

Food Services for Older People in the Community

Consumer Focus Scotland

Final Report

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Executive Summary

1. About the study

Consumer Focus Scotland (CFS) commissioned us (ODS Consulting) in October 2010 to provide baseline information about the range and extent of food services for older people (aged over 65 and focusing on those that are most vulnerable) living in the community in Scotland. The research explored consumers' views on these services and sought to establish gaps in provision.

Community Food and Health Scotland (CFHS) have also been directly involved in providing advice for this research project. CFHS supports work within low income communities that improves access to and take up of a healthy diet providing development support to a wide range of community based food work. It also seeks to maximise the impact and influence of community based activity on the achievement of national priorities in food and health.

2. Methodology

We used a number of methods to gather information including:

- a survey sent to all 32 local authorities asking about their food provision for older people;
- discussion with 62 service users at six lunch clubs;
- twenty-one telephone interviews with service users from eight different services across five local authority areas;
- a survey sent to 56 voluntary organisations; and
- case studies carried out by local organisations in three different local authority areas.

3. Key findings

3.1 Local authority survey

Twenty eight local authorities responded to our survey, developed in collaboration with CHFS and CFS.

Extent and range of provision

Hot meal delivery services are the most common service provided, being offered by 18 local authorities. Frozen meals services are offered by 15 local authorities and shopping services by 12 local authorities. Nineteen local authorities support lunch clubs.

Geographic coverage

The majority of services cover the entire local authority area. Only three hot meal delivery services were identified as operating in a more limited geographical area.

External providers

Almost two thirds of the food services we have information for are contracted by the local authority to an external provider. Those providing services to the greatest number of local authorities are Apetito (13) and WRVS (9).

Special meal requirements

The majority of local authorities are able to offer a range of menu choices as part of their hot meal delivery and frozen meals services to meet particular needs. However, of those for which information is available, only one fifth (6) provide finger food and two thirds (18) provide fortified food.

Accessing the service

In the majority of local authorities, recipients of hot meal delivery services are required to be referred to the service by a professional (74%, 14 local authorities) although four local authorities would also accept referrals from individuals which are then followed up by a professional referral. Shopping services tend to be accessed by professional referral although any individual interest is followed up by a professional assessment.

Cost of the service

Local authorities were asked to indicate the average cost of their meals services. We found that on average, a hot meal delivery service would cost the local authority £281,000 per year and a frozen meal service would be on average £58,800. Information supplied to the Scottish Government indicates the average cost of 'meal services' which could be either frozen or hot meals was £214,000 for the year 2008/09.

Service users can expect to pay on average, £2.49 for a hot meal delivery service, or £2.57 for a frozen meals service. Lunch clubs charged anywhere between £1.23 and £3.00 for a two course meal.

Quality assurances

All of the local authorities were able to indicate the quality assurance and nutritional guidelines they adhere to. These included the National Association for Care Catering (NACC), the Health and Nutrition (Scotland) Act 2007 and the same standards set for school catering provision.

Gaps in service provision

Gaps in their existing services that were recognised by local authorities related to either the frequency of service, the types of service and the geographical coverage of some meals provision.

Changes in food service provision

Over half of the responding authorities did not report any changes in provision in the last year. Planned changes in the coming months include changes in the way service providers are procured, introducing new services or new ways of delivery.

Feedback from service users

The majority of local authorities indicated that they conduct a survey or questionnaire with their service users on an annual basis to collect their views. Some local authorities also conduct taster sessions for feedback on new menus.

3.2 Service user feedback

Focus groups were undertaken with six lunch clubs in four local authority areas consulting with over sixty older people. In addition 21 telephone interviews took place with service users in five different local authority areas, representing eight different services including:

- hot meal delivery;
- frozen meals service;
- food train;
- shopping service; and
- personal care.

Quality and variety of food

The lunch club meals were fairly consistent in their composition. They tended to be a bowl of soup and a main meal which consisted of chicken or red meat, vegetables and potatoes, followed by tea and biscuits. All but one of the lunch clubs were praised for the quality of their food.

The lunch clubs were also praised for the variety of food on offer – with participants stating that they tend to get something different every week. The hot meal delivery service was praised for its variety – particularly as it comprised meals that the older person would no longer make for themselves.

There were some discrepancies in the views of shopping service users about the quality of the food they received. This was influenced by the supermarket from which the shopping service purchased the shopping. The issue of 'own label' brands were mentioned by users of a shopping service – and the point made that often the food arrives and 'it's not what I would've picked'.

Barriers

Transport was laid on for older people to attend three of the lunch clubs we visited. One provided a free taxi service, in another club the volunteers collected and dropped off the older people for the lunch club. Another club relied on a council provided bus to collect them. Those using the transport stated that they would not be able to attend the lunch club without it. Other than comments on the bad weather which interrupted the delivery of either hot meals or shopping services for a short time over winter, there were no other barriers mentioned by older people to accessing good food.

Benefits

The majority of older people were attending lunch clubs as a way of socialising. Many of the participants indicated that the lunch club was a way of meeting people their own age. Many lived alone and said that they looked forward to the lunch club because it was an opportunity to get out of the house and speak to people. Those in receipt of a delivery service (whether shopping or a hot meal delivery) commented on the peace of mind that comes with knowing someone will be checking on them.

Other benefits of meal services were the value for money. All the service users we spoke to indicated they thought their service was 'excellent' value for money. Lunch club participants indicated that they would not be able to buy all the ingredients to make the meal for the cost they were being charged, which was typically between £2.00 and £2.50.

3.3 Case Studies

Initial work carried out by CFHS identified three locations in which local community based organisations had expressed an interest in taking part in this research as a case study. These provide a geographical spread of services being delivered in urban, rural and remote areas:

- Moray; Moray Handy Person Services;
- Pilmeny (Edinburgh); Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) and The Edinburgh Community Food Training Hub; and
- The Western Isles, Cearns Community Development Project.

We agreed to commission each of the organisations identified as a sub-contractor and made a payment to them to cover their costs.

Each case study was asked to look at:

- The food services available within a defined area – We agreed whether this was the local authority, a region or town.
- The characteristics of the food services – such as client group, scale, frequency, type of service, cost of delivery, charges, nutritional guidelines, etc.
- Consumer views on local food services – such as access, availability, affordability, choice, safety, cultural or lifestyle requirements, quality and involvement in service planning.

Range of services

The case studies identified a wide range of food services in operation across Western Isles, North East Edinburgh and Moray, predominantly focusing on those in the community, voluntary and social enterprise sectors. Services available included:

- breakfast clubs;
- lunch clubs;

- cooking classes;
- allotments and grow your own projects;
- food co-operatives;
- outings and trips linked to meals;
- healthy eating or nutrition advice; and
- meals for homeless people.

Generally services were targeted geographically, but some (particularly in Edinburgh) were targeted at minority ethnic people or older men.

Planning and delivering lunch clubs

The case studies focused strongly on the operation of lunch clubs. In most cases, the planning and delivery of the lunch club required significant investment of time and effort. Often management committees, and particularly chairs, were instrumental in ensuring that lunch clubs were delivered and sustained.

Volunteers were often crucial to sourcing and making the food at lunch clubs. In some cases, one or two key individuals cooked meals – or volunteers shared responsibility on a rota basis. Volunteers took the lead in gathering ingredients, cooking and assisting with transport.

Funding lunch clubs

In most cases, lunch clubs were funded largely through service users either covering or contributing towards the cost of provision. Sometimes volunteers made up the difference, and in other cases donations and funding from public sector organisations were used. Often a small amount of funding (just a couple of hundred pounds) made a big difference to the sustainability of a lunch club.

Accessing food services

In remote and rural areas, the issue of transport to and from lunch clubs and other food services out of the home was a considerable barrier. In many cases, lunch clubs used community transport services offered by local community organisations, or used volunteers to transport older people to and from the group. However, in some cases the cost of organising transport privately was high, and increasing, causing concerns about sustainability.

Role of private businesses

In some cases, local businesses have been extremely supportive of local lunch clubs. In the three case study areas, this tended to happen in the more rural and remote areas. Businesses have supported lunch clubs through offering low cost meals, ensuring physical access to premises, and providing extras – such as Christmas or birthday specials. Generally local businesses have been considered when existing provision was under threat. The charges appear broadly comparable with community and voluntary provision.

Benefits of lunch clubs

Generally, the main appeal of food services outwith the home – such as lunch clubs – appears to be the social aspect. For many, lunch clubs or related trips were the only chance of eating with others, or eating outwith the home.

Participants valued the social aspect highly. However, a number of older people consulted as part of these case studies felt that the opportunity of a nutritious meal was the main draw – particularly older men who indicated that they rarely cooked at home.

Some lunch clubs were struggling to attract those who had recently reached the age of 65. One case study found that there was some stigma around the term 'lunch clubs', which may discourage some appropriate people from attending.

Targeted services for minority ethnic older people in North East Edinburgh were highly valued. There was some demand for more gender specific services.

Shopping services

In rural areas, older people often used community transport schemes for shopping in the main town. Mobile grocery vans, operating in rural areas, were also seen as a good way of shopping – with vans flexible about bringing different foods if requested.

Older people in North East Edinburgh mentioned that they did not use online shopping services due to not having a computer, not knowing how to order online, and high charges in relation to the small quantities of food that they needed. There was demand for a low cost telephone shopping service from supermarkets or local shops.

Support in rural and remote areas

The case study in Western Isles highlighted that many older people receive significant support from their neighbours – particularly with shopping and cooking. There appears to be a strong sense of community spirit and an ethos of supporting one another, particularly older and more vulnerable people.

4. Conclusions

A baseline of food services for older people

This work set out to establish a baseline of the food services supported by local authorities for older people living in the community. We have provided an initial baseline. In the future, it will be possible to look at changes in the range; type; and cost of food services for older people in relation to this baseline. It provides a snapshot at December 2010 of the provision of food services for older people in Scotland.

In carrying out this work, we found that gathering data from local authorities took longer than had been anticipated. We believe that this was impacted on by:

- **a lack of strategic overview** – in many authorities we got the sense that there was not a single person with a clear overview of all the food services provided for older people. In some authorities it was difficult to identify the key point of contact. The responsibility for overseeing the completion of the surveys was often passed from one officer to another. A number of staff were involved in different aspects of provision – and (it appeared) that there was a lack of corporate responsibility for planning the delivery of food services for older people. We did not feel that there was often a clear picture in the local authority of the range of food services for older people that were in place. This led to services being omitted from the returns from some authorities – and we needed to gather further information from follow up telephone discussions and, in some cases, web based searches.
- **a lack of priority** – although there were some external influencing factors (like the particularly bad weather in December) the amount of ‘chasing’ of responses that we had to do with some authorities was quite unusual – and we got a sense that for some authorities food services for older people had a relatively low priority. This appeared to impact on the quality of responses received from some authorities.

Having said this, there were examples of authorities that provided good quality information in a well coordinated way and expressed an interest in the findings of the research.

The range of services provided by local authorities

Local authorities provide a range of food services for older people in the community. In addition to the provision for those that receive meals as an essential part of day care services, local authorities informed us of the provision of:

- meals at home (either hot meals; frozen meals; or, in one case a deli sandwich option);
- lunch clubs;
- shopping services; and
- assistance with meal preparation as part of personal care support.

The services are generally welcomed and valued by service users. However, we heard enough users saying things like ‘I didn’t like to complain’ to have some concerns about whether sufficient account is always being taken of the views of service users in the design and delivery of services. Commenting on (or complaining about) services does not always come naturally to older people and, in this circumstance, particular steps need to be taken to make sure that there is a consumer focus in the planning and delivery of food services for older people.

The services are seen as value for money. This is normally in comparison with the cost of the older person providing a similar quality of meal rather than in comparison with other services.

Gaps in service

All the local authorities (with the possible exception of West Dunbartonshire who did not respond to our survey) provide either a home delivered **hot meal or frozen meals** service. Three provide both (North Lanarkshire; South Lanarkshire; and Dumfries and Galloway). Although at present hot meal delivery is more common, there are signs that there has been a movement from hot meal to frozen meal provision, and this may continue. One of the major reasons for this is that it appears that the frozen meals service can be delivered at less net cost to the council than the hot meals service.

The gap in the provision of **lunch clubs** is (at least in part) filled by the provision of lunch clubs by the voluntary sector. While 14 councils reported that they provided or supported lunch clubs in their area, six confirmed that there was lunch club provision provided by the voluntary sector without council support. In addition, the Moray case study identifies voluntary sector provision of lunch clubs. It is highly likely that there is voluntary sector provision of lunch clubs (without local authority support) in a number of other authorities.

There is therefore a mix of approaches to the balance between councils and the voluntary sector in resourcing lunch clubs, with the council not supporting the provision of lunch clubs in about one-third of council areas.

In addition, most lunch clubs were reliant on school kitchens and were commonly not open during school holidays.

There does appear to be a gap in the provision of **shopping services**, with 12 councils indicating that they supported this provision. Shopping services can be important for people with mobility problems, who find carrying shopping difficult. The interviews with older people suggest that at present many would not be likely to use on-line shopping services (of the kind provided by supermarkets) because of lack of access to personal computing or lack of confidence in using this. Shopping services supported by the council are not in place in two-thirds of councils.

More generally, over half the local authorities which responded to the survey identified what they felt were gaps in their current service provision. The main gaps identified by councils were:

- gaps in the frequency of existing services;
- the need to expand the extent of their current food service provision;
- and
- geographic gaps in their current services.

Barriers to accessing food services for older people

The main barrier that was identified was transport. This could be transport to a service (like a lunch club) or of the service to the older person's home (meals or shopping). This was important in all areas, but was of particular concern in more rural and remote areas.

Wider benefits

Food services for older people aim to deliver health and nutritional benefits. They also have wider social benefits. Our interviews with older people found that the social contact was particularly important. It was seen as a major benefit of lunch clubs by many interviewees – although others (most notably older men) also valued the quality and variety of food which was provided. In the case of home meal delivery services and shopping services, older people regularly mentioned how much they valued the regular visit of those delivering the services – both for social interaction and also as a reassurance in case something was wrong.

In addition, some (particularly those who were younger) mentioned the wider healthy eating messages that they had picked up from the service – encouraging them to focus on issues like eating five portions of fruit and vegetables in a day; reducing salt intake; and reducing the intake of saturated fats.

The role of the voluntary sector

The main purpose of this report was to establish a baseline of local authority funded food services for older people. But, in addition, we worked with three local community organisations to look at the full range of services provided in their area.

Each of the three case study areas identifies a wide and rich range of services provided by the community and voluntary sector including:

- breakfast clubs;
- lunch clubs;
- cooking classes;
- allotments and grow your own projects;
- food co-operatives;
- outings and trips linked to meals;
- healthy eating or nutrition advice; and
- meals for homeless people.

There were examples of services being targeted. Targeted services for minority ethnic older people in North East Edinburgh were highly valued and there was demand for some more gender specific services.

Voluntary sector organisations expressed some concerns about sustainability. In the main this related to their reliance on a small number of people in planning and delivering activities. But the concern about reducing public resources was an important issue for those services that received some public funds. Even relatively modest amounts of money could make a significant difference to the sustainability of the service.

Finally

Where food services for older people are available they are highly valued and have wider benefits beyond health and nutrition. The services are relied upon by people – most of whom had no alternative. Service users generally praised the quality and value of the services provided. The nutritional content of the meals (or the benefits of access to a shopping service) helped in providing a balanced diet.

1. Introduction

1.1 About the study

Consumer Focus Scotland (CFS) commissioned us (ODS Consulting) in October 2010 to provide baseline information about the range and extent of food services for older people (aged over 65 and focusing on those that are most vulnerable) living in the community in Scotland. The research explored consumers' views on these services and sought to establish whether there were gaps in provision.

Community Food and Health Scotland (CFHS) have also been directly involved in providing advice for this research project. CFHS supports work within low income communities that improves access to and take up of a healthy diet providing development support to a wide range of community based food work. It also seeks to maximise the impact and influence of community based activity on the achievement of national priorities in food and health.

CFHS is based within and managed by Consumer Focus Scotland (CFS) and is assisted by a Steering Group which is made up of representatives from a range of community groups and local/national organisations.

1.2 Aim and objectives

The aim of the study is to provide a baseline of information about food services for older people across Scotland. We know that Scotland has an ageing population. The General Register Office of Scotland estimates that the number of people in Scotland who are over 60 will rise by 49% by 2033 - and that, in that period, the number of people over 75 will rise by 84% (to 724,000)¹.

Generally people wish to remain independent and live in their own homes for as long as possible but some older people find it difficult (either in the short term or the long term) to maintain a healthy diet of their own choice. Community Food and Health Scotland (CFHS) and the Scottish Government have identified a range of 'barriers' to healthy eating for older people living in the community.

There are a range of food services to support older people achieve a healthy diet. Some are provided directly by local authorities and other public agencies, and some provided by voluntary and community organisations. But there is currently no clear overview of provision across Scotland. The main aim of this research is to provide a baseline of information, gathered in a similar format, across the whole of Scotland. This would allow gaps in provision to be identified and consideration to be given to the most

¹ <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files2/stats/annual-review-09/rgar2009.pdf>.

appropriate mix of services for older people. The research looks in greater depth at the range of food services for older people in three different parts of Scotland. We worked in partnership with local community organisations to consider these local services. We also gathered the views of a number of older people on the services that they need, and how well the current services reflect these needs.

1.3 Methodology

We used a number of methods to gather information – including desk based research and collecting qualitative information. The methods used included:

- a survey sent to all 32 local authorities asking about their food provision for older people;
- discussion with 62 service users at six lunch clubs;
- twenty-one telephone interviews with service users from eight different services in five local authority areas;
- a survey sent to 56 voluntary sector umbrella organisations; and
- case studies carried out by local community organisations in three different local authority areas.

In relation to the survey to voluntary sector umbrella organisations, only one completed response was received - from a small Older People's Welfare Committee. A number of organisations stated that they could not complete the survey because they did not hold information about food services for older people. We have not included the information from this survey in the report.

2. Local Authority Survey

2.1 Methodology

In order to map the provision of food services for older people we designed and circulated a survey to each local authority in Scotland. The survey was to be completed and returned either by post or email. We asked each council to provide us with information about the food services supported by the council – either directly or through commissioning or funding the service. We received responses from 28 of the 32 local authorities in Scotland (a response rate of 88%).

2.2 Survey design

The survey had two sections. The first section was designed to give an overview of the provision of food services for older people in the local authority area. The questions covered issues such as:

- examples of good practice;
- any existing gaps in provision;
- any significant changes to provision in the last 12 months;
- if and how older people are consulted about their food provision; and
- the quality assurance or nutritional guidelines that are in place.

The second section was designed to provide a profile of all the food services that the local authority provided or commissioned, including:

- the estimated number of service users (and the frequency of use)
- the geographical coverage of the service;
- the service provider;
- the extent to which the service makes provision for particular needs or menu choices, such as vegetarian, halal or texture modified foods;
- the way in which older people access the service (directly or through referrals); and
- the cost of the service to the authority and to the older person.

2.3 Pilot

The survey was designed in consultation with the research steering group which was made up of staff from Consumer Focus Scotland and Community Food and Health Scotland. Once the content was agreed, we piloted the survey with two willing local authorities – Dumfries and Galloway and Glasgow City Council.

