

Ex-Corrie star turned chef backs young Barnsley man's call to ditch takeaways and start cooking

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A young man from Swinton, who wants to get more young people cooking from scratch, has won the support of ex-Corrie star Sean Wilson.

Working with Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, Nathan Ward wants to show young people that cooking from scratch isn't a chore – it can be fun and beneficial.

Nathan, 18, from Kilnhurst, near Swinton, was taught to cook from a young age by his mum and grandmother.

"It was always about the enjoyment and it was always fun," he says. "I feel comfortable and relaxed when I cook - it feels like second nature to me.

"I don't think enough people my age cook. A lot of them resort to going to a supermarket and grabbing something quick, or go to fast food chains.

"When you cook yourself you know exactly what is in your food. I think it's important that more people are aware of the nutritional value of foods from a young age – it's an important part of staying healthy."

A report about Nathan's Fixers campaign will feature on ITV News Calendar on Thursday 9 May, from 6pm.

As part of the film, Nathan met up with Sean Wilson, who played Martin Platt in Coronation Street and is now a cheese maker and a chef. He is passionate about cooking and agrees more people need to cook from scratch.

Sean said: "I've always been into cooking. I taught myself at home, worked in a Michelin starred restaurant for a while, and then became a cheese maker. I just absolutely believe in fresh food.

"I think the key to getting young people excited about cooking is to get them round the table three times a week, talking about food, and then cooking with them. Keep it exciting, do a bit of baking."

In the film, Nathan persuades a young man whose previous culinary skill extended no further than pouring water on noodles, to cook up a stir fry from scratch.

Aspiring chef Nathan, who is studying professional cookery at Barnsley College, hopes one day to own his own restaurant.

As well as attending college three days a week – he also works in a local hotel restaurant where he is gaining valuable work experience.

He specialises in desserts and creates his own recipes. "I enjoy how creative you can be. You can channel all your energy into food and make that food taste great through your own passion and enthusiasm," he says.

Fixers is a charity which supports young people across the UK to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported over 7,400 young people to have an authentic voice in their community and aims to work with a further 20,000 Fixers over the next three years.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

"Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea... an idea given a voice by over 7,400 young people over the past five years," says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

"They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around

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where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves.”

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:

<http://www.fixers.org.uk>

<http://www.twitter.com/FixersUK>

<http://www.facebook.com/FixersUK>

Notes to editors:

- Fixers started in England in 2008. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. To date, over 7,400 young people across the UK have become Fixers and created 900 projects.
- The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
- The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
- BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

Company Contact:

Fixers

T. 01962810970

E. sarahj@fixers.org.uk

W. <https://www.fixers.org.uk>

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