Just over 3 years ago the original school kitchen was decommissioned due to the opening of the new building for KS2.

Not long after that Mrs Taylor heard about, and visited a community café based at a school in Leeds. Here pupils were using food that supermarkets were obliged to throw away even though it was perfectly edible. Customers could simply enjoy the food or give a donation that they could afford towards it. Pupils were perfecting basic life skills and were ensuring vulnerable people weren’t going hungry unnecessarily. In doing so they were also helping the environment by reducing food waste and by preventing the creation of gases detrimental to our planet.

Alongside of that we had some families at school who were struggling to buy food for themselves and their children. Families who didn’t have a choice other than to use the local food bank. We also had teachers who were frustrated by a lack of facilities and a lack of equipment to be able to give regular opportunities to pupils to cook and bake and learn practically how to put together a healthy meal.

From this came a dream. A dream to create a purpose built kitchen in this empty room that was fast becoming a storage space for anything and everything. A dream to create a purpose built kitchen where pupils and adults could be given the opportunity to learn how to cook and eat healthily and well. A dream to create a purpose built kitchen that could be used by community groups to help people nearby who are vulnerable, unhappy and who are literally, in the true sense of the word hungry. A dream to create a purpose built kitchen which could help vulnerable people without it costing lots of money.

As always in life, money was the stumbling block. Initial quotes for the building work needed suggested fees of around £50,000 plus. Hearts sank and the great temptation was to give up. Say forget it. But naively, stubbornly, fool heartedly we didn’t do this. We said lets have a sponsored walk and make a start, however small, however laughable, towards making the dream come true.

Hours of planning, 10 miles of walking by pupils, family members, staff and governors and practical as well as financial support from Soroptimist International of Bingley resulted in da, da, da, £2,000 being raised. We were going to need an awful lot of walks to finance our dream.

There followed another event in partnership with Bradford City Football Club. Another £2,000 was in the bank. Only a minimum of £45.000 to go.

Bids were written. Some (many) were rejected. Others were successful. After a year or so we had raised approximately £15,000. Another sponsored walk – what was now known as our annual sponsored walk loomed. Grim determination mixed with unspoken despair and an unspoken fear of the kitchen never happening was the flavour of the day.

Then our prayers were answered in a way we hadn’t even considered possible. Mr Gration, Tilly and Stanley’s dad came to see me. He said I believe in what you are trying to do. He said My own children and hundreds of children who come to this school in the future will enjoy and benefit from the kitchen in your dreams. I will do it without charging you for the labour. He said I can help you resource things for the best prices and I will try and get people I know to help you too.

And, to keep the story short. Here we are. Our dream exists. We have done it. We have finished?

No. Today is where we start. Our pupils start to cook regularly. Our parents start to have the opportunity to learn to cook regularly. Our community groups start to use this resource. Vulnerable local people start to be given help inside our kitchen.

Our dream has just begun.

I have insufficient words to express the depth of my gratitude to each and every person, each and every organisation, who has supported and encouraged the creation of this kitchen. Supported us by walking, planning, making tea and sandwiches, making posters, labouring, donating money or even by simply giving words of encouragement. Whatever you have done I say a personal thank you, thank you, thank you.

I now ask our Chair of Governors, however to give formal thanks on behalf of Trinity All Saints CE Primary School.

We now come to the part of our service where the ribbon needs to be cut and the kitchen will be officially opened. We have invited a well known and easily recognised figure to do this. A man who is the face of Look North. A man who is admired for the considerable time and impressive effort he gives to raising money for charity. A man who is not averse to cycling in snow blizzards, pushing a settee around the county, abseiling, sitting on top of a flying aeroplane or participating in a 3 legged walk over rough terrain for miles and miles

I trust you will not find our challenge to cut this ribbon too tame. Thank you for accepting our invitation. I welcome Dr Harry Gration MBE.

Now I ask someone known by us all, a man who needs no introduction, to bless Bingley Community Kitchen. Thank you, the Rt Revd Dr Toby Howarth Bishop of Bradford.