



Annual Report 2020

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Food Train trustees would like to give their heartfelt and genuine thanks to all our volunteers, friends, funders, supporters and staff. This has been the most challenging and unique year. Over the last few months we have all witnessed the amazing contribution made by Food Train volunteers and staff providing valuable support to members during a very worrying and fearful time. As key workers during the pandemic, our teams consistently went that extra mile to help any older person who needed us. Our funders stepped up with emergency funding and we received many helpful practical donations too. Our pandemic effort is not over and we are really pleased to be able to continue offering help to older people right across Scotland.



Pictured Above: Dumfries & Galloway branch volunteers keeping vital shopping supplied during lockdown



Chair's Report

In 2019, I was honoured to be appointed the Chair of Food Train. At the time I anticipated that I would continue to report a well-run organisation with sustainable growth reaching an increasing number of older people in Scotland. As a bonus, we looked forward to 2020 as Food Train's 25th anniversary with much to celebrate as accomplishments since its start in 1995.

It is my privilege to report the extraordinary effort and success of Food Train made possible by the generosity and kindness of volunteers and the dedication and tireless effort of our staff. But this is not reflecting the exuberance of our 25-year celebration but our response to finding ourselves in an environment no one had foreseen at the start of the year. We were faced with the reality of a global pandemic with an even sharper focus on the support needed by the older population – whether Food Train members or not.

It has been rewarding that National and Local Government saw Food Train as a key part of the response to this challenge. In less than a month the number of older people we were asked to support grew by an overall figure of 70% and in some areas nearly doubled. We were able to do this thanks to the dedication, effort and imagination of our staff; by the sheer hard work and enthusiasm of volunteers – both long standing and new helpers; and by the support, financial and material, from Scottish Government, public sector partners and many other donors. Despite the size and rate of growth, Food Train continued to administer its operation with the organisational and financial discipline needed for a well-run charity. Many systems had to change, such as payment methods for members, but this was always done sympathetically and with the right controls in place.



Pictured left:

Trolleys and boxes filled in our Glasgow branch ready for delivery to members. Weekly shopping deliveries in the Glasgow area rose by 79% during April and May and are still 55% higher than before the pandemic.



Chair's Report

Necessary safety and protection measures due to the pandemic led to reduced personal contact with our members when delivering shopping and Meal Makers. To maintain some oversight on our member's wellbeing and mitigate feelings of isolation, we instituted a weekly check-in call service. In six months this new service has recorded over 10,000 calls with very complimentary and appreciative feedback from the members. The pandemic highlighted the issues of food access around Scotland, driving us to launch Food Train Connects, a service matching volunteers to older neighbours helping with weekly food shopping, in areas without a Food Train branch, aiming towards no older person going hungry for want of their regular food shop. This new model is a template for geographical expansion in Scotland and a platform for adding other services.

Despite the pandemic, Food Train's core aims in our business plan remained on course. Our sustainable growth aspiration saw the addition of shopping services into Clackmannanshire and East Renfrewshire regions. We become cleaner and greener by introducing 9 new electric vans to our fleet thanks to funding from Scottish Power's Green Economy Fund.



Pictured Above: Some of our green fleet powering up at our charging station.

Our Eat Well Age Well project remains on course to deliver its objective of tackling malnutrition among older Scots. Some of this is measured by its engagement to date with over 26,000 people via activities such as training, screening sessions, information events and the provision of small grants.

For our 25th anniversary, we revitalised our Food Train logo. Consultation with members and volunteers showed the name and image of the train associated with us should not be lost. Our new logo family gives our services identity and demonstrates our vision to provide holistic support to older people in Scotland.

With the immediate future dominated by the pandemic, Food Train is positioned to remain relevant and a key support for the older population of Scotland such that they are well nourished and enjoy a quality of life each one of us has a right to.

Mahdi Hasan, Chair

A Year in Review

The chart below shows the scope and scale of services delivered to members over the last year. While some stopped during lockdown and continue to be affected (At Home, Library and Friends), other services continued and experienced significant growth such as the shopping service which increased by 70% between April and October. With the last 7 months dominated by the pandemic, its easy to lose sight of normal day to day life at Food Train. Staff and volunteers have been amazingly creative to keep our fundraising on track and adapting how we communicate so we can keep in touch and keep working life as close to normal as possible —we’ve all become wizards at WhatsApp groups and Zoom meetings!



Pictured left:

Food Train’s Board of Directors/Trustees replaced their usual face to face meetings with virtual meetings online. With no option to meet in person, Trustees took the opportunity to say thanks to the staff and volunteers with a big thumbs up.

- 58,767 shopping deliveries across 9 Food Train branches in Scotland

Shopping



- 10,500 meals shared and 10,400 befriending hours across 20 regions in Scotland

Meal Makers



- 60 outings, 600 home visits and 1,200 befriending hours in 4 Food Train branches

Friends



- 600 deliveries of library resources in 1 Food Train branch

Library



- 1,200 household support tasks completed in 2 Food Train branches

At Home



- Launched 1st June 2020, 40 members in 12 regions of Scotland, 140 shopping deliveries made to date

Connects



A Year in Review

The pandemic has brought older people's needs into the public eye, at the same time bringing Food Train into the media. We've seen a large increase in newspaper stories, radio items and TV news items featuring Food Train, which in turn has helped bring in more donations. While most of our 25th anniversary celebrations were cancelled, we did manage 2 parties in January and February.

