



farechoice

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY FOOD AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND)

National Policy-local voices

Eight years ago a conference we organised in Stirling concluded that strategies around food had to be people-centred and action-oriented¹. In the current efforts to develop a National Food Policy it is more important than ever to ensure that the people of Scotland are at its heart and that all the communities that make up Scotland are included in its deliberations, conclusions and implementation.

The response to our recent offer to assist local meetings discussing a National Food Policy was heartening, as was the interest in attending our national seminar. An update on these meetings will feature in the next edition of Fare Choice.

This edition of Fare Choice has no shortage of examples of communities that clearly have so much to contribute and urgently need a National Food Policy that meets their needs and aspirations.

From Shetland (see page 10) to the Borders (see page 10), from the homeless (see page 4) to people with learning disabilities (see page 3), from retailing (see page 7) to infant feeding (see page 10) a truly national picture of Scottish communities who value food is emerging.



Kilchoan Primary School first harvest - see page 10

It is to be hoped that the sentiments expressed by the Minister for Public Health (see page 2) and the recent welcome recognition from Government of the contribution made by Scotland's Healthy Living Initiatives (see page 5) will be reflected in future funding decisions made locally and nationally.

Scotland has a legacy of promoting inclusion and tackling inequality through food that is second to none - a legacy that is definitely people-centred and action-oriented.

Recently, references in the media to community food initiatives have too often related to their financial uncertainty as opposed to their achievements (see survey page 13). A National Food Policy needs a robust community and voluntary sector contribution that can reach the communities frequently ignored and deliver the outcomes sought by Government. It is crucial that this wealth of experience and potential is not marginalised or misinterpreted in a National Food Policy.

¹Table Manners: a report of the Scottish Community Diet Project (now CFHS) seminar on building food partnerships and developing local strategies, held on Wednesday 27 October 2000 at the Municipal Buildings, Stirling.

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About Us

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

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

AVAILABILITY

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

AFFORDABILITY

tackling not only the cost of shopping but getting to shops

SKILLS

improving confidence and skills in cooking and shopping

CULTURE

overcoming ingrained habits.

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

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

What's Cooking? **spotlight on a hot topic**

In the last edition of Fare Choice we highlighted that the debate around a National Food Policy for Scotland was beginning. Since the launch of 'Choosing the Right Ingredients: The Future for Food in Scotland' discussion paper in January 2008, the debate is really hotting up. Below, Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Public Health, emphasises the role of community-based food and health activities in tackling health improvement and inequalities and the importance of their contribution to the debate about food in Scotland.



"Community food initiatives across Scotland reach many of the most vulnerable in our society and, as Minister for Public Health, I thank those at the front line who are supporting a range of food and health improvement projects for those most in need in our communities.

"I am aware of the ongoing challenge relating to future funding and I support the need for more sustainable solutions for community food initiatives across Scotland. Local government, as part of their health promotion commitment, have a key role to play in continuing to help support such projects at local level. Nationally we can also learn from best practice and the Scottish Government provides support to Community Food and Health (Scotland) or CFHS to ensure that information and skills training are delivered in a way that continues to support the sector in the future.

"I am also keen that everyone gets a chance to feed ideas into the current Discussion Paper, 'Choosing the Right Ingredients', which is looking at the future of food in Scotland across all of our interests. You all have a chance to have your voice heard and look at how you think the community food sector can develop for the future."

CFHS has been assisting low-income communities to have their say to ensure that any future policy around food is inclusive and effective. This has been happening through local/regional meetings around Scotland including Skye, East Lothian and the Highlands, as well as a national event in Glasgow. We are delighted that many communities are taking up the call to contribute and influence what a future food policy could look like.

A report and feedback from our national event will be available on our website in due course. Please let us have your feedback from local/regional meetings so that these can be included in the next edition of Fare Choice.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to respond to the discussion paper, there is still time. If you would like to make your views known, the deadline is 25 April. You can let the Food Industry Unit know by taking part in an online blog or submit your views via its website at www.scotland.gov.uk/food/ or you can write to Room 256, Pentland House, 47 Robb's Loan, Edinburgh, EH14 1TY. You can also telephone 0131 244 6223.

Richard Lohead MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, will be making an indicative statement reflecting what has been heard so far from respondents' views at the Royal Highland Show in June. Shaping a new policy will take time and we will all be following its development with keen interest over the coming year.

Conference 2008

Over the coming months we will be planning our networking conference, which we expect will take place in October. Please keep an eye on our website for more details. The report from last year's conference, 'Back in Touch', will be available soon on our website. **If you have any suggestions for this year's event, please let us know.**

UK Liaison

The next Food Access Network/FSA UK Liaison event will be held on Tuesday 16 April at the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff. The theme for this event will focus on Food Access and Older People. **If you are interested in attending or presenting a workshop at this event please contact Sarah Cannon (sarah@sustainweb.org) or Lisa Wilson (lisa@sustainweb.org) or telephone 020 7837 1228.** Information on and reports from previous events can be found at www.sustainweb.org/page.php?id=326. As the funding for the Food Access Network is coming to an end, this will be the last event in this format. However, CFHS will continue to network and engage with partner regions as we have always done, along with offering opportunities to participate in our own events.

Supporting work with parents and children

CFHS have commissioned Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS) to lead work which will help participating projects improve their self-evaluation skills, to collect better evidence for their own learning, and show the difference their work with parents and children (0-5) is making. Following an initial workshop in November, the six participating projects have all received one-to-one site visits from ESS to assess and develop their individual evaluation systems. A short report and six case studies will describe their journey and experiences so far. These will be available on our website at the end of April.

