



ANNUAL REPORT

2021

**Food Train**
supporting older people



SHOPPING



AT HOME



FRIENDS



LIBRARY
1



MEAL MAKERS



EAT WELL AGE WELL



CONNECTS

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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. The last year has been challenging and rewarding in equal measures. The remarkable efforts of our volunteers and staff have supported more older people than at any time in Food Train's history, reaching record levels of shopping deliveries, meals shared and contacts with members. While some of our services remained paused due to Covid restrictions, other services were scaled up rapidly and responded to every older person who needed us.





Chair's Report

In 2020, I first reported the impact of the pandemic. This report represents the full year in which our operations were dominated by the pandemic and a clear focus on keeping our members, volunteers and staff safe as we delivered our services. I am pleased to report that throughout this demanding period, we delivered the shopping service, without exception, to all members who needed us. This is a tribute to, and recognition of, the generosity and kindness of every volunteer and the great work and dedication of our staff admirably led by our Chief Executive. At its peak the number of our shopping members was 83% above pre-pandemic levels and, even as the vaccination programme helped stabilise things, the demand remains high and currently averages at 47 % higher.

We acknowledge support, both financial and material, from the Scottish Government, public sector partners and many other donors. The increase in members, additional funding and being restricted to virtual meetings were challenges to ensuring appropriate standards of financial and operational governance whilst allowing a nimble response in an ever-changing world. The excellent work by Food Train staff and an efficient and enabling relationship with the Board of Trustees has safeguarded, without compromise, the standards of governance expected of a well-run charity.

I can report a successful growth in members after launching Food Train Connects last year. This service matches volunteers to older neighbours to help with weekly food shopping in areas without a Food Train branch, in order that no older person going hungry for want of their regular food shop. As intended, this new model has become the template for geographical expansion in Scotland, especially in non-urban and less densely populated areas and a platform for adding other Food Train services.

As the vaccination mitigates the threat of the pandemic, we have gradually, but with care, resumed services such as At Home, Library and Friends. In addition, due to the positive response and visible impact, we continued the check in call service under the umbrella of Phone Friends. All this, with the growth of Food Train Connects, position us well towards delivering our objective of providing nutritional, emotional and practical support to older people in Scotland.

Our Eat Well Age Well project has extended beyond the 3.5 year National Lottery funding, securing funds from Scottish Government to continue until November 2022. The project success is measured by its engagement to date with almost 33,000 people via activities such as training, screening sessions, information events and provision of small grants. The project team are now working with Government on a new malnutrition framework.

While these have been the visible parts of service delivery, much is happening behind the scenes to improve our operating and governance systems. This includes improving our Information Technology system so that it is integrated, up to date and reliable. Last year's introduction of electric vehicles was the first step towards a greener operation, and we continue to develop vehicle strategies that remain in step national environmental targets. We undertook organisation-wide training for diversity and inclusion and aim to move forward with having local champions to actively promote that agenda. Meanwhile, our safeguarding and data protection systems remain up to date and fit for purpose.

Our much anticipated 25-year celebration, originally scheduled for 2020, remains pending. For the moment we celebrate Food Train delivering another successful year and on behalf of the Board, we thank our volunteers, staff and supporters for their continued support.

