



**REPORT ON RESEARCH INTO COMMUNITY CAFÉS IN SCOTLAND  
FOR  
COMMUNITY FOOD AND HEALTH SCOTLAND**

**MARCH 2011**

**Report prepared by:**

**Clare Lardner**

**Clarity  
20 Galachlawside  
Edinburgh  
EH10 7JG**

tel: 0131 445 5842  
mob: 07808 930652  
fax: 08717 33 55 62

e-mail: [clare@clarity-scotland.co.uk](mailto:clare@clarity-scotland.co.uk),  
[www.clarity-scotland.co.uk](http://www.clarity-scotland.co.uk)

**Contents**

Summary ..... 3

2 Introduction ..... 5

3 Methods ..... 6

4 Results ..... 8

    Impact of community cafes on individuals and the community.....8

    Purpose of cafes..... 10

    Type of enterprise.....11

    Size and location..... 12

    Opening hours..... 14

    Premises..... 14

    Management and staffing.....14

    Money and other support..... 16

    Pricing, menus and supplies..... 18

    Customers and marketing..... 19

    Other initiatives and links..... 20

    Future vision and support needs..... 21

    Top tips / learning points..... 22

5 Conclusions..... 23

Appendix 1: Café profiles ..... 25

**Acknowledgements**

CFHS and Clare Lardner would like to thank all the staff, customers, volunteers and board members from the 12 cafés that took part in the research. Their hospitality and willingness to give their time and information about their community café is much appreciated.

## Summary

- 1.1 CFHS works to support communities in tackling barriers to healthy food, in particular issues relating to availability, affordability, skills and culture. Community cafés are one way in which local communities can tackle barriers to healthy food.
- 1.2 Following a successful pilot support and training programme with a sample of Edinburgh community cafés, CFHS commissioned a mapping exercise which identified around 250 community cafés across Scotland<sup>1</sup>. This research was commissioned to build on the previous two projects by investigating a sample of 12 community cafés in more depth. The aim was to find out about the detail of their operations, funding, menus, impact and support and training needs, to inform possible future work.
- 1.3 Twelve community cafés took part in the research from a remote rural area, accessible rural areas, accessible small towns and a large urban area. A profile of each café is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.4 The research methods were to visit each café and conduct interviews with café managers, staff, volunteers and/or board members. A customer questionnaire was offered to any customers visiting at the time. A flexible approach was adopted to fit in with the operational needs of the café on the day of the visit and who was available.
- 1.5 Community cafes have a positive impact on their communities, according to those involved in the research. The impacts included providing a meeting place or hub for the local community, reducing social isolation, providing jobs and skills development, increasing spending in local areas, providing volunteering opportunities and providing healthy eating options at low cost.
- 1.6 These impacts showed that the cafés are achieving what they had been set up for, variously, to provide a community facility, to provide jobs and training or to promote healthy eating.
- 1.7 Most of the cafés are charitable organisations run by a volunteer board of directors and as a trading arm to separate the café (and other enterprises) from their charity. Most had been established since the year 2000. Half the cafés are in local authority-owned premises, with some of these paying only a minimal rent.
- 1.8 Cafés range in size, seating between 20 and 50 people. Most open six days a week and employ paid staff. Only one is entirely run by volunteers.
- 1.9 Although only one café had already achieved the Healthy Living Award, most offer healthy options, for example, home-made soup, sandwiches and baked potatoes. Only two offer chips and most offer home-baking.
- 1.10 Across all cafés, the price of food items ranges from 30p to £8.75. Pricing can

---

<sup>1</sup> This list was not thought to be exhaustive.

be a complex process involving the weighing up of a variety of factors including the competition, costs, customer base and sustainability.

- 1.11 Most cafés are fragile operations and are dependent on funding from a variety of sources, including public sector sources, trusts and the BIG Lottery. Some had also received in-kind support and funding for particular services – for example providing Gaelic courses, a breast-feeding area or public toilets. Some suggested that providing a range of services was crucial to the survival of cafés.
- 1.12 Four cafés in rural areas are heavily dependent on tourist trade for the bulk of their turnover and therefore have a seasonal peak. The remainder are more dependent on local trade and tend to have their busy spells more consistently throughout the year.
- 1.13 There were no other major differences between rural and urban cafés. Cafés are subject to slightly different pressures in different areas, for example, the difficulties of operating in small or remote communities versus a large urban area. However on the whole, they had more in common than apart, for example, their fragility, similar support needs and their positive impact on communities.
- 1.14 Most cafés would like more help with marketing – for example promotion through websites, tourist literature and through offering special deals and healthy eating options. Support to network with other similar enterprises and help with management and finance, evaluation, enterprise structures, recruiting volunteers, accessing training and developing menus were also required. Café managers and board members also offered a range of learning tips for others considering establishing a community café.
- 1.15 Given that only one café had already achieved the Healthy Living Award, and yet all were offering healthy options on their menus, there is great potential for cafes to achieve the award and publicise the healthy eating opportunities they provide. This could help both their marketing and sustainability.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 Community Food and Health (Scotland) (CFHS) is a government funded organisation based within Consumer Focus Scotland. The aim of CFHS is to ensure that everyone in Scotland has the opportunity, ability and confidence to access a healthy and acceptable diet for themselves, their families and their communities.
- 2.2 CFHS (previously called the Scottish Community Diet Project) was set up in response to the publication of the Scottish Diet Action Plan<sup>2</sup> by the then Scottish Office in 1996. Two of the plan's recommendations related to encouraging local initiatives and improving access to a range of healthy food at reasonable prices. More recently, the Scottish Government has published three significant policy documents on food and health: a Healthy Eating, Active Living Action Plan<sup>3</sup> which aims to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackle obesity; a National Food and Drink Policy<sup>4</sup> which recognises that access to, and affordability of, healthy food is vital for Scotland's health and wellbeing; and Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight<sup>5</sup>, which is a strategy for tackling obesity in Scotland. Tackling Scotland's diet therefore remains a key policy objective of the Scottish Government.
- 2.3 CFHS works to support communities in tackling barriers to healthy food, in particular issues relating to availability, affordability, skills and culture. It supports low income communities to identify, develop and sustain local initiatives to overcome these barriers. Community cafes are one way in which local communities can tackle barriers to healthy food.
- 2.4 Prior to this research CFHS conducted a community café capacity-building pilot project in Edinburgh. The aims of the pilot were threefold: to improve the sustainability of community cafes that participated by increasing their customer base; increase the provision of healthier options for customers; and encourage community cafe workers and management to share and learn from good practice.
- 2.5 The evaluation of the pilot highlighted the benefits of participating for the cafes that were involved. As a result of the findings, CFHS are considering the potential for rolling-out the pilot to other areas of Scotland. Therefore CFHS commissioned a mapping exercise to identify the number and location of community cafes operating across Scotland. To date, the mapping project has identified more than 250 community cafes across Scotland.
- 2.6 In December 2010, Clarity was commissioned to conduct detailed research into a sample of 12 community cafes across Scotland, identified by the mapping

---

<sup>2</sup> Eating for Health: a Diet Action Plan for Scotland, Scottish Office 1996

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

<sup>4</sup> Recipe For Success - Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy, Scottish Government, 2009

<sup>5</sup> Preventing Overweight and Obesity in Scotland: A Route Map Towards Healthy Weight, Scottish Government, 2010

project. The purpose of the research was to find out more about the operation and structure of cafes and assist CFHS to assess the potential for rolling out a capacity building programme.

2.7 The aims of the research were to:

- identify and contact 12 community cafes in large urban areas, accessible small towns accessible rural areas and remote rural areas across Scotland to invite participation in the research;
- profile the 12 cafes including their operation, premises used, opening hours, number of staff and volunteers, who their customers are, content of their menu and food served, their charges, suppliers, running costs, income and management structure;
- determine the support available to cafes and who provides that support and identify any further support or training that cafes require/are seeking;
- identify the difference/impact made by cafes on staff, volunteers and the local community;
- identify best practice for community cafes.

2.8 This report describes the results of the research. It comprises an overall report drawing out similarities and differences in cafes and key themes arising from the research. Appendix 1 contains a profile of each of the cafes participating in the research<sup>6</sup>.

2.9 For the purpose of this research, it was recognised that defining a 'community cafe' is not straightforward, and, while intelligence about community cafes exists, this is fragmented. The starting point for this research was to define a community café as 'a community or voluntary sector managed or governed cafe that is operating for the benefit of a defined community'.

### 3 Methods

3.1 The methods used in this evaluation were:

- sampling and contact with 12 community cafes
- review of documents provided by cafes
- a half day visit to each café to conduct face-to-face research by interview and questionnaires
- profiling of 12 cafes and sending draft profiles back to cafes to check information.

3.2 A sample of 15 community cafes was selected from the large sample of cafes gathered during the mapping project and using the Scottish Government's Urban Rural Classification. Initially three or four cafes were identified in each of the following areas:

- a remote rural area – the Western Isles
- an accessible rural area - Aberdeenshire

---

<sup>6</sup> With the exception of A Taste of Home which was about to close its café and continue with its meal on wheels service.

- accessible small towns – in Aberdeenshire, Fife, Midlothian and East Renfrewshire
- a large urban area – Dundee

3.3 However, due to a total of three cafes declining or unable to take part, two that were not operating as cafés and one being un-contactable, three substitutions were made to arrive at the final sample of 12 that were visited. The name and location of cafes taking part in the research and their urban rural classification is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Cafes participating in the research**

<b>Name of cafe</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Local authority</b>
<b><i>Urban rural classification – remote rural</i></b>		
An Clachan Tearoom	Harris	Western Isles
Claddach Kirkibost Cafe	North Uist	Western Isles
Ravenpoint Tearoom	Lewis	Western Isles
<b><i>Urban rural classification – large urban</i></b>		
Coffee Exchange	Dundee	Dundee City
Roseangle Café Arts by the Bridge	Dundee	Dundee City
Tay-s-Tay	Dundee	Dundee City
<b><i>Urban rural classification – accessible rural</i></b>		
Meldrum Cafe	Oldmeldrum	Aberdeenshire
Harbour Howff Cafe	St Monans	Fife
Taste Cafe	Auchtermuchty	Fife
<b><i>Urban rural classification – accessible small towns</i></b>		
Campus Cafe	Loanhead	Midlothian
Shotts Healthy Living Cafe	Shotts	North Lanarkshire
A Taste of Home	Crosshill	Fife

- 3.4 Prior to visits, each café was sent an email with an information sheet about the research. This was followed up with a phone call to determine their willingness to take part, to arrange a date for a visit and to request copies of any documents that would provide some detail about the operation of the café, for example, annual reports.
- 3.5 Contact with cafes was slightly hampered by the timing of the research, which meant that the initial contact was in mid-December 2010 and many cafes were about to close for the festive season. Several were also temporarily closed due to severe weather. In practice this meant that there were several attempts to contact some cafes and there were delays in arranging visits. In addition, many cafes did not send any documents, though some provided them during the visit and these have been used to help prepare profiles.
- 3.6 All research visits took place in January and February 2011. It should be noted that this was the quietest time of year for most cafes and this was reflected in the low number of customer questionnaires completed. However, it also meant that café staff, managers and board members had time to take part in the research.
- 3.7 Separate topic guides were prepared for café managers/board members, volunteers and staff. A short customer questionnaire was also prepared. A flexible approach to each visit was necessary so that the conduct of the research could be adjusted according to who was available to take part and how busy the café was on that particular day. In the event, more than one

person was interviewed in 11 out of the 12 cafes and customer questionnaires were completed in 11 out of 12. In two cafés where there were few customers on the day, questionnaires were left in the café completion on subsequent days. The An Clachan Tearoom did not have any customers present as it was closed for the winter.

- 3.8 During the visit, each café was provided with a set of materials from CFHS, including a copy of Fare Choice magazine, a brochure about relevant publications, a list of training courses and leaflets about CFHS and the Healthy Living Award. In addition, each café taking part was offered a £40 gift voucher in recognition of the time they had spent on the research.
- 3.9 Following each visit, a draft profile of the café was prepared and sent back for checking of facts and figures.

## 4 Results

### Impact of community cafés on individuals and the community

- 4.1 During the research, customers, staff, volunteers and café managers were asked about the impact of the community café on the local community. Volunteers and customers were also asked what difference the café had made to them. The responses showed that community cafes had impacted positively on communities by offering a focal point and place to meet and helped to sustain local communities by developing their economies. For some individuals, community cafes had helped reduce social isolation, promote positive mental health and help them to acquire new skills and opportunities.
- 4.2 Cafes in rural areas were valued for providing the only meeting and eating place in the local area, sometimes for miles around. In some cases, people used the café whilst waiting for services, such as the local bus, or for the newspapers to arrive in the shop. In Auchtermuchty, the cafe provided an informal place for young people to meet, which they preferred to having a local youth club.

*“It’s the only place where we can meet friends, chat and not feel you have to rush away” (Customer, Harbour Howff)*

*“It is a focal point for the local community” (Customer, Claddach Kirkibost)*

*“I like being able to come here whilst waiting for the bus home. It’s made a difference because it aids communication with people in the community you would not see otherwise” (Customer, Ravenspoint)*

*“It’s the only place there is” (Customer, Meldrum)*

*“A lot of new people have used the café since (current manager) started. It’s a place for the younger generation” (Customer, Taste)*

- 4.3 In some urban or town-based cafes, it was also felt that the café helped to bring people together who might not normally meet. Some people felt that this, in turn, helped to promote community cohesion:



*“It is keeping the community together”* (Customer, Shotts)

*“It’s good for young people to meet others, for example, older people and young mums”* (Café manager, Tay-S-Tay)

*“It has made people come together that wouldn’t normally be in the same place, for example art students, people from the church – it is an asset to the community”* (Minister, Roseangle)

*“I think it has helped people to meet new people”* (Customer, Campus)

- 4.4 Community cafes help to sustain and develop local economies, by providing employment and training opportunities, attracting tourists, increasing spending in the area, promoting local history, culture and arts and both buying and selling local produce. Some of the feedback illustrates this:

*“It brings money to the community”* (Customer, Meldrum)

*“It provides employment in a place with very few jobs”* (Manager, Ravenspoint)

*“It attracts walkers and visitors to spend more time in the village”* (Customer, Harbour Howff)

*“The café uses local food and therefore supports local producers”* (Customer, Claddach Kirkibost)

*“We are one of the biggest employers in North Uist”* (Board Member, Claddach Kirkibost)

- 4.5 Some cafes provide volunteering and training opportunities to help people build skills and confidence. In some cases this has had a major impact on the volunteers, for example those with a history of mental health problems (for example at Harbour Howff) or with learning difficulties (for example at Meldrum and Shotts). Young people who had left school with few qualifications and were unemployed had also benefited from the opportunities provided at Tay-S-Tay, whilst other cafes such as Claddach Kirkibost and Shotts had provided training opportunities.