Getting Down to Business

Thirty-seven participants attended Getting Down to Business in Edinburgh on 7 February, the first of two social enterprise awareness-raising events being held by CFHS.

Geoff Pope from the Scottish Government and Kevin Smith from Community Enterprise in Strathclyde (CeIS) opened the event. Geoff spoke about the support that is being made available to social enterprises, including £30 million investment

funding and *Aspire to Enterprise*, which is specialist one-to-one support. Kevin gave a comprehensive presentation entitled 'Demystifying social enterprise' which did just that.

The participants then heard about the work of four community food initiatives that operate as social enterprises - from Michelle McCrindle from the Food Train, Marian McDonald from the Engine Shed, Dave Simmers from CFINE and Ian Shankland from Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership. Twelve community food groups also had a one-to-one session with a social enterprise adviser from First Port or CeIS, in which they discussed the steps they required to take to become a social enterprise.

The initial feedback from the participants has been very positive, with comments received about how useful the different parts of the day had been. A fuller evaluation will take place later, following the second event being held in Inverness on 28 February. The evaluations will be used to identify further support and resources that CFHS can provide for community food initiatives interested in becoming social enterprises.

CFHS Promotion of REHIS Food and Health course

Last year, we published 'A Taste for Independence: using food to develop skills for life'. This guide was based on the experiences of 21 organisations that deliver cookery, food budgeting or shopping sessions with some of Scotland's most vulnerable groups. To follow on from this work, we are in the process of working with the Scottish Learning Disability Dietitian Clinical Network to promote the REHIS Elementary Food and Health course to those working with people with learning disabilities. We will underwrite the costs of a small pilot group of dietitians or food workers to register as REHIS Elementary Food and Health tutors and deliver a course to staff or carers working with people with learning disabilities. The group will meet up in the summer to discuss how they got on. Note from this meeting will be available from our website at that time.

CFHS small grant scheme opening in April

Our small grant scheme will open this year on 22 April. Groups and agencies working in Scotland can apply for between £500 and £3000 to develop food activities that will help increase access to, or take-up of, a healthy balanced diet. Successful grant recipients in the past have ranged from parent and

Team Talk

toddler groups that were new to delivering healthy eating activities, to national charities providing staff training on food and health, throughout Scotland.

All Fare Choice readers in Scotland will receive a special edition grants newsletter with more information on the grant scheme. **General information on the small grant scheme and funding is already available on our website. Small grant application packs will only be available from 22 April and the closing date for applications will be 5pm Friday 27 June.**

Directory of community-based food and health activity

As outlined in this and previous editions of Fare Choice, it is vital that community food and health initiatives take advantage of opportunities to raise

their profile and highlight their activities where possible. Our searchable directory of community-based food and health activity can assist groups in this way. It is also a valuable resource for information on projects working in particular regions, with particular groups, or a combination of both. We are regularly asked for such information from a wide range of agencies including the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and the Food Standards Agency.

We would ask that groups reading this who have not yet contacted us with information about their activities download an application form from www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/foodinitiatives (or contact us for a copy) and complete and return the form to us as soon as possible to ensure that your activities can be shared and promoted to others.

Food, Health and Homelessness

Capacity Building Fund

The end of February marked the closing date for applications to stage two of the food, health and homelessness Capacity Building Fund. As we go to press, a number of applicants will be in the process of receiving either notification of their success, or in some cases, the funding itself. We have been delighted by the response from the field and impressed by the quality and diversity of the ideas put forward. Thanks to additional funding from the Food Standards Agency Scotland and NHS Health Scotland, we have been able to make offers of funding, or part-funding, to a greater number of applicants than originally anticipated. Thirty-four organisations, spanning the length and breadth of Scotland, have been offered funding towards food-related work, which it is anticipated, will play an important part in supporting homeless clients to rebuild the skills, confidence and self-esteem necessary to moving into independent living. Claire looks forward to providing Fare Choice readers with more news from these exciting pieces of work in future editions, and in Food Matters, an update on food, health and homelessness in Scotland. **Contact Claire to sign up to Food Matters.**

Grampian seminar on food, health and homelessness

On 26 February, NHS Grampian and the Aberdeen Foyer, supported by CFHS, held their first food, health and homelessness seminar. This upbeat and informative event brought together a variety of organisations working with homeless people from across Aberdeen city and the shire. The morning presentations offered participants an opportunity to find out more about useful local resources, such as Confidence to Cook, Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) and the NHS Grampian Health Information Resources Service, as well as an overview of nutrition issues and homelessness, and finally an outline of national support available through CFHS's food, health and homelessness initiative. The afternoon was dedicated to group work based on case studies from Aberdeen Foyer and a discussion on how to take food-related issues forward in Grampian with regard to homeless and vulnerable people. Participant feedback suggests that the event was an excellent networking opportunity and that awareness was raised both about what already exists in Grampian to support food and homelessness work and what gaps need to be addressed in future. More information on this event and how the discussions from the day will be taken forward will be available in the next edition of Food Matters.

More information on Confidence to Cook is available at www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/show.php?contentid=95
CFINE www.cfine.org Health Information Resources Service www.nhsgrampian.org/inforesources

Policy

Scotland

As expected, this winter has proven to be a busy time, with a range of new policies being discussed, proposed and implemented.

Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan

"...health inequalities are widening. This government is clear that, in a country as rich as ours, that is simply not acceptable. That is why we have made tackling health inequalities our top health priority."
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon

In December the government's Action Plan for Health and Wellbeing, Better Health, Better Care was launched setting out 'a clear vision of a mutual NHS where ownership and accountability is shared with the public and with NHS staff'.

