

Thanks to  
*Food Train Heroes!*

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SHOPPING



AT HOME



FRIENDS



LIBRARY



MEAL MAKERS



EAT WELL AGE WELL



CONNECTS



## Valiant Volunteers are our Heroes'

Thank you for all that you have done to help our older people when they have needed us like never before.

That's our message to all of our volunteers and staff across Food Train, 12 months on from the first lockdown and the unprecedented demand it created for our services.

"The dedication - and bravery - of our amazing volunteers has made a remarkable difference to the lives of older people across Scotland," says our Chief Executive Michelle Carruthers.

"I can't thank our whole team enough - and I know I speak for all of our managers and staff when I say that we have been blown away by the support we have had from our volunteers.

"Without each and every one of you, we would not have been able to respond in the way we have to help the older people who have turned to us for support.

"From those who have manned phones, dealt with requests for help, taken shopping orders and made check-in calls, to those who have been in the supermarket aisles and on the road making deliveries, you have helped ensure that older people can live healthy, independent lives at a time of tremendous worry for them.

"It's only now - approaching a year on from the first lockdown and the order for so many older people to shield - that we can truly reflect upon the magnitude of the challenges that we have faced and overcome together."

We know we have brilliant volunteers here at Food Train, but the impact they have allowed us to make in the past 12 months has been something else.

At the peak of the pandemic, the demand for our shopping services was 70% higher than the year before. Even now, across the country we are carrying out 50% more deliveries than we were this time in 2020. That's just staggering.

What's even more staggering is the fact that we did this while dealing with the fact that many of our established shopping volunteers had to shield during the first lockdown.

That meant we had to complete a massive recruitment drive for volunteers - many of whom have stayed with us, we are delighted to say - while facing demand the likes of which we had never witnessed in our 25-year history.

And, while we have operated in the safest ways possible to protect our people and our members during the pandemic, they came forward at a time when safety rules were not as clear as they are now.

Glasgow Regional Manager Chris Curtis perhaps summed it best up, saying: "These people came forward willing to risk their own health not knowing what was involved. So many people showed huge bravery. It meant we could help so many."



Chris Curtis

The reaction of our members to the dedication of volunteers has been overwhelming, admits Michelle.

"Reading the comments we have received is so humbling. Food Train has been needed more than ever. I am so proud that we have been able to deliver in every sense of the word. I will never be able to thank those who have made that possible enough," she says.



# Welcome from the CEO



Hello everyone and welcome to our Spring newsletter. I hope this issue finds you well and looking forward to some warmer days ahead.

This latest lockdown is so tough for everyone and the news of easing restrictions in the coming weeks is much needed. I'm delighted that you (our members) will have received your first dose of the vaccine, with some maybe even having their second dose by now. It's been such a relief to see our volunteers and staff vaccinated too, helping keep us all safer. With the vaccination roll-out, we're looking forward to welcoming back some of our volunteers who have been isolating; it really will be great to have our Food Train family back at full strength. Our services remain adjusted for safety for now and we'll provide updates on restarts for our At Home and Friends service once the guidelines have eased enough to allow those services to resume.

Despite the last 12 months being extremely challenging for us, we've seen the highest ever level of public donations in our 25 year history.

Regular donors to Food Train, the general public and businesses up and down the land have been so generous. Income from donations has risen 256% on this time last year. The extra funds are being well used and we've been able to upgrade 5 of our oldest delivery vans already and have another 6 newer vans on order. Upgrading our old vans is not just kinder to the environment, but great for our funds as they cost less to run and repair. We can't thank everyone enough for their amazing kindness.

With the upcoming Scottish Parliament elections in May, we've written our first ever manifesto and sent it to all political parties. This last year has exposed the gaps in support for older people and highlighted the negative impacts over the last 20 years where community meals and shopping services have all but disappeared, except for Food Train. The feedback from all your member surveys in recent years echoes that and we felt it was the right time to speak out. We're calling for improvements in funding, services and policies that give older people the best chance to eat well, live well and age well. If you'd like a copy of our manifesto, please call us on 01387 270800 and we'd be delighted to post one out to you.

*That's all for now. I hope you enjoy reading the news from round the branches and projects.*

*Stay safe and stay well.*



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## Generous Donation

Stewartry Food Train has again received a generous donation of £500 for the fourth year running from the Bank of Scotland under their Matched Giving Programme. The programme encourages volunteering amongst bank staff and gives £8 per hour of voluntary time given, to a maximum of £500.

Food Train grocery delivery volunteer Iain McQueen, who is also a Bank of Scotland employee, secured the funding for the fourth year running. This past year Iain has not been able to do so many delivery runs because of his different working hours at the bank due to Covid, so to make sure he still had enough hours for this award he has been washing and valeting the delivery vans, cleaning shopping boxes and keeping hedges trimmed around the office. Thank you Iain from everyone at Food Train.



Jif (Development Officer) and Iain McQueen (Volunteer)

## Sainsbury's Thank You

Roses are red, violets are blue ... thank you to Sainsbury's, we love you too. A lovely bunch of red roses for all our Newton Stewart customers today courtesy of our shopping partner Sainsbury's, as modelled by the gorgeous Keith. Last week Sainsbury's also gave our customers some choccies - thank you again to Store Manager, Duncan and the team.



## Potato Day

Potato Day is our yearly fundraiser held in Newton Stewart to raise awareness of Food Train. The fundraiser sells locally grown potatoes, onions, and other produce as well as a café with soup, home baking and a raffle. This year we managed to raise an amazing £502.20.



We would like to thank everyone for their help, George, and Mary from the Tattie Team for all their hard work in keeping this event going in a trimmed down format for 2021. Jamieson Brothers in Annan for their support and to everyone who attended. Thank you for all your donations, cheery waves, and chocolate during deliveries. We gained some new friends this year and hope to be able to meet you all in the flesh in January next year.



## Kind Donations

Our Annan branch were delighted to recently receive a very kind donation of £200 from the local Rotary Club, and our Dumfries branch were thrilled to receive £300 from Young's' Seafoods, thank you for your continued support.

## Welcome

We are pleased to welcome two new Support Workers, Susan Hentges and Moira Walker.

## 10th Anniversary

Food Train West Lothian celebrated 10 years in September 2020. Sadly due to Covid-19 restrictions we were not able to celebrate but we did manage to make front page in the West Lothian Courier.



## Funding

We are pleased to be part of the Co-op Community Fund. Customers who have a Co-op card can opt to support Food Train by choosing us as their charity. Please support us if you can.'



## We are Delighted to Have Received:

- A £20,000 legacy which was bequeathed to us by a customer in her will.
- A £400 donation from Technip FMC in Dunfermline.
- £20,000 from West Lothian Third Sector Community Support fund - this has allowed us to employ a Support Worker for one year.



## Christmas Made Special

This year, after a very tough year, our members received some lovely treats:

Peel Primary School pupils kindly gifted 60 food hampers to our customers, each one contained a handmade Christmas card inside with a lovely message.

Lonza provided boxes of biscuits and chocolates.

Home Instead provided a variety of presents.

Sainsbury's gave mince pies to all our customers.

Our volunteers were also treated to a voucher, mince pies and shortbread as a thank you for all their hard-work and dedication over the year.



## Big Ted Went Fundraising

We were thrilled to be chosen as McArthur Glen's Christmas Charity. We had a window display in one of the shops, which Big Ted offered to supervise for us. Sadly, Lockdown brought about the closure of shops, leaving us a little disappointed on this occasion.



## Christmas Crackers

While Christmas is now a long distant memory, for this picture alone we had to include it in the newsletter and show off our very own Food Train Christmas Crackers Jeanette and Stuart. Another reason we had to bring up Christmas is because this is a time of year when people are often very generous and we were delighted to receive these very kind donations this winter;

- £1,000 from Actify
- £2,000 from Energy Assets Utilities
- £500 from Stirling & Bridge of Allan Round Table

And the season of good will is continuing into 2021 as we also recently received a very generous donation;

- £1,000 from the Guildry of Stirling

A huge thank you to these groups and organisations for your tremendous support.

We also want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all our customers who have made kind donations to us around Christmas and elsewhere in the year.



## Shopping Lists - Top Tips

Ever since the pandemic was announced there has been a huge uptake of online shopping as many people have opted to organise their shopping from the comfort and safety of their own home. While the supermarkets have done a wonderful job at keeping the groceries coming in through these turbulent times, because online shopping is picked in the morning – sometimes there are more gaps on the shelf than there had been before the pandemic.

We therefore thought we would share some top tips to help our fabulous volunteers get your shopping list right for you.

- ✓ **Dates** – We will always seek out the longest dates possible, but if you would like a minimum number of days before the product reaches its 'use by' or 'best before' date please let us know.
- ✓ **Alternatives** – Sometimes we can't always get the exact product you would like, or sometimes it will only have very short dates. In these circumstances we will seek out an alternative. However, if you can suggest alternatives even better. If you would rather not receive an alternative please let us know and we will let the shoppers know.
- ✓ **Be specific** – The more specific you can be the better. Believe me when I tell you our shoppers love a very specific list. However, if you are easy going just let your list collector know and we make it that clear too.

## Food Prices

There has been a small jump in food prices over the last few months. At 0.7% it's nothing major to worry about but if you have noticed an extra pound or so on your shopping bill that will be the reason why.

## 100th Birthday

One of our members celebrated her 100th birthday a few weeks ago. Congratulations, we hope you had a great day Mrs Noble.



## Calendars

We still have some calendars left, if you would like one just call our office or let your volunteer know and we will arrange for one to be dropped off. They are great for noting your grocery delivery day and any other appointments you may have.

 **DIRECT Debit** Paying for your groceries could not be any easier now with our new direct debit facility. No need to worry about having cash available or looking for your cheque book. Give Caitlyn or Amanda a call on 01382810944 to get more information or ask your volunteer for more details.

## Befriending Service & At Home

We are hoping to get our befriending service up and running again as soon as restrictions are lifted. If you would like to have a one-to-one befriender or join us on excursions and trips out, or indeed both then call the office and ask for Amanda. She will take note of your wishes and start arranging for our restart.



FRIENDS



AT HOME

We also plan to get our At Home service up and running too. This is our handyman service that was just about to start when the pandemic came along. We do not know yet when we can restart this service but if you are interested and you need curtains hung up, some hoovering done, or your fridge needs a post winter defrost just let us know and we will take note of your interest.

## Chocolate Surprise

Just before Christmas we received a donation from a local business and asked that we use the donation to give our members something to brighten up their day. So, we purchased boxes of chocolates and delivered them to all our members.



## Snow Clearing

As we come into spring and the temperatures are steadily creeping up, we look back at the winter past and thank the volunteers who worked tirelessly to get the vans out to get the shopping delivered.



## Staffing Changes



There have been some staffing changes in the branch over the last few months. We've welcomed Bronwyn to the team as a support worker. Bronwyn joined us at the start of the pandemic in early April 2020 as a volunteer and is now in charge of our shopping operations over in Govan every week, overseeing the volunteers and shopping operation in general.

Becky, our previous Community Jobs Scotland placement has moved over into a support worker role and previous support worker Charlotte is now our Service Administrator and Coordinator.

## Springwatch

The weather in early 2021 has been unpredictable and we've seen a fair amount of snow on the ground but our volunteers are hardy souls and won't let a little bad weather get in their way. Everyone however is looking forward to warmer weather and lighter nights. Its lovely to see the daffodils, snowdrops and crocuses emerging around us and they're giving us all a little hope for better times. We did however take this photo of the Glasgow office and one of the vans on a beautiful wintery morning and decided it was too good not to share.



## Covid - 1 Year On

Its hard to believe its been a year since the Covid Pandemic hit us here in Scotland. What a year it has been. The kindness and determination of people to help Food Train out has been overwhelming at times.

From April 2020 - February 2021 the branch carried out a staggering 9,816 deliveries to you. We couldn't have done this without our volunteers.

At the start of the pandemic we raised a call for volunteers to come forward and help us ensure we could support as many people in the city as possible. We were blown away by the response. A whopping 940 volunteer enquiries have been received in the branch to date. The staff team are truly grateful for every single person who has come forward in such challenging times. Thank you.



## Delivery Vans

As we're sure you can imagine, our delivery vans put in some amount of miles every week to make sure all of you receive your weekly groceries. We decided it was time to retire these 3 legends after completing an incredible 281,618 miles between them. They have served us well but we are delighted to have 3 brand spanking new vehicles headed our way in March to replace them.



## We are Sailing (and Flying)

We have been fortunate to have had our amazing Support Workers, Connor and Alice, with us over the past months. You will have spoken to them on the phone or met them doing your deliveries. We are sad to say they will be leaving us shortly, but delighted to report both are heading for new careers - and both in the armed forces. Connor is heading for a life on the ocean waves as he joins the Navy, while Alice will be flying high when she swaps her Food Train fleece for an RAF uniform. I'm sure you will join us in wishing them "Orra Best." in their future careers.



## Laurie Ross - Again

We benefited in 2020 from being one of the local charities supported by the Paisley Branch of Laurie Ross Insurance. We are delighted to say that their customers have chosen to continue to support us in 2021. A huge thanks to Maureen and the all the staff in Causeyside Street.

## Gillian Chases the Big Prize

You may have spotted our volunteer, Gillian on the ITV quiz show - "The Chase" in recent weeks. Gillian gave Food Train a mention as she chatted to host Bradley Walsh. (Spoiler Alert!) - Gillian survived her Head-to-Head encounter and got home with cash in the bank. Unfortunately, in the Final Chase she was up against chaser "Sinnerman" in scintillating form and was caught with time to spare.



## Co-op Local Community Fund

If you are a Co-op member in East Renfrewshire, please be sure to sign into your account and choose Food Train as your nominated local cause. We are one of their supported charities in 2021 as we attempt to raise funds to replace our remaining ageing transit van.



## 2020...

Here we are one year on from the start of an unprecedented year of living with the Covid-19 virus and the lockdowns and closures that affected us all. At the Borders branch, we have more than doubled the number of customers we are shopping for each week since the beginning of the pandemic. We have only been able to respond in such a way due to the efforts of our dedicated volunteer team. Over the last year our volunteers have given around 10,000 hours of their time for free - what an incredible kindness.



## Police Scam Packs

We are pleased to be working together with our local Police to distribute Scam packs to all our members. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 situation has given rise to more telephone scams than ever, and we are very keen to help keep everyone safe in their own home. A scam is just a fraud and if it feels wrong, it is wrong. Keep calm and hang up.

## Food Train Scottish Borders on the News

We were delighted to have ITV Border News here to film us during the hectic festive period. The cameras followed one of our vans out on delivery to the lovely Margaret, one of our very first customers. It was super to see our service being recognised and to see Rob, our volunteer, and Nikki, our Regional Manager speaking about the service.

<https://www.itv.com/.../food-train-reports-busiest...>



## Weather

Who can ignore the weather? This February, our shopping delivery service was really tested. Our volunteers dug out their cars to get to the shop and the van crews were slipping and sliding through the snow and ice to get to our more remote customers. Amazingly, we made all our deliveries even if we had to delay a day. A massive thanks to all our volunteers who go the extra mile to support our older members.



## Helping to Boost Funds

We are so grateful to several local organisations and trusts for donating to our branch to help us continue to support our local older people at home. Our thanks go to Berwickshire Housing Association; Bruce Stevenson Insurance; Police Scotland; Scottish Borders Housing Association; Roxburghshire Landward Benevolent Trust, the Brunton Trust and the Portmore Trust, as well as our many individual donors. You are helping keep us on track.



Meal Makers supports people over the age of 55 by pairing them with a volunteer Cook in their area. If you want to sign up as a Cook or a Diner please contact us.



## Making Time to Chat

Here's Hugh and his Cook Charlotte ensuring that lockdown doesn't get in the way of them catching up. Charlotte delivers Hugh's meal and they ensure to have a regular blether and a good old chuckle to lift the spirits.

## General

Meal Makers is for anyone over the age of 55 who would love a home cooked meal and some company. As a Diner you will be matched with a volunteer Cook in your local area who will bring round a regular nutritious cooked meal for you. The aim of Meal Makers is to bring people together through food and create lasting friendships. So whether you're a mince and tatties kind of person or prefer a vegetarian diet, Meal Makers caters for all tastes and makes sharing food sociable, fun and rewarding.

## What We've Been Doing in 2020

**1031**

**Volunteers**

signed up to make home cooked meals for older people in their community.



**13075**

**Cooked Meals**

made and shared with people straight to their doorstep.



**13033**

**Befriending Hours**

either face-to-face or remotely making sure people aren't lonely.



**1900**

**Check in Calls**

made to ensure our Diners were heard and supported during lockdown.



For older people needing some shopping help and friendship, we can arrange a connection with a local volunteer.

## Shopping Friends Service

Food Train Connects is now operating in 16 local authority areas across Scotland. Our Shopping Friends service has volunteer shoppers matched up with older people who are needing support to get their grocery shopping therefore enabling them to continue to live well and eat well in their own home for as long as they wish.

## Phone Friends

In addition to our Shopping Friends service our Phone Friends volunteers offer a regular phone chat for any existing Food Train member. This is proving to be a very valuable service and many of our Phone Friends members are commenting on what a pleasure it is to receive a regular call and develop a friendship with their Phone Friend volunteer.

## Connects Team

Our Connects team is growing and we now have five members of staff, Morna who is our Service Manager, Yvonne is our Shopping Friends Co-ordinator, Debs is our Phone Friends Co-ordinator, Carol is our Development Officer in North Scotland and Jennifer is our Development Officer in South Scotland. They can be contacted on [connects@foodtrainconnects.org.uk](mailto:connects@foodtrainconnects.org.uk) or 0800 304 7924 Give them a call if you want to find out more, sign up for the services or volunteer your time.



Morna Yvonne Debs Carol Jennifer

# Puzzle Word Search



FIND ALL THE SCOTTISH TOWNS

U	U	O	C	W	C	I	M	D	U	M	B	A	R	T	O	N	G	M	R	P	Z	Y
Y	E	D	H	M	Q	M	N	V	Z	X	G	Q	U	A	W	C	A	B	F	G	K	U
V	T	Y	J	W	M	Y	E	L	S	I	A	P	V	Z	L	G	K	E	R	Y	K	M
L	A	C	K	R	D	O	N	E	E	D	R	E	B	A	I	U	B	X	O	Z	X	G
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R	B	P	R	I	N	K	F	U	J	L	R	C	U	E	Y	X	Y	G	L	B	H	A
A	W	N	T	Y	B	X	Y	U	C	R	D	M	N	Y	Q	M	A	S	T	J	L	N

ABERDEEN, BATHGATE, BEARSDEN, BELLSHILL, BROXBURN, DUMBARTON, DUMFRIES, DUNDEE, DUNFERMLINE, EDINBURGH, ELGIN, GLASGOW, HAMILTON, KILMARNOCK, LIVINGSTON, MOTHERWELL, PAISLEY, PERTH, RENFREW, STIRLING

# Eat Well Age Well



W: [eatwellagewell.org.uk](http://eatwellagewell.org.uk)  
 T: 0131 447 8151  
 E: [hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk](mailto:hello@eatwellagewell.org.uk)  
 Tackling Malnutrition in Older people Living at Home in Scotland

## Your stories

As we grow older it can become more difficult to eat well at home and we want to help raise awareness of the issues that older people can face. Older people's voices and views are extremely powerful, and your lived experience can help us to create change for older people to eat well, age well and live well. We are currently on the lookout for your stories around your experiences with:



- Loss of appetite
- Difficulties eating and/or drinking
- Not eating as much as usual
- Unintentional weight loss

Your stories will be part of our case studies to help us better understand issues around food and eating well at home. To get involved, all we ask is that you're available to have a couple of friendly chats with our project dietitian scheduled at a time to suit you.

If you or someone you know is interested in taking part, or you would like more information, then please get in touch with Jen Grant with your name and contact number at **07718 489 023** or email: [jen@eatwellagewell.org.uk](mailto:jen@eatwellagewell.org.uk)