



FARE CHOICE

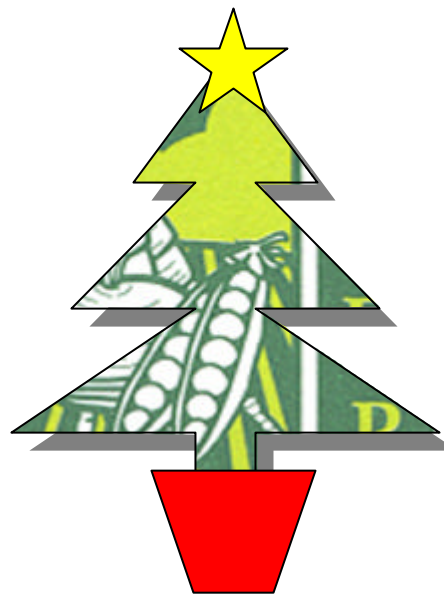
THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DIET PROJECT

Organised for Christmas... ...meet up in the New Year

This edition of Fare Choice includes an insert encouraging you to join the Healthyliving Food and Health Alliance. First announced last Summer, the new structure, designed to improve communication and co-ordination across all sectors, is going in for a bit of Christmas marketing before getting active in the New Year. The Alliance plans to “provide a link between people, businesses and organisations across Scotland enabling them to speak to each other and to Government about food and health issues which affect them.” The Alliance will also “host meetings, workshops and discussions for members and will ask for their views and comments on different food issues.”

The proposed Food and Health Council (see Fare Choice 29) is also expected to meet for the first time in the New Year.

The challenge for the Alliance will be to connect with the scale and range of needs, concerns and aspirations. In this edition of Fare Choice alone, the link between local communities and the academic community is highlighted (see SCOFF article, page 4). There are those with policy concerns (see Welfare Food Scheme, page 2) and others with a need to communicate practice (see



Breakfast Clubs, page 9). Planning is an increasingly common issue (see Lothian strategies, page 3) and some have specific geographic interests (see island communities, page 3) or specific circumstances (see homelessness, page 9). This edition’s ‘Take Stock’ article (see page 6) highlights the amount of different interests one initiative alone has.

Better co-ordination and communication throughout the national strategy has been a common concern raised at many seminars and conferences. It is now up to all Fare Choice readers to play their part in ensuring that this is taking place as effectively as possible.

On this issue’s menu.....

Lothians
look forward
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Lord James
looks back
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Policy roundup

Holyrood

You have probably caught most of the **cabinet changes** in the news, but here's the results of the recent reshuffle. The new Minister for Health and Community Care is Andy Kerr, previously Finance Minister. The new Deputy Health Minister is Rhona Brankin. Malcolm Chisholm replaced Margaret Curran as Communities Minister. Johann Lamont is Deputy Communities Minister, following the resignation of Mary Mulligan over hospital closures.

Health has rarely left the headlines at Holyrood. **The Breastfeeding Bill** and proposals on smoking in public places are significant moves that complement a lot of the work at community level. The Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Bill makes it an offence to prevent or stop a child under the age of two years who is permitted to be in a public place or licensed premises from being fed milk in that place. *"I welcome the passage of this Bill which will make a significant contribution to public health. It will help to give children the best start in life and ensure that mothers are confident to breastfeed their babies where and when they need to without fear of judgement and recrimination"* Andy Kerr, Health Minister. For more information see www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/bills/billsnotInProgress-s2/breastfeeding.htm

In the same week the Executive's proposals on **smoking in public places** were announced. *"You will be aware of this week's announcement on smoking in public places. This move will complement a raft of other measures that aim to improve Scotland's health, such as our healthy living campaign, our strategies for physical activity and diet and our plan for action on alcohol problems. We have always known that it would be a long term battle to make Scotland a healthier and more prosperous nation. That's why it's vital that those who are responsible for delivering healthy living services in our schools, workplaces and communities continue to share good practice and information about what works."* Deputy Health Minister Rhona Brankin speaking to the Association for Public Services Excellence

Although a reserved issue, the Scottish Executive Health Department has been bringing NHS Boards up to date with the latest situation regarding the long awaited changes to the **Welfare Food Scheme**. This includes information on the new application procedure, a welfare food scheme update and a Healthy Start update. You can view the letter on www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sehd/mels/hdl2004_29.pdf or contact Alice for a copy. A pilot scheme in the spring, possibly in Cornwall, is on the cards. It appears that Healthy Starts' introduction to Scotland might still be some way off.