A copy of the full report can be downloaded from
www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/11103453/0

Community initiatives - vital

In late December the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing also wrote to all NHS Boards reiterating the "vital" role that community health initiatives play in, "delivering effective services that improve health and reduce health inequalities in some of our most deprived communities". The Cabinet Secretary asked NHS Boards to, "consider taking steps to secure the future of community health initiatives in your area" and acknowledges the "cost-effective" way in which local initiatives work.

Scottish Government recognition of, 'the valuable and unique contribution that Healthy Living Initiatives make', led to a one-off £2.5 million transition fund being announced in February to assist with core costs in the coming year.

For more information visit
www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/02/19101037

Tackling obesity

At the end of January the Cabinet Secretary also announced an investment of an extra £40 million for healthy weight, healthy eating and physical activity initiatives, with £5 million directly targeted at obesity. **For more information visit**

www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/01/24105109

At the latest meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food in February, (see page 13), the Minister for Public Health, Shona Robison, indicated that an Obesity Action Plan was due to come out later this Spring, building on existing strategies.

Well North

Also in January, a £750,000 health improvement programme was announced by the Minister for Public Health, to be rolled out across the Highlands, Grampian and Island communities. Well North aims to target communities where health needs are greatest.

For more information visit
www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/01/24102537

UK

Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives

Meanwhile 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: a cross government strategy for England' has been launched. The cross-government strategy has been presented as a first step in 'a sustained programme to support people to maintain a healthy weight'. A public annual report is planned that will assess progress, look at the latest evidence, and make recommendations for further action. The aim is by 2020 to reduce the proportion of overweight and obese children to 2000 levels. **The strategy is available to download from**
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_082378

Food Cabinet

The Strategy Unit at the Cabinet Office has produced a very comprehensive and accessible discussion paper entitled 'Food: an analysis of the issues'. The 113-page document is the first stage of a process that will culminate in a report going to Prime Minister Gordon Brown in the spring. **Further information is available from**
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/work_areas/food_policy.aspx

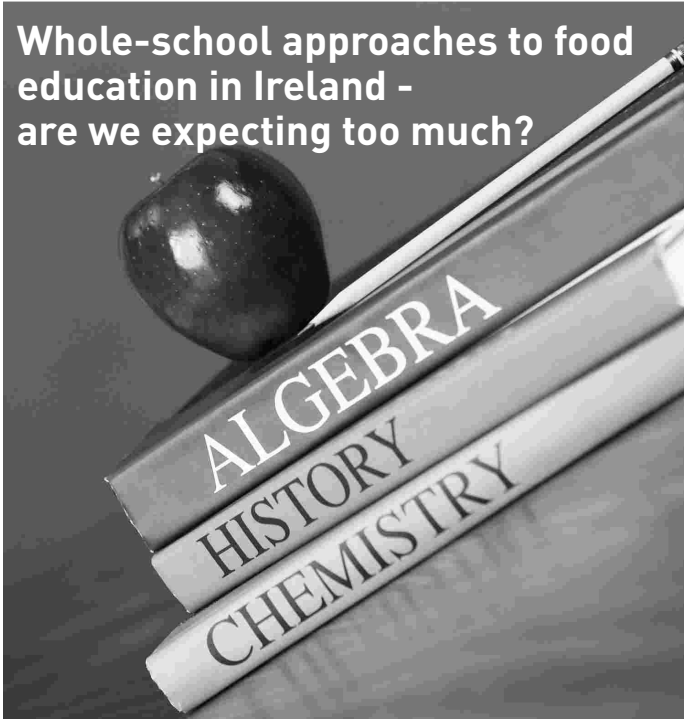
Europe

EU school fruit scheme

A consultation led by the EU Council on Agriculture and Rural Development to explore possible options to implement a European school fruit scheme closed in February. The consultation explored four possible implementation options as well as the value that EU-wide action might have. A summary of the contributions received is expected in May.

For more information visit
www.ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets/fruitveg/sfs/index_en.htm

Whole-school approaches to food education in Ireland - are we expecting too much?



Policy responses to the problematic of young people's dietary practices and the so-called 'epidemic of obesity' suggest that schools should adopt 'whole school' approaches to food education and provision by adopting the health promoting schools model. This would mean, amongst other things, a joined-up approach to food education and provision that would involve students and the wider school community in all stages of its design and delivery. It would also connect food consumption with wider issues of sustainability and globalisation. This article reports on research that was conducted in Ireland (Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) that examined food provision and food education issues in the context of second-level schools that varied by school type.

While in recent years there has been strong interest in what young people are provided to eat at school, there has been little research on the context in which food and eating, and learning about food and eating take place. The study described below* examined how schools in two different educational jurisdictions responded to food education and food provision. It involved ten schools representing different school types (five in Northern Ireland (NI); five in Republic of Ireland (ROI)). It involved student focus groups; in-depth semi-structured interviews with school principals, home economics teachers, health education teachers and school caterers about school food provision and education.

In ROI private and NI grammar schools teachers and principals reported barriers to whole school approaches to food and nutrition education because of education systems that are exam-focused and

performance driven. Not only are there systemic barriers but student and parent expectations about valued learning in terms of educational outcomes lead teachers to adhere closely to the examinable syllabus.

Home Economics is regarded as the key tool for learning about food and nutrition in both jurisdictions but is very much a gendered subject. Boys in grammar schools (NI) and private schools (ROI) had no opportunity to take this subject and no opportunity to learn to cook. Although Home Economics is regarded by students and teachers as the key subject for food education, its syllabus has little engagement with issues of globalisation and environmental sustainability. Teachers themselves do not favour cross-curricular approaches because of the fear of eroding the value of their subject. Health Education was limited also in engaging with food education.

