

Continuing to make a difference in the future.....

As well as making a difference for the duration of grant funding, many grant recipients were keen to find ways of sustaining their work in the future....

East Ayrshire Council Community Learning and Development received funding to develop cooking sessions with young people aged 16 to 19. The young people were keen to learn and were involved in all stages, including choosing recipes and going shopping. The worker found that they were particularly good at assessing the prices and offers in the shops. They also enjoyed the social aspect of cooking and sharing a meal together. Two or three participants were reluctant at first to try the food they had made, but overcame this quickly with a little encouragement. They were especially keen to try food prepared by a partner when working in pairs. Some are now trying the recipes at home, while others are also teaching their parents the recipes. Other local young people have heard about these sessions and are keen to take part. The worker plans to continue the cookery sessions now that she has a store cupboard of ingredients and suitable equipment

Barra Pre-School Ltd bought some new equipment, including a baked potato oven and a soup kettle, in order to extend the range of healthier options in the centre's community café. Customers, including local schoolchildren, have been enjoying the new range of healthier foods and suggesting new baked potato fillings. The group have plans to grow fruit and vegetables in the community garden, working with pre-school children attending the centre. The produce will be used in the café and for the children's break-time snacks.

Randolph Crescent Hostel in Edinburgh supports 16 residents taking part in a three-month intensive drug or alcohol addiction rehabilitation programme. Most have also experienced homelessness. Residents cook and eat together in the hostel. The hostel staff are using grant money to transform the hostel back yard into a fruit and vegetable garden. So far, staff and residents have cleared the garden and have begun to make structures for raised beds. All the residents have been involved and ex-residents have also returned to help. The staff report that everyone has been really helpful and happy to get involved. Plans are in place to ensure that there are adequate funds within its budget to buy vegetable seeds for the garden throughout the coming years.

Find out more....

Policy and local food and health work

To find out about food and health work in your area, visit your local authority and local NHS Board websites. You can also find out about your local Community Health Partnership (or Community Health and Care Partnership) on these websites. You may also get information on these at your local library.

To find out about community food activity nationally, visit our website www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

To find out about national policies around food and health, visit the Scottish Government's website www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/health/19133

Healthy Eating Information

Information on healthy eating is available from the Food Standards Agency's educational www.eatwell.gov.uk. and the Scottish Government's 'take life on' website www.takelifeon.co.uk

It is also worth contacting your local NHS board to find out about the availability of healthy eating resources or NHS health promotion libraries.



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farechoice

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY FOOD AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND)

SPECIAL GRANTS EDITION

2009 Small Grant Scheme is open!

Community Food and Health (Scotland) is pleased to open the 2009 small grant scheme. This year groups or agencies working with low-income groups in Scotland can apply for between £500 and a new upper limit of £4,000 to tackle the barriers to a healthy balanced diet. Last year 59 applications were successful out of a total of 247 and we awarded around £100,000.

To find out more about our small grant scheme, please call or email us and ask for an application pack. You can also download an application pack from our website.

This newsletter will show you some of the types of groups and activities we provided funding for last year. It will also provide some information on Scottish food policy.

The closing date for grant applications is 5pm on Friday 26 June. Please note that we are unable to accept faxed, emailed or late applications.

Last year, groups and agencies received funding for all sorts of activities, including training for lunch club volunteers, a polytunnel to grow a wider range of produce for a centre working with people with learning disabilities and cookery workshops for parents and children. Grant money was used to pay for all kinds of items, from wheelbarrows and watering systems to crockery and casserole dishes.

Complementing national or local priorities...

The Scottish Government is promising a new national food and drink policy soon. This should provide direction, co-ordination and leadership across

industry, health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

Keep up to date with the latest on this policy by checking www.scotland.gov.uk or through Fare Choice.

In addition, the 'Healthy Eating, Active Living' (HEAL) action plan published by the Scottish Government in 2008 aims to improve health, increase physical activity and tackle obesity until 2011. As well as reinforcing the message from earlier policies that food-related activities need to tackle the barriers of access, affordability, skills and culture, the HEAL action plan prioritises particular groups in society. These were identified as **early years** (children and babies under the age of five), **school-age children, older people** (over the age of 50), **adults and workplaces**, and **communities**. All the groups who received a small grant from us last year worked within low-income communities. Over the page is a small selection of some of their work....



A big 'thank you!' to all the 2008 grant recipients who have sent in reports, photos and newspaper cuttings, letting us know how they are getting on with their grant-funded work.

About Us

Our over-riding aim is to improve Scotland's food and health.

We do this by supporting work within low-income communities that improves access to and take-up of a healthy diet. Major obstacles being addressed by community-based initiatives are:

AVAILABILITY

increasing access to fruit and vegetables of an acceptable quality and cost

AFFORDABILITY

tackling not only the cost of shopping but getting to shops

SKILLS

improving confidence and skills in cooking and shopping

CULTURE

overcoming ingrained habits.

We help support low income communities to identify barriers to a healthy balanced diet, develop local responses to addressing them and highlight where actions at other levels, or in other sectors, are required.

We value the experience, understanding, skills and knowledge within Scotland's communities and their unique contribution to developing and delivering policy and practice at all levels.