The survey was sent to these authorities to test for clarity and length - and to ensure that the pre-coded responses were as complete as possible. We conducted follow up telephone interviews with representatives of both authorities to gather any other comments, and made amendments to the survey as appropriate. A copy of the survey is attached as Appendix 1.

2.4 Contact details

To ensure the survey reached the appropriate person within each local authority, we set out to identify a 'key contact person' to co-ordinate the response. CFHS supplied us with a number of contact names. We supplemented this through telephone contact with individual local authorities. This was relatively complex as each authority manages their food services in different ways. We did identify an appropriate contact in all local authorities.

2.5 Dates for completion and response rate

We circulated the surveys by email. In four local authorities, the questionnaires were sent by post at the request of the contact person within the relevant authority. Each survey was accompanied by a covering letter, setting out the background to the research and giving our contact details for any queries. The survey was sent on the 17 November 2010 with a deadline date for completion of the 6 December 2010.

A reminder email (or letter) was sent to all recipients one week before the deadline. By 6 December, we had received 10 completed responses. We received four more by 13 December. Several respondents were on holiday when the initial email was sent, which delayed their response.

2.6 External influencing factors

Unfortunately, extremely bad weather hit Scotland during the week of our deadline. This caused many of our local authority contacts to be unavailable or involved in critical aspects of service provision. The bad weather continued until the start of the Christmas and New Year holiday period, which again affected the availability of our contacts.

2.7 Encouraging responses

Immediately before Christmas, we contacted all the local authorities which had not submitted their completed questionnaire. We found that in some cases, the survey had been passed to someone else for completion or had been mislaid.

We were unable to speak to our designated contact person in some local authorities, and so reminder emails were sent and messages left with colleagues or on voice mail.

As a result of continuing contact, by 5 January 2011 we had received 22 completed surveys. We continued to encourage the outstanding local authorities to respond, and by 3 February 2011 we had received a total of 28 completed responses.

We attempted to follow up the receipt of the questionnaire with a telephone interview with our contact. In a number of cases this improved the quality and range of information we received.

2.8 Non-participation

Four local authorities did not return a completed questionnaire. Of these, two indicated to us that they did not intend to respond.

West Dunbartonshire Council indicated they would not be responding but we were unable to speak with the contact person to establish a reason.

North Ayrshire Council indicated that they were currently reviewing their food services for older people and were concerned that any responses to the survey might subsequently be inaccurate.

Additionally, we had no response from Aberdeenshire Council or Renfrewshire Council.

2.9 Quality of responses

We undertook initial analysis of the responses we received in early January 2011. Some councils had indicated they only provided one food service for older people, when their websites suggested that they offered others which were not listed in their response.

We prioritised our follow up calls, where there was evidence that the information provided to us was incomplete.

We contacted local authorities again, and asked them to clarify the position. Where they confirmed that they did provide other services we undertook a short telephone survey (completing the template questions) to fill the gaps.

We also undertook an internet search of local authorities who had not submitted a completed survey response. We were able to identify food services these authorities offer from information displayed on their websites. We have included this information in table 3.1 but as we do not have any further information on the service, it has not been included in the more detailed analysis.

All local authorities provide a day care service for certain older people. This was where the older person would attend a care facility during the day and receive at least one hot meal per day. These services are not included in our analysis.

2.10 Analysis of responses

We analysed all the responses received, by local authority, using a response matrix. We also noted any additional information which did not relate to a specific question. The matrix allowed each question to be analysed in turn.

The tables are presented with the local authorities in order of the size of their population of older people. Information was gathered from the General Register Office of Scotland (GROS) based on population projections for 2008 – the most up to date available information. The figures for the population in each local authority aged 65 or over are included in the following table. All

subsequent tables will present the local authorities in this order so as to give a relative comparison of size of population when interpreting the findings.

Table 2.1: Number of older people by local authority area, based on 2008 population estimates

| Local Authority | Older people (aged 65 and over), 2008 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Glasgow City | 82,400 |
| Edinburgh City | 68,600 |
| Fife | 61,800 |
| South Lanarkshire | 50,600 |
| North Lanarkshire | 48,200 |
| Highland | 39,900 |
| Aberdeenshire | 38,300 |
| Aberdeen City | 32,200 |
| Dumfries &Galloway | 31,800 |
| Perth and Kinross | 28,000 |
| Renfrewshire | 27,800 |
| Dundee City | 25,700 |
| North Ayrshire | 24,400 |
| Falkirk | 24,300 |
| South Ayrshire | 23,200 |
| West Lothian | 22,100 |
| Scottish Borders | 22,000 |
| Angus | 21,500 |
| East Ayrshire | 20,400 |
| East Dunbartonshire | 19,000 |
| Argyll & Bute | 18,800 |
| East Lothian | 16,900 |
| Moray | 15,900 |
| East Renfrewshire | 15,600 |
| Stirling | 14,800 |
| West Dunbartonshire | 14,600 |
| Inverclyde | 14,200 |
| Midlothian | 13,000 |
| Clackmannanshire | 7,700 |
| Western Isles | 5,500 |
| Orkney | 3,800 |
| Shetland | 3,600 |

Source: GROS, Projected population (2008-based) by sex and broad age group, by council

3. The Scope and Extent of Local Authority Services

3.1 Type of food services available

The survey asked local authorities to give detail on each of the food services they provide - either directly or by commissioning an external organisation.

In addition to the information provided to us in the survey, we gathered further food service provision from some local authorities' websites – this included the four authorities who did not complete a response. For the purpose of the following table, these food services have been included.

Seventy five individual services were identified in total – 58 from the local authority survey and follow up telephone calls for which we have additional information.

Table 3.1 below, gives an indication of the types of services offered to older people. Every local authority was also offering meal provision through their day care service, but as the numbers of service users are relatively small, we have not included this in our analysis.

Table 3.1: Number of authorities offering food services by type

| Food service | No. of local authorities offering the service |
|---|---|
| Hot meal delivery | 18 |
| Frozen meals services | 15 |
| Shopping service (inc. Food Train) | 11 |
| Lunch club services* | 14* |
| Meal preparation (as part of personal care) | 16 |
| 'Deli bag' sandwich delivery | 1 |
| Total | 75 |

*In addition, 6 local authorities informed us of lunch clubs provided by voluntary sector organisations, with no support from the council – these have not been included in the analysis.

Hot meal delivery is the most commonly provided service, offered by almost two thirds of the responding authorities (64%). Inverclyde and Angus Councils indicated that they offered two hot meals per day. The majority of local authorities did not indicate whether they provided older people with more than one meal a day. We assume that unless they specified otherwise, that one hot meal a day was provided.

We have further information for sixteen of the hot meal services. In seven of the local authorities offering a hot meal, this was delivered by WRVS (44%) while in five authorities, their own catering teams delivered the hot meals (31%) – this included Clackmannanshire, Dundee City, Falkirk, Fife and North Lanarkshire. South Ayrshire Council used Apetito to deliver their hot meals service. Angus Council purchase the food and lease the vehicles from Apetito, but choose to deliver the service themselves. Shetland Council

produce their own meals but use a contractor to deliver them, while in Stirling a voluntary group deliver the hot meals.

A frozen meals service is offered by 15 local authorities (54%). We have more detailed information on twelve of these services. The majority of these are delivered by Apetito (10 local authorities, 83%). One local authority (Dumfries & Galloway) sub-contracts the delivery of their frozen food services to WRVS, while one other (Orkney) offers a frozen food service to those in receipt of home meal preparation at the weekends, when this service is not available.

Almost 40% of the local authorities responding to our survey stated that they offer a shopping service. Normally this involves staff collecting shopping lists and delivering groceries on the following day. Five of the local authorities were providing their own shopping service (45%) in one case (South Lanarkshire) this service was part of their wider 'home care' package. The Food Train delivered shopping in West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway, while voluntary organisations such as the Salvation Army, the Red Cross and a Community Development Trust delivered a shopping service in Angus, Moray and Inverclyde respectively. In West Lothian, the supermarket chain Scotmid delivered the shopping service.

Lunch club services are supported by councils in 14 areas. In most of these cases, the clubs are run by voluntary groups such as the WRVS. In six additional local authorities, the council informed us that it does not subsidise or manage lunch clubs but they are provided by volunteers.

Anecdotal feedback suggests that there are not as many lunch clubs in operation as some local authorities would like – particularly as day care services are becoming stretched. In Glasgow, the provision of lunch clubs is influenced by the extent of service user demand, which they report is relatively low in some areas.

'The former North area has less lunch clubs than other areas, however it should be noted that the set up of clubs is determined by local interest being expressed'.

(Service provider, Glasgow)

Most of the food is provided by local authority schools and so, during school holidays, there was no lunch club provision.

The 'Deli Bag' service in Clackmannanshire consists of a sandwich – a portion of cake and a cold drink. Fruit is also offered as an alternative to cake. The service costs £2.81 per deli bag and the service is accessed through a professional referral.

The following table shows the breadth of food service provision for each of the local authorities. Some information which was not provided by local

authorities was gathered online using each authorities' website and this is shown in a lighter hatched shading in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Matrix of food service provision by service and local authority

| | Hot meal delivery | Lunch Clubs | Frozen meals service | Shopping service | Personal care/meal preparation |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Glasgow City | | | | | |
| Edinburgh City | | | | | |
| Fife | | | | | |
| South Lanarkshire | | | | | |
| North Lanarkshire | | | | | |
| Highland | | | | | |
| Aberdeenshire | | | | | |
| Aberdeen City | | | | | |
| Dumfries & Galloway | | | | | |
| Perth & Kinross | | | | | |
| Renfrewshire | | | | | |
| Dundee City | | | | | |
| North Ayrshire | | | | | |
| Falkirk | | | | | |
| South Ayrshire | | | | | |
| West Lothian | | | | 2 services | |
| Scottish Borders | | | | | |
| Angus | | | | | |
| East Ayrshire | | | | | |
| East Dunbartonshire | | | | | |
| Argyll & Bute | | | | | |
| East Lothian | | | | | |
| Moray | | | | | |
| East Renfrewshire | | | | | |
| Stirling | | | | | |
| West Dunbartonshire | | | | | |
| Inverclyde | | | | | |
| Midlothian | | | | | |
| Clackmannanshire | | | | | |
| Western Isles | | | | | |
| Orkney | | | | | |
| Shetland | | | | | |

In summary:

- Six local authorities provided only one type of food service;
- Thirteen local authorities provided two types of food service;
- Ten local authorities provided three types of food service;
- Two local authorities provided four types of food service; and
- One local authority provided five types of food service.

3.2 Estimated number of users

Responses to survey

Local authorities were asked to detail, not only the number of service users that were in receipt of their service, but also how many days a week they received this service.

Local authorities found it difficult to answer this question – tending to know the *total* number of service users, rather than the breakdown on a frequency basis. Eight local authorities did not provide any information on the number of service users.

The information that local authorities provided has been included in Table 3.3 but should be treated with some caution given the different approaches taken by local authorities.

Table 3.3: Estimated number of service users by local authority, service type and frequency of use

| Local Authority | Service | Daily | More than once a week | Weekly | Fortnightly |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Fife | Hot meal delivery | 700 | | | |
| East Lothian | Frozen meals | 550 | | | |
| Aberdeen | Frozen meals | 360 | 360 | | |
| East Ayrshire | Frozen meals | 280 | 88 | | |
| South Lanarkshire | | 156 (MoW) | | | 276 (Frozen) |
| Dumfries and Galloway | | 140 (Frozen) | 240 (MOW) | 560 (Shopping) | |
| Midlothian | Frozen meals | 120 | | | |
| Clackmannanshire | Hot meal delivery | 48 | 68 | 1 | |
| Argyll & Bute | Hot meal delivery | 18 | 106 | 62 | |
| East Renfrewshire | Hot meal delivery | | 45 | 6 | |
| Glasgow | Lunch clubs | | 656 | 371 | |
| Moray | Hot meal delivery | | 304 | | |
| South Ayrshire | Hot meal delivery | | 586 | | |
| Western Isles | Meal preparation | | 266 | | |
| Dundee | Hot meal delivery | | | 700 | |
| East Dunbartonshire | Hot meal delivery | | | 83 | |
| Highland | Frozen meals | | | 340 | |
| Scottish Borders | Shopping service | | | 100 | |
| Perth and Kinross | Frozen meals | | | | 250 |
| Edinburgh | Frozen meals | | | | 134 |

Source: Self completion local authority surveys

Additional information from website searches

In addition, the Glasgow City Council website and information submitted by them to the Scottish Government indicates that around 400 people are in receipt of a frozen meals service from Glasgow City Council. Website information and information submitted by North Lanarkshire Council to the Scottish Government, suggests that around 20 older people receive a frozen meals service from North Lanarkshire Council.

Home Care Services report (Scottish Government, 2010)

More complete information was provided by councils to the Scottish Government about how many older people had received a meals service provided by the local authority². The publication contains information on how many clients aged 65 and over receive a meals service.

The figures are based on a revised home care services statistical data collection introduced in 2010 by the Scottish Government. Information was collected for the first time on every person who receives or uses a meals service (provided or purchased by the local authority) during census week. All figures relate to the last week in March 2010.

Statistics from this report show that as at March 2010, there were 10,446 clients receiving a meal service which was provided or purchased by the local authority. Thirteen per cent of these people were aged between 65 years and 74 years, 36% were aged between 75 and 84 years and 42% were aged over 84 years.

Information was collected separately on the number of clients receiving a hot meals service and the number receiving a frozen meals service. This information was provided by all local authorities who offer a meals service with the exception of the Scottish Borders and Western Isles.

The following table show the number of clients who are receiving a hot meal or a frozen meal service by local authority as of March 2010.

² *Home Care Services, Scotland 2010, The Scottish Government*

Table 3.4: Clients who are receiving either a hot meal or frozen meals service by local authority, March 2010

| Local Authority | Hot meal | Frozen meal |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Glasgow City Council | 0 | 395 |
| Edinburgh City | 0 | 145 |
| Fife | 958 | 0 |
| South Lanarkshire | 131 | 276 |
| North Lanarkshire | 135 | 22 |
| Highland Council | 0 | 253 |
| Aberdeenshire | 0 | 479 |
| Aberdeen City | 0 | 658 |
| Dumfries & Galloway | 250 | 0 |
| Perth and Kinross | 0 | 282 |
| Renfrewshire | 417 | 0 |
| Dundee City | 662 | 0 |
| North Ayrshire | 299 | 0 |
| Falkirk | 347 | 0 |
| South Ayrshire | 516 | 0 |
| West Lothian | 0 | 478 |
| Scottish Borders | n/r | n/r |
| Angus | 663 | 0 |
| East Ayrshire | 0 | 668 |
| East Dunbartonshire | 74 | 0 |
| Argyll & Bute | 153 | 0 |
| East Lothian | 0 | 524 |
| Moray | 331 | 0 |
| East Renfrewshire | 62 | 0 |
| Stirling | 236 | 0 |
| West Dunbartonshire | 318 | 0 |
| Inverclyde | 166 | 0 |
| Midlothian | 0 | 117 |
| Clackmannanshire | 118 | 0 |
| Western Isles | n/r | n/r |
| Orkney | 0 | 83 |
| Shetland Islands | 230 | 0 |
| Scotland | 6,066 | 4,380 |

Source: Home Care Statistical Return, March 2010, Scottish Government

3.3 Geographic coverage

The self completion survey indicated the geographic coverage of the food services. We have information on 58 services, of these, 55 services (approximately 95%) cover the entire geographical area of the local authority. The exceptions are East Renfrewshire, Dumfries and Galloway and Moray Councils' hot meal delivery services.

East Renfrewshire Council offers its service in the towns of Barrhead, Giffnock, Newton Mearns, Netherlee, Eaglesham, Thornliebank, Busby and Clarkson only.

Moray Council offers its hot meals service in every area except Tomintoul and its surrounding area.

Dumfries and Galloway Council qualified their response by stating that their hot meal delivery service covers most of the area, but that there are some remote villages where the numbers of people who may require the service were too few to make it viable.

3.4 Services provided by the local authority or contracted to another organisation

Of the 58 food services for which we have detailed information, just over a third (38%, 22 services) are delivered directly by local authorities. The remainder (62%, 36 services) are delivered by contracted services. The following table shows the different types of service provider and the number of services they provide.

Table 3.5: Food service provider

| Food service provider | Number of services |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Apetito/Wiltshire Foods | 13 |
| WRVS | 10 |
| Food Train | 2 |
| Community Development Trust | 2 |
| The Salvation Army | 1 |
| Scotmid | 1 |
| Cordia | 1 |
| The Red Cross | 1 |
| Other | 4 |

Apetito and Wiltshire foods (related private companies offering hot and frozen meal delivery to local authorities across the UK) deliver 13 services. The majority of these are frozen food service delivery (11 services, 85%) but in South Ayrshire Apetito deliver a hot meal service, and also provide meals to a lunch club in East Lothian. In Angus Council the food is purchased from Apetito and the delivery vehicles leased by the local authority who choose to deliver the frozen meals service themselves.

The WRVS provide hot meal delivery, (seven services) frozen meals delivery (Dumfries and Galloway), lunch clubs in East Dunbartonshire and personal care service for Stirling Council.

The Food Train provide shopping services in West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway. Inverclyde Community Development Trust provides both a shopping service and delivers hot meals as part of an 'evening meal' programme for Inverclyde Council. The Salvation Army, the Red Cross and Scotmid provide shopping services on behalf of the Councils in Angus, Moray and West Lothian. And Cordia provide meals for the lunch clubs operating in Glasgow.

The four 'other' providers mentioned in Table 3.5 are:

- Tay Cuisine – operating for Dundee City Council providing their hot meal service;
- Helping Hands – operating in East Ayrshire providing Care at Home;
- Moray Handyperson Service – offering shopping service in Moray; and
- Allied Health Care, delivering the home care service in Moray.

In addition, six local authorities stated that they had lunch club provision but that this was managed in their entirety by volunteers either from local churches or volunteer groups. The local authority did not fund or staff these lunch clubs. These local authorities did not have any further information on provision, size or frequency of usage of these clubs. This includes Argyll & Bute, Falkirk, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, West Lothian and Western Isles.

See also section 6.6 on the Western Isles case study which gives more detail on lunch club provision through volunteers.

3.5 Provision of meal choices

We have looked in more detail at the choices offered for service users receiving hot meals or frozen meals services.

Of the 18 local authorities providing a hot meal delivery service, 15 were able to provide information on their ability to meet particular needs. Most dietary needs – but not all – are generally taken into account including diabetic, halal or vegetarian.

Table 3.6: Provision of particular needs or menu choices – Hot meal delivery services

| Local Authority | Vegetarian | Halal | Diabetic | Texture modified | Fortified | Finger food |
|-----------------------|------------|-------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Fife | | | | | | |
| South Lanarkshire | | | | | | |
| North Lanarkshire | | | | | | |
| Dumfries and Galloway | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Renfrewshire | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Dundee | | | | | | |
| North Ayrshire | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Falkirk | | | | | | |
| South Ayrshire | | | | | | |
| Angus | | | | | | |
| East Dunbartonshire | | | | | | |
| Argyll & Bute | | | | | | |
| Moray | | | | | | |
| East Renfrewshire | | | | | | |
| Stirling | | | | | | |
| Inverclyde | | | | | | |
| Clackmannanshire | | | | | | |
| Shetland Islands | | | | | | |

*Source: Local authority self completion questionnaire

All are able to provide a vegetarian hot meal delivery option, and most are able to provide both diabetic (93%) and texture modified (87%) meals for clients. In addition, almost three quarters (73%) are able to provide a Halal meal if requested. Fewer authorities stated that they are able to provide 'finger food' for clients (2 authorities, 13%).