Students revealed that they lacked understanding of the complexities of school food operations. They had high expectations of what should be provided, valued choice and low prices. However, they had no experience of active involvement in decision-making about the school food other than being asked what they liked or disliked.

Barriers to whole school approaches to food education and provision were found in Northern Ireland secondary schools where, unlike grammar schools, the school had no control over the food service.

Notwithstanding the barriers faced in whole school approaches to food education and provision principals in both jurisdictions favoured non-educational interventions that focused on changing the eating environment in schools so that the eating experience could be more enjoyable for students, less rushed and more civilised.

There is a need to recognise the complex situations of schools that make whole school approaches to food education difficult and aspirational. More attention should be given to ensuring that all young people receive the opportunity to learn how to cook and that food education curricula be revised to critically engage with food in terms of sustainability and globalisation. More dialogue and involvement is required in the school setting amongst food providers and food educators and students.

Dr Michelle Share, Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. sharem@tcd.ie

* This study was funded by Safefood the Food Safety Promotion Board. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the funding body.

The Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF) Healthy Living programme was established in partnership with the Scottish Executive in 2004 with the aim of improving people's eating habits, particularly in low-income areas. It works with convenience stores, encouraging them to increase the amount of fruit, vegetables and other healthier produce that they sell in their local communities. The programme is a true example of win-win, with communities able to access a wider range of affordable fresh produce and convenience stores increasing their sales and profitability. The programme offers participating stores training in good practice in selling fruit and vegetables, and provides resources - point-of-sale stands and display materials - which promote the 'Healthy Living' message. Around 500 stores across Scotland are involved in the programme which is part-funded by the Scottish Government.

Three community food initiatives recognised that working with the Healthy Living programme could bring wider benefits to the communities they work with. While each has taken a different approach to this partnership-working, all have found it a positive and worthwhile experience.

Community food networks - Grampian

In Grampian, a training day was arranged by the food access worker, Annette Johnston, for community food networks and convenience stores. The day was arranged in response to a request from the Moray Food and Health Project, which had previously run a pilot 'healthy shelf' scheme with independent retailers in the area, with limited success. Nine members of community food outlets and one convenience store manager took part in the day. The SGF delivered their training in the morning. In the afternoon, the participants evaluated the morning's training, and discussed the programme and how it could be amended or adapted to be more suitable for community food initiatives. The afternoon session was led by Annette and Anne Gibson from CFHS.

It had been hoped that more retailers would be able to take part in the day. In hindsight, it was realised that retailers were less likely to be able to take time away from their businesses to attend. Instead, SGF programme staff will visit the shops likely to be interested individually.

Everyone found the training day very useful, and enjoyed the presentations given by Ross Kerr from the SGF and Wilson Neil, Commercial Manager for fruit and vegetable suppliers Total Produce. They felt that the content of the training could be amended so that it recognised and reflected the social aspects and benefits that community food outlets bring. They also saw the point-of-sale resources as another useful addition for community food outlets to promoting healthier foods.

The food outlets attending the day will be visited in late spring to see if they have put any of the tips they learned into practice and, if they have, if this has increased their sales.



Take Stock

Have a Heart Paisley

Have a Heart Paisley (HaHP) was one of three national demonstration projects funded by the Scottish Government. Phase Two of the project involved evolving a model of 'Health Coaching', which aimed to support clients in making lifestyle behaviour changes. Clients living in the most deprived areas of Paisley also had access to a fruit and vegetable voucher scheme, with the vouchers redeemable in 30 independent shops. The shops were supported through the SGF Healthy Living programme to stock more fruit and vegetables.

HaHP identified the following key learning points and recommendations:

- Convenience stores have the potential to impact on food access issues.
- Feedback from the shops involved highlighted that the use of the healthy living stands in shops increased the sale of fruit and vegetables significantly - by between 30-40%. The stands act as excellent 'engagement tools' for the shopkeepers.
- Working with retailers brought opportunities and challenges. The opportunities included being able to involve local shops in promoting the Healthy Living message. The challenges included the inability of some shops to take the stands because of lack of space, shop staff lacking time to meet and discuss the project arrangement with HaHP staff, and the quality of produce sold in some of the shops. HaHP staff suggested that the programme could consider offering a wider range of point-of-sale materials that could be used in shops with less space.

Have a Heart Paisley drew to a close at the end of February 2008. Learning materials will continue to be disseminated under the umbrella of Anticipatory Care, by NHS Health Scotland and are available at www.healthscotland.com/hearthealth

Khush Dil

The Khush Dil (Happy Heart) Project was established in 2002 in Edinburgh, in recognition of the significant increased risk of developing coronary heart disease amongst the South Asian population.

Three community workers were employed to build strong links with the South Asian community which



resulted in a range of culturally-sensitive services and activities being developed. This included encouraging shops run by South Asian community members to become part of the Healthy Living programme.

The community workers approached the ten Halal butchers shops in Edinburgh, with six agreeing to take part. The Halal butchers shops were chosen because South Asian community members were likely to shop there to buy Halal meat. The six shops were visited by SGF programme staff to determine the most appropriate point-of-sale material for each one.

The shops involved all sold a wide range of fruit and vegetables and other healthier products. The point-of-sale material was used to highlight these. In addition, the shop owners were encouraged to

dairy products. The Khush Dil staff supported the shops by providing food, and nutritional advice, both in the stores and within the community. For one of the shops they translated the content of the signage into Urdu. They also held a promotional session inside and outside one of the shops to raise awareness about the healthy living logo.

