

Fare Choice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DIET PROJECT

BEARING FRUIT

A FEAST OF KNOWLEDGE

After listening to many local initiatives the Scottish Community Diet project has organised residential training events which will cover the varied skills and knowledge required by groups embarking on or already running community food initiatives.

Bearing Fruit will take place over two days and participants will be put into teams and asked to plan their own community food initiative. Quality advice and information will be on hand from experienced practitioners in practical nutrition, food safety, community entrepreneurship and getting started! We are also well aware that those attending will also bring with them a wide range of skills and experience.

We are holding two residentials, a third if the numbers demand it, in different parts of the country open particularly to volunteers running, or planning to run, community-based initiatives. Some places will also be kept for staff working with local initiatives.

We have accommodation booked for forty people at each event. There is no limit on the numbers from individual initiatives as long as there are spaces available. There will be no charge for these training events with all meals and accommodation included.

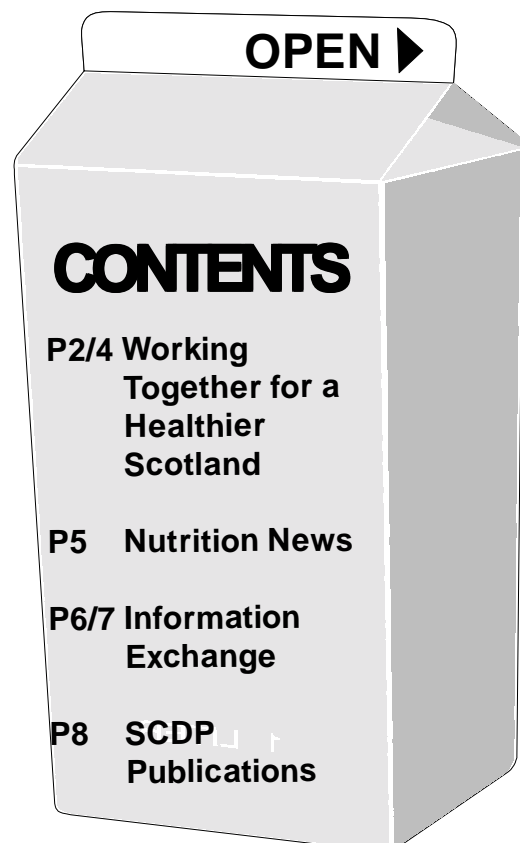
The first **Bearing Fruit** event will be held at Churches House, Dunblane on Wednesday 13 May - Thursday 14 May.

The second **Bearing Fruit** will be held at Newbattle Abbey, Newbattle, near Dalkeith on Saturday 30 May - Sunday 31 May.

It is hoped to make the events as informative and enjoyable as possible.

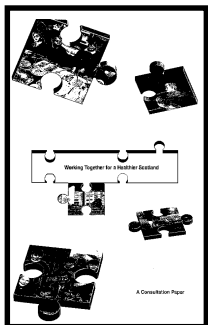
Both events will commence at lunchtime on the first day, finishing at lunchtime on the second.

An application form has been included with this edition of **Fare Choice**. If missing, or if you require more, please contact SCDP as soon as possible by phone, mail, fax or e-Mail (see back page for details) and we will send you more application forms. Group applications on one form will be accepted and projects can send different people to both events, places permitting.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

WHAT IS IT?



In February the government published its consultative document (ie Green Paper) on health in Scotland. **Working together for a healthier Scotland** calls for a new public health strategy to tackle the root causes of Scotland's health problems. It acknowledges that *"tackling health problems is not just about confronting major diseases and illness. It is also about recognising and attacking the health inequalities which have increasingly seen the more affluent enjoy much better health than people who are less well off."* The Green Paper also notes that *"a strategy for all must be a strategy by all"* and that *"there are local frameworks and initiatives well down the road, with much to teach. We need to listen at this stage to expert views and local voices before framing the White Paper that will follow"*.

