



# community food and health

(scotland)

## Going Forth

A workshop based conference focusing on community initiatives that are developing and sustaining food and health activities that address food access and health inequalities across Scotland

## Key points from workshops



Supporting local  
communities  
tackling inequalities  
in food and health



## Introduction

Despite acknowledging difficult times ahead for community food and health projects, there were plenty of exchanges detailing experiences in tackling health and sustainability challenges.

Participants had the opportunity to hear about the Scottish Government's continued commitment to food and health policy through a range of policies and action plans. More recently the community food sector has been acknowledged in Scotland's National Food and Drink Policy - Recipe for Success, as a key contributor to health. It was noted that together with invaluable experiences and support from CFHS, together as a sector we are in a strong position to tackle forthcoming challenges.

NHS Health Scotland gave a very useful insight into tools that are being developed for organisations and local partners to clarify the links between the outcomes of the services they provide, and the shared health improvement outcomes that they are working with partners to provide. There was a further opportunity to explore these tools in more detail during a workshop at the conference. This information was very challenging for everyone, however, the opportunity provided Health Scotland with some insight as to how the tools could be made clearer and more accessible to all stakeholders. We are all tasked with demonstrating how we can or are contributing to improved health and building our capacity to use these tools is more important than ever.

## Going Forth

### Key points from morning workshops

#### 1. Cooking and nutrition with older men

This workshop, led by Anne Munro and Peter Hextall, Pilmeny Development Project, focused on a piece of work around engaging with 'hard to reach' groups. An example of their work is a cooking and nutrition programme with older men in the Leith area of Edinburgh.



To work successfully with 'hard to reach' groups - a lot of time and patience is needed!



It's hard to get older men to join in – but not impossible. It helps to have a hook – food is a good way to get older men involved.



Know your area and get local people/agencies to link up together



Word of mouth is the best form of advertising

#### 2. Let's grow together

Iain Anderson, Community Food Development Worker, Fife Community Food Project, gave participants an overview of growing initiatives that the project has been supporting and developing in Fife. In groups, participants used scenarios to discuss and identify a range of practical steps to manage and deliver successful growing projects in their own communities.

- **Task 1** – identifying community interest in developing vacant local authority land on housing estates into growing spaces for local residents.

Responses included arranging public meetings; becoming familiar with planning laws and processes; identifying project champions; assessing accessibility and keeping up momentum and enthusiasm.

- **Task 2** – an approach from a mental health support group to a community worker for help and advice in relation to fundraising for a therapeutic growing project that they want to develop. The group is keen to know if this initiative would fit in with local funding and policy priorities and a reasonable chance of receiving funding and support.

Responses included developing a management committee; being realistic about timescales; developing an action plan and identifying local as well as funders' priorities.

- **Task 3** – running a small grants scheme to promote greater involvement in growing initiatives among young people and low- income families. These activities would have health benefits and the proposal needs to be developed further along with relevant partners.

Responses included working with a variety of partners within local authorities, local growing initiatives, social enterprise groups, statutory agencies, youth and family support organisations and others. The advantages of working with other partners included: groups with similar aims could share resources and knowledge, raise awareness of target groups and help with application process.

- **Task 4** – a retired chef has worked with a local homeless centre project for many years running gardening and cooking workshops. Due to ill-health the volunteer has to give up work. In order for this work to continue a replacement will be needed to sustain these activities at the centre. However, there is no money in the budget to pay for a replacement - what can the centre do?

Responses included identifying and encouraging volunteers to get involved, contact local networks, build capacity internally and use links with local colleges.

### 3. Child Healthy Weight interventions

Laura Martin, NHS Health Scotland, and Rosalie McCluskey, Drongan Health Initiative, East Ayrshire, highlighted the unique role that the community and voluntary sector can bring to child healthy weight interventions (a national programme delivered by NHS Scotland) creating greater access in disadvantaged communities. Current support available to the sector was discussed.

-  Identify who to contact within your local health board – contact NHS Health Scotland and your local health board for local health promotion departments.
-  Provide information on how to set up family-based programmes for all partners - developing work that includes both children and adults (families) is thought to be more effective.
-  Support for local groups and volunteers developing work – contribution to costs

More information is available in Appendix 1.

### 4. Outcomes and performance frameworks

Michael Craig and Emma Halliday, NHS Health Scotland, gave workshop participants the opportunity to examine some of the tools they are developing to help clarify the links between the outcomes of the services they provide and the shared health

improvement outcomes they are working with partners to achieve. Some of the tools explored were those being developed to use in the area of healthy weight outcomes.



Participants provided feedback on how the models could be made clearer and more accessible. These suggestions included ensuring consistency and simplicity in language and terminology and avoiding acronyms.