Khush Dil staff believe that their work with the Healthy Living programme has been successful. Interviews with 30 customers using the shops indicated that seeing the healthy living signage would make a difference to what they bought. However, shop staff have found it difficult to find the time to help promote the logo. They also suggested that they would welcome visits from SGF or Khush Dil staff to ensure that they were making the best use of the point-of-sale materials.

Khush Dil staff feel that the success of the programme has been due to the following:

- the support of the shopkeepers involved;
- the community workers knew most of the shopkeepers, which made it much easier to approach them about taking part; and
- there were no language barriers as Khush Dil staff were able to speak to the shopkeepers in their own first languages.

Khush Dil has now come to a close. However, it is hoped that the experiences of the project and the lessons learned will inspire similar work elsewhere.



A flavour of **community-based food and health activity in Scotland**

Burnfoot Community School - Blend for Baby project



As part of a multi-agency co-ordinated approach to providing parenting support in Burnfoot Community School, and following consultation with parents and carers, a 'Bumps and Babies Group' was piloted for parents and carers with children in the 0-3 age range. Initially a block of six 'taster' sessions was offered covering a wide and diverse range of topics from healthy eating to arts and crafts to baby and toddler massage. These were well-attended and well-received. Parents have commented on the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, the quality of the resources and information available and the venue. They shared that having time dedicated to spend with their children without distraction has improved their confidence and their relationships. They noted that sharing of common issues, and peer as well as professional support, is being valued.

The taster sessions have been a means of identifying common issues, one of these being family eating and weaning problems. The 'Blend for Baby' project is funded by CFHS and will be aimed at young parents/carers. It will tackle barriers such as lack of confidence in shopping and cooking skills as well as ingrained poor dietary habits. The sessions will aim to cover nutrition and kitchen and food safety, through practical activities where the emphasis will be on 'real life' purchasing and cooking of foods suitable for all the family. Led by the Healthy Living Network and supported by local health visitors, as well as school and community development staff, sessions will also allow time for input from dental health and speech and language experts who work within the community. An 'in room' crèche will support parents to fully participate in the practical sessions.

'Blend for Baby' is aiming to expand and complement healthy eating work already going on within the school where school age children enjoy a Breakfast Club and Tasty Tuck and have also participated in a Healthy Lunch Box project. The school has also worked in partnership with the school meals service to improve the quality and uptake of school lunches.

At the end of the project parents will receive equipment in the form of a blender and containers to help with the preparation and storage of foods, and a resource pack with a range of information sheets.

Highland school pupils learn crofting skills as part of 2007 Highland Year of Culture

Four Highland schools took part in the 'Planting to Plate' project in 2006 and 2007. School pupils, ranging from ages 5-15, learnt about the past, present and future of crofting, as well as local history and culture using gaelic or local dialect. All four schools are located throughout the Highlands and Islands and included Kilchoan Primary school in Lochaber, Sgoil nan Loch on Lewis, Farr School in Sutherland and Whalsay Junior High school on Shetland. Each school developed projects in its own way, but came together in September in Inverness to find out what each school had learnt, as well as to celebrate their achievements, enjoy a dinner sourced from local ingredients and take part in a ceilidh.

The study of crofting and local food included hands-on butter making lessons, history trails, studies of local crofts and visits to rural industries. Schools were given the use of croft land by local families, some of which had stood uncultivated for 30 years. The children planted potatoes on the crofts, built raised beds, and used containers in the more sheltered area of school grounds to grow a larger variety of vegetables and herbs. Children were

A flavour of

involved in all aspects of growing, from soil testing and digging to planting, harvesting and eating. Two schools built polytunnels in order to extend the growing period and grow fruit such as strawberries. The children prepared meals using the food that they had grown together with contributions of food from local producers. The children took foods that they had grown home to their families and gave some away to local senior citizens. They sold herbs to local hotels.

A variety of skills were used to teach crofting and also demonstrate what had been learnt. As well as numeracy, literacy and communication, the projects helped develop outdoor physical skills, knowledge of healthy eating, use of gaelic, music, art, drama and filming. In Whalsay, the activities were integrated into an SVQ Rural skills course that is part of the mainstream curriculum.

In the future the schools will continue to grow produce in school grounds, crofts or polytunnels. Different groups of pupils will lead the project so that other pupils can gain from this experience. The schools are also considering various social enterprises, including selling surplus vegetables to a local shop or selling soup. Whalsay school is in the process of piloting a crofting module as part of the SQA Rural skills Intermediate 1 course.

The partnership that came together to make Planting to Plate possible comprised of the Crofters Commission, Scottish Crofting Foundation, Soil Association Scotland, Highland Council, CSV Action4Sustainability, Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit, the schools and their communities. The Crofters Commission provided £16,000 for the work which included money for the schools to buy equipment and seeds. CFHS provided £3000 from its small grants scheme so that Whalsay school could improve facilities at their local croft. Pam Rodway from Soil Association Scotland co-ordinated the project.



Bitesize

Projects grabbing grants to combat child poverty

As highlighted in the last edition of Fare Choice, the Dare to Care campaign, run by volunteering charity CSV, has 200 small grants of between £50 and £150 available for volunteering projects in Scotland taking place by April 2008. There are also six flagship grants of £250 available to groups that are planning long-term initiatives in their communities. Activities can be as simple as growing a vegetable patch, running an after school club with healthy snacks or educating parents about healthy meals and nutrition.