The importance of diet and nutrition in tackling health inequalities is recognised in the Green Paper as is the role of community-based responses.

"Improving diet has to be at the heart of improvements in Scotland's health. We want to encourage and enable the Scottish people to adopt a better and healthier balance in their diet."

"In seeking to foster community cohesion and reduce social

exclusion it is important that community-based approaches are put on a sustainable footing, with local action underpinned and enabled by policy and strategy at higher levels."

The Green Paper however is only a discussion document and not a detailed plan of what the government intends to do. In fact, the Green Paper poses many questions that the government is desperate to find answers to. It is crucial that those involved in Scotland's community food initiatives not only attempt to answer many of these questions but also highlight their own hopes and fears for the future.

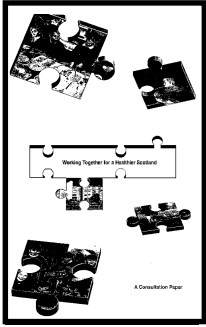
Responses to the Green Paper should be sent in **before 30 April** addressed: *FAO Mrs J Niven, The Scottish Office, Public Health Policy Unit, Room 433, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DE.*

Copies of **Working together for a healthier Scotland** are available from the Stationery Office and bookshops who stock Stationery Office publications (price £7.50). The whole of the Green Paper is also available on the internet on the Scottish office website. An excellent summary of the Green Paper has been produced by the Scottish Community Health Network Project.

Available free from Bill or Jacquie at SCDP (see back page for address/tel) or from Lizanne Hume at the SCHNP, suite 329, Baltic Chambers, 50 Wellington Street, Glasgow G2 6JH T 0141 248 1924



WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

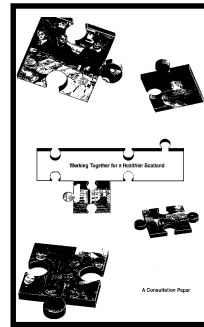


If you, your group or any network or federation your group forms part of, intends responding to the Green Paper then you could do worse than follow the guidance given by

Lesley Sutherland, an officer of the Transport & General Workers Union, when she addressed the seminar on the Food Standards Agency organised by the SCDP in February.

- ✂ Think clearly about **who** you are trying to influence, **what** you are trying to achieve, **where** your efforts should be concentrated, and **when** your efforts will be most effective. In other words, discover **who** will be making the decisions, decide **what** decisions you would like to see them make, and target **where** and **when** these decisions will be made.
- ✂ Ensure that the information you provide is clear and to the point.
- ✂ Make sure you lobby in favour of any aspects you support as well as **against** any aspects you disagree with and any highlight any **gaps** you have identified.
- ✂ Not everyone will have heard of your group so **explain who you are** and what you do.
- ✂ If you are part of networks or alliances, encourage a response **at all appropriate levels**.
- ✂ **Be confident** in your own knowledge.
- ✂ **Send copies** of your response to the Green Paper to relevant bodies (Scottish Community Diet Project, your local MP, the media).

WHAT DO OTHERS THINK?



“The Scottish Consumer Council (SCC) agrees with the government that people’s life circumstances are intrinsically linked with their health and well being. We welcome the shift away from a culture which holds individuals to be solely responsible for their own health, and welcome the emphasis in the Green Paper on the importance of multi-agency solutions to improving health and addressing inequalities...”

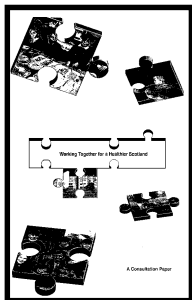
The Green Paper emphasises the importance of developments at community level and the SCC welcomes the recognition that solutions which are reached at community level are the most likely to be effective in addressing real needs. We would also encourage a greater emphasis on public involvement in the planning and delivery of services, both within the Health Service and in other contexts. Public involvement means that the services provided are more likely to be appropriate to local needs, are more accountable and can have the effect of empowering those involved...

