



farechoice

The quarterly newsletter for Community Food and Health (Scotland)

April 2010

2010 Small Grant Scheme is open!

We are delighted to open the 2010 Annual Small Grant Scheme. Groups and agencies working with or within low-income groups in Scotland are welcome to apply for grants between £500 and £4,000 to develop healthy eating activities. Last year we awarded a total of £140,000 to 58 groups out of 220 grant applications.

To find out more about our small grant scheme, please call or email us and ask for an application pack. You can also download the application form, guidance notes and other materials from our website.

The closing date for grant applications is 5pm on Friday 9 July. **Please note that unfortunately we are unable to accept faxed, emailed or late applications.**

Last year's grant recipients are currently letting us know how they are getting on with their activities and you can learn about thirteen of these in this newsletter. We would like to thank all the grant recipients that have sent us reports and photos.

Last year, successful grant applicants planned food and health activities with a wide range of groups, including those that might need more support than others, such as women affected by domestic violence or homelessness, people with mental health support needs and people with autism. Successful grant applicants also included those working with whole sections of their community.

Groups developed a range of practical activities to tackle the barriers to a healthy balanced diet. These included developing or improving healthy cookery sessions, vegetable gardens, food co-ops, community cafés and lunch clubs. Grant money was spent on a wide range of resources, from steel toe capped boots, sand, seeds and sessional workers, to kissing gates, crèche costs, cookery equipment, and a kiosk.



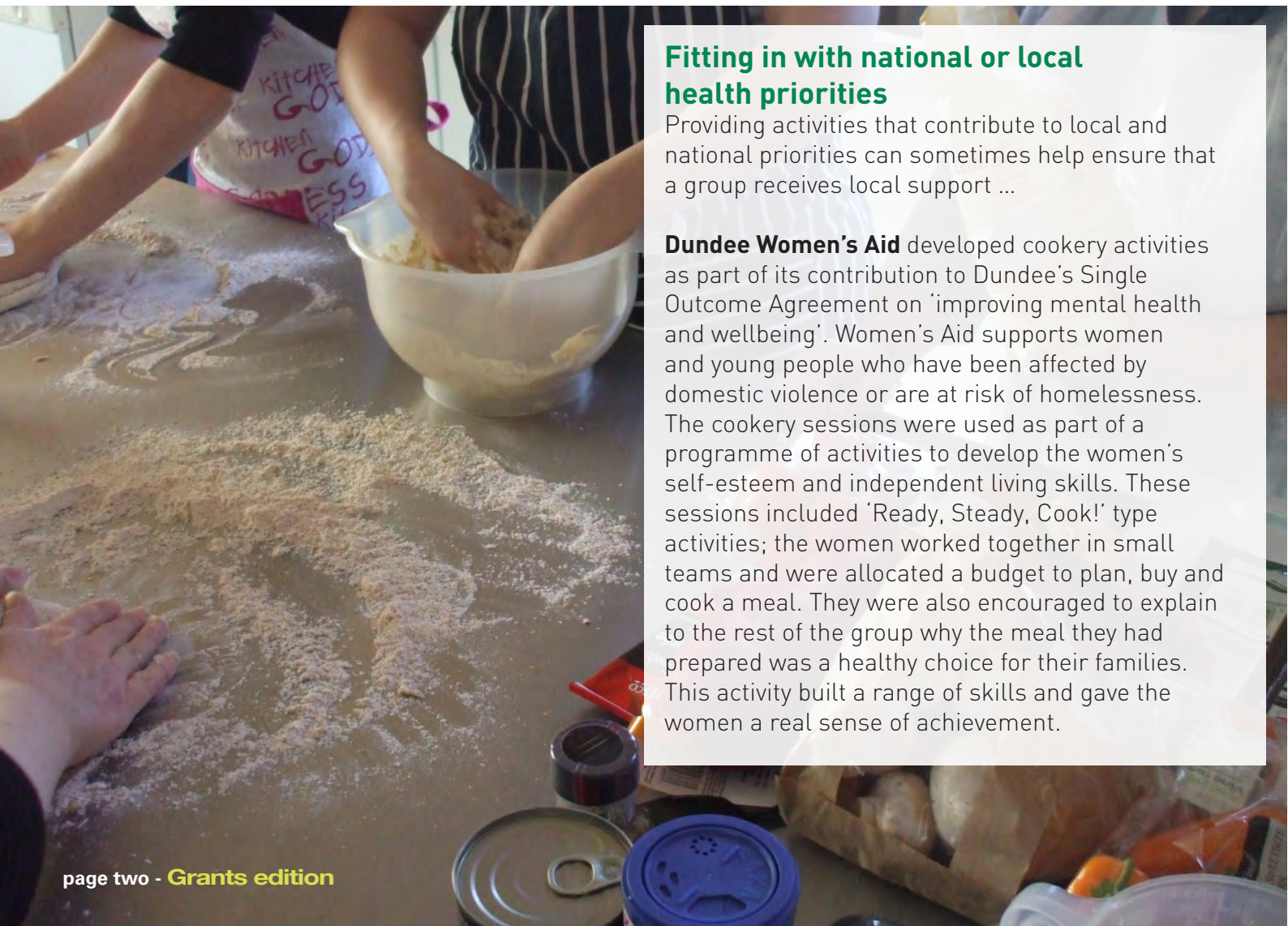
Victoria Park Child and Family Centre (see page 5)