Current community projects in Scotland who will 'Dare to Care' in February and March include:

- 1) The Give Initiative in Glasgow, which is running an after school homework class that will also provide nourishing snacks for the children who attend.
- 2) Lochaber Deaf Centre, which is proving that food can be fun by organising an Easter Egg hunt for children in its area who might not otherwise receive an egg.
- 3) Food Fit for Families, which is providing free sessions to learn how to cook nutritious food which does not cost a fortune. The classes will also teach how to understand food labelling and avoid fatty, salty foods.

To apply for a small grant or discuss your eligibility for a flagship grant, please contact Sarah Bromley, CSV Dare to Care Campaign Officer on 0131 622 7766 or email sbromley@csv.org.uk

For further information contact: Pam Rodway, Soil Association Scotland 01309 676566 or prodway@soilassociation.org or Penelope Hamilton, Crofters Commission 01463 663458 or Penelope.hamilton@crofterscommission.org.uk

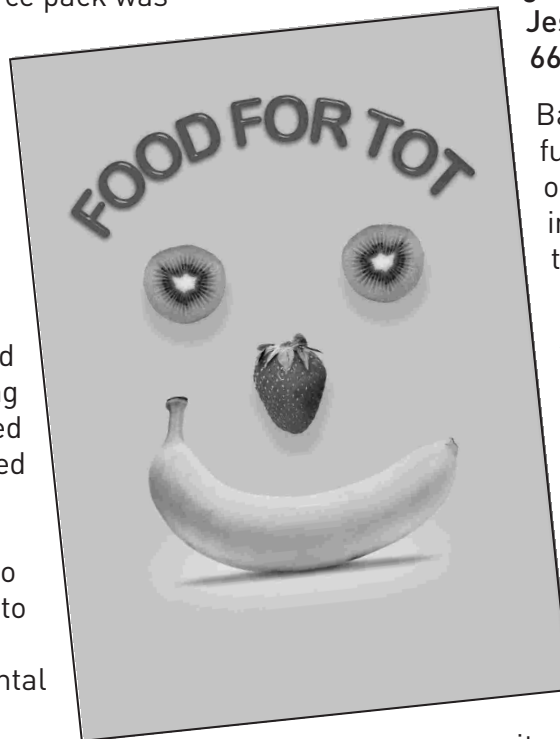
Food for Tot 2nd Edition launched

"From the moment we are born someone is worrying about how or what to feed us."

An updated 'Food for Tot' resource pack was enthusiastically received when it was launched at Greengables Nursery School in Edinburgh at the end of February. The 'Food for Tot' pack is the result of 12 years of work with parents/carers, and parents/carers and children together, having been initiated by them following requests for advice and information. With five years having passed since it was first published in 2002, the pack is still widely used by professionals working with individuals/groups of parents/carers to enable them to make better choices about how to feed young children. Following increased public and governmental awareness of the importance of working with parents and children to encourage healthy eating, the recognition of the importance of children growing up healthy, and the need for more consistent messages to engage parents, it was felt that the time was right to update the pack.

Councillor MacLaren, Convener for Education, Children and Families, and Fiona Bayne, Senior Health Promotion Specialist with NHS Lothian, both reiterated that Early Years work is a high priority both at national and local level and emphasised the role that food plays in all aspects of a child's development, including social skills and educational learning. The new pack reinforces the importance of practical skills, as well as the information needed for parents.

If you would like more information about the work of Food for Tot or if you think this pack could be beneficial to your work with parent and children groups, please contact Barbara Jessop at Greengables on 0131 669 8512.



Barbara's post and her work is funded by Sure Start until the end of March. A range of funders including Sure Start contributed to the re-launch of 'Food for Tot'.

Share what you are doing with others

Fare Choice is mailed out to over 2000 recipients involved in food and health activities in low-income communities across Scotland. Included in the mailing are all the members of the Scottish Parliament, community health partnerships,

community planning partnerships, local authorities, health boards and other agencies.

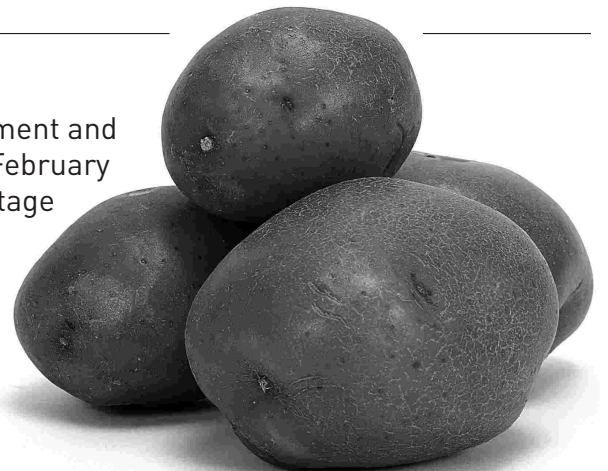
Having your work included in our newsletter can benefit groups by both making others aware of what you are doing as well as enabling your experiences and practice to be shared widely. There are a number of sections in the newsletter where your work can be highlighted: 'Take Stock' gives a group an opportunity to write in detail about their activities; 'A Flavour of...' usually contains two to three shorter articles about an aspect of a group's work or something new that's happening; 'Bitesize' is a space for short articles of news, events or any new developments.

If there is something you would like included, please email us at cfh@scotconsumer.org.uk.

Bridgend Allotment Potato Day

Following the success of their event in 2007, Bridgend Allotment and Community Health Project held another 'Potato Day' on 24 February at Inch Park in Edinburgh. A wide range of organic and heritage potatoes were available for sale, including seed potatoes, in preparation for the new growing season. There was also an opportunity to find out more about the new allotments and the work of the community health project based there.