The SCC welcomes the intention to *press home strongly the Scottish Diet Action Plan...*

The SCC agrees with the Secretary of State for Scotland that there are already many examples of local activity *well down the road and with much to teach*. There can be few areas where this is more the case than Scotland’s community food initiatives...

SCC also welcomes the brief but important reference to the proposed Food Standards Agency that can play a key role in ensuring both the quality of the food and the quality of the information reaching the consumer.”
(Taken from the Scottish Consumer Council’s Response to the Green Paper)

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES



A number of local meetings already have taken place, with others planned, to allow everyone who wants to have their say. The Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS) have organised a national conference on '**Health, Inequality and the new Scotland**' in Edinburgh in June. This will be attended by people from a broad cross section of relevant bodies and one third of the places are reserved for community groups and projects. There will be a number of ways of accessing these places including three places which have been reserved for the Scottish Community Diet Project. If you are, or think you might be, interested in one of these places contact Bill (address/tel on back page) as soon as possible. Preference will be given obviously to those currently working (paid or voluntary) with local issues around food. We will also attempt to use our limited places to ensure there is a good geographical spread attending.

Before this national event the SCDP along with the Scottish Community Health Network Project have organised a seminar to allow community groups and projects the opportunity to discuss their views on the Green Paper and the role of community health approaches.

The seminar will be held in the Albert Hall, Stirling on Thursday 21 May at 10am - 4pm. The seminar is free and a light lunch will be provided.

An application form was included with this newsletter. If you have not received

one, or would like one sent elsewhere, please contact Jacquie (address/tel on back page).

**WELL
DOWN
THE
ROAD**

**HEALTH INEQUALITIES,
LOCAL COMMUNITIES
AND THE FUTURE!**

**Thursday 21 May 1998
10am - 4pm
Albert Hall, Stirling**

Organised by
**the Scottish Community Diet Project
and the Scottish Community Health
Network Project**

Responses to the Green Paper should be sent in before 30 April addressed: FAO Mrs J Niven, The Scottish Office, Public Health Policy Unit, Room 433, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DE.



LIVING ON THE EDGE - AT HOME AND AWAY

Inequalities in disposable income affect every aspect of daily life in the home and beyond. Dietary expenditure is one way in which such inequalities are reflected. In the lowest income decile in the UK, 23% (£21.76) of total household income is spent on food compared with 14.2% (£96.50) in the highest. The top food expenditure groups are ranked the same in both income groups with vegetables, fruit (and nuts), milk, biscuits (and cakes) accounting for 23% of money spent on food in the lowest group and 17.5% in the highest.

Dealing with domestic life also reflects inequalities. The Family Expenditure report (Office of National Statistics, 1998) reports that in the lowest income decile only 50% own a microwave compared to 87% in the highest. An even greater contrast is provided by the figures for owning a dish-washer which is 2.3% in the lowest compared to 62.2% in the highest. Washing machines are owned by 70% and tumble-dryers by 21.5% in the poorest compared to 99% and 75.7% in the richest. No mention is made whether all these appliances actually work!

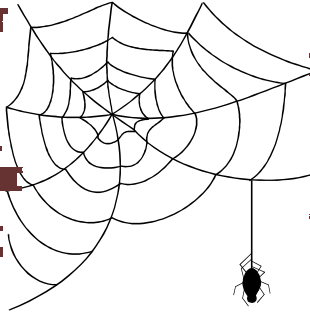
Even out of the home, coping with life through leisure activities and holidays do not hold much hope for the poorest households. Data from Social Trends (1998) reveals that 87% of Social Groupings A ate a meal out in a restaurant in the last 3 months compared to 36% of social groups E. Likewise, 48% of group A had eaten in fast food restaurant and 29% of group E. Escaping to the cinema also looks like an unlikely pursuit with 47% of group A and 21% of group E making it to the big screen. Football may be enjoyed by the bulk of the population but only 30% of social group A and only 18% of social group E made it to any spectator sport event over the study period. Longer outings in the form of "a short break" was experienced by 41% of the better off compared to 18% in the poorest households.