Finger foods are prepared in a way that makes them easy to pick up and eat with the hands. They are ideal for people with dementia who have difficulties using cutlery.

Fortified foods have additional vitamins or minerals added to the food. This helps to ensure that older people are meeting their minimum dietary requirements.

Texture modified food is soft and pureed food and is appropriate for people with swallowing difficulties (such as dysphagia and people with dementia).

None of the authorities stated that they could provide a kosher meal.

Table 3.7: Provision of particular needs or menu choices – Frozen meals

| Frozen Meals | Vegetarian | Halal | Diabetic | Texture modified | Fortified | Finger food |
|---------------------|------------|-------|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Glasgow | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Edinburgh | | | | | | |
| South Lanarkshire | | | | | | |
| North Lanarkshire | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Highland | | | | | | |
| Aberdeenshire | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Aberdeen City | | | | | | |
| Dumfries & Galloway | | | | | | |
| Perth & Kinross | | | | | | |
| West Lothian | | | | | | |
| Scottish Borders | | | | | | |
| East Ayrshire | | | | | | |
| East Lothian | | | | | | |
| Midlothian | | | | | | |
| Orkney | | | | | | |

*Source: Local authority self completion questionnaire

All the authorities are able to provide vegetarian and diabetic menu choices through their frozen meals service and the majority are able to provide texture modified food, or a Halal meal if required. Four authorities provided a ‘finger food’ choice through the frozen food services.

3.6 How the service is accessed

Local authorities were asked to indicate how service users accessed their different food services, for example through their GP or another professional service or whether through self referral.

Sixteen local authorities provided information on their hot meals service. In the majority of local authorities, recipients of a hot meal delivery service are required to be referred to the service by a professional (74%, 14 local authorities) although four of these local authorities also receive referrals from individuals, which are then followed up by a professional assessment. In other words, all service users were subject to some form of professional assessment before being allowed access to the service.

Shopping services tend to be accessed by professional referral also (eight of the eleven services were by professional referral). Three local authorities (Dundee, Moray and West Lothian – with their own service) also accepted self referrals which are followed up by an assessment of need. The Food Train service in West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway will accept both professional referrals and individual enquiries. In other words, with the exception of the Food Train service, all service users were subject to some form of professional assessment before being allowed access to the service.

3.7 The cost of the service

Local authorities were asked to indicate the average cost of their service. Six were not able to provide this information. Below we identify the cost to each authority for their hot meal delivery and frozen meals services as these were the most commonly offered services. The tables then show the average cost to each authority.

In addition, where the information on the number of service users was available we have calculated the cost of the service to the local authority, per service user. This should be interpreted with considerable caution as the comparison is not like-for-like.

Table 3.8: Average cost of the hot meals service

| Local Authority | Number of service users* | Annual cost** (£) | Cost per service user (£) |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Fife | 700 | 1,350,000 | 1,929 |
| South Lanarkshire | 156 | 220,957 | 1,416 |
| North Lanarkshire | n/a | 76,000 | n/a |
| Dumfries & Galloway | 240 | 41,113 | 171 |
| Dundee | 700 | 806,000 | 1,151 |
| Falkirk | n/a | 180,000 | n/a |
| South Ayrshire | n/a | Not available | n/a |
| Angus | 589 | 409,000 | 694 |
| East Dunbartonshire | 83 | 13,553 | 163 |
| Argyll & Bute | 186 | 20,178 | 108 |
| Moray | n/a | 210,000 | n/a |
| East Renfrewshire | 51 | 60,000 | 1,176 |
| Stirling | n/a | 120,000 | n/a |
| Inverclyde | n/a | 147,240 | n/a |
| Clackmannanshire | | Not available | |
| Shetland Islands | | Not available | |
| Average for available hot meal delivery services | | 281,080 | |

*information where available from local authority self completion survey

**information provided by local authority self completion survey

Table 3.9: Average cost of the frozen meals service

| Frozen Meals | Number of service users | Annual cost of service** | Cost per service user |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Edinburgh | n/a | £0 | £0 |
| South Lanarkshire | 276 | £115,000 | £416 |
| Highland | n/a | £0 | £0 |
| Aberdeen City | 720 | £80,000 | £111 |
| Dumfries & Galloway | 140 | £40,000 | £286 |
| Perth and Kinross | 250 | £7,000 | £28 |
| West Lothian | n/a | £74,000 | n/a |
| Scottish Borders | n/a | £66,000 | n/a |
| East Ayrshire | 368 | £92,000 | £250 |
| East Lothian | 550 | £75,000 | £136 |
| Midlothian | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Orkney | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Average for available frozen meals service | | £58,800 | |

*information where available provided by local authority self completion survey

**information provided by local authority self completion survey

Edinburgh and Highland Councils stated that there is no cost to them for the provision of the frozen meals service as they are self financing with the full cost being met by charges to users. Orkney and Midlothian did not provide a cost for their frozen meals service.

In addition, the Home Care Services, Scotland 2010 Report provides information about the cost of meals services for older people provided by each local authority in each year since 2007. It does not specify the type of food service, but gives a relative picture for each local authority. This is summarised in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10: Cost of meal service provision for older people, by Council

| Local Authority | 2007/08 | 2008/09 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Glasgow City | £643,000 | £511,000 |
| Edinburgh City | £71,000 | £79,000 |
| Fife | £392,000 | £454,000 |
| South Lanarkshire | £438,000 | £359,000 |
| North Lanarkshire | £142,000 | £182,000 |
| Highland | 0 | 0 |
| Aberdeenshire | 0 | 0 |
| Aberdeen City | £62,000 | £63,000 |
| Dumfries & Galloway | £118,000 | £121,000 |
| Perth & Kinross | £202,000 | £150,000 |
| Renfrewshire | £215,000 | £776,000 |
| Dundee City | £1,238,000 | £1,357,000 |
| North Ayrshire | £216,000 | £215,000 |
| Falkirk | £194,000 | £202,000 |
| South Ayrshire | £383,000 | £411,000 |
| West Lothian | £67,000 | £111,000 |
| Scottish Borders | £70,000 | £85,000 |
| Angus | £186,000 | £121,000 |
| East Ayrshire | £97,000 | £114,000 |
| East Dunbartonshire | £30,000 | £15,000 |
| Argyll & Bute | £81,000 | £60,000 |
| East Lothian | £167,000 | £209,000 |
| Moray | £373,000 | £184,000 |
| East Renfrewshire | £165,000 | £39,000 |
| Stirling | £106,000 | £92,000 |
| West Dunbartonshire | £177,000 | £243,000 |
| Inverclyde | £150,000 | £154,000 |
| Midlothian | £69,000 | £88,000 |
| Clackmannanshire | £74,000 | £99,000 |
| Western Isles | £74,000 | £22,000 |
| Orkney | 0 | £7,000 |
| Shetland | £216,000 | £331,000 |
| Average cost per council | £200,500 | £214,188 |

Source: LFR 3 (Social Work) returns, Home Care Statistical Report, 2010.

Care should be taken when comparing the expenditure as there are variations in the types of meal services provided and in the financial arrangements that are in place. There may also be inconsistencies in the data due to variation in council's accounting procedures.

Table 3.10 does not show a direct correlation between the number of older people and expenditure by councils on food services for older people.

Dundee City made the largest expenditure (they currently offer a hot meal delivery, lunch clubs and a shopping service). South Lanarkshire, who currently offer the most food provision services (hot, frozen, shopping, lunch clubs and meal preparation at home) also spend a significant proportionate amount on food services for older people.

The table also includes significant fluctuations in expenditure from year to year (for example Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire) but there was no explanation provided for this.

3.8 Cost to the service users

The survey asked each authority to detail the cost of the service to the service user.

The cost of the delivery of a hot meal ranged from £1.23 in South Lanarkshire to £3.42 in Argyll and Bute. The average cost was £2.49.

The cost of a meal at a lunch club varied from £1.23 in South Lanarkshire to £3.00 in Edinburgh. The average cost was £2.14.

Recipients of a frozen meals service can expect to pay on average £2.57 for, typically a two course meal. The cheapest frozen meal service was in Dumfries and Galloway (£2) and the most expensive in Orkney (£3).

The Food Train charges £2 for each delivery. Other shopping services charge on average £3, except in Dundee City where the shopping service charge is £7.40. It was noted there is a large waiting list for this service in Dundee.

Table 3.11 shows the cost to the service user – where this information was provided by the local authority.

Table 3.11: Cost of service (per meal or per delivery) to service user by service type and local authority

| Local Authority | Hot meal delivery | Lunch Clubs | Frozen Meals service | Shopping service | Personal care/meal preparation |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Glasgow City | | £1.77 | | | |
| Edinburgh City | | £3.00 | £2.80 | | |
| Fife | £3.03 | | | | |
| South Lanarkshire | £1.23 | £1.23 | | | £9.89* |
| North Lanarkshire | £3.00 | £2.10 | | | |
| Highland | | | £2.74 | | |
| Aberdeenshire | | | | | |
| Aberdeen City | | | £2.70 | | |
| Dumfries &Galloway | £2.00 | | £2.00 | £2.00 | |
| Perth & Kinross | | | £2.45 | | |
| Renfrewshire | | | | | |
| Dundee City | £2.40 | £2.40 | | £7.40 | |
| North Ayrshire | | | | | |
| Falkirk | £2.00 | | | | |
| South Ayrshire | £2.35 | | | | |
| West Lothian | | | ** | £3.00/£2.00*** | |
| Scottish Borders | | | £2.60 | £3.42 | |
| Angus | £2.50 | | | £3.00 | |
| East Ayrshire | | | £2.34 | | |
| East Dunbartonshire | £2.10 | £2.10 | | | |
| Argyll & Bute | £3.42 | £2.50 | | | |
| East Lothian | | £2.40 | £2.40 | | |
| Moray | £3.00 | | | | |
| East Renfrewshire | £3.10 | | | | |
| Stirling | £1.80 | £1.80 | | | |
| West Dunbartonshire | | | | | |
| Inverclyde | | | | | |
| Midlothian | | | £2.72 | | |
| Clackmannanshire | £2.85 | | | | |
| Western Isles | | | | | |
| Orkney | | | £3.00 | | |
| Shetland | £2.70 | | | | |

*South Lanarkshire cost is the cost per hour of a carer at home.

** West Lothian charge depending on the type of meal required and whether equipment such as a small freezer is required and their Food Train service costs £2.00 per delivery, while their shopping service is £3.00.

3.9 Quality assurance and nutritional guidelines

All the local authorities were able to indicate the quality assurance and nutritional guidelines that their food services operate to.

Eleven local authorities used the National Association for Care Catering (NACC) as the standard for their service provision.

Other standards reported were:

- Three authorities used the guidelines established by the Caroline Walker Trust.
- Four local authorities trained their staff in basic food hygiene or the provision of minimum nutritional standards in contracts with providers and tender documents.
- Argyll and Bute Council stated that school kitchens and care homes are registered 'Cook Safe' providers and both regularly get updates from a dietician.
- Several local authorities' lunch clubs used school catering facilities and meals were therefore prepared to the same standard as school meals.
- In Clackmannanshire they mentioned that food is prepared according to the Health and Nutrition (Scotland) Act 2007.
- Moray, Orkney, South Ayrshire and Edinburgh Councils have links with, employ or follow the advice of a dietician. Perth and Kinross Council consult with the NHS nutrition consultant during their tendering process.
- Similarly, a number of authorities (Glasgow, Perth and Kinross, Scottish Borders, South Lanarkshire) said that they built in nutritional requirements to their tender process.

3.10 Gaps in service provision

Local authorities were asked to identify whether there were any gaps in their current provision of food services to older people.

- ten authorities said there were not currently any gaps in provision;
- three did not answer; and
- fifteen suggested gaps in their service provision.

A key issue identified in terms of the gaps in service provision was in relation to the frequency of the service. For example:

- Dundee City Council does not provide lunchtime services at weekends and does not provide any breakfast services.
- Dumfries and Galloway and Moray Councils only provide a hot meal delivery service three days per week.
- Lunch club services across many authorities are only available during school term time and are suspended during holidays. This was mentioned as a gap by Argyll and Bute Council specifically.

'Some service users do not get meals during school holidays as the school kitchens close. In some cases alternative arrangements are made with local hotels but for several areas this is a gap in service'.

(Service provider, Argyll & Bute)

Other local authorities want to introduce new service provision either by **expanding their existing services** or introducing **new food provision**. For example:

- Aberdeen City Council said that, following a pilot, it wishes to establish more lunch clubs as it is increasingly difficult to find spaces at day centres.
- Edinburgh City Council does not currently provide a shopping service or a hot meal delivery service.

'I feel we should provide more lunch clubs as Day Centre places are becoming more difficult to come by'.

(Service provider, Aberdeen)

Geographical gaps existed for some local authorities, for example:

- Dumfries and Galloway Council said that there are geographic gaps in the location of volunteer-run day centres.
- Stirling Council also said that geographical issues impacted on the 'parity of service delivery across the region.'
- Glasgow City Council indicated that there were fewer lunch clubs in the north of the City than in other areas. However, this was due to a lower level of expressed demand.
- Moray Council was not able to deliver hot meals to 'certain rural areas.'
- South Lanarkshire Council indicated that while there were no gaps in provision, there was a 'variation' in practice. For example, a high proportion of older people in the rural areas of South Lanarkshire will be receiving frozen meals, while older people in urban areas mostly receive hot meals. The number of lunch clubs in the different areas of South Lanarkshire Council vary considerably and not necessary in line with the size of the population.

Other gaps in services were identified, such as trying to maintain the number of referrals to keep a service running, or to encourage older people to use food services in new ways.

- East Dunbartonshire Council provides four weeks of free hot meal delivery services as older people are released from hospital, but are not receiving many referrals.
- Scottish Borders Council identified a difficulty in encouraging older customers to use online shopping.

See more about online shopping in Edinburgh's case study in Section 6.5

Finally, two authorities mentioned the way in which the service was provided.

- The Western Isles identified that there was no private provider to take on the delivery of food services.
- North Lanarkshire Council indicated that finding trained, competent staff could be a gap in service delivery.

3.11 Examples of good practice

We wanted to identify whether there were any examples of good practice that existed in their local authority in terms of food service provision.

The Food Train was given as an example of good practice for both West Lothian and Dumfries and Galloway Councils. In Dumfries and Galloway this service has expanded to include a befriending and handyman service.

Other examples of good practice included Orkney Islands Council which provides training to home carers as well as cookery books with recipes that can be made within 15 minutes to help make wholesome meals for older people.

In South Lanarkshire, the Council has begun a collaborative training programme with a local college to train their home care staff in 'nutrition in later life'. This has been delivered jointly with NHS Lanarkshire, the Centre for the Older People's Agenda (COPA) and Queen Margaret College in Edinburgh. Home Care staff have been attending a one day course to further develop their skills in providing the best nutritional care to older people living alone in their own homes.

In Argyll and Bute all of the hot meal deliveries and lunch club meals are cooked from fresh on the day they are served. Meals are provided either from school kitchens or care homes.

Highland Council retain an 'emergency stock' of frozen meals around the area which they stated was particularly helpful when supporting individuals on hospital discharge and when transport is an issue during times of extreme weather.

In Shetland, a new system has been introduced where hot, locally produced, food is delivered in individual containers, which is more environmentally friendly.

Fife Council has also been undertaking good practice in their food provision, such as providing a seven day, 363 days a year hot meal delivery service. This menu is prepared by NHS dieticians and is tested with service users before provider contracts are awarded.

'Fife Council Social Work Service is exemplary in providing a 7 day hot meal delivery service 363 days per year, with meals provided for all dietary types and requirements. Menus are prepared with assistance from a NHS Dietician to ensure minimum nutritional values and meals are checked routinely to ensure quality standards are met.'

(Service provider, Fife)

3.12 Changes to the provision of food services

Over half the local authorities (57%, 16 respondents) indicated that there had not been any changes in their provision of food services in the last year.

Of those that indicated that there had been changes:

- Midlothian Council reported stopping their hot meal delivery, which has been replaced by a commissioned frozen meals service.
- Orkney Council has introduced frozen meals to all people in receipt of meal preparation from homecare at weekends – with the option at the individual's request for this to be extended to seven days.
- West Lothian Council noted the introduction of the Food Train in September 2010.
- Glasgow City Council's lunch clubs raised their prices to reflect the rising price of food from 81p to £1.77.
- Moray Council reported the closure of lunch clubs, some of which are now being run as self-supporting groups.

3.13 Any planned changes to the provision of food services

Local authorities were asked to indicate whether there were any changes planned to the way they provide food services to older people:

- ten local authorities were planning specific changes;
- eight local authorities have no planned changes;
- six authorities were consulting with service users to inform a review of the service, and
- four authorities did not respond.

The six authorities consulting with service users were Dundee City, East Dunbartonshire, Scottish Borders, Shetland Islands, South Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire.

Specific changes that were mentioned included:

- Four local authorities said that they are considering the Scotland Excel National Framework contract for provision of individual and multi-portion meals in the community.
- West Lothian Council are expanding Food Train.
- Edinburgh City said that they 'may' reintroduce some of their previously deleted services (hot meal delivery and the shopping service).

- Glasgow City Council said that they are hoping to establish the viability of providing nutritionally analysed menus to meet the needs of the nutritionally vulnerable.
- Moray Council said that they are working in collaboration with voluntary sector partners to work out new ways of delivering food services.
- Inverclyde Council are considering introducing a lunchtime frozen meal service delivery which will ensure meals are provided 365 days per year and take over from the meal delivery which currently comes from local schools.
- Orkney Council are in the process of putting their frozen meals service out to tender.

3.14 Methods of consulting with older people on the provision of food services

The majority of local authorities indicated that they conduct a survey or questionnaire with their service users on an annual basis. One local authority (Aberdeen City) conducts this twice a year.

Other local authorities indicated other ways in which they collect service user views:

- East Ayrshire Council had some service user participation in trial menu tasting during their tender process.
- West and East Lothian Councils, and Stirling Council said that they use stakeholder fora and 'representational groups'.
- Perth and Kinross Council said that their service is regularly reviewed as part of a wider review of care services.
- A number of authorities said that they rely upon verbal feedback from service users (Argyll and Bute, Falkirk and Western Isles).
- Midlothian Council said that, before overhauling their service provision, they consulted with service users and had now established a 'comprehensive' annual survey which was to be rolled out in February 2011.

East Renfrewshire Council was the only local authority to state that they do not conduct any systematic gathering of data about levels of satisfaction with their food services.

The local authorities were not asked what happened to the information they collected, and there was no indication that participants receive any feedback from the local authorities following these consultations.

3.15 Summary of quantitative research

Twenty eight local authorities responded to our survey, developed in collaboration with CHFS and CFS.

Extent and range of provision

Hot meal delivery services are the most common service provided, being offered by 18 local authorities. Frozen meals services are offered by 15 local authorities and shopping services by 12 local authorities. Fourteen local authorities support lunch clubs.

Geographic coverage

The majority of services cover the entire the local authority area. Only three hot meal delivery services were identified as operating in a more limited geographical area.