For more information on Bridgend visit www.bridgendallotment.org.uk.



News

Talking food

"We need a long term policy that takes us forward...we're not starting from zero, there has been a lot of good work already done... there will be no magic bullet...we need an inclusive food policy."

Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health, speaking at the latest meeting of the Cross Party Group on Food.

What should be contained within a National Food Policy was the central theme of both the Food and Health Alliance conference in early February at Murrayfield and the latest meeting of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on food held the following day at Holyrood. Both were multi-sectoral events, with a Ministerial presence, highlighting the opportunities and challenges of developing a truly national policy that addresses the needs and concerns of everyone in Scotland, not just those with the loudest voices.

For more information visit

www.fhascot.org.uk/faha/1149.37.232.html or
www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/crossPartyGroups/groups/cpg-food.htm

Have your say

Probably one of the last events scheduled to take place before the deadline for contributing comments on a national food policy is to take place on 16 April in Edinburgh. 'Food Policy for Scotland: Creating a national strategy for local, sustainable food' is being organised by Holyrood Communications. The one-day event will feature Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, as keynote speaker.

We have two complimentary tickets to give away (worth up to £600) and will also cover travel expenses if required. If you would like to take up this offer please get in touch with Alice, by letter or email, by the end of March, giving your name, organisation, contact details and a brief explanation of why it would be relevant to your work.

More information on the conference is available from

<http://conferences.holyrood.com/content/view/406/>

In poor health

The Community Health Exchange (CHEX) has just undertaken, with assistance from Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS), a 'health check' on Scotland's community-led and voluntary health sector which highlighted that 22% of those surveyed expect to close by the end of March 2008, with 50% of the

surviving organisations expecting to have to reduce their services thereafter. The most commonly cited causes of funding loss are from the NHS and local authorities, as well as delays in access to community planning funds. Delays in response to grant-funded bids are also quoted.

Further information on the survey and any plans to further highlight the current problems are available from CHEX and VHS websites, www.chex.org.uk and www.vhscotland.org.uk

Support programme for community-led health improvement

'Healthy Communities: Meeting the Shared Challenge' is a support programme for community-led health improvement and is one of the responses to the recommendations that came from the Ministerial Task Group that met on this subject throughout 2005/06. The ambitious programme is being delivered by CHEX and the Scottish Community Development Centre, and is overseen by Health Scotland through a National Reference Group, of which CFHS is a member. The programme is designed to raise awareness and build capacity and has already involved the establishment of 12 regional forums. User-friendly training and development materials are being developed and events planned. Visit www.chex.org.uk for the latest news on what is happening.

Ofcom update on television advertising of food and drink to children

Early last year, Ofcom published its final statement on the Television Advertising of Food and Drink to Children which launched new rules aimed at reducing the impact of advertising of high fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) food and drink to children. Just before Christmas Ofcom released information on the impact of the phased restrictions in the first six months. Since 1 April 2007, HFSS advertisements have not been allowed, 'in or around programmes made for children (including pre-school children), or in or around programmes that are likely to be of particular appeal to children aged 4-9'. Since January the age band has risen to 4-15 with full implementation required by the end of the year. A full review is planned this year, but Ofcom have released interim data with, 'clear signs that the new rules are having the intended effect'. For more information on the restrictions and an explanation of why Ofcom did not accept proposals for a total ban before the 9pm watershed, visit www.ofcom.org.uk/media/mofaq/bdc/foodadsfaq/

Food competencies framework for young people

"Young people must be able to select and prepare a safe, healthy and balanced diet for themselves."

Rosemary Hignett, Head of Nutrition,
Food Standards Agency

The Food Standards Agency has published a food competences framework to assist schools and community-based organisations provide children and young people with the foundation to make healthy food choices. The competences apply to all learning experiences, both within and outside the school setting, and can be met at home or through other activities. As well as promoting the competencies through their existing programmes the FSA will also be encouraging other relevant organisations to adopt the framework.

The food competencies can be viewed at www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/competencies_consensus.pdf

FSAS consumer engagement event with young people in Peterhead

As part of the work of the Strategic Policy and Consumer Engagement Branch within the Food Standards Agency Scotland, three events throughout Scotland are being organised in order to capture the views of young people (aged 16-25) on food and healthy eating, in order that these views can be taken into account when developing future work and policies. The first event took place on 15 February in Peterhead with young people from the Princes Trust and Aberdeen Foyer's Lifeshaper programme.

Informal discussions on food and healthy eating issues were followed by a cookery demonstration showing them how easy it was to cook simple, nutritious meals in minutes. In addition, the young people enjoyed the challenge of choosing and purchasing some simple ingredients and food products for them to take home with them at the end of the day.

The feedback from the event was very positive, suggesting that the young people found the discussions and cookery demo interesting and useful. It was clear from the discussions that although the young people often had a number of other priorities and concerns at this stage of their lives, they were still very aware of the benefits of healthy eating and had a vast knowledge of what they should and should not be eating. Better labelling and more advice on healthy food and

cooking in secondary schools was raised as was the issue of limited budgets proving that purchasing healthy, nutritious food was not always easy.



Food, Society and Public Health conference

"Understanding differences in food consumption patterns could offer wider insights into, for example, social class, ethnicity, self-identity or the life course and the implications of these patterns for social and health inequalities. This conference will bring together researchers, practitioners and policy makers interested in addressing such questions."