*“It has been a life enhancing opportunity for many volunteers”* (Manager, Meldrum)

*“I was stuck in the house with no friends. It has given me more confidence”* (Volunteer, Shotts)

*“It has made the world of difference to me. Given me my confidence back and made me feel worthwhile”* (Volunteer, Harbour Howff)

- 4.6 Community cafes can play an important role in reducing social isolation and social exclusion. In addition, cafés can help people by providing food at low cost.

*“It gives me a reason to go out”* (Customer, Taste)

*“A place for single older ladies to meet”* (Customer, Harbour Howff)

*“I work with people with learning difficulties and the staff make everyone welcome”* (Customer, Shotts)

*“It’s very affordable for people on a limited budget”* (Customer, Meldrum)

*“We provide a hot meal at a low price and a place for young mums to socialise where they can breastfeed with more confidence and this helps reduce isolation”* (Manager, Tay-S-Tay)

- 4.7 Finally, as in the example of Campus Café, the presence of a café can make adjacent services feel less formal and more easily accessible to service users.

*“It makes my service at the centre feel less formal and more welcoming to clients”* (Therapist, Campus)

### **Purpose of cafes**

- 4.8 The cafés participating in the research were established for a variety of different reasons. Six of the cafés (Ravenspoint, Taste, Roseangle, Meldrum, Harbour Howff and Shotts) were specifically set up to provide a meeting place for the community. Some articulated a longer term goal that by providing such a facility, they would be able to promote community development or capacity-building. In addition, Meldrum, Harbour Howff and Shotts were set up partly to provide opportunities for volunteers. An Clachan Tearoom was established to provide a facility for both locals and tourists.

- 4.9 In the case of Meldrum, Harbour Howff, Ravenspoint and Shotts, the opening of the café followed a period of community consultation which had identified the need for a café or meeting place in the local area.

- 4.10 Two of the cafés had specific employment-related goals. Claddach Kirkibost was established (along with the nursery and food production business) to provide employment for local women and Tay-s-Tay was set up to provide a training programme for unemployed young people with few qualifications.

- 4.11 Coffee Exchange is run by a charity which fundraises for development projects in Uganda. The purpose of the café is to provide a ‘shop front’ for the charity and to raise money for its Ugandan projects, whilst also providing a facility for people in the city centre of Dundee. Harbour Howff was also set up partly to raise money for its parent mental health charity.

- 4.12 A Taste of Home was the only café that was set up without a specific community-focused purpose – it was because the facility was available along with the kitchen, which was being leased to run a meals-on-wheels enterprise.

- 4.13 The only café that included healthy eating in its goals was the Shotts Healthy Eating Café. This was established as part of a healthy living centre and

therefore its whole focus has centred on the provision of healthy food. It was also the only café that had already applied for (and achieved) the Healthy Living Award.

4.14 Table 2 shows summary information about the cafés, which is further described in the following sections of the report. The remainder of this report presents information on 11 out of the 12 cafés visited, as A Taste of Home was operating on very limited hours and closed in February 2011.

### Type of enterprise

4.15 All of the cafes, with the exception of An Clachan tearoom which was established in 1979, were set up in, or since, the year 2000.

4.16 Most of the 12 cafés are run by charities but many have set up a trading arm<sup>7</sup> to separate and protect the charity's income from potential losses. The exceptions are:

- An Clachan Tearoom, which is a community co-operative<sup>8</sup> but plans to separate the trading part of the operation from the co-op;
- Tay-S-Tay, which is a local authority run training project;
- Taste Café which is a franchise<sup>9</sup>;
- Meldrum Café and A Taste of Home, which are community interest companies<sup>10</sup>.

4.17 Only one of the cafés – Taste Café in Auchtermuchty - is run for private profit, but included in the contract is provision of low cost meals for an older people's lunch club once a week.

### Size and location

4.18 The size of cafés ranged from the smallest, Ravenspoint, which currently seats a maximum of 20 but is being extended to seat 30 plus, to An Clachan, which seats 50. When the Campus Café moves into its new building in 2011, it will be able to cater for over 60 people.

---

<sup>7</sup> Charities, including those that are registered companies, can set up subsidiary companies to enable them to carry out non-charitable trading activities. These subsidiary companies can be called social enterprise arms, trading arms or trading subsidiaries and are wholly-owned by the charities, or charitable companies, that set them up. Any profits made by a trading subsidiary are gifted back to the charity or charitable company.

<sup>8</sup> Community co-operatives are enterprises that are owned and controlled by people belonging to a particular community. This may be a geographical community or a community of interest. Normally they will carry on activities that are of benefit to the whole community.

<sup>9</sup> A franchise is a licence granted by one person (the franchisor) to another (the franchisee), which entitles the franchisee to trade under the trade mark or trade name of the franchisor.

<sup>10</sup> Community Interest Companies (CICs) are limited companies, with special features, created for people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage. This is achieved by a "community interest test" and "asset lock", which ensure that the CIC is established for community purposes and the assets and profits are dedicated to these purposes.

- 4.19 Six cafés – Campus, Harbour Howff, Claddach Kirkibost, Meldrum, Ravenspoint and Roseangle extend, or plan to extend, their capacity by having seats outside in summer. Claddach Kirkibost also has an IT suite with sofas that can be used as overspill when the café is very busy.
- 4.20 The location of cafés is an important factor in determining their customer base and marketing strategy. The three cafés in the Western Isles and Harbour Howff in St Monans are very dependent on tourist trade in the summer. Both An Clachan and Claddach Kirkibost also get large numbers of customers arriving on (mainly) pre-booked bus tours in summer. Ravenspoint is hoping to be able to cater for the bus tour market when its extension is open and capacity increased.
- 4.21 The remaining cafés serve mainly local people and there is less of a contrast between summer and winter trade. Some cafés - Roseangle, Taste, Ravenspoint, Tay-S-Tay, Shotts and Meldrum - are close to community or leisure centres or halls which are being used for local classes and pick up some trade from those. Roseangle is also close to Dundee University and College of Art and many of its customers are students – it therefore had a slightly quieter period during the university holidays.

**Table 2: Summary of key data on cafés**

<b>Name of café (Year est.)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of enterprise</b>	<b>No. seats</b>	<b>Opening hours</b>	<b>Average customers per week</b>	<b>Busiest times</b>	<b>Staff and volunteers</b>	<b>Most popular food items</b>	<b>Price range (excl. drinks)</b>
An Clachan 1979	Harris	Community co-op	50	M-Sa 10-4 Apr-Oct	100s in summer	Summer, when buses arrive	Paid staff & volunteer Board	Soup, home baking	£0.80 -£2.50
Claddach Kirkibost 2000	North Uist	Charity and trading company	30+	M-Sa 11-4, later in summer Su 1030-1430 Apr-Oct	750 in summer 85 in winter	Summer	Paid staff & volunteer Board	Soup & cheese scone, home baking, oatcakes, trout & crowdie	£1.50-£7.50
Ravenspoint 2001	Lewis	Charity, limited company	20+	M-F 9-6 Sa 10-5	200 in summer, 30 in winter	Summer 10-3 Winter after 11am	Paid staff & volunteer Board	Soup, toasties	£1.20-£8.75
Coffee Exchange 2006	Dundee	Charity	34	M-Sa 9-4	350-500	Weekday lunch and all Sat	Paid staff and volunteer Board	Soup & sandwich deal	£0.65-£3.75
Roseangle 2010	Dundee	Charity (Church run)	26	M-Th 10-4, F 1-4	80	Weds-Fri lunch	Paid staff, volunteers in café & on management group	Soup & sandwich deal	£1-£3.45
Tay-s-Tay 2008	Dundee	Local authority training project	40	M-F 10-2 F 7-10pm Sa 2-4pm	200	Weds and Thur	Paid staff and youth trainees	Soup, toasties	£0.70-£1.50
Meldrum 2007	Oldmeldrum	Charity & CIC	26	W-Sa 10-4	260	Lunchtimes	All volunteers, in café & on Board	Soup, paninis & toasties	£0.90 - £2.80
Harbour Howff 2007	St Monans	Charity & limited company	24	Tu-F 10-4 S,S&PH 11-5	150 in summer, 70 in winter	Summer – weekends, winter weekday lunches	Paid staff, volunteers in café & on Board	Soup, bacon rolls & paninis	£1-£4.75
Shotts Healthy Living 2002	Shotts	Charity & limited company	34	M-F 9-3 Sa 10-2 M&W 6.30-9.30pm	500	Lunchtime	Paid staff, volunteers in café & on board	Soups, sandwiches, omelettes, toasties	£0.80-£2.40
Taste 2008	Auchtermuchty	Franchise	26	M-Tu 9-2 W-Sa 9am-11pm	100s	Evenings	Paid franchisee	Pizza	£1-£5.50
Campus 2003	Loanhead	Charity & limited company	40	M-Sa 9.30-2 Term times	500	Mornings & weekday lunchtimes	Paid staff, volunteers in café & on Board	Tray bakes, paninis, baked pots & hot meals	£0.30-£2.95

## Opening hours

- 4.22 Most of the cafés (9 out of 11) are open six days a week, usually Monday to Saturday, though some have different Saturday openings. Harbour Howff is open six days from Tuesday to Sunday. The exceptions to six days a week opening are Roseangle Café which is open Monday to Friday and Meldrum Café which is open Wednesday to Saturday. Roseangle Café is open later on a Friday because there is a cooking group in the large church hall upstairs, which makes a healthy lunch for 80-100 members of the public, and has stalls selling farmers' produce, books and Fair Trade produce. Instead of opening the café at the same time, the café manager holds a stall in the church hall to sell arts, crafts and home baking from the café, which helps to raise its profile.
- 4.23 One of the cafés in the Western Isles – An Clachan – is closed completely during the winter. However, it hopes to move to year-round opening by becoming a self-service operation. Another of the Western Isles cafés - Claddach Kirkibost - is open different hours in summer, extending its weekday opening into the evening and opening on a Sunday to offer Sunday brunches. This has proved popular with both locals and tourists. In addition, during the winter it offers a 'curry night' on the last Friday of every month, selling a range of takeaway curries and accompaniments. This has proved very popular with locals and visitors alike, with 40 curries sold on the January 2011 curry night.

## Premises

- 4.24 Seven of the cafés – Campus, Claddach Kirkibost, Meldrum, Tay-S-Tay, Taste, Harbour Howff and Shotts - are in local authority owned premises. Two are old schools, two are community centres, one a Town Hall and the other is in a building with other council projects. Some of these cafés pay a 'peppercorn rent' to the council (for example £1 or £50 a year).
- 4.25 The co-operative that runs An Clachan Tearoom recently purchased its premises and will lease them to the trading arm of the enterprise from next year. Ravenspoint also owns its premises. Coffee Exchange leases its premises on a commercial basis and Roseangle is based in premises owned by the church which runs the café.

## Management and staffing

- 4.26 Eight out of the eleven cafés were overseen by a volunteer management board or committee. The size of boards ranged from four people for Meldrum Café to 12 people for Campus Café. The other management arrangements in place were:
- Tay-S-Tay – line managed by a council officer
  - Taste – run as a franchise by a single operator (see para 3.26)
  - Roseangle is overseen by an informal volunteer management group drawn from the Church congregation and reporting to the Minister
- 4.27 One café – Taste – was run as a franchise in a community centre. The community centre management committee had some say over the contract, but

otherwise the franchisee was largely free to make all operational decisions on opening hours, menu, staffing, marketing and supplies.

- 4.28 Ten cafes employed at least one full or part-time paid member of staff but, in some cafes, staff worked across a number of parts of the enterprise (for example, in Ravenspoint, staff served the tearoom, hostel and shop), so it is difficult to give comparable staff numbers across all the cafes. One café employed a person who worked 15 hours paid and the remaining 15-20 hours on a voluntary basis as social security benefit rules limit how long he can work.
- 4.29 Only one café – Meldrum - employed no paid staff. Meldrum was run by a team of 50 volunteers who had each signed up for specific tasks. Volunteers were recruited by listing the various tasks that needed doing (for example, opening the café, baking, cashing up, clearing tables, washing dishes, preparing food etc.) and contacting local groups to ask for volunteers. This helped to ‘sell’ the role to potential volunteers because they could see that they would not have to do all the tasks and that they would not have sole responsibility for the operation of the café. The café is overseen by a volunteer from the management board who acts as café director, but the café largely runs itself on a day-to-day basis. Volunteers receive free drinks and half price food when they are in the café and tips pay for about three nights out a year.
- 4.30 Four other cafes – Campus, Roseangle, Harbour Howff and Shotts - also used volunteers. Roseangle recruited volunteers from the Church congregation and from the local council of voluntary services in Dundee. Both Harbour Howff and Shotts specifically set out to provide opportunities for volunteers with particular needs, for example, people with mental health problems or people with learning difficulties, who wanted to increase their skills and confidence.
- 4.31 One of the cafes in the Western Isles had found it hard to recruit volunteers for café work because, in a remote rural area where jobs are scarce, people tend to be looking for paid, rather than unpaid, work. In all the Western Isles cafes and Harbour Howff, the importance of providing job opportunities was emphasised by interviewees.
- 4.32 As both Claddach Kirkibost and Tay-S-Tay cafes had specific employment-related goals they therefore did not recruit volunteers for operational roles. Claddach Kirkibost established a nursery, food production business (Hebridean Kitchen) and the café to provide employment and child care opportunities for local women.
- 4.33 Tay-S-Tay takes on groups of six young people aged 16-19 every 16 weeks to train them in the hospitality industry. The young people are all unemployed and most have few qualifications. During the 16 weeks they learn how to take orders, cook, present and serve food, clear tables and wash up. They have the opportunity to gain up to five units of accredited training in food safety, essentials of catering, first aid, health and safety and cookery skills. They also learn soft skills such as punctuality and team working. One of the reasons Tay-S-Tay does not take on volunteers is because they are working with vulnerable young people and would need to have all volunteers disclosure checked.

4.34 In some cafes there had been occasional challenges in managing relationships among people working or volunteering in the café, or with customers. This is not a problem peculiar to community cafes but, particularly in small communities where 'everyone knows everyone else', it can add to the complexities of running a café and requires good management skills.

### Money and other support

4.35 All of the cafés have received at least some form of financial help in setting up their premises or running their operations. Two cafes have received this in the form of a commercial loan (Coffee Exchange) or small family loan (Taste). All of the other cafés have received help with either capital or revenue costs (or both) from a range of sources, including the BIG lottery, Fairer Scotland Fund, local authorities (either money or, for example, in-kind help with premises), LEADER (part of the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) to support rural development), trusts (for example the Tudor Trust, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the Robertson Trust), enterprise funding (for example from First Port, Highland and Islands Enterprise or Social Investment Scotland), planning gain, NHS funding, Bord na Gaidhlig and Lloyds TSB.

