



# Evaluation of the Roll Out of the SGF Healthy Living Programme to Community Food Initiatives



Report for Community Food and Health (Scotland)

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Registered Name: EKOS Ltd

Registered Office: St. George's Studios, 93-97 St. George's Road, Glasgow, G3 6JA

Telephone: 0141 353 1994

Web: [www.ekos-consultants.co.uk](http://www.ekos-consultants.co.uk)



healthy**living**

EKOS Quality Assurance Record		
	Name and email	Date
Prepared by:	Rick Rijsdijk <a href="mailto:rick.rijdijk@ekos.co.uk">rick.rijdijk@ekos.co.uk</a>	26/08/2009
Proofed by:	Kevin Williamson <a href="mailto:kevin.williamson@ekos.co.uk">kevin.williamson@ekos.co.uk</a>	27/08/092009
Quality Controlled by:	Jonathan Coburn <a href="mailto:jonathan.coburn@ekos.co.uk">jonathan.coburn@ekos.co.uk</a>	27/08/092009

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## 1. Introduction and Background

This report has been commissioned by Community Food and Health (Scotland) (CFHS) to conduct an evaluation of the Roll Out of the Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF) Healthy Living Programme to Community Food Initiatives (CFI's) ('the SGF Programme' thereafter).

This section sets out the background of the SGF Programme, and presents the study objectives and methods used.

The research was conducted between September 2008 and July 2009.

### 1.1 Background

The Scottish Grocers Federation's (SGF) Healthy Living Programme was established in 2004 to improve 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. Around 500 stores across Scotland are involved in the programme which is part-funded by the Scottish Government.

As part of their work to support community retailing, Community Food and Health Scotland (CFHS) has established a pilot project to roll out, and test the appropriateness of, the Healthy Living programme for community food initiatives and find out if the programme would have an impact on the CFI's impact and long-term sustainability.

The pilot programme included:

- the delivery of seven SGF Healthy Living training sessions to staff and volunteers working in community co-ops and community food outlets; and
- the distribution and use of 27 sets of branded point-of-sale stands and display materials with the 'Healthy Living' message to CFI's that have taken part in the training

The pilot has supported CFI's in three areas – East/Central Scotland, Aberdeen & Moray, Glasgow and Lanarkshire.

## 1.2 Study Objectives

It was originally intended that a three-stage evaluation would be undertaken:

- stage one – a baseline study to be carried out at the pilot's inception;
- stage two – an interim evaluation at the six-month stage; and
- stage three – a final evaluation at the end of the programme.

The third stage of the evaluation was planned to be commissioned separately at a later stage.

The roll-out of the project did not go according to plan and was delayed, in some cases by six months. Uncertainty about the timescale for the re-branding of the Healthy Living materials, and a lag between the delivery of the resources to some of the networks and their redistribution caused lengthy delays in getting the stand and materials to some of the individual CFI's.

Given the delayed roll-out of the project, it has been decided to conduct a final evaluation at around 12 months into the programme that will inform the negotiations with the Scottish Government about longer term funding. The aims of the evaluation are to:

- assess if using the SGF programme resources increases the sales of produce in community food outlets by improving the quality of produce sold and increasing the marketing skills of the staff and volunteers; and
- identify what amendments or additions to the resources would improve their suitability for use by community food outlets.

## 1.3 Study Method

EKOS has undertaken to conduct an evaluation of the success and emerging impact of the SGF Programme for CFI's. Carried out between September 2008 and July 2009 the study has incorporated:

- desk-based research of the programme's aims and objectives, its supported activities, and its relevant strategic context;

- semi-structured interviews with 3 key stakeholders, representing Community Food and Health (Scotland), the Scottish Government and the Scottish Grocers Federation;
- a baseline questionnaire to all participants of the programme;
- an evaluation questionnaire to all participants of the training sessions; and
- site-visits to 11 of the participating projects.

From this research, an assessment of the emerging impact, although tentative, has been undertaken.

Finally, lessons learned and recommendations for the future were drawn.

There are, however, a number of limitations to the scope and depth of the study:

- baseline information is not retained by all participating organisations, and was partial; and
- insufficient resources available to the research team to visit all sites where the materials were used.

## 1.4 Structure of Report

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the programme objectives and the strategic fit;
- Section 3 assesses the performance of the programme;
- Section 4 describes the lessons learned from the site visits; and
- Section 5 provides conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. Programme Objectives and Strategic Fit

This section provides an overview of the SGF Healthy Living Programme pilot and its objectives. Section 2 further determines the project's strategic fit with policies and good practice across Scotland.

### 2.1 Programme Objectives

The Scottish Grocers Federation's Healthy Living programme was originally a programme aimed at convenience stores. Its purpose was to improve people's diets, particularly in low-income areas. The idea is that if the programme supports local shopkeepers to better market and display fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthier food, people will buy more of it and improve their diets. The programme is especially targeted at areas of deprivation to reduce the existing health inequalities.

Based on the success of the original SGF Healthy Living programme for convenience stores, CFHS, with the support from the Scottish Government, set out to introduce the same benefits to CFI's and have initiated a pilot project to roll out the SGF Healthy Living Programme to CFI's in three areas in Scotland: East/Central Scotland, Aberdeen & Moray, Glasgow and Lanarkshire

The participating projects were offered support through the pilot project in three ways:

- access to a tailored SGF Healthy Living training session and a DVD to be used as reference after the training;
- the loan of a branded point-of-sale stand; and
- display materials with the 'Healthy Living' message.