'Food, Society and Public Health' is the title of the forthcoming two-day conference being organised by the British Sociological Association Food Study Group. The conference is being held in the British Library conference Centre in London on 14-15 July. **More information on the event is available from www.britisoc.co.uk/events/food.htm**

The organisers have agreed to cover the conference fee (worth up to £225) for one Fare Choice reader and CFHS will cover travel expenses and accommodation. If you would like to take up this offer please get in touch with Alice, by letter or email, by the end of March, giving your name, organisation, contact details and a brief explanation of why it would be relevant to your work.

Scottish Health Council launches new website

A new interactive website was launched in January by the Scottish Health Council to help NHS staff share their experiences of developing 'patient-friendly' services. **Evolving practice** highlights real case studies from around Scotland which show how NHS Boards engage with patients, carers and the public to improve services.

For more information visit www.evolvingpractice.org

Publications

Putting Scotland's shops on the map



"The results show a very complex picture in Scotland, but in general the provision of food shops selling a range of healthy food was not found to be a major issue... There was some suggestion of an association between deprivation and price. The size of the food shop was more important than geographical location in influencing the availability and price... The results of the study underline the importance of considering ways to enable small general

food shops to provide a good range of affordable healthy food."

The Food Standards Agency Scotland (FSAS) has published its long awaited study looking at the availability of affordable healthy food across Scotland. Entitled '**Accessing healthy food: A national assessment and sentinel mapping study of food retailing in Scotland**', it was commissioned by FSAS and undertaken between 2005-2007 by the Centre for the Study of Retailing in Scotland at the University of Edinburgh, led by Prof John Dawson and Prof David Marshall.

A map of food shops and supermarkets across Scotland was constructed, involving almost 6,000 outlets, with nine sample areas, covering 500 shops, selected on the basis of urban-rural location and affluent-deprived conditions.

A Healthy Eating Indicator Shopping Basket was designed to investigate the availability and cost of healthy foods made up of 35 items including fresh fruit and vegetables, potatoes, baked beans, porridge oats, wholemeal breads, rice, oven chips, meat, fish and some low-fat fresh dairy produce.

FSAS hopes the study will contribute to future policy development and feels it particularly timely in the middle of a national discussion on food policy.

"For the majority of the population the results suggest good availability of shops selling affordable healthy food although there were differences in price

especially in relation to the size of the shop. It is recognised that the results of this study inform only the supply side of the relationship between food purchasing and a healthy diet. Other physical and socio-economic factors that can create barriers to accessing a healthy diet such as car ownership, income, health, age, fear of crime, knowledge about what constitutes a healthy diet and cooking skills were not part of this survey."

A very useful summary can be downloaded from www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/accessfoodscotexec.pdf

The full report can be obtained in CD format from the FSAS library. Contact sandra.cruickshank@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk for details.

Healthy opinions

Published by NHS Health Scotland, '**Perspectives on Health Improvement**' is a collection of four essays from independent experts from within and outwith Scotland, writing about the current and future challenges that Scotland faces in achieving its goals of improving health and reducing inequalities. The document was submitted as part of the **Better Health, Better Care** consultation and can be downloaded from www.healthscotland.com/about/whatwedo.aspx (follow the 'Meeting the Challenge' link).

Growing up in Scotland (GUS) Year 2 report

This major study, launched in 2005 and funded by the Scottish Government, is aimed at tracking children and their families from early years and beyond. The information provided is expected to support policy-making as well as provide a resource for academics, voluntary organisations and others to draw from. The report, launched on 19 February, contains results on the eating habits of participating families with children under the age of two. Some analysis of responses show that disadvantage can be seen to have an effect on the early development of children's eating habits and what food is available to them. The study also highlights that the relationship between disadvantage and eating behaviour is complex. Parents' knowledge of cooking was highlighted as influential. It notes that while more knowledge could improve behaviour, the relationship between knowledge and behaviour is also complex. **To read the report in full visit www.growingupinScotland.org.uk**

Diary

MARCH

CFHS seminar on the national food policy discussion paper

18 March 2008 • the Piping Centre, Glasgow

A free national event for those involved in food and health activity within low-income communities.

More info: www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/showlog.php?weblogid=116

Nutrition Society Conference: Behavioural nutrition and energy balance in the young

27 - 28 March 2008 • West Park Conference Centre, Dundee

Organised by the Scottish Section of the Nutrition Society.

More info: www.nutritionssociety.org/index.php

APRIL

16th UKPHA Annual Public Health Forum

1-2 April 2008 • Arena and Convention Centre, Liverpool

This year's theme is Community Cohesion and Empowerment: Championing the social, cultural, economic and environmental determinants of health.

More info: www.ukphaconference.org.uk

Food policy for Scotland: creating a national strategy for local, sustainable food

16 April 2008 • Edinburgh

One day conference on the discussion paper on a national food policy for Scotland.

More info: <http://conferences.holyrood.com/content/view/406/29/>

S2S Social Enterprise Trade Fair

23 April 2008 • Caird Hall, Dundee

3rd annual social enterprise trade fair .

More info: www.s2stradefair.com

4th National Conference on Obesity and Health

28 - 29 April 2008 • Lakeside Conference Centre, Aston University, Birmingham

More info: www.obesityandhealth.org.uk

MAY

Gardening Scotland

30 May - 1 June 2008

More info: www.gardeningscotland.com

JUNE

The Gathering

19 - 20 June 2008 • SECC, Glasgow

Scotland's charity and voluntary sector event. www.gatherscotland.org.uk

Royal Highland Show

19-22 June 2008 • Ingliston, Edinburgh www.royalhighlandshow.org

JULY

Food, Society and Public Health

14 July 2008 British Library Conference Centre, London

2 day BSA Food Study Group conference. www.food-study-group.org.uk/



community
food and health

(scotland)

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