

# Public Health Nutrition Healthier Future Team

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

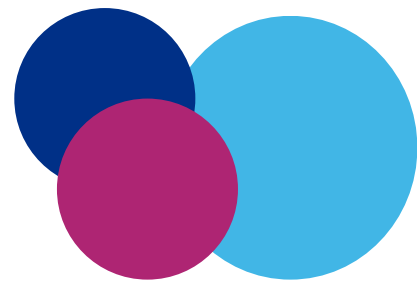


Visit our **Community Nutrition Website**  
[www.nhsforthvalley.com/nutrition](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com/nutrition)



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# About Our Work



## Striving to improve the health and well-being of individuals and populations throughout Forth Valley



Our Public Health Nutrition Team is part of NHS Forth Valley's Healthier Future Team. Our work has a focus on early intervention and prevention of ill health through promotion of good food and nutrition particularly where access to healthy food is poor or limited.



We work with a wide range of partners and stakeholders from voluntary organisations, community groups, local authority, health and social care partnerships, NHS and Scottish Prison Service (SPS) Sectors, as well as liaising closely with our colleagues from the oral health and health promotion teams.



We aim to ensure that staff, volunteers and communities have access to the knowledge, skills and resources needed to enable others to eat well and develop a healthy relationship with food.

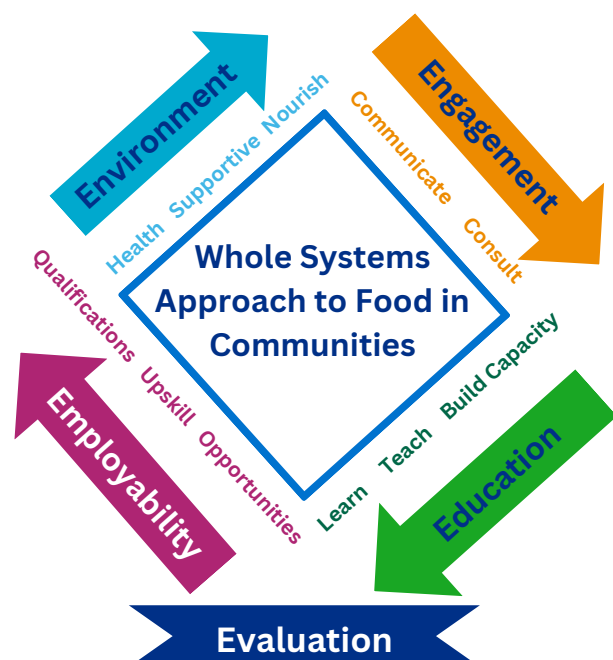


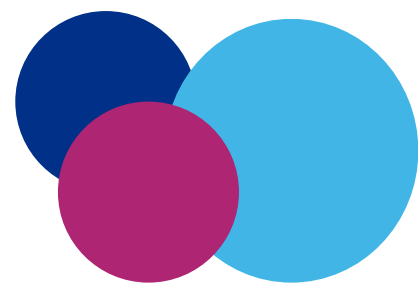
We provide funding, training, practical resources and advisory support to staff and volunteers who can act on addressing food issues.

## Whole Systems Approach to Food in Local Communities

Our team have developed a 'Whole Systems Approach to Food in Communities' Model based around around 5E's :-

- Engagement
- Education
- Employability
- Environment
- Evaluation





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# Meet Our Team



**RHONDA ARCHIBALD**  
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT (NUTRITION) LEAD



**DONNA RODGERS**  
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SPECIALIST



**ELLEN COWIE**  
COMMUNITY FOOD DEVELOPMENT WORKER



**FIDELMA GUEST**  
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SPECIALIST DIETITIAN



**LESLEY HETHERINGTON**  
COMMUNITY DIETITIAN



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**MAIRI WRIGHT**  
COMMUNITY FOOD DEVELOPMENT WORKER



**PAMELA MURRAY**  
PUBLIC HEALTH DIETITIAN



**WENDY HANDLEY**  
COMMUNITY FOOD DEVELOPMENT WORKER

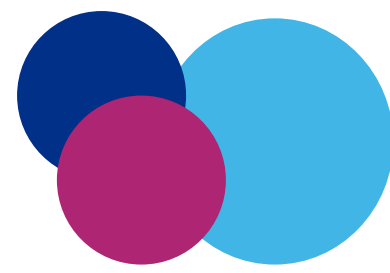
# Training & Building Capacity In our local Communities



Over the year, The Public Health Nutrition - Community Food Team engaged with over **50** organisations throughout Forth Valley and delivered training courses to **165** people.

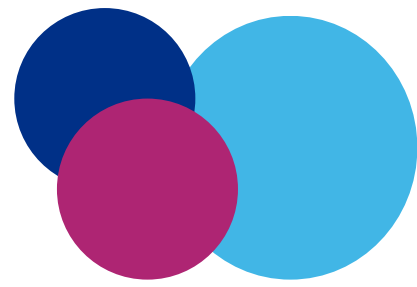
Training Delivered	Number of Participants	Who attended training
REHIS Elementary Cooking	27 Participants from Falkirk and Clacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 organisations attended</li> </ul>
REHIS Elementary Food & Health	22 Participants from Falkirk, Clacks and Stirling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 organisations attended</li> </ul>
REHIS How to Run A Cooking Group	15 Participants from Falkirk, Clacks and Stirling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 organisations attended</li> </ul>
Community Cooking	19 Participants from rural Stirling, Stirling and Falkirk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 organisations attended</li> </ul>
Mini Steps Training	7 Participants from Stirling and Clacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 organisation attended</li> </ul>
Make & Taste	15 Participants from Falkirk, Clacks and Stirling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 organisations attended</li> </ul>
Grow	44 Participants from Falkirk, Clacks and Stirling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17 organisations attended</li> </ul>