The specific objective of the pilot project for CFI's is:

- to increase the turn-over of CFI's and thus to contribute to their long-term sustainability by:
  - improving the quality of produce sold; and
  - increasing the marketing skills of staff and volunteers working in the CFI's

## 2.2 Strategic Fit

Despite years of policy development and interventions by the commercial and third sector, the Scottish diet is still amongst the unhealthiest in the developed world. Food and health is therefore high on the policy agenda nationally and locally. Policy on food and health in Scotland has developed substantially since the early 1990s. The Scottish Diet Action Plan<sup>1</sup> of 1996, and the later Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge<sup>2</sup>, formed the basis for a co-ordinated food chain based strategy for food and health improvement.

The SGF Healthy Living Programme pilot for CFI's contributes to the main strategic objectives of the Scottish Government on healthy eating.

### Healthy Eating, Active Living

In June 2008 the Scottish Government has brought forward an integrated action plan – Healthy Eating, Active Living<sup>3</sup> – which re-affirms the Government's commitment to the underlying principles and goals established in the Scottish Diet Action Plan, and aims to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackle obesity and seeks to achieve influence in five main areas: early years, schools and school age children, adults and workplaces, older people and communities.

The SGF pilot contributes to this action plan by improving the Scottish diet through increased sales of healthy food by CFI's and increased sustainability of the CFI's.

### Equally Well

Also in 2008, the Scottish Government published *Equally Well*,<sup>4</sup> a report that sets out a strategy to tackle health inequalities in Scotland. This report stresses the importance of targeting deprived areas and vulnerable groups with health interventions.

The SGF pilot contributes to this strategy by targeting its interventions to the most deprived areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Eating for Health: A Diet Action Plan for Scotland', Scottish Office, 1996

<sup>2</sup> Eating for Health: Meeting the Challenge, Scottish Executive, Edinburgh 2004

<sup>3</sup> Healthy Eating, Active Living: An action plan to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackle obesity (2008-2011), Scottish Government, Edinburgh, 2008

<sup>4</sup> Equally Well: Report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities - Volume 2, Scottish Government, Edinburgh, 2008



## 3. Programme Performance

This Section presents an overview of the activities, progress and reported benefits arising from the pilot programme. The findings presented in this section are based on EKOS' survey of training participants.

### 3.1 Training Programme

#### 3.1.1 Overview of the Training

The pilot project delivered seven training events in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Musselburgh, Peterhead, Bellshill and Livingston. In total the seven events were attended by 77 participants from 30 CFI's.

The training sessions lasted one day and were facilitated by Ross Kerr, the SGF Healthy Living Programme Co-ordinator. The training had the aim to:

- promote the objectives of the SGF Healthy Living Programme;
- improve the range of fruit and vegetables of CFI's; and
- improve the display of fresh fruit and vegetables by CFI's.

#### 3.1.2 Immediate Post-Programme Feedback

Immediately following the training, EKOS distributed a questionnaire to all participants. Of the 77 participants, 31 returned the questionnaire, which equates to a response rate of 40%.

The respondents represented a broad spectrum of the community food and health sector, ranging from small food co-ops, entirely run by volunteers (opening once a week for a couple of hours) to large CFI's run by professional staff (opening up to six days a week for more than 40 hours per week). **Table 3.1** and **Table 3.2** show the opening days and opening hours of the respondents.

**Table 3.1 number of opening days per week**

Opening days	Number of respondents
1 day per week	11 (38%)
2 days per week	2 (7%)
3 days per week	3 (10%)
4 days per week	0
5 days per week	8 (28%)
6 days per week	5 (17%)

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 29 responses

**Table 3.2** shows the average hours of operation per week.

Opening hours per week	Number of respondents
0 - 4.5 hours per week	9 (31%)
5 – 8 hours per week	5 (17%)
9 – 16 hours per week	3 (10%)
17 – 30 hours per week	2 (7%)
31 – 40 hours per week	4 (14%)
More than 40 hours per week	6 (21%)

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 29 responses

The main reason for participants to attend the training was to improve the marketing/promotion of fresh fruit and vegetables and increase their sales. Many respondents also stated that they attended the training as part of their job or at the request of the CFI. **Table 3.3** shows the reason participants stated for attending the training session, thus stating their expectations.

**Table 3.3 Reasons for attending the training sessions**

Reason for attending training	Number of respondents
To market/promote fruit/veg. better	8
Part of the job/asked by CFI	8
To increase our sales	5
To increase knowledge of the retail sector	3
To run our CFI better	2
To get a free display stand	2
To improve my skills	1
To increase knowledge about storage	1

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 31 responses

Almost all participants expressed a positive opinion about the event; 58% (18 participants) thought it was very helpful, 39% (12 participants) thought it was helpful and only 3% (1 participant) thought that the event was not helpful. **Table 3.4** shows what aspects of the training participants found most helpful.