Freedom of Information Scotland Act comes in to being on 1 January 2005. It should open doors for those people who want to ask public bodies such as local authorities and the NHS questions about the information they hold. For more advice contact the Scottish Information Commissioner www.itpublicknowledge.info

Westminster

'Choosing Health', Westminster's White paper on **improving public health in England**, launched in November, contained a number of initiatives that are likely to have an impact in Scotland, particularly concerning advertising to children and food labelling. More information is available on www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics. Health Secretary John Reid, MP for Hamilton North and Bellshill, said *"This Government's role is to help ensure society moves in the right direction - by providing clear information for individuals, working with industry to deliver real progress and where necessary taking decisive action to ensure healthy choices are available to all."* Dame Deirdrie Hutton, chair of the National Consumer Council and former chair of the Scottish Consumer Council, welcomed the proposals stating *"the key is to ask consumers what approach helps them most... Together with clear deadlines for implementation, these measures add up to an important first step."*

The SCDP organised a **participatory appraisal** training course which took place at New Lanark. The course comprised of a mixture of teaching and field work. The SCDP has published a report about participatory appraisal which is available in Scotland from Alice or downloadable from the project website (see back page for details). In Dystart, Fife, the local food and health initiative have employed participatory techniques to look at problems around food access. To read the report visit www.fifedirect.org.uk/uploadfiles/Publications/Dysart%20Food%20Acces.pdf

The SCDP gave two people who work on food and health issues within **island communities** the opportunity to present a poster on networking Scottish islands on food and health issues and they were awarded a prize by the University of Maastricht for their efforts. The conference, called Overcoming Health Disparities, took place in Atlanta, USA last October and was a great opportunity for networking with people working on similar issues from around the world. The poster is now available on the SCDP website and a short report of the event will be available in the new year.

Thanks to all hundred and fifteen people who participated in the SCDP networking event '**In Touch**' which was held at Murrayfield last September. The report of the event will be out in the new year.

The SCDP has recently employed **Kim Newstead** to cover Lizanne's workload while Lizanne takes a years study leave.

The Scottish Consumer Council has a small supply of **surplus print toners**, due to the purchase of new equipment. The SCC would like to offer these to community groups who could make good use of them. The following toners are available: C4191A Black, C4192A Cyan, C4193A Magenta, C4194A Yellow, C4195A Drumkit (2 of these) & C4198A Fuser kit (printer model HP 4500), C3900A (for laserjet 4V series), C8061X (for laserjet 4100). All toners are genuine HP products. If your community group is interested please contact Alice.

The Scottish Healthy Choices Award Scheme (SHCAS) continues to attract interest from caterers around Scotland, with over 470 caterers now holding an Award and many working towards achieving the standards. You can read more about Award holders on the SHCAS website www.shcas.co.uk. A great example of how the SHCAS can have a positive impact on your business is Café Derran at the Auchterderran Centre at Cardenden. They have experienced increased sales in fruit, vegetables and vegetarian healthy choices, and a reduction in confectionery sales. You can find out more on the news section of the website. Alternatively call 0141 226 5261 or email shca@scotconsumer.org.uk for more information.

Lothian looks forward

In October NHS Lothian Health held a seminar to look at food and health strategy in Lothian. The report of the event will be out soon. Contact Moyra Burns on 0131 536 3533 for more information. Over in East Lothian the Council has approved a food and health policy developed by a cross department working group chaired by the Head Of Education. This policy will ensure that East Lothian Council adopts a clear attitude to food and health issues and reinforces that through its practice in all relevant areas of its work. The East Lothian Council food and health policy seeks to protect and promote health by supporting improvements in diet. The policy promotes a balanced and inclusive approach to food and encourages partnership working. The objectives of the policy include: getting all council departments to recognise their responsibilities in relation to promoting a healthy diet; tackling the barriers associated with eating a balanced diet; and developing learning and training programmes and resources to suit the needs of a variety of workers and groups working with local communities. Action Plans are to be developed for each relevant service area to address the objectives of the policy. These action plans will be reviewed by the food and health working group, and monitored by the council's performance review panels. For more information on the East Lothian Council food & health policy contact Steven Wray (Health Improvement Development Officer) on 01620 827509 or email swray@eastlothian.gov.uk

Scoff



An insight into the world of research provided by members of the Scottish Colloquium on Feeding and Food

Proof of the Pudding: Reflections on a workshop about communities, food and research