# Training in our 3 local Prisons



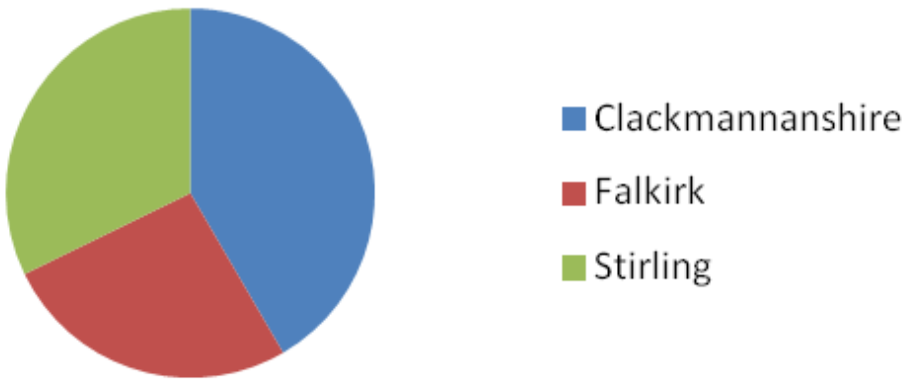
Training Delivered	Number of Participants	Who attended training
REHIS Elementary Practical Cooking Skills	69 Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prison residents - across 3 local prisons</li> </ul>
REHIS Introduction to Food and Health	6 Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prison Residents - across 3 local prisons</li> </ul>
REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene	32 Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prison Residents - across 3 local prisons</li> </ul>
Veg Power Practical - Make & Taste Sessions	12 Participants 3 Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the Veg Power Campaign at HMPYOI Polmont 3 Vegetable Dip making sessions were held.</li> <li>Both male and female residents took part in these practical and interactive vegetable Make &amp; Taste sessions.</li> </ul>
Food Focus Groups	12 Participants 3 Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of the Veg Power Campaign at HMPYOI Polmont 3 Food Focus Groups were held to gather feedback and comments about the prison food provision with a particular focus on vegetables. Comments collated were fed back to the catering manager.</li> </ul>

# Training Staff & Groups

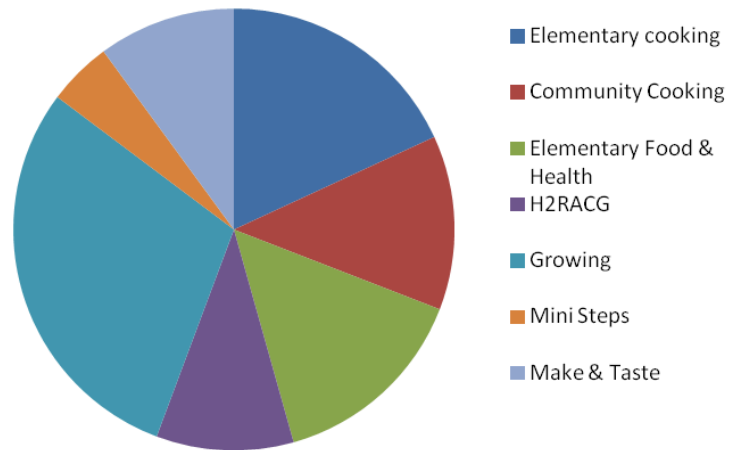


Many groups took up training in their communities to offer food activities.

