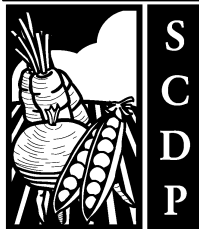


April 2006

£££ SPECIAL GRANTS EDITION ££ SPECIAL GRANTS EDITION £££



FARE CHOICE

£££ SPECIAL GRANTS EDITION ££ SPECIAL GRANTS EDITION £££

Fund out!

The Scottish Community Diet Project is delighted to launch this year's small grant scheme. Small grants are available for groups and agencies wishing to develop healthy eating activities in their communities. Groups and agencies can apply for a grant between £500 and £3000. Last year, 57 applicants were successful out of a total of 168.

Please call or email us to receive an application form. Alternatively, you can download the application form and guidelines from our website www.dietproject.org.uk. However, please remember that you must post us your completed application form, as faxed or emailed forms are not acceptable. **The closing date this year for our grant scheme is 30 June.**

News from last year's grants

We were able to fund a wide variety of applications last year, who all worked with or within low-income communities. All applications aimed to tackle one or more of the barriers to healthy eating: **availability; affordability; skills and culture.**

These were tackled in a wide variety of ways. Some aimed to work with all of their local community, whilst others



worked with specific groups, such as parents with young children, or teenagers in residential care, or older ethnic minority groups. Many worked with existing groups whilst others ran new food

activities and aimed to attract new people. Many groups 'added on' small scale (but often effective) healthy eating activities to their existing work, whilst others used grant money to pay for part of a larger or more ambitious initiative, often as part of a local partnership or local plan. Grant money was spent on a variety of items or activities, from accredited training courses to crèche facilities and from fridges to vegetable seeds.

Thanks to all grant recipients for sending in some great reports on their work!

Last year some of the most impressive grant applications were clearly plugged into local strategies, planning processes and local partnerships, using these alongside national policies to strengthen their impact and sustainability. Community food initiatives have taken a lead from the Scottish Diet Action Plan since its launch almost ten years ago and have contributed to developing local Diet Action Plans. They also currently contribute as Community Planning systems and Community Health Partnerships evolve. They have worked in tandem with the themes of Scotland's Health Improvement Strategy and contributed greatly to the Scottish Executive's current working Task Group on Developing Healthy Communities. As opportunities to feed into the recently established Food and Health Alliance and Food Council increase, then the Scottish Executive's Food and Health Action Plan will become as useful to planning and prioritising local action as the Scottish Diet Action Plan has been over the years. Scotland's community food initiatives need the support of good policy and planning at all levels and good policy and planning will only be achieved through valuing and learning from the activities of community food initiatives.

Here's a taste of what some of last year's grant recipients got up to....

Joined up ...

Last year, some grant recipients teamed up with their local services to improve access to healthy foods in their area. For example, **HealthWays** in Ross and Cromarty received funding to plan and pilot a 'fruit and veg on prescription' scheme in Ullapool. This project, due to start in May, will work with local GPs and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms to provide 20 to 40 families per week (for 24 weeks) with a subsidised box of local vegetables (and some fruit when in season). Patients who take part in the scheme will also be encouraged and assisted to visit their local CSA farm and will also receive advice on preparing and cooking the vegetables that they receive.

Richmond Craigmillar Food Co-op in Edinburgh teamed up with the Richmond café to encourage food co-op customers to buy a wider range of fruit and vegetables by offering them tasters. About 30 food co-op customers each week can taste new foods in the café and the co-op, which they can then buy on 'special offer'. The food co-op also supplies recipe cards and 'soup packs'. So far, all promotions have been successful at encouraging people to taste and buy new foods – however, the biggest success has been the soup packs and the chance to try and then buy sweet potatoes. The **Home School Link project** in Ayr also teamed up with their local food co-op when they ran a cookery course for eight parents. They gave the participants £2 vouchers every week to spend at the local fruit and vegetable co-op. During the evaluation, most of the parents said that they would continue to buy their vegetables at the co-op.

NHS Orkney are working in partnership with Orkney Island Council and voluntary agencies to improve healthy eating at centres working with adults or children with learning or physical disabilities. Each centre will run a different project, according to its needs. Two are planning gardens, including a scented herb garden and the others will introduce healthier snacks.

Getting help ...

Many projects made use of help from local sources, such as local dietitians or Health Promotion Departments. **Sure Start-West Lothian** received help from the West Lothian Health Improvement Team who help local food initiatives as part of their local Food and Health Plan. This help included sourcing the popular 'Eating for Health Plate' mat. **Stirling Health and Wellbeing Alliance** also got advice from the Infant Community Dietitian when they were planning to run some cookery sessions for parents with young children. The dietitian checked the recipes that they were planning to use and a health visitor attended some of the sessions to be available for any parents who might want advice.

Getting better at what you do ...

Priesthill Community Café in Glasgow used their grant money to build a 'fruit and veg barra' so that they could sell a wider variety of produce. They have also been experimenting with providing healthy options on their menu. So far, these have been well received. **YWCA Lochend** in Edinburgh also planned to improve their current practice by introducing a Healthy Eating Policy at their Out of School club. This meant bringing in new healthier snacks for the children as well as holding cookery sessions and educational activities. Some parents have said this has improved their child's eating habits at home.

Youth@Kennoway Youth Café in Fife have introduced a 'healthy snacks only' night. So far, these snacks have been free for the young people in order to encourage them to try new foods. When the funding runs out, they will put them on sale instead. So far, the healthier options have gone down well with most of the participants, although some boys said they would prefer to have a choice. Rather than just provide fruit and fruit juice – the group talked with their local nutritionist to help them choose other healthier snacks.