Once business were open after lockdown we got back on track getting the new logo on vans and uniforms and even managed an anniversary badge to say thanks to our fantastic volunteers. We'll just need to make our 30th anniversary celebrations in 2025 even bigger and better.



Pictured Above: Annan branch 25th party in January

Our Eat Well Age Well project faced covid disruption. Much of our work to tackle malnutrition among older people is delivered to in communities, but our team adapted and achieved a great amount in tricky circumstances (see image below).

- 8,900 people in contact with us about malnutrition among older people
- 17 training courses delivered
- 12 e-newsletters
- 24 Small Impact Big Idea Grants given out
- 10 Covid Emergency Grants given out
- 1 piece of research published with Glasgow University
- 2 methods of malnutrition screening tested
- took part in 4 UK wide Malnutrition Awareness Partnership Network events
- contributed our knowledge to 3 government consultations

**Eat Well
Age Well**



We re-purposed some unused project funds to give out 10 emergency covid grants to groups directly providing food and meals to older people in non-Food Train areas. The big success this year has been the publication of unique research in partnership with Glasgow University, evidencing the links between malnutrition and social isolation and the cycle of how food insecurity develops in older people. We are delighted to see Scottish Government using our learning in a new framework.

Financial Overview (April 2019 to March 2020)

Food Train's main sources of income are the service charges paid by members and public sector contracts. Income is enhanced by a variety of grants and funds from external trusts and foundations, such as National Lottery Community Fund, Players of the People's Postcode Lottery, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and Tudor Trust to name a few. During the year many individuals, groups and businesses generously donate funds and our staff and volunteers undertake a wide range of fundraising activities. We also benefit from local garages, colleges and others who kindly help us keep our vans and minibuses running. Thank you to everyone for their kind and generous support throughout the year.

	2019	2020
Total Income	1,704,396	2,295,656
Total Expenditure	1,815,525	2,070,310
Total Members Funds	611,548	836,894
Surplus (Deficit)	(111,129)	225,346
Designated Reserve	153,996	204,985
Restricted Reserve	191,910	399,474
General Reserve	265,642	232,435
Income Analysis		
Grant Income	745,325	1,246,900
Earned Income	823,950	923,558
Donations & Fundraising	135,121	125,198
Expenditure Analysis		
Staff Costs	1,231,489	1,283,704
Vehicle Costs incl depreciation	146,393	258,362
Premises Costs	112,579	103,337
Volunteer Costs	47,183	44,832
Running Costs	277,881	380,075

“Food Train keeps me safe.”

“The spirits lift when I see the van parking up.”

Members Feedback Snapshot

- On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, 81% of members rated Food Train services either a 4 or 5
- 96% of members say they look forward to volunteers calling or visiting, enjoy the social contact and it makes a positive impact on their health and wellbeing
- 85% of members say Food Train helps them access and eat more food than before with 23% saying they now eat more fruit and veg and 18% saying they eat more cooked meals than before
- 59% of members have no alternative to Food Train services
- 66% of members use Food Train services because of poor mobility
- 74% live alone, 82% are aged over 75+ and 45% are aged over 85
- 83% of members specifically noted that using Food Train to help them stay safe at home during the pandemic

“I love what I do and as long as I am able will continue to do so, it's a privilege to be part of the food train community.”

Volunteers Feedback Snapshot

- 98% of volunteers feel their role and work is important to their local community with 84% saying their work made a positive impact during the lockdown period of the pandemic
- Volunteers feel their work helps older people to live independently at home for longer, feel less lonely and eat well and stay healthy
- 77% of volunteers said the most useful form of support they received was from the staff team
- 89% of volunteers feel like a valued member of Food Train
- 15% of volunteers have been with Food Train longer than 5 years with 38% volunteering for less than a year, which shows the large increase in new volunteers during the pandemic



Tribute to Sean Hearn

Food Train employee based in Dundee 2013- 2020

On May 7th this year, our colleague Sean died after contracting corona virus. Aged 55, married to Janice with 3 children, he was a much loved family man. Sean was a well respected amateur football referee and junior football coach. A lifelong football fan he was passionate about youth community sport. In August Sean's family were presented with the Angus & Perthshire Scottish Football Association of Referees Member of the Year Award for 2020 for Sean. He also enjoyed a round of golf at his local club, Drumoig. Food Train received a donation of 5,000 euros in memory of Sean from professional golfer Connor Syme, based at the Drumoig Club, following a win on the virtual European Tour this summer. Sean was a wonderful man, kind hearted, lots of fun and is very much missed by his family, friends and everyone connected to Food Train.

Looking forward to 2021 and beyond, we remain focussed on providing vital support safely to older people around Scotland. We are working towards the full re-starts of our Friends befriending work and handyperson At Home service, but for now and most likely the months ahead, wearing masks, sanitizing and social distance will be at the core of delivering our services.



Once restrictions are eased we are looking forward to restarting home visits and filling the minibuses, getting members and volunteers together to eat, chat and generally have fun. Our staff are looking forward to seeing each other in person again for training and networking. Sadly this year our usual celebrations for

Volunteers Week in June and our seasonal volunteer parties in December/January, have all been cancelled due to Covid, but we'll be making extra special efforts to mark these occasions in 2021. Next year we will complete the purchase of our own property for our head office in Dumfries, a huge achievement of us and a long held ambition of our founders.





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