Measuring health through mortality and morbidity figures provide a sharp picture about health service expenditure but often fail to reflect the difficulties and struggles of every day life on a low income. Solutions to buying more food to provide a healthy varied diet, paying bills, cooking, cleaning and saving strategies present an everyday bag of struggles for many people that take a long time to show in the health statistics.

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This year's Apple Day is scheduled for October. We hope to be able to give more information in the next edition of **Fare Choice** including tips on how local groups can become

involved. One event already organised will be held by Earthwards at Tweed Horizons, Newton St Boswells, Roxburghshire. For more information contact Dr Nancy Woodhead at the above address or on 01835 822122.



'3/4 Of An Egg' - Accessing a balanced diet

What factors have the greatest influence on shopping patterns? What facilities and information is needed to store food safely? What's a help and what's a hindrance in trying new foods and new recipes? Do people have the skills, the knowledge, the confidence and the equipment to prepare a range of different foods? What makes a good, healthy diet? Where is the best place to get food and health information? '3/4 of An Egg' outlines the results of a focus group based analysis of the barriers to accessing a balanced diet for families living in 'low-income' areas. The report highlights key issues and includes a number of practical ideas for addressing these issues.

Presented in a highly accessible format, copies (£5 per copy), can be obtained from Edinburgh Community Food Initiative, 22 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 t 0131 467 7326 fax: 0131 467 7325.



West Lothian Council have produced an 'action plan' to combat food poverty. The comprehensive plan includes support for food co-operatives, a commitment to maintaining a choice of retailers for consumers and the encouragement of local growing.

More information is available from Jane Jones, Health Unit, West Lothian Council, Almondvale Boulevard, Livingstone



There is still time to apply to be part of the "Get Shopping, Get Cooking" initiative being run jointly by the Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives and the Scottish Co-op (see **Fare Choice** No 4 for details).

Application Forms are available from Scottish Federation of Community Food Initiatives, c/o Money Matters, 986-988 Govan Road, Govan, Glasgow, G51 and have to be returned by the end of April.



There have been a number of enquiries lately concerning Oral Health. If your community food initiative has worked alongside the community dentist/oral hygienist or tackled the issue in a novel or particularly successful manner please let **Fare Choice** know.



The people of Ferguslie Park in Paisley are one step closer to their own 'community shop'. A business plan has now been produced for a 'Good Food Centre' and everyone is hopeful that after several years of hard work their efforts are to be rewarded.

Further information can be obtained from Annette Beattie of FRESH LOAF or Christine Reilly at Ferguslie Community Health Project, both contactable at the Tannahill Centre, Blackstoun Road, Paisley t 0141 887 9650.



Teaching Bairns to Cook

In the course of organising various food-related events for children during *Perth Food Festival*, it became obvious to Festival Co-ordinator Brian Wilton that there was widespread interest in teaching children about cooking and healthy eating and that - countrywide - very many exciting projects were being undertaken by individuals and organisations from a range of relevant sectors.

It was also apparent that many of them were taking place in isolation resulting in project leaders sometimes *reinventing the wheel*. Out of that knowledge came the idea of a one-day conference to bring operators in those sectors together to pool their knowledge, share their experiences and perhaps map out a future course of action.

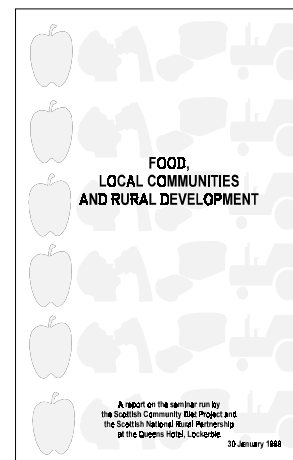
Largely sponsored by Crieff Hydro Hotel, *Teaching Bairns to Cook* will take place on Friday 1 May at Crieff Hydro, Crieff.