**Table 3.4 What participants found most helpful**

Most helpful	Frequency mentioned
How to display/promote fruit/veg.	11
All of the training	4
Information on storage of fruit/veg.	3
Information on what products sell well	3
Networking / sharing best practice	2
Clear facilitation of the event	2
Knowledge of fruit & veg. / waste reduction / the promotional materials (DVD) / link between quality and sales / links with other agencies / ideas for promotion / Info on pricing / how to increase sales / info on funding / how to use the stall	1

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 31 responses

When asked what parts of the training were not helpful, four participants commented that the training was too much geared to commercial convenience stores and did not take into account the specific role of CFI's, and one participant was not involved in selling food.

Of the 28 participants that responded to the question, 27 (96%) found the training and the commercial approach to distributing fruit and vegetables appropriate for their CFI. One respondent (4%) thought this was not appropriate.

Some respondents, however, commented on the commercial focus of the training and one respondent mentioned the lack of proper equipment to implement the learning, such as fridges and displays.

The participants found the content of the training relevant to their organisations and activities. On a scale from 1 – 5 the average relevance of the training content was 2.5, with 1 being very relevant and 5 not being relevant at all. All respondents found the length of the training just right.

**Table 3.5** describes what the participants thought was the most important single message from the training.

**Table 3.5 Most important single message from the training**

Most important single message	Frequency mentioned
Importance of display/presentation of fruit/veg.	16
How to promote/market fruit/veg.	5
Importance of quality of fruit/veg.	4
How to get messages across to customers	2
How to sell fruit/veg.	1
Importance of profit for CFI's	1
Increase in government support for CFI's	1

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 31 responses

When asked to comment on any ways in which the training had changed their way of thinking about their customers and the development of their CFI, respondents reported:

- an increased understanding of the importance of how fruit and vegetables are displayed/presented;
- an increased ability to understand and meet customers need;
- an understanding of the ability to better advertise and promote the CFI and its products;
- an acknowledgement of the importance of choice and variety for customers; and
- increased commercial thinking

Following the training the vast majority (92%) of the respondents thought that their CFI has the skills, knowledge and capability to adopt a more commercial approach to distributing fresh fruit and vegetables.

There were a few other comments and suggestions relating to ways that the training might be improved:

- regular updates/refreshers of the training would be useful;
- the training could be more targeted at the voluntary community food and health sector;
- hands on follow-up support would increase the impact of the training;
- there is a need for the planned display stand and promotional materials; and

- for some CFI's the venues in which they have to operate can hinder the implementation of the training lessons.

### 3.1.3 Stakeholder Perspectives on the Training

The interviewed stakeholders expressed a positive opinion on the training.

The facilitator of the training programme, expressed that the training programme was a success and had reached its objectives. He noted the enthusiasm of the participants and their plans to implement what they have learned. No concerns or issues were raised.

The Policy Executive of the Scottish Government thought that the transfer of sales and marketing skills from the commercial sector to the CFI's was important and could potentially contribute to the sustainability of the CFI's.

The Development Officer of CFHS, who attended some of the training sessions and who works with the CFI's on a regular basis, thought that the training was well received by the CFI's and has received anecdotal evidence that some CFI's have implemented what they have learned.

### 3.1.4 Subsequent Feedback on the Impact of the Training

EKOS also sent a separate questionnaire to all 16 CFI's that received a stand and promotional materials, in which questions were asked about the training. Of the 16 CFI's 10 (63%) responded. The questionnaires were completed six months after the initial training sessions. **Table 3.6** shows how the CFI's have implemented what they have learned from the training.

**Table 3.6 Implementation of training by CFI's**

Action	Frequency mentioned
Improved display/presentation of fruit/veg.	5
Cascaded training information to volunteers/staff	3
Developed the CFI	2
Used existing resources better	1
Improved pricing structure	1
Improved stock rotation	1
Improved promotion	1
Better use of seasonal produce	1

Source: EKOS Survey, December 2008, based on 12 responses

The reported emerging impacts clearly show that the participating CFI's have gained skills and knowledge from the training and, more importantly, have started to use these in their day-to-day operations.

## 3.2 Sales Outlets and Promotional Materials

As part of the pilot project, 26 bespoke sales outlets (stands) with the healthy living branding have been distributed to 16 of the participating CFI's. Figure 3.1 and 3.2 depict the stands and the branding.

**Figure 3.1 & 3.2 Healthy Living branding**



The promotional material that has been distributed to the participants include:

- two hanging signs;
- ten price highlighters;
- five wobblers;
- a packing sleeve;
- a training manual; and
- a DVD containing an interactive learning tool.

EKOS sent out a questionnaire to all 16 organisations that received a stand with a response of 12, representing 22 stands (85%).

**Table 3.7** shows how the CFI's use the stand and the promotional materials and the impact it has had on their operations.

**Table 3.7 Impact of stand and promotional materials by CFI's**

Use	Frequency mentioned
Improved marketing / promotion	5
Improved appearance/presentation of fruit/veg.	5
Improved information to customers/community	2
Improved outreach	2
Increased sales	1

Source: EKOS Survey, December 2008, based on 12 responses

This shows that from the perspective of the participants, the stand and promotional materials played a part in achieving the anticipated outcomes of contributing to the sustainability of the CFI through increased marketing skills.

