



Newsletter September 2016

As Kirkcaldy Foodbank becomes firmly established as a source of emergency support for local families in need, the Board of Trustees and other volunteers are constantly working on ways of extending what the Foodbank does while remaining true to the core concept on which it was founded – feeding people who are hungry.

Just Giving

Graham Gourlay brought to the Board the idea of creating an online *Just Giving* page and after considerable spade-work by Graham and by Lynne Jenks, our Treasurer, this is now up and running. It can be reached via the donate button in the top right-hand corner of the home page and donations can be made by credit card, debit card or PayPal. There is also a *donate now* button on our Facebook page.

Kirkcaldy4All

The vision of this local organisation is, “To promote Kirkcaldy Town Centre as a place where people want to work, shop and

spend their leisure time in a welcoming environment which is customer focused and investment-friendly”. Kirkcaldy 4 All is an independent company providing additional projects and services to those that the Council or other public services provide. As part of their contribution to the community, Kirkcaldy 4 All has funded a series of four banner advertisements for the Foodbank in the local press and will also promote the Foodbank via a notice-board in the Mercat.

Linking with local events

Board member Maureen Closs is now coordinating the Foodbank’s involvement with local events and also organising initiatives to raise the Foodbank’s profile. Fife College’s Freshers’ Fayre event which took place from 30th August – 1st September included a stand manned by volunteers from the Foodbank. Students often want to be involved in community projects and this is a good way of recruiting volunteers and generally raising awareness of local needs.

Asda

On Saturday 27th August, we staged an awareness-raising event at Sainsbury's in Kirkcaldy. Here's what John wrote:

"I think everyone involved felt that the exercise had been very worthwhile. Though all donations of food are very gratefully received, the opportunity of reminding people about the food-bank's existence and function was equally important. As usual, the majority of people we spoke to were generally open to our appeals and many genuinely interested and concerned. At the end of the day we had gathered four trolleys of food; approximately two dozen carrier bags worth. In the context of our requirements this might constitute around 25% of one weeks demand so it could be that we judge the success of everyone's efforts and enthusiasm on these days not in terms of quantity gathered but in terms of enhancing social support and awareness. It's always great too to meet and chat with the different volunteers; a noticeably happier crew who have not been subject to the Monday morning managerial tyranny inflicted on the workers by Mr McKenzie - only joking Hugh!"

Must get down to Dysart one Monday morning – sounds like fun! (ed.)

Sainsbury's

And Lynn reports: "The Sainsbury's event

on Saturday was very successful and we raised just under £650 and a trolley full of food.

I thanked Diane Parker (the deputy manager at Sainsbury's) on Saturday for all her work in facilitating the event."

Tombola at Linton Lane, 12th June

Jennifer reported that £83 was raised in spite of poor weather and a reduced anticipated turnout.

News from neighbouring food banks

Glenrothes Foodbank reports that over 200 people a month are currently visiting them for food. They find that many of their customers need more than just a bag of shopping. Many need company, advice, support as well as more practical help; clothing, bedding and other household items and the food bank supplies these too.

This year has seen an increase in numbers of men who are living in their cars, families who are living for months without gas & electricity, and people who have been sanctioned and expected to live on no benefits for months on end. One sad story was that of a family of four, who through ill health had been sanctioned for six months and have been living on £134 per month since February and have only just become known to the Foodbank. They

have had no gas or electric since then and their home is at serious risk due to rent arrears. They came to ask for clothing for their children but the food bank has also been able to help them with appeals and applications to Scottish Welfare Fund as well as referrals to other organisations.

This October they have a fundraising event planned; The Fall Ball. This promises to be an excellent night, with entertainment, three course meal and much more. They hope to raise vital funds on so that they can then give back to those who need it most in the community. We are looking for Organisations, Businesses and anyone who fancies a good night out to come along. Tickets are priced at £35 each although tables of ten come at a reduced rate of £300.

If you would like to go along to a great night out for a fantastic local cause please contact Nicola on info@glenrothes.foodbank.org.uk

Finances

In light of the ongoing need for the resources provided by the Foodbank, we are able to maintain adequate provision to deal with this crisis. Money from donations is used for online shopping and to fund local food-related projects approved by the Board of Trustees.

Some donors prefer to make regular donations by standing order and the list of

those who give in this way is growing.

Recent publications

Here's an extract from the recent report from Dignity (the Independent Working Group on Food Poverty)

This report sets out evidence and recommendations from the first six months' work of the Independent Working Group on Food Poverty.

Action is needed now, and our recommendations focus on reducing and removing the need for food banks in the lifetime of the current Parliament and of transitioning to other models involving increasing income and developing community food initiatives. This is in line with Scotland's commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 2.1: By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

Here are some of the key points:

During 2015/16, a total of 208,060 applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund were received. These included 66,970 applications for Community Care Grants and 143,350 applications for Crisis Grants. Re Crisis Grants: there have been marked increases in Crisis Grant applications due to benefit or other income being spent (4,860 applications and 7%) and due to

lost money (990 applications, 10%).

During 2015/16, 97% of Crisis Grant applications were processed within the two day working limit – an increase of 1% on 2014/15.