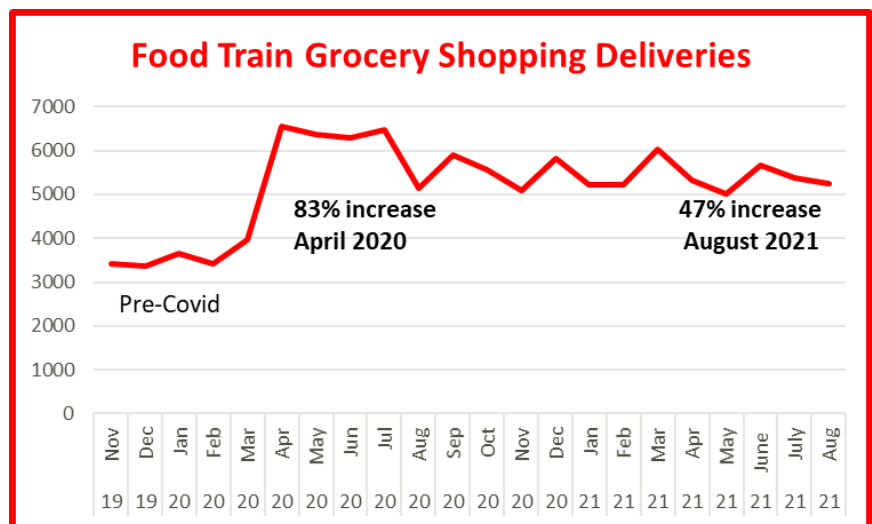
Mahdi Hasan,

Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees

Review Of The Year

Sensational Shopping

Food Train’s grocery shopping service has risen to the challenge of the pandemic. The initial response last year during the first lockdown saw our shopping deliveries increase by 83%. As the pandemic eased last summer, we began to see a drop in weekly deliveries, but a further lockdown at the start of 2021 brought a fresh increase. The vaccination program brought relief to us all, seeing our members, staff and volunteers allocated vaccines as a priority group. Vaccines have eased hearts and minds, but you can see from the chart below our shopping deliveries remain at levels far greater than pre-covid. Feedback in our annual member survey found many members reliant on our shopping service and continuing to use it to help keep safe and well or because their overall health had worsened. Volunteers made a whopping 69,700 vital deliveries over the last year helping our members stay safe and well fed.



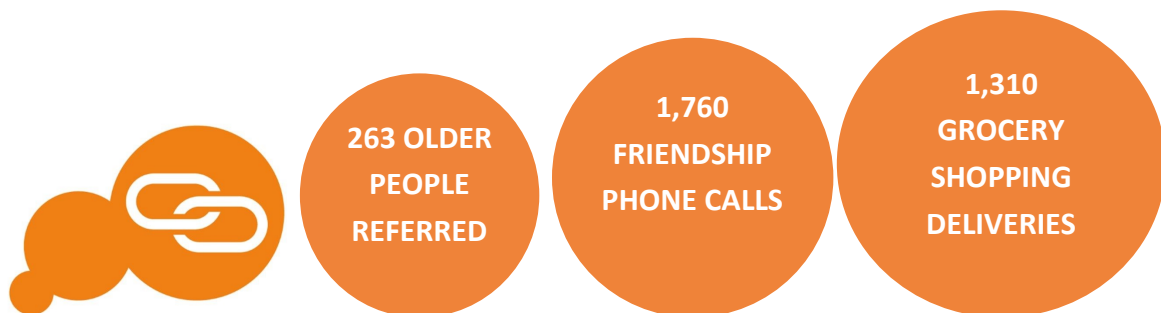
Marvellous Meals

Our many marvellous Meal Makers volunteers rose to the challenges of Covid by finding novel ways to get home cooked meals to our members safely. Many extended their menus to provide treats and snacks and brighten up the days of members by chatting safely at the window, doorway or in the garden. Over the last year 450 of our members benefitted from 18,100 nutritious home cooked meals. One Glasgow pairing, Alex & Andrew, featured their foody friendship in an item for the BBC News.



Caring Connects

Since launching in June last year we have made great progress matching volunteers with older people in parts of Scotland where we don't have a branch of Food Train. Our Food Train Connects services are funded by the Rothesay Life Foundation. Their funding means we have been able to help older people via Food Train Connects in 20 mainland local council regions in Scotland with food shopping and friendship phone calls. We've had excellent feedback from members matched with a Food Train Connects volunteer.



Eat Well Age Well

Over the last 3.5 years Food Train has been leading the conversation in Scotland to bring about changes to help all older Scots to eat well and age well. Our Eat Well Age Well project has been involved in influencing changes to policy, creating accessible training for carers, volunteers and staff and introducing community malnutrition screening tools around the country. This October marks the 4th UK wide Malnutrition Awareness Week with Food Train leading this work in Scotland supported by Scottish Government. The graphic below shows what this project has achieved since it began in 2018.



700 people trained in malnutrition detection, prevention and treatment

1,850 older people screened — 344 (19%) found at risk of malnutrition and given further help

32,985 total contacts with the project

1,000 toolkits and 21,000 printed leaflets and booklets given out to community groups, social care organisations, carers, volunteers and older people

Doing Digital

Food Train has been helping some of our members access devices and the internet through the Scottish Government program Connecting Scotland. This initiative is designed to help everyone in Scotland get online so they can connect with friends and family, learn, work, shop and access information. We've got volunteers trained up and helping members get familiar with their new device and using the internet.



Daphne (above) and Grace (right) enjoying their new devices

Getting Greener

Being aware of the environmental impact of our services is something we are thinking about more and more. We made a good start in 2019/20 with funding from Scottish Power Energy Networks to buy electric vans. Over the last year the combined use of our 9 electric vans has saved **6.23 tonnes of CO₂e**



Fantastic Fundraising

The pandemic affected many of our usual fundraising routes. Community events like coffee mornings, open days and sponsored events were all affected by Covid restrictions. Our terrific team came up with some novel new ideas to raise funds with the sale of Christmas Cards, BOXtober month and 100 Club raffles for members. We're taking this a step further this year and adding fundraising calendars to items the public can buy.