External providers

Almost two thirds of the food services we have information for are contracted by the local authority to an external provider. Those providing services to the greatest number of local authorities are Apetito/ Wiltshire Foods (13) and WRVS (9).

Special meal requirements

The majority of local authorities are able to offer a range of menu choices as part of their hot meal delivery and frozen meals services to meet particular needs. However, of those for which information is available, only one fifth (6) provide finger food (which can be helpful for people with dementia).

Accessing services

All hot meal delivery services require professional assessment for users. Most (14 authorities) require users to be referred to the service by a professional and the remaining four authorities do accept requests from individuals which are then followed up by a professional referral.

Cost of the service

Local authorities were asked to indicate the average cost of their meals services. Some were not able to provide this information and some were not calculated in the same way. We found that on average, a hot meal delivery service would cost the local authority £281,000 per year and a frozen meal service would be on average £58,800. Information supplied to the Scottish Government indicates the average cost of 'meal services' which could be either frozen or hot meals was £214,000 for the year 2008/09.

Service users can expect to pay on average, £2.49 for a hot meal delivery service, or £2.57 for a frozen meals service. Within these figures there are large variations ranging from £1.23 to £3.42 for a hot meal delivery service, and £2 to £3 for a frozen meals service. Lunch clubs charged anywhere between £1.23 or £3.00 for a two course meal.

Quality assurances

All of the local authorities were able to indicate the quality assurance and nutritional guidelines they adhere to. The most commonly quoted guidelines were the National Association for Care Catering (NACC).

Gaps in service provision

Gaps in their existing services that were recognised by local authorities related to either the frequency of service, the types of service and the geographical coverage of some meals provision.

Changes in food service provision

Over half of the responding authorities did not report any changes in provision in the last year. Planned changes in the next year include changes in the way service providers are procured; introducing new services; or new ways of delivery.

Feedback from service users

The majority of local authorities indicated that they conduct a survey or questionnaire with their service users on an annual basis to collect their views. Some local authorities also conduct taster sessions for feedback on new menus.

4. Interviews with Service Users

The second element of the local authority survey was to use the emerging knowledge of the range of services across Scotland to identify a number of service users who would provide their views on the service that they received.

4.1 Sample

We wanted to include the views of older people receiving different types of services (for example hot meal delivery, or lunch clubs) and also to ensure a mix of urban and rural authorities from across Scotland.

We selected a sample of local authorities and services which took account of:

- the type of projects that we had identified in the mapping work;
- council run projects and voluntary sector projects supported by councils; and
- urban; rural and remote rural settings.

We had outlined in our proposal the intention to identify services targeted at specific groups such as men, or people from minority ethnic groups. We did not identify any specific services of this type.

We identified four local authorities providing lunch clubs for older people:

- Argyll and Bute
- East Dunbartonshire
- Glasgow City
- Stirling.

We identified other local authorities providing other types of food service such as hot meal delivery or a shopping service. We selected:

- Dumfries and Galloway
- Stirling
- Dundee
- East Dunbartonshire
- West Lothian.

We felt this sample represented a geographic mix as well as incorporating different types of food services. The breakdown of food services was as follows:

- hot meal delivery – 3 projects
- shopping service – 3 projects
- frozen meals – 1 project
- personal care – 1 project.

We hoped to involve service users from the frozen meals service in Orkney. Letters were sent on our behalf to the service users, but we were informed that no one wished to participate in the research.

4.2 Gathering contact details

We asked each of the selected local authorities to assist us in recruiting service users. We drafted a letter which set out the purpose and background to the research, and gave an indication of the types of questions that would be asked of the older person. The letter provided reassurances that the discussion would be informal and confidential. We provided our contact details for any questions.

Each food service then contacted a number of their service users to seek their permission for us to contact them. Once permission was granted, the food service passed contact details to us.

4.3 Discussion guides

We designed a separate discussion guide for each of the types of food service, in consultation with CFS/CFHS. Topics included:

- the service user's main concerns about food and nutrition;
- any barriers to good food and nutrition for the individual;
- the main benefits of the service;
- other food services that the individual used; and
- any potential improvements to the service.

The discussion guides are attached as Appendix 2.

4.4 The telephone interviews

We conducted 21 telephone interviews with service users. The discussions lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. We were encouraged by the willingness of the older people to speak to us, and found them all very engaging.

We took comprehensive notes during the interviews and wrote these up immediately afterwards including verbatim comments where relevant.

4.5 The lunch clubs

We attended six lunch clubs and facilitated discussions either in small groups, or with individuals. We consulted over sixty older people in this way. We often found that older people came to the club early, so the majority of discussions took place before lunch was served. In a minority of cases our discussions took place during lunch or immediately afterwards.

All six of the lunch clubs were run by the voluntary sector.

4.6 Incentives

We provided a gift voucher to individuals participating in the telephone interviews and made a donation to lunch clubs, in recognition of their co-operation.

4.7 Analysis of responses

Once all the fieldwork was completed, we analysed these notes by food service, exploring common themes and findings. In addition, each member of our team involved in undertaking fieldwork discussed the findings from their interviews and groups to ensure that all the common themes were covered.

In Section Five we report on service users' views.

Where possible we have indicated the age of the service user. This was not a specific question that was asked of service users, but we found often older people were happy to tell us their age during the conversation. Where possible we have been able to indicate an 'age band' based on the conversation or face to face interview to give an indication of the service users age. In addition, the quotes also indicate the type of area the service user lived in, based on the Scottish Government's urban rural classification. This helps to give some context to the quotes.

4.8 Summary

We conducted six focus groups with a total of 62 service users and undertook 21 telephone interviews. A total of 83 service users were involved in the qualitative research.

5. The Views of Service Users

This section focuses on the contents made by service users in relation to the different types of food services.

5.1 Lunch clubs

All six lunch clubs used the services of volunteers, but were funded or subsidised by the local authority. In all but one lunch club, the meals were prepared by a local school and delivered at the start of the lunch club. Only one club freshly prepared all the meals on the day themselves.

Most lunch club users were under 80 years old and were quite able. Some did have mobility issues but the majority were able to cook for themselves at home (whether a frozen meal or cooking from scratch). The less able were supported to do their shopping by family or friends - no one used a shopping service, although one participant expressed an interest in finding out more about this possibility.

The lunch club users tended to be women – two of the lunch clubs we visited had only one male service user, while others had a group of around three or four men who met there regularly.

The benefits

The majority of older people were attending lunch clubs as a way of socialising. Many of the participants indicated that the lunch club was a way of meeting people their own age. Many lived alone and said that they looked forward to the lunch club because it was an opportunity to get out of the house and speak to people.

'I could be in the house all week and not see a soul'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, male, 65-75)

The other key benefit was having 'someone cook for you'. The participants were mixed in their abilities to cook for themselves at home – some still did, while others relied on the lunch club to provide their one 'main meal' of the day.

'It's for the companionship as well as the novelty of having someone else cook. It's nice to have someone cook for you'.

(Lunch club user, other urban area, female, 65-75)

The lunch clubs were particularly beneficial to older men. We spoke with several men who said that they had only started to come to the lunch club when they were widowed and found themselves living on their own. Some of these men stated that they had 'never' cooked for themselves before, and although some were capable of making a meal for themselves, the lunch club ensured they were eating at least one hot meal a day.

'I would just cook ready meals in the microwave – the meal here (lunch club) would be my main meal for the day'.

(Lunch club user, other urban area, male, 75+)

There were no examples of older people 'missing meals'. On days when the lunch club was not available, older people either made themselves a meal, or these were prepared by family. No one was in receipt of any other food service provided by the local authority – such as hot meal delivery or frozen meal service. A few service users at one lunch club stated that they had met during the summer holidays in a local cafe for a meal – allowing them to continue to socialise while the lunch club was closed for the school holidays. Similarly, we spoke to a few lunch club users who frequented more than one club so as to take advantage of a prepared meal more than once a week.

One of the lunch clubs we visited was predominantly a 'social club' that served lunch. At this club, service users said that the benefits of attending were 'meeting friends' and the activities that were on offer, such as playing bowls or scrabble. Service users at this lunch club said that the food was not the motivation for attending although agreed that eating was a social event – which was an attraction of the lunch club.

See the Moray case study at Section 7 for more detail on the social aspects of lunch clubs

The food

The lunch club meals were fairly consistent in their composition. They tended to be a bowl of soup and a main meal which consisted of chicken or red meat, vegetables and potatoes, followed by tea and biscuits. In the summer, soup was replaced with a sweet. One lunch club provided a three course lunch, with soup, a main meal and a dessert, with tea and biscuits.

All but one of the lunch clubs were praised for the quality of their food and that it was hot and delivered on time. One participant stated that there was a 'novelty' in having someone serve you – as those who ran the lunch clubs serve the older people at their tables.

'If I was at home, I'd be licking the plate'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, male 75+)

Service users at one lunch club had mixed views about the quality of the food which was prepared at the local secondary school. Views ranged from 'bloody awful' to 'good' in terms of the quality of the food. One person indicated she was quite upset when she first joined as she felt that the food was like 'a soup kitchen with no flavour or substance'. A couple of people indicated that they had 'become vegetarians' because they felt that the non meat option meals were better. One person suggested that the choice and quality of vegetables was poor. However, others said that the food was quite tasty and there was good variety.

Nutrition

The older people agreed that they were eating a nutritional meal at the lunch clubs, and this was determined by the presence of vegetables with every meal.

'You always get a veg'.

(Lunch club user, other urban area, female, 65-75)

In addition, there was one lunch club who did not have salt on the table during the meal to discourage people from using it. All the service users agreed that it was a good idea not to have salt on the table and found their food to be tasty enough without it. One participant at this particular lunch club stated that he was now very aware of health and nutrition and made particular choices when out in the supermarket.

'I'm wary of saturated fats, and I always cook with olive oil and I don't take salt'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, male, 65-75)

Overall, most participants stated that they were eating a balanced diet at home and continued to buy meat and vegetables from the supermarket. One group of men supplemented their lunch club meal with frozen meals at home and said that these also contained vegetables and so assumed that the nutritional content was good for them.

Two participants admitted that their diets were not as balanced as they could be – both found it difficult to motivate themselves to cook or prepare food when only doing so for themselves.

'I just can't be bothered sometimes, so I'll just have toast'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, female, 65-75)

The majority of people we spoke to indicated an interest in their food and had nutritious diets. Several participants mentioned their awareness of the '5-a-day' campaign and said that although they did eat fruit and vegetables, they found this an ambitious target.

'Eating five portions is awful hard in one day – that's a lot of fruit'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, female, 75+)

At one lunch club, one of the service users had been a dietician for 40 years. Her opinion of the meal was that it did represent a balanced, healthy diet. However the rest of this group believed that a 'balanced diet' was a concept of the 'younger generation' and that older people were not concerned about this – only eating 'what they're used to.'

The volunteer at this lunch club added that the school meals used to provide the lunch club with salads and pasta dishes as their meal, but the response was poor and so the meals tend to be meat or fish with vegetables.

'The school used to send over wee salads or pasta dishes, but they didn't like them; it wasn't to their taste'.

(Lunch club volunteer, accessible rural area)

Variety

The lunch clubs were also praised for the variety of food on offer – with participants stating that they tend to get something different every week.

'You always get something different – the meals here are lovely'.

(Lunch club user, accessible rural, female, 65-75)

However, one lunch club did not serve fish, as it was felt this might not be to everyone's taste – but this disappointed one participant who, as a non-meat eater would have preferred fish as an option.

Some vegetarians felt that they were not well catered for. On two occasions at different lunch clubs, vegetarians were given the main meal - but without the meat, rather than a separate vegetarian meal. One lunch club representative stated that usually 'there is a wee salad sent over, but it didn't arrive today'. Only one lunch club that we visited offered a separate vegetarian option, and for some members of this club, it was perceived as better quality than the 'meat option'.

The lunch clubs serve one meal per session – so despite the choice differing each week, there is no choice on the day – but by and large the older people were not unhappy about this.

'It's a surprise... you never know what you're going to get....but it's very good variety and an excellent choice'.

(Lunch club user, large urban area, female, 75+)

'It's never the same meal two weeks in a row'.

(Lunch club user, other urban area, male, 75+)

Value for money

The cost of the two course meal did not vary greatly between all the lunch clubs we visited. The cheapest meal was £2.00 and the most expensive was £2.50. All the older people paid for their meal on the day.

'You couldn't get a cup of tea in the town for that money'.

(Lunch club user, other urban area, female, 65-75)

The participants also stated that they would not be able to buy all the ingredients to make the meal at home for the cost of their lunch club meal. Therefore, they all agreed that the value for money was 'excellent'.

Barriers to eating good food

It was common for the older people to suggest that there had been a 'drop off' in the numbers of people attending their clubs. Some cited the recent bad

weather as the issue – either people were still reluctant to leave the house, or there were several stories of older people having fallen on the ice and who were still at home recuperating. This was seen as an issue to accessing food when the weather prevents people from leaving the house. Family and friends became more important at these times to ensure older people were accessing food.

Transport was provided for older people to attend three of the lunch clubs we visited. One provided a free taxi service. In another club, volunteers collected and dropped off the older people for the lunch club. One club used a council provided bus for transport. Those using the transport stated that they would not be able to attend the lunch club without it. This issue is discussed in more detail in the Western Isles and Moray case studies (see section 6.4 and 6.6).

Others suggested that as they get older, it becomes more of a ‘chore’ to leave the house and it is easy to fall into a rut. But it was suggested that family and friends play an important part in encouraging people to attend the clubs and to get out of the house.

‘You get stuck in a rut and you can’t be bothered going out’.
(Lunch club user, other urban area, female, 75+)

‘I said that I would leave it till after Christmas, but she said, no – the bus will be here for you on Monday – so you’d better be ready’.
(Lunch club user, other urban area, female, 75+)

Interestingly, one lunch club was held in a sheltered housing complex, once a week and the residents came together in a common room to have a meal. They all thought this was a good way to meet people that otherwise, you would ‘walk past in the street’ – particularly so for new residents. However, when asked if they would attend a lunch club that was located elsewhere – none of the participants said they would make the effort to attend. The convenience of having the lunch club on their doorstep was definitely the draw and they would be put off having to travel to access the food.

‘No, I couldn’t be bothered going out – why wait on a bus when it could be right here?’
(Lunch club user, large urban area, male, 75+)

There were no other barriers identified – in fact, some older people commented on how shops were more likely now to provide single portion meals – either frozen meals for the microwave or smaller portions of vegetables. People also referred to the amount of publicity and information on healthy diets that was available.

Improvements

Only at one lunch club was there the suggestion that the quality of the food could be improved. All the other participants were very satisfied with the quality, variety and value for money of the food. No one at the lunch club stated that they had been asked their views on the service formally (either through a survey or discussion group) – but all the older people were vocal in praising the volunteers who were preparing their meal.

Case study

Mrs X has been coming to the lunch club for 4 years. She first came with a friend who had been recommended by her doctor, but who didn't want to go alone. Mrs X volunteered to accompany her friend and enjoyed herself so much, she kept coming. She said that she 'had an idea' of what to expect initially but was surprised at how welcoming the lunch club was and how easy it was to make friends.

She said that the benefit of the lunch club was 'the company' and also that it 'saves you cooking.' Mrs X was a resident in a sheltered housing complex and cooked for herself on other days but 'this is a bit of a treat on a Tuesday'.

She said that the food at the lunch club was 'very good' and that it was 'always piping hot and very tasty.' There was also quite good variety 'sometimes you get steak mince, or steak pie – last week's steak mince was lovely.'

She agreed that her diet was balanced and that she does eat a good balance of fruit and vegetables, and although aware of the aim to eat 'five a day' she did not think she was getting that much.

She had recommended the lunch club to others at her sheltered housing complex and very much enjoyed attending the club.

Concerns for the future

All of those participating in a lunch club indicated that they were more than happy with the service they were receiving – but suggested that perhaps the clubs could be better advertised to increase the number of participants. There were general concerns among the older people that public sector budget cuts could lead to the lunch clubs being disbanded and they hoped an increase in service users would combat this, if necessary.

In one other lunch club the school providing the meals was closing down and a new arrangement was in place with a different school. The service users were concerned that the quality of the food might change (as they were currently very happy) and also had concerns about a rise in the price of their meal.

See Section 7 from Moray for examples of sustainable food services

Overall

The service users we spoke to were happy that their local council was providing sufficient food services for older people. Only one older person during the course of our fieldwork asked for information on how to access a shopping service that could be of benefit to her.

See section 9 for views of service users in the Western Isles on their service provision.

5.2 Hot meal delivery

We conducted telephone interviews with nine older people receiving hot meal delivery. Typically this meant at least one hot meal per day being delivered to the older person and for some this was a service that was delivered seven days a week, during weekends and holidays.

The benefits

The majority of those in receipt of the hot meal delivery service were not able to get out on their own anymore and looked forward to the meals being delivered. In many cases, the meals were delivered by the same people every day and it meant that the older person built up a friendship with the deliverer.

'See when you're on your own and you don't get many visitors, the meals on wheels are a presence in your home, it's someone to talk to'.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, male, 75+)

For others, knowing that someone would be coming to their door every day was a source of comfort in case of emergencies.

'I know that if anything happens to me, if meals on wheels can't get an answer at the door, then there will be someone checking on me'.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, female, 65-75)

The service was also praised across the different local authorities for being excellent value for money.

Nutritional value

Several of the older people were referred to the hot meal delivery service by their GP – either following a stay in hospital or an illness. These respondents indicated that they had all been told by their GP to 'put on weight' and this has been achieved by eating the food from the hot meal delivery service.

'I weighed seven stone when I came out of hospital and now I weigh 13 stone, and it's all down to the good food I'm eating through meals on wheels'.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, male, 75+)

Others commented on the amount of vegetables that were present in the hot meals dishes and one older person commented that the portions were often too big for her to finish.

Variety

The hot meal delivery service was praised for its variety – particularly as it comprised meals that the older person would no longer make for themselves.

‘You get variety, one day it might be stovies, or sausages or it might be fish. It’s a good wee meal – it’s never the same two days running’.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, male, 75+)

‘It’s the same kind of food that I would’ve prepared for myself’.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, female, 65-75)

Special requirements

Some of the recipients of hot meal delivery indicated that they had special dietary requirements that meant they were not to eat certain foods due to their medication (examples given were older people advised to avoid spinach or brussels sprouts). Two of the nine hot meal delivery clients we spoke to mentioned this as a concern, but stated they had not mentioned this to the staff so as not to make a fuss.

‘I haven’t told anyone because I don’t get them (specific food item) every day. I just eat a wee drop and throw the rest away’.

(Hot meal delivery client, other urban area, female, 75+)

The vast majority of the participants we spoke to were very happy with their hot meal delivery service and praised the staff for being friendly and courteous and helpful if there are any issues (such as changing the delivery time or taking feedback on the quality of the food). None recalled having been asked for their views before. All stated they would recommend the service to others.

5.3 Shopping service

Shopping services take an older person’s shopping list and then purchase and deliver their shopping. We spoke to nine older people using a service (six of these used the Food Train services in Dumfries and Galloway or West Lothian).

The service users tended to be referred to the shopping service either through their GP or physiotherapist to avoid them having to carry heavy shopping. The service users we spoke to had been using the service for at least six months and indicated this was a long term solution to their health issues.

Reliability

All the recipients of a shopping service praised its reliability in terms of both collecting the shopping list and delivering the food. The service users all stated that the volunteers arrive at the same time every week and promptly deliver the shopping.