East Lothian Roots and Fruits, who already run a fruit and vegetable mobile service, used their grant to extend their activities to selling '5 a day' bags of fruit and vegetables in local GP surgeries. So far, they visit one surgery per week and have been well received by both surgery staff and

Fare Choice

patients. Because they sell quality produce, their sales increased when they turned up at the GP's



for their second visit. They hope to expand to all the GP surgeries in the area, as this service has been so 'straightforward'.

Getting trained ...

Fraserburgh Community School went some way to build the capacity of local organisations by providing a 10-week accredited Cookery and Diet Skills course (in partnership with Banff and Buchan College and NHS Grampian Dietetic Services). This was aimed at those working directly with young people and families. They also plan to buy basic kitchen equipment to loan out to local groups. The feedback so far from this project suggests that a 10-week (3 hours per week) course may be too long for some staff to commit time to. They have an evaluation planned for 3 months after the course.

Glenrothes Rugby Club are in the process of improving the snacks that they provide to the 60 young people who come along each week to train. Grant money was also awarded so that volunteer cooks can complete an elementary food hygiene certificate. So far, the young people are very happy with the healthier options that have already been prepared by volunteer cooks at the club – these have included vegetable soup and rolls filled with grilled bacon and salad as well as fruit juice and fresh fruit.

Improving facilities ...

Torryburn School and Community Garden, (pictured on front page) run by volunteers in Fife,

provides organic vegetables to local people, as well as space for the school children to learn about growing and the environment. The grant was used to improve the facilities. Some of the school children help out the volunteers in their school holiday, or just go along to enjoy the space. The local young people have been encouraged to enjoy and get involved in the garden, which has enabled it to flourish.

Getting people involved ...

The **Romany Youth Action Group** were successful at engaging young travellers to take part in an accredited cookery course at Cydebank college. Nine out of ten completed this ten-week course. Many had not attended school on a regular basis. Taking the group all together to the college worked well, and all of the young people said they liked working with the chef that tutored them. The grant paid for college costs and minibus hire.

Edinburgh Cyrenians used their grant money to extend their cookery classes to more homelessness organisations. So far they have delivered ten cookery sessions at a hostel for young offenders. Out of the four residents in the hostel, three wanted to take part, however only two attended on a regular basis, as the three residents were unable to get along altogether. The two who took part attended every week and said they enjoyed the sessions and learnt a great deal. One has signed up for other cookery sessions run by the Cyrenians.

Another project, **Health all Round**, also based in Edinburgh, ran five weeks of cookery sessions for five young mothers referred to them by a Health Visitor. All the young



parents had very little experience of cooking. The young women attended every week and all stated on their evaluation forms that they would use the skills that

they had learnt. Some continue to go along to the centre's food co-op to buy their fresh fruit and vegetables. The project was successful at engaging this new group partly because the tutor had two or three helpers to assist the young mothers. This was necessary as the young women needed one-to-one help with unfamiliar tasks such as chopping fresh vegetables, and tailored advice, such as on weaning. The project was also successful because it provided crèche facilities and a cooking pack at the end for the parents to take home.

Contact Point Day Centre in Fife used their grant to set up a 'Grow, Cook and Eat' project within their day centre for adults with learning difficulties or long-term mental health problems. This has included developing a garden site, as well as providing free healthy snacks and healthy eating information in the centre. The free fruit has been successful and the cookery sessions have been popular with those in the day centre who are normally more difficult to engage. Getting people involved in the garden activities has been a little more difficult, but the centre hopes that participants will become more interested as the weather improves.

Some vulnerable groups can be quite difficult to engage. Not all grant recipients have had instant success; some found that their work was delayed when they were unable to attract their target audience to attend sessions. This was the case even when some of those targeted expressed an interest, or were even the driving force in getting these activities started.

Trying out new ideas ...

East Inverclyde Community School used their grant to try out cookery and healthy eating sessions with young people who would soon be leaving school. Up to ten young people attended sessions for four weeks at a time. A student assistant was

available at each course to find out what the young people thought about the course. They found that it was difficult to get young people to attend the first course, but after that they had to start a waiting list as news about the courses spread fast throughout the two schools that took part. All of those involved said that they felt more confident about cooking and better prepared to cook for themselves when they moved away from their family home. As the result of these pilot sessions, the project will continue to run two short sessions each year for school leavers.

Unexpected results ...

Many projects found additional benefits to their healthy eating activities, such as participants getting involved in volunteering for the project or making new friends. **North Argyll Young Carers Club** found that an unexpected benefit to their cookery sessions for young carers was that these young people became comfortable, relaxed and conversation flowed when they sat down to share and eat the meal that they had prepared.

Further information

Scottish Office., 1996. *Eating for Health: a Diet Action Plan for Scotland*.

Scottish Executive., 2003. *Improving Health in Scotland: The Challenge*.

Scottish Executive., 2004. *Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge*.

Healthy Living Food and Health Alliance: Food and Health Council:Community Planning:Community Health Partnerships.

Information on all the above is available from: www.scotland.gov.uk.

HealthyLiving – 'Eating for Health' Plate Model. Available from: www.healthyliving.gov.uk/healthy eating/index.cfm?contentID=1465

Supporting and developing healthy communities task group. Information available from the grants page of the SCDP website.

How to get in contact with the Scottish Community Diet Project

The SCDP team are: Bill Gray, National Project Officer; Anita Aggarwal, Development Officer; **Kim Newstead, Development Officer (Grants)**; Geraldine O'Riordan, Development Officer; and Alice Baird, Administrator. SCDP c/o SCC, Royal Exchange House, 100 Queen Street, Glasgow, G1 3DN Tel: 0141 226 5261 Fax: 0141 221 0731, email: scdp@scotconsumer.org.uk Reports, back issues of the newsletter, toolkits, information about the project and other useful links are available on the SCDP website www.dietproject.org.uk