**Table 3.8** shows how CFI's usually promote fresh fruit and vegetables.

**Table 3.8 Promotional activities for fruit and vegetables by CFI's**

Promotional Activity	Used regularly	Used sometimes
Word of mouth	11	1
Leaflets in CFI	7	3
Own website	7	0
Talks in schools	5	4
Posters in CFI	4	5
Posters in community	3	8
Advertising in own newsletter	3	5
Advertising on other organisation's website	3	5
Door to door leaflets	2	8
Advertising in local paper	2	7
Training/information sessions	2	5
Advertising in other organisation's newsletter	0	5
Advertising on local radio	0	2
Community Events	0	1

Source: EKOS Training Survey, September 2008, based on 31 responses

When asked about new ways of promoting fresh fruit and vegetables as a result of participating in the pilot project, the CFI's reported a range of new promotional activities, including:

- produce and sell smoothies (3);

- special offers and promotional activities (3);
- fruit tasting sessions (3);
- use of incentives (free recipes);
- produce and sell soups;
- introduce healthy start vouchers; and
- produce and sell fruit baskets.

### 3.3 Key Points

From the survey of training participants the following relevant messages emerge:

- the training was received well by the participants;
- the training was felt to be geared towards the commercial convenience stores by a significant number of participants and could be more targeted at CFI's;
- the most important learning from the training is related to the display and presentation of fresh fruit and vegetables;
- other important learning from the training included: improved skills and knowledge of advertising and promotion, increased commercial thinking and an increased focus on quality;
- there was a desire for regular updates/refreshers of the training;
- there was a stated need for hands-on support with implementing the learning from the training;
- the promotional materials have reportedly improved marketing, promotion, displaying and presentation of fresh fruit and vegetables; and
- CFI's have started to use new methods of promoting fresh fruit and vegetables as a result of the training.



## 4. Case Studies

As part of the study EKOS visited eleven of the participating CFI's to examine the use and emerging benefits of the training and the promotional materials. This Section describes the experiences of a sample of nine of the 16 CFI's that participated in the programme.

### 4.1.1 Village Orchard – Stoneyburn

The Village Orchard is a food coop run by WELF&HD<sup>5</sup> in the village of Stoneyburn near Bathgate. The food co-op runs a village shop that is open six days a week and sells fruit, vegetables, bread, dairy, juices, water and ready made food. The shop is staffed by a paid worker of WELF&HD and local volunteers.

**Figure 4.1 & 4.2 The Village Orchard**



The staff member interviewed had attended the training session and the stand was used in the shop. It is placed near the door of the shop, to ensure clear visibility by the customers.

<sup>5</sup> WELF&HD is an acronym for West Lothian Food & Health Development

**Figure 4.3 & 4.4 the stand in the Village Orchard**



The stand is used to display the big selling items, such as bananas, and to promote special products, such as pineapples and other fruit in the summer, and soup and stew packs in the winter.

Staff and volunteers have suggested that the stand has made an impact on the sales. For example, the staff and volunteer both stated that they have sold more pineapples since the introduction on the stand, although systems are not in place to report on this.

Customers have commented on the stand in a positive way, especially praising the improved visibility of the produce. Customers like the idea that fruit and vegetables look better on the stand and that they can examine it before they buy. The WELF&HD staff member commented: “I believe the people would miss the stand if it was taken away”.

The interviewed customers had a positive opinion on the stand. They stated the produce was better displayed, looked fresher and more attractive. One customer commented: “You can actually see what you’re getting, you don’t have to rake through everything”.

The Village Orchard staff claimed not to have received any promotional material, but stated that it would be used, especially the wall charts. After further investigation, it emerged that the promotional material has been sent to the network organisation.

**Figure 4.5 The Village Orchard**



The training also made an impact on the CFI. The staff member who attended the training stated that she had an increased knowledge of fruit and vegetables, knew more about the seasonality of fruit, had an increased knowledge about how to keep fruit and vegetables fresher, which led to reduced waste and the knowledge and skills to maximise the presentation of fruit and vegetables.

For example, as a result of the training:

- apples are sprayed with water regularly to keep them fresher and increase their appeal;
- broccoli is kept in water to ensure freshness and longer shelf life;
- regular taster sessions of fruit that is not common to the local population (pineapple, dragonfruit);
- the staff and volunteers are better able to answer questions from the customers, such as ‘when is a pineapple ripe’; and
- reduced articles at the end of their shelf-life are now placed on the counter to trigger impulse buying.

One of the interviewed customers said: “They made me try pineapple, and now I like it”.

From the interviews with staff, volunteer and customers, and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made, including:

- the training combined with the stand can make a significant impact;

- although sent to the network organisation, the promotional materials appeared to not have reached the CFI;
- the learning from the training is not fully cascaded down to the volunteers; and
- hands on support would make an even bigger impact.

#### 4.1.2 The Hot Spot – Peterhead

The Hot Spot is a community facility in the centre of Peterhead. The Hot Spot acts as a one stop shop for information and advice on a range of issues including housing matters, money issues, health and wellbeing, steps to employment and educational opportunities. The centre provides meeting space and operates a cafe that also offers free access to computers and the internet.