The number of Community Care Grant awards decreased by around 4,000 (9%) between 2014/15 and 2015/16, while the number of Crisis Grant awards remained largely unchanged (a decrease of 665 and 1%) over the same period

For Community Care Grants, the most common expenditure was on floor coverings, washing machines and cookers. For Crisis Grants, most expenditure was on food, essential heating costs and other living expenses.

Between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2016, the most common type of household in receipt of Community Care or Crisis Grant funds was a 'Single Person' household (54% of all households). Households containing children (including single parent, couple with children and other with children) received 33% of the scheme's funds.

Recommendations 14 & 15 in the independent report [Dignity Ending Hunger Together in Scotland](#) relate to the Scottish welfare Fund:

14. The Scottish Government, along with local authorities and all those responding to acute food insecurity, should ensure widespread use of the Scottish Welfare Fund as the first port of call for emergency

support and ensure the Fund is administered in a way that allows this.

15. If demand for the Scottish Welfare Fund grows, the Scottish Government should increase investment in it accordingly

Fame at last!

Our esteemed chairman has at last been recognised for his media talents!

Look out for an audio link on our web-page to the interview Ian gave on Kirkcaldy Community radio. This was coordinated by Michael McLaren, and Ian is hoping there might be air-space to include a specific reference he made about the FB previously supporting wider enterprises such as breakfast clubs, lunch events etc but which now really need a dedicated line of funding.

Ian says, "I think it has been fantastic that one of our own volunteers has put this together for the FB, in a manner that was very quietly supportive." He also adds, "Just funny how you never like your own voice when you hear it....."

I'm sure everyone else does, Ian. Are you signing autographs? (ed.)

Fife Council Unpaid Work scheme gets thumbs up

Fife Criminal Justice Social Work Services' Unpaid Work scheme has been given a

positive boost in their annual feedback review of service recipients.

The scheme is designed to give people with court ordered community service the chance to payback their local communities by undertaking tasks and projects that will benefit their local area and the people living there.

The tasks and projects undertaken have a varying degree of difficulty with the aim of promoting and building upon individual skill bases and supporting offenders with future employment expertise. The feedback survey showed that over 90% of the recipients of the service were happy with the work that had been undertaken and 94% were very happy with the time that it had taken to complete the projects.

Bill Kinnear, Service Manager, is very pleased by the results of the survey. "Our members of staff are experienced in assessing project requests and we aim to make sure that recipients are given the best service possible. We're happy the hard work is paying off, our service is well received and that we're making a difference to both the lives of the offenders and those in the local community."

Kirkcaldy Foodbank is one of the many organisations that has benefitted from the Unpaid Work scheme. Ian Campbell, Chair of Kirkcaldy Foodbank, said: "We were really pleased with the work undertaken for us by the Unpaid Work team. The team has been involved in the

pick-up of food parcels from the Foodbank hub in Dysart and delivering this direct to the food collection points in Kirkcaldy and Burntisland. Without this help, we would struggle to transport the food to these vital collection points and it would make our job, helping people in crisis, all the more difficult. We are supportive of the fact that those sentenced to community payback orders have had the chance to give something back to our charity and the local community, too."

This type of work, and other examples, showcases the benefits of working alongside the third sector to help local communities.

Bill Kinnear continued: "We will continue to build on our successes to ensure continuous improvement to our local communities in Fife."

Projects to tackle food poverty

Twenty-one projects to tackle food poverty will benefit from over £900,000 through a new fund established by the Scottish Government.

The first wave of the *Fair Food Transformation Fund* will help initiatives across the country that are seeking to reduce reliance on emergency food aid, by establishing more sustainable approaches to ensuring families can access healthy, nutritious food.

Projects supported include schemes to

grow fresh produce, cooking classes, community meals, and community cafes, bringing people and communities together in a positive social environment while offering support to those in greatest need. (extract from 'Scottish Housing News' 09.2016)

Some statistics:

From January to July this year Kirkcaldy Foodbank has handed out 2, 600 food parcels to a total of 4,696 people. This equates to providing approximately 42,264 meals to people who would otherwise be hungry.

The faith sub-group

At their recent meeting the faith sub-group spent time talking about the needs of our own Trustees and other volunteers. They came up with the idea of providing time and space for reflection, quiet and focus. In answer to this they have organised an "open evening" which they are calling "**Food for the Soul**".

It will be held at 7:30 on Monday 26th September in Dysart Kirk in the "packing room" downstairs. It will last 40 minutes at most.

It will be relaxed and open to all, with the intention of being free thinking, ecumenical and interfaith; not tied to any specific tradition but open and accessible. It aims to provide time to reflect on the core issues surrounding help, sharing, "well"fare ...

There will be times of quiet and times with some words and some music.

Finding time to reflect is important when we worry about whether there will be enough and where will all this go next?

As sometimes we feel the welfare crisis is now permanent.

This is a time for you.

A time to pause and reflect, support each other and help each other.

No need to reply.....just come if you're able.

Calling all photographers...

If you have a talent for photography or just enjoy taking pictures, please take photos of any Foodbank events you attend or even some action shots of volunteers at work! Send them to Graham for inclusion in the website or on our Facebook page.

Also...

If you would like to write a short (500 words max) article for the Foodbank Newsletter, please send it to carollatimer98@gmail.com



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