Positive People

Over the last year we have welcomed many new volunteers and welcomed back returning volunteers as restrictions eased. Volunteers are the heart of Food Train and take on a wide variety of roles across all our services. From our early morning shoppers to our van drivers and phone callers, every single volunteer is valued for the time, energy and commitment they give that has enabled Food Train to provide help to almost 4000 older people over the last year. Food Train volunteers come from all parts of the country and from a broad range of ages and backgrounds, bringing lots of different knowledge and skills. Their contribution to Food Train is beyond measure. Volunteers, we salute you!

Thank You

196,000 Hours Volunteered



Super Supporters

Over recent years, staff from **Morgan Stanley**, based in Glasgow, have been helping our Glasgow Food Train branch every year through their workplace volunteering scheme. In response to the pandemic, the company stepped up their efforts through a new charitable giving program called Move for Meals. Food Train has received tremendous financial support via Move for Meals in 2020 and 2021, allowing us to upgrade some of our delivery vans and have extra staff in place to help us with the increases in our shopping and meal services. A big **Thank You** to Morgan Stanley from everyone at Food Train.

Members Feedback

- On a scale of 1-5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), **94%** of members rated Food Train services either a 4 or 5
- **99%** 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
- **65%** of members have no alternative to Food Train services
- Poor mobility is the reason **76%** of members use Food Train services
- **76%** live alone, **80%** are aged over 75+ and **44%** are aged over 85
- Members cite benefits from using Food Train services as; eating more and eating better, less risk of falls, able to live more confidently and independently, more companionship and feeling less alone
- **72%** of members specifically note Food Train services are playing a vital role in their ability to stay safe and well during the pandemic

763 surveys were received—a return rate of 45%

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

“You are a
lifeline for me”

“I do not feel
alone”

Food Train
supporting older people



Looking Forward to 2022

A New Building in Dumfries

We were absolutely delighted back in August 2020 when Dumfries & Galloway Council accepted our offer to buy 116-118 English Street in Dumfries. As our longest established branch of 26 years, we have been renting office space for a long time. Thanks to terrific local fundraising and the Council supporting our offer, we have been able to buy the building outright, giving our head office branch improved facilities to look forward to and financial security. Covid restrictions delayed the formal sale until recently, but we have the keys and the work to refurbish the building can begin in earnest. Over 400 local people have shared their views on the building giving us great ideas to work with. The ground floor will have office space for our Dumfries branch staff and a large accessible social space with seating for both eating and relaxing, plus accessible kitchen and toilets; a great space for older people to meet, chat and eat. Once fully upgraded, we plan to open the building during week days for local older people to drop in for a cuppa, a blether or just a rest on a comfy chair. Over time we hope the building will become a hub for anything and everything that helps and supports local older people.

Pictured below is our CEO Michelle Carruthers making the first visit.



A New Branch in Falkirk

We are delighted to report a new partnership with Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership. They have confirmed funding for a new branch of Food Train. We will be opening the doors in Falkirk later this year, helping older people with shopping, home support and befriending.

Financial Overview

(April 2020 to March 2021)

Food Train's main sources of income are service charges paid by members and public sector contracts. Income benefits from a variety of grants from external trusts and foundations, such as National Lottery Community Fund, Players of the People's Postcode Lottery, Robertson Trust, Rank Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and Tudor Trust to name a few. During the year many individuals, groups and businesses generously donate funds and other types of help and support throughout the year. Staff and volunteer fundraising during the year also contributes to our income.

Thank you to everyone for their kind and generous support throughout the year.

	2020	2021
Total Income	2,295,656	3,080,794
Total Expenditure	2,070,310	2,394,325
Total Members Funds	836,894	1,523,363
Surplus (Deficit)	225,346	686,469
Designated Reserve	204,985	204,467
Restricted Reserve	399,474	381,665
General Reserve	232,435	937,231
Income Analysis		
Grant Income	1,246,900	1,451,774
Earned Income	923,558	1,156,640
Donations & Fundraising	125,198	472,380
Expenditure Analysis		
Staff Costs	1,283,704	1,690,663
Vehicle Costs incl depreciation	258,362	298,117
Premises Costs	103,337	112,525
Volunteer Costs	44,832	34,138
Running Costs	380,075	258,882



Scottish Charity No: 24843

Scottish Company No: 158165

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Unit 9, Attic Floor, Balgray Works, Balgray Place, Dundee, DD3 8SH—Tel: 01382 810944

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www.thefoodtrain.co.uk

www.mealmakers.org.uk

www.foodtrainconnects.org.uk

www.eatwellagewell.org.uk