**Figure 4.6 & 4.7 The Hot Spot**



The Hot Spot cafe is open five days per week from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm and offers locally produced healthy foods and also sells local produce. The stand is used to sell fresh produce, delivered by CFINE<sup>6</sup>. The stand is placed near the counter as a logical place to ensure maximum visibility.

<sup>6</sup> CFINE is the acronym for Community Food Initiative North East

**Figure 4.8 & 4.9 The stand in the Hot Spot**



The stand is used to display fresh fruit and vegetables and other healthy options of consumables, such as porridge, pasta and lentils. The stand also offers seasonal products, such as salad packs in the summer and soup packs in the winter.

The stand is a replacement of another unbranded stand. In **Figure 4.10 & 4.11** the old and new stand are depicted. The interviewed Hot Spot staff member said that the new stand “raises the tone” and gives the cafe a more healthy and professional appearance.

We interviewed one customer, who agreed that the stand was an improvement. The main advantage of the stand is that the produce is now better displayed and looks more attractive.

**Figure 4.10 & 4.11 The old and the new stand**





The Hot Spot used the promotional material and thought the leaflets were especially useful. The staff and volunteer believed the stand has had an impact on the Hot Spot.

For example, as a result of the stand:

- the sales of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased;
- the healthy food is better presented and looks more attractive;
- the stand and promotional materials are used in outreach activities, making them more attractive and effective; and
- more customers enquired about healthy eating and staff were better able to help them through the promotional materials.

From the interviews with staff, volunteer and customer, and the observation of the consultant, it was clear that the stand was not used to its maximum potential. Some observations include:

- the stand could be better located, showing both the front and the sides;
- the staff and volunteers have not attended the training and the learning from the training has not been cascaded to them; and
- there were some ideas to increase the use of the stand, but the volunteers lack the skills and experience to implement them.

### 4.1.3 Barri Grub - Edinburgh

Barri Grub is a community food project in Pilton and surrounding areas of Edinburgh. The project aims to help local people tackle the main barriers to a healthier diet and delivers a range of food and health activities and services, such as food stalls at community venues, cooking classes, taster sessions, nutritional information, healthy eating leaflets and recipes. Barri Grub also runs a healthy food outlet in the Pilton Community Health Project.

**Figure 4.12 & 4.13 Barri Grub**



Two staff members of Pilton CHP, responsible for Barri Grub, attended the training and they received a stand and promotional materials. The stand is placed outside the serving hatch to catch the eye of customers and other visitors of the Pilton CHP. The stand is used to promote different seasonal produce and is changed on a fortnightly basis. Barri Grub received the promotional materials, but could not use them.

**Figure 4.14 & 4.15 The stand at Barri Grub**



The interviewed staff members believed the stand and training has had an impact on Barri Grub. For example, as a result of the stand and the training:

- the sales of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased;
- the CFI is better at taking advantage of impulse buying;
- the stock is moved around more frequently to increase its visibility to customers;
- there are plans to start selling pre-packed food and salads, which has not been implemented due to time constraints; and
- the stand is used to enhance and improve outreach activities.

From the interviews with staff and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- the mobility of the stand is a great advantage for the CFI; and
- although the content of the training is focusing on the commercial aspects of selling fruit and vegetable, the delivery of the training could be made more relevant for community initiatives and use a more participative approach.

#### 4.1.4 East End Healthy Living Centre - East End Kids & Co

The East End Healthy Living Centre (EEHLC) in Glasgow operates the Sunshine Café, a community café that offers healthy and affordable food to its customers. EEHLC is a participant in the pilot project and have attended the training.

**Figure 4.16 East End Healthy Living Centre**



East End Kids & Co runs a weekly food stall in the Sunshine Café and EEHLC has transferred the stand to them. The stand does not meet their requirements and therefore East End Kids and Co does not use it.

Further investigation brought to light that the staff member who attended the training session, and managed the stall, left earlier this year. The stand was used by the previous staff member.

From the interview with the staff and the consultants observations the following comments arise:

- the end user of the stand has not been included in the project and feels no ownership of the project and therefore does not use the stand; and



- the end user of the stand lacks the skills and knowledge of how to use the stand properly and therefore does not use it.

#### 4.1.5 Coalburn Miners' Welfare Social Club

The Coalburn Miners' Welfare Social Club, the trading arm of the charitable society with the same name, delivers a range of services to the local community from its One Stop Shop. It runs a post office, a charity shop, a food co-operative, a café, a conference and events venue, and a place to hold drop-in sessions for the citizens' advice bureau or local councillors.

**Figure 4.17 & 4.18 The Coalburn Miner's Welfare Social Club**



The staff member in the food co-op attended the training session and used some of the learning in the food co-op. They used to display fruit and vegetables in boxes, but they have changed that to the stand. When the shop closes at 2.00 pm, the stand is moved to the post office to maximise sales.

**Figure 4.19 & 4.20 the stand at the Coalburn Miner's Welfare Social Club**



Since attending the training, waste is reduced. Fruit that is on the verge of going off or is damaged is cut up, the bad sections removed, and sold in ready-made packs.

The interviewed customers were very positive about the stand. They commented that the presentation of fruit and vegetables is clearer and it looks fresher.