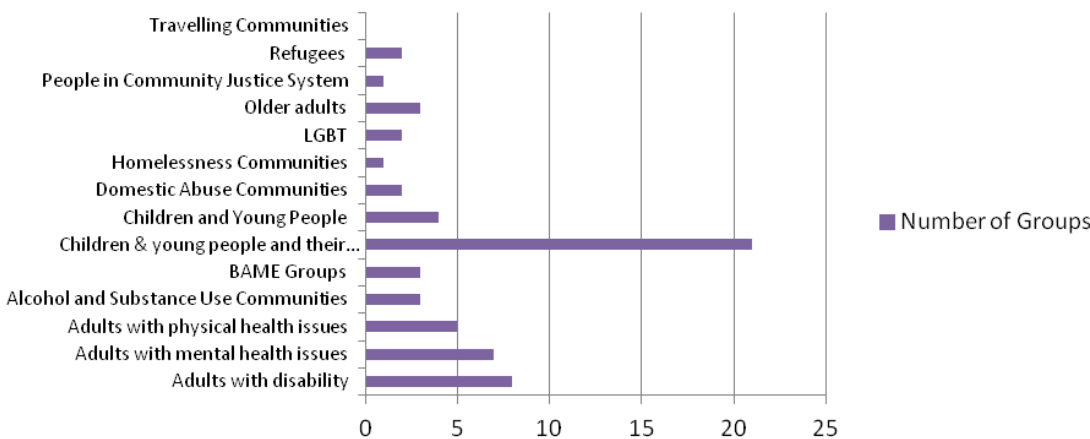
Training Participants in Areas



Training Participants



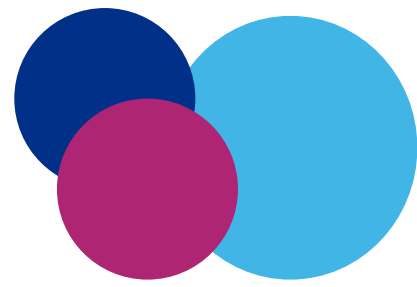
Training by Group Setting



Find out more about the training our team offers



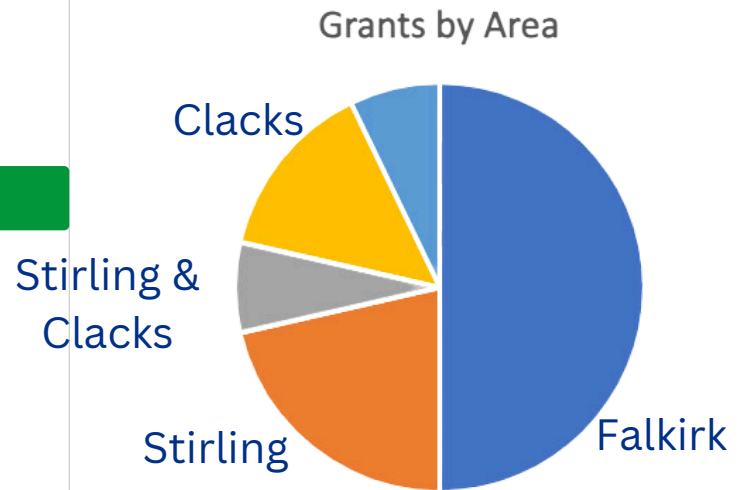
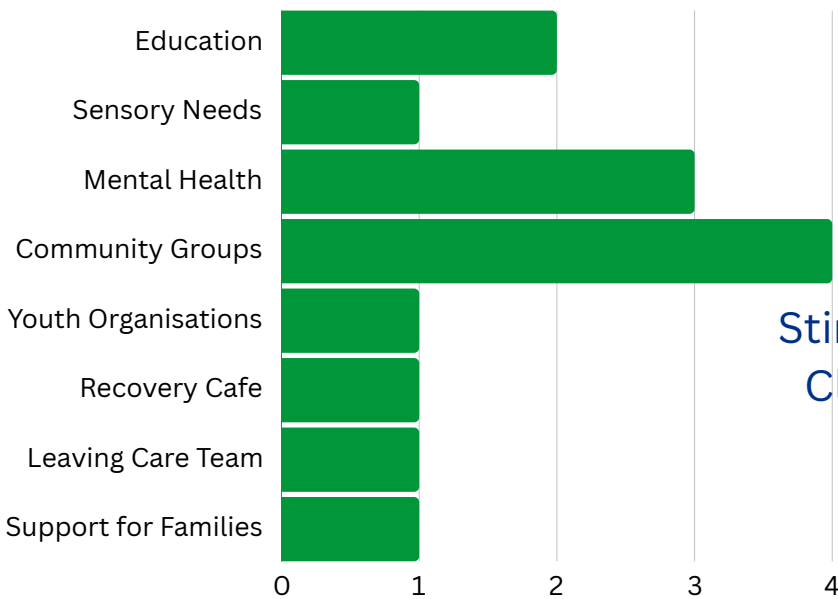
# Grants & Funding Agreements



14

Food activity grants were awarded across Forth Valley 2024 - 2025

Over 480 + individuals including children young people and families were reached through our food grants



**COMMUNITY FOOD GRANTS**



Food Activity Grants are now available to support communities across Forth Valley to develop local cooking and food activities.

For further information and details of how to apply visit [www.nhsforthvalley.com/nutrition](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com/nutrition)



## Social Media



Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, word of mouth and email were used to share details of our Community Food Grants, with local groups and organisations.

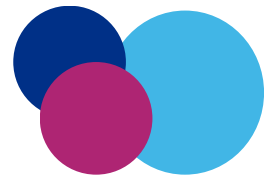
Visit our Funding & Grants web page for details on how to apply for Food Activity Grants





# Case Study

These Case Studies give a flavour of some of the projects our team have funded over the year 2023 - 24



## Supporting independent living skills and encouraging engagement in food preparation and activities for Young People

A funding agreement was provided to Barnardo's who support young people across Forth Valley. The funding enabled staff and a volunteer to be offered support and training in Mini Steps for Nutrition, REHIS Elementary Food and Health and REHIS How to Run a Cooking Group. Cooking groups were delivered, some in collaboration with partner organisations at the Stirling base. Young people were involved in Lunch making activity sessions in various locations throughout Forth Valley.

**50** young people from across Forth Valley engaged in food and cooking activities from September to March 2024

### Main Benefits

All young people who attended the cooking and activity sessions reported an increase in either their nutrition knowledge, skills and confidence within certain areas.

The young people that attended:

- Really enjoyed the opportunity to showcase their cooking talents.
- Got the opportunity to design menus and prepare and cook food to share which has increased their knowledge and skills around planning meals, shopping, budgeting as well as preparing food.
- All received a Saltire Award for their participation in the sessions.
- Got the opportunity to try and taste new foods as well as sit down to eat together as part of a group.

### Move Forward - What Next?

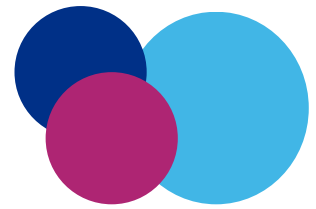
- 'Food can be a challenge for some young people, so it will remain a focus of our work to encourage healthy eating with our young people.' Barnardos Staff
- 'As a service we were unaware of how much the young people would enjoy the cooking groups as in the past we have mainly offered outdoor experiences. Going forward we will ensure to widen out the opportunities we offer to our young people and seek out partnerships to support this.'

“ I never knew I could do that! ”

“ I have lived on my own for years and rarely cook a meal. I eat a lot of takeaways and pasta. I don't like big groups of people and liked that the cooking group was small. My worker supported me to come along every week. At the end of each session we would decide what to cook next time and each week there was enough of the meal we cooked left over so we could take it home for later. ”

Group Participants

# Case Study



## Cooking Classes for Adults with Additional Needs

Forth Valley Sensory Centre hosted cooking classes for participants with a sensory loss or additional learning needs.

