



PwC, Brigade and the Beyond Food Foundation: Our social impact

May 2024



Foreword



Kevin Ellis

PwC – Senior Partner
2016-2024

It is hard to believe it was 2010 when I first met Simon Boyle, the chef founder of Beyond Food Foundation (BFF) at a restaurant he was running in the crypt of All Hallows Tower Bridge. Simon had won ‘Spark’, a competition PwC ran in partnership with BT, for the impact he was having training those at risk of homelessness in culinary skills.

Together, we created the innovative initiative Brigade at The Old Fire station on Tooley Street, adjacent to our More London office. It has been incredibly satisfying in my role as Senior Partner and Chair of Trustees of the PwC Foundation to see first-hand the impact this unique triple sector partnership has had over the 13 years. Our support has involved a combination of staff volunteering their time and expertise, along with financial support. I have personally participated in takeovers for One Firm One Day, our annual day of fundraising and volunteering, and have hosted numerous clients and PwC Foundation charity events at Brigade. This unique collaboration highlights the importance of long-term sustainable support for charities and their beneficiaries.



Simon Boyle

Beyond Food Foundation –
Founder & CEO

From the very beginning, our partnership with PwC has been instrumental in driving our mission forward. Since opening Brigade's doors in 2011, it has been clear that our collaboration is a powerful force for social change. Together, we have illuminated new paths for supporting those in vulnerable situations, creating a lasting impact not only in the lives of our participants but across the broader community and society as a whole.

Our collaborative efforts have seen thousands of individuals supported through Brigade, seeking and finding guidance and opportunities, whether through hospitality apprenticeships or transformative work experiences. Our approach has always been one of open doors and open hearts, a philosophy reflected in the

engagement of Brigade's customers, including the many PwC employees who have supported us. Their participation has been a vital component of our social impact, offering real-life opportunities for our FreshLife participants to grow and excel.

The success of our alumni speaks volumes, with over 1,500 individuals from London and beyond making significant strides in their lives. Of those who obtain employment, an impressive 84% remain employed after a year, and in some cases, for over a decade, highlighting the enduring impact of the partnership between PwC and Beyond Food Foundation. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved, especially the PwC employees who have supported us as customers, volunteers and experts. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of them, and particularly to Kevin Ellis, whose unwavering support from the outset has been invaluable.

The collaboration

Supporting the community and making a positive impact on society has always been at the core of PwC's purpose and values. For 175 years, PwC has remained dedicated to this cause and it is still at the very centre of the work we do. This report focuses on the collaboration with the Beyond Food Foundation and, through that, the formation and impact of the Brigade Bar + Kitchen.

PwC leased the fire station on Tooley Street in London in 2010 to create a social enterprise hub to provide benefits to the community. Since 2011, this social enterprise hub has provided training, apprenticeships, and support to individuals seeking to improve their lives. The impact of this collaboration has been significant, with thousands of people completing programmes and finding inspiration through Beyond Food's initiatives.

The restaurant itself has been designed with a social purpose at its core. In addition to serving food and drinks, Brigade also serves as the training hub for Beyond Food's flagship programme, FreshLife. The three-week experience offers practical and skills-based training, equipping participants with both cooking and life skills. FreshLife is specifically designed to empower individuals, providing them with the tools and self-awareness to take care of themselves, support others, and gain employment. The programme is tailored to address various challenges individuals may be facing, such as trauma, addiction, or poor mental health. While FreshLife primarily focuses on adults, it is also open to young adults, prison-leavers, care leavers and those with disabilities.

FreshLife was specifically designed to empower individuals, providing them with the tools and self-awareness to take care of themselves, support others, and gain employment. The programme is tailored to address various challenges individuals may be facing, such as trauma, addiction, or poor mental health. While FreshLife primarily focuses on adults, it is also open to young adults, prison-leavers, care leavers and those with disabilities. Over the years the FreshLife programme has continuously evolved to meet the needs of their graduates. Beginning as a year-long apprenticeship programme the scheme now offers shorter, more intense learning to allow individuals to graduate onto other roles more quickly and grow more rapidly.

“

The course here gave me the kick that I needed to get my life back in order. Fortunately I am there now, hard work, determination, trust and knowing that these guys are going to be there for you every single step of the way on your journey through life is the most fantastic thing ever.”

Clyde, FreshLife Graduate



Since 2011 over **300,000** hours of work experience have been completed in Brigade

The impact

The collaboration between these organisations has had a significant impact in many different ways, our relationship and the effects these organisations have had on one another are summarised in the diagram below.



Beyond Food Foundation's unique approach focuses on a step-by-step process and methodology that has been developed over 20 years, of helping the vulnerable restart their lives.



PwC Partners and staff have supported Brigade over the years, by sharing their skills, mentoring apprentices, fundraising through the PwC Foundation and hosting client and charitable events.



Completing FreshLife provides individuals with opportunities to become and remain employable, breaking through barriers and empowering them to take control of their life.

Over

1,640

participants of FreshLife have completed work experience at Brigade.