The Coalburn Miners' Welfare Social Club has used the promotional material across the building to put the message of healthy eating across to other users of the building.

**Figure 4.21 & 4.22 Promotional materials**



The interviewed staff member reported the impact of the stand, promotional material and training on the food co-operative:

- the sales of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased;
- the CFI has less wastage;
- the learning from the training is not only used in the CFI, but is implemented across the charity shop;
- the mobility of the stand has enabled the CFI to increase their sales time; and
- when the stand is at the post office it generates a lot of impulse buying.

From the interviews with staff and customers and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- the mobility of the stand is a great advantage for the CFI; and

- the training has had a knock on effect on the organisation's other activities.

#### 4.1.6 Strathbrock Partnership Centre

WELF&HD runs a weekly food co-operative in the Strathbrock Partnership Centre in Broxburn, a multi-purpose service point bringing together statutory, voluntary and private services within West Lothian in one location to maximise access to services and joint working. It provides an extensive range of social and healthcare facilities under one roof, including Social Work, Community Education, Housing, Council information services, Community Medicine, Carers of West Lothian, Capability Scotland, a pharmacy, three GP practices and a mental health resource centre.

The co-op is open on Thursdays from 9.00 am – 2.00 pm and sells fresh fruit and vegetables.

**Figure 4.23 & 4.24 Food –co-op in Strathbrock Partnership Centre**



The WELF&HD staff member attended the training, when she was still a volunteer. The training has increased knowledge on display and presentation, the use of colours, promotion and pricing. The training, as a volunteer, enabled the interviewee to secure her present job with WELF&HD.

The food co-op is placed in the large main entrance space and the stand is used at the beginning of the food co-op to attract attention. The stand is used to promote special offers.

**Figure 4.25 & 4.26 The stand in Strathbrock Partnership Centre**



The customers thought the produce looked fresh and attractive, but not better than the tables with the other produce. Some customers expressed they would buy more because it caught their eye in the stand.

The promotional material was not useful for the co-op, because they operate only once a week and cannot permanently display things.

The interviewed staff members reported the impact of the stand, promotional material and training on the food co-operative:

- in general the presentation of fresh food in the CFI has improved;
- changing promotional offers every week in the stand makes them very successful;
- the CFI has less wastage; and
- the staff have gained confidence through the training.

From the interviews with staff and customers and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- using the stand for just one product could limit its impact; and
- the promotional materials are not suitable for CFI's without fixed premises



#### 4.1.7 Bargeddie Food Co-op

The Bargeddie Food Co-op sells fresh fruit and vegetables on Thursdays in the Bargeddie Community Hall in North Lanarkshire. The co-op sells a whole range of food products, such as tinned goods, dairy, bread and fresh fruit and vegetables. The majority of the co-op's activity consist of the delivery of pre-ordered food to homes in the local community, often elderly or disabled individuals with mobility issues.

**Figure 4.27 & 4.28 Bargeddie Food Co-op**



The volunteer running the food-co-op has attended the training. It made him more aware of the importance of fruit and vegetables, seasonality and pricing.

The stand is placed near the check out area to trigger impulse buying. Before the stand the food was displayed on tables. The co-op was not aware of any promotional materials.

**Figure 4.29 & 4.30 The stand in Bargeddie Food Co-op**



The interviewed customer commented positively on the stand. Fresh produce is more visible and the customer noticed that the information on fresh fruit and vegetables by the co-op has improved recently. She also commented positively on sessions held by the co-op at the local primary school producing fruit kebabs.

The interviewed staff members reported the impact of the stand and training on the food co-operative:

- the presentation of fresh fruit and vegetables has changed for the better;
- the stand is use for outreach activities; and
- the placing of the stand near the check-out has been effective.

From the interviews with staff and customers and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- the promotional materials are not suitable for CFI's without fixed premises; and
- the impact of the stand and the training on CFI's that do not have a substantial sales outlet to the public is limited;

#### 4.1.8 Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

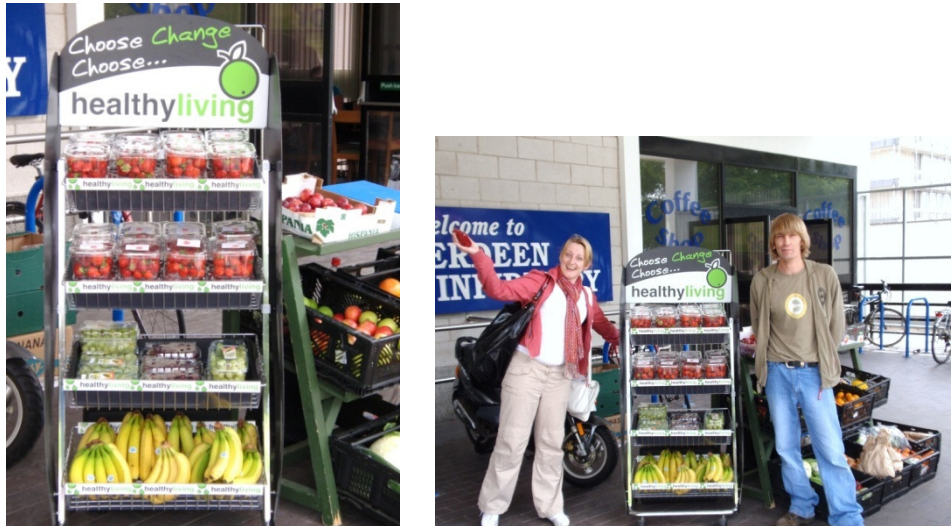
CFINE runs a food stall at the main entrance of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 12.00 - 3.30 pm to coincide with the visiting hours.