### Main Benefits

Those that attended the course learned:

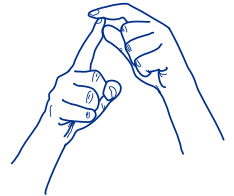
- how to prepare food and how to make meals healthier.
- about portion sizes, how to store food properly, as well as, information on healthy eating on a budget. This supported people struggling with the cost of living.

The volunteers who support David, the deaf and blind chef at the Sensory Centre, have learned a great deal about accessibility and the barriers that people with a sensory loss or learning disability have when performing daily tasks, such as cooking. Volunteers undertook sighted guide training and used various assisted tech to support them during the cooking course.

### Moving Forward - What Next?

It has come to light that these classes were not accessible to British Sign Language (BSL) users, so in future we will have an interpreter available for BSL users and we will need to factor that into the costs of the classes.

**18** Attended Cooking Groups  
**45** People attended event



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## Food Hygiene and Meal Prep Training for Teenagers

**10** Young people aged between 16 to 18 years from the Go Youth Trust have completed Food Hygiene training and been awarded with a REHIS Food Hygiene Certificate.

**They also designed a 4-day meal plan for a residential home, shopped for the ingredients using budgeting and organisational skills and then prepared and cooked the meals.**

### Main Benefits

Those that attended the course:

- Improved their knowledge of how to prepare, handle and store food.
- Benefitted from learning new budgeting skills when buying and preparing food, all of which are proven to build confidence in young people.
- Reported that their confidence and group work skills improved during the food sessions.

### Evaluation

100% More confident

100% Received qualification and certificate

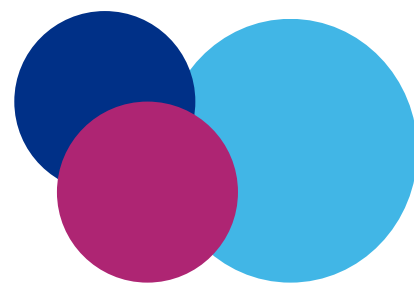
80% More likely to eat healthier

90% Learned skills to help independence

## Moving Forward

‘We are keen to explore the potential of becoming a REHIS centre.’

# Case Study



## Growing and Sensory Garden at Alva Early Learning Centre

Alva ELC in Clackmannanshire applied for a Public Health Nutrition Food Activity grant, which helped them set up a growing space for sensory learning. With the children they set out to grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, herbs and edible flowers.

The children showed excitement around the garden and were accessing the garden more than before. They were more willing to taste and explore new foods such as peas and tomatoes after being involved in the growing, harvesting and the making of snacks.



The children were able to take this enthusiasm home through our home projects such as growing cress and sunflowers on their windowsills.

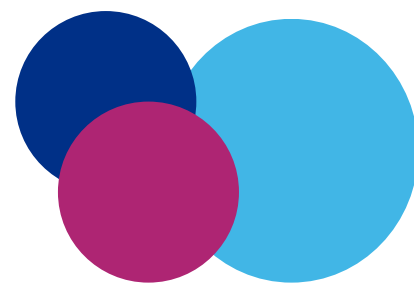


Public Health Nutrition team provided support and resources. With the ELC lead, we together provided a twilight workshop for other ELCs in Clackmannanshire to learn about outdoor learning.

We had a total of 25 participants from 10 nurseries. We introduced them to the project and the outcomes from the Alva growing space. We led a demonstration on how to grow your own in a nursery setting; from beans, peas to potatoes. ELC practitioners learnt about how to involve children and their carers/families and also how to access funding to set up their own growing space.



# Case Study



## The Conservation Volunteers Jupiter - Growing Together Project

*This project wasn't just about growing food, it was also about growing individuals confidence, resilience, skills and connecting people who need these skills most.*

Cooking classes were delivered to showcase simple recipes people can use at home with the vegetables grown: redcurrant crumble, vegetable soup, rhubarb and ginger cordial, coleslaw, pizza and hot pumpkin salad. Volunteers were encouraged to get involved with prepping and cooking the food before eating and enjoying it together.

The grant helped buy cooking utensils and equipment for the outdoor kitchen area. A garden open day was held and the Rainbow Muslim Women's Group used the outdoor cooking kitchen to cook food for attendees.

### Main Benefits:

Some of the volunteers don't always have the opportunity or confidence to cook for themselves. Cooking in a group encouraged social interaction, as well as, increasing participants knowledge and confidence. Participants had the opportunity to choose and pick the vegetables from the garden then prep and cook easy to follow recipes and dishes.

People commented on how nice it was to take time out together to prepare a meal, and be able to sit and enjoy it together whilst catching up.

*"It was nice to chill and chat with everyone over food and enjoy the garden"*

**Volunteer during a cooking session.**

### Unexpected benefits:

Volunteers went on to cook more at home and even brought in some of the items into the group to share. One of our volunteers offered to cook for our summer social, this volunteer in particular can suffer from low confidence so to see them offering to cook for everyone was amazing.

*"I really enjoy the cooking that we do, I don't always get the chance to cook back at home"*

**Volunteer who lives in supported living.**

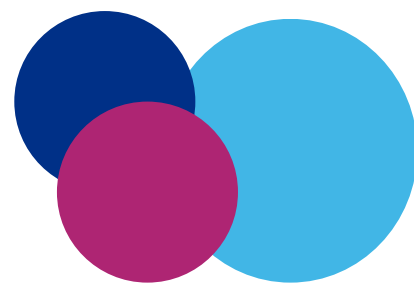
### Future Developments:

We plan to continue our cooking sessions during our growing season to show how to use seasonal vegetables into autumn and winter. We also would like to develop our outdoor kitchen area, as volunteers really enjoyed it. It's a great way to catch up and socialise over food whilst ensuring people get access to free, fresh and healthy food.

