

»»» NEWSLETTER «««

GOOD FOOD MIDDLESBROUGH

Middlesbrough Food Partnership



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2024

WHAT'S NEW

»»» FOOD PARTNERSHIP FEATURES

- Middlesbrough Food Partnership receives Gold Award including our Journey to Gold
- Tees Valley Together

UPCOMING EVENTS«««

- Larchfield Christmas Fayre - 16th November
- CAM Nature Matters Film Screening - 21st November
- Stewart Park Farmers Market - 24th November
- Christmas Orange Pip - 21st December

WHAT'S HAPPENING

By Alexandra Young

MIDDLESBROUGH RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS GOLD AWARD



»»» SUSTAINABLE FOOD PLACES AWARD

Middlesbrough Food Partnership are celebrating a momentous achievement as we have been awarded the highly coveted Gold Award from Sustainable Food Places. This significant recognition strengthens the town's place as a national leader in sustainable food practices, community resilience, and innovative food systems.

The Gold Award is not just a testament to Middlesbrough's commitment to sustainability, it represents a collective effort by local organisations, businesses, community groups and residents to create a healthier, more sustainable and inclusive food future. It highlights our commitment in tackling some of the most pressing social, environmental, and economic challenges, from reducing food waste to promoting healthy eating and building stronger local food economies.



Image: Representatives of Middlesbrough Food Partnership

➤➤➤ A JOURNEY TO GOLD

The Middlesbrough Food Partnership has been on an inspiring journey toward this achievement. Over the last 14 years, the partnership has spearheaded transformative projects that address food poverty and promote access to healthy, nutritious food for everyone in the community. The collaboration between local authorities, charities, schools, businesses, and grassroots initiatives has been the cornerstone of the partnership's success.

Middlesbrough's Food Power Alliance has also played a vital role, tackling food insecurity through programs such as community kitchens, food banks, and the Healthy Start voucher scheme, which supports low-income families in accessing fresh, nutritious produce.



Image: Sustainable Food Places Conference, Partnership Winners (SFP, 2024)

The Sustainable Food Places (SFP) Gold award, recognises the long-standing commitment to promoting sustainable food systems in the community. The criteria set by SFP outlines a partnership should have secured key resources, ensuring its growth and continued impact. Middlesbrough have built a strong network, engaging key representatives from various sectors, and gained recognition and support from prominent institutions and the broader food movement.

TEES VALLEY TOGETHER

➤➤➤ BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN MIDDLESBROUGH



Tees Valley Together (TVT) is a dynamic community initiative based in Middlesbrough, making a significant impact on the lives of local residents. Born out of the COVID-19 pandemic, TVT has evolved from a small group addressing urgent needs during a global crisis into a registered charity (CIO) that continues to support vulnerable families across the Tees Valley.

A Grassroots Beginning

TVT was initially formed as a Constituted Community Group with a mission to provide essential services, such as food parcels and household necessities, to families struggling through the pandemic. As the community's needs grew, so did TVT's scope. Today, it addresses various social challenges, from helping individuals with basic needs to running creative and social activities that foster stronger community ties.

TVT's work is deeply embedded in a philosophy of practical support. For example, they provide "Home from Home" services, offering preloved clothing and small household items, and even baby essentials such as clothes and toys, ensuring that families can access crucial goods without the high costs of new items. This service is open on select days each week, with an upstairs baby room designed for easy access.

“Volunteers are the heart of everything we do at TVT”

The Eco Shop: Affordable Choices for All

TVT are part of MEC's Eco Shop network, opening 3 days a week. Based at The Viewley Centre, TVT's Eco Shop is open to everyone. This initiative allows customers to purchase 10 items for just £2, with the aim of reducing food waste by sourcing surplus food from supermarkets.

By repurposing what might otherwise be thrown away, TVT plays an active role in reducing landfill waste, while also ensuring people can access affordable, nutritious food. The shop also distributes free period products, supported by the Hey Girls Campaign, highlighting TVT's commitment to dignity and health.