'They come on a Monday morning to pick up the list and the money and then deliver the shopping on a Tuesday. They always come roughly the same time'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

Choice of shops

The service users stated that there was no choice in terms of which supermarket the shopping came from – and there were some suggestions that they would have preferred an alternative. The older people had some perceptions about which chain of supermarket was better – and the shopping service does not always go to their preferred supermarket. However no one had complained or mentioned their preference to the shopping service staff. There was an element of 'not wanting to cause any trouble'.

'I don't like the food from XXXXXX but they would have an awful problem trying to keep everybody happy'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

Quality of food

There were some discrepancies in the views of service users about the quality of the food they received. This was influenced by the supermarket from which the shopping service purchased the shopping. The issue of 'own label' brands were mentioned by users of a shopping service – and the point made that often the food arrives and 'it's not what I would have picked'. The older people suggested that despite being unhappy with some of the choices, they would not say to the staff because they did not want to be seen to be causing trouble.

'I don't like the meat from XXXX. It's not what I would pick but I've not said anything. I've stopped ordering meat and one of the staff did say to me 'are you not wanting any meat?' and I said, 'yes, but not from you'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

'Sometimes they might forget something or bring mustard cress instead of water cress – but I never complain because I'm so satisfied otherwise; it's such a difficult a job'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

In some cases the older person stated that they no longer ordered certain items through the shopping service because they were not happy about the shop from which it was bought. For example, one service user was not happy with the quality of the meat she was given, so she now asked a neighbour to buy meat for her, from an alternative supermarket.

The benefits

The benefits were clear, in that the shopping service offered a door-to-door service for people who were otherwise unable to get to the shops. All the service users stated that they would, or had already, recommended the shopping service and relied on it. Examples were given of the recent bad

weather in December 2010, and service users were very impressed that the shopping service was able to continue despite the weather.

'I don't have to think – I don't need to walk up and down the aisles thinking or looking for what I need'.

(Food Train client, other urban area, female, 90yrs)

'Over Christmas it was a life line'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

Some of the older people commented on the benefit of having someone coming to the house as peace of mind for their safety.

'Sometimes I feel helpless – neighbours no longer care about elderly people and so when they (shopping service) arrive on a Monday morning, it gives me peace'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

The Food Train was particularly praised for offering a pre-coded shopping list making it easier for older people to remember what they need to buy. The list can then either be collected by Food Train staff, or the older person can save time by telephoning their order to the Food Train office.

'I used to do the shopping list – but now I use a sheet produced by the food train that has all the articles on it and I just phone it in, it saves them a trip'.

(Food Train client, large urban area, female, 65-75)

For one older person, the shopping service was helping him to retain some independence in his own home and he was delighted that he was still able to have some 'control' over the process.

'The Food Train helps me to be as independent as I can be, for as long as I can be'.

(Food Train client, large urban area, male, 75years)

Value for money

All the respondents praised the shopping service for being excellent value for money. The shopping services that people were using cost either £2 or £3 per delivery.

'There's no much you can get these days for £3. If you had to get a taxi to the shops it would be £5 each way'.

(Food Train client, large urban area, female, 75+)

Initiative of staff

The staff were also praised for having initiative if an item of shopping is not available, the volunteers will try to find the older person an alternative. For some, this was a benefit as it meant that they did not go without – and most people were not fussy.

'If I ask for a tin of John West salmon, and they don't have it and I get Princes – it doesn't worry me. I like that they get me something else'.

(Food Train client, large urban area, male, 75years)

However, others found it difficult to let someone else make food choices on their behalf – and often lots of 'supermarket own brand' items were purchased for the older person, whereas they would prefer particular brands. One older person also commented on the fruit that the volunteers picked for her – would not have been her own, personal choice.

'They brought me bananas – but I didn't want whoppers'.

(Food Train client, other urban area, female, 87 years)

Alternative to the shopping service

None of the users of a shopping service were also in receipt of any other food services such as hot meal delivery or frozen meals delivery and therefore relied on the shopping service. All stated that with family and friends either living far away or health reasons preventing the service user from leaving the house – the shopping service was relied on by its users.

'I don't get out much and my children live far away – it would cost £20 in a taxi to get to Tesco and back, so I rely on this service'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

'I have considered learning to use that blinking computer, but I refuse to deal with finances online and I can't expect friends to help with shopping as they have done in the past'.

(Shopping service client, other urban area, female, 75+)

Case study

Mr F has been receiving the Food Train services for 3 months. He noticed his health was deteriorating and he found that the supermarket was too big for him to walk around easily. Determined to stay independent in his own home, he was told about the Food Train by the social work department.

Having 'never heard of them before' this client telephoned the Food Train and said that the process was easily explained and he soon became a member. He said that when he went to the social work team he was 'clutching at straws' – he had no idea whether there was anything they would be able to do for him and he said that 'as long as someone was getting my messages, I'd try it'.

He described the service as 'excellent' and 'very reliable' – he gave the example of the recent bad weather where the 'government had to accept the Transport secretary's resignation, but the Food Train was only 'derailed' for one day' – he said that there was only one day when the volunteers didn't make it to work and he was really impressed.

Case study

Mrs H has been receiving the shopping service for 3 years. She was referred to the scheme through an occupational therapist.

She used to get the shopping service coming once a week, but she found that, because she was on her own, she struggled to get through all the food, so she changed the arrangement so that she only gets the shopping service once a fortnight.

She gets the list together on a Thursday and it is collected and delivered on the same day. The shopping service provides a list – but she can't read it. She has written her shopping list out three times this week – because she says her hand writing is getting worse and she worries the staff won't be able to read it.

She said that the service is very reliable – they come in the mornings and usually arrive around the same time.

She said that she does not get a choice about where her shopping comes from. The service goes to Morrison's – but she would prefer her shop to come from Tesco. She hasn't told the staff as she does not want them to go out of their way to Tesco.

She said that the staff are nice, which is good because as she is on her own '*I might not see anyone for weeks.*'

5.4 Frozen meals service

Three older people were consulted about their frozen meals service. All three were supplied their meals by the WRVS who took orders and delivered the frozen meals to the service users at their convenience. Older people can order up to three weeks worth of frozen meals at any one time. The service users select from a list of food choices. Older people without a fridge freezer or microwave are offered the use of these items by WRVS.

Attempts were made to speak to frozen meal service users in Orkney – but none of the service users chose to participate in the research.

Reliability

As the service users are able to decide how many meals they wish to order at any one time, there is also some flexibility in when the meals are delivered. Service users can arrange with WRVS a delivery time that suits them.

'Deliveries come between 11.30 – 12 on a Wednesday. I arrange it so that there's always someone in. They (WRVS) do offer different times though'.
(Frozen meals client, large urban area, male, 75+)

Variety

WRVS also offer a choice. A list of different frozen meal choices is supplied to the older person. These include red meat (roast dinners, sausages and mince) as well as chicken and fish. The service users stated that the choice was excellent.

Quality

Overall the quality of the food was praised – there were only a few specific meals where the service users had some comments and these tended to be in relation to the size of the portions. One respondent indicated that he would prefer a larger portion – in particular of potatoes, which he said were ‘scooped using an ice cream scoop – it’s more like a child’s portion.’

One other comment related to the ‘Vienna steak’ which was described as a ‘glorified beef burger’.

There were also some comments on the accuracy of some of the cooking instructions. Some service users had found that following the cooking instructions still left them with frozen, or half-cooked meals and so had to amend the cooking times themselves.

‘The instructions on the rice pudding says cook for 6 minutes, but if you do, it is still freezing cold’.

(Frozen meals client, large urban area, male, 75+)

Nutrition

Vegetables were a staple part of every frozen meal and service users felt that because of this, their frozen meals were healthy.

Special needs

Some of the respondents had particular food needs – for example because of diabetes. These service users said they were well catered for through the WRVS choices as there were vegetarian and specific diabetic options on the list of food choices.

However, one service user stated that because of health reasons, he is not to eat certain vegetables. He said that he has not mentioned this to WRVS as he doesn’t want to make a fuss.

‘We do get fruit and veg, but I’m not to eat some vegetables. I haven’t mentioned it to them (WRVS) – I don’t want to make a fuss, I’ll just take what’s on offer’.

(Frozen meals client, large urban area, male, 75+)

Value for money

Those receiving their frozen meals through the WRVS were paying approximately £2 per frozen (two course) meal. The service users were all in agreement that this represented good value for money.

Case study

Mr and Mrs L first started on frozen meals about four years ago when they were told about the service through the WRVS. They organised it themselves directly with WRVS. They order eight frozen meals every two weeks. Each frozen meal is two courses and so typically meals would include fish and chips and macaroni cheese. He gets a delivery every two weeks and this usually arrives at the same time, with the same staff. He said the staff were very courteous and always ask how they liked the food.

He thought there was an excellent choice on the menu and that it was good value for money (as each two course meal costs £2).

The service saves him 'a lot of trouble', as his wife is very unwell and can no longer use the kitchen. As his wife's carer, Mr L said that the service was excellent and he wouldn't change anything about it. He has recommended it to others.

See Section 8 for service user views of the frozen meals service in Edinburgh

5.5 Personal care

We spoke to two service users in receipt of personal care. This service is tailored to the individual's needs but essentially involves a carer coming to the older person's house and undertaking different tasks, which often involve the preparation of food. These interviews were limited in the quality of the information we were able to gather about the meal preparation as it was a small part of the overall service being provided through personal care to the service users.

For one service user, her carer arrives early in the morning (7am) and helps her out of bed. Breakfast is prepared and a meal left in the fridge for lunch time. The carer then returns in the evening to make an evening meal. The carer also does the grocery shopping. The carer returns later in the evening (8-9pm) to make a cup of tea and put the older person to bed.

There were positive comments about the type of food that was prepared. The biggest praise for the personal care service was the company the carers provide as well as the peace of mind they were being looked after. One of the recipients of personal care also had family who were able to help prepare meals at lunch time or at the weekends.

'I like the companionship the best and being in touch with people – otherwise I'd be alone, without any family around. The staff are quite good at having a blether'.

Personal care user, other urban area, female, 75+

5.6 Summary of the views of service users

Focus groups were undertaken with six lunch clubs in four local authority areas. In addition 21 telephone interviews took place with service users in five different local authority areas, representing eight different services covering:

- hot meal delivery;
- frozen meals service;
- food train;
- shopping service; and
- personal care.

Quality and variety of food

The lunch club meals were fairly consistent in their composition. They tended to be a bowl of soup and a main meal which consisted of chicken or red meat, vegetables and potatoes, followed by tea and biscuits. All but one of the lunch clubs were praised for the quality of their food.

The lunch clubs were also praised for the variety of food on offer – with participants stating that they tend to get something different every week. The hot meal delivery service was praised for its variety – particularly as it comprised meals that the older person would no longer make for themselves.

There were some discrepancies in the views of shopping service users about the quality of the food they received. This was influenced by the supermarket from which the shopping service purchased the shopping. The issue of ‘own label’ brands were mentioned by users of a shopping service – and the point made that often the food arrives and ‘it’s not what I would’ve picked’.

Nutrition

The older people agreed that they were eating a nutritional meal at the lunch clubs, and this was determined by the presence of vegetables with every meal. Some older people indicated their awareness of ‘saturated fats’ and added salt in their diets and were making more informed food choices as a result. Others mentioned their awareness of the ‘5-a-day’ campaign and stated that they attempted to eat fruit and vegetables but for most older people, they tended to stick to food choices that they ‘had always eaten’ which tended to consist of meat, potatoes and vegetables.

Barriers

Transport was provided for older people to attend three of the lunch clubs we visited. Those using the transport stated that they would not be able to attend the lunch club without it.

Other than comments on the bad weather which interrupted the delivery of some hot meals or shopping services for a short time over winter, there were no other barriers mentioned by older people to accessing good food.

Reliability of delivery services

All the recipients of a shopping service praised its reliability in terms of both collecting the shopping list and delivering the food. The service users all stated that the volunteers arrive at the same time every week and promptly deliver the shopping.

Benefits

The majority of older people were attending lunch clubs as a way of socialising. Many of the participants indicated that the lunch club was a way of meeting people their own age. Many lived alone and said that they looked forward to the lunch club because it was an opportunity to get out of the house and speak to people. Those in receipt of a delivery service (whether shopping or a hot meal delivery) commented on the peace of mind that comes with knowing someone will be checking on them.

The benefits of home meal services were the value for money and the provision of a varied menu. All the service users we spoke to indicated they thought their service was good value for money. Users indicated that they would not be able to buy all the ingredients to make the meal for the cost they were being charged.

6. Case Study Overview

6.1 Introduction

We worked with three local community organisations to prepare case studies to look more closely at the role of the voluntary sector and other community based food provision. Each case study will be presented in more detail in the following chapters.

6.2 Methodology

Initial work carried out by CFHS identified three locations in which local community based organisations had expressed an interest in taking part in this research as a case study. These provide a geographical spread of services being delivered in urban, rural and remote areas:

- Moray; Moray Handy Person Services;
- Pilmeny (Edinburgh); Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) and The Edinburgh Community Food Training Hub; and
- The Western Isles, Cearns Community Development Project.

We agreed to commission each of the organisations identified as a sub-contractor and made a payment to them to cover their costs.

We contacted each organisation and briefed them on what was expected. We produced a document setting out the nature and purpose of the research, and what was expected of the case study. Each was asked to look at:

- The food services available within a defined area – We agreed whether this was the local authority, a region or town.
- The characteristics of the food services – such as client group, scale, frequency, type of service, cost of delivery, charges, nutritional guidelines, etc.
- Consumer views on local food services – such as access, availability, affordability, choice, safety, cultural or lifestyle requirements, quality and involvement in service planning.

In addition, the case studies were to highlight examples of good practice; barriers to successful and effective food services; and lessons learned about how to deliver an effective food service.

We produced an outline document for each case study area which gave an indication of the types of work that they might consider to produce a comprehensive overview of their areas food provision. This included:

- **Scoping** – Using local knowledge, local databases, internet searches and phone calls to identify organisations that may provide food services in their area.

- **Mapping** – Using a postal, face to face or telephone surveys to gather basic information about the food services available.
- **Detail** – Follow up discussions with a small number of food services to find out more about interesting, innovative or unusual approaches.
- **Experiences** – Speaking to a small number of service users, by phone or face to face to find out more about their experiences of using different services.

We designed a template – with appropriate headings and some guidance about what each section of the case study should include. This suggested:

- **Method** - To include information on how the case study was undertaken such as what you did and the numbers of people involved.
- **The Area** - Basic information about the geographical area that the case study covered. It was suggested this could cover the age profile of the population, and any other relevant themes such as disability, ethnic origin and gender.
- **The Services** - An overview of the food services available in the area. Information should be gathered around key themes like:
 - Client group – area covered, age group covered, other access criteria.
 - Type of service – shopping, meals at home, meals outwith home, etc.
 - Level of service – frequency and duration
 - Quality of service – nutritional standards, choice, flexibility, etc.
 - Cost – cost of delivery, type of funding, charging systems, etc.
- **Experiences** - A summary of the views of (a small number of) older people on the food services available. This could be gathered from interviews or focus groups specifically undertaken for the purpose of this case study, or from customer satisfaction surveys already undertaken by organisations providing food services.
- **Lessons Learned** - An overview of the success factors (what makes a food service work well); barriers and challenges; and lessons learned about delivering food services for older people in their own homes.

Reporting timescales were also agreed as the research would have to be undertaken between November 2010 and January 2011 – taking account of the Christmas holidays.

6.3 Key findings

Range of services

The case studies identified a wide range of food services in operation across Western Isles, North East Edinburgh and Moray, predominantly focusing on those in the community, voluntary and social enterprise sectors. Services available included:

- breakfast clubs;
- lunch clubs;

- cooking classes;
- allotments and grow your own projects;
- food co-operatives;
- outings and trips linked to meals;
- healthy eating or nutrition advice; and
- meals for homeless people.

Generally services were targeted geographically, but some (particularly in Edinburgh) were targeted at minority ethnic people or older men.

Planning and delivering lunch clubs

The case studies focused strongly on the operation of lunch clubs. In most cases, the planning and delivery of the lunch club required significant investment of time and effort. Often management committees, and particularly chairs, were instrumental in ensuring that lunch clubs were delivered and sustained. Often activity was planned well in advance (up to one or two years ahead).

Volunteers were often crucial to sourcing and making the food at lunch clubs. In some cases, one or two key individuals cooked meals – or volunteers shared responsibility on a rota basis. Volunteers took the lead in gathering ingredients, cooking and assisting with transport. In addition, in some cases volunteers met the cost of food provision, or contributed towards this. Volunteers were often older people, but in some cases (particularly in rural areas) young people were involved.

Funding lunch clubs

In most cases, lunch clubs were funded largely through service users either covering or contributing towards the cost of provision. Sometimes volunteers made up the difference, and in other cases donations and funding from public sector organisations were used. Often a small amount of funding (just a couple of hundred pounds) made a big difference to the sustainability of a lunch club.

In many cases, funding (particularly from the Council) was decreasing and costs were increasing, causing challenges in terms of sustainability. However, most clubs had managed to get round these challenges – with a strong reliance on volunteers. Many lunch clubs were concerned about sustainability, given a strong reliance on a small number of individuals in planning and delivering activities.

Accessing food services

In remote and rural areas, the issue of transport to and from lunch clubs and other food services out of the home was a considerable barrier. In many cases, lunch clubs used community transport services offered by local community organisations, or used volunteers to transport older people to and from the group. However, in some cases the cost of organising transport privately was high, and increasing, causing concerns about sustainability.

Role of private businesses

In some cases, local businesses have been extremely supportive of local lunch clubs. In the three case study areas, this tended to happen in the more rural and remote areas. Businesses have supported lunch clubs through offering low cost meals, ensuring physical access to premises, and providing extras – such as Christmas or birthday specials. Generally local businesses have been considered when existing provision was under threat. The charges appear broadly comparable with community and voluntary provision.

Benefits of lunch clubs

Generally, the main appeal of food services outwith the home – such as lunch clubs – appears to be the social aspect. For many, lunch clubs or related trips were the only chance of eating with others, or eating outwith the home. Consultees in Edinburgh mentioned that they found many new restaurants and bars unwelcoming, with more traditional and less expensive options closing down due to regeneration.

Participants valued the social aspect highly. However, a number of older people consulted as part of these case studies felt that the opportunity of a nutritious meal was the main draw – particularly older men who indicated that they rarely cooked at home.

Some lunch clubs were struggling to attract those who had recently reached the age of 65. One case study found that there was some stigma around the term 'lunch clubs', which may discourage some appropriate people from attending.

Targeted services for minority ethnic older people in North East Edinburgh were highly valued. There was some demand for more gender specific services.

Shopping services

In rural areas, older people often used community transport schemes for shopping in the main town. Mobile grocery vans, operating in rural areas, were also seen as a good way of shopping – with vans flexible about bringing different foods if requested. Some consultees in urban areas felt that this flexible approach was lacking in local businesses, with few offering home delivery or assistance without a significant charge.

Older people in North East Edinburgh mentioned that they did not use online shopping services due to not having a computer, not knowing how to order online and high charges in relation to the small quantities of food that they needed. There was demand for a low cost telephone shopping service from supermarkets or local shops. There was limited awareness of other services available to support older people with their shopping.