*“ Just wanted to say a massive thanks to you (and all involved) for making yesterday such a great day! We all thoroughly enjoyed it. It was nice to see everyone chatting and enjoying food in the sunshine together. ”*

**Occupational Therapist Team Lead - Bellsdyke Hospital**

# New Resources



Our team have developed a number of resources, that support our work:

## Development of 'Tasty Beginnings'

### Introducing Solid Foods Toolkit

A needs assessment was carried out with parents and staff groups who support parents with infants to inform the development of this resource.

A budget friendly, pictorial resource was then developed promoting safe, responsive self-feeding, repeated exposure and food acceptance with a focus on promoting vegetables as the first solid food.

A free-standing table-top flip book, accompanying parent information leaflet and evaluation tools have been produced and piloted.

The roll out of 'Tasty Beginnings' in 2024 - 25 will include training to ensure staff and those from partner organisations, particularly those reaching child poverty target groups, are skilled in and encouraged to use the updated toolkit and resources.



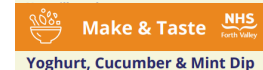
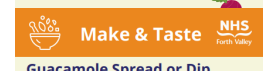
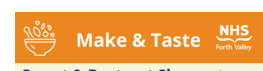
## Further Development, Evaluation and Roll out of 'Make & Taste'

Make and Taste aims to support early year's staff to facilitate and embed food activity in early years settings. This increases opportunities to engage with families, particularly where there may be concern about a child's food intake and supports the child and family to make good food choices.

Early Years teams attending training report increased confidence to practically cascade healthier food messages to parents and children in a way that is positive and supportive and embedded into service provision.

The Public Health Nutrition Team have supported 3 Early Learning Centres (ELC's) and Home-Start in Clackmannanshire. 29 team members from 10 Stirling ELC'S, 8 team members from Home-Start Clackmannanshire; 3 team members from St Serf's nursery in Clackmannanshire; 2 engagement sessions in Falkirk, including a block of sessions within Rannoch Nursery.

An evaluation of the impact of Make & Taste by a Queen Margaret University student is underway (due to be completed in April 2024).



## Vegetable Dip Recipes

5 new Veggie Dip recipes were developed, as part of the Veg Power Campaign at HMP YOI Polmont. Due to the positive feedback received - the vegetable based recipes have been added to our Make & Taste resource. These quick, easy, non-cook recipes could be used as part of an interactive food activity or tasting session. A great way to introduce new flavours and textures and encourage children to try a wider variety of foods and experiment with new vegetables.

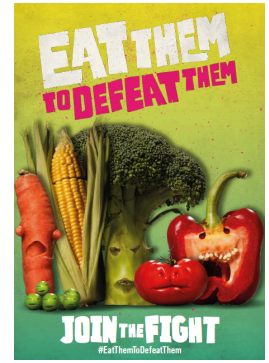
Download Make & Taste here





# Campaigns

## Veg Power Campaign HMPYOI Polmont Nov 2023 - March 2024



As part of our Whole Systems Approach to Food in Prisons our team worked in partnership with staff from the Scottish Prison Service and Crossreach - Visitor Centre to co-ordinate and deliver a health improvement intervention 'Veg Power Campaign'. The aim of this 'prison-wide' campaign was to increase engagement around food and well-being with staff and residents in HMPYOI Polmont, inspire and encourage vegetable consumption and create a foundation for sustainable activity.

### Activities Included:-

- Staff Soup Bag giveaway to all SPS staff over 4 weeks.
- 5 Residents identified and trained as 'Nutrition Champions' - Each attended 3 REHIS Food and Health Courses in life skills and received 3 qualifications and awards.
- Ran 3 practical food activities and focus groups.
- The Visitor Centre was awarded a funding agreement to deliver a Soup Bag giveaway and soup taster sessions to families visiting.
- Interactive resources and nutrition information was shared with all residents digitally via the in-cell TV screens, as well as through in-cell activity sheets.
- 5 Vegetable dip recipes developed, tried and tested.

Our poster will be presented at The Scottish Public Health Conference at the University of Strathclyde on the 1st of May 2024.



Using food as an engagement tool within the prison setting can support the attainment of qualifications and development of wider practical and interpersonal skills, such as teamwork and communication which can help improve confidence, self-esteem, well-being and resilience. It also provides an opportunity for residents to come together, reducing their sense of loneliness and isolation.

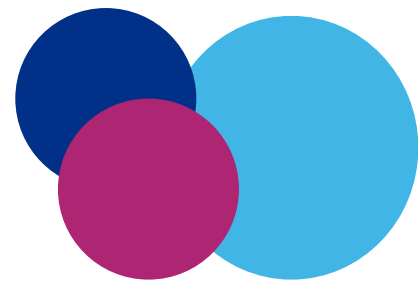
“ The Veg Power Campaign was such a positive project, it was great to see everyone working together. (SPS Staff Member)

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about the Veg Power Campaign



Email: [pamela.murray@nhs.scot](mailto:pamela.murray@nhs.scot)

# Partnership Working



## Falkirk Council Library Service

Following on from Covid and to help address the cost of living crisis the Falkirk Council Libraries set up Warm Space Initiatives within all 8 libraries across the Falkirk district.

Our team worked in partnership with the Falkirk Council Library Services - and supplied stocks of our low cost soup, slow cooker and porridge picture recipe cards. These were distributed across the 8 local libraries who then created recipe corners.

