

Food and Tackling Homelessness Seminar

6th September 2007

at the

**Murray Arms Hotel
Gatehouse of Fleet**

FEEDBACK REPORT

INTRODUCTION

It was a good day with a very positive vibe! Not only that - the sun shone specially for those taking their lunch in the hotel beer garden! Individual feedback evaluations were overwhelming positive.

Many people attended from a range of agencies across the region. The day comprised of four presentations and three demonstration workshops in the morning and four afternoon action planning workshops after lunch.

John Worsley of Nithsdale Health Improvement Team welcomed and thanked everyone for taking time out to attend. The day was introduced as an opportunity to explore the concept and the practicalities of working with food to tackle key aspects of homelessness. Thanks were given to Community Food and Health (Scotland) for making the day possible, especially for facilitating the travel and stay-over arrangements for the three guest workshop facilitators from Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh respectively.



Claire Street of Community Food and Health (Scotland), gave a brief overview of some of her organisation's work with people who are homeless, current thinking and news of some funding opportunities on offer from Community Food and Health (Scotland). These included: the Health and Homeless Capacity Building Fund with 3k to 10k grants available from a national pot of 50k (extended deadline for applications October 12th 2007), and the Annual Small Grants Scheme with grants from £500 – 3k. For details see: >www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk<.

Pastor Mark Smith, Chair of Dumfries Christian Care for the Homeless and Michelle Eddy staff member and Terry Brown volunteer gave an overview of the work of CCH from their base / drop-in cafe on Whitesands, Dumfries. It is estimated that 4,500 free meals are provided annually from the drop-in, which is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday lunch times – supplying free food, friendship and information. CCH drop-in provides a welcome place to go, with non-judgemental staff and volunteers always on hand for a chat if required. Other amenities include a hot shower, a clothes washing/drying machine and a change of clothes for the meanwhile! Mark emphasised that ideally larger and more accessible premises are required to meet local needs. Similarly increasing food prices are becoming problematic – and could be perhaps be overcome by the development of a local “FareShare” scheme – redistributing ‘excess’ supermarket food locally.

Dougie Lisi “Chef Extraordinaire” and proprietor of the L’Aperitif Italian restaurant in Stranraer finished off the morning’s presentations with a lively cooking demonstration, complete with wok and head microphone! Dougie related stories of his many experiences of delivering healthy cooking skills learning to vulnerable young people across the region. Dougie is convinced of the value to young people locally of having the opportunity to learn about the skill and joy of creating and sharing good food, both in terms of learning to purchase, prepare and cook basic healthy food inexpensively, getting over the message “feeling good ‘cos yer eating good”, and eating together with friends or family as a life affirming experience.

MORNING WORKSHOPS

Aberdeen Foyer: Workshop One

Facilitator: Lisa Fallowfield: Aberdeen Foyer



Aberdeen Foyer is a charity with trading subsidiaries (a community enterprise). It has 80 tenancies in 6 accommodation sites for 16-25 year olds at risk of homelessness across Aberdeen / Perthshire. It is resourced by 80 different funding streams and has a full-time fundraiser/manager.

The 'foyer' concept was introduced from France in the 1990's. There are 139 'Foyers' in the UK. But only 3 in Scotland. Foyers seek to break the 'no home, no job, no home' cycle which entraps many young people. Aberdeen Foyer has a strong culture of being a 'listening organisation', enabling it to successfully develop and innovate to meet client/customer as well as staff needs thus creating a virtuous circle of support and creativity.

Much of Aberdeen Foyer's work with people who are homeless is 'individual client based' with programmes concentrating on personal development skills, healthy living skills, overcoming substance misuse, and building capacity to join the job market (get a job), IT skills, confidence raising, building self-esteem. Aberdeen Foyer has 'Learning Houses' in five deprived areas of Aberdeen City, Fraserburgh, and Peterhead .

Current initiatives include:

- Foyer Learning – 1000 participants per year: Progress to Work, Get into Life, drug rehabilitation programmes, and Training for Work
- Foyer Enterprise – restaurant and art gallery, driving school, Ben & Jerry's, Foyer Music recording studio, Foyer Graphics
- Foyer Health – physical activity, food, sex and relationships, mental health, smoking, complimentary therapy
- Foyer Food – food diaries, goody bags, (linked to smoking cessation), cooking skills nutrition awareness: 1-2-1, workshops, health fairs
- Prince's Trust - a 12 week learning / development activities programme with Healthy Breakfast & Lunches / Nutrition Workshops / Practical Cooking Skills / Physical Activity / Community Health Event.

