

Community Food Webinar - Collaborating across Scotland to develop a food insecurity resource space.

What this webinar was about

Community Food National Reference Group Members Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE), Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership (LCFHP), Glasgow Community Food Network (GCFN) and Edinburgh Community Food, (ECF) worked together to develop an online resource space with access to information on local and national cash-first approaches to tackling food insecurity and poverty. They outlined the food insecurity resource space, highlighted best practices in applying cash-first approaches and reflected on the benefits of working together. Their work was funded by the Scottish Government.

The Community Food National Reference Group - Food Insecurity Resource Space

The resource space is available on each of the of the four community food organisation's websites and provides local and national information. Each site includes information for those 'Looking for Support', explains 'What is Cash First?', provides 'Resources for Organisations' and 'Policy, Research and Evaluations'. You can find out more on each of the organisation's websites:

LCFHP Food Insecurity Space: [Cash First Resource Centre | LCFHP](#)

ECF Food Insecurity Space: [Edinburgh Community Food Ltd](#)

GCFN [Food Insecurity Resource Space | Glasgow Community Food Network \(en-GB\)](#)

CFINE [The Food Insecurity Resource Space is live now! - Cfine](#)

Who was presenting

Introduction

Alison Owens is a Health Improvement Manager for Public Health Scotland. Alison outlined how this webinar topic contributes to Public Health Scotland's ten-year strategy and Scotland's Population Health Framework.

A journey through the partnership

Fiona Rae is the Chief Executive of Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE). Fiona described the importance of the history of the four organisations working together as part of the Community Food National Reference group and how the group has used its strength to connect communities, support connections within communities and ensure dignity, choice and people being heard.

Introducing the food insecurity resource space

Paddy McKenna is the Project Lead (Freelance) for Glasgow Community Food Network. Paddy described the online spaces that the partnership has created which provides local and national 'cash-first' resources to tackle food insecurity and poverty and emphasised that these online spaces will continue to be developed.

Connecting the Food Ladder approach with Cash First Approach

Graeme Robbie is the Depute Chief Executive of CFINE. Graeme outlined what CFINE does and explained that CFINE uses a [Food Ladder approach](#) to address food insecurity. This asset based, community development approach supports people to move from food crisis to self-organised community change.

Edinburgh Community Food Toolkit

Jo Howie is the Food and Health Development Team Lead for Edinburgh Community Food. Jo explained ECF's work and the need to develop of an online resource to upskill ECF and partner organisations so they can provide accurate and consistent information about where to access financial and other advice.

Amplifying the voices of those with food insecurity

Paddy provided information about Glasgow Community Food Network and how the network worked with communities to ensure their voices were heard; that resources were co-produced and relevant to people that use them.

Evaluating the impact of cash-first approaches -An example from Lanarkshire

Gordon Thomson is the Manager of Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership. Gordon outlined LCFHP's work and explained that LCFHP has been involved in a local partnership cash first pathway since 2014. Gordon provided data about who uses food aid in the area and how income maximisation support reduced the need for food aid, particularly before the pandemic.

There was also time for delegates to ask questions

Topics included

- Challenges of raising awareness of what 'cash-first' means
- Food aid verses food waste reduction focused projects and the challenges of using surplus food
- The limitations of 'cash-first', e.g. stretched support services and people with No Recourse to Public Funds are not eligible to ways to maximise income
- Supporting communities to grow and consume locally grown food
- The challenge of supporting people to access jobs

Individuals attending were from

- Community and voluntary sector organisations and charities
- Local authorities
- NHS boards
- Universities