

CHARITY CASH WILL KICKSTART WORK TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES

Women powering ahead thanks to a £36k grant



Christine Taylor, Julie Blackmore, Tunde Jotham, Christine Locke, Heather Thomas-Pugh, and Vandana Manocha celebrate the £36,000 of funding for Swale Women Empowering Women

Picture: Andy Payton PD1893292

by Scott Mitchell

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A NEW charity aiming to address social and economic inequalities for women has been given a big financial boost.

Swale Women Empowering Women has been awarded £36,000 in funding over two years from the Lloyds TSB Foundation.

The Diversity House project has gained support from 12 local organisations and is receiving £1,538 from Kent county councillors Adrian Crowther and Mike Whiting.

It aims to increase the self-esteem, confidence and with that the employability and entrepreneurial skills of women in the area.

In turn, the project hopes this will ensure Swale women will have the same opportunities for economic independence despite their backgrounds.

Part of the money will go to recruiting a project manager and administrator, and project leader Christine Locke hopes the funding will help kick-start the initiative.

She said: "This grant award is fantastic news. It will help us to address the inequalities that exist in terms of health, education, learning and skills in Swale.

"It is key that women can be equipped to become leaders with the vision that can elevate every one of us to a life of fairness, equality and prosperity."

The Sittingbourne-based charity aims to boost the business profile of women, and highlights the percentage of self-employed women as a particular issue.

Despite there being more women than men in the borough, only 4% of women aged 16 to 74 are self-employed.

The project also aims to bring together women from different backgrounds to increase understanding between communities.

Swale Women Empowering Women will offer mentoring, coaching, volunteering, training, seminars and workshops to help raise awareness, improve skills and promote inclusion.

Diversity House, Phoenix House, Central Avenue, currently has a display as part of the Mobile Gateway, which is appearing around Swale and is to be involved in the Gateway project in Sheerness.

■ The project is recruiting members and you can register your interest by calling Christine Locke on 01795 420455 or 07515 494877