4.36 Tay-S-Tay receives funding from Skills Development Scotland which in turn is used to pay an allowance of £55 a week to their youth trainees. Payment of the money to Tay-S-Tay is according to strict targets and, if they are not met, funding is withdrawn. This means that recruitment of trainees must have regard to the likelihood of targets being achieved by each young person. At least two cafés said they had made use of the Future Jobs Fund, which is being phased out by March 2011. The fund has provided a useful source of financing the employment of people who had been unemployed for 38 weeks or more (but had previous experience of employment).

4.37 Tay-S-Tay had also received funding from the NHS Grow Well initiative to promote breastfeeding. It received approximately £27,000 to provide facilities for mothers to breastfeed and hosts groups for mothers and babies run by local Health Visitors.

4.38 Fife Council had funded Harbour Howff £1,000 per year to make its toilet facilities available to the public.

4.39 Shotts Healthy Eating Café received a small grant of £438 from CFHS in 2004 to purchase equipment to start up food coop. ENeRGI, the parent charity of Harbour Howff, also received a small grant of £3,000 from CFHS in 2008 to run cookery classes with people with mental health problems and community groups.

4.40 Other forms of non-financial help and support received by cafés included:

- business advice and support from First Port, Business Gateway, HIE (for example Managed Accounts and the Tourism Excellence initiative which help with training and networking),
- training from Environmental Health and REHIS (one café had used an Individual Learning Account to fund training)



- a kitchen provided by IKEA to the Campus Café
  - membership of the Co-operative Group which brings benefits in terms of regular and cost effective deliveries of supplies, which is particularly important in remote rural areas
  - help and support from partners, including local authorities, NHS, councils of voluntary service, the police and leisure services.
- 4.41 Very few of the cafes are aiming to make, or are making, a significant profit, with most breaking even or making just a small profit. For many, the aim is to break even and any surplus is put back into the parent charity or used to develop the business. An example of this is that Shotts Healthy Eating Café extended its opening into the evening, six months ago, and is hoping that this will generate enough income to employ another full-time member of staff.
- 4.42 The recent extension to the An Clachan shop was partly financed by profits from the shop, which have increased significantly in recent years, but the tearoom itself does not make a profit.
- 4.43 Meldrum Café is the only one that has made sufficient profit to reinvest in the community and in the development of the business (and is the only one without paid staff). For the past four years it has generated £13,000-£15,000 a year which has been paid, via its charitable parent body, to local community and voluntary groups, for example arts and crafts groups, youth groups, nurseries. In addition, in the coming year, it is investing approximately £28,000 from profits (along with £112,000 combined planning gain and LEADER funding) to re-develop the Town Hall.
- 4.44 The Taste Café in Auchtermuchty is run on a for-profit basis, helped by low rent, and financial information was not provided for reasons of commercial confidentiality. However, the franchisee ultimately aims to make enough profit to open his own café or restaurant.
- 4.45 Although most cafés are not making a large profit, five said they had significantly increased their turnover in recent years, including Claddach Kirkibost, Ravenspoint, Harbour Howff, Shotts and Tay-S-Tay. The perceived reasons for this varied. In the Western Isles it was thought to be partly due to increased tourists visiting the island in the last two years - possibly due to an increasing trend for holidays at home by UK residents, plus the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff, which has led to reduced ferry fares to, and between, the islands. In addition, in Claddach Kirkibost, Ravenspoint, Shotts and Tay-S-Tay it was felt that increased turnover was partly due to extended opening hours. Although Harbour Howff had increased its turnover for two years, most likely because of a more appropriate pricing strategy, it then suffered an unexplained drop in turnover last year.
- 4.46 A problem encountered by some cafés is that increasing turnover brings increased liability for tax, for example VAT. If cafés keep some of their profits in their trading arm for cash flow or reinvestment (rather than giving it all back to the charity), they can also be subject to corporation tax, so the tax burden can be significant.

## Pricing, menus and supplies

- 4.47 Across all the cafés, prices for food items ranged from 30 pence to £8.75. This reflects what one interviewee said: *“everything is below £10 because we’re a café not a restaurant”*.
- 4.48 In line with the charitable aims and community-focused ethos of most of the cafes, pricing policy was based on covering their costs and, if possible, making a surplus which could either be reinvested in the café or donated to the charitable parent body.
- 4.49 Some interviewees described how pricing had been a complex decision, involving weighing up the costs of supplies, their customers’ ability to pay and relationship with the competition. This can be particularly delicate in those rural areas which have a mix of tourist and local trade (because tourists are generally willing to pay more than locals) and when there is limited local competition (but competitors may be your friends or colleagues if in a small settlement). In an urban area, however, where competition is fiercer and more anonymous, there is more likelihood of community cafés basing their pricing on slightly undercutting the competition. One café, Roseangle, was aware of students being a key target group when deciding on its pricing. Another, Harbour Howff, had run into problems with managing the expectations of some customers, who perceived that because the café was a charity, it should offer ‘charity prices’. This approach initially led to the café making a loss, but this was turned around when a trained chef took over management. Getting the prices right is therefore important for the sustainability of cafés.
- 4.50 Most of the cafés visited had not applied for the Healthy Living Award, though some were aware of it. The Healthy Living Award rewards catering establishments for dishing up healthier food and helps customers know where to go for healthier food. Little changes are often what are required for catering establishments to attain the award, for example, reducing the amount of salt used in cooking, serving skimmed milk as opposed to whole milk, or serving thick chips as opposed to fries as they absorb less fat in the cooking process.
- 4.51 Only one café – Shotts Healthy Eating Café, had applied for the award and achieved it and displayed all the healthier items on its menu. However, most interviewees said they were interested in applying for the award for their café.
- 4.52 Although they did not have the Healthy Living Award, many cafés aimed to offer healthy food. Most offered home-made soup and filled rolls, sandwiches and toasties and some offered baked potatoes, fish dishes and salads. Many also offered paninis (less healthy because they are made with oil) and two cafés offered chips. Only three did not offer home baking. In most cafés, the most popular item was soup, sandwiches, or both.
- 4.53 Ravenspoint Tearoom aims to offer local dishes in future, such as Buntata’s Sgadan (herring and potatoes) and Ceann Cropaig (fish head stuffed with oatmeal). This would tie in with its focus on promoting Gaelic culture and history.

- 4.54 Two cafés were limited in the menus they could offer because of their facilities. These were Harbour Howff, which was awaiting a larger kitchen extraction fan and Coffee Exchange, which had no cooking facilities (only microwave and toasters). The Meldrum Café, although having food hygiene-trained volunteers, had made a decision not to use any eggs and unwashed salads or vegetables to minimise food risk.
- 4.55 Some cafés had a policy to buy local produce, for example, Claddach Kirkibost aimed, where possible, to buy firstly from North Uist, other Outer Hebrides islands, then Scotland. Roseangle and Taste cafés bought local fish and local farm produce. Some cafés, such as Ravenspoint and An Clachan, bought local home baking and both Claddach Kirkibost and Ravenspoint bought (or traded) produce from a local polytunnel. Many cafés also used Fair Trade produce such as tea, coffee, sugar and cocoa.
- 4.56 Otherwise, cafés purchased basic grocery and other supplies either from a local wholesaler, local supermarket, or in the case of An Clachan, from the Co-operative Group. Tay-S-Tay received all its supplies via the council's procurement system.

### Customers and marketing

- 4.57 The three cafés in the Western Isles and Harbour Howff in St Monans depend heavily on the tourist trade in summer for their main custom. An Clachan closes in the winter (but hopes to stay open on a year-round self service basis next year) and the others remain open for predominantly local trade. This is reflected in their average customer numbers - both Claddach Kirkibost cafés have tens of customers weekly in winter and hundreds weekly in summer. Harbour Howff doubles its customer numbers from winter to summer and An Clachan also receives hundreds of customers in summer. Both Claddach Kirkibost and An Clachan receive busloads of pre-booked visitors in summer.
- 4.58 The other cafés have a much more local clientele and their busiest times tend to be lunchtimes or specific days of the week, with a more even turnover throughout the year. Only Taste was busiest in the evenings, as it stayed open to serve young people in the village and also operated a pizza delivery and takeaway service.
- 4.59 Types of marketing included:
- leafleting the local area, including individual houses, notice boards, shops, tourist offices, business units, libraries and GP surgeries
  - advertising in the local press and tourist magazines and on ferries
  - word of mouth
  - signs
  - website and Facebook pages
  - offering specials and meal deals
  - local radio coverage
  - via the local councillor
  - Ravenspoint is on the international youth hostel website and booking system and gets advertising that way

- 4.60 Many cafés would like more help with marketing, for example, advice about maximising publicity through websites and/or Facebook pages, attracting more tourists and locals and getting cost-effective advertising. Marketing is not generally an activity that is funded (by public bodies and other funders) as readily as capital expenditure.
- 4.61 Customer feedback from all the cafés<sup>11</sup> was positive, as might be expected, as most of the customers who completed questionnaires were regulars. All the cafes were praised for their quality of food and friendly service and many also for their ambience and prices. Some were also praised for their locations (views from the café or convenience), their ethical values or the selection of food.
- 4.62 Suggestions for improvement reflected how positive the customers were, as most related to opening longer hours, having more space/seats or offering a greater selection of menu items.

### Other initiatives and links

- 4.63 Most cafés have other services to offer in addition to, or linked to the day-to-day running of the café. In some cases these are crucial to the survival of the café. Some cafés offer a takeaway or delivery service in the evening, for example the curry nights at Claddach Kirkibost. Others, such as Harbour Howff, Campus, Shotts, Claddach Kirkibost, An Clachan and Tay-S-Tay offer occasional or regular outside catering.
- 4.64 Ravenspoint Tearoom, Claddach Kirkibost Café and An Clachan Tearoom are all parts of multi-faceted social enterprises which offer a range of other services, including a shop (An Clachan and Ravenspoint), petrol station (An Clachan), crafts/gift shop (all three), hostel (Ravenspoint) and production kitchen, office suite and nursery (Claddach Kirkibost). Ravenspoint and Claddach Kirkibost also offer room hire, displays of local art and courses or programmes of events linked to the culture and history of the islands.
- 4.65 Harbour Howff, Coffee Exchange, Shotts and Roseangle are all part of larger charities which had other projects or initiatives alongside, or linked to, the cafes. These include the Friday lunch at Roseangle, a skate park run by the same charity that runs Coffee Exchange, the mental health drop-in run by ENeRGI and a food co-op and fruit tuck service offered from Shotts healthy living centre. The healthy living centre also provides health-related activities including group-based support, sexual health drop-in, dancing and football.
- 4.66 Campus Café is moving into a newly built log cabin in May 2011 which will also house a soft play area, sensory room, cinema, charity shop, dance studio, community laundry, sound and vision area and tuition room for gardening. It is hoped that 6 new social enterprises and 15 new jobs will be created. Café opening hours will be extended from term-times to year round.
- 4.67 Roseangle has a gallery space adjacent to the café which is run by the café manager, a fine arts graduate. The aim is to have regular exhibitions featuring

---

<sup>11</sup> An Clachan was closed for the winter so no customer feedback was obtained.

local artists, which it is hoped will be of mutual benefit to the artist and the café. Roseangle sells arts and crafts at 20% commission, which brings in extra income. Coffee Exchange also sells crafts made in the Ugandan villages it supports. Both Roseangle and Coffee Exchange have also held occasional musical evenings in their cafes.

4.68 The Meldrum Café has recently taken over the management of the whole town hall (the café operates from one room in the hall) and currently receives income from room hires. The plan, for which it has received funding, is to refurbish the whole Town Hall and provide a quiet/meeting room, book swap, larger, upstairs meeting room and kitchen and a lift. There are ideas to hold themed days and festivals, for which more volunteers are needed.

### Future vision and support needs

4.69 Café managers and board members were asked about their vision for the café in five years time and what help and support they would need to achieve that vision. Most of the interviewees had fairly modest ideas about where they would like the café to be in five years, reflecting the fact that some were struggling to break even. Most wanted to be busier, more financially viable and able to offer more to their communities, customers, staff and or volunteers/trainees.

4.70 Three cafés said they did not need any help or support. Of the remaining eight, six said they needed help with marketing. One café manager said it was hard to get funding for marketing, and easier for capital projects. Two cafes (Claddach Kirkibost and Ravenspoint) had been taken on by HIE as a 'managed account' which entitled them to help with marketing and training, for example through the Tourism Excellence initiative. For Claddach Kirkibost this had enabled them to travel to other rural areas in Scotland to visit and learn from similar enterprises.

4.71 Three cafés – Campus, Roseangle and Shotts - had a Facebook page and others had a website or page, including Ravenspoint, Harbour Howff, Coffee Exchange, Meldrum and Shotts. Some cafes would like help and support with developing or maximising the use of these media.

4.72 Other types of help and support needed were:

- networking and learning from other cafés and other social and tourist enterprises
- finance, for example taxation advice and accountancy skills
- recruiting people with the right skills and providing training and resources to get the best out of board members, other volunteers and trainees
- developing a healthy menu and/or applying for the Healthy Living Award or linking what they are doing to health initiatives/policy
- options for different legal and enterprise structures and the pros and cons of each
- self evaluation to demonstrate impact and support funding bids

## Top tips/learning points

4.73 Interviewees were asked about the learning points that they would pass on to others as their 'top tips'. Their tips ranged from considering your overall strategy, to staffing issues, finance and marketing, and are listed below.

### **Overall strategy**

1. Make sure that everyone (or a majority) in the community buys in to the café
2. Be well organised and have a good business plan
3. Be clear about your strategic aims and how it fits in with the target audience

### **Finance**

4. Get the budget right
5. Have a real understanding of how each of the funding elements works and get the funding in place before you start

### **Legal structure/set-up**

6. Get the legal structure right from the start
7. Be aware of the potential for delay in dealing with public bodies, caused by bureaucracy and red tape.
8. Talk to another café that has been successful.

### **Staffing/volunteers/skills**

9. Get a good mix of flexible, hard working staff who have an interest in food and are friendly and volunteers who can bring new ideas (to the board)
10. Recruit excellent, outward-going staff who can communicate with customers
11. Make sure you have the right skills, for example sourcing produce, menus and pricing etc
12. Provide training for volunteers and employ trustworthy workers.
13. Get all the training in place for your staff before you start.
14. Don't have paid staff – the margins are too tight.

### **Marketing/targeting**

15. Research the demand and competition, and have 'a few strings to your bow' - offer something else to help make money
16. Think about who you are targeting and what you are trying to deliver.
17. Try to be individual and differentiate from other cafes.
18. Promote your area as an attractive place to visit, based on its outstanding environment, history and culture
19. Get customer feedback and provide what they want
20. Get your marketing right

### **Food and pricing**

21. Offer a good, broad menu, reasonably priced and with good service
22. Have a good, clean environment for food preparation
23. Offer home baking

## Overall

24. Be prepared for hard work and the unexpected and have a good sense of humour!

## 5 Conclusions

5.1 The objectives of this research, in brief, were to:

- research 12 community cafés
- profile the 12 cafés, including their operations, menus, pricing and customer base
- describe support provided to cafés and identify any further support or training that they require;
- identify the impact of cafés on staff, volunteers and the local community;
- identify best practice/learning points for community cafés

5.2 The 12 cafés have provided extremely useful information which will help to develop an understanding of how they work, the pressures facing cafés and their support needs for the future.