**Figure 4.31 The food stall at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary**



The staff member of CFINE that runs the stall has not attended the training. The stall is used next to another stand with boxes of fruit and vegetables. The stand contains some of the high-selling items, such as strawberries, bananas and grapes.

**Figure 4.32 & 4.33 The stand at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary**



The customers liked the stand. The food looks fresher and more attractive and the stand improves the professional outlook of the stall. However, two customers preferred the rustic and nostalgic character of the other display. Most customers admitted that the stand seduced them to impulse buys.

The interviewed staff member reported the impact of the stand on the CFI:

- the food presented in the stand usually sells out;
- the mobility of the stand makes setting up and packing the food stall up a lot easier; and
- the stand increases the visibility of the food stall and triggers impulse buying.

From the interviews with staff and customers and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- the stand is a real eye-catcher in this location;
- impulse buying is essential for the success of this CFI; and
- training of the front-line staff would likely increase the impact.

#### 4.1.9 Healthy Valleys

Healthy Valleys, the Healthy Living Initiative for rural South Lanarkshire, has the vision to reduce health inequalities, promote positive lifestyles and improve health and wellbeing for the people in the Douglas and Nethan Valley.

Healthy Valleys runs a fruit and vegetables outlet every Thursday morning in the local housing office. This is a temporary accommodation, because the usual premises in Rigside Community Hall are currently unavailable.

**Figure 4.34 & 4.35 Healthy Valleys**



A member of staff has attended the training and she has cascaded the training down to the volunteers using the DVD. The DVD is also used by staff and volunteers for regular refreshers and solving problems. The volunteers did refer to the DVD several times and seem to have benefited from this.

The learning from the training directly included legal requirements, display and presentation, and what produce sells best. The cascaded training and the DVD taught the volunteers about display and presentation, and the importance of the location of the stand.

The stand is placed near the door, where it is the first thing that customers see. The stand is also sometimes used for outreach activities.

The promotional material is not only used in the food outlet, but mainly at other activities. The temporary accommodation is not suitable for many of the promotional materials.



**Figure 4.36 The stand at Healthy Valleys**



The customers commented positively on the stand and think the fruit and vegetables are better presented and look fresher and more attractive. The stand makes them buy more and different things. One customer mentioned that her children now go and pick a piece of fruit regularly.

The interviewed staff member and volunteer reported the impact of the stand, promotional materials and the training on the CFI:

- the CFI now sells more seasonal fruit and vegetables;
- the CFI holds taster sessions with new and unusual;
- foods food presented in the stand usually sells out;
- the presentation of fresh produce has improved;
- the staff and volunteers are more able to check deliveries and thus minimise waste; and
- the staff and volunteers have more knowledge about fresh fruit and vegetables and are therefore more able to address their customer's needs.

From the interviews with staff, volunteers and customers and the observation of the consultant, some comments could be made:

- cascading the learning of the training can be effective, if taken seriously and done properly; and
- the DVD can be a powerful tool for CFI's.

## 4.2 Key Points

From the site visits a number of main messages and implications emerge as significant:

### The project

- the project has improved the display and presentation of fresh fruit and vegetables by the participating CFI's;
- the participating CFI's have reported increased sales of fresh fruit and vegetables as a result of the project, although this could not be quantified;
- through the training and the stand CFI's have been able to benefit from impulse buying, which is confirmed by the customers;
- the impact of the project is minimal to CFI's that have a limited exposure to the general public;

### Training

- increased knowledge about fruit and vegetable, gained through the training, is reported to have had a positive impact on the business of the participating CFI's, through increased sales, reduced waste, and better product information for customers, although it proved difficult for CFI's to produce evidence of these assertions;
- the stand and promotional materials are most effective in combination with the training;
- the training is not always attended by front-line staff, but by managers or support organisations, which hinder the impact of the stand and promotional materials;
- in general the learning from the training is not cascaded down by the people who attended;
- where the learning from the training has been cascaded down the impact has increased;

- the DVD can be a powerful learning tool, but is not used very often;
- CFI's report a reduction in waste as a result of the training;
- the training has made CFI's more aware of pricing;
- the training has made CFI's more aware of the seasonality issues in the fruit and vegetables business;

### **The stand**

- the customers noticed the stand and commented positively on it, saying the food products are better displayed, looks fresher and more attractive;
- the stand can add to the 'professional' image of CFI's;
- the location of the stand is important for its effectivity, next to the entrance or the check-out gives best results;
- the mobility of the stand is a great advantage to the participating CFI's because:
  - the stand can be moved around the premises to increase the visibility of produce
  - storage is easier for CFI's without fixed premises
  - the stand can be used to sell fruit and vegetables at different locations during the day
  - the stand enhances the effectiveness of the CFI's outreach activities;

### **The promotional materials**

- the promotional materials have not made such a great impact, some CFI's claimed they have not received them, others deemed them unsuitable;
- the promotional materials are not suitable for CFI's without fixed premises;

### Unexpected outcomes

- the learning from the training can be used in other commercial operations of third sector organisations; and
- training volunteers can lead to employment.