Complementing national policies

The work of all groups and agencies in Scotland are affected by a range of policies. There are currently three policies in Scotland that focus mainly on food. **'Healthy Eating, Active Living' (HEAL)** is an action plan to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackle obesity between 2008 and 2011. HEAL reinforces messages from previous policies that food-related activities need to tackle the barriers to healthy food. These are access, affordability, culture and skills. In 2009 **'Recipe for Success'**, a National Food and Drink Policy for Scotland was developed. This policy considers food issues from many angles, so its actions include building the food and drink industry in Scotland as well as considering health issues. Planned actions that are related to health include: exploring suitable support for vulnerable groups, including those in rural areas and older people, and addressing access to affordable healthy food; exploring actions to address food poverty; supporting community fruit and vegetable gardening; and supporting social enterprises and community food groups. In February this year, **'Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight'** was launched. This route map signals a population-wide approach to addressing obesity. Its focus is on changing our environment (such as shops, take-aways and availability of large food portions) so that it is easier to make healthier choices and harder to make less healthy food choices. It has a particular focus on babies, children and the working environment.

In 2007 the Scottish Government launched its **National Performance Framework**. This framework lists outcomes that the Scottish Government believes need to be achieved to make Scotland healthier; smarter; wealthier and fairer; safer and stronger; and greener. The framework is also the basis for **Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs)** between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships. SOAs detail local priorities and how local action will contribute towards achieving the outcomes identified in the National Performance Framework. Across Scotland, all policies and strategies are contributing towards achieving these national outcomes. The **NHS HEAT targets** also contribute to the framework.

Here's how thirteen of last year's grant recipients developed their grant funded activities . . .



Fitting in with national or local health priorities

Providing activities that contribute to local and national priorities can sometimes help ensure that a group receives local support ...

Dundee Women's Aid developed cookery activities as part of its contribution to Dundee's Single Outcome Agreement on 'improving mental health and wellbeing'. Women's Aid supports women and young people who have been affected by domestic violence or are at risk of homelessness. The cookery sessions were used as part of a programme of activities to develop the women's self-esteem and independent living skills. These sessions included 'Ready, Steady, Cook!' type activities; the women worked together in small teams and were allocated a budget to plan, buy and cook a meal. They were also encouraged to explain to the rest of the group why the meal they had prepared was a healthy choice for their families. This activity built a range of skills and gave the women a real sense of achievement.

Meaning business

In the current financial climate, groups are making tough decisions and spending a lot of time developing the business-side of their work.

East Lothian Roots and Fruits used its grant to make its activities more cost-effective and less reliant on grants in the future. It has been delivering a range of food and health activities for around ten years, including managing food co-ops and a mobile shop. Although customers in rural areas of East Lothian have benefited from having access to affordable healthy food from the mobile shop, it is expensive to run. The group decided to redesign its service to reduce the hours that the mobile shop was on the road, develop new voluntary-run food co-ops in the areas that the mobile shop had served, and deliver to housebound or disabled customers. The mobile shop now only delivers food to housebound or disabled customers and to areas where it would be difficult to set-up a food co-op. Early reports show that the new delivery service to those most in need is successful and appreciated.

South East Area Lifestyle (SEAL) community health project manages six volunteer-run fruit barras in south-east Glasgow. It received a grant to hold a volunteer development day to discuss how to find ways of improving the fruit barras to make them more consistent and business-like. Twenty-four volunteers attended the day, which was led by an external facilitator; by the end of the day they had agreed on a set of policies.