Support in rural and remote areas

The case study in Western Isles highlighted that many older people receive significant support from their neighbours – particularly with shopping and cooking. There appears to be a strong sense of community spirit and an ethos of supporting one another, particularly older and more vulnerable people.

7. Case study: Moray

Introduction

This case study explores social eating opportunities in Moray. It was developed by Moray Handyperson Services.

In January 2010, Moray Handyperson Services published a report – Moray Older People's Survey on Food and Related Issues. The report was based on an in depth survey of clients needs related to 'food issues' and was commissioned by Community Food and Health Scotland. Shortly after the report was published, in April 2010, the local authority withdrew subsidies from all older people's luncheon clubs in Moray, which it had previously supported.

This case study is designed to look at the various ways communities across the area reacted and adapted to these changes. The emphasis is on the importance of gathering, socially, to eat, rather than on the food itself. We also briefly cover the efforts which are being made to encourage people to further develop these social networks.

The case study by no means gives an exhaustive picture of all the social eating activities being carried on in Moray, however it hopes to demonstrate the wide range of activities which has evolved.

Case Study Methodology

This case study involved telephone interviews with nine community or voluntary organisations providing food services in Moray. Telephone interviews were undertaken using a semi-structured discussion guide, exploring the history of the group, its structure and membership, food services offered, pricing structures, and lessons learned.

The Area and Context

Moray stretches from the Moray Firth central coast at its northern edge to the Cairngorm mountain area in the south. It covers approximately 860 square miles of predominantly rural landscape. It has a population of almost 90,000, of which 19 per cent of the population is over 65³.

Most people live in the main towns of Elgin, Lossiemouth, Buckie, Forres and Keith. Other smaller communities are also scattered throughout Moray, several in remote and rural locations. Moray has a fully integrated Community Health and Social Care Partnership led by a joint local authority and NHS Management Team.

During the financial year 2009/2010, The Moray Council, in common with all other local authorities in Scotland, was looking to identify financial savings

³ ISD General Practice Populations Data, October 2010

within its services. The Social Care Services had two layers of provision to older and vulnerable people. Firstly, there was the statutory obligation to assess and deliver services to those in need. This work included assessment of need for food services and there were clear eligibility criteria for e.g. Day Centres, hot meal delivery and shopping services.

Secondly, there was a non-statutory provision of preventative and lower level support services. This included providing subsidised meals for luncheon clubs around the area. Council supported groups were not the only provision but were certainly in the majority.

Meals were typically being cooked either in school canteens or community centres, by Council staff, and came at a cost of around £2.10 to customers. The intention of the Council was that these meals would provide hot nutritious food to those over the age of 65, who either could not afford food or who were unable to prepare it adequately. The social networking aspect of the groups was of secondary importance.

The Council had concerns that there was no form of assessment of need for these groups. There were also concerns that people attended who were below the age of 65, who did not necessarily live in the catchment area and, most importantly, could be deemed capable of paying a non-subsidised cost.

It was decided, therefore, that subsidised meals provision to non-assessed groups, would cease from April 2010. Clubs were informed that they could continue if they agreed to pay £4.25 per head and if they became constituted groups with a registered membership. Some catering staff who were employed in the larger centres to provide meals for the clubs were given notice of redundancy. Responsibility for supporting groups through this phase was passed to the Community Support Unit.

Despite good intentions, this transition did not occur as smoothly as might have been hoped and the following examples highlight, by their diversity, the various routes which were taken.

Previously Council Supported Lunch Clubs in Moray

Portgordon Lunch Club

Portgordon is a coastal village with a population of 771⁴ of whom around 145 are over 65 years old. For many years the lunch club ran in Portgordon Community Centre on a Tuesday. The food was prepared across the road in the Primary School and members had to go and collect it and return the empty crockery at the end of the meal.

During 2009 some of the key members had health issues and, in particular, collecting the meals became a problem. The club was temporarily postponed. Matters resolved themselves and it was decided to start up again after the

⁴ 2001 Census

Tattie holidays (October). However, the Council by this time had taken the decision to stop lunch club subsidies, and was also considering closing the community centre. The club was informed that the primary school would no longer be able to provide meals. Councillors and officers were approached but that decision held.

Luckily, Portgordon also has a village hall and one of their committee members, who is a cook, proposed that the club move to the village hall and she and another committee member would provide the meals on a voluntary basis. This was taken forward and the lunch club members undertake non-cooking tasks.

The club still meets on a Tuesday and there are 30 members registered with more than 20 attending every week. Membership is open to pensioners living in Portgordon and its rural hinterland. For those who do not have access to transport and are not within walking distance, there are two drivers who go and pick them up. The club is not run as a drop-in, and meals are pre-booked in order to avoid wastage. The cost is £3 per head.

The club has weekly raffles to raise money for special activities. The village hall committee is supporting the group to become constituted and be involved in wider community activities.

Members highlight the vital importance of the conviviality of meeting and sharing a meal. Many people live on their own and their potential isolation is reduced by such activities. Informal and low key support can be given to members who may be going through difficult times. This was emphasized by members of all of the groups we spoke to.

Tomintoul Lunch Club

Tomintoul is a village in the far south of the county on the edge of the Cairngorm National Park. It has a population of 322 people of which 73 are over the age of 65⁵.

Tomintoul has a day centre for older people, one of four Council run facilities in the county. Attendees of the day centres are assessed for need and the daily provision, at a cost of £3.70 for the day, includes a mid-day meal. Until April 2010, other older people, who were not assessed, were allowed to come for the meal. Meals were prepared in the primary school and volunteers collected them to take over to the centre.

After the decision had been taken to withdraw subsidies, the social care services initiated a support exercise which focussed on Tomintoul. A Council officer was tasked with looking at ways which older people could develop their own, self-supporting club. In the main, in Tomintoul, the non-day centre members were residents of Tomnabat, the Castlehill Housing Association

⁵ 2001 Census

sheltered housing complex. These were the people who were supported to form an independent group.

Since late 2009 the Tomintoul lunch club has met in the Glen Avon Hotel in the centre of the village. They meet on a Wednesday and a Friday. The area of the dining room they meet in has disabled access and a disabled toilet.

There is a choice of meal from the basic hotel menu, for which they are charged £4.50 each and there is an additional £1 charge for tea/coffee/soft drink. Meals are paid for individually on the day at the hotel, as would happen for any member of the public. There are currently ten people attending the club of which two are men. The local Dial-a-Bus service provides transport for those needing it – they have an adapted vehicle for disabilities.

Contrary to original intentions, this lunch club is not 'self supporting'. It is administered by the warden of the housing complex, within her work remit. One other staff member goes along as a volunteer. The staff at the hotel also play a big part in the running of the group.

Knockando Lunch Club

Knockando is a small, quite isolated village within the church parish of Rothes. From 2003 to 2010 an older people's lunch club was run within the primary school. An average of 20 people attended. There was a high standard of good nutritional meals provided by the school cook. There was no group structure and when the subsidy cuts were announced there was no one person/persons who felt able to lead the group on the way forward and they decided to close.

However, members greatly missed meeting up and there was a danger of several becoming socially isolated. Knockando, although small, has an active church and active community association. The church elders decided to run a pilot scheme during the summer months of 2010 (June – September) which they called Heavenly Pieces. Essentially this was a home bakes tea, open to all as a drop-in on a Wednesday afternoon.

There were no age limits. A lot of the old regulars came and looked forward to meeting up with friends each week. They also had visitors to the area who came in from USA, Sweden, Germany and Holland among others, which brought added interest for the local group.

Everything was done by volunteers who also enjoyed the meetings. There was no charge but a dish was left out for anyone who wished to make donations. There was always enough to fully cover costs.

Attendance was around 40 to 50 people each week once the event got going. No record was made of the gender split but volunteers reported that there were a number of men who enjoyed going each week to meet up with other men. They became regulars. The feedback on Heavenly Pieces was 'very very positive' and the church intends to run this again from April to the end of September during 2011.

Aberlour Lunch Club

This club was started in the late 1970's or early 1980's by the local GP, and others, to encourage older people to get out and socialise and make sure they had a good nutritious meal twice a week. The meal was provided at Speyside High School. The group is open to those over 60 in the Aberlour area (this includes smaller rural villages) and the occasional visitor. They meet on Tuesdays and Thursday from 11.30 – 1.30 in the school canteen before the students come in for their own meals. Meals are paid for individually at the school office.

When the subsidy cuts were announced, the group was informed that the price of meals was to go up. There was no support to examine other options. The group decided to accept the Council offer of £4.25 per meal and they also use the school community room for a further one hour meeting after the meal when they talk and play cards etc. They contribute 50p for tea and biscuits for this, and there is an excess from this which goes towards a summer outing.

Since the price increase there has been a change to the menu. Despite the school menu being quite broad of choice and varied, there is now no choice of meal for the club, unless a member has a specific dietary requirement. Portions are quite small. Members set up and clear the tables themselves and collect the food. Some members have found that they are now only able to afford one meal a week instead of two. This also has a knock on effect with the 50p donation to funds, although some do contribute extra to that to make up for this.

There are currently 27 members with an average attendance per meal of around 20. There is a 75:25 female/male split and an age range from 71-94 years. They have been told that the maximum the school can cater meals for is 30. There is some car sharing to provide access for those with no transport. The group is reasonably happy with a service and venue they are used to and comfortable with, although they are concerned that they have no younger members coming on board.

Lossiemouth Senior Citizens Luncheon Club

Lossiemouth is a coastal town with a population of 6,873 of which 950 are over the age of 65⁶. This club has been running for 25 years and met at Buckie Community Centre. It is a constituted club with a committee of seven members and a Chairman. They have regular meetings. The club is run

⁶ 2001 Census

entirely by volunteers including those who help on the minibus. The youngest volunteer is in her late 50's.

In early 2010, the club was originally told by the Council that the cost of meals could go up to as much as £9 per head. The club Chairman and committee immediately started looking elsewhere for a suitable venue and more realistic cost. They identified the Beach Bar, a restaurant and bar venue whose owner was sympathetic and offered to do two course meals for £4 per person every Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime. Her local food suppliers were also very supportive.

Not long after the decision was taken to move, the Council came back with a revised price of £4.25. However the committee decided not to accept this offer and to make the move to the Beach Bar. The club uses the Senior Citizens Trust's bus to transport people to and from the lunch club, and also take people shopping or to another club in the afternoon. There is a charge of 50p per person for the bus service.

There are 32 club members with around 20-25 attending each meal. Membership is open to anyone living in Lossiemouth or the surrounding area who is over 60. Carers are welcomed also to support those less able. Around two thirds are women, and one third men.

Members report that the meals at the Beach Bar are very good, and there is an added bonus of being able to buy a drink at the bar if you wish. The menus are known beforehand and there is flexibility for dietary considerations. Staff at the bar have made efforts to provide special menu's for birthdays and did a full Christmas lunch. This was laid out with table plans as for a wedding, a seasonal drink was given free to everyone, everyone had a present and there was a raffle. As a surprise, a small choir from the school came along and sang Christmas songs. A local businessman sponsored the extra costs of the Christmas lunch.

The club stops during July, when a summer club is run for a maximum of 15 people. Every Tuesday they go out for the day in the mini-bus. This costs £4 each. There is a lunch stop at a different place each week and everyone pays for their own food.

The club is also active in raising money for their various activities. As well as raffles, they take over the local charity shop for two weeks every July. They pay for the use of the building and the electricity used. In 2010 they made a clear profit of £800.

The chair of the club is a driving force and believes variety and good organisation is the key to the success of the club. An annual calendar of events is drawn up and given to all members. At the moment the club along with the Trust are struggling for drivers and support volunteers on the bus and the chair feels that sometimes the members do not appreciate the amount of time and effort that goes into running a club of this calibre. There are no

younger volunteers coming on board. This could indicate problems of continuance should the current chair have to withdraw from the club for any reason.

Pensioner's Luncheon Group – Bite and Blether (Forres)

Forres is an attractive market town, built by local estate owners. Forres has 9,174 people of whom 1,590 are over the age of 65⁷. This group is based in the hall of St Leonard's Church. The group is open to all, but the majority of members come from Forres and its rural and coastal hinterland.

Bite and Blether was set up directly in response to the withdrawal of subsidies to a lunch group which met in the community centre. The cook for that group was made redundant as the decision had been taken that Social Care Services would no longer employ catering staff. This woman was instrumental in supporting the group to form into a constituted club and they moved into St Leonards hall which had a good kitchen and dining facilities. The group was also advised initially by the local Community Support Unit officer and latterly by the Age Scotland local officer.

As well as the advisory support given to set up, the group received financial support from various organisations. Forres Groups Action gave £450 start up money and arranged public liability insurance. Age Scotland gave £600 for equipment and £300 towards a big Christmas lunch event. There have also been private donations.

The group meets once a week on a Friday and have the use of the premises all day for which they pay the church £100 per month towards funds. The cook is the only paid member of staff, the rest of the work being done by volunteers. Around 40-45 members eat there each week. About 90 per cent are female.

Members pay £3.75 per meal which consists of a set menu of two or three courses – there are always alternatives available to suit dietary needs. Tables are attractively set and meals are served and cleared up by volunteers.

The group has grown since moving from the community centre. There are now 60 members with a committee of nine. The only eligibility criterion is that members should be over 60 yrs of age. There were articles in the local press and menus and leaflets are printed by the cooks husband. There is a slight concern that no-one would take over from the chair if they had to step down for any reason, however it is early days and the group is clearly successful and has a good committee.

Elgin – Pensioner's meals at the community centre

Elgin is the main town in Moray. The population is 20,929 of which 3,366 are over 65 yrs of age. Before April 2010 an average of 40 older people met three times a week at the lunch club in the Community Centre. After the catering

⁷ 2001 Census

staff serving them had been made redundant the group had some support from Council officers to constitute themselves as a group. However they did not wish to do this.

An offer came from existing community centre staff running the centre coffee bar. With support from the centre manager they decided that they could continue to offer pensioner's meals three times a week in the dining area, with no extra staff hours and no extra resources. However there is voluntary help.

Consequently the coffee bar runs an extended service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays when older people can drop in and have a value three course meal. It is a set menu. Soup costs £1, main course £2.80 and sweet £0.50p. If they want something different then they eat in the coffee bar.

There is no formal group organisation. Around 25 customers eat, meet and talk with friends. Activities have been offered but not taken up. People tend to eat their meal quite quickly and leave. Ten customers travel on the free Laich Moray Trust bus. It would appear that the food element is more important than the social element.

Independent Lunch Clubs in Moray

In addition to the above we include a few examples of provision which were never supported by the Council and therefore not affected by the changes.

Moray Retired Persons Friendship Centre

The Moray Retired Persons Friendship Centre was established in 1994 by three or four people who wanted to remain active after they retired. It is a fully constituted group (non-charitable status) with a committee of 12, all drawn from the membership. The group has a cap at 80 members, and now has 76 members. The gender breakdown is approximately two thirds female to one third male. Members must live in Moray.

Annual membership fees are £10 and members pay for meals, outings etc as they go along. Food plays a central role for this group. They have a coffee morning every Friday in Moray College (Elgin) which is attended by around 16 people. They have lunch at the College once a month, attended by 25 to 30 people, and have one evening meal out per month, again with 25-30 people. In addition, there are meals on special occasions, like Christmas. Car sharing options are available for those with no access to transport. Venues are carefully chosen to enable access to those with reduced mobility.

MRPFC feels it has a good working model. The current chair believes that a strong committee, willing to serve others, is a key component of their success. Membership of organisations like Age Scotland brings added support. Activities and events are planned 2 years in advance. Membership numbers naturally fluctuate a little, but regular small articles in the local press keep the organisation in the public eye.

The role of churches

Several churches throughout Moray are very active in providing or hosting social activities for people in the communities in which they are based (often beyond church membership). These activities often include food. For example, in the Fochabers area, churches are involved in running:

- 'Coffee and Chat' in Bellie church hall, once a week.
- 'Brew and Blether' in the parish hall, Garmouth once a week.
- Men's Breakfast Club on selected Saturday mornings in Bellie Church hall. The main object of the club is to allow men of all ages to share fellowship over a nicely cooked breakfast.

A range of other organisations, although not all directly related to the church, use Bellie Church hall on a regular basis. As well as being used by the lunch club and the Thursday club every week, the hall is often used within the local community for social functions and fundraising events, such as coffee mornings and quiz evenings. Church officials say that attendees at most of the activities tend to be from older age groups.

The Soup and Sweet Scene

Soup and Sweet events are extremely popular in Moray. Venues and popular time slots are booked up, sometimes years ahead. These events are largely run as fundraisers for charities and community or voluntary organisations. However many older people go along every week to all the events held in a particular venue, treating them as an unofficial club.

Next steps

Over the next 12 months, Moray HandyPerson Services will be working in Partnership with Moray Community Health and Social Care Partnership to help build up social networks for older people, particularly in rural areas. This pilot project, 'Connect', is part funded by LEADER Moray and is using food to focus the initial activities.

This case study was produced by Moray Handyperson Service.

8. Case Study: North East Edinburgh

Introduction

This report has been prepared by a partnership between Pilmeny Development Project (PDP) and The Edinburgh Food and Health Training Hub. These two organisations working together combine a wealth of experience and knowledge around food and health among older people in North East Edinburgh.

The purpose of this case study is to map the non statutory food services available in North East Edinburgh and to explore older people's views on these services. It focused on the range of different food services available for older people aged 65 or above, including: support with shopping, meals preparation, meals provision at home (pre prepared or hot meals) and meals provision outside home (lunch clubs, community cafes etc).

Case Study Methodology

The development of this case study involved:

- **desk top research** – using existing local research and reports.
- **a mapping exercise** – building on work which both the Hub and PDP had undertaken. The Hub had mapped food and health activities across Edinburgh and food and health activities specifically for older people. PDP had worked to identify unmet need in relation to opportunities for older people in North Edinburgh, and assist with developing a database of local services and opportunities for older people.
- **consultation with agencies and service providers** – six organisations providing or funding food services for older people were consulted, including NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council, Voluntary Organisations in Leith Together, two minority ethnic support providers, and one local church.
- **focus groups and one to one interviews with older people** – 40 older people were consulted, including members of Pilmeny Older Women's Positive Health Group; Older People's Tuesday 'Drop In Group; NEECAG Leith & Portobello Older Peoples Forums; and North East Edinburgh Older Men's Health & Wellbeing Group.

The Area

North East Edinburgh covers the areas of Leith, Craighentilly, Duddingston, Portobello and Craigmillar. Around 14,704 older people aged 65 and above live in these areas representing 16 per cent of the total population. There are around 1,738 people aged 85 and above, most of whom have greater levels of physical frailty or disabilities. Leith has high levels of ethnic diversity with older people from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Polish Communities resident in the local area.

Compared to Edinburgh as a whole, older people (over 75) in the Greater Leith area are more likely to be living alone, not to be in good health and suffering from a long-term illness, all of which is associated with depression. Suicide rates in Lothian per 100,000 population for the period 1992-2001 indicate elevated rates for 50+ and 75+ older men in North East Edinburgh⁸.