SCOFF is an active research network with about 100 members. The network includes academics (half of the membership in Scotland), practitioners, activists and community workers - all of whom have an interest, or involvement, in research on many aspects of food production and consumption. In 2000, delegates at a SCDP training event concluded that partnerships need to be built between communities and research agencies to give local communities access to research skills and the confidence and capacity to apply them. SCOFF and the SCDP therefore began discussing how they could bring their respective networks together to provoke discussion about conducting food-related research involving communities. We decided on a participatory workshop format. The aim of the workshop was to:

- * De-mystify the research process - 'Research' could be anything from asking a few customers in a community café what food they want to be served, to a large survey of low-income families' feelings about local supermarkets. It's all research!
- * Enable participants to hear about and discuss recent research on community food projects:
- * To activate discussion on the differences and similarities between the presenters' experiences and the experiences of the participants in order to draw conclusions about best practice in research.
- * Give participants an opportunity to hear how different agencies (a funding organisation; an academic; a 'research into action' representative and a community organisation) perceive research and their feelings about how research partnerships can be strengthened for the benefit of communities.

In order to maximise the number and quality of discussions, we split the research process into 4 distinct (though overlapping) areas which were:

1. Identifying research needs: Why do we need research? What is it for?
2. Collecting research data (gathering information): What sort of information do you want to collect? What questions do you want to ask? Who will you ask for this information?
3. Engaging communities: How can communities get involved in research? What will they get from it?
4. Sharing and using research findings and experiences: There is little point doing research unless you tell somebody about your experience and findings! Who could benefit from this information? How can you best share it with others?

The event was hectic, exhausting and, in my opinion, enjoyable and rewarding. Opportunities to talk to people working in different sectors to you should always be welcomed and giving people a chance to network and find things they have in common with people they have never met before often brings about long-term, beneficial relationships and partnerships. The conversations I heard and took part in at this event were stimulating and varied - from discussing how the language I use as an academic researcher can be off-putting and alien to non-academics to discussing the politics of research funding. From hearing about local communities wanting regular, continued consultation with food policy makers to café workers being told their ideas about conducting research with local people were 'woolly' by a team of evaluators. These discussions highlighted the diversity that exists within research 'communities' and I hope that the 70 participants, facilitators, presenters and panel members who took part on the day found the event useful and rewarding.

A full report from the Proof of the Pudding conference, which was held at the Tolbooth, Stirling on Thursday 28 October 2004, is in preparation and will be available in the new year. Please contact the SCDP for further details. Wendy Wills, SCOFF Convenor. on 0131 651 1206 or wendy.wills@ed.ac.uk. See [www.britsoc.co.uk/studygroups \(food\)](http://www.britsoc.co.uk/studygroups(food)) for further details about the network. SCOFF is incorporated within the British Sociological Association Food Study Group.

Project News

The Food Train in Dumfries and Galloway (www.thefoodtrain.co.uk) has recently won a Guardian Charities award. All the winners were commended for their “fresh thinking, innovation and providing an easily replicable service.” The Food Train was particularly commended for its work with volunteers. Each of the five winning organisations received £5,000 from Sainsbury’s and a computer donated by SmartChange.org (<http://society.guardian.co.uk/voluntary/news/0,8371,1325587,00.html>)

Flourish House in Glasgow celebrated its 6th birthday in November by opening its doors. There were guided tours of the clubhouse which explained how the project supports people with mental illness to achieve their potential and be respected as co-workers, neighbours and friends. The café served a lunch which showcased some of the recipes which will feature in the eagerly awaited cookery book. For more information visit www.flourishhouse.org.uk

Multi Ethnic Aberdeen Ltd (MeAL) is a recognised charity and company limited by guarantee that caters for the needs of the ethnic community and businesses in the North East of Scotland. The organisation evolved from the work of the Aberdeen Scotland Africa Link (ASAL) and is committed to promoting and raising the visibility of ethnic individuals, businesses and organisations in the North East. As well as a range of support services, MeAL has also developed a number of enterprises designed to generate further income for the organisation. These include Soul and Spice Café Bar, Echo Me newspaper and MeFM Radio. For further info visit <http://soulspice.freeservers.com/>

Please note that in the SDCP 2004 Directory of Community Food Initiatives the entry under the name **Creating Community Through Cooking** has the wrong e-mail address. It should read hannamorjan@findhorn.org and the groups work with people of all ages especially those on a low income.