5.3 The importance of cafés to local communities is demonstrated by the data on impact that was gathered. Community cafes:

- offer a place to meet, a focal point for the community, bring people together who might not otherwise meet.
- help the economy of the local area by providing jobs, attracting tourists and buying local produce
- promote positive mental health by reducing social isolation caused by living alone, bereavement, mental health problems, learning difficulties and/or living in a remote area
- provide opportunities for volunteers and trainees to build skills and confidence
- provide an opportunity for offering healthier food at low cost to customers

5.4 However, community cafés are also fragile enterprises and are mostly breaking even or making a small profit. Between them the 12 cafés identified a range of support needs, including:

- marketing to extend their customer base and reduce seasonality
- accessing training, for example, food presentation and food hygiene
- providing a healthy menu and applying for the Healthy Living Award
- networking and learning from others – they also suggested ‘top tips’ for other cafés
- options for different legal and enterprise structures
- self-evaluation
- management and finance, including taxation issues
- recruiting and getting the best out of board members and other volunteers

5.5 There were no major differences between rural and urban cafés. They may be subject to slightly different pressures in different areas, for example a reliance

on tourist trade, or the difficulties of operating in small communities. However on the whole, they had more in common than apart, for example, their fragility, similar support needs and positive impact on communities.

- 5.6 As only one of the cafés had already achieved the Healthy Living Award, it suggests there is great potential for extending healthy options and publicity about healthy eating to other cafés across Scotland through support for applying for the Healthy Living Award. This, in turn, could help with their marketing and sustainability.



## Appendix 1: Café profiles

1	An Clachan Tearoom	Harris	Western Isles
2	Claddach Kirkibost Cafe	North Uist	Western Isles
3	Ravenspoint Tearoom	Lewis	Western Isles
4	Coffee Exchange	Dundee	Dundee City
5	Roseangle Café Arts by the Bridge	Dundee	Dundee City
6	Tay-s-Tay	Dundee	Dundee City
7	Meldrum Cafe	Oldmeldrum	Aberdeenshire
8	Harbour Howff Cafe	St Monans	Fife
9	Taste Cafe	Auchtermuchty	Fife
10	Campus Cafe	Loanhead	Midlothian
11	Shotts Healthy Living Cafe	Shotts	North Lanarkshire

## Cafe profile: An Clachan Tearoom

Leverburgh, Harris, Western Isles

Urban-rural classification: Remote rural

**Type of organisation:** Community co-operative

**Size:** Seats 50

**Strengths:** Above shop and near ferry, well established.

**Training & support needs:** None identified



- An Clachan Tearoom is located above the An Clachan shop, in Leverburgh, on the south coast of Harris. The shop and the tearoom are run by Co-chomann na Hearadh, a community co-operative.
- It is 15 minutes walk from the Harris ferry which goes to Berneray and links Harris to the south islands in the Western Isles chain.
- The tearoom is open Monday to Saturday 10-4, April to October.
- The main purpose of the tearoom is to provide a facility for tourists and locals.

### History and purpose

Community co-operatives were set up all over the Highlands and Islands in the 1970s to help combat economic decline, but many did not last. In Harris the Leverburgh shop was threatened with closure so in 1979 the community decided to run a shop themselves and set-up a co-op to do so. The co-op decided to concentrate on a shop, craft business and tearoom right from the start (others focused on, for example fish farming) and all three parts of the business are still running. The purpose of the tearoom was largely to provide a facility for tourists and locals.

The co-op is a member of the Co-operative Group and therefore gets regular supplies from the Group. It sells Fair Trade produce and a wide range of fresh, frozen and chilled produce and groceries. It also sells petrol, hardware, maps, books and newspapers and provides tourist information and a community notice board.

The shop and tearoom kitchen have recently been re-furbished and renovated with the help of additional funding (see Money Matters, below). The loan has also enabled An Clachan to purchase the premises. In the near future the co-op will split into two bodies – one of which will own the premises and the other, a trading company, will lease it.

### Management and staffing

- 2 full-time paid managers run the shop, tearoom and craft shop
- There are 7 other full-time staff and extra temporary staff in summer. The tearoom uses 2 of the paid staff in the summer.
- Policy and strategy matters are decided by a board of 8 directors who are volunteers.
- The board meets every two months.
- There are no volunteers working in the tearoom or shop.
- It is difficult to get volunteers because it is a small population and there is not much employment. People want paid work, or they are past the age when they want to volunteer. The population of Leverburgh was 200 at the last Census

### Money matters

Up until now, the tearoom has been subsidised by the shop, as it does not make enough to break even. The tearoom benefits the shop by attracting people in who might buy produce. From summer 2011 the tearoom will be run on a self-service basis, with a till shared with the adjacent craft shop. The tearoom will continue to sell soup, pre-filled rolls and home baking. It is hoped that this will enable it to stay open all year round.

The turnover of the whole business (shop, tearoom and crafts) is about £14,000 per week and up to £30,000 in the peak of summer. The annual turnover was just short of £1 million in 2010.

Co-Chomunn recently received a 10 year loan of £100,000 from Social Investment Scotland, which invests in social enterprises

### Menu

- An Clachan Tearoom sells home-made soup, filled rolls, sandwiches and home baking.
- The tearoom is supplied by the shop and by local people who do the home baking.
- There are only occasional problems with supplies, for example if the ferry is cancelled due to bad weather.
- The most popular items are home baking and home made soup.
- Pricing is based on covering the overheads but not making too

with a track record of profit. This in turn attracted a grant of £50,000 from HIE and An Clachan will be donating at least £50,000 from its own profits. The money was used to extend and refurbish the shop, renovate the tearoom kitchen and put in a disabled toilet and lift.

Being a member of the Co-operative Group has been essential to the survival of the Harris co-op as the Group charges a flat rate tariff for delivery. This has been a big asset for the remote rural community enterprise.

much profit – they do not want to price the locals out and pricing is also sensitive because of the local competition – there is a restaurant on the pier and a mobile outlet which sells hot filled rolls. In a small community it is important for all the businesses to thrive.

**Links/other initiatives**

The shop also sells petrol on a commission basis, supplied by a garage in Tarbert. Without this it would be a long drive for local people to get fuel. However, the shop does not make much money from this – it is for the benefit of the community.

The tearoom does occasional outside catering, for example a buffet for the agricultural fair in July and for occasional meetings held there.

**Our vision:**

***To continue the tearoom as a small part of a larger business and to break even with the new self service arrangement.***

**Challenges and issues**

- **Strengths:** the tearoom is a well established facility for the local community and tourists.
- **Challenges:** sustaining the tearoom through the seasonal nature of the tearoom business.
- **Opportunities:** to develop the tearoom on a self service basis and stay open all year. In about four years An Clachan hopes to have enough surplus to help to create more jobs by providing loans for new businesses.
- **Threats:** there is no point in trying directly compete with the other suppliers in Leverburgh as it would be a threat to all of them. A longer-term threat is the sustainability of the population of Harris, which was 2,222 at the 1991 Census but declined to 1,600 by 2001. Many jobs are migrating to Stornoway and the local primary school which serves the whole of South Harris has only 20 children.

**Support and training needs**

➤ None identified.

**Customers & marketing:**

Approximately 75% of the customers in the tearoom are tourists and 25% locals. The tearoom is busier when ferries come in and when tour buses stop there. Some bus companies book in advance and a few do not. There is an average of 3-4 buses a week in the summer.

The tearoom and shop are marketed by advertising in the local paper, on the ferry, in tourist magazines, via Visit Scotland and by word of mouth.

The last two summers have been noticeably busier which is thought to be partly due to the RET (Road Equivalent Tariff, a Scottish government policy which made ferry fares cheaper).

**Community impact**

The shop is a lifeline for the community – without it there would be a 52 mile round trip for basic provisions, e.g. milk.

*“The community relies on An Clachan – a lot of folk couldn’t live here without it. It is two-way – we depend on them”* (Chair of Board)

Although fewer locals than tourists use the tearoom, it is a good facility for locals, for example locals sometimes use the tearoom if a morning delivery of produce or newspapers to the shop is delayed, or if they are waiting for the bus home.

**Top tips:**

1. Have a good, clean environment for food preparation
2. Offer home baking
3. Have a few strings to your bow – other enterprises that bring in money

**Research sources:** Interview with Chair of Board and one member of staff.

## Cafe profile: Claddach Kirkibost Cafe

Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist, Western Isles

Urban-rural classification: Remote rural

**Type of organisation:** Charitable trust and trading company

**Size:** Seats 30 inside + overspill room and 12 outside in summer

**Strengths:** High quality food and service, stunning views, friendly staff.

**Training & support needs:** Marketing



- The Café is located in the village of Claddach Kirkibost on the south west coast of North Uist.
- It is run by a charitable trust which also runs a food production business, Hebridean Kitchen, a small gift shop, a nursery and a room hire, IT and office facilities service.
- The cafe is open Monday to Saturday 11am-4pm with extended evening opening in summer. From April to September 2010 it started to open 10.30-2.30 for Sunday brunch.
- The main purpose of the café, nursery and food production are to provide employment

### History and purpose

The charity 'Urachadh Uibhist' (which means revitalising Uist) was started in 1995 to create and sustain employment and training opportunities in the area, especially for women. The aims are to relieve poverty and promote employment and education. Membership was open to anyone living on North Uist or nominated by a North Uist resident.

Some years were spent fundraising before the Claddach Kirkibost Centre was opened in an old school in June 2000 with the help of funding from the BIG lottery, local council and enterprise agency, European Regional Development and Rural Challenge Funds and funding from Lloyds TSB and Children in Need. The nursery was started because, at that time, childcare vouchers were provided but there was nowhere for 20 miles that they could be spent.

In 2007 further significant capital funding was received from a wide variety of sources to extend and improve the kitchen, nursery and café, and to develop the Hebridean Kitchen food production business and brand, which makes chutney, jam and tablet. In 2002 the charity created a trading subsidiary for the café and food production.

### Management and staffing

- *Run by a board of 8 directors who are volunteers*
- *The café and kitchen employ a part-time food enterprise manager, 1 full-time and 1 part-time cook, 2 part-time waitresses, 2 part-time assistants, 1 cleaner and up to 5 additional temporary staff in summer.*
- *The other parts of the charity also employ staff, for example the nursery employs 7 people.*
- *All the waiting staff speak Gaelic*

### Money matters

Turnover in 2008 was about £68,000 and over £100,000 last year. Turnover has increased dramatically (doubled in 4 years) but this means the trading company is now VAT registered, so paying more tax. This was a dilemma when considering winter opening, because it would take the café over the VAT threshold. The centre, although a social enterprise, also has to pay corporation tax.

Everything is under £10 because it is a café not a restaurant. Pricing is based on the raw ingredients plus up to around 70%. Pricing is a fine balance between making it affordable for locals, but knowing that tourists can pay a bit more, and trying to make a profit.

The centre receives revenue funding from a variety of sources, which 2010-11 includes Esmee

### Menu

- The café offers soups, hot and cold filled rolls, scones, oatcakes, baked potatoes, open sandwiches, salads, toasties and home baking.
- Prices range from £3 for soup to £7.50 for open sandwich/baked potato with local salmon.
- In summer there is also a Sunday brunch menu with prices ranging from £1.50 for a toasted bagel to £5.45 for a bagel with smoked trout, organic crowdie, salad and home-made chilli jam.
- Most food is cooked from scratch and as much as possible is local to North Uist, the Hebrides or Scotland. The coffee and tea is supplied by a specialist shop in Perth. The café uses seasonal produce as much as possible and Fair Trade tea, coffee and

<p>Fairbairn Foundation, Lloyds TSB, the local council (through a service level agreement), Bord na Gaidhlig and HIE. The council owns the building which is leased for a peppercorn rent of £1 a year.</p>	<p>sugar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several local people grow vegetables and supply the kitchen on a paid or barter basis.</li> <li>• On the last Friday of the month the café offers home cooked curries to take away. In January there were 40 curries sold.</li> </ul>
---	--

<p><b>Links/other initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evening classes and computer classes are offered from the centre by the local council.</li> <li>• The nursery has a Gaelic medium unit.</li> <li>• The office facilities are useful for local people, for example crofters, who may need to submit tax returns etc. This year locals will also be able to complete their Census forms online at the centre.</li> <li>• Art work is also displayed from time to time – both in the café and, for example in 2009, as part of the Art on the Map initiative – part of the Year of Homecoming.</li> <li>• The centre organised and hosted a summer programme of cultural events including ranger walks, talks, music and dancing.</li> <li>• The café occasionally does outside catering for events and private parties, for example, two weddings last year.</li> <li>• There are links with the nursery children, for example they grow some of the salad produce used in the café.</li> </ul>
--

<p><b>Our vision:</b>  <i>To be financially viable and not so dependent on funding; to be slightly bigger and recruit and maintain year-round staff.</i></p>
--

<p><b>Challenges and opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths:</b> quality of food and service (from comments book), the location and stunning views, the atmosphere, friendliness of staff and value for money</li> <li>• <b>Challenges:</b> maintaining the standards of food quality and service when very busy; getting the right staff (especially temps) who really care; keeping the business going in winter</li> <li>• <b>Opportunities:</b> more development like curry nights and Sunday brunch, opening longer in summer, themed events, e.g. Mothers Day, St Andrews, Christmas</li> <li>• <b>Threats:</b> the economic situation; the cost of fuel which affect every aspect of island life and is not sustainable. Other outlets opening up.</li> </ul>
---

<p><b>Support and training needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Help with marketing. It is hard to get funding for this, and easier for capital projects. The centre has become a 'managed account' with HIE which offers funding for training.</li> <li>➤ Networking with similar enterprises (already had some help with this from HIE Tourism Excellence Initiative). It can be isolated from other mainland businesses on the Western Isles.</li> <li>➤ Help with applying for Healthy Living Award</li> </ul>
--

<p><b>Customers &amp; marketing:</b></p> <p>The customers are mainly locals in winter and tourists in summer. It is very busy in summer. The quietest times are January and February, however, the café decided to stay open in winter because of demand from locals. There are an average of 750 customers per week in summer and 85 in winter. In summer the meeting room is sometimes used for people having coffee and cake if the main café is full.</p> <p>Marketing so far has been small scale, with adverts in the local press and Visit Scotland publications/websites, the Hebridean magazine and by word of mouth.</p> <p><b>Community impact</b></p> <p>It is the only meeting and eating place this side of Uist. People enjoy the food and come back. It provides a good service for local people, e.g. curry nights.</p> <p><b>What do you like about the café?</b></p> <p><i>"The view, excellent service, relaxed atmosphere"; "Good food, hygiene, view, community feel"; "Portions not too big, good selection, friendly staff"; "Convenient to where we live"; "Very impressed with the efficient waitress today"; "Local, peaceful, beautiful. Excellent service and cleanliness, well priced, real flowers on the table." "The food, service, ambience and browsing local produce. The free</i></p>
--

*tablet also delights!”*

**What could be improved?** *“Sometimes local people can’t get in in the summer” “Open longer hours and weekends in summer”; “My husband would like more meat on the menu”; “Development of takeaway possibilities, several child-friendly items/prices and chips – occasionally!”; “More elderly-friendly seats”; “Don’t grow too big and impersonal and become too much a business and not a facility for Uist people”*

**Impact on community?**

*“It is a focal point for the community”; “It’s made a big difference. North Uist, especially the west side, is lacking places to eat and meet people. Also the café uses local food therefore is supporting local producers”; “Somewhere to meet, eat, learn, children catered for”.*

**Top tips:**

1. Get a good mix of flexible, hard working staff who have an interest in food and are friendly and volunteers who can bring new ideas (to the board)
2. Research the demand and competition, and have a few strings to your bow.
3. Be prepared for hard work and the unexpected and have a good sense of humour!