Here are some quotes from customers that used the recipes:

*"I think even I could make some of these meals without messing them up!"*

*"These look easy. I am going to give them a try. Can I take one of each?"*

*"These are a really good idea, they're a handy size for using in the kitchen and storing and are easy to follow"*

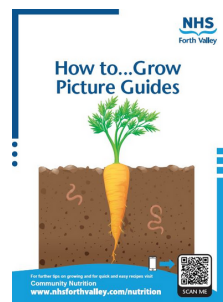
We also worked with the Falkirk Libraries Communications Team - who shared our Pictorial Recipes and links to our 'Grow and Cook' web page via their Social Media - Facebook and Twitter (X) Accounts.

## Further Work Developments

The work above allowed us to establish connections with the relevant library staff and resulted in our team offering Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Training to library staff across the Falkirk libraries. ?? Now Registered ???

## Gardening Clubs

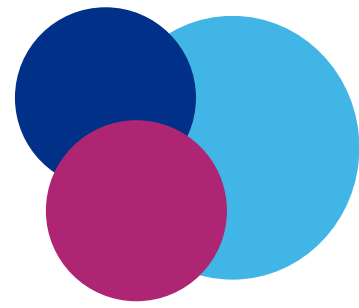
The Falkirk Libraries are working in partnership with FDAMH, they have recently received funding to set up Gardening Clubs and loan out Gardening Starter Kits called 'Growing for Recovery'. The library staff have been in touch and are keen to use our pictorial Growing Guides and Recipe Cards as part of this gardening initiative - which is great news - we look forward to receiving their feedback!



*"I haven't cooked for years. These recipes look fun to try with the kids."*  
Customer Comment

*"The Recipe cards are a really important addition to the warm space areas in our libraries and have proved very popular with both staff and customers. They are easy to use with fewer ingredients than many recipes which makes them good value for money as well, which is especially important during the current cost of living crisis."*

Vikki Ring, Senior Librarian, Communities



## ELLY 'Enjoy Life Locally': A Community Designed Healthy Weight and Wellbeing Intervention

The Elly Project is now completed and the results are being analysed

A team of researchers from NHS Forth Valley Public Health Nutrition Team, Stirling, Glasgow Caledonian and Aberdeen Universities worked to co-design a community project, which aims to improve and promote healthy weight and wellbeing. The intervention tested the feasibility of using financial incentives, goal setting and twice weekly soup to support health behaviour change. The project started in September 2023 when residents from across two local areas, Denny and Westfield, were invited to sign up to the 12 week project.

**75** Participants signed up to take part in the Elly Project



## Intervention Elements Included

Questions and Measurements - Week 1 & Week 12



Attendance at a local activity group

Free twice weekly soup and support cafes



Integration of behaviour change techniques such as goal setting and financial incentives

## What's Next?

- Analyse outcome measures data
- Analyse participants and volunteer interviews
- Publish results
- Apply for further funding for a longer trial

It has been productive, as it forces me to get out of the house, because I wouldn't ever. So I come up here twice a week.

**Background**  
Elly (Enjoy Life Locally) is a mixed methods community co-designed intervention that tested the feasibility of financial incentives for health behaviour change.

**Systematic Review**  
From 28,304 records; 10 studies (6076 participants) met inclusion criteria.  
Most studies were conducted in the US;  
4 studies employed a RCT design.  
9/10 studies had a food and Physical activity element

**Community Co-production**  
The systematic review findings were shared with the two communities. Iterative cycles of community engagement (formal cafes, 'pop up cafes', and informal conversations) created an acceptable, relevant and evidence informed intervention.

**Participant Experience**  
**Goal Setting:**  
• 65/75 people wanted to set a personal goal  
• 64/75 people wanted to set a weight goal  
• 48 of those wanted to decrease their weight  
• 66/75 people wanted to set a wellbeing goal  
• 60 of those wanted to improve their wellbeing

**What's Next?**  
• Analyse outcome measures data  
• Analyse participants and volunteer interviews  
• Publish results  
• Apply for further funding for a longer trial

**Conclusions**  
Analysis and interpretation of outcome measures and interviews is needed to provide full and valid conclusions. However, preliminary data suggests that Elly is a feasible and acceptable intervention that could be scaled up to facilitate health behaviour change and support wellbeing in community settings.