Absolutely Amazing Activity was a trial project in Midlothian bringing together two strands of Government policy in one course, the healthy eating message and the active lifestyles initiatives. The lottery-funded pilot involved both local authority and NHS board staff. Aimed at primary-age children and targeting those over-weight, the project had three strands; physical activity, food and self confidence. More information on the project, and its evaluation, are available from bruce.fraser@midlothian.gov.uk

An 18-month assessment into food and health issues across NHS Argyll & Clyde began in June, thanks to funding from The Big Lottery Fund. The focus is on access to food, and food-related knowledge and skills in communities. The assessment will look into the issue of wider food access in communities across NHS Argyll & Clyde. The objective is to provide an in-depth directory of current community food activity, with a particular focus on areas such as written plans and strategies (especially whether any food-related policy objectives appear in the plans), funding, who benefits from the projects, and what methodologies are used. This information will explore the support needed to enable further action on improving diet in the area. The resulting report will highlight realistic recommendations for future work within the NHS Argyll & Clyde area. It will help to inform planning and action around nutrition and health improvement, as well as aiding the development of local food and health action plans, which will serve as a guide for future practice. For more information, please contact Lucy Horton on 0141 8427361 or lucy.horton@achb.scot.nhs.uk

A new Health Responsibility Index league table to score retailers in England on their healthy eating practices was launched today by the National Consumer Council. It found leading stores - Tesco, Asda and Morrisons - rating behind Waitrose, Sainsbury’s and the Co-op. The indicators measure and compare company performance in four key areas: nutritional value, clear labelling, in-store promotions, in-store information. For the full report look up *Rating Retailers for health* at www.ncc.org.uk/food/rating_retailers.pdf

Take Stock

Gorebridge Health and Regeneration Project

Gorebridge is a Midlothian village of some 6,000 people, 10 miles from Edinburgh. The Gorebridge Health and Regeneration project was set up as a community health project in 1997 after a series of public meetings and after the area had been identified as being at risk from deprivation. The project is based in the community centre and started with just one member of staff working part-time and now has 1 full-time worker and 12 part-time workers. There are a core group of volunteers involved in various projects and the management committee consists of local people.

The Community centre is the base for a busy **breakfast club** that has been running for over three years. Up to 50 school children that attend the primary school next door receive an excellent start to every school day with a subsidised healthy breakfast (food provided by Scotmid). Teachers refer those children that they believe would most benefit from the breakfast club. Breakfast is free for children who receive free school meals and 50 pence per day for others (but free on Fridays). The doors open at 7.30 am and children can take part in a wide range of activities before they go to school.



"It is fun and has a big hall to play games."
Breakfast Club user

Breakfast consists of a choice of cereals, toast, tea, hot chocolate, fruit juices and fruit – and weekly 'specials' such as eggs or cheese on toast. Exotic fruit tasters are always popular too. The club actively encourages tooth brushing and good personal hygiene. A recent addition has been a weekly certificate for good behaviour - the children are keen to receive this and staff have noticed an improvement in behaviour as the result.

Parents on benefits who are entitled to milk tokens for free milk take advantage of the **Milk Token Initiative**; a scheme delivered by the project at 7 local outlets. Normally milk tokens would be exchanged at a local retailer who receives profit from accepting milk tokens. The project 'gives back' the profit margin to the customer by providing, in addition to the milk; 50 pence worth of free fruit, a 50 pence book voucher and 50 pence goes into a credit union account for the child. This venture will change in the future when the Welfare Foods scheme is changed over to the 'Healthy Start' scheme.

Isolation is a problem for the elderly in Gorebridge, so the centre also provides a venue for the twice-weekly **Day Centre** for the elderly.

"Quizzes are good, keeps the old brain going"
Day Centre user

Members are transported by Lothian Community Transport and receive tea and toast on arrival and take part in various activities throughout the morning such as exercises and bowls.

Staff and volunteers serve a nutritious 2-course lunch, which is followed by further, more sedate activities. There is a waiting list for both of these popular sessions so an extra weekly session is planned for next year.

The Food Train is a voluntary-run shopping service for elderly or disabled people or those recovering from illness. Home- helps or customers phone in their orders weekly and volunteers pick up and deliver supplies from the local Scotmid store and the food co-op to the customers' home. The service will buy any supplies from these stores, except of cigarettes and alcohol. The service is free and evaluation is expecting to show that this service frees-up home-helps valuable time. The service has been run for less than a year and currently has 19 customers. In the new year a similar service will be run in Penicuik by a new group of volunteers from a local church club.