Useful feedback was provided on gaps in the activities and outcomes included in the models. Other useful assumptions and issues were noted such as broadening out activities to include suppliers other than supermarkets in providing access to healthier options and consumer demand.



The models would also benefit from more detail about the activities and who does what, eg. which partners contribute to shared outcomes and what their potential role might be in this.

## **5. Black Community Development Project World Cafe (now known as Community Organisation for Race Equality (CORE))**

Khalida Hussain, CORE, Edinburgh, gave an overview of the development of the World Cafe, its work with BME communities and how it is addressing barriers to participation. The World Cafe uses food in an informal setting to work on community integration.



Food is a good way to bring people together from all cultural backgrounds



Benefits – learning/knowledge; confidence; friendships; community cohesion



Creating a sense of ownership

## **6. Weaning the Weans**

Tansy Lee-Moir, Parent Action Worker and Catrina Robertson, Nursery Nurse, West Lothian Council/Blackburn Early Years Action Group, led a workshop highlighting activities they are involved in that focus on healthy foods and early feeding in West Lothian. Participants also had the opportunity to hear about the different methods they use to engage and involve local families and share their own experiences.



Recipes – how to ... , ingredients, pictures, step by step.



Practical hands on activity



Training for Trainers > Health workers



Informal, relaxed, non-threatening



Need to make a DVD to inform other workers

## 7. Better CFHS grant applications

Kim Newstead, Development Officer (Practice Development) Community Food and Health (Scotland) led a session on the CFHS annual small grant scheme for participants to learn about how to improve small grant applications as well as offer their experiences on writing successful applications.

### 3 Top tips:



Get someone to read through your funding application for you



Do your homework (what is the funder looking for? costs of running your project, etc)



Put as much information as you can about your work on the application (within the space provided)

## 8. Impact

Judith Myers, formerly Development Worker at Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership, used a food mapping project in North Lanarkshire to lead an informal discussion on monitoring and evaluating the impact of food and health activities.



Sharing of findings – everyone is doing lots of different bits of work across Scotland. It is important to learn from each other about what does and does not work – this includes sharing evaluation findings/evidence and sharing best practice.



Capacity building is key for all community and voluntary groups; however, it is also an issue for commissioners and funders to ensure they have the capacity to use evidence of impact in the most efficient way.



SROI is currently being promoted as a way to demonstrate the economic value of community food initiatives, however, we need to consider this more and share more examples of using this alongside health and nutrition issues.

## 9. Maternal and infant nutrition

Cathy Higginson, formerly Health Improvement Programme Manager, Food and Health Team, NHS Health Scotland and Ruth Campbell, Infant Nutrition Co-ordinator for the Scottish Government, provided a brief progress update on the development of a national Maternity and Infant Nutrition Strategy. The opportunity to discuss emerging recommendations from the strategy was really useful to examine the actions in it and ensure that they are meaningful and will encourage progress.



**The ongoing need to improve access to and affordability of healthy food for women and families on low incomes.** There continues to be really big challenges here, with a feeling that cheaper and more readily accessible foods would really make a difference to some families' diets. Many good local initiatives making healthy food more available have fallen by the wayside when funding has run out.



**The importance of achieving effective integration between health and social care services in relation to maternal and infant nutrition to achieve greater impact.** This leads into the next point below ..



**The challenge of engaging with hard to reach groups** and the need to be really creative to achieve this. Integrating services better could help achieve this.

## Going Forth

### Key points from afternoon workshops

#### 1. From seed to plate

Tommy Kennedy, a staff member and two young people from Clued Up and the Oasis Project in Kirkcaldy shared their learning about how developing a vegetable plot improved their diets and also boosted their confidence, skills and employment prospects.



An extensive range of outcomes were identified from the work between the Oasis project and Clued Up – including confidence, commitment and training.



Sharing of good practice – there was a lot of interest in the techniques that Clued Up and others had used to develop allotments in a cost-effective way, eg. using old fish tanks for planting (which allows people to see the roots growing); using drain pipes for planting carrots; and using old tyres.

#### 2. Healthyliving Award - the sign of healthier food

As part of the workshop, participants were asked to comment on the achievability of the award, the suitability of the award in the community setting, possible customer feedback and the perceived benefits and barriers associated with the award. Three common themes emerged.



Amongst participants there was acknowledgement that making a dish healthier by making small changes is easier than anticipated; and small gradual changes are the best way to introduce change.



When asked if there were any perceived barriers to introducing healthier food into a cafe setting, participants felt there could be a resistance to change, both amongst staff and customers.



When asked about benefits it was recognised that there was potential to widen and increase customer base.