Find out more about

**ELLY**  
ENJOY LIFE LOCALLY



Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about Elly



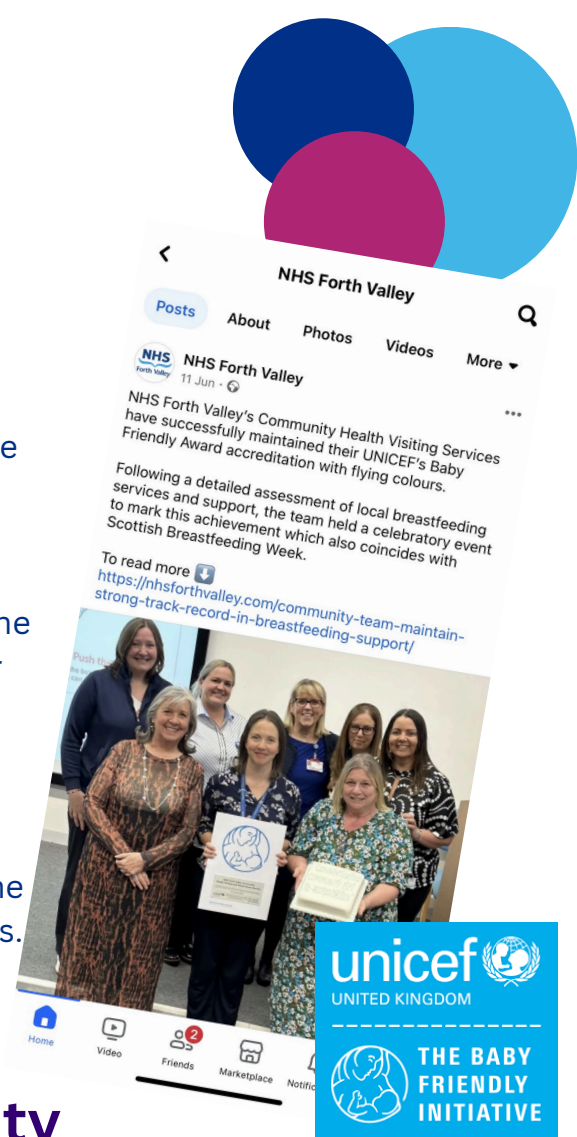
Email: rhonda.archibald@nhs.scot



# Success Stories

## UNICEF's Baby Friendly Award

NHS Forth Valleys' Community Health Visiting Services have successfully maintained their UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Award accreditation. Lesley Hetherington, Infant Feeding Co-ordinator provided leadership through training, education and ongoing support to staff to help them gain the knowledge and skills required to support mothers and their families. This award programme has a strong public health focus and highlights the benefits of breastfeeding to the mother, child and family, as well as, increasing the acceptance of breastfeeding in public across Forth Valley. Lesley continued to develop and build relationships with the Breastfeeding Network (BfN) and other community partners. Well done to all involved!



## Child Poverty - Infant Food Security

*Supporting children to eat well and have a good relationship with food*

### New Guidance Developed for Food and Baby Banks

NHS Forth Valley Public Health Department and the Public Health Nutrition Team carried out a needs assessment for maternal and infant food insecurity in liaison with local authority and 3rd sector organisation.

The following resources have been developed:

- Interim guidance for local food banks on the provision of infant formula based on Feed UK – [Guide for Food Banks on Formula Provision](#)
- Standard Operational Procedure for health visiting, midwifery and family nurse colleagues
- In Falkirk, specific measures have been taken to prioritise families with children under 1 for household support fund

Further work to both strengthen the support offered and embed the pathway will be taken forward in line with Scottish Government's [Infant Food Insecurity - Responding and Preventing : Guide](#)

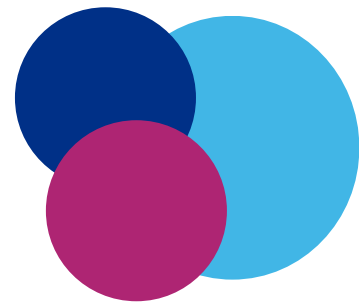
This provides guidance for the development of pathways to support families with money worries and other supports before crisis point is reached.

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about our team's work



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# Success Stories



## Connecting Communities through Cooking

Our Public Health Nutrition Team were made aware of confidence and capacity issues in communities running food events; such as lunch clubs, supper clubs and community meals. These included food hygiene concerns, safe staffing, as well as dignity and sustainability issues. Our team adapted existing resources and developed a training course and packs to increase communities' knowledge, skills and confidence to run food events to meet their local needs. We engaged with local food organisations that had established cooking skills, who were running food events to discuss their needs and identify barriers. Our team then developed a programme of practical and interactive food and nutrition activities that looked at skills and tools for food hygiene, cooking techniques and equipment, cooking in bulk, responsibilities and boundaries for volunteers, food waste, sustainability and dignity for those attending the events.



**30** Individuals attended the Community Cooking Course - Participants were from 4 groups - one from each NHS Forth Valley local authority area and one from Rural Stirlingshire.



## Impact of Training

**'More confident how to teach people to cut vegetables safely'**

**'We did a community meal after the training. I would like to do an intergenerational lunch club in the spring.'**

**'Enjoyed company and eating together'**



**'Man with a pan gave me an interest in trying new recipes'**

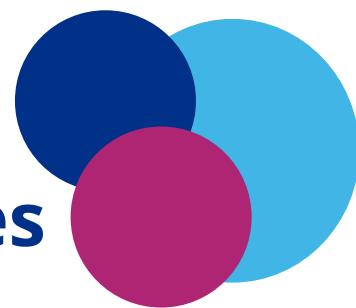
**The community cooking with groups training increased community food organisations confidence and capacity to deliver community food events safely, in a dignified manner for their groups.**

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more about our team's work



Email: [fv.publichealthnutritionteam@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.publichealthnutritionteam@nhs.scot)

# Cooking up Connections in Local Communities



## Food Champion Event

Our Public Health Nutrition Team organised a Food Champion Event in November 2023. All the community organisations who had attended food, nutrition and cooking training delivered by our team, throughout the year, were invited along to Stirling Community Enterprise. This event created an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the valuable work of local food champions across Forth valley. Participants had the opportunity to network with others and share their ideas, pieces of work, experiences and the challenges they face. It also provided a forum for our team to gather and capture feedback from local community groups - around what matters most to them around cooking and food. This information could then be used by our team to develop plans on how we can support and develop further Food Champions across Forth Valley.



Individuals from 12 organisations across Forth Valley attended.



Certificates were presented to those who had recently completed the REHIS Elementary Food & Health course. Attendees were also presented with Food Champion Certificates to acknowledge their role in supporting food activities in their communities. Participants included youth workers, support workers, volunteers, chefs and staff from local Councils, Voluntary Organisations eg. The Gate, Forth Valley Sensory Centre, Community Organisations eg Sauchie Active 8 and the Recovery Community.



Food Champions are a valuable asset in communities across NHS Forth Valley. Offering Networking opportunities allows them to share good practice, encourage community connection and the development of knowledge and skills. Annual events are required with further opportunities for training and support.



Food Champions are key to sustaining ongoing community food activities. Wider support is required to secure affordable access to community kitchens to allow Food Champions to continue to develop cooking in the community.