The Food Co-op started as an 'order-only' food co-op service, but members and long-term volunteers such as Fay, were keen for the service to develop into a 'shop' service so that they could pick products before they bought and attract more custom. The food co-op also stopped briefly due

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to supply problems – but re-opened three years ago as a 'shop' service and now has several outlets in the area selling to over 500 members. The co-op is run by paid staff and volunteers and is dependent on ongoing funding to pay for staff and overheads such as their 2 vans. Supplies are delivered by a wholesaler at a negotiated price. The co-op sells a wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, some dried and canned products, as well as local free-range eggs - all at affordable prices. The co-op avoids wastage because it has stalls almost daily and supplies the other projects, ensuring a constant turnover of quality stock. The co-op is open to the whole community, but is particularly aimed at the elderly and people on a low income. Staff and volunteers are active in their efforts to get customers to try new foods -tasters and recipes are sometimes available. The co-op



also provides subsidised fruit for local primary schools and plans to extend this service next year. Spring 2005 will see the launch of a new food co-op service: '**Toot for Fruit**' a new mobile shop that will replace some of the smaller co-op outlets and expand the service into new areas. Ariane, the Food Co-op Development Worker, has already collected contact details of potential customers so that when the service starts there will hopefully be a ready-made audience.

'**Lets meet and eat**' was a cookery club aimed at parents with young children with the aim of demonstrating that meals made from scratch need not take long to make. The project ran for almost a year and eight members learnt to cook a range of healthy meals and baked foods. Although those who attended enjoyed learning new cookery skills, the project was unable to attract the target audience. Laura, the Milk Token Initiative Worker

Top tips

- Good partnership working is essential for reaching as many potential members as possible.
- Projects like cookery clubs are more likely to attract their target audiences if they are run where there are already clubs for these groups.
- Don't charge for membership for projects like food co-ops, it is a barrier for people on low incomes and creates unnecessary administration.
- Start with a pilot project to give you a chance to review your achievements and check that you are working with those most in need.

who ran these sessions, suggested that this was because the project was not sited in a venue that parents already attend. She suggested that future clubs would be run at venues that the target audience already use. This is what she did with the follow up to this club - **Get Cooking**, a short project aimed at adults with learning difficulties and their key workers. After meeting and running healthy eating games at a club for people with learning difficulties, she ran a cookery club in a supported residence. In the near future, Laura plans to run '**Kids can cook**' – a series of cookery and 'fun with food' sessions for 9 to 11 year old children, with a farm trip for each session so that children can see where food comes from.

This is just a flavour of what the project has achieved since 1997, there have been many other clubs and projects, such as weaning, baby massage, volunteers outings, health promotion events, men's' group, SCDP berry and root vegetable promotions and many more... The Health Project would like to thank its many funders and volunteers for their ongoing support. The organisation is a registered charity with plans to also become a company limited by guarantee next year.

Contact Judy Robertson, Project Co-ordinator on 01875-825-985 or ghealthp@aol.com for more information.

Question Time

Lord James Douglas Hamilton was a Minister of State at the then Scottish Office between 1987 and 1997. He chaired the Scottish Diet Action Group and launched 'Eating for Health: a diet action plan for Scotland' (available on www.dietproject.org.uk) in July 1996. Lord James is currently a member of the Scottish Parliament and deputy-convenor of the Education Committee.

Q Back in 1996 when you launched the Scottish Diet Action Plan, did you expect it to be described eight years later by Government as 'one of Scotland's best developed and most mature health improvement programmes' and commended by the World Health Organisation?

A Yes. The reason is because it was well developed. It came about after a two year enquiry and after consultation with a wide range of players, those many sectors that influence the food industry and those that could educate, all in all those players who could make improvements to the diet of the Scottish people and consequently improve the health of Scotland. I believe that this was possibly the most important single act I committed as a Scottish Office Minister over 10 years. It was aimed at improving the quality of life and length of life, at both of which it is succeeding.

Q Both the production and the conclusions of the Scottish Diet Action Plan were multi-sectoral. How important do you feel it is today to continue to involve all relevant sectors?

A The issue of diet encroaches many sectors. There are many people who can influence what we eat. Those in the health sector, retail sector and agriculture and fishery sectors to name a few all have a part to play. This belief has not changed. The Action Plan set out a framework in which everyone with an influence on what we eat - from food producers and processors to the NHS, local authorities, schools, caterers, retailers, the media and, of course, consumers. This multi-sectoral working is crucial to the success of this plan. We must continue to work together to bring about dietary improvement in Scotland.