Partnerships include:

- A 'FareShare' supermarket food distribution scheme (a la Cyrenians!) supported by Lottery funding
- Community Food Initiatives North East – a social enterprise area regeneration charity

New Initiatives include:

- Food n' Mood Workshops – nutritional information and exercises on the effects of different foods on mood, emotions, energy / anxiety, learning etc
- Monthly 'Food Market' - a local survey revealed the term 'food cooperative' as old fashioned and out of date
- Negotiating with the Food Standards Agency for their staff spend one day a month employment volunteering

Case Studies

The workshop concluded with a quick Case Study exercise followed by brief discussion and conclusion.

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Cyrenians Good Food in Tackling Homelessness Programme: Workshop Two

Facilitator: Carol-Anne Alcorn – Programme Manager: Edinburgh



Introductory DVD – “Cyrenians Good Food in Tackling Homelessness” an overview ‘taste of the project’.

The Good Food Programme includes four distinct food and health services – each offering a refreshing approach to tackle ill health and poor nutrition –

“If you eat well, you feel well, and if you feel well, so much more can be achieved.”

Food Redistribution Scheme

FareShare Franchise – redistributing surplus food to homelessness projects in Edinburgh and West Lothian (around 8 tonnes per week)

Supported Volunteering

Volunteering and training with a support structure. Opportunity to learn new skills and build self-esteem – 80% of the volunteering hours are contributed by people who have experienced homelessness and associated issues

Improving Provision and Practice

Sharing Cyrenians learning experience with other organisations working with people who are experiencing homelessness. In addition the Annual Food Conference and the availability of the Good Food in Tackling Homelessness Handbook are available to assist organisations working in this area.

Cooking at Home Classes

To improve and maintain good health, people need to be able to cook and enjoy good food. The Cooking at Home classes inspire people moving into their own tenancy to eat

well on a budget and to enjoy the social benefits good food can bring – eating, talking etc.

Mini-Workshops to discuss:

1. What could individuals organise that would ‘make a difference’
2. Who would they need to involve and inspire to ‘make it happen’
3. What would be the anticipated timescale

Lively and interesting discussion within mini-workshops!

Mini-Workshop Feedback:

Ideas:

- To influence Scottish Government – if targets existed for exercise within the school curriculum this should also be incorporated in respect of cooking classes starting with the 5 – 11 year olds and developing into secondary education.
- Teaching the Teachers – courses/workshops to teach individuals how to deliver ‘cooking classes’
- Befriending Groups – incorporate Cyrenians ‘Cooking at Home’ model – not only providing a learning opportunity but an activity that will promote discussion and have a positive influence
- Setting up of Cooking at Home Classes

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NHS Tayside & Perth & Kinross CHP “Cook and Carry Oot”: Workshop 3 Facilitators: Lyndsey Renfrew and Katy Griffiths.



Cookery workshops were arranged for young people living in a hostel for people who are homeless, experienced homelessness. The young people involved had low levels of literacy and behavioural problems which posed challenges to the people who would be delivering this course. Creative thought processes were required and staff had to be very flexible in their methodology when designing the course.

The main aim of the programme of cookery workshops which were developed was to promote Independent Living skills and healthier eating amongst young people. Key members of staff involved in the running of these sessions included an NHS Dietitian, Home Economist and key workers from the hostel.

Funding for the sessions was secured from Community Food and Health Scotland so there were no costs to the young people participating. A number of different methods of getting the young people engaged were tried and the most successful method was a “ready steady cook” idea which included a fun element for the young people. Participatory Appraisal methods were used to evaluate the sessions. These allowed people to participate including those with literacy problems.

The course ran for 6 weeks in total and this in itself proved problematic getting young people to commit to 6 sessions. However, those who did attend and complete the sessions were given a “kitchen starter pack” made up of knives, chopping board, plates etc in the hope that this would encourage young people to cook for themselves. Of the young people who did complete the course they reported more self confidence, one decided to go to college to complete a cookery course and one is using the recipes in the coffee shop where he works.

Should the facilitators run a “Cook and Carry Oot” programme again which they hope to, they would use the “ready steady cook” method as this seemed to capture young peoples interest. They would reduce the time of the course from 6 weeks to between 4-5 weeks in duration and introduce nutrition messages in a fun way by maybe using games or models.

A DVD titled “Tea for Two” with recipe cards has been developed on basic cooking, shopping, and healthy eating skills for the delivery of “How to Run Cook ‘n Carry Oot” training sessions next year.

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AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

NITHSDALE ACTION PLANNING

Facilitator: John Worsley

1. Working with Food and Young People

To continue and develop work with young people who are homeless, vulnerable to homelessness and/or in temporary 'transitional' accommodation.