**Research sources:** Interviews with Board Secretary, Food Production Manager and conversations with seven other staff. Eight customer feedback questionnaires.

## Cafe profile: Ravenspoint Tearoom

Kershader, Lewis, Western Isles

Urban-rural classification: Remote rural

**Type of organisation:** Charity, limited company

**Size:** Seats 20 maximum, but being extended to seat 30+

**Strengths:** Next to shop and hostel, Gaelic courses, extension.

**Training & support needs:** marketing, healthy food choices, accountancy skills, food hygiene



- Ravenspoint Tearoom is located in the South Lochs area, about 25 miles south of Stornoway.
- The co-operative runs a shop and 14-bed hostel in the same building, which also hosts an archive, museum and the Islands Book Trust.
- The tearoom is open 9am-6pm Monday to Friday, and 10am-5pm on Saturday.
- The main purpose of the tearoom and other facilities is to promote community development.
- The charity has recently been awarded a BIG lottery grant of around £0.25 million to build a new café overlooking the loch, which will seat at least 30 people

### History and purpose

The Co-chomunn na Pairc (Park Community Co-operative) which runs the tearoom started life as one of a range of community co-operatives set up in the Highlands and Islands in the 1970s, by the then Highlands and Islands development board (now HIE). The tearoom, shop and hostel occupy an old school building. The shop is the only one for the 400-strong population of the South Lochs area and is therefore a vital service. The tearoom is currently a small area in the shop. The main purpose of the shop, hostel and tearoom is to promote community development.

The Co-Chomunn has recently been designated by HIE as a 'managed account', which reflects that they are a social enterprise with a track record of, and prospects for, growth. This opens up access to consultancy and training.

Adjacent to the building housing the shop, tearoom, hostel, archive and museum is a council-owned building which houses offices, a playgroup and community meeting room.

### Management and staffing

- *Pairc Community Co-op is run by a Board of 5 voluntary Directors, and meets once a month.*
- *The board would like more members, particularly someone with accountancy skills.*
- *There are 4 paid staff who work through-out the year. In summer there are 7 paid staff including young people working on a temporary basis. Over the year, staffing is equivalent to 2 full time.*
- *The staff run the tearoom, shop and hostel.*
- *There has been a reduction in regular volunteers, as local people want paid work, or they are retired or not seeking work.*
- *However, several members of the community are ad hoc volunteers for particular jobs, for example, building the porch. In addition, the present manager puts in a lot of unpaid hours.*

### Money matters

The shop, hostel, tearoom and room hires together are just about breaking even with turnover of approximately £100,000. The turnover has doubled in the last 2 years, but costs have increased as well because of longer opening. The plan is to double turnover again in next 4 years. The co-op makes a profit in summer but not in winter. A subsidiary trading company has been set up for the café and shop, which separates it from the charity, but any profits will go back to the charity.

The co-op has received funding for an Operations Manager for two years and is currently recruiting

### Menu

- Home made soup, toasted sandwiches, filled rolls, chicken, fish or sausage with chips & salad.
- Prices range from £1.20 for scones or pancakes to £8.75 for fish, chips & salad
- Favourite items – soup and toasties.
- No alcohol served – community survey showed majority against.
- Would like to join and get supplies from the Co-operative Society, but there is a moratorium on new members at present. Especially important for fresh fruit and veg as would be able to get regular supply delivered.

to what is planned as a permanent post. They will be able to expand the shop when the new café is built and increase the range of produce.

The co-op has received income from grants for Gaelic courses, the Council (capital for expanding shop) and the BIG lottery for café extension.

Currently have to go and buy it in Co-op in Stornoway.

- Local polytunnel and other local suppliers provide some fruit and veg in summer.
- Pricing is based on Stornoway prices plus 10% (approximately)

#### **Links/other initiatives**

The shop has wireless network and a computer for free use.

Gaelic courses have been offered, assisted by a grant from Bord na Gaidhlig. They are run from the hostel and provide opportunities for people to improve their oral fluency in Gaelic through visits in the local community to people's homes, the school and church.

The Angus MacLeod archive is a rich source of local history which, along with the museum, attracts visitors who wish to learn about local history and genealogy.

There is a new art gallery nearby and the shop also sells arts and crafts which bring commission.

The Post Office runs an outreach service from the building next door on a Monday and Friday.

One of the board members drives the local community bus which is based at Ravenspoint.

#### **Our vision:**

***To have more local people and visitors coming in and to offer a wider range of food, especially local traditional dishes. To be a café seating 30+ people attractive to locals and tourists and able to take on more community events and functions.***

#### **Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** Last year won Gaelic Business of the Year Award. Marketing of South Lochs as a destination and offering the Gaelic courses. A go-ahead board of Directors. Few places on this side of island to get a cup of tea any time of year. Good place for locals to meet, very friendly.
- **Challenges:** It is off the beaten track and a fragile enterprise. Also, the choice on the menu is currently limited.
- **Opportunities:** Extended café offers new opportunities, for example, to get bus tours to stop here. Currently they stop at the nearby inn, but when the new café is open, there will be more room. There is also an idea to build a jetty which would allow visiting boats. Paicr Community Co-op has money for consultancy in relation to healthier food, but needs to balance this with what would sell. There is some good local produce e.g. venison, fish.
- **Threats:** Having to close down because of lack of money – this threat is receding because the population is increasing again – the school roll has increased from 19 to 30 in the last few years.

#### **Support and training needs**

- Staff training in food hygiene, specialist training for the new manager
- Help with the menu – to prepare and present healthier food well
- Marketing of café as a well-planned, well presented place to be, more marketing on the mainland to sell the area and this place specifically
- Management and financial skills

#### **Customers & marketing:**

Customers in winter are mainly local people and in summer supplemented by tourists. Lunchtimes are busiest in winter – from 11am when the newspapers come in. In summer it is busy from 10-3.

The café has to offer something distinctive because it is off the beaten track, and there are opportunities to do this once the new extension is open. The Board has made sure there have been lots of articles in the Gazette. Also marketing is done through signs at the road junction, a website and leaflets placed at local tourist offices in Tarbert and Stornoway. Hostel bookings are partly handled via the SYHA booking system, which is world-wide.



**Community impact**

The shop is a lifeline for the community – without it there would be a 28 mile round trip to Stornoway for shopping trips. It was small and run-down, but has doubled its turnover since May 2009.

In addition, it provides employment in a place with very few jobs – one person who works there would have to go to Stornoway for a job otherwise, which would be difficult to fit around her childcare.

The tearoom provides a place for local people to meet and have a chat and it is the only place in the area serving 400 people where you can get a cup of tea year round.

**Customer feedback****What do you like about the café?**

*“Being able to come here whilst waiting for the bus home. It has made a difference because it aids communications with other people in the community that you would not see otherwise”*

*“It’s very handy and offers nice food and friendly people”*

*“They will cater for your tastes”*

**What could be improved?** *“It is good that it will be bigger”.*

**Impact on community?** *“It is a good place to meet”. “It provides a central point for many to meet, chat and have a bite to eat or a cup of tea in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.”*

**Top tips:**

1. Recruit excellent, outward-going staff who can communicate with customers
2. Promote South Lochs as an attractive place to visit, based on its outstanding environment, history and Gaelic culture
3. Offer a good, broad menu, reasonably priced and with good service

**Research sources:** Interviews with Chair of Board and Manager and two staff. Two customer feedback questionnaires.

## Cafe profile: Coffee Exchange

20 A Exchange Street, Dundee

Urban-rural classification: Large urban

**Type of organisation:** Charity

**Size:** Seats 34

**Strengths:** Good quality coffee and home baking, quiet and comfortable ambience, friendly staff.

**Training & support needs:** none identified



- Coffee Exchange is run by a charity, the Capstone Trust, which raises money for development projects in Uganda.
- The café is located in central Dundee, close to the shops, railway station and offices
- The cafe is open 9am-4pm Monday to Saturday.
- The main purpose of the café is to raise money for projects in Uganda to provide employment and to provide a 'shop front' for the charity in Dundee.

### History and purpose

The café was opened in 2006 by Capstone Projects, a Dundee-based charity which raises money for projects in Uganda. The charity has also recently opened another Coffee Exchange café in Kirriemuir and runs a skate-park project in a deprived area of Dundee which offers homework clubs and skateboarding.

The café was set up to make money for the projects in Uganda. It is run on a commercial basis but all profits go to the charity.

### Management and staffing

- *Capstone Projects is run by a board of directors which comprises 7-8 members. These members all used to belong to the same church, but the charity is not now a church-based charity.*
- *The board meets monthly or more often if particular issues arise. The group is close knit and meetings are a formality – there is a lot of informal discussion in between meetings.*
- *The café employs a full-time paid manager, a part-time employee who works 25 hours funded by a government training scheme and two part-time staff on a Saturday (for a total of 14 hours).*
- *There is one volunteer who is gaining work experience on a Saturday.*

### Money matters

The café premises are leased on a commercial basis. The café has a commercial loan to help with set-up costs.

The budget is to break even by bringing in £1800 per week – it usually fluctuates between £1400 and £1800. There is no income other than takings. Any surplus would be donated to the charity projects in Uganda.

The café has grown from being run by one manager and volunteers to being able to pay a full-time manager and Saturday staff.

Pricing was decided by looking at other cafes in the area and taking into account costs. All baked potato fillings are priced the same so as to keep pricing simple.

The charity receives substantial financial donations from individuals which go to Capstone Projects.

### Menu

- The facilities in the café do not allow oven or hob cooking, so all food is prepared elsewhere, or can be made with equipment including microwave and toasted sandwich maker.
- The menu includes soup, toasties and paninis, filled rolls and baguettes, baked potatoes, toast, crisps and home baking.
- Prices range from £0.65 for toast and jam to £3.90 for a panini.
- There are various deals e.g. soup, sandwich and hot drink for £5.00.
- The café specialises in good quality coffee supplied by a specialist coffee merchant in Perth. Staff have been trained by a barista.
- The café uses Fair Trade tea, coffee and hot chocolate. Supplies come from the local areas, for example Fife Creamery for soup.

**Links/other initiatives**

- The charity also runs a skate park in Dundee which has received BIG lottery funding.
- The projects in Uganda which are funded by Capstone Projects include child development, skills training, medical centre, primary school and micro-finance.
- The café runs a few acoustic nights each year on summer evenings and all money made from them goes straight to the charity.
- A second Coffee Exchange is opening in mid March 2011 in Kirriemuir

**Our vision:**

***To be busier and making a profit for Capstone Projects.***

**Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** Good reputation for coffee. Coffee Exchange has won a couple of awards for good new eating places. One of the directors won a Businesswoman of the Year award for setting up the café. The café is known for being quiet and a good place to sit and read or study. Some people have meetings there. Good home baking.
- **Challenges:** Customer numbers fluctuate, limitations of kitchen area – e.g. cannot make bacon rolls. Location of the café is just off the high street and customers have to seek it out.
- **Opportunities:** Meal deals have brought in some new customers. Could promote it for groups to use in the evenings as the café is not used after 5pm.
- **Threats:** Competition from other coffee outlets. Unpredictable customer numbers.

**Support and training needs**

➤ None identified

**Customers & marketing:**

Busiest times are weekday lunchtimes 12-2pm and throughout Saturday. There are approximately 350-500 customers a week.

Marketing has been done by the Factory Skatepark's marketing director. This has been through fundraising events, the skate park, word of mouth etc.

Some customers are aware of the ethos of the café and make charitable donations from time-to-time.

**Customer feedback:**

**What do you like about the café?** *"Quiet, clean, warm and friendly"; "ethical values and fair trade"; "good coffee and service"; "light space, good prices"*.

**What could be improved?** *"More sofas"*.

**Impact on community?** *"Friendly staff cheer my day" "Brightens the city centre of Dundee"*

**Top tips:**

1. Think about who you are targeting and what you are trying to deliver.
2. Try to be individual and differentiate from other cafes.

**Research sources:** Interview with Café Manager and a member of the Board of Directors. Further comments from another board Member. Seven customer feedback questionnaires.

# Cafe profile: Roseangle Café Arts by the Bridge

130 Perth Road, Dundee

Urban-rural classification: Large urban



**Type of organisation:** Charity, run by local churches

**Size:** Seats 26

**Strengths:** Ambience, gallery space, prices, location

**Training & support needs:** Marketing to increase customer base

- Roseangle Café is located in the west end of Dundee near the university and art college
- The cafe is open 10am-4pm Monday to Thursday and 1-4pm Friday.
- The café was started by, and is in premises owned by, Dundee West End Churches
- The café also offers local artists a display space and opportunity to sell art and crafts

**History and purpose**

Roseangle Café is located in the west end of Dundee in the premises of a large church. The building also contains two large halls, offices, toilets, a catering kitchen and the café with its own kitchen and gallery space. The church undertook a major refurbishment of the main premises, which was completed in 2002, and started work on the lower floor and cafe in 2008. The café opened in June 2010 during Dundee’s West Fest. The purpose of the refurbishment was to open up the church to the community and to provide a meeting space for people in the community to come together.

The premises were developed by a union of six local churches who jointly made a large capital outlay for the refurbishment and also received grant funding from various trusts. The main refurbishment was completed in 2002 and the café in 2010.

**Management and staffing**

- *Established June 2010*
- *Overseen by volunteer, informal management group from church congregation*
- *Employs full-time café manager and part-time cook (10 hours pw)*
- *Around 8 volunteers help in the café*
- *Up to two volunteers help each day for 2-3 hours, depending on demand*
- *Volunteers were recruited from church congregations or Dundee Voluntary Action*
- *Café manager is an arts graduate and runs the gallery as well*
- *Part time cook has experience of running her own restaurant and is on the management group*

**Money matters**

Income is from the café takings and commission of 20% on arts and crafts sales. A one-year grant from the Robertson Trust pays half of the café manager’s salary.