Q How confident are you that progress can be continued?

A This administration has an inescapable duty to continue to progress the excellent work that has been achieved so far in improving the diet of Scotland. It is vital that it must continue to educate and make a difference to those in society most susceptible to ill health. The plan widely recognised that dietary improvement was not achievable without tackling the deprivation which underlines so much of Scotland's poor dietary and nutritional status. Although Scotland has made progress in improving and preventing the past rates of early death from coronary heart disease, cancer and stroke, the mortality rates in comparison to Europe and the rest of the UK remain higher than they should be. In addition, there are still stark inequalities in Scotland, and between Scotland and England. The English on average live longer than the Scots and some Scots live longer than others. In areas of deprivation the length of life tends to be less, and the quality of life can be improved through informed choices being made, even on low or relatively low budgets. The allegation has been made that by 2010 almost 30% of Scottish adults will be obese and even if this may be an exaggeration, the need to improve diet throughout Scotland remains as strong today as when I launched the Diet Action Plan in 1996. Improvements in the area will undoubtedly improve the quality of life and longevity for countless Scots. When I launched the original campaign I was seeking to place opportunities within the grasp of Scotland's population by encouraging a responsible and enlightened approach on the part of food producers, opinion formers and consumers in the best interests of them as well as of the nation. It was also clear that this approach would only achieve the maximum result necessary if it was sustained over a considerable period. It is therefore encouraging to see that the Executive have pledged that they will continue to hold the principles of the Scottish Diet Action Plan as a crucial base for their proposals to continue healthy eating.

Publications

*“At the first cooking class they say ‘I can’t do that!’ By the second or third class they are saying ‘We can do that!’ Gary Wilson from Grassmarket Mission. This year’s Food Forum organised in November by Edinburgh Cyrenians included the launch of their ‘**Good Food in Tackling Homelessness Handbook**’. The useful 77 page publication has four sections covering ‘ideas’, ‘cooking at home’, ‘basics’ and ‘menus and recipes’.*

The handbook can be downloaded from www.cyrenians.org.uk/EZEdit/popups/uploads/04%20Cyrenians%20Good%20Food.pdf For more information on the Cyrenians Food and Health Education Project contact Jeanie Collier, Food & Health Education co-ordinator, Edinburgh Cyrenians, Health Improvement Services, 84 - 86 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HG on 0131 554 3900 or jeanie@cyrenians.org.uk

In response to a request from the Health Minister, **Voluntary Health Scotland** are working in partnership with NHS Boards on an outline local compact which every NHS Board would be required to adopt, as formal recognition of the agreement between them and their local voluntary sector. If you would like to contribute to this document please visit www.vhscotland.org.uk/consultation/compacts.html where the current draft can be viewed.

CHEX has produced a briefing on assisting Community Health Initiatives to engage with the planning and implementing of **Community Health Partnerships** (CHPs). It features the background to CHPs and the role of Public Partnership Forums. Copies can be downloaded from CHEX website at www.chex.org.uk or for hard copies e-mail chexadmin@scdc.org.uk.

*“**Breakfast Clubs... More of a Head Start** aims to provide an insight into the process of developing a breakfast club at every stage from set-up to sustainability in this current policy climate. It poses some of the questions many wished they had asked earlier as well as sharing practical solutions to some of the problems that others have encountered and overcome along*

the way.” Copies of SCDP’s new toolkit are still available in Scotland from Alice or downloadable from the project website (see back page for details).

NHS Borders and the Scottish Borders Council have just launched a Borders School Breakfast Club toolkit aimed at those in the Borders. For more information contact: Frances Price, Development Officer for Health Promoting Schools/Hungry for Success on 01896 755110. *‘You get a laugh with your friends and I like the toast’* a young participant explains the social, as well as health, benefits of attending a school breakfast club.



This year the Food Standards Agency’s Board agreed an **Action Plan on Food Promotions and Children’s Diets**. The Action Plan makes a series of recommendations intended to shift the balance in food promotions aimed at children away from foods high in fat, salt and sugar, and towards healthier options. In doing so, the Agency intends to make it easier for parents and children to make healthier food choices. The Agency is now seeking stakeholder views on nutrient profiling, which underpins a number of recommendations to develop advice on signpost labeling. If you have time to contribute to this consultation before February 25 visit www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/Consultations/ukwideconsults/nutrientprofiling

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has launched a new website, www.eatwell.gov.uk. It is aimed directly at members of the public and will provide information and advice on healthy eating and consumer choice. The old FSA website www.food.gov.uk site will continue to be a news-led site and the FSA plans to further improve its design and navigation capability in 2005.