Individuals on Beyond Food's FreshLife programme are given the opportunity to complete work experience in A Brigade kitchen or front of house.

Providing work experience and training impacts not only individuals but also employers allowing them to access these talented individuals who have developed A skills through the programme.



When I started I didn't know what it was coming into it so I didn't know what to expect but I knew that I needed something to make me enjoy life again. That's what this has given me."

Jennifer FreshLife Graduate



Jan said we'll train you to be a chef, I said there's one problem with that idea. I can't cook and I don't like cooking, she said leave the rest to us and she was good on her word. Today I'm 8 years in as a professional chef, I work all over London, in hotels, restaurants, investment banks in Canary Wharf."

David, FreshLife Graduate

Brigade's mission extends beyond providing training and support to those who feel their lives have unravelled, it also aims to have a broader social impact.

In 2018, the restaurant underwent a complete refurbishment, during which the focus of the business shifted towards supporting the community and other social enterprises through their purchasing practices. Brigade now sources 80% of their ingredients directly from producers, farmers, and fishermen, aligning with PwC's Buy Social strategy. Additionally, Brigade organises restaurant takeovers for organisations seeking a unique and socially responsible volunteering activity. This started with the annual PwC One Firm One Day takeover, where PwC hosts a number of charities and clients within the restaurant. Food is prepared not only by the skilled Brigade chefs but also by partners and staff at PwC. PwC works alongside Brigade specialists to host the evening while raising money for selected charity partners.



“

Jan, Simon and everybody you're amazing, they will help you, they will do good things. It's the most positive life-changing experience I've ever had.”

Ben, FreshLife Graduate

“

Our programmes aim to nourish both the mind and body, helping individuals move from a state of being unravelled to thriving. What sets us apart is our unique approach - we assist our participants in reclaiming control over their lives by using food as a catalyst. Our goal is to help them discover their true purpose, rewrite their story, and regain their footing so they can return to work and live fulfilling lives.”

Jan Seymour, Beyond Food Foundation – Support & Progression Manager



Chris Reeve

PwC – London Regional Market Leader and Brigade Board member

It has been a privilege for me to serve as a board member on the Beyond Food CIC and witness first hand the positive impact that Simon and the team at Beyond Food have on the lives of vulnerable people in London and beyond.

In my role as London Regional market leader, I have had the opportunity to showcase Brigade to a wide range of stakeholders and everyone who has had the opportunity to visit, whether for a meal or an event, is overwhelmingly positive about the unique partnership that has been established.

Brigade gives organisations and individuals in London a tangible opportunity to make a difference to many lives, put their purpose and social impact aspirations into action and build an influential coalition of like minded participants. Each year on One Firm One Day a team of PwC volunteers help to run Brigade for the evening, hosting guests, allowing organisations to contribute resources, funds and ideas, energising the business and grow Brigade's social impact.



The future

The success of Brigade bar + kitchen and their ongoing community projects is a testament to the power of collaboration and social responsibility. Since its establishment in 2011, this unique social enterprise has shown the power of transformation and how it can positively impact local communities. Over the years, Brigade's pioneering status has attracted considerable interest from business leaders, politicians, and across the social enterprise sector.

As the FreshLife programme has continuously evolved to meet the needs of their graduates so has PwC's support for BFF evolved and will continue to do so into the future, adapting to the needs of the beneficiaries whilst responding to external forces and challenges.

As well as Brigade, for over 12 years, the Fire Station has housed a complementary group of inspired organisations working collaboratively to advance social and environmental change. Social Enterprise UK and the School for Social Entrepreneurs were based in the Fire Station until 2023, and although they have now moved to different premises, PwC continues to collaborate and work closely with both organisations as strategic partners.

All of this would not be possible without the close partnership between PwC's Foundation and Beyond Food Foundation. Having collaborated for many years, through national charity fundraising partnerships, PwC's Social Entrepreneurs Club, and volunteers supporting employability programmes, Beyond Food is often integral to PwC's flagship fundraising events, providing food and drinks, allowing PwC to spend socially whilst running events.

There is real value for PwC stakeholders hearing first hand from someone who has benefited from

Beyond Food Foundation's programmes and is now working at Brigade. This approach brings the charity to life and demonstrates the direct impact it has on its beneficiaries.

Through this collaboration, PwC and its staff have raised over £1.3 million to support Beyond Food since 2011.



David Adair

PwC – Director of Community Engagement and The PwC Foundation

I am extremely proud of initiating our long-standing collaboration with Simon Boyle and The Beyond Food Foundation, resulting in Brigade. Brigade demonstrates how a triple-sector partnership between a corporate (PwC), a charity (Beyond Food Foundation) and a supplier (currently Searcys) can work together around a common vision and collectively increase their impact. PwC staff have been able to actively engage in the journey with the recipients through fundraising, volunteering, mentoring, or simply eating at Brigade and what a journey it has been – not only life-changing for the participants but for those of us from PwC that have been involved too.

Thank you

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