Food Services in North East Edinburgh

Providers with a food and health focus

- **Castlebrae Community High School and Leith Academy** run cooking classes. Classes are accessed by older people but are not specifically for them.
- **Bridgend Allotment Community Health Inclusion Project** is a holistic health project using encouraging and supporting people to grow their own food. Classes are run throughout the year and cooking sessions are included. This is a service open to all but regularly taken up by older people.
- **Pilmey Development Project** provides a wide range of more than 20 day opportunities for older people in North East Edinburgh. This includes information, talks and inputs about healthy eating and nutrition, cooking classes for older men, intergenerational cooking sessions (including partnership work with New Spin Intergenerational Project). It is also the base for the North East Ageing Well Project which has an allotment in Leith Links which is accessible to older people who don't have a garden.
- **Edinburgh Cyrenians** provide a range of food services such as Food Redistribution Service (FareShare franchise), Cooking classes and Traineeships and Volunteering. These services are open to anyone over the age of 18 but are often accessed by older people.
- **The Bingham and District 50+ project** runs cooking classes and healthy diet tasting sessions specifically for older people. It also has a volunteer committee which provides lunches at social occasions. Each year about 40 people attend one of the sessions. There is no charge for attending these sessions and the programme of sessions is developed by the older people involved in the project.
- **Edinburgh Community Food** is a citywide food and health project that has project workers working across this area of the city with a remit for the people experiencing health inequalities. Limited time is therefore given to work with older people. Work includes running cooking classes in partnership with other organisations and nutrition sessions for established groups.

⁸ Source: 2000 Camo Data Set 5 Lothian Health, 2000

Community cafes

- **Anchor Café** in Leith Community Education Centre is open six days a week. It offers small portions for pensioners at a reduced rate (costing around £3).
- **Sikh Sanjog** has a community café selling Punjabi food. There are no special deals for pensioners but there are about three older people who volunteer in the café.
- **Perc-u-up café** in the South Leith Parish Halls is used by some older people in the Leith area.
- **Thistle Project Garden Café** does not have a specific menu for older people, but is a very open and friendly cafe that older people use. The cafe finds it difficult to estimate how many of their users are older people.
- **Richmond Café** in Richmond Craigmillar Church is open every weekday morning and is used by the whole community. It is estimated about 20 older people use the café each week. Within the church there is also a fruit and veg co-op one morning while the café is open. The church also used to run a large lunch club but with the arrival of the café and more successful lunch clubs in the area this was ended. They do still however have a regular group once a week and a special Pensioners meal deal - soup of the day, lunch of the day and a hot drink for £3 which would normally be £4.60.
- **Lochend /Restalrig Community Hub** which is part of the Ripple Project is also currently setting up a café.

It should also be acknowledged that in the Leith area particularly there are a number of commercial cafes and food outlets that older people rely on, including Capital Bingo Hall, Weatherspoons pub and Edinburgh Masonic club.

Food co-ops

There are three food co-ops in the area, each running once a week on a week day morning:

- **Richmond Craigmillar Church** runs a fruit and vegetable co-op, as previously mentioned.
- **Lochend/Restalrig Hub** a standard weekly co-op. It is also investigating the idea of a shopping delivery service linked to the co-op using volunteers.
- **Abbeyhill** is a co-op based in a sheltered housing complex right on the outskirts of the case study area. This well established co-op is supported by the residents of the home and is valued as an important part of the week by them.

Services providing a meal

There are also a number of services which provide a meal, but this is not their primary focus. These services normally require individuals to be referred to the service by another organisation.

- **Calton Welfare Services Project** is for older people aged 65 and above, particularly those who are frail or with dementia. Food is provided two days a week, and is cooked by volunteers. The charge is £2 to £3.
- **Northfield and Willowbrae Community Care Project** is a service for people with dementia). Food is provided at a charge of £4.
- **Portobello Monday Club** is a service for people with dementia. It runs one day per week, and provides food at a charge of £4.
- **North Edinburgh Dementia Care Project** is for older people aged 65 and above with dementia. It runs 6 days per week. Food is provided for a charge of £10.50.
- **Lochend Neighbourhood Centre** provides support for frail older people with dementia or mental health issues. It runs five days a week at Lochend, and one day in Portobello. A meal is provided by City of Edinburgh Care home at a charge of £5.50.
- **COPE (Caring for Older people in Edinburgh)** is a citywide service for people with learning disabilities or dementia. A meal is provided five days per week by City of Edinburgh Council, with no charge to service users.
- **Lifecare - Cottage Companion Club Dementia service** is open five days per week and meals are provided. The charge is £50 per month.
- **Lifecare – Dean Club** is a city wide service for frail older people aged 65 and over. The service runs five days a week, and meals are provided at a charge of £12.50.
- **Lifecare – St Bernards Club** is a city wide service for older people aged 65 plus and with dementia. It runs three days a week, and provides meals for a monthly charge.
- **NHS Lothian Older People’s Rehabilitation and Assessment Unit (OPRA)** provides free meals for older people requiring medical treatment. This is a time limited service depending on medical treatment required.
- **Bethany Christian Trust** runs homeless care shelters during the winter months, between November and April. These take place at various venues across the city. Breakfast and evening meals are provided, free of charge.

Services for people from minority ethnic communities

The following is a list of services that are for minority ethnic people. They are not all in North East Edinburgh but it is the experience of the researchers that BME older people will travel across the city to access these services.

- **Edinburgh Chinese Elderly Support Association** provides a city wide service for Chinese people aged 50 and over. Day care is provided one day per week, with lunch provided by a Chinese caterer. The charge is £2.60.
- **Milan (Senior Welfare Organisation)** is a city wide service for older people aged 50 and over, from Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Mauritian Communities. It provides a range of services for frail or disabled older people with dementia. Lunches are provided three days per week by South Asian caterers as part of day care. The charge is £2.60.
- **Jewish Community Lunch Club** is a city wide service for the Jewish community in North East Edinburgh. It runs twice a week at a charge of £3.
- **NKS (Nari Kalliyani Shango)** is a city wide service for South Asian Women. Lunch is provided one day per week by South Asian caterers.
- **MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project)** provides support for Chinese and South Asian people aged 50 and over. It provides a meals at home service as well as meals as part of other services. There is no charge.

Lunch clubs

- **Duddingston Kirk Lunch Club** operates one day a week, with a charge of £2.
- **Pilrig and St Paul's Church Lunch Club** operates one day a week. City of Edinburgh Council provide lunches, for a charge of £3.
- **St Margaret's Church Lunch Club** is supported by a voluntary sector organisation as well as the church. Meals are provided five days a week, and come from a local high school. There is a charge of £3.10.
- **South Leith Parish Church Lunch Club** runs five days per week, with meals coming from the local school. There is a charge of £3, and about six members.
- **Caring in Craigmillar Lunch Club** is a popular lunch club in the Craigmillar area of the city.
- **Bield Housing Association** runs a lunch club in a local sheltered housing complex, for residents only.
- **Ripple Project Lunch Club, Restalrig** runs five days per week. There is a charge of £2.90 + 40p if transport is required.

Views on Food Services

Overall, older people had a limited knowledge of the range of food services available in the area. Those that had knowledge of some services commented that some were 'referral only' or were too expensive.

Shopping services

Help with shopping was seen as somewhat limited. The cessation of the Council Social Work Shopping Service without warning or consultation was commented upon as a negative development.

Some participants had family members or good neighbours who sometimes helped. A local supermarket had delivered bread and milk in the recent bad weather. This was commented upon very positively, but it was acknowledged that this was an exception.

There was little enthusiasm for online shopping. None of the participants interviewed had a computer or knew how to use one. It was felt delivery costs were high and that *'you cannot order just milk and bread'*. One respondent said *'I like to see what I am buying'*.

Some respondents knew of voluntary sector transport services such as Dial a bus and Handicabs – *'they can take you to shops / collect other people on the way'*. A suggestion was made that older people could perhaps share taxi with a friend to minimise costs.

Meals preparation and provision

There was little knowledge about what support with meal preparation and meals provision at home there might be. Older people depended on family help or frozen meals (through frozen food delivery companies like Wiltshire or Oakdale).

Some participants had used the Council frozen meals service (introduced following the cessation of the council funded hot meal delivery service). This was felt to be a standby and not suitable for the longer term as they *'all taste the same'*. Others commented on recent changes in Council social work services. *'They cut out home helps – we don't get help with meals now'*. One participant commented *'when I came out of hospital, I just ate sandwiches only'*.

Concerns were expressed about the Council encouraging older people to receive direct payments and older people having to employ staff themselves. It was felt there was nothing available and that private sector charged upwards of £10 per hour – which was felt to be too expensive for older people on low incomes. Older people said they were frightened to have strangers in their house and were worried about how they would be certain they were checked or had disclosures done. There were also concerns about the quality of services provided and who would be monitoring this.

Lunch clubs and cafes

Meals provision used by older people outside the home mainly included local cafes, small restaurants or pubs. There was an issue that many local cafes, restaurants and pubs had shut due to recession or no longer offered pensioner meal deals. Recent regeneration in Leith has led to a number of expensive restaurants coming to the area. It was felt the prices charged and the type of food provided actively exclude the majority of local older people and has exacerbated a 'them and us' feeling in the area. Older women, in particular, felt uncomfortable about going into a pub to eat and some had been upset by drunken behaviour of some patrons. Minority ethnic older people consulted said they would not go into pubs on cultural and religious grounds.

Everyone agreed the 'social thing' was hugely important when going out to eat.

'There's nothing more soul destroying than one knife and fork, one cup - setting a table just for one.'

Cooking at home

Many consultees, particularly older men, mentioned that they rarely cooked at home.

'I can't cook unless it comes in a tin. I can cook anything from a tin - I know it might not be so healthy but...!'

'I never cook at home – it's too depressing'

'I'm on my own, I get these frozen meals and you just need to put them in the microwave and they're ready'

'I'm on my own; it's not worth it, going to all the bother of cooking a meal for myself'

'I use the 'ding ding' dinners as well! I can't be bothered cooking something that's going to take a long time just for myself'

Wider Research on Views

Existing local research with older people found that existing work on food services for older people had:

- increased awareness of healthy eating and nutrition issues for older people leads to improved physical and mental health;
- supported older people with lifestyle changes, addresses underlying issues including, poor diet, low income, depression, bereavement, loneliness, isolation; and
- empowered older people to improve cooking and nutrition skills contributes greatly to their mental/physical health and well-being.

Views on Improving Food Services

The older people consulted felt that there were a number of important factors in any food service:

- cost is a very important factor;
- being able to buy small amounts is very important - but small quantities are more expensive;
- food services need to be available when needed and be flexible to better meet personal needs;
- accessibility is important – both physically and cost wise.
- food services and menus need to provide '*something older people like*' (this was described as things like soup, mince and potatoes).

When asked what a good food service for older people in this area would look like, suggestions included:

- community based 'drop ins';
- someone to check older person is actually eating (particularly for older people who are socially isolated, live alone and have no family to help);
- hot meal delivery service for housebound older people;
- some gender specific services for older men or older women only;
- local shops should have bad weather plans and offer home delivery;
- low cost telephone home delivery services from supermarkets.

Overall, older people felt that there should be choice, with people able to choose the services they need and want. Some suggested that it would be useful to have a telephone helpline and simple written information to give older people, carers and families more information on what is available locally.

Wider research undertaken locally also found that key barriers to effective food services were:

- a lack of person centred food services specifically targeted towards older people – with particular challenges around Council provision and statutory responsibilities for personal care;
- difficulties using online shopping services – including technical challenges and high delivery costs for small quantities;
- challenges of frozen meal services (delivered once every few months by the Council) for those with dementia or memory problems;
- issues for people with specialist diets, including minority ethnic older people, in accessing appropriate food;
- stigma around using 'lunch clubs' – and a need to include mainstream food co-ops and cafes to consider older people's needs;
- need for training for local community groups and older people wishing to develop food or meals services – and accessible affordable transport; and
- particular challenges around engaging certain groups – such as vulnerable older men – and supporting them to prepare healthy meals.

Conclusion

This case study has unveiled a wide range of important issues around the quality, scope and nature of food services for older people in North East Edinburgh. The lively and active participation of local older people and local groups has contributed greatly to increasing our understanding, knowledge and awareness of their concerns.

Overall, older people felt that there were relatively few services around food for older people. Many of the projects that do exist are quite specific to an area or group and are not widely known about by professionals and potential service users. Older people were keen that food services were acknowledged as an important part of care services for older people.

This case study was produced by Pilmeny Development Project.

9. Case Study: Western Isles

Introduction

This case study was developed by Cearnas Community Development Project. It explores the food services available in the Western Isles, run by community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprise organisations.

Case Study Methodology

This research was carried out using the following processes:

- **Internet search engines** – This particular method was used due to the short timescale of the Project itself and as the Research had to be carried out over the Christmas and New Year breaks and with extremely bad weather conditions this year hampering travel to other Islands within the Western Isles it was an essential source of information gathering.
- **Telephone interviews** – This particular method was used as it permitted access to respondents from all across the Western Isles, particularly valuable given the issues surrounding travel and weather conditions. It was also a very supportive method in reaching those respondents who worked in alternative employment or volunteering during the day.
- **Face-to face interviews** - This method was used mostly in and around Stornoway town itself and proved to be a useful method of collecting data as often respondents provided information and documentation about groups and offered many more avenues for exploration of services available. The total number of people interviewed face-to-face was nine.

The Area

The geographical area covered by this research report is the Western Isles. The report covers services across the islands of Lewis, Harris, North and South Uist and Barra.

The population of the Western Isles area is estimated at **26,502**. There are very slightly more women (50.6%) than men (49.4%). Key characteristics of the population include:

- 23% over pensionable age
- 58% 16-pensionable age
- 19% under 16 year
- 90% White Scottish
- 60% of the population is Gaelic speakers
- 11% of the population is widowed⁹.

⁹ 2001 Census

Food Services run by Voluntary Organisations

Location: Isle of Barra
Project: Bus Bharraidh
Web: <http://www.isleofbarra.com>

Bus Barraidh is a community transport initiative run by Voluntary Action Barra for all age groups. It complements the public bus services. It provides a flexible, accessible approach to transport needs in a small Island setting. They provide day and evening services to the community, employing two to four people. The driver and escort services have proved to be a vital link for members of the Barra community in order to do daily or weekly shopping trips. This service carries a nominal fee and operates on a daily basis.

Location: Stornoway
Project: Over 50s Men's Health Lunch Club

This group is run by the Cearns Community Development Project. The majority of users are over 65 and it has a core attendance of fifteen. The project offers a twice weekly lunch club and a Saturday home cooked take-away meal. This initiative is delivered from the Cearns Ceilidh Hoose, which is a small community room within the heart of the largest social housing area within the Western Isles, which has a high prevalence of unemployment, single parent families and older people.

The lunch club service is offered free of charge to the client group and is currently funded by the Fairer Scotland Fund. A number of the users of this service have health and addiction issues coupled with experience of poverty. The lunch club is not just about the eating of food. It is about nutrition for health benefits, a social interaction opportunity and has the added benefit of support from Community Development staff, who can signpost to other agencies, and provide health information and food and nutrition advice.

The facility has disabled access, a friendly and welcoming ethos and offers an open-door policy to all user groups. The service also offers an opportunity for users to volunteer in a number of other aspects of the development project. This includes a Grow-your-Own poly tunnel scheme and transport to local walks through a health initiative 'Paths to Health' – which includes taking people out for lunch. This is a much valued service.

'This is the first time I have sat at a table in a restaurant with other people in twenty years. It is so nice, thank you'.

Location: Stornoway
Project: Retirement Centre

The Lewis Retirement Centre is situated in Stornoway. It is a not for profit organisation run by volunteers, and with a membership of 24 older people. It offers a lunch club every Thursday, where older people enjoy a freshly cooked three course meal consisting of soup, roast with two veg, potatoes and a sweet. Tea, coffee and home baking is included. The food is provided and cooked by a core of volunteers on a rotational basis. The service costs each member £4.00 per head. The service quality is seen as excellent and food meets a high nutritional standard and offers alternative dietary and vegetarian options. The local council provides funding to transport members to and from the venue.

On Wednesday afternoons the local town churches provide an afternoon tea (on a rotational basis) supplying and preparing all food free of charge. One of the volunteers expressed that:

Whenever the need arises for extra things to be purchased or replaced, such as a new cooker, it involves a great deal of fundraising activities and reliance on local donations'.

Food Services run by Social Enterprises

Location: Isle of Uist
Project: Tagsa Uibhist
Web: <http://tagsauibhist.org>

Tagsa Ubhuist is a company limited by guarantee, locally owned and managed by its members and directors. It covers the Uists and Benbecula, with services offered to over 60s in a range of community settings. Services include transport provision, a befriending service and administration support. It also offers 'shopping support', which is a door-to-door transport service for people with disabilities or mobility problems which are either temporary or permanent. It is available to anyone both young and old whose disability or mobility problem prevents them from accessing public transport, shopping support, medication collection, post office or indeed banking facilities.

The groups who utilise this service include five lunch clubs, members pay for their own lunches and also contribute a set amount towards each outing, transport and club funds. Lunch clubs vary between weekly, fortnightly and monthly. One interviewee quoted. '

The quality of this service at all levels is excellent value for money, food is freshly prepared and very palatable. My mother is a regular attendee and really enjoys the social aspect and for me it offers a few hours of respite and peace of mind that she is being cared for'.

Location: Western Isles
Project: Third Sector Hebrides Dial a Bus Service and Befriending
Web: www.thirdsectorhebrides.org.uk

Third Sector Hebrides offers a door to door 'Dial a Bus' service, for all age groups. However, in the Western Isles which has fairly high numbers of over 65's they are identified as more regular users of this service as are those with disabilities and infirmities. The service is available five days a week throughout the year. The service enables users to get their own shopping, and be in town for a while, without having to depend on public transport. Support with getting on and off the minibus with their shopping is a really valuable part of the service which is really appreciated by service users. A small fee is charged to the user for this service.

Third Sector Hebrides also offers a befriending service where trained volunteers offer assistance to over 65's to do their own shopping, or visit and have a cup of tea and a chat. This offers a social relationship to those that are or would otherwise be housebound. In some cases this offers carers some welcome respite on a regular basis.

Food Services run by Community Volunteers

Location: Ravenspoint, Kershader, South Lochs
Project: Afternoon Lunch Club

The Afternoon Lunch Club is run by five women from various villages within the community who on a rota base provide fresh homemade soups, puddings, teas, coffee and home baking for an average of eighteen members over the age of 65 on a fortnightly basis. Each person attending the lunch club pays £3.00, which is less than the actual cost of the food. The women who do the organizing and cooking donate the shortfall.

The group is experiencing significant problems with meeting the cost of transportation for customers to attend the lunch club. At present the cost of transporting the customers is £24.00 and this is leading to anxieties of not being able to continue the delivery of the service as costs continually increase. One of the users quoted that:

'It is a lifeline, I live on my own and if I didn't go to the lunch club, I would not be meeting up with people all week. Just to simply sit and have lunch with someone else is great, much better than being on my own'.

Location: Western Isles
Project: Senior Citizen Groups

There are various over 65's groups throughout the Western Isles, that come together either as independent groups or as part of a larger community organization. They organise afternoon meeting sessions, fundraising events, annual outings, and activities such as walking groups and annual events that include Christmas parties and Burns Suppers.

Some of the food is donated and some purchased from fundraising event monies or from local Councillors Ward Initiative funding. Food is prepared and served by younger members of the community. These events are always well attended within the Islands and usually develop into musical evenings, in particular the traditional 'Ceilidh'.