Amongst almost 20 speakers will be *Professor Annie Anderson* of the University of Dundee, *David Wilson* of the Peat Inn, *Eileen Gillan*, Chairman of the Institute of Home Economics, *Anita Cormac* of the RSA, *Fergus Chambers* of Glasgow City Council and *Bill Gray*, of Scottish Community Diet Project.

Despite the Conference being imminent there may well still be places available so if you are interested ring Brian Wilton (day or evening) on 01764 654427 (Fax: 01764 654242). Registration is £25 which includes refreshments and lunch and Brian will invoice you if you wish.

If you are doing something you think is worth sharing, or are looking for advice or practical assistance, or simply want to declare your existence, then *Fare Choice* will be glad to hear from you. The next edition is due out in July and the deadline for contributions is Wednesday 17 June.

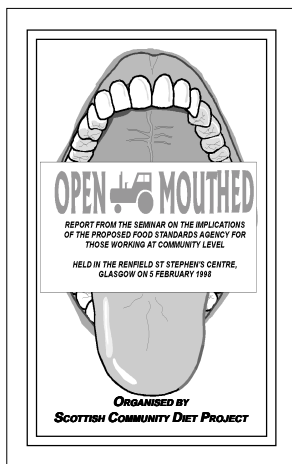
“A common starting point for much of the discussion was a recognition the problems generated by attempts to compartmentalise ‘food’. Responsibility for food lay with many parties, some with a greater sense of their responsibilities than others. Food is as difficult to approach from a purely economic, community or sustainable development approach as it is from a purely nutritional, dietetic or health promotion perspective. The significance of everyone from crofters and town planners to genetic scientists and dentists, not forgetting everyone as consumers, highlights the problems of trying to deal with food on a sectoral basis.”



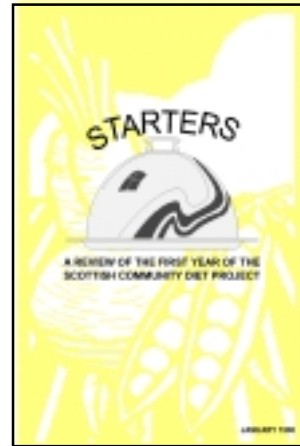
Very well worth the effort to get there was one delegates reaction to the ***Food, Local Communities and Rural Development*** seminar held in Lockerbie at the end of January. SCDP organised the event jointly with the Scottish National Rural Partnership and the day involved visits to local community food initiatives, presentations from the Highland Food Group and an alliance from Islay, workshops and reflections from an ‘expert panel’. A report on the seminar is available free from SCDP (address on last page).



“The general feeling was that the proposals were not a solution to the many barriers currently being confronted by community food initiatives nor were they intended to be. However, they did represent an opportunity to bring those previously excluded into setting national standards for food and diet. Finding the right mechanisms/structures and the political will to apply them was felt to be fundamental as to whether this opportunity is grasped or squandered.”



A *beginning* was one of the conclusions of the seminar held in early February to examine the implications of the establishment of a Food Standards Agency for those working at community level. Contributors from the Scottish Office and the Transport & General Workers Union provided delegates to the seminar with good quality information on the proposals and how they could influence them. These presentations and the conclusions of those who attended are available in **Open Mouthed**, a report on the day’s proceedings. Available free from SCDP (address below).



“A National Project Officer should be appointed...”

A review of the first year of the Scottish Community Diet Project has been produced. **Starters** is a nine-page summary of how the project has approached the remit laid down for it by the Scottish Diet Action Plan and should be of particular use to those who haven’t been involved with the project from its beginnings. Available free from SCDP (address below).

If this copy of *Fare Choice* has been sent to the wrong address, or you wish a copy to be sent to another agency, or a different part of your own organisation, or you no longer wish to receive a copy, please let us know.

Bill Gray
National Project Officer



Jacquie MacIntyre
Administrative Assistant

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THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN *FARE CHOICE* ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DIET PROJECT UNLESS SPECIFICALLY STATED.