The aim is to cover the costs of the supplies, heating and lighting in the short term and pay the full salary of the café manager in the longer term. Ultimately any future profits will be invested into the church or charities.

The church (along with five other churches in the area) paid out a large capital sum towards the refurbishment, which was supplemented by another grant from the Robertson Trust and by other fundraising.

Pricing is aimed at being a bit cheaper than other nearby venues.

**Menu**

- Food items include daily fresh home-made soup, daily special (e.g. pasta bake), vegetarian options, home-baking.
- The menu is kept short, fresh and simple, as the café is a new venture.
- The most popular item is the soup and sandwich deal for £4.50.
- Food prices range from £1 to £3.45.
- Supplies are bought from the local supermarket, the farm stall (see below) and a local fishmonger who delivers fresh and smoked fish.
- The café uses fair trade groceries, where possible.
- Home baking is made by self-employed cook who also makes the daily soup and special – usually in the church kitchen.
- There are seasonal offerings, for example, spooky Hallowe’en cookies and Christmas clottie dumpling.
- The café has recently been awarded Fair Trade status and will apply for the Healthy Living Award.
- There is a takeaway menu.

### Links/other initiatives

The café has a gallery space and holds regular exhibitions and sells locally-made arts and crafts, along with recycled goods. The café also held a music evening in December and is able to hold events if special requests are made, for a example a swimming club wanted an evening meal for 40 members and an artists collective held a Christmas event there.

Every Friday the church holds a healthy cooking session in one of the large halls, which involves making a healthy lunch for anyone who wants to come in. This has been going for about 6-8 years. The usual attendance is around 80-100 people. In addition to the lunch there is a farmer's market stall, second-hand book stall and fair trade stall. Recently, the café manager has also held a stall there, selling arts and crafts from the café, home baking and drinks, to help publicise the cafe.

### Customers & marketing:

Café customers are students, business people, older people, university staff, artists and art students, as well as people using the two adjacent church halls for classes and clubs. There are approximately 80 customers per week. The busiest times are Wednesday to Friday lunchtimes.

Marketing has been via the church congregation, distribution of fliers, a Facebook page, coverage on Radio Tay and in the List magazine, via the local councillor and by word of mouth.

### Community impact

*"It has made people come together that wouldn't normally be in the same place – for example art students, people from the church. It is an asset to the community"* (Minister).

*"It's been very well received, especially by university staff and young people from art school"* (Café manager).

### Customer feedback:

#### What do you like about the café?

*"Friendly, not too busy"; "small and intimate and the food home-made"; "nice and cosy".*

*"Convenient stopping place between local shops and town"; "Good service, food and prices"; "Not too big or noisy"; "Good place to meet our son who is studying at uni"; "A good place to have informal meetings".*

#### What could be improved

*"Advertising. I would like to see it become busier but not so busy it loses its appeal." "Longer opening hours, breakfast menu"; "Maybe wi-fi"; "To retain the original character and charm would be important"; "More accessible from Perth Road".*

### Impact on community

*"It encourages people to meet"; "It has undoubtedly enhanced the local community spirit"; "It has broadened the choice".*

### Our vision:

***To be a thriving presence in the West End serving very good food at competitive prices and with a good reputation for the gallery. Being busy from opening to closing time.***

### Challenges and opportunities

- **Strengths:** It is welcoming and aesthetically pleasing. It has a friendly atmosphere, the volunteers and manager work well together, the arts and crafts. "Church coffee shops have a reputation for bad coffee but here we have excellent coffee and home baking". (Cook)
- **Challenges:** Marketing could be better, for example through products such as canvas bags and badges.
- **Opportunities:** flexibility to open for events, there are opportunities for local artists
- **Threats:** there is a lot of competition nearby. A new restaurant opening across the road is going to offer student lunches.

### Support and training needs

- Training or support with marketing could help the café to increase the number of customers.
- The café needs new, more prominent signage (one banner has been vandalised).
- Also, training of volunteers in serving would be useful, to ensure consistent high standards of, e.g.

presentation. The café has a plan to get photographs of all meals to demonstrate to volunteers what they should look like.

**Top tips:**

1. Get the budget right (for example, the cost of a coffee machine is £3,500).
2. Target your audience.
3. Offer something else to help make money, for example, arts and crafts, which is of mutual benefit for the café and artists.

**Research sources:** Interviews with café manager, Church minister, cook and 3 management group members. 12 customer feedback questionnaires. There is also positive feedback on the café's Facebook page.

## Cafe profile: Tay-S-Tay

15 The Shore, Dundee

Urban-rural classification: Large urban

**Type of organisation:** Local authority training project

**Size:** Seats 40

**Strengths:** location, prices, space; offers young people training and support

**Training & support needs:** advice on legal structure and self-evaluation; e-learning resources.



- Tay-S-Tay is located in the centre of Dundee near the station, shops and leisure centre.
- The cafe is open 10am-2pm Monday to Friday, 7-10pm on Friday and 2-4pm on Saturday.
- The Tay-S-Tay project is managed by Dundee City Council
- The main purpose of the café is to offer young people skills and training in hospitality

### History and purpose

The Tay-S-Tay café is located in The Shore project in Dundee – an arts, music and media centre for young people run by the Council. Tay-S-Tay started out as a youth training initiative, with the aim of giving unemployed young people training and experience of the hospitality industry. Initially the young people would take home what they had cooked. Gradually the café evolved from opening one day a week to 6 days. The café is primarily a vehicle for giving young people core hospitality skills.

The café is in one half of an upper floor of a large building shared with a hairdresser, pub and The Shore and The Corner young people's projects. The kitchen is at the opposite end of the building from the café seating.

Young people can obtain up to five units of accredited training – in health and safety, first aid, food safety, essentials of catering and cookery skills. There is also a big emphasis on learning soft skills such as working in a team, punctuality, improved communication etc.

### Management and staffing

- *Established 2008*
- *Managed by a full-time Chef-Lecturer employed by council*
- *Also employs a full-time community learning development worker and a part-time chef*
- *The project offers a 16 week training programme to 6 young people at a time*
- *The young trainees are aged between 16 and 19 and the majority have no qualifications.*
- *Two people are also employed through the Future Jobs Fund – they are employed by the council and paid by the Job Centre*
- *There are no volunteers*
- *A nutrition degree student was on a 10 week placement during this research.*

### Money matters

The project is funded by Skills Development Scotland (SDS- approximately £31k), the Fairer Scotland Fund (FSF – approximately £40k) and the NHS (approx £27k). The SDS funding pays the youth trainees allowance of £55 per week and, if they do not attend or obey the rules, the money is taken back from Tay-S-Tay. In addition, the project is on a target of 50% positive outcomes for the young people – i.e. either college or employment – and it is likely to get less money in the next funding round if the target is not met.

Income is generated through the café but it does not generally make a profit. Last year it was at risk of closing but agreed to aim for a budgeted income of £10,000 this year. However, the café is doing well and has made £23,000 so far. This surplus will be used to renew the soft furnishings.

Pricing aims to cover the costs of ingredients, with no mark-up.

### Menu

- Soup, hot main course and pudding made fresh every day. Also toasted sandwiches, baked potatoes and sandwiches.
- Most popular items are toasties and soup.
- Prices for food items from 70p for soup to £1.50 for a main course
- Outside catering can be charged higher and brings in a profit.
- All supplies come via Dundee City Council.
- Tay-S-Tay is applying for the Healthy Living Award.

### **Links/other initiatives**

The grant from the NHS is to encourage breastfeeding in public. Health visitors come to the café/The Shore to run groups and events, for example a 10-week course on weaning.

Tay-S-Tay occasionally caters for special events which make a profit, for example a recent child care conference in the Caird Hall which catered for 500 people. The project also held 6 Christmas lunches last year.

Private training companies come into Tay-S-Tay to run the accreditation assessments. The project also works closely with other youth projects such as The Corner and Xplore, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Making money work and literacy and numeracy training is also offered as appropriate and ties in with the hospitality training. The community learning officer runs employment workshops with the young people and they all leave the project with their CV on a memory stick and with interview training. There is a shower and an iron in the project so that young people can make themselves presentable for work if this is difficult at home.

### **Our vision:**

***To continue but with a slicker operation, and offer young people more accredited units. Also to offer training packages to schools.***

### **Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** gives people a place to meet and cheap, nutritious food; offers young people advice and support and access to other services.
- **Challenges:** each group of young people varies and there is a turnover every 16 weeks. It takes a huge amount of time and effort to train them.
- **Opportunities:** the possibility of becoming a social enterprise or charity and thereby to expand and develop. Becoming an accredited training centre.
- **Threats:** financial security depends partly on quality of young people recruited.

### **Support and training needs**

- More information on how we extend our funding and what is the best legal structure for the project – for example charitable status.
- Self-evaluation which would help to demonstrate the softer outcomes and the food and health impact – funders are currently looking for ‘hard’ targets.
- Additional teaching resources for young people, for example accreditation via e-learning

### **Customers & marketing:**

Café customers are - on weekdays, office workers, leisure centre users and the general public, especially young mums and older people. On Friday and Saturday customers are mostly young people as the café is open to support events in the Shore. The busiest days are Wednesday and Thursday. There is an average of 200 customers per week.

The council has an agreement with local businesses that they would not take any business away, so the cafe marketing is all by word of mouth. In addition, the café does not want to get so busy that the young people cannot cope.

**Young people:** said they liked cooking and hoped to get certificates in food and health, health and safety, first aid and food hygiene. They enjoyed learning how to cook and had cooked at home. They hoped to get a job at the end of the training.

### **Community impact**

*“We provide a hot meal at a low price and a place for young mums to socialise where they can breastfeed with more confidence and this helps reduce isolation”* (Chef-lecturer).

*“It is good for young people to meet others, for example older people and young mums. We are building the social skills of young people and intergenerational contact. Until the café opened only young people came in here.”* (Youth worker).

### **Customer feedback:**

**What do you like about the café?** *“The prices”; “home-made food”; “polite and friendly staff”;*



*"location, cleanliness and lots of room for prams".*

**What could be improved?** *"Provide breakfast rolls and afternoon teas"; "bigger menu"," high chairs, microwave for heating baby's bottles", " longer opening hours".*

**Impact on community?** *"Good place to meet"; "helps young people and brings people together"; "affordable for older people".*

**Top tips:**

1. Be clear about your strategic aims and how they fit in with the target audience
2. Have a real understanding of how each of the funding elements works and get the funding in place before you start
3. Get all the training in place for your staff before you start.

**Research sources:** Interviews with Chef-Lecturer, Community Learning Officer, 2 young trainees, student on placement, 16 customer feedback questionnaires.

## Cafe profile: The Meldrum Cafe

The Square, Oldmeldrum, Aberdeenshire

Urban-rural classification: Accessible rural

**Type of organisation:** Charity & Community Interest Company

**Size:** Seats 26 (plus up to 16 on outside tables in summer)

**Strengths:** good food and ambience, run entirely by volunteers

**Training & support needs:** Networking



- The Meldrum Café is located in the main square of Oldmeldrum, a small town in Aberdeenshire, 18 miles from the city of Aberdeen.
- The cafe is open 10am-4pm Wednesday to Saturday.
- The project is managed by a board of volunteer directors and staffed entirely by volunteers.
- The main purpose of the café is to provide a meeting place and promote local capacity building.

### History and purpose

Local consultations by Aberdeenshire Council and the Community Council in 2004-5 highlighted priority requirements for a café and a central source of community information, tourist information, heritage information, book exchange and internet access. Local people also felt the Town Hall was under-used and dilapidated.

An action group was formed and set up a Community Interest Company in 2006, which provided the legal framework within which funds could be raised for the café and it could operate without paying tax on the profits. The community café opened in 2007 in an under-used room in the old town hall.

In addition to the café, there is a small book swap and an information display with leaflets.

### Management and staffing

- *Board of 4 volunteer directors.*
- *Around 50 volunteers staff the café, each contributing at least 2 hours each a week.*
- *There are no paid staff.*
- *One director co-ordinates the café on a daily basis.*
- *Volunteer meetings are held every few months to discuss cafe management issues. Each volunteer must read a handbook before starting in the café, which contains policies and procedures for the café.*
- *The board meets every quarter to oversee strategy and, for example, sanction prices etc.*
- *Volunteers were recruited through other local groups. Tasks on offer were broken down, for example, baking, operating the till, cashing up, washing dishes, opening and closing the café, etc.*
- *Volunteers are offered free drinks and half price food at any time they are in the café.*

### Money matters/premises

Aberdeenshire Council provides the premises for a peppercorn rent (£50) and the company has, to date, been exempt from business rates. Start up funding included a £2,500 contribution from a local community development group, left over from a previous attempt to open a café; £10,000 from the BIG lottery and £13,000 from Wimpey as part of a planning gain payment.

Prices – are aimed at being at the bottom end of the local market.

Takings are about £150 daily and approximately £30,000 a year, of which approximately £13-15,000 has been profit. This is used to enhance facilities and to disburse small grants to community groups, for example Scouts, arts groups, playgroup, walking group, old people's home etc.

The company has plans to refurbish the rest of the Town Hall. In 2010 it took over the lease of the

### Menu

- The food menu includes soup, sandwiches, toasted sandwiches and paninis, quiche, salads, cakes, tray bakes, scones and pancakes.
- Food prices range from 90p for cakes to £2.80 for a salad platter. The most popular items are soup, paninis and toasties or just a tea or coffee.
- Everything is made fresh to order.
- Supplies come from wholesalers and a local supermarket which delivers every Wednesday.
- Although a core group of volunteers and the director have completed food hygiene training, the cafe avoids the use of eggs, cream, unwashed salad and vegetables to minimise risks.
- The café receives tips at around 10% and (following consultation with a few customers) these are used for volunteer

<p>whole building. It has received approximately £140,000 from a combination of LEADER, the BIG lottery and café profits to do the refurbishment.</p>	<p>nights out – around 3 per year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turnover of volunteers is minimal.</li> </ul>
---	---

**Links/other initiatives**  
 The company has recently taken on the lease of the whole Town Hall and currently receives income from groups using the other rooms ( for example, exercise classes). The plan for the rest of the building is to provide a quiet room/meeting room, a bigger book stall, a meeting room with kitchen upstairs and a lift. There is a need for new volunteers to take on responsibility for new tasks, including organising events.