#### 3. Community involvement in developing food strategies

Elaine Lamont and Tina Gibson, Public Health Practitioners, Dumfries and Galloway gave an overview of their involvement in developing a 'Food and Health Strategy and

Action Plan for Dumfries and Galloway 2008-2013'. Participants had the opportunity to hear about and discuss engagement with the wider community to shape strategy and models of good practice.



***"not an end in itself"***

Community involvement is not a short-term or one-off activity during the development of a food strategy but is best built on a long held and ongoing commitment to engagement.



***"a coming together"***

Community involvement benefits from the active involvement of other sectors, including face-to face contact, even if this involves having to learn each others' language and culture.



***"not everyone has the same experience"***

Community involvement in the development of food strategies has been pursued across Scotland with widely differing of levels of commitment and impact. However, it has also generally been regarded outside the country as a key feature of our policy planning and delivery.

## **4. Growing healthy communities**

Two national organisations: the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG) and Trellis support, promote and represent a range of community and therapeutic growing projects across Scotland at national level. In order to illustrate that it is often helpful to have an overview of a situation, rather than just a local view – workshop participants put together jigsaws of community and therapeutic farms and gardens in Scotland. The workshop leaders moved around the jigsaw filling in gaps that participants could not see.



The jigsaw exercise illustrated the work of FCFCG and Trellis – people get so involved in projects at local level that they often waste time reinventing the wheel (or looking for pieces of the jigsaw that they can't see) when FCFCG and Trellis can help to fill in the gaps from somewhere else in the national network of community and therapeutic gardens.



FCFCG /Trellis might not always know the answer, but we probably know someone who does



Services we offer include: site visits from fieldworkers (local, freelance experts), information service (by phone, email or in person), training events, travel bursaries, representation, promotion.

## 5. This session had to be cancelled

## 6. The Commonwealth Orchard

John Hancox, Project Director of Glasgow's Childrens' Orchard, gave workshop participants an overview of community orchards and matters relating to growing fruit trees. Developing community orchards is one way of getting communities involved in growing local food. John also informed participants about the Commonwealth Orchard which was launched in 2009 – getting children to plant fruit trees, and soft fruit plants across Glasgow and Scotland, which would be ready to pick and use for events in 2014.

John had brought along some samples of local varieties of apples, as the conference coincided with Apple Day, a national event that takes place every October to improve awareness and enjoyment of local apples. Delegates had been encouraged to bring apples for juicing in a traditional apple press and everyone got involved in producing hand-pressed apple juice .

## 7. Nutrition – food and mood

Jacqueline Moran, Development Worker, ECLIPS Lite, Dundee, and Christine Dallas, Community Health Worker, Dundee Healthy Living Initiative, introduced work that they are doing in partnership highlighting the link between and the impact of food and mood. The session provided opportunities to learn about foods that can be used to benefit mood.



'Food and Mood' promoted in relation to healthy eating.



Food and mood is related to all age groups and client groups



Good way of engaging in a creative way

## 8. Early years

Norma Aberdein, Leonie Purdie and Julie Parker, Child and Family Centre, Perth. Norma and colleagues shared experiences of the impact of their 'Lifeskills Cookery Group' on early years. Participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas relevant to their practice or work that they are developing.



The informal format of the workshop was a great success. This allowed the majority of attendees to participate in discussion, whereas a more formal approach may have put people off speaking. The outcomes of the discussions were very useful.



Networking with other professionals from different authorities was beneficial to everybody. Finding out how other service providers deal with normal everyday situations has widened everybody's knowledge base by discussion on personal experiences both past and present. Making new contacts was considered to be a big plus.



Funding was very high on the agenda and it seems that everybody is looking to explore other avenues to maintain future funding and other financial assistance.

## Appendix 1

### Child Healthy Weight Interventions

Examples of current work delivered by voluntary and community sector participants that can support child healthy weight interventions:

- Healthy eating courses to P7 children and to parents/grandparents.
- Childsmile Training to Dental Nurses and Dental Health Support Workers, which includes training in breast feeding, weaning, nutrition and behaviour change.
- Family fun sessions educating children and parents to get involved in making meals and other food related activities as a family.
- Young carers lunchtime group.
- Range of voluntary groups, eg. after school club that provides care/education, etc to children. This club aims to promote health, wellbeing, physical activity and healthy eating for children aged 4-12 years.
- Healthy cooking skills courses for parents, which provides advice, information and practical skills on healthy eating.
- Working with Sports Departments where parents and children are involved.



**Community Food and Health (Scotland)  
c/o Consumer Focus Scotland  
Royal Exchange House  
100 Queen Street  
Glasgow G1 3DN**

**Tel: 0141 227 6463/6464  
Email: [cfh@consumerfocus.org.uk](mailto:cfh@consumerfocus.org.uk)**

**[www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk](http://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk)**

**Supporting local  
communities  
tackling inequalities  
in food and health**