

Karen gives TV Chef Recipe for Success

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Quickthinking Karen Cockfield made sure Forest food was added to the menu when TV producers turned up looking for a venue for their latest programme.

After learning celebrity chef Olly Smith was in the area for his latest cookery programme, the organiser of St Briavels farmers' market was not about to let him leave without trying a taste of the Dean.

And the TV chef was so impressed he picked a range of local ingredients to create an outdoor banquet for his new series, the Secret Supper Club.

Next month, Channel 4 viewers will see Olly serve up a feast of forest fare to invited guests at Puzzlewood.

Olly and his team had been travelling the country looking for filming venues for the new Channel 4 series when they contacted Karen to book the newly refurbished St Briavels Assembly Rooms.

"They told me they wanted to book the rooms so they could invite 20 or 30 food producers from Hereford and Worcester to come and meet Olly Smith and he would select what he wanted for the supper club" she said.

"I was totally aghast. They knew nothing about our farmers' market and I had to tell them they could get everything they wanted locally. It was really short notice but I got in touch with all our suppliers and told them to turn up."

Those who auditioned for the programme included cheesemaker Diana Smart, poultry supplier Madgetts Farm and Orchard Cider. Steve Turley brought his Gloucestershire Old Spot Pork and said: "It was quite pressured but I'm glad we took part because they filmed me telling Olly all about our produce in the Assembly Rooms."

Olly told his fans: "It's been a fantastic adventure, travelling Britain seeking out fabulous local produce, top locations and fascinating people."