Image: Linda and Fiona at TVT



Image: TVT Eco Shop



Image: TVT Eco Shop

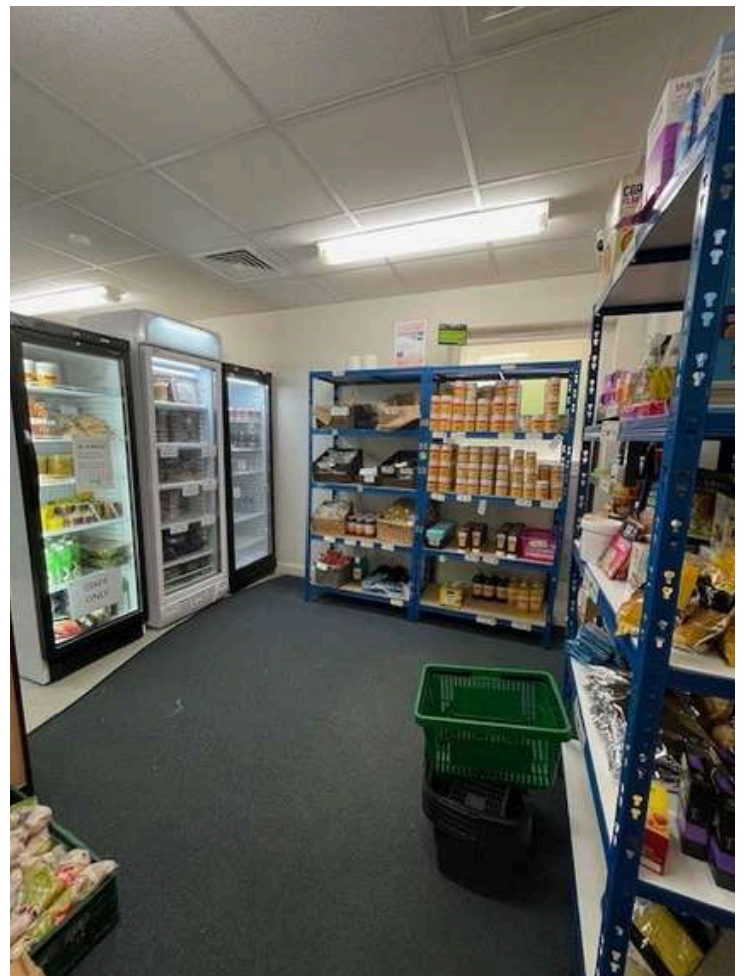


Image: TVT Eco Shop

More Than Just Services: A Hub for Community Engagement

Beyond the essential services, TVT is a vibrant social hub, offering a range of free activities through the use of the Community livingroom. Held weekly, these sessions invite people to join in creative projects—such as building birdhouses or planting and to connect with others over coffee. These activities, often supported by other local organisations like My Sisters Place and Thirteen Housing, create opportunities for individuals to combat isolation and make meaningful connections.

TVT also runs inclusive holiday programs for children, providing not only activities but also hot meals for school-aged kids during Easter, summer, and Christmas breaks. These programs split children into age-appropriate groups, ensuring fun and engagement for everyone involved.

In addition, Warm Welcome Wednesday's offer teas and coffee to nurture a sense of community whilst customers are waiting for the Eco Shop to open.

Powered by Passionate People

None of this would be possible without the passionate team behind Tees Valley Together. Led by founder and CEO Sharlein Smales, TVT operates with a dedicated group of staff and volunteers, including Operations Manager Linda Bacon and Deputy CEO Fiona Taylor. Together, they manage the day-to-day operations and continuously seek ways to expand the charity's reach.

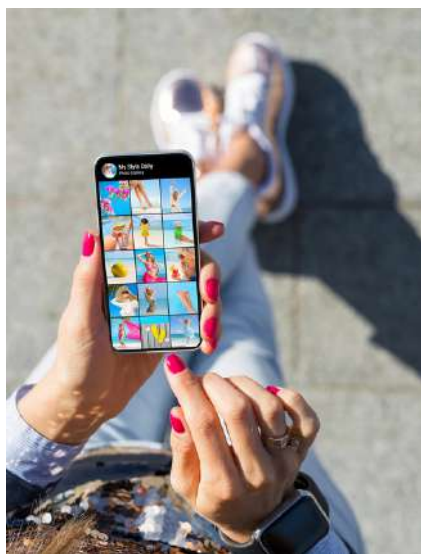
TVT's work is also made possible by a core group of trustees and volunteers who ensure the charity remains responsive to the needs of the community. From managing the Eco Shop to organising holiday activities, the volunteers are the heart of TVT, playing an imperative role in sustaining its efforts.

Looking Ahead

Tees Valley Together exemplifies the power of community-driven action. By addressing immediate needs and creating spaces for social connection, TVT fosters a sense of belonging and support for all members of the community. As the charity continues to grow, it remains committed to enhancing the quality of life for Tees Valley residents and building resilience in the face of new challenges.

For more information on how you can get involved or support Tees Valley Together's initiatives, visit their website or check out their Facebook page for updates on upcoming events and opportunities.

Middlesbrough Food Partnership



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Would you like to feature in our next newsletter?

Get in touch!

We would love to write an article about you to showcase your work and achievements.

Contact Alex at alex.young@mencity.org.uk