News

The Scottish Community Diet Project has been invited onto a new task group established by the Scottish Executive to develop 'an approach, strategy and action plan' for the 'communities' pillar of the **Health Improvement Strategy**. The Community Health Exchange, Voluntary Health Scotland, Volunteer Development Scotland and SCDP will be working alongside representatives from central government, Local Government, the NHS, Communities Scotland and the Big Lottery. Watch out for more details.

"We've got to focus on action and be bold". Pam Whittle, Director of Health Improvement at the Scottish Executive. *"We need a health system that includes health services but is not defined by them".* Dr Anna Coote, Sustainable Development Commissioner and Director of Public Health at the King's Fund. Health, regeneration and sustainable development were the themes at this year's **Sustainable Scotland conference** in Stirling. The two day event, comprising of speakers and workshops, covered a number of linked themes including health impact and strategic environmental assessments, toxicology, mental health and hands-on greenspace, fuel poverty and food poverty. It was organised by the Sustainable Scotland Network and a report on the conference should appear shortly on their website www.sustainable-scotland.net.

There was a lot of Scottish interest again in this year's **BBC Radio 4 Food and Farming Awards**. The Seaforth Chippy in Ullapool won the award for best take away and the Derek Cooper Award went to Scottish journalist and author Joanna Blythman. First Foods, a Glasgow weaning initiative, was shortlisted for the Best Food Campaigner/Educator. More information is available from www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/foodprogrammes.html.

The Food Standards Agency has published guidance on the setting up of **healthy vending machines**. This provides schools with advice on the best location, products, and the importance of involving both staff and children in deciding what to stock in the machine. The guide defines

healthier drinks as those drinks that "contribute towards a balance diet and do not contain high levels of fat or added sugar." Such drinks include pure fruit juices, milk and water. The guidance is based on the results of an 18-month pilot study tracking the success of 12 healthy drinks machines which were placed in secondary schools around the country. The guidance can be found at www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2004/oct/vendingtips.

An application has been made to the Office of Fair Trading requesting an investigation into the domination of the grocery market by the big four supermarkets. The application was made by a group made up of the Association of Convenience Stores, Friends of the Earth, the National Federation of Women's Institutes and FARM. For more information visit www.thelocalshop.com.

The Green Party has launched a national 'Food Revolution' campaign. The campaign calls for urgent action from the Executive to tackle the explosion in the number of supermarket planning applications. Shiona Baird, MSP for North East Scotland and Green Speaker on enterprise, said, *"Supermarkets have their place in the mix of retailers - but they can destroy local jobs, not create them, and they too often build on green spaces. Greens want fair deals for farmers, we want supermarkets to exist alongside thriving local shops so that communities have genuine choice and variety."* For further information call the Green MSPs' press office on 0771 761 8771 or 0790 99 33 074 or download their report from www.scottishgreens.org.uk.

Guidance on the **New Regeneration Fund** has recently been issued by Communities Scotland. The £104m fund replaces a number of existing funds, including the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) programme. It is aimed at regenerating the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods to create better access to employment and improve quality of life. Two-thirds of the new fund will be allocated to the most deprived 15 percent of areas, as identified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004. The remaining funds will be allocated to Community Planning Partnerships with above average concentration of deprivation in their area. Transitional funding is currently in place. Visit

www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk for information.

The Scottish Executive has issued the first quarterly update of the **Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics** (SNS) internet site. The site provides statistics about local communities and makes use of the Government statistics data zone small area geography which contains on average 750 residents. Local communities are expressed in terms of groups and the site contains a range of relevant socio-economic statistics describing the characteristics of these communities. The site can be accessed at www.sns.gov.uk.

The **Glasgow Centre for Population Health** has been officially opened. The Centre has been established to produce evidence and make recommendations on interventions aimed at improving health and narrowing inequalities. It will bring together a range of people with expertise in health improvement - Glasgow City Council, NHS, universities and community and voluntary groups - who will work to identify the issues and solutions in tackling health inequalities. For further information visit www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2004/10/27111155.

