

***Durham Charity offers a solution to Christmas card problems***

A local charity has just launched a new website to provide an easy way for local businesses to lend their financial support to local good causes of their choice this Christmas.

County Durham Foundation is offering corporate Christmas cards that come complete with a donation to a local good cause that is chosen by the company itself. There are a range of 10 'gifts' that the cards can support, including people with disabilities, the homeless and education and learning. This gift is featured in the cards to explain to all recipients what donation has been made on their behalf.

Similar Gift Shops are run by other larger charities, mainly supporting international causes but County Durham Foundation's is unique in that it is the only one offering a service to support local people. Businesses can even go as far as to choose which district of County Durham their support will go to.

Deputy Chief Executive Melanie Caldwell said,

'Many businesses have to make a choice at Christmas to either send cards or make a charitable donation – few can afford to do both, especially smaller businesses. If a company chooses to make a charitable donation the majority of the time their customers and employees remain unaware of this good deed. We thought this would be a great way to provide an opportunity for companies to have the best of both worlds and ensure their support is received locally.'

One of the first businesses to order cards this year was GlaxoSmithKline. The multinational pharmaceuticals company, which has a site in Barnard Castle, has chosen to support healthy-living projects with their Christmas cards.

The cards cost no more than regular corporate cards but 30-60% of the total cost supports a local good cause (a much higher percentage than is usually received via charity Christmas cards).

County Durham Foundation has been providing grants to individuals, community groups and small local charities in County Durham and Darlington for over 11 years so it is able to find only the most deserving causes to receive your support.

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