Possible developments / suggestions included:

Deliver More Healthy Cooking Skills Sessions with Young People - keep to basic skills, must be fun, involve young people in the design of sessions (what to prepare, training venues, learning needs etc). Tie-in with independent living skills learning - menu planning, budgeting, shopping etc. And personal development skills (building confidence and self-esteem). Allow for possible literacy/numeracy difficulties (refer to ALN Coordinators for advice). Explore activity/tactile learning methods (using bags of fat, working with children in fruit & veg outfits etc). Include social value of food and eating together at 'the table' – as a celebration at end a course or session? Explore opportunities of running healthy cooking skills sessions in young people's kitchens, ie in transitory and/or recently allocated 'permanent' accommodation.

ACTION: John Worsley - NHS Nithsdale Health Improvement
Shona McKinnon – Loreburn Housing

2. Explore and develop existing multi-agency proposals for a Dumfries Town Centre Forum (for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness)

Work with partners to explore the feasibility (scope, remit, partners, funding sources, sustainability) of a Dumfries Town Centre Forum – research/visit work undertaken at Aberdeen Foyer and elsewhere. Identify possible funding streams, especially funding for the development of independent living skills, parenting skills, and into employment, training, education skills.

ACTION: Mark Smith – Christian Care for the Homeless
Shona McKinnon – Loreburn Housing
John Worsley – Nithsdale Health Improvement

3. Explore development of a FareShare type initiative in Dumfries ie local supermarket surplus (in date) food redistribution.

Form a steering group to carry out / commission a feasibility study for a Fare Share (type) scheme in Dumfries

ACTION: John Worsley Nithsdale health Improvement
Mark Smith – Christian Care for the Homeless

4. Other Issues Raised

- Young Mums Centre – incorporate into Town Centre Forum?
- Cooking Skills Training for Trainers – new course set to start next month initiated by NHS Nithsdale Health Improvement team. Additional course planned for Spring 2008
- Cooking skills work planned with Dumfries Prison (pre-release prisoners) - NHS Nithsdale Health Improvement Team
- Worth exploring possible funding from private sector / entrepreneurs?
- Example of Toronto's 'one stop shop' approach including kitchens / cooking skills
- Rurality, a dispersed population and a predominantly low wage economy present Dumfries and Galloway with particular challenges – including tackling homelessness and deprivation
- Need to be creative to meet needs in a rural environment – a travelling converted bus?

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WIGTOWNSHIRE ACTION PLANNING

Facilitator: Julie Currie

1. Set up a multi-agency drop-in in Stranraer



One group spoke about setting up a multi agency drop-in Stranraer based in the Salvation Army building. The group were inspired by the presentation in the morning from Mark Smith from the Christian Care Centre in Dumfries and discussed the possibility of visiting the Centre. It was noted that it would be critical to include service users in volunteering in the drop-in. An idea was to use Douglas Lisi to show the service users how to cook nutritious meals on a budget. Funding for the drop-in was also discussed, how would it be funded long term? It will also be important to promote awareness of different services available locally. FareShare was discussed and the possibility of providing food bags for service users.

ACTION – Health & Homelessness Forum

2. Consultation with service users

Another group discussed the need for consultation with service users. Consultation will need to be carried out with various agencies including Apex, Women's Aid refuge, Turning Point and ADS. Contact should also be made with the Council homeless department to see if they could suggest other people/groups to consult with.

ACTION – Health & Homelessness Forum

3. Staff Awareness & Training



Staff awareness and training was discussed by one group and it was decided that this should be carried out in the near future. Training would need to be identified and planning groups would meet to decide on content of training and who to deliver it to etc... Important to link into NHS and agencies that are already in place. Funding for training would need to be secured and appropriate trainers used. May be possible to hold workshops or group work sessions.

ACTION – Regional Health & Homelessness Steering Group & Health & Homelessness Forum

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STEWARTRY: ACTION PLANNING

Facilitator: Imran Arain and Irene Johnstone

1. To role out an activity providing cooking and budgeting skills to homeless people who are in need.
 2. To establish a voucher system to provide food to homeless people by approaching various food stores and relevant organizations.
 3. To establish a system through which homeless people are supported properly during first 3-5 days. Counselling, mentoring, food and financial support will be the key.
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ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE: ACTION PLANNING

Facilitators: Gail Copeland and Kirsty McKie

CHALLENGES

Think outside the box
Secure funding for consultation
Find out needs
A&E has the 2nd highest homeless need in D&G
Volunteers
Funding
Suitability of Premises
Appropriate Premises

WHAT COULD WE DO BETTER?