**Our vision:**  
*To carry on the cafe and integrate with the rest of the Town Hall so it all works together as an expanded meeting place.*

**Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** good food and ambience; track record of keeping volunteers; tolerance and good team-work among volunteers; track record of applying for funding and spending it as planned, which helps to raise further money. The café has been run successfully for 4 years at a profit. Other strengths are a tight management system with a small board and the volunteer meetings.
- **Challenges:** succession planning for current director/co-ordinator and board. It is difficult to find someone to take over the management role. Also, managing people and small town rumours can occasionally be a challenge.
- **Opportunities:** The planned refurbishment of the whole Town Hall provides huge potential for a range of new developments and opportunities, including catering for larger events and organising local festivals.
- **Threats:** The current lack of obvious management succession and, as a threat to expansion - competing with other bodies at a time of public sector cuts.

**Support and training needs**

- Help with organising an independent social enterprise network which is only for social enterprises and does not include quangos, local government or Councils for Voluntary Service. This would enable free and open discussion on, for example, managing volunteers, and would enable joint training. A previous attempt to do this in Aberdeenshire through the CVS has not been successful because they will not give out contact details of other enterprises.
- Use help available from services such as Environmental Health for food hygiene training. Recognise need to devote more management time to encourage volunteers to take up assisted training opportunities and to facilitate community training opportunities in the Town Hall.

**Customers & marketing:**  
 The café has about 60-70 customers per day on average. About 75% of the customers are local and the rest tourists or day trippers from the surrounding area. The busiest times are 12-2 daily. After 12 months operation a customer consultation was conducted. 21 responses were received and most comments simply praised the friendliness of the café and contribution to the community. The café has been marketed via occasional press releases and word of mouth. No paid advertising has been used, however, there is a plan to launch a community newsletter.

**Community impact**  
 The café provides a meeting place for local people and has also provided small grants for many local groups over the past four years. It has involved many people in volunteering and as customers. It helps reduce social isolation and has helped build the confidence and skills of some volunteers. *“It has been a life enhancing experience for many volunteers.”* (Director)

**Feedback from volunteers**  
 Volunteers enjoy volunteering because it gives them something to do, they meet other people and because they are doing something to benefit the community. *“If you want something to happen, you need to put in the effort”* (Volunteer). They feel it has had a very good impact on the community, both by providing a meeting place: *“It’s the only place there is”* (Volunteer); and giving grants out to community groups.

**Customer feedback:****What do you like about the café?**

It is "handy", "friendly and happy", "good food, coffee and prices", "good service" "it is cosy" and "has nice atmosphere and décor".

**What could be improved?** "Open all week", "offer baked potatoes and egg fillings", "introduce a dress code", "more seats", "offer chips", "music", "improve the toilets", "offer IT facilities and get a licence to serve alcohol"

**Impact on community?** "Provided a central meeting place", "benefited local groups", "it brings money to the community", "given us a nice, cheap, friendly place to have lunch, especially for single people and the elderly it's very affordable for people on a limited budget"

**Top tips:**

1. Talk to another café that has been successful.
2. Be aware of the potential for delay in dealing with public bodies, caused by bureaucracy and red tape.
3. Don't have paid staff – the margins are too tight.

**Research sources:** Interviews with Director/Co-ordinator and 6 volunteers. 17 customer feedback questionnaires. Documents and reports provided by Director.

## Cafe profile: Harbour Howff Cafe

Station Road, St Monan's Fife

Urban-rural classification: Accessible rural

**Type of organisation:** Charity & company limited by guarantee

**Size:** 24-26

**Strengths:** good food, well presented and a good team of staff & volunteers; location on Fife coastal path

**Training & support needs:** Marketing, recruiting and getting the best out of board members and volunteers



- The Harbour Howff Café is located near the harbour of St Monan's, a small town in the East Neuk of Fife and is on the Fife Coastal Path.
- The cafe is open 10-4 Tuesday to Friday, 11-5 Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays.
- The café is a social enterprise which is a sister organisation to ENeRGI, a mental health charity.
- The main purpose of the café is to provide a meeting place to benefit the local community, to provide an opportunity for volunteers to participate and to generate income for ENeRGI.

### History and purpose

The ENeRGI mental health charity was established in 1995. It now provides a drop-in service for the whole of North East Fife as well as Housing Support and other services.

In 2006 the charity received a grant from the Tudor Trust to start a social enterprise and, coincidentally, at the same time the local community café was closing. Local consultations indicated that there was support for keeping a cafe open and, after further fundraising, the café re-opened as Harbour Howff in April 2007. Initially it was only opened at weekends, but it soon extended to weekday opening.

The café had a number of difficulties with pricing and staffing during its first year of operation which led to a major deficit, so to protect the parent charity it formed a separate trading company and bank account for the café in 2008/9. Although they are run by separate boards, the two boards have the same members.

### Management and staffing

- *Management Board of 6 volunteer directors who meet every 6-8 weeks.*
- *A café manager who is paid for 15 hours and does an additional 15-20 hours on a voluntary basis, which is permitted under benefit rules.*
- *The café manager reports to the project manager of ENeRGI.*
- *There are 7 regular volunteers, of whom 4 work 20 hours, 2 work 10 hours and 1 works 5 hours – a total of approximately 110 hours a week.*
- *Student or work placements provide additional help – there have been 5 people on placements this year. Work placements bring a weekly fee which is paid to the café.*
- *The current and previous café manager started as volunteers through the ENeRGI project.*
- *Volunteers receive training in food hygiene, health and safety, dealing with challenging behaviour and first aid.*
- *The café does not make enough money to pay a full-time manager or other staff.*

### Money matters/premises

The ENeRGI project has received fairly stable core funding from a variety of sources since it started. In order to start a social enterprise it received funding from the Tudor Trust for both refurbishment of the café and revenue costs.

The café made a loss in the first two years but broke even in 2009/10. Turnover had increased from around £26,000 in 2007/8 to almost £33,000 in 2009/10 but has decreased significantly this year, which is thought to be due to the recession.

The Café is leased from Fife Council and costs £3000 per year. The café also receives £1,000

### Menu

- The menu includes hot filled rolls, bagels, home-made soup, paninis, sandwiches, nachos and home baking.
- Prices range from £1 for some items of home baking to £4.75 for a hot sandwich, salad and tortilla chips.
- The café uses local, free range and Fair Trade produce where possible.
- The most popular items are soup and bacon rolls in the winter and paninis in the summer.
- Supplies predominantly come from wholesalers in the summer (when bigger quantities are needed) and a supermarket in winter.
- Pricing is aimed at covering costs and making a surplus. Initially there was a feeling among some

a year from Fife Council to make its toilets open to the public. Approximately £1,500 has been generated in the current year through provision of work placements through Triage, (which provides New Deal, Welfare to Work and Pathways to Work in Fife and elsewhere).

people involved in the café that prices should be low, because the café was a charity, and this led to financial difficulties. When a new (chef-trained) manager took over in 2008 he re-adjusted the prices to ensure it broke-even.

**Customers & marketing:**

The Harbour Howff café serves the local population of St Monan’s and the East Neuk of Fife as well as tourists, particularly in the summer. There are an average of 12 customers a day in winter and 25 a day in summer. The busiest times are the weekends in summer and winter, although there are regular customers throughout the year. A youth group meets at the café on a Thursday evening and a Stitching Group on a Tuesday evening. A walking group also meets there occasionally.

Marketing has been through adverts in a local East Neuk booklet which goes annually to all residents, leaflet drops and flyers in local shops and tourist places, for example Anstruther and Elie and along the coastal path, and by offering specials at weekends and holding promotional days. In general, the staff and volunteers have lots of ideas but there is not enough time to implement them – a lot of time is taken up with just running the café and dealing with day-to-day issues. The café also had a sign by the harbour but it was stolen.

**Community impact:**

This has been mixed due to issues with staffing and operational matters as well as financial difficulties resulting in tensions within the local community as a result. This has meant that some local people do not use the café. However, many locals are regulars and others are starting to come back. The café is well used by other groups in the town, including the youth group, walking group and the Stitching Group.

**Feedback from volunteers:**

*“Every volunteer has benefitted from being here and doing something useful”* (Volunteer)  
*“It has made the world of difference to me – given me my confidence back and made me feel more worthwhile from when I was at a very low ebb”* (Volunteer)

**Feedback from customer survey**

**What do you like about the café?** *“Excellent coffee, good baking, friendly service, attractive décor”, “Camaraderie”, “Friendly staff, good place to meet, clean”, “The soup is brilliant and the cakes excellent”, “The only place we can meet friends, chat and not feel you have to rush away”*

**What could be improved?** *“Bring back the monthly exhibition of art work”, “More comfortable chairs”*

**Impact on community?** *“It provides somewhere to chill out, talk, learn about what’s going on, a safe haven”, “It attracts walkers a visitors to spend more time in the village”, “A place for single older ladies to meet”, “Good to have a venue for local groups to meet in the evening”, “Would like if it really was a community café, with locals running it instead of a charity”.*

**Links/other initiatives**

The café has done some outside catering, for example for a recent mental health day exhibition and for an allotment association. It has recently established links to supply a group of people who are doing maintenance work on the coastal path.

The café has strong links with the ENeRGI project which is a source of volunteers. The café enables those volunteers who have had mental health problems to develop skills and confidence which aids their recovery and provides employment or steps towards employment.

**Our vision:** To be busier, more used by the local community and making a surplus so that the café is self sustaining. To be able to provide more volunteer training.

**Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** Good food, well presented; good team of volunteers and staff who work well together; the volunteers’ time and commitment. *“It’s a robust operation now and we have learned some hard lessons”* (Project Manager)
- **Challenges:** Keeping it sustainable and recruiting more local people to the Board and getting more local customers in. Having time to take a step back and think more strategically

- **Opportunities:** Tables outside in summer, more takeaway food offered and more outside catering. Special deals are offered on particular days to pensioners groups and mothers and toddlers – this could be extended, for example through theme days.
- **Threats:** A bad summer could risk the tight cash flow. There has been an improvement on the deficit but it is an ongoing concern.

**Support and training needs**

- All training has been provided free in the past but now only the health and safety training is free.
- Help with marketing
- Training on how to recruit board members and get the best out of them.
- A structured approach to recruiting and training volunteers

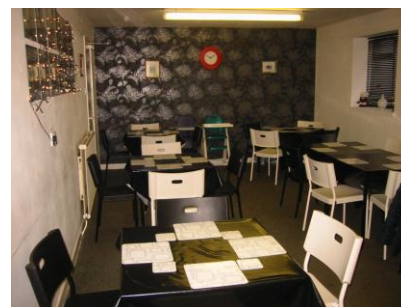
**Top tips:**

1. Make sure that everyone (or a majority) in the community buys in to the café
2. Make sure you have the right skills, for example sourcing produce, menus and pricing etc
3. Get the legal structure right from the start

**Research sources:** Interviews with Project Manager and Café Manager/Volunteer. 10 customer questionnaires.

**Cafe profile: Taste Cafe**  
**Newburgh Road, Auchtermuchty, Fife**  
**Urban-rural classification:** Accessible rural

**Type of organisation:** Franchise within community centre  
**Size:** Seats 26  
**Strengths:** Provides a place for local people of all ages to meet, particularly popular with young people.  
**Training & support needs:** None identified



- The Taste Café is located in a council-owned community centre near the centre of Auchtermuchty.
- The cafe is open 9am-2pm Monday and Tuesday and 9am-11pm from Wednesday to Saturday.
- The café is run by a trained chef on a franchise basis and offers both eat-in and take-away food.
- The main purpose of the café is to provide a meeting place to benefit the local community.

<p><b>History and purpose</b></p> <p>When the community centre first opened it had a small café to encourage people to come into the centre. After a few years the council grant to the community centre was reduced, so the café was run as a franchise by two women from the local community.</p> <p>After they gave up the franchise the café was closed for a short period, then the management committee found a new franchisee who is from the village and had previously been an Executive Head Chef. He has now run the café for the last 3 years.</p> <p>The franchisee is on a 3 months notice contract with the community centre management committee. The purpose of the café is to provide a place for local people to meet and get something to eat.</p>	<p><b>Management and staffing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The community centre is run by a management committee of 12 volunteers which meets every 6 weeks.</i></li> <li>• <i>The café manager is a franchisee who runs the café on a commercial, for-profit basis.</i></li> <li>• <i>The franchisee for the café is a member of the management committee.</i></li> <li>• <i>The committee has a contract with the franchisee which stipulates that he must cater for an older people's lunch club once a week.</i></li> <li>• <i>The franchisee has run the café for the last three years. He pays for rent, heating and lighting from takings. He is sometimes assisted by a friend when busy, on a voluntary basis.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are no community workers based at the centre, but there is an administrative worker, caretaker and cleaner.</i></li> <li>• <i>The centre has found it difficult to recruit a youth worker, so there is no youth worker based in the town at present.</i></li> </ul>
--	--

<p><b>Money matters/premises</b></p> <p>The café is run as a profit making business. Start-up was aided by a family loan. The rent is quite low, which helps keep the prices down. The community centre has recently received a three-year grant to develop service provision and refurbish the community centre.</p> <p>Other financial information is commercially confidential.</p> <p>The aim with pricing is to try to keep it low for the local community, whilst still generating a profit for the franchise. The prices are lower than other local outlets.</p>	<p><b>Menu</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The menu is wide-ranging and food is cooked to order. It includes home-made pizza, fish (in home-made batter), sausages, burgers, chicken, curry, chips, hot filled rolls, home-made scones, sandwiches and filled rolls, toasties, home-made soup of the day, salads, omelettes and baked potatoes, breakfasts and desserts.</li> <li>• Prices range from £1 for chips to £5.50 for a 12" pepperoni pizza. The lunch club for older people is priced at £3.50 for 2 courses.</li> <li>• The most popular item is pizza.</li> <li>• There is a takeaway and home delivery menu from 5pm til late on Friday and 4.30pm til late on Saturday and Sunday.</li> <li>• Supplies are sourced locally as much as possible, for example fruit and veg from local farms, fish from Pittenweem and meat from a butcher in Newburgh. Other supplies are from a cash and carry and occasionally from supermarkets.</li> </ul>
---	---



**Customers & marketing:**

Customers are mostly drawn from the local area – Auchtermuchty, Newburgh, Strathmiglo and other villages. Evenings are busiest but it is a bit unpredictable. The average number of customers in a week runs into the hundreds. Young people from the local school come in at lunchtimes and the café is busy with people of all ages during the times when groups are meeting in the community centre.

In addition, there are tourists passing through in the summer, as Auchtermuchty is the home town of the Proclaimers and Jimmy Shand (there is a statue of the latter 50 metres from the café) and there is a cycle route passing by the café. However, July and August are quieter than term-times. Marketing has been via leafleting in the local village, signs outside the café, menus posted through doors and word of mouth.