Within some communities, groups have 'Grow-your-Own' projects and these provide fruit and vegetables for selling or in the preparation of soups for lunches etc. Food demonstration nights are popular, providing the opportunity to prepare different foods, hear about nutritional values and - of course the most important part - tasting the final result.

Location: Stornoway, Isle of Lewis
Project: Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is a church organisation with charitable status. In Stornoway, it caters for all age groups and has an average of 20 users between the ages of 65 - 80. It has many services, of which two are food focused.

A breakfast and lunch club is offered 51 weeks of the year. The breakfast club runs once per week and the lunch club twice per week. The breakfast offers a choice of cereal, a cooked breakfast or continental style, and service users are asked to make a donation.

The lunch club offers a two course meal, with all food locally sourced where possible. It is freshly prepared and is accompanied with tea, coffee and home baking. The cost is set at £2.50 per head. The service offers a choice to the users and also provides food that is suited to those who may have allergies or intolerances to food or who may have a health condition such as diabetes.

The Salvation Army is very aware of the need to offer good nutritional value to its user base and aims to ensure that users receive a range of fresh fruit and vegetables with their meals. It also works in partnership with other organisations, assisting with food services across the community.

Experiences

Discussions were held with ten individuals over the age of 65, from across the Isle of Lewis. Most consultees were very independent and could manage their shopping using the mobile grocery van services operating in the area.

'This is great for me to get my shopping delivered to the door, and if I need something the van doesn't have they will bring it the next time they come to the area'.

In many cases, consultees indicated that their neighbours would take them to the town for their shopping, combining both necessity with social contact. Often neighbours would bring shopping to older people, and make meals and deliver them to their older neighbours. This is a clear sign that there is good spirit within communities, especially in the more remote areas of the Islands.

Lessons Learned

What makes a good food service?

The main factors of a good food service delivery were identified as:

- Accessible
- Cost effective
- Ease of access
- Sociable

Barriers and challenges

The research highlighted the following barriers and challenges:

- Availability
- Cost
- Ease of access (disabled access)
- Services are often in central locations (transport issues)

Lessons learned about delivering food service

Availability of premises, funding and volunteers is crucial in the delivery.

Cost of providing a regular service due to ever increasing overheads and lack of funding sources has to be continually addressed and we also identified that there is very little core support for the over 65s in terms of social/meal provision services other than that being delivered by voluntary or charitable organisations.

Every rural area has an issue with transportation in terms of cost of provision in any part of a food initiative. In Island life can often involve great distances needing to be covered just to get a bag of shopping and for many this is a real issue. The lesson from this research is that, by providing the type of services identified, we are currently able to alleviate some of the issues surrounding basic human need by providing: support with transportation, home delivery services, food preparation and a reduction for many who are affected by social isolation.

Social exclusion is a major factor as even when communities have services to offer, they are often unable to reach those who are isolated due to the constraints of financial investment.

On conducting this study we have highlighted that within the Western Isles there is an excellent range of food services for older people. There is variation in provision across the islands, and cost can still be a barrier. The research clearly identifies that the work and diligence from community staff, church leaders and community volunteers is extremely rich throughout the Western Isles. The food services available show levels of community care that are not simply about giving people food, but caring, sharing experiences, committing time and energy and above all providing a source of friendship and kinship.

This case study was produced by Cearnas Community Development Project.

10. Conclusions

A baseline of food services for older people

This work set out to establish a baseline of the food services supported by local authorities for older people living in the community. We have provided an initial baseline. In the future, it will be possible to look at changes in the range; type; and cost of food services for older people in relation to this baseline. It provides a snapshot at December 2010 of the provision of food services for older people in Scotland.

In carrying out this work, we found that gathering data from local authorities took longer than had been anticipated. We believe that this was impacted on by:

- **a lack of strategic overview** – in many authorities we got the sense that there was not a single person with a clear overview of all the food services provided for older people. In some authorities it was difficult to identify the key point of contact. The responsibility for overseeing the completion of the surveys was often passed from one officer to another. A number of staff were involved in different aspects of provision – and (it appeared) that there was a lack of corporate responsibility for planning the delivery of food services for older people. We did not feel that there was often a clear picture in the local authority of the range of food services for older people that were in place. This led to services being omitted from the returns from some authorities – and we needed to gather further information from follow up telephone discussions and, in some cases, web based searches.
- **a lack of priority** – although there were some external influencing factors (like the particularly bad weather in December) the amount of ‘chasing’ of responses that we had to do with some authorities was quite unusual – and we got a sense that for some authorities food services for older people had a relatively low priority. This appeared to impact on the quality of responses received from some authorities.

Having said this, there were examples of authorities that provided good quality information in a well coordinated way and expressed an interest in the findings of the research.

The range of services provided by local authorities

Local authorities provide a range of food services for older people in the community. In addition to the provision for those that receive meals as an essential part of day care services, local authorities informed us of the provision of:

- meals at home (either hot meals; frozen meals; or, in one case a deli sandwich option);
- lunch clubs;
- shopping services; and

- assistance with meal preparation as part of personal care support.

The services are generally welcomed and valued by service users. However, we heard enough users saying things like 'I didn't like to complain' to have some concerns about whether sufficient account is always being taken of the views of service users in the design and delivery of services. Commenting on (or complaining about) services does not always come naturally to older people and, in this circumstance, particular steps need to be taken to make sure that there is a consumer focus in the planning and delivery of food services for older people.

The services are seen as value for money. This is normally in comparison with the cost of the older person providing a similar quality of meal rather than in comparison with other services.

Gaps in service

All the local authorities (with the possible exception of West Dunbartonshire who did not respond to our survey) provide either a home delivered **hot meal or frozen meals** service. Three provide both (North Lanarkshire; South Lanarkshire; and Dumfries and Galloway). Although at present hot meal delivery is more common, there are signs that there has been a movement from hot meal to frozen meal provision, and this may continue. One of the major reasons for this is that it appears that the frozen meals service can be delivered at less net cost to the council than the hot meals service.

The gap in the provision of **lunch clubs** is (at least in part) filled by the provision of lunch clubs by the voluntary sector. While 14 councils reported that they provided or supported lunch clubs in their area, six confirmed that there was lunch club provision provided by the voluntary sector without council support. In addition, the Moray case study identifies voluntary sector provision of lunch clubs. It is highly likely that there is voluntary sector provision of lunch clubs (without local authority support) in a number of other authorities.

There is therefore a mix of approaches to the balance between councils and the voluntary sector in resourcing lunch clubs, with the council not supporting the provision of lunch clubs in about one-third of council areas.

In addition, most lunch clubs were reliant on school kitchens and were commonly not open during school holidays.

There does appear to be a gap in the provision of **shopping services**, with 12 councils indicating that they supported this provision. Shopping services can be important for people with mobility problems, who find carrying shopping difficult. The interviews with older people suggest that at present many would not be likely to use on-line shopping services (of the kind provided by supermarkets) because of lack of access to personal computing or lack of confidence in using this. Shopping services supported by the council are not in place in two-thirds of councils.

More generally, over half the local authorities which responded to the survey identified what they felt were gaps in their current service provision. The main gaps identified by councils were:

- gaps in the frequency of existing services;
- the need to expand the extent of their current food service provision; and
- geographic gaps in their current services.

Barriers to accessing food services for older people

The main barrier that was identified was transport. This could be transport to a service (like a lunch club) or of the service to the older person's home (meals or shopping). This was important in all areas, but was of particular concern in more rural and remote areas.

Wider benefits

Food services for older people aim to deliver health and nutritional benefits. They also have wider social benefits. Our interviews with older people found that the social contact was particularly important. It was seen as a major benefit of lunch clubs by many interviewees – although others (most notably older men) also valued the quality and variety of food which was provided. In the case of home meal delivery services and shopping services, older people regularly mentioned how much they valued the regular visit of those delivering the services – both for social interaction and also as a reassurance in case something was wrong.

In addition, some (particularly those who were younger) mentioned the wider healthy eating messages that they had picked up from the service – encouraging them to focus on issues like eating five portions of fruit and vegetables in a day; reducing salt intake; and reducing the intake of saturated fats.

The role of the voluntary sector

The main purpose of this report was to establish a baseline of local authority funded food services for older people. But, in addition, we worked with three local community organisations to look at the full range of services provided in their area.

Each of the three case study areas identifies a wide and rich range of services provided by the community and voluntary sector including:

- breakfast clubs;
- lunch clubs;
- cooking classes;
- allotments and grow your own projects;
- food co-operatives;
- outings and trips linked to meals;
- healthy eating or nutrition advice; and

- meals for homeless people.

There were examples of services being targeted. Targeted services for minority ethnic older people in North East Edinburgh were highly valued and there was demand for some more gender specific services.

Voluntary sector organisations expressed some concerns about sustainability. In the main this related to their reliance on a small number of people in planning and delivering activities. But the concern about reducing public resources was an important issue for those services that received some public funds. Even relatively modest amounts of money could make a significant difference to the sustainability of the service.

Finally

Where food services for older people are available they are highly valued and have wider benefits beyond health and nutrition. The services are relied upon by people – most of whom had no alternative. Service users generally praised the quality and value of the services provided. The nutritional content of the meals (or the benefits of access to a shopping service) helped in providing a balanced diet.

Appendices

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Appendix 1 | Local authority questionnaire |
| Appendix 2 | Discussion guides |
| | Lunch clubs |
| | Food Train |
| | Shopping service |
| | Hot meal delivery |
| | Frozen meals service |
| | Personal care services |

Appendix 1 - Food Services for Older People: Local Authorities' Questionnaire

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Name of local authority | |
| Key contact name: | |
| Department: | |
| Telephone: | |
| Email: | |

Overview of your local authority area

1. Are there any examples of good practice that you are aware of in your local authority area? Please detail below

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

2. In your opinion, are there any gaps in the provision of food services in your local authority? (either geographic or in the provision of different types of services).

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

- 3a. Have there been any significant changes to the provision of food services in the last 12 months? Please detail below

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

- 3b. And are there any planned changes to the provision of food services for older people in the next 12-24 months? If so, please detail below.

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

4. How are older people in receipt of food services consulted about the provision of food services in their area? (Please write in)

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

5. What quality assurance/ nutritional guidelines are followed by the local authority in its provision of food services, if any?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

TEMPLATE (Please complete one template for each food service offered by the council)

Food services for older people provided by the council

T1. Please provide details of the food service below.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Name of Food Service | |
| Length of time in operation | |
| Key contact name: | |
| Telephone: | |
| Email: | |

Type of food service

T2. Please indicate below how you would best describe this food service (tick one box)

| | |
|---|--|
| Support with shopping – direct shopping service | |
| Support with shopping – accompanied shopping | |
| Meals preparation | |
| Meals provision at home (pre-prepared meals, e.g. frozen meals) | |
| Meals provision at home (hot meals delivery) | |
| Meals provision outside the home (lunch clubs) | |
| Other (please specify) | |

Extent of the service

T3. What is the estimated number of older people using this service?

| Frequency | Number of service users |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Daily | |
| More than once a week | |
| Weekly | |
| Less than once a week | |

T4. Does the service cover the whole of the local authority area? (Please tick one box)

Yes No

If no, please state the area covered by the service?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

T5. Is the service provided directly by the local authority or by contracting another organisation to deliver the service? (Please tick one box)

Directly by the local authority Contracting another organisation

If another organisation, please specify.

T6. Does this food service make provisions for particular needs or menu choices? (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Vegetarian | |
| Halal | |
| Diabetic | |
| Texture modified food | |
| Fortified diets | |
| Finger food | |
| Other (Please specify) | |

T7. How do older people access this particular service?

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Direct access | |
| By professional referral | |
| Other (Please write in) | |

Funding of the service

T8. What is the estimated total cost of this service, each year to the local authority?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

T9. Is there a charge for this service to the older person? If so, please indicate the amount.

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Any other comments?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Many thanks for your cooperation

Appendix 2 – Discussion Guides

Food Service for Older People **Lunch club services**

Interviewer: *Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. We want to find out a little bit more about the lunch club. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been coming to the lunch club? (Months/years)

How did you first hear about the club?

How often do you come? (every week?)

What was it about the idea of the lunch club that made you want to come along? What did you expect it would be like? And has it met your expectations?

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the club?

What kind of food do you like to eat? Is this catered for? What do you think of the food that's available? Is there a choice?

What is the food like? Is it tasty? Is it hot? Do you get a lot of variety or is it the same thing quite often? Where does the food come from? Is it reliable? So what happens when they arrive....(talk me through it)

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What about the food you get at this lunch club – do you think it's nutritional/good for you? (why do you say that?)

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

What other kinds of services they would like to see available in their areas to support older people to eat well?

Is there anything about the service you would change in an ideal world? (probe, type of food, frequency of delivery, the cost).

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone do your shopping for you? Or help you to prepare meals at home?) Is it a family member of someone from the council?)

Without the lunch club – what would you do?

Would you recommend the lunch club to other people? Why do you say that?

Food Service for Older People

Food Train

Interviewer: *Thank you Mr/Mrs X for agreeing to take part in this interview. To remind you, we want to find out a little bit more about the food train service you get. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been receiving the food train service? (Months/years)

(Is it your intention to keep using it? or is this a short term use?)

How did you first hear about the service? (Probe if referred by Doctor/friend/self referral?)

What was it about the service that attracted you?

How often does the food train come to you? (probe once a week?) Does this suit you? Are you able to make up the shopping list yourself or do they help you with that?

Is your shopping delivered at a time that suits you? Is the food delivered on the same day every week? What about the same time?

Is the service reliable?

Is there a choice of shops that the food can come from? Are you happy with the quality of the food?

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older!) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

Do the food train volunteers do anything else for you – probe – any household chores, or help with preparation?

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the service?

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think? Have you been asked your views on the service before now? (if so, have your views changed?)

Without the food train – what would you do?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone help you prepare the food? Is it a family member or someone from the council?)

Would you recommend the food train service to other people? Why do you say that?

Discussion guide for telephone interviews

Shopping service

Interviewer: *Thank you Mr/Mrs X for agreeing to take part in this interview. To remind you, we want to find out a little bit more about the shopping service you get. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been receiving the shopping service? (Months/years)

(Is it your intention to keep using it? or is this a short term use?)

How did you first hear about the service? (Probe if referred by Doctor/friend/self referral?)

What was it about the service that attracted you?

How often does the shopping service come to you? (probe once a week?)

Does this suit you? Are you able to make up the shopping list yourself or do they help you with that?

Is there a choice of shops that the food can come from? Are you happy with the quality of the food? (what happens if they don't have an item that you wanted? Will the shopping service get you something else??)

Is your shopping delivered at a time that suits you? Is the food delivered on the same day every week? What about the same time?

Is the service reliable?

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older!) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the service? And what are the worst things? Anything about the service you're not quite so happy with?

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think?

Have you been asked your views on the service before now? (if so, have your views changed?)

Without the shopping service – what would you do?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone help you prepare the food? Is it a family member or someone from the council?)

Would you recommend the shopping service to other people? Why do you say that?

Hot meal delivery services

Interviewer: *Thank you Mr/Mrs X for agreeing to take part in this interview. To remind you, we want to find out a little bit more about the hot meal delivery service you get. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been receiving your hot meal delivery service?
(Months/years)

How did you first hear about the service? (Probe if referred by Doctor/self referral?)

How often do you get your hot meal delivery? (probe every day? How many times a day?) Probe this covers weekends, and what about holidays?

Are the meals delivered at a time that suits you? Is it the same time every day?

Is the service reliable? (Probe – get participant to talk through a typical day.....when do the meals arrive? At what time? Are the meals all pre-prepared – what happens?) Do you prepare any food at home for yourself? What would you make for yourself?

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the service? What kind of food do you like to eat? Is this catered for? What do you think of the choice of food available?

What is the food like? Is it tasty? Is it hot? Do you get a lot of variety or is it the same thing quite often?

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older!) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What about the food you get delivered – do you think it's nutritional/good for you? (why do you say that?)

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

Do you have any special needs – anything you are allergic to, or the need for food to be specially prepared? (If so what, and how has this been accommodated?)

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think?

Have you been asked your views on the service before now? (if so, have your views changed?) Have you ever had to complain about the service?

Is there anything about the service you would change in an ideal world? (probe, type of food, frequency of delivery, the cost). Without the hot meal delivery service – what would you do?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone do your shopping for you? Is it a family member or someone from the council?)

Would you recommend hot meal delivery to other people? Why do you say that?

Food Service for Older People
Discussion guide for telephone interviews

Frozen meals services

Interviewer: *Thank you Mr/Mrs X for agreeing to take part in this interview. To remind you, we want to find out a little bit more about the frozen meals service you get. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been receiving the frozen meals service? (Months/years)
How did you first hear about the service? (Probe if referred by Doctor/self referral?)

How often do you get your meals? (probe every day? How many times a day?) Or how frequently? (What do they do for Breakfast?)

Are the meals delivered at a time that suits you? Is it the same time every day/
Is the service reliable?

Is there a choice of menus/meals? What do you think of the choice?
Where do you store them (Did they have their own freezer or did the council provide it?)

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the service?
What kind of food do you like to eat? Is this catered for?
What is the food like? Is it tasty? Is it hot? Do you get a lot of variety or is it the same thing quite often?

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older!) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What about the food you get delivered – do you think it's nutritional/good for you? (why do you say that?)

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

Do you have any special needs – anything you are allergic to, or the need for food to be specially prepared? (If so what, and how has this been accommodated?)

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think?
Have you been asked your views on the service before now? (if so, have your views changed?)

Is there anything about the service you would change in an ideal world?
(probe, type of food, frequency of delivery, the cost).

Without the frozen meals service – what would you do?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone do your shopping for you? Is it a family member of someone from the council?)

Would you recommend the frozen meals service to other people? Why do you say that?

Food Service for Older People
Discussion guide for telephone interviews

Personal Care services

Interviewer: *Thank you Mr/Mrs X for agreeing to take part in this interview. To remind you, we want to find out a little bit more about the personal care service you get. Everything you tell me is confidential – so you can be as honest as you like – and it will also be anonymous – so no one else will know what you've told me. It should take about 20 minutes – do you have any questions for me before we start?*

How long have you been receiving the personal care service? (Months/years)
How did you first hear about the service? (Probe if referred by Doctor/self referral?)

What does it involve exactly? (probe: shopping, preparing or cooking meals?)
What kind of food do you like to eat? Is this catered for?
Do you prepare any food at home for yourself? What would you make for yourself?

How often does the personal care service come to you? (probe every day?
How many times a day?) Probe this covers weekends, and what about holidays?

Are you concerned (now that you're getting a bit older!) that you are getting enough nutrition or eating the right types of food? Would you make sure you eat fruit and veg for eg? Do you think you eat a balanced diet?

What do you think the barriers are for older people in accessing good food that's nutritional? (probe: transport, income, health, lack of knowledge)

Do you have any special needs – anything you are allergic to, or the need for food to be specially prepared? (If so what, and how has this been accommodated?)

What are the benefits for you? What are the best things about the service?
Anything you are not quite so happy with?

Do you pay for the service? Do you know how much you pay? Is it value for money do you think?

Have you been asked your views on the service before now? (if so, have your views changed?) Have you ever had to complain about the service?

Do you use any other food services? (probe – does someone do your shopping for you? Is it a family member or someone from the council? Lunch clubs, frozen meals delivery, etc?)

Would you recommend the personal care service to other people? Why do you say that?