Let agencies know what we do
Leaflets
Posters
List of useful numbers
Visual info for with literacy difficulties
Listen to what is needed
Work with other agencies

OPPORTUNITIES

Local ADAPT & Steering Group could work together
Use people skills – ask homeless people what they need
Liaise with other service providers
Leaflets
Awareness Days

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ATTENDANCE LIST

| NAME | ORGANISATION | AREA | E-MAIL |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| A llerton, Caroline | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Dumfries & Nithsdale | caroline.allerton@nhs.net |
| B artlett, Clare | Alcohol & Drug Support | Wigtownshire | mmcallum@adssws.co.uk |
| Bennewith, Alison | Apex Scotland | Wigtownshire | alisonb@apexscotland.org.uk |
| Binnie, Vikki | Apex Scotland | Wigtownshire | vikkib@apexscotland.org.uk |
| Brown, Terry | Christian Care for the Homeless | Dumfries & Nithsdale | |
| Burnett, Lydia | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Annandale & Eskdale | lburnett@nhs.net |
| C harles, Paul | | Stewartry | |
| E ddy, Michelle | Christian Care for the Homeless | Dumfries & Nithsdale | |
| E dmonds, Natalie | Building Healthy Communities | Wigtownshire | |
| E ggo, Kenny | D & G Council | Stewartry | KennyE@dumgal.gsx.gov.uk |
| G ibson, James | Salvation Army | Wigtownshire | |
| Glenister, Jamie | Turning Point Scotland | Dumfries & Nithsdale | jamieglenister@btconnect.com |
| H annah, Adele | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Dumfries & Nithsdale | adele.hannah@nhs.net |
| Harfield, Steve | Glenkens Medical Practice | Stewartry | steve.harfield@nhs.net |
| Howat, Ian | D & G Police | Stewartry | |
| Howson, Lou | D & G Elderly Forum | Dumfries & Nithsdale | office@dgef.org.uk |
| J ohnston, Irene | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Stewartry | ijohnston@nhs.net |
| K eery, Emma | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Wigtownshire | emma.keery@nhs.net |
| Kelly, David | Alcohol & Drug Support | Wigtownshire | mmcallum@adssws.co.uk |
| L eslie, April | Sacro | Dumfries & Nithsdale | aleslie@dumfries.sacro.org.uk |
| M ackay, Tracey | Alcohol & Drug Support | Wigtownshire | mmcallum@adssws.co.uk |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Mackinnon, Shona | Loreburn Housing Association | Dumfries & Nithsdale | smackinnon@loreburn.co.uk |
| McArthur, Barbara | ADAT | Dumfries & Nithsdale | barbaramc@dumgal.gov.uk |
| McConnell, Ken | D & G Elderly Forum | Dumfries & Nithsdale | office@dgef.org.uk |
| McCurry, Arlene | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Wigtownshire | a.mccurry@nhs.net |
| McFarlane, Linda | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Dumfries & Nithsdale | linda.mcfarlane2@nhs.net |
| McQuaker, Pamela | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Dumfries & Nithsdale | pamela.mcquaker@nhs.net |
| Murray, Lilian | D & G Victim Support | Stewartry | lilian123@btinternet.com |
| R ae, Martin | Dumfries & Galloway Council | Dumfries & Nithsdale | martinr@dumgal.gov.uk |
| Rice, Anne | Turning Point Scotland | Wigtownshire | |
| Rose, Jocelyn | NHS Dumfries & Galloway | Dumfries & Nithsdale | jocelyn.rose@nhs.net |
| Ross, Peter | Building Healthy Communities | Wigtownshire | peter@ross999.fsnet.co.uk |
| T hompson, Hazel | Alcohol & Drug Support | Stewartry | hthompson@adssws.co.uk |
| W right, Alexander | Turning Point Scotland | Wigtownshire | |
| Y oung, Sylvia | Loreburn Housing | Wigtownshire | syoun@loreburn.co.uk |

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS & SPEAKERS

Lisa Fallowfield: Aberdeen Foyer >LisaF@aberdeenfoyer.com<

Lyndsey Renfrew: NHS Tayside >l.renfrew@nhs.net<

Katy Griffiths: NHS Tayside >katymg2000@yahoo.com<

Carol-Anne Alcorn: Edinburgh Cyrenians >Carol-AnneAlcorn@cyrenians.org.uk<

Dougie Lisi: L'Aperitif Restaurant, Stranraer >nicmardoug@aol.com<

Pastor Mark Smith: Dumfries Christian Care for the Homeless >mark@riveroflife.org.uk<

Claire Street: Community Health & Food (Scotland) >CStreet@scotconsumer.org.uk<