**Community impact:**

There were few other places to eat-in in the village when the current franchisee started and one of the local pubs had closed. Taste Café has got a lot busier since then. Many young people use it during lunchtimes and in the evenings, when there is nowhere else to meet. *“It keeps them off the streets”* (Café manager). *“It’s great to see the building being used”* (Committee member)

**Feedback from customer survey**

**What do you like about the café?** *“Good food and sensible prices”, “Friendly service”, “Good choice” “The company”, “Chance to meet new friends and not have to cook for myself”, “It gives me a reason to go out”.*

**What could be improved?** *“Extra lighting as it appears quite dark”*

**Impact on community?** *“A lot of new people have used the café since Garth started”, “He is good with the kids”, “A meeting place for locals”, “It’s a place for the younger generation”, “I would like to see it get bigger but we don’t have room”.*

**Links/other initiatives**

The community centre hosts a wide range of groups during the week, including keep fit, quilting, a garden club, theatre club, crafts, karate, children’s and toddler groups, Scouts. It also has an IT suite. A detached youth worker and a Fife Council Community Education Worker cover the village but are not based there.

The café sometimes does additional catering, for example for dances in the halls.

**Our vision:**

***To make enough money to open own restaurant.***

**Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** Fresh, good quality food, value for money.
- **Challenges:** Location – the village is small and quiet and the café is on a side road.
- **Opportunities:** Regular changes to the menu to keep it interesting.
- **Threats:** It depends on the council to keep funding the community centre.

**Support and training needs**

➤ None identified.

**Top tips:**

1. Get your marketing right.
2. Get customer feedback and provide what they want.

**Research sources:** Interviews with chef, chair of community centre management committee, member of management committee and community worker. Eight customer questionnaires.

## Cafe profile: Campus Cafe

Mayburn Walk, Loanhead, Midlothian

Urban-rural classification: Accessible small town

**Type of organisation:** Charity & Company Limited by Guarantee

**Size:** Seats 40 including infants table seating 8 (new build will seat 60+)

**Strengths:** Quality of food and friendly service

**Training & support needs:** Marketing and networking



- The Campus Café is in a community centre, which is located within the campus of Paradykes Primary School in Loanhead. A community nursery and a garden are also run within the centre.
- The cafe is currently open 9.30am-2pm, Monday to Saturday, term times only.
- The cafe is part of Loanhead Community Learning Centre (LCLC) which is managed by a board of volunteer directors. The LCLC has raised funding for a new building which will provide premises for the café and a range of other new services.
- The main purpose of the café is to provide a meeting place and a hub to access local services.

### History and purpose

The LCLC was established in 2002 to take over the running of the local community centre. In 2003 the Loanhead community centre was refurbished by funding from a variety of trusts and Midlothian Council which was then taken over by the Community and renamed Loanhead Community Learning Centre. There was a high level of support for a cafe offering healthy food at low prices and the café was started in 2003.

The café is run as a social enterprise, as is the Loanhead After School Club and Community Nursery in the same building. The café supplies 30 lunches daily to the community nursery. The café provides a hub for people to access local services and to meet before or after classes, meetings, school and nursery drop-off etc. The community centre offers a wide range of activities including fitness and evening classes, youth groups, parents and tots, Sure Start and bingo. Any profits made by the café would be used by the parent charity to develop further services

A large new building (the Kabin) will open on the campus in May 2011. The Kabin will house a new café (the Honeypot), soft play area, sensory room, cinema, charity shop, dance studio, community laundry, sound and vision area and tuition room for gardening. It is hoped that 6 new social enterprises and 15 new jobs will be created. Café opening hours will be extended to year round.

### Management and staffing

- *The LCLC charity has a board of 12 volunteer directors which meets every 6 weeks*
- *The café is a social enterprise overseen by a management committee of 6 people. The committee will be renewed soon to ensure it is able to manage the new café.*
- *One member of the board is also the full-time paid manager of the centre, including the café and nursery.*
- *There are two part-time paid staff in the café – a supervisor and assistant - who work 20 hours a week each.*
- *There are two volunteers who work a total of approximately 14 hours.*
- *When the new building opens the café will have another three staff two full-time and one part-time, plus up to 6 more volunteers each day.*

### Money matters/premises

Midlothian Council provides the premises for a peppercorn rent (£50 per year). The refurbishment of the existing community centre was funded by various trusts and Midlothian Council and, currently, the two café posts are partly funded by LEADER. The LCLC admin support post (15 hours per week) is funded by Midlothian Council.

Funding for the new building has come from a cocktail of BIG lottery, trust and public sector funding (for

### Menu

- The food menu includes soup, nachos, toasted sandwiches and paninis, hot and cold filled rolls, tray bakes, breakfast and a daily hot meal.
- Food prices range from 30p for toast to £2.95 for a double cheeseburger and bacon.
- The most popular items are tray bakes, baked potatoes, paninis and hot meals.
- Much of the food is home-made and

example LEADER). The land for the building has been gifted by the council and IKEA has donated the kitchen.

The café is currently just short of breaking even and has been subsidised by the community centre to date. Menu pricing is aimed at being low cost and cheaper than other local outlets.

meals are cooked fresh to order.

- Supplies come from the community garden which provides organic fruit and vegetables for soup and salads, and from local wholesalers. Cafe staff shop around to get the best prices and quality.

### Links/other initiatives

The community centre offers a wide range of classes and groups and will have a much expanded range of services once the new building opens in April. The café itself will have 60 seats inside and a new patio area outside will extend capacity in good weather.

The LCLC is just about to complete its Gold Award for Healthy Working Lives and is interested in applying for the Healthy Living Award for the café.

The LCLC works with other local partners including the primary school and health centre by offering its premises for training and meetings, and with the local miners welfare who occasionally sell supplies from their food co-op.

### Our vision:

***To be self-sustaining, encourage more people in the community to develop a wider range of skills, ideas and tastes in food and to promote the café as the hub of the town.***

### Challenges and opportunities

- **Strengths:** Warm and welcoming ambience, quality of food and service. Supportive Board which includes representatives from Midlothian Council.
- **Challenges:** Getting more people to use the cafe. The current location in the centre means there is no passing trade and the intercom-controlled entrance can be a barrier.
- **Opportunities:** The new building will provide the opportunity for a wide range of new services and enterprises, offering jobs and training and the opportunity to offer cookery demonstrations and classes, a refurbished garden with tuition room, linking the café and garden and providing training for people with special needs.
- **Threats:** Funding to cover the running costs of the new building - LCLC will need to make profits of at least £23,000 per year.

### Support and training needs

- Other than funding and the gifting of land, there has been little ongoing support provided in the development of LCLC. Public sector bureaucracy can sometimes be a barrier.
- There is a need for training and support with marketing, networking with other community cafes and accessing supplies (for example, a reconditioned coffee machine)

### Customers & marketing:

The café has about 500 customers per week on average. The customers are mainly users of services provided within the centre, staff from local services (the local library, primary school and leisure centre are all close by) and pupils from Paradykes Primary School, many of whom come in for lunch on Friday (the school's half day). The busiest times are in the mornings on days when Parents and Tots groups are running and weekday lunchtimes.

The café has been marketed via a website, leaflets, newsletter, Facebook page and word of mouth. There is a customer comments box in the café and a previous customer questionnaire obtained 98% positive feedback.

### Community impact

To date the main impact has been on users of the community centre and surrounding services. It has provided them with a place to meet friends before and after classes where they are not feeling rushed and they can have a chat. The hope is that the new building will be much more accessible to all members of the community and become more of a focal point for the town.

### Feedback from customer survey

**What do you like about the café?** *“People are friendly, food is value for money”; “relaxed, nice food, good prices”; “fresh produce”; “accessible”; “friendly atmosphere, great staff and tasty home-made food”; “makes my service at the centre feel less formal and more welcoming to clients”; “very child-*

*friendly*".

**What could be improved?** *"More vegetarian options, fruit and veg, smoothies etc"; "updated décor"; "speciality coffee"; "chips"; "designated play area".*

**Impact on community?** *"Provides a meeting place"; "a community hub", "provides fresh food daily", "I think it has helped people meet new people".*

**Top tips:**

1. Recruit staff of the highest calibre who are focused on continually delivering a high quality of food and service.
2. Do not scrimp on the quality of food – shop about for good prices which are not always through bulk buying. Continually evaluate what your customers want and test new items through daily specials.
3. Be warm and welcoming and have an open door.

**Research sources:** Interviews with Company Secretary/Manager, Development Worker and Café Supervisor. 14 customer feedback questionnaires. Annual report.

## Cafe profile: Shotts Healthy Living Cafe

Kirk Road, Shotts, North Lanarkshire

Urban-rural classification: Accessible small town

**Type of organisation:** Charity & company limited by guarantee

**Size:** Seats 38

**Strengths:** Healthy eating, good quality food and service, friendly, support & training of volunteers

**Training & support needs:** Marketing



- Shotts Healthy Living Café is part of a Healthy Living Centre located in an old school in Shotts.
- The Healthy Living Centre 'Getting Better Together' Project includes the café, food co-op, fitness classes, cookery classes, walking groups, routes to work groups, sexual health clinic and many other groups and services provided from the centre including Citizens Advice and a Credit Union.
- The cafe is open Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm and Saturday 10am-2pm. On Monday and Wednesday it is open 6.30-9.30pm to serve evening classes.
- The main purpose of the cafe is to provide a place for people to eat together and to encourage healthy eating

### History and purpose

The Healthy Living Centre (HLC) is a company limited by guarantee set up in 2001. Local people were consulted and one of their priorities was for a place for people to meet and have a coffee, get information and access good quality fruit and vegetables.

The Healthy Living Centre was one of over 50 HLCs funded by the New Opportunities Fund in the early 2000s. Now, only around 26 are left.

The café was set up as a social enterprise to deliver employability skills as well as a meeting place and healthy eating. It started off staffed by volunteers and now employs paid staff, is well-used and makes a small profit. In addition to the café staff, the HLC employs a manager, team leader, finance and administration worker, youth development workers, nutrition and information worker and two community drivers.

An evaluation of the HLC was completed in February 2009 and found that volunteering was an essential part of the programme and that the HLC offered healthy eating and, in addition, a good range of opportunities, support and training for volunteers, many of whom have mental health problems.

One of the highlights of 2010 for the HLC was the visit by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal in January 2010.

### Management and staffing

- *The HLC Company is overseen by a board of 9 volunteer directors which meets bi-monthly. It has two sub-groups - on policy & finance and personnel.*
- *There is a full-time paid café manager, café assistant and two staff who have been employed for 26 week under the Future Jobs Fund, but this will finish at the end of June 2011.*
- *An additional member of staff is employed in the café who was previously a future jobs placement. As well as working part-time they also attend college studying for an HNC in catering.*
- *The café manager is managed by the HLC Manager.*
- *There are 4 volunteers who, between them, do 62 hours work each week.*
- *All volunteers receive training in food hygiene, food safety and first aid.*

### Money matters

The Shotts HLC received original funding from the New Opportunities Fund, NHS Lanarkshire and latterly transition funding from Scottish Government. The core grant for the HLC currently comes from NHS Lanarkshire. Project funding is currently from the Robertson Trust, Children in Need and the Souter Trust. The premises are owned by council and leased by the HLC. The café has also had a small grant from CFHS and training to support the development of satellite food co-ops.

### Menu

- The menu includes breakfast items, soup, filled rolls, paninis, sandwiches and toasties, baked potatoes, pasta, omelettes and salads.
- The Café has the Healthy Living Award and displays healthy choices on the menu. This has help the café by giving it recognition for its healthy food.
- Prices range from 80p for two slices of toast to £2.40 for a mackerel salad or pasta dish.

Pricing is based on cost of produce plus a percentage mark-up, but only enough to break-even or make a small profit and to cover wastage.

The trading part of the HLC – the café, food co-op and community transport is self sufficient and earns income. It is hoped that the additional opening hours (evening and Saturday opening) introduced 6 months ago will help to generate enough income to allow the cafe to sustain one of the future jobs posts and to provide an extended service for the community.

- There are also meal deals available, for example, soup, Panini and soft drink for £3.90.
- The most popular items are soups, paninis, toasties, potatoes and omelettes.
- Takeaway food is also available.
- Supplies are mainly from a cash and carry and a fruit and vegetable supplier in Glasgow

#### **Customers & marketing:**

There are approximately 80 customers a day/500 a week. Lunchtime is the busiest time. The customers are drawn from the local community and local businesses, disabled groups, doctors, social workers, health and leisure centre, school and nursery staff. A local walking group eats lunch in the café every week. In addition, a lunch club comes to the café weekly.

The café has been marketed in the local doctor's surgeries, post office, leisure centre, community centres, chemist, local papers and library.

*"People wouldn't be able to do without it now – it belongs to the community"* (Café manager). *"People didn't get out of house much before the café was here"* (Development Worker)

#### **Feedback from volunteers**

One Future Jobs Fund trainee has gone on to college and is studying for an HNC in hospitality.

*"I was stuck in the house with no friends. It has given me more confidence, I have learned how to cook and have made friends from the town. I have also got certificates in food and health and food hygiene"* (Volunteer)

*"I had depression and June asked me to volunteer here. I have gone from doing 2 hours a week to 12 hours. The staff are very supportive - if you are having a bad day you can just phone. I am more confident and have come out of my shell"* (Volunteer)

#### **Feedback from customers:**

##### **What do you like about the café**

*"Good food", "healthy food", "friendly people", "quick service" "everything", "convenient to home" "I work with people with learning difficulties and the staff make everyone welcome", "good atmosphere" "jolly", local people know you and say hello".*

##### **What could be improved?**

*"Make it bigger", "more space for buggies and to cater for the disabled".*

##### **Impact on community**

*"Allows people to get together", "catch up with friends", "living on your own, you meet people", keeping the community together".*

#### **Links/other initiatives**

The café has done some outside catering including for training and events in the centre and it delivers meals to a small number of people at home and to Mornay Way Sheltered Housing.

The food co-op sells vegetables, fruit, bread and milk from the café and offers a bread and milk delivery service to schools and runs 8 other food co-ops in towns across North Lanarkshire. It also supplies Fruit Tuck shops in 8 primary schools & 3 nurseries.

The HLC works with Strathclyde Police, NHS Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire Leisure and North Lanarkshire Council on a range of initiatives.

#### **Our vision:**

***To continue and develop as a great community asset and be able to cater for more services outside, for example, meals for the elderly and outside catering.***

#### **Challenges and opportunities**

- **Strengths:** the good quality food and produce provided; recipes and information provided so people can make things at home; bi-monthly HLC newsletter.
- **Challenges:** Sometimes the café gets a bit crowded. There are territorial issues around the Greater

Shotts area which the HLC tried hard to overcome.

- **Opportunities:** Planning to provide soup packs and recipes and starting a community garden to grow produce for the café and co-op
- **Threats:** Dependent on core funding in a climate of public sector funding cuts.

**Support and training needs**

- Marketing, for example how to publicise and use our Facebook page better and help with our website.

**Top tips:**

1. Be well organised and have a good business plan
2. Identify target customers and be sure that people will use the café.
3. Provide training for volunteers and employ trustworthy workers.

**Research sources:** Interview with Healthy Living Centre Co-ordinator and conversations with Development Worker, café manager and three volunteers. 15 customer questionnaires. Review of documents provided by the café.