“Volunteers gained a new sense of purpose and enjoyed sharing skills and information.”

Staff member

Getting help

Many groups seek advice or receive resources from other organisations. NHS Health Improvement or dietetic departments and healthy living initiatives can provide access to accurate and consistent information on healthy eating. Seeking help from the community and voluntary sector is also beneficial for those working in the NHS.

NHS Tayside employs a Health Improvement Practitioner to deliver food and health activities to people with learning disabilities. A local needs assessment had identified that this group required more support around good nutrition.

“This has been a fantastic opportunity for me to develop new working relationships with different organisations throughout Tayside.”

Health Improvement Practitioner

NHS Tayside used its grant to develop partnerships between Dundee Healthy Living Initiative and PUSH (who promote inclusion throughout Perth and Kinross). So far, one nine-week health promotion and practical cookery course has been delivered to five people with learning disabilities in Dundee and two more courses are planned for other areas. Dundee Healthy Living Initiative and the Health Improvement Practitioner ran the activities together. PUSH developed a series of food preparation photographs, which will provide a simple step-by-step pictorial guidance to preparing vegetables. These photos will provide a much-needed visual resource on all future courses. PUSH are also providing the venue in Perth and other practical help. The Health Improvement Practitioner is currently developing partnerships in other areas for the next courses. She believes that developing good partnerships will result in more work around food and health with people with learning disabilities in the future.

Making sure food and health activities are needed and wanted

Healthy eating activities are more likely to be successful if groups take time to find out the needs and wishes of those they plan to work with.

REACH community health project, based in south-east Glasgow, consulted with 20 women from BME communities to find out their health promotion needs. This was followed by health information sessions where 45 women from Pakistani, Iranian and Afghani communities were asked what food and health activities they wanted. Many of the women asked for cookery classes, which REACH are now planning. It has also approached local shops to secure sponsorship to help provide further support.

Reaching out to those who might need more support or are isolated

Nifty Fifty's in Lanarkshire used its grant to set up cooking courses for older people. The group includes people with learning disabilities, people referred by Social Services and older men who live alone. The group worked well together with the tutor from the Food and Nutrition Department at Motherwell College. Nifty Fifty's took time throughout the course to listen to what people wanted and adjusted the course or recipes when necessary. By the end of the course, those who had originally attended with a carer were confident to attend on their own.

Pilmeny Development Project provides health and wellbeing activities for older men in North East Edinburgh. Men who are isolated, depressed, on a low income, or have been recently bereaved, are particularly encouraged to get involved. The project used grant money to arrange nutrition talks and a cookery course. Around 20 men attended the talks delivered by staff from NHS Keepwell and Edinburgh Community Food Initiative (ECFI). They enjoyed discussing nutrition and most said that they would start reading the food labels on ready prepared meals. However, many said that they found it difficult to motivate themselves to cook alone and few 'cooked from scratch'. Their discussions confirmed that practical cookery sessions could help men develop cooking skills



Pilmeny Development Project

and provide new healthy, fast and tasty recipes in a sociable environment.

Five men regularly attended the ten cookery sessions. They chose the meals they would cook with help from the tutor, worked together as a team and shared the meal at the end of the session. Socialising and team working was as important to the men as learning new cookery skills. They were disappointed when the course finished.

“... the teamwork was excellent, so was the chicken and rice curry.”

Participant

Some of the men report that they are cooking more at home since the course. The project is going to run another course with funding from the NHS Keepwell programme to meet the growing demand.

Reaching half a community (so far)

Isle of Eigg Gardening Club received a grant to develop a community orchard to improve access to affordable fresh fruit on the island. In future years the trees will produce plums, cherries, pears, and apples suitable for storing, which will increase the availability of local fruit throughout much of the year. Almost half the population (23 adults, 17 children and 6 dogs) turned up to the 'community orchard planting day' in March and eventually the whole island will have access to the fruit.



Making an impact

All groups are aiming to make a difference to the wellbeing of the people they work with.

Straiton Village Co-operative is a community-run co-operative shop in rural South Ayrshire. The community took control of the local shop in January 2009 when it was about to close down. About half of the village are members of the Co-operative. A village survey prior to the shop takeover found that local people wanted the shop to sell a range of fresh fruit and vegetables. The shop received a grant to buy a chiller cabinet to display produce, which has helped improve shelf life, and reduce wastage and travel to wholesalers. Originally solely run by volunteers for a year, business has now proved strong enough to have half the staff time paid.