## 5. Comparative Assessment

This Section discusses the findings from this study in the context of results from earlier evaluations of the SGF Healthy Living Programme for convenience stores.

In 2007 Health Scotland produced an evaluation report for the first two phases of the SGF Healthy Living Programme for convenience stores<sup>7</sup>. The evaluation demonstrated that the project has been very successful and has improved the “availability, range, quality and profitability of healthier food options in the convenience sector”. Some of the highlights included:

- average satisfaction rate of customers have increased significantly on all aspects of healthier food;
- since taking part in the programme the sales volume of healthy food have increased spectacularly with over 40%;
- display and presentation of healthy food made a huge impact on the sales volume; and
- participating in the project improved the knowledge and skills of retailers and led to reduced wastage.

These impacts are similar to the ones identified for the CFI’s, although the CFI’s have not been able to quantify them.

This evaluation also identified the critical success factors for the project. One of the critical success factors was “the successful contribution of an experienced project co-ordinator with a proven track record in the retail industry”.

From the consultation with the project co-ordinator of the SCG Healthy Living Programme for convenience stores it emerged that the programme for the convenience stores is supported by two experienced project workers who continuously visit the participating shops to support them in implementing the programme.

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<sup>7</sup> Healthyliving Neighbourhood Shops Project, A report on the success of marketing healthy options in convenience stores in Scotland, Health Scotland, 2007

This is an important difference with the pilot project for CFI's who had no support in implementation of the programme. On the one hand it is unreasonable to expect the same outcomes from the pilot project without this vital support. On the other hand, it seems likely that with additional implementation support the pilot programme for CFI's would have had significantly greater impacts.

In May 2009 HIM conducted another evaluation<sup>8</sup>, which is currently unpublished. This evaluation surveyed over 750 customers through face-to-face interviews in over 60 stores.

This study shows ever increasing rates of customer satisfaction on the range of healthy food, the quality, the presentation and location of healthy food. Quality, freshness and price were the three determining factors for customers to buy healthy food.

These evaluation reports clearly show the success of the programme with commercial convenience stores. Although different in many aspects, there is no reason to believe the programme cannot be equally successful with CFI's.

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<sup>8</sup> Scottish Grocers Federation Healthy Living Study, HIM, May 2009, unpublished

## 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This Section presents the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation study.

### 6.1 Conclusions

The following main conclusions can be drawn from the evaluation:

1. The current evidence base on the Scottish diet and existing health inequalities means that healthy eating is still high on the national policy agenda.
2. CFI staff and volunteers have reported that the programme has resulted in increased sales for the CFI's.
3. The programme has made the biggest impact on CFI's where frontline staff and volunteers attended the training.
4. The training programme was well received by participants and has had an impact on the participating CFI's, through increased sales, reduced waste and improved product information to customers.
5. The training programme could be improved by:
  - a. an increased focus on the specific needs and constraints of CFI's;
  - b. regular refresher sessions; and
  - c. hands-on support with implementation.
6. The promotional materials were not fit for purpose for many of the CFI's and therefore not well-used.
7. The stand is well-used and highly commended by CFI's and customers alike and has been linked to increased sales by the CFI's.
8. The mobility of the stand has been a great advantage for the CFI's.

## 6.2 Recommendations

Overall the programme is widely considered a success by the participating CFI's and the evaluation shows that positive results are emerging.

On this basis there is no reason to believe that a roll out of the programme to CFI's across the remainder of the country would not generate similar results.

However, this evaluation has highlighted a number of improvements to any further programme.

1. The selection of participating CFI's should be managed by strict criteria, ensuring the CFI:
  - a. has a significant exposure to the general public;
  - b. has the internal capacity to participate in the project;
  - c. has a significant commercial drive; and
  - d. shows a genuine commitment to participate in every aspect of the programme.
2. CFI's should be made more aware of their responsibilities in producing baseline and evaluation data, including sales figures, customer satisfaction ratings, and waste figures.
3. Any follow up programme should include continuous hands-on support for a prolonged period of time from a professional with in-depth knowledge and experience in retail of food products, comparable to the support available for convenience stores. Some consideration should be given to make the support provider aware of the special features of CFI's.
4. The training programme should be reviewed and made more suitable for CFI's taking into account the special circumstances of CFI's, namely that :
  - a. many CFI's do not have fixed premises;
  - b. most CFI's work with volunteers;



- c. one of the core reasons of existence for CFI's is the promotion of healthy eating and therefore, in contrast with the convenience stores, do not need to change their product supply from unhealthy to healthy; and
  - d. although working in a business like manner, CFI's are driven by motives other than profit alone.
- 5. Any follow-up programme should ensure that the training is attended by the majority of the frontline workers, whether paid or volunteers, and measures should be in place to prevent CFI's that do not comply with this from receiving further support (stand, promotional materials, hands-on support).
  - 6. Regular refresher training sessions should be built into the programme.
  - 7. Bespoke promotional materials should be designed that are mobile and suitable for CFI's.