The Minister for Communities has approved a new fund - the **Community Voices Programme** - to help people living in the most disadvantaged communities to influence and engage in the planning and delivery of services and other regeneration activity in their neighbourhoods. The Programme is in excess of £9 million over the next three years to 2007/08. The aim of the programme will be to ensure that communities in Scotland can directly influence the key decisions around regeneration. Account must be taken of the National Standards for Community Engagement in using the fund. More detailed conditions of the grant will be sent to Community Planning Partnerships early in the New Year which will set out the specifics of what the programme should be used to support. For further information Contact Tracy Bibb at Communities Scotland, tracy.bibb@communitiesscotland.gsi.gov.uk.

A new think tank has been launched in Scotland to tackle regional disparities and improve the quality of policy making for regeneration and economic

development. Backed by £1m from the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, the **Centre for Public Policy for the Regions** (CPPR) - aims to become a major Scottish and European hub of debate about the regions and changing governance at national, regional, municipal and community levels. For more information or to apply to be a research fellow visit www.cppr.ac.uk

Through the mainstreaming programme of the EQUAL Strengthening the Social Economy, Forth Sector will be providing a series of training courses across Scotland complementing the recently published **Tendering for Public Sector Contracts: a practical guide for social economy organisations in Scotland**. These courses are being delivered in conjunction with the Scottish Executive. To register your interest in taking part in one of the training courses please contact Stephanie Wilson at Forth Sector on email: stephanie.wilson@forthsector.org.uk. Courses take place in West Dumbartonshire - Friday 14 January 2005, Midlothian - Tuesday 18 January 2005, and East Dumbartonshire - Thursday 20 January 2005. EQUAL has a website www.objective3.org/objective3/Web/Site/Equal/equal_programme.asp. You can also subscribe to an electronic newsletter with networking events by e-mailing equal@scvo.org.uk.

The Food Standards Agency will pick two community food projects to give funds of £15,000 over 3 years in the name of consumer champion the late Dame Sheila McKechnie. Further details and application packs for the Dame Sheila McKechnie Award are available from the Agency's website www.food.gov.uk or call 0207 2768146.

Claire Doyle, Facilitator for the Milk Development Council School Milk Project in Scotland assists Local Education Authorities by encouraging children in nursery and primary schools to drink more milk. She provides *free* advice on milk, subsidies, best practice and fun resources. Contact Claire on 07976984215 or visit www.schoolmilk.co.uk.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

January

6-9 The Soil Association's annual conference at Newcastle Civic Centre. Tickets cost from £100 (day rate) to £620 (full conference rate). To book or for further information contact 0117 914 2451 or visit www.qlif.org. A large number of reduced rate tickets are available for small-scale producers and processors, thanks to support from the European Union.

23-29 Farmhouse House Breakfast Week. This celebration of breakfast is run by the Home Grown Cereals Authority. Visit www.hgca.com/breakfast for recipes and how to get involved.

24-25 Young people and health, Radison Hotel Glasgow. For further information and booking forms get in touch with Debbie Adams on Debbie.adams@rocketsciencelab.co.uk.

24 Food allergy and food intolerance week. Visit www.allergyuk.org/ for more information.

26 Salt awareness day. Visit www.hyp.ac.uk/cash/ for more information.

February

13-9 Honey week. For more information visit www.honeyassociation.com

14-16 The Gathering at SECC Glasgow is Scotland's voluntary sector fair, attracting over 3,000 visitors, organised by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations. There are exhibitions,

seminars, conferences and events, as well as product and service launches. Last year delegates were also treated to stress busting sessions, entertainment, a network café, interactive arts and crafts and much more. It was also free to attend. Visit www.gatherscotland.org.uk for more information or call 0131 474 6152.

March

22 World Water Day. Visit www.unesco.org/water/water_celebrations/ for more information.

June

3-5 Gardening Scotland, Edinburgh. The country's premier gardening and outdoor living show offering something for all skill-levels and specialities. Visit www.gardeningscotland.com for more information.

11 Taste of Grampian Food Festival, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire is the north-east's premier food event celebrates the richness and diversity of Grampian's food larder. For more information visit www.tasteofgrampian.co.uk

16-18 The 4th annual meeting of the International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. This meeting will be held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The deadline for abstract submissions is January 31, 2005 and the booking deadline is May 15, 2005. For further information visit www.isbnpa.org

Visit www.dietproject.org.uk for more information on events. If you have an event coming up let SCDP know!

The views expressed in Fare Choice are not necessarily those of the Scottish Community Diet Project unless specifically stated.



**The Scottish Community Diet Project:
Supporting local communities tackling inequalities in diet and health.**

How to get in contact with the Scottish Community Diet Project

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