Victoria Park Child and Family Centre

As well as aiming to improve food-related health, some groups use food activities to support other parts of their work, such as educational activities. **Victoria Park Child and Family Centre** in Edinburgh used part of its grant to develop a weekly fruit trolley. ECFI delivers produce to the Centre and runs healthy eating activities for the children. The nursery aged-children play a big part in running the trolley. They are enthusiastic volunteers and have fun whilst learning new skills. As well as learning about different fruit and vegetables (and getting a chance to taste new foods) they are learning about money, hygiene, dividing up fruit portions, and working together as a group. The added bonus is that the children's fruit tuck shop trolley attracts attention from the parents who then come and buy fruit from the children. The Centre is also encouraging the children to get involved in growing vegetables in the garden, which will then be available on the fruit trolley. It is also delivering cooking workshops for parents.

Knowing that you are making an impact

Some groups find out what difference they are making through informal feedback from participants, others use more formal methods.

Larbert Nursery Parents Group received funding to develop a cookery group for parents. Local Community Food Workers (employed by NHS Forth Valley Dietetic department) led the cookery group and provided recipe books. A community development worker was also available to support the parents. The parents were asked to complete easy questionnaires before and after the course to demonstrate the difference in their confidence and skills. All the parents reported increased confidence in cooking skills and their comments included: 'cooking from scratch more' and 'making more soups'. After the grant funding has been used, the group plans to run cookery sessions for the parents on a monthly basis.

Continuing to make an impact

Many grant recipients hope that they can continue some or all of their food and health activities after they have spent their grant.

Around 40 young people attend the **Castlemilk Youth Complex** in Glasgow each evening. Grant money was used to deliver twice-weekly evening cooking sessions and some sessions during the day. These were delivered to suit the needs of the young people and to integrate food and health activities into other programmes. Cooking activities were used as part of a literacy, numeracy and employability programme to help teach budgeting, recipe research and portion control skills. During the more informal evening cookery sessions, the young people benefited socially from sitting round a table to share a meal. The Complex hopes to continue some cooking activities and shared meals in the future as part of a range of programmes, as these activities have been popular and beneficial. It has also recently started working with another partner to develop a vegetable garden on the premises; food from the garden will be used in future cookery activities.

Increasing the profile of your group

A handful of grant recipients promoted their work by running workshops at the CFHS annual conference or by attending other CFHS events. This is also useful for sharing information with other groups. Some groups aimed to increase their profile with a wider audience.



Garnetbank School gardening club in Glasgow used grant money to develop its vegetable gardening area and to buy plants and seeds. Fourteen children are regularly involved in the club and are keen to help out, even in the winter months. The club has made sure that a wider audience is aware of its achievements. This has included providing an exhibition at the local arts centre and it has entered competitions to take part in both the Chelsea Flower Show and Gardening Scotland.



**community
food and health**

(scotland)

About us:

Community Food and Health (Scotland) was set up as a result of recommendations in the 'Scottish Diet Action Plan'. Our overall aim is to improve Scotland's food and health by supporting work with and within low income communities that improves access to, and take-up of, a healthy diet.

We are funded by the Scottish Government and based within Consumer Focus Scotland.

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Find out more

Local food and health work and policy

To find out about food and health work in your area, visit your local authority and local NHS Board websites. You can also find out about your local Community Planning Partnership and Community Health Partnership (or Community Health and Care Partnership) on these websites. You may also get information on these at your local library.

National food and health work and policy

To find out about community food activity nationally, visit our website www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

To find out more about the policies mentioned on page two, visit the Scottish Government's website www.scotland.gov.uk

Healthy eating information

It is important to provide consistent food and health messages to those you work with. It is worthwhile contacting your local NHS board to find out about the availability of healthy eating resources, leaflets or other help. NHS Boards will employ Health Improvement or Health Promotion staff, they will also have dietitians or a Dietetic Department who will be able to tell you how they can help.

Accurate nutrition information is also available free online from: The Food Standards Agency's nutrition education site:

www.eatwell.gov.uk

The Government's 'take life on' website: www.takelifeon.co.uk

The British Dietetic Foundation: www.bda.uk.com

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) accredits the Elementary Food and Health course. This course gives participants a basic knowledge of nutrition and its links to health and takes around six hours to complete. To find out where this course is available, visit www.rehis.org



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www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk