



Shoppers Express

Spring 2018

Welcome to all our members, volunteers and friends across Scotland. We hope you enjoy this Spring Edition of *Shoppers Express* and all the latest news from Food Train.

Spotlight on Loneliness

The New Year brought the announcement of a new National Strategy to tackle Social Isolation and Loneliness. Food Train staff and volunteers contributed to the work of the Equal Opportunities Committee over 2 years which helped get this new strategy approved, so we are delighted the Scottish Government has created a focus through a new strategy. At Food Train, we try and bring extra social contact to our members through every service we provide; whether that's a blether with the volunteers delivering your shopping, or your cook volunteer bringing a meal or on a trip with lots of other people via our befriending service. We are one of many charities and groups across Scotland trying to combat loneliness. In a previous newsletter, we highlighted The Silver Line, a telephone befriending service run by Age Scotland, which you can call free anytime day or night **0800 4 70 80 90**. This time we want to tell you about Contact the Elderly...

TEA, CAKE AND COMPANY ON A SUNDAY

Charity Contact the Elderly is keen to attract more guests and volunteers to its fun, friendly and informal free afternoon tea parties held in villages, towns and cities throughout the country.

The charity has 125 groups in Scotland, offering a lifeline of friendship to 900 older people who live alone with the support of 1200 volunteers.

An older person is collected by a volunteer driver who accompanies them to an afternoon tea party in a volunteer host's home one Sunday a month. The driver is the same person each month and it is the same group of between six and 10 people who meet meaning strong friendships very quickly form.

Janice Kerr, Development Officer at Contact the Elderly, said:

"Sunday is very often the loneliest and quietest day of the week. Our tea parties offer a very welcome break from routine and a chance to enjoy a fantastic afternoon tea with a group of lovely people from within the same local community.

"After each and every tea party, we hear from our guests and volunteers about the superb time they have had and how much they value their monthly get-togethers.

"We would really like to be able to welcome even more older people and volunteers to our groups in Scotland in 2018 so have a think – does an afternoon of baking and blethering sound good to you? If so, get in touch with us to find out more."

To find out more about becoming a guest or volunteer for Contact the Elderly contact Janice Kerr on **01236 898613** or janice.kerr@contact-the-elderly.org.uk.

Visit www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk for more information on the charity.



**CONTACT
THE ELDERLY**



Hello everyone,

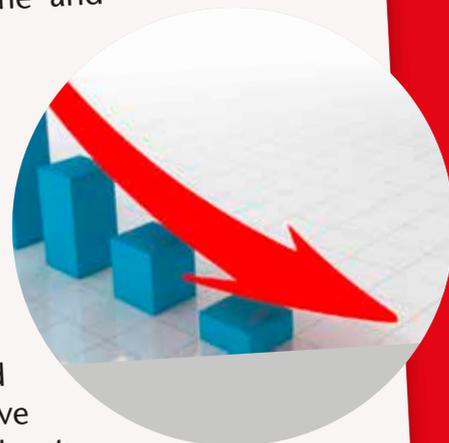
Welcome to our Spring Newsletter, full of news and information from around the country.

Running a Charity is a lot like being on a roller-coaster; full of ups and downs.

The end of 2017 was full of great funding news; £200,000 over 2 years from the Postcode Lottery Support Trust to help us with national development, improving technology and growing Meal Makers. We also have new funding from Big Lottery to help us work wider across Scotland tackling the growing problem of malnutrition among older people. During December, we had a fantastic number of donations, from grocery packs, shortbread and gifts to our members as well as others fundraising for us and sending in lots of very kind donations. During December and January, we celebrated our long serving volunteers with a Long Service Certificate and Badge presentation at our festive season gatherings. It may only be a small token, but our thanks to our amazing volunteers are fulsome and heartfelt.



In contrast, the start of 2018 has been very challenging. News of funding being cut for our North Ayrshire Branch and similar concerns in Glasgow, has brought sadness and distress affecting hundreds of our members and volunteers. We are pulling out all the stops to rescue both branches using the full weight of the media, great public support and help from local groups and public representatives. You may have



seen articles in the press or on TV about our fight to save our services. We hope to bring you more positive news from these areas in the next newsletter and in the meantime reassure members in all other areas they can continue to rely on Food Train and our funding remains in place.

Winter weather is something we take in our stride, after all, it comes around every year without fail. Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers for their flexibility and dedication working in snow, wind, ice, rain and floods. Thank also to our members for their patience and understanding when we had to juggle things around the weather.

That's all for now, stay safe and stay well.

Michelle



Dumfries & Galloway



Dumfries Choir

Our Dumfries Administrator, Stephanie Wield is pictured with the Chairman of the Dumfries Choral Society, Alistair Brown receiving a donation of £500 from a collection at the Christmas

Concert held in St John's Church, Dumfries in December. Steph had a fabulous time and said the concert was fantastic – thanks to everyone for this fabulous donation.

Long service awards

Long service awards were presented across the region at our volunteer Christmas lunches. Here are a few of our Dumfries volunteers receiving their 5 year awards. Leigh, Richard, Brenda and Colin are pictured with our very festive looking CEO Michelle Carruthers MBE who presented the volunteers with their certificates and badges. Congratulations to everyone who received awards this year.



Rotary Christmas 2017

72 bags of food were donated by the Dumfries Rotary in partnership with M&S to Food Train to distribute to local older people. Local Rotarians and M&S staff are pictured with Food Train volunteer Sally Gibb loading the van ready for delivery. Huge thanks to the Rotary and M&S for their continued support.



Christmas Party 2017

Many of our befriending customers across the region enjoyed Christmas lunches and parties throughout December, here are our Dumfries customers enjoying their meal at the Crichton Golf Club.

New Annan Van

A huge thank you to the ANCBC for recent funding allowing us to buy this lovely delivery van for our Annandale and Eskdale branch – this lets us continue to grow the branch and help many older people in this area.



Big thanks to John Maurice Aitken Trust who very kindly donated £2,000 recently.



If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:
Tel: **01387 270800**
Email to: **everything@thefoodtrain.co.uk**
For Food Train Friends call: **01387 279111**



West Lothian

Welcome

In September Connor McClung started at Food Train as part of Community Jobs Scotland.

Connor will be with us for a year and has already been out on the services meeting our customers. Our new administrator Jennie Walker started in November, and has also been out meeting some of the customers.



Volunteer Celebration Evening

On Friday 29th September we held our Volunteer Celebration Evening. We arranged different games based on the services we deliver, which were hilarious. We also had a band who were great.

"The Food Train games were priceless and all set to the right music as well. The buffet was marvellous and again a lot of work for many no doubt. Fred's band was brilliant too and enjoyed a standing ovation with yourselves." A volunteer



Fundraising

Over the last few months we have held our Christmas Craft Fayre, attended Coffee

mornings, Yoga Classes and local

Coop Stores to help raise funds for our services. A Big thank you to everyone who has helped us:

- Coop Community Fund - £2,890.32
- Christmas Craft Fayre - £807.89
- St Peters Parish Church - £333.55
- Scotmid - £250
- Whole Body Balance (Yoga) - £453



5 year Service Award

Our volunteers are amazing and give up their time to help us support older people throughout West Lothian and we were very happy in December to give David Kelly his 5 year award. David volunteers with the Library and Extra Service in West Lothian. Thank you David, and here's to the next 5 years!



Councillors Experience Food Train

We have been happy for two local councillors to help us with our deliveries. Cllr Harry Cartmill delivered to customers in his local area, he had a great time and met some of his old neighbours and work colleagues. Cllr Andrew McGuire helped deliver groceries to customers in Bathgate and Armadale. Both councillors were very impressed with the services Food Train provide in West Lothian and were full of praise and admiration for our volunteers and the great work they do.

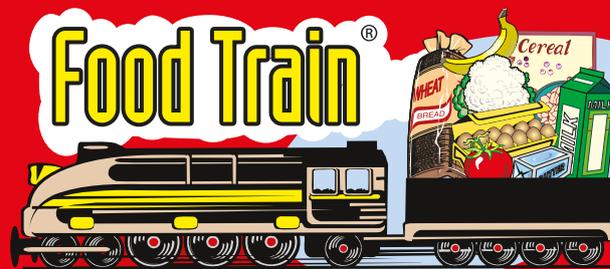
If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **01506 413013**

Email: **westlothian@thefoodtrain.co.uk**



Find us on facebook.



Stirling

Food Train Update

Our 52 local volunteers have been turning up in all weathers to make sure essential food deliveries are made to our Food Train members. We currently support 203 older people in the Stirling area to eat well and easily access vital food supplies to keep them well-nourished and healthy. A simple 'thank you' is more than enough to repay them for the early morning starts, long days and heavy loads they deal with on any typical Food Train delivery day! We appreciate the lovely feedback that you give us either directly to the volunteers or when you call us in the office. We make sure it is always passed on!

Food Train Vans Maliciously Damaged

We faced some disappointing news and unexpected costs recently when 2 of our delivery vans were broken into and maliciously damaged whilst parked up over a weekend. Due to significant amounts of broken glass and blood splatters from the person responsible, they were both out of service for 10 days, meaning we had to pay additional costs for hired vehicles and insurance excesses to get the repairs done. The generous people of Stirling showed their compassion by making donations to help us cover these costs and the students of Stirling High School did a sponsored walk and donated their proceeds. Thank you to everyone who donated!

VIP VOLUNTEERS

MSP for Stirling Bruce Crawford spent a day delivering shopping to Food Train members in the Bannockburn and St Ninians areas in September. He

thoroughly enjoyed his volunteering experience but the highlight of his day was getting an opportunity to meet and talk with older people in his constituency area and finding out how the shopping service helps them to eat well and feel more independent at home. Councillor Alastair Tollemache also took part in delivering to customers in Bridge of Allan and delighted one customer by making arrangements to get her beloved garden tidied up. Thank you to both our VIP volunteers. Shortly MSP Keith Brown and Councillor Ellen Forson is joining us for deliveries to Dunblane and Bridge of Allan. Watch this space!

Local business partners lend their support

A huge THANK YOU to local businesses and groups who have shown their support of Food Train by making a donation to keep the train 'on track' to help older people eat well and live independently at home in our local communities. Thanks to Strathearn Pest Control, Howdens Joinery, Volunteer Scotland, St Ninians Parish Church, Logie Kirk Church and the Stirling & Bridge of Allan Round Table. You are all AMAZING!

Over 7,500 deliveries made since April last year by our local Food Train volunteers in Stirling and the surrounding areas and in excess of £259,000 spent in local supermarkets! If you know someone who is over 65 and struggling with their shopping call us on the number below. We are here to help you.



If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **01786 450536**

Email: **stirling@thefoodtrain.co.uk**



Dundee

We would like to welcome two new members of staff who joined us since the last newsletter. They are Kiaya Thomson who has joined us as an Operational assistant and Caitlyn Cooper-McCulloch as a Befriending Intern.

Hi! My name is Caitlyn (left) and I am Food Train's *Time to Shine* Intern funded through The Rank Foundation. I will be with Food Train for the next year working to bring generations together. I worked full time as a community support worker only leaving my post there to pursue my internship.



Hi! My name is Kiaya (right), I joined Food Train in December having previously worked as a Nursery Nurse. I am an Operational Assistant and will be working with all the services we offer, supporting grocery deliveries, helping with our Befriending service and assisting with Meal Makers. I will be here for the next year and am very excited to meet you all.



Rhea had a stall at Tesco during Befrienders Week to raise awareness of Food Train Friends, hoping to enrol more Befrienders. (Pictured left Rhea with Stuart, one of our loyal volunteers).

We held a car boot sale in August and made £103, thank you to everyone who donated items for the sale.



Food Train Dundee celebrated its 6th birthday having launched in Dundee on the 23rd January 2012. That week we had 15 members of the service and delivered to 7 customers. We now have over 210 members and deliver an average of 130 shopping orders across the city. In the early days we had 1 delivery van and offered a shopping service. Now we have 5 delivery vans, 1 minibus and offer 3 services; Grocery Shopping Delivery service, Befriending service and our meal sharing service Meal Makers. It's all about the numbers!



Last year was our 6th appearance at Dundee Flower and Food Festival. We had our usual information station with details of all the services we offer and how to become a volunteer or register for a service. We

also try to raise some much needed funds and had a tombola and raised over £834 which was a great boost for us. Pictured above is Chris Law MP for Dundee West visiting our stand.

If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **01382 459202**

Email to: **dundee@thefoodtrain.co.uk**



Glasgow



Christmas Lunch

In the run up to Christmas, courtesy of a generous donation from the ASDA Foundation, some of our members were treated to a Christmas lunch at Orion Way on the outskirts of the City. Traditional Christmas dinner, salmon, burgers and other tasty morsels were on the menu alongside plenty of Christmas crackers to pull with their share of jokes and trivia. It was a lovely afternoon and set everyone up for the festive period.

Friends

Food Train Friends is continuing to grow its members in the North East of Glasgow and towards the end of 2017 had some great outings to The Riverside Museum, The People's Palace and Summerlee Heritage Museum. Friends aims to provide 1-to-1 befriending alongside monthly outings as planned by members. We're just waiting for slightly warmer, sunnier weather before we head 'Doon the Water' for ice cream!



Glasgow Facts & Figures

It was a busy second half of 2017 for the branch with 4096 deliveries made by our volunteers from June to December who gave us an incredible 8324 hours of their time!

EXTRA

In September 2017 Glasgow launched Food Train EXTRA, our household help service offering customers assistance with household tasks that they struggle to do by themselves. The service is run by our brilliant volunteers on a Friday who can assist with a variety of tasks including defrosting freezers, hoovering, cleaning windows, hanging curtains and changing bedding amongst other things. Contact the office on 0141 423 1722 for more information.



Minibus

In the later half of 2017 the branch took delivery of a new minibus after receiving a fantastic grant from the ASDA Foundation. The bus will be used to transport Friends members to outings etc. The livery was added just before Christmas and the bus will have its official launch in the coming weeks.

Bank of Scotland

Our friends at our local Bank of Scotland on Victoria Road in Glasgow chose Food Train as one of the recipients of their Christmas Shoe Box appeal. Staff and customers donated gifts of items including gloves, sweets, biscuits, toiletries gift sets etc and wrapped them up for distribution amongst our customers who were delighted to receive them.

100 Club

The branch are setting up a '100 Club' to help raise some funds. It costs £2 per month, payable in advance for the year on signing up, with a prize draw held on the 29th of each month. For more information or to sign up, give Patricia a call at the office.

If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **0141 423 1722**

Email to: **glasgow@thefoodtrain.co.uk**



Renfrewshire

Food Train Renfrewshire has been operational for just over four years. We recently undertook our 15,000th shopping delivery to our customers. The operation is entirely dependent on the 40 plus amazing volunteers who donate 13,520 hours per year of their own time to the Renfrewshire Branch.



Benefiting the Community

We were delighted to receive a cheque for £632 from Drewe McIlroy (centre), Regional Business Development Manager with Ross Electrical. The award is through the Renfrewshire Community Benefits scheme. The scheme is administered by Iain Cunningham (left) of Engage Renfrewshire. The funding will go towards new delivery boxes.



Welcome Cara

Our Operational Assistant, Chris, finished his year-long position recently. We were sad to see Chris leave, but delighted to be funded through Community Jobs Scotland to employ a new Operational Assistant for this year. Cara has been with us for a couple of months and is proving to be a big hit with our customers and volunteers. Even better, after a short break, Chris has been back to volunteer with us in the shop and office!

VIP Volunteers

We have been offering local politicians the chance to volunteer with us for the day to see for themselves the amazing work Food Train does in Renfrewshire. Local MP Gavin Newlands and MSP Derek Mackay accepted the invite and came along to the supermarket and out in the vans to meet the volunteers and customers. Both were impressed by the commitment of our volunteers and the service provided to our customers and gave some excellent publicity to the branch in their media channels.



Christmas

As ever the run up to the festive season was busy. Our customers were alerted early to the Christmas arrangements and took the opportunity to stock up on their non-perishable items. This meant our volunteers could focus on getting essential supplies out to those needing orders during the period. We were also able to offer our customers some of the festive shortbread our colleagues at Meal Makers had acquired.

Volunteers Lunch

Thank you to all our customers who so generously gave donations towards our volunteers' Christmas treat. Thirty of our volunteers came along to the festive lunch held in Hamish's Hoose in Paisley. A great time was had by all!

If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **0141 887 2557**

Email: **renfrewshire@thefoodtrain.co.uk**



Scottish Borders



A big welcome to our newest Food Train branch in Galashiels, Scottish Borders. Johan Aitken our Regional Manager and Fiona Haworth our Administrator have been working hard to set things up and are already delivering shopping to over 30 customers with many more coming aboard every week. Initially running as a pilot in the Galashiels, Selkirk and Hawick areas, the new shopping service is being part funded by Scottish Borders Council Social Work and supported by the Community Capacity Building Team as part of the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership. After officially opening the office in October, local Councillor Tom Weatherston said: "Thanks to the hardworking volunteers at Food Train, I am sure this vital service will be as much of a success here in the Borders as it is across the rest of Scotland. It supports our work to change the way we provide services to help more older people stay in their own homes and communities for as long as they wish and are able to."



Our very first customer, Mrs Dorothy Gray from Galashiels (pictured), is delighted with the service and has already recommended us to all her friends. Thank you to our customers, volunteers and local partners for helping make our first three months of service an absolute pleasure.

It's a Family Affair! With all our volunteers and our administrator on holiday over the festive period, our Christmas week delivery could have been tricky. Thankfully the Aitken Clan came in to make sure that our customers got their Christmas deliveries. Three generations all working together to get the job done. Thank you. You are all amazing.



Every little Helps! Thank you to Tesco, Galashiels for hosting a volunteer recruitment day in their Galashiels store and for donating 10 fantastic cool bags to Food Train to help with deliveries. The day was really successful and generated lots of interest in Food Train. Hopefully we will see many new volunteers and customers joining us as a result.

Thank you to our fantastic volunteers for helping us to get off the ground in the Borders. Three months in, we already have a wonderful team of dedicated shoppers and helpers and our only volunteer driver Karl is a wonder, driving three days a week. Without you this wouldn't be possible, so thank you all for your dedication and commitment. You are all amazing.

MEAL
MAKERS



Meal Makers is now running across the Scottish Borders and we have a number of volunteer cooks ready and waiting, we just need diners! If you would like to receive a home cooked meal once a week and some company from a local neighbour, or you would just like know more about Meal Makers, please get in touch on 01896 751 750.



North Ayrshire



Find us on facebook.



Christmas at Food Train

I know it already feels like a lifetime ago but Christmas really is a lovely time of the year, especially at Food Train. The spirits are always sky high in the run up to Christmas, and where we can we like to throw in the odd surprise to add that touch of magic to festive season. We were so happy to provide our own little Christmas gift of some delicious homemade shortbread courtesy of a grant we received from the Corra Foundation this Christmas, and our retail partners Sainsbury's got involved the following week by providing all of our customers with a box of their taste the difference mince pies!

VIP volunteers

Food Train North Ayrshire has always enjoyed a lot of local support from our public representatives, and we love nothing more than to invite them along for the Food Train VIP volunteer experience. Since the last newsletter was published we have had 9 local councillors, Kenneth Gibson MSP of Cunninghame North, and Patricia Gibson MP of North Ayrshire and Arran, join us for shifts in the supermarket, and out in the vans.

If you would like to know more about using Food Train services or volunteering with Food Train, please contact us:

Tel: **01294 271 025**

Email to:

northayrshire@thefoodtrain.co.uk

Food Train North Ayrshire facing funding withdrawal

We were recently deeply saddened to learn that the North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (NAHSCP) would not continue to fund Food Train North Ayrshire beyond 31st March 2018. As our core funder this means that unless we can source alternative funding before the end of March then the branch will unfortunately face closure.

We were shocked by the news. We were also very disappointed. Disappointed that we had not been approached ahead of the decision being made, and disappointed that the views of older people (and especially our customers) had not been sought ahead of making the decision. We therefore decided that the best course of action was to launch a campaign to 'Save Our Service'. The campaign has been a huge success as people far and wide have spoken out in defence of the service and for our customers who rely on Food Train. We raised online petition that has been signed by over 4,400 people in support of having funding restored to Food Train North Ayrshire. Our campaign has enjoyed excellent local and national news coverage including features covering the campaign in The Sunday Post, Daily Record, The National, Irvine Times, Ardrossan & Salcoats Herald, West FM and STV2. We have also enjoyed great support from a number of local representatives who have publically expressed their disappointment in the decision of the NAHSCP to end their funding of Food Train, including Kenneth Gibson MSP who raised his concerns about the decision in First Minister's questions.

We are enormously grateful to everyone who has helped us with our campaign, especially customers and family members who have played a vital part in this campaign by making their voices heard, and by expressing the importance Food Train plays in their lives.

We will continue to work hard behind the scenes to do everything we can to prevent the service from closing, and we hope to be returning to you in the next edition with some great news. In the meantime, we will keep all customers up to date with the developments as they occur.



Meal Makers

Meal Makers on the TV

Meal Makers were delighted to appear on STV2s 'Live at Five' in December. The Live at Five team were interested to find out about the project so they sent presenter David along to attend a meal share with our brilliant Renfrewshire cook and diner pairing Anne and Annie. David was over the moon to be asked along to the meal share, and chatted away to the Meal Makers about what the project means to them, and how they have become good friends through meal sharing.



It's Cool to be Kind

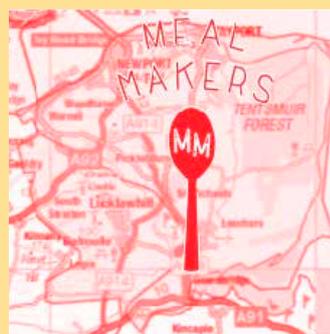
In other great publicity for Meal Makers, we were thrilled to feature in the Edinburgh Evening News 'It's Cool to be Kind' campaign, whereby they aim to make Edinburgh and the Lothians the kindest place in the world! As a thriving project in Edinburgh we were more than happy to get involved and they featured an article in which they met with cool Edinburgh pairing Corinna and Isabella. It was an excellent piece which explored why they originally became involved with the project, and what they get from regular meal sharing.

New Meal Makers Area

It is with great delight that we can announce that Meal Makers is active in the area of Tay Bridgehead ward of Fife. We look forward to seeing the project grow through this area with plenty of food and friendship for all involved.

Good Cause of 2018

It is with great pride that we can announce that Meal Makers (Food Train) has been chosen as The Scottish Food Awards & Academy's good cause of the year. The Scottish Food Awards & Academy honour, by year-round ratings and annual awards, the best of food produced and served in Scotland. It is a real honour to be selected as their good cause of the year and we look forward to working with them throughout 2018.



If you would like to know more about using Meal Makers services by signing up as a cook or becoming a diner please contact us on:

Tel: **0800 783 7770**

Email: **hello@mealmakers.org.uk**





The clocks go forward on Sunday 24th March, the official start of British Summer Time. Spring is in the air! Be careful reaching for clocks which require some effort to change. Local volunteers across Scotland are always happy to help you to do this – just ask! Did you know, or do you remember, that during World War II (1940 – 1945) Britain operated on a British ‘Double Summer Time’ system, with clocks jumping two hours ahead of GMT during the summer months.

Have you ever looked into your fridge for inspiration and all you can see is a bit of butter, a block of cheese and half a dozen eggs? Well, we thought we would dedicate this section to the good old humble egg, and a reminder of the very versatile ways you can make something ‘egg-citing’ with our little fawny-coloured friends:

-  **Boiled eggs** - mashed up in a cup and seasoned to taste, or with the top sliced off and dipping soldiers
-  **Scrambled, poached or fried** – all great with toast or a roll, or served with all their Big Breakfast friends
-  **Omelettes** – the filling choices are endless and a fantastic way to use up your leftovers
-  **French toast** – have you tried serving with some fruit? Or drizzled with maple syrup?
-  **Fairy cakes** – what better way to use up your eggs than to mix with flour, sugar and butter!

Easy Cheesy Frittata

- 2 spring onions, ends trimmed off
- 4 tablespoons of frozen peas, defrosted
- 2 slices of ham
- 1 courgette, halved with the ends cut off
- 100g feta cheese
- 4 eggs

Snip up the spring onions, add the peas to the bowl, grate the courgette, cut the ham into pieces, crumble the feta, add everything plus the peas to the bowl with the whisked eggs and pour into a dish, bake for 30 minutes at 180/Gas 4 or until the egg is set. Serve with salad and crusty bread.

Food Train staff take the biscuit...

...but put it back into the tin!

Food Train is delighted to have passed the assessment for the Healthy Working Lives Silver Award for a 5th year. Demonstrating our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our workforce, we have been encouraging exercise with our Techathlon challenge using pedometers and apps to measure walking distance during the working week. We also endorse campaigns such as “National No Smoking Day” and “Suicide Prevention Week.” As a Healthy Working Lives (Silver Award)



HEALTHY WORKING LIVES

employer Food Train is committed to support and encourage employees to achieve and maintain good health and wellbeing in their personal and working lives. One of our more challenging promotion is ‘No Biscuit Week’ where we encourage staff and volunteers to hide the biscuit tins and opt for fruit instead. The big question asked all over Scotland? ‘Does a jaffa cake count as a biscuit...?’. You decide!



12th – 18th March is Nutrition & Hydration Week, a good chance to think about whether you are getting enough to eat and drink every day. If you

are worried about losing weight, or worried about what you eat and drink, or if you feel your appetite has reduced there’s lots of great information we can access for you, so please give your local branch a call if you’d like us to help, or if you are online you can visit www.nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk

If you’re on Social Media, ‘like’ or follow us – or tell your families to check us out – it really does help spread the word across Scotland.