Special Grants Edition

Reaching prioritised groups...early years.....

Gowans Child and Family Centre in Perth developed cookery courses for some of the parents they work with. All were isolated mums with children under five who were experiencing isolation and many had additional support needs. Groups of two or three women took part, although attendance did vary. They learnt to cook a wide range of affordable healthy meals, including homemade burgers, soups and pasta. They were also given tasters of new foods to try. They discussed food labeling and some were surprised by the amount of sugar in some food products aimed at children. Some took longer than others to feel comfortable in the group, such as one mum who took a while before she would eat food in front of others. After a few weeks, the women were usually keen to start cooking straight away.

Staff used two main methods to evaluate their work - the cookery tutor's notes from each session and questionnaires with the women. Both highlighted the social benefits of these sessions, 'having a chat and a laugh', as well as learning about healthy eating. Some also valued the opportunity to discuss their personal concerns or get help filling in welfare benefit forms, such as those for 'Healthy Start'.

Reaching prioritised groups... school-age children...

North Glasgow Community Food Initiative formed 'Green Food Hit Squads' who worked to start up small community and school gardens. Over the last six months they have worked with several primary and nursery schools, as well as a local housing association. Parents and volunteers were involved at one of the nurseries and in the schools the pupils formed Green Food Hit Squads of their own. Pupils also planted seedlings to take home. Over the summer the initiative plans to help more organisations develop their gardens, and involve even more volunteers and residents. A local secondary school is also keen to develop a vegetable garden in the near future.



Reaching prioritised groups...older people.....

Age Concern Broomlands and Bourtnehill in Ayrshire is a volunteer-run group that has provided lunch and entertainment for around 35 to 40 older people every weekday for the last 30 years. In recent years it has expanded its work to include a befriending service for older people and a Healthy Living Centre open to everyone in the community. It used grant funding to buy some new crockery and kitchen equipment, which will help to ensure that they can continue this valuable service.

Making sure that activities are needed and wanted....

All grant applicants have to show why their planned activities are needed....

Alloa Family Centre set up two cooking groups for young people who were either living independently, young parents, parents-to-be or young carers. The Family Centre was already delivering some healthy eating activities, including smoothie-making and food tasters, but the young people asked for more in-depth practical cookery sessions. So far, the centre has reported some successes, although attendance does vary. Participants say that they have learned new skills, are more confident with their cooking, are eating less take-away meals, and have made some of the recipes at home using the ingredients that the centre provided for them.

Getting help.....

Most grant recipients sought advice or resources from others. Working with organisations such as health promotion and dietetic departments, or healthy living initiatives can help ensure access to good, credible healthy eating information. Seeking help can also support groups to build links with other work taking place in their area.

Camelon Community Project in Falkirk used grant funding to develop its community café and deliver a range of healthy food activities, including cooking classes and a lunch for older people. It received help from the local community food worker who was able to spend some time with the management committee. She helped choose suitable training for café staff and gave advice on the best way to use money-off vouchers to encourage new customers. She also gave advice on choosing kitchen equipment. So far, the cookery sessions have been attended regularly by about six people, the money-off vouchers have attracted new customers, and new equipment has helped the café expand the range of healthier meal options.

Knowing you are making a difference...

All grant recipients aim to make a difference to the health and wellbeing of those they work with through their activities. Some groups find out what difference they are making by receiving informal feedback from participants. Others use more formal evaluation methods.

Sorn Educational Trust in Ayrshire developed a food club once a week for children attending an after-school club. It purchased kitchen equipment and taught the children to make a range of snacks including veggie dips, sandwiches and smoothies. It also bought and tried different breads and fruit. The Trust found that the children were more enthusiastic when they were taking part in practical, hands-on work compared to any theory work. They were also more likely to taste and eat new foods they had prepared themselves, rather than food they were given to try. Some parents reported that their children have requested some of the new foods, and have been more involved in cooking at home. Now that it has suitable equipment, the Trust hopes to continue the food club and is considering charging parents a small fee to take part in order to cover food costs.

Healthy Valleys, NHS Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire Council's Integrated Children's Services carried out a feasibility study to find out local need and support for two volunteer-run community food co-ops in two rural areas. The groups then used grant money to buy some equipment and to promote a pilot service. Fourteen volunteers were involved. To evaluate this pilot food market, customers were encouraged to add comments to posters and were also asked to complete questionnaires. Thirty-eight out of 60 customers reported that they now ate more fresh fruit and vegetables than before they used the market. Nine out of 61 also reported that they had changed their cooking habits, by using more vegetables when cooking and grilling foods instead of frying them. The two groups of volunteers are currently making plans and assessing their options for continuing the service.



The Preparation for Life Project in West Dunbartonshire provides supported accommodation for young people who have experienced homelessness. All ten tenants attended the meal preparation sessions that the project developed. The tenants were provided with a budget and were asked to plan, shop for and prepare a meal, with support from staff. They then ate the meal together. The worker reported that the young people enjoyed learning to cook, and they also developed their social skills, built their confidence and found out more about the local shops. Holding these sessions three times a week over several weeks also helped many of them to establish daily cooking and eating routines. Staff received informal feedback during the sessions, and more formal feedback from discussions with tenants during support plan or review meetings, and tenants' meetings.