

# Helping lives is a piece of cake for cafe



COOKING UP CHANGES: The Braw Tea team: Moira, front, and, from left, Jackie, Charlene, Debbie, Eve, Julia and Sedra. Picture by Kim Cessford.

## BRIAN STORMONT

**B**raw Tea, a new not-for-profit community cafe in Broughty Ferry, which has the potential to transform the lives of its volunteers, officially opens its doors today.

The unique social enterprise based at the Ferry's Castle Green aims to upskill and train women in need of support, including those who face challenges through social isolation, poverty and domestic abuse, as well as refugees, asylum seekers and low-risk offenders.

The cafe has secured grant funding, in-kind support and a large group of female volunteers from across Dundee, with partners attending a special launch event yesterday to sample the very first cups of Braw Tea artisan coffee and a showstopping selection of home-baking.

The cornerstone of Braw Tea's approach is to offer barista, food preparation and customer service training for all women who are referred to the project by its partner agencies,

providing experience of running a busy cafe and building the skills and confidence needed to step into further education or paid employment.

Founder and director Jackie McKenzie said the response since setting up Braw Tea had been both humbling and inspiring.

She added: "We're over the moon to be opening our doors this weekend and we can't wait to start using that potent power of cake and great coffee to create a vibrant new hub for the Broughty Ferry community."

"The backing we've received from our supporters has really touched me and it just seems to be one of these situations where everyone involved has seen the good in the project from the start and done all they can to bring it to life."

"We have a small and brilliant staff team who are working hard to make this the best it can possibly be."

"At one end of the scale we've had significant donations from local trusts and companies to get us off

the ground, while at the other I've had people literally walk into the pavilion off the street to make a contribution, purely because they read about us in The Courier.

"My son Joe is even competing in a triathlon this weekend to raise funds for the cause - I honestly couldn't be more proud."

"We've been super busy getting everything ready behind the scenes in preparation for this weekend and I know I speak for all of our women when I say we're genuinely proud of getting to this stage and of the underpinning social mission behind Braw Tea."

"The women we'll be supporting come from a wide range of backgrounds and will often have experienced very different challenges - our approach will be to treat everyone as an equal and to focus on providing first-rate food."

On top of coffee and cake, Braw Tea's all-vegetarian and vegan menu will offer up scones, soups and salads.

## Volunteer's animal photographs earn special praise from charity

The Scottish SPCA has recognised the work of an Angus volunteer who photographs its animals.

Ewan Noble, a HND photography student at Dundee and Angus College, volunteers at the Angus, Fife and Tayside Animal Rescue and Rehoming Centre.

He gave up his time for the charity to gain experience alongside his studies and for his own business in pet photography.

So far this year, volunteers have contributed 8,815 hours to the Scottish SPCA, while in 2022 847 volunteers gave 21,695 hours.

Ewan said: "So far my experience volunteering with the Scottish SPCA has been very positive and rewarding, seeing animals go to new homes and knowing I've played a part in that process just fills me with pure joy."

"I volunteered to gain experience alongside my



Talented photographer Ewan Noble.

two-year college course, as well as for my own business in pet photography.

"I've also been able to interact and learn more about animals, which itself is very valuable to me and I would actively encourage anyone to volunteer for such an amazing charity."

Katie Mulreany, animal care assistant at the Angus

centre said: "Ewan has been a fabulous addition to our wonderful group of volunteers."

"His photography skills have played a huge part in securing new homes for our animals. We often get comments about how great the photos he has taken look on the website by potential adopters and that he captures their personalities well."

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