If you'd like to find out more about our Food Champion Event, please get in touch



Email: [fv.publichealthnutritionteam@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.publichealthnutritionteam@nhs.scot)

# Cooking up Connections in Local Communities



## Food Dignity Dialogues

The Food Dignity Clackmannanshire project was led and hosted by Nourish Scotland. Fidelma Guest, Public Health Dietitian worked closely with Joanne O'Suilleabhain, Public Health, NHS Forth Valley initiating local discussions and promoting this project to senior leaders from the public sector. Local community groups, throughout Clackmannanshire were encouraged to identify and recruit people who were accessing the food pantries and food banks as community advisors.

The aim of the Dignity Dialogues project was to investigate possible interventions to prevent and respond to food insecurity. It was based on the principle of co-production - where service providers and users worked on a range of activities and processes to reach collective outcomes.

# 6

Community advisors were recruited



## Themes Identified

**Equity** - Access to services isn't always equal

**Linking Services** - Inadequate signposting / connections between different services, departments and organisations

**Cost of living** - Earnings and / or benefits are not in line with the rising costs of living

*"My lived experience is relevant and important and can be powerful in influencing change."*

Community Advisor

*"I found the discussions very helpful for understanding some of the blockages we have across the systems of support. Understanding the lived experience of people and hearing their stories is vital for developing new approaches to reducing poverty and food poverty."*

NHS Decision Maker

### Dignity Dialogues in Clackmannanshire: Summary Report

This summary report describes the 'Dignity Dialogues' work that took place in Clackmannanshire between January and May 2024 and outlines the key findings and next steps.

#### Background

The aim of the Dignity Dialogues project is to investigate possible interventions to prevent and respond to food insecurity. We work alongside paid 'Community Advisors' (CAs) with lived experience of accessing food support services, such as pantries, larders and food banks, culminating with a meeting with local 'decision makers' to co-design potential ways to improve local responses to food insecurity. For public bodies, the work fits within local policy contexts, including the production of Good Food Nation Act local food plans, Local Child Poverty duties and the Cash-First Partnerships Programme, in those local authority areas where they exist.

The work is delivered by Nourish Scotland's 'Dignity in Practice' team, funded by the Food Insecurity Team at Scottish Government, and is ongoing across Scotland. We are hugely grateful for the trust and expertise brought by our teams of Community Advisors.

#### Co-production

Dignity Dialogues is based on the principle of co-production: a range of activities and processes where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. Co-production supports a human rights-based approach, ensuring services are fit for purpose, increases satisfaction in those using them, and can often reduce costs since they are delivered and cojoined more effectively.

*"I found the discussions very helpful for understanding some of the 'blockages' we have across the systems of support. Understanding the lived experience of people and hearing their stories is vital for developing new approaches to reducing poverty & food poverty."*

NHS decision maker

*My lived experience is relevant and important and can be powerful in influencing change.*

Community Advisor

#### What did we do?

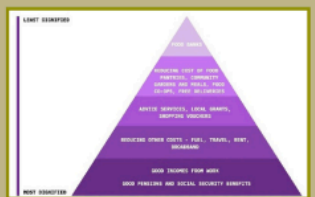
##### Working with our Community Advisors

Working with local partners we recruited 6 CAs, speaking with them first one-to-one and then online as a group every week during January. Using the hierarchy of interventions model, as shown below, we gathered views on accessing local food support services and invited people to discuss other potential dignified responses to food insecurity - from primary prevention such as better wages and social security, to how to support people in a crisis.



A key element of the work was to identify other things that could have been in place to help reduce their need to access food support in the first place, for example access to better transport links, improved sign posting between services, skills shortages, etc.

In the final sessions the group learnt more about how local public bodies work and co-designed their meeting with local decision makers.

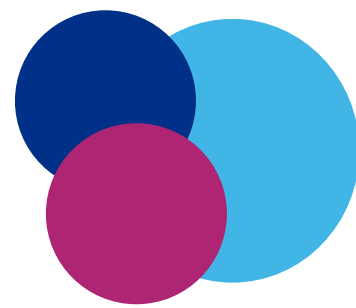


For further information



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# Success Stories



## Learning through Growing and Cooking

### Rannoch Early Learning and Childcare Centre Test of Change Project

A piece of work with a focus on strengthening the food and nutrition work within the Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC) and improving links to the wider community started in January 2024. The project so far has focussed on staff, family and child engagement through Make & Taste food activity sessions and conversations, as well as, support to develop the outdoor space into a garden where they can grow their own produce.

We have undertaken a food, nutrition and breastfeeding environment audit; a breastfeeding support group has been set up and an asset mapping of the surrounding area has been undertaken to date, with lots more planned for 2024.

Rannoch ELCC received a Food Activity Grant and they are using this funding to help them transform their garden and develop a project 'Grow A Soup Bowl'.

Children and families have been invited to get involved in gardening and growing the produce. Then once harvested, the staff and children will use the produce to make a wholesome pot of soup. The soup will then be shared and they will eat it together at snack time.



**@Rannoch\_ELCC**  
use X (Twitter)

to share the great work they do, this helps engage with parents, families and local communities.

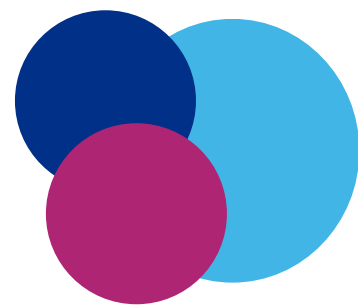


Permissions received from Rannoch ELCC to use these pictures in this Annual Report

“ Working with Ellen was a pleasure, as she guided me through the planning and implementation of a make and taste session. She was so positive and supported me to relax during the session and not focus too much on the end product.

She encouraged myself and the children to try new things. ”

Millie, ELCA (Early Learning and Childcare Assistant)



# Contact Us

## Public Health Nutrition Team



fv.publichealthnutritionteam@nhs.scot



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