go smoothly. This year we will be open later than last year and encouraging children to come down with parents after school when there will be free skating on the Harpur Square skating rink as well as cookery demonstrations aimed at the younger audience and the Bedford Blues offering their support. The cookery demo tent is an exciting new addition to the day and we have some brilliant chefs lined up as well as experienced comperes and a BSL interpreter from Access Bedford, signing the demonstrations"

All proceeds from SoupFest are distributed to the homeless via registered homeless support agencies by the Bedford Homeless Partnership. A number of these agencies will be present on the day such as YMCA, CVS, The King's Arms Project and Emmaus. Information will be available for anyone who would like to find out about the work of these organisations or to volunteer their time or expertise. This event is part of Bedford Homelessness Week 2018 and has the support of HM Lord Lieutenant Helen Nellis, the High Sheriff, Julian Polhill and Dave Hodgson, Mayor.

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Notes to the Editor:

Further information about SoupFest is available from Emma Garrett, DL. Tel 07970 284823 soupfestbeds@gmail.com, SoupFest Director & Trustee. Director Pavilion at the Park (www.pavilion.attheparkbedford.co.uk.) Bedfordshire BusinessWoman of the Year 2018

Further information about the grants allocated in 2017/18 is available from Sam Price Tel: 07950 479351 sam@bedfordhomelss.org.uk. Homeless Inter-Agency Officer Bedford Homeless Partnership

Website: www.soupfest.co.uk

Twitter: [@soupfestbeds](https://twitter.com/soupfestbeds)

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