



ANNUAL
REPORT



2022



Food Train
supporting older people



SHOPPING



AT HOME



FRIENDS



LIBRARY



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.



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Mahdi Hasan (Chair)



Chair's Report

Following the tumultuous year that I reported at the 2021 AGM, this year has been a mixture of activities still affected by the aftermath of the pandemic peak and a reopening of services and expansion of Food Train to reach a greater part of the Scottish population. And as I acknowledge every year, this is only possible through the generosity and kindness of our volunteers and the great work and dedication of our staff. This is overlaid by the capable and inspirational leadership of our Chief Executive but this year I take pleasure in noting her completing 20 years with our Charity. I am sure our members, staff and volunteers join me in recognising this service and extending a heartfelt thank you to Michelle Carruthers.

As the pandemic became more manageable, thanks to a successful vaccination programme and a responsible and well-structured implementation of precautionary measures, there is an increasing sense of normality in our operations. However, despite this, the average shopping service demand remained some 40% higher than pre-pandemic levels. A more settled environment allowed us to resume other services such as Meal Makers, Friends, Library and At Home support. In addition, Food Train Connects, which supports members living outside our branch areas, continued to grow at the expected rate. I am also delighted to report that, in November 2021, Food Train opened the doors to its latest regional branch in Falkirk, helping over 100 older people so far.

We acknowledge support, both financial and material, from many sources such as the Scottish Government, public sector partners, local Councils, local groups and individual and corporate donors. While some increased funding provided to us for responding to the emergency has ended, our balance sheet and financial operations remain healthy. I can also report an encouraging trend by many of our regular partners providing commitments or assurance of longer term funding as this gives us a better planning basis. In addition, funding for subsequent years is being considered earlier by the authorities which reflects the effectiveness of our operations and awareness messages.

Our Eat Well Age Well project funding was extended beyond the original 3.5 year National Lottery grant. Thanks to Scottish Government funding this work will continue to March 2023. Last year I reported the project success measured by its engagement with almost 33,000 people via activities such as training, screening sessions, information events and provision of small grants. As the standalone project draws to a completion, its objectives and processes are being incorporated into the mainstream of Food Train operations in supporting older people. This enables Food Train to increasingly be a holistic service for not only practical support such as shopping, befriending and at home support, but also as a nutrition and wellbeing education and training organisation. Increasingly we work towards holistic care of the older person rather than stand alone separate services.

A major milestone to report this year is the acquisition, refurbishment and opening of Food Train's own premises in the shape of a building in Dumfries. In addition to office space for our own operations, it provides warm and welcoming social, dining and information space for older people in the area and has additional offices that will be rented out to provide a stable income stream. The new building was completed and occupied by Food Train in June 2022, fulfilling the ambitions of our founders to create a hub for older people in the town.

We have continued work to improve our operating and governance systems including an Information Technology project to create an integrated and reliable tool for service delivery. This is still work in progress, but satisfactory progress is being achieved.

It has been increasingly possible to resume face-to-face work, not just in our services, but in how volunteers and staff interact. The return of in-person team meetings and training has been positive for all. The Annual Volunteers Week celebrations were also great moments, bringing everyone together again to record our thanks to the volunteers. This year we presented over 50 long service certificates.

My fellow Trustees join me in extending a warm appreciation to our volunteers and staff that form the backbone of and reason for our being able to report another successful year. We also acknowledge the appreciation that our members express as this is an ongoing source of encouragement for us to continue with even greater enthusiasm.

Mahdi Hasan
Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees

Support and Services for Members

Over the last year, our teams around the country provided support to members spanning 26 of Scotland's 32 regions. From Annan to Aberdeen, Peebles to Paisley and everywhere in between, our fantastic volunteers have provided a variety of practical and social help, making the daily lives of our members more comfortable.



60,480 shopping orders were picked, packed and delivered from our 8 regional branch bases.

Members enjoyed over 22,000 hours of social contact via home visits, trips out and telephone calls.



Volunteers helped members with over 1,200 jobs to keep them safe and living well at home.

Library service volunteers in our West Lothian branch made 452 deliveries of library books over the last year.



540 new member referrals were received during the year, looking to be matched with a one-to-one support volunteer.

11,752 meals were provided and supported.



2,392 grocery shopping deliveries were made by individual volunteers.

1,579 companionship phone calls were made by individual telephone befriending volunteers.





Eat Well Age Well

Food Train's ambition is a Scotland where all older people can access enough food, and the right food, to help stay well and enjoy later life. We continue to improve Scotland's ability to prevent, detect and treat malnutrition through our national program of training, screening, support and campaigning. Now in Year 5, this project is beginning to see change happening. More health, social and community care practitioners are using community screening tools regularly and we're seeing better communication pathways between hospital and home. New digital resources are freely available right across the country and our team's extensive campaigning work has impacted on national policies such as the Good Food Nation Bill.

Over the last 12 months our team have completed over 6,500 tasks

- **601 people working in health and social care trained in malnutrition detection, prevention and treatment.**
- **956 older people screened. 15% at risk or suffering malnutrition**
- **17 calls to Malnutrition Advice Line**
- **2701 Malnutrition Screening Toolkits sent out**
- **2291 booklets and leaflets sent out**

“

possibly one of the best training sessions I have been on in a long time, with its relevance, delivery, timing and technology, thank you
Feedback from training



Helping our Members have their say

At Food Train we utilise opportunities to hear our members views so that their voices can be heard on matters that affect them. In May we invited our members and volunteers to attend Scottish Government Consultation events in Dumfries & Galloway and West Lothian. The consultation was on the Scottish Government's new Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People and what should be included. We provided refreshments and transport making it easier for members to attend. One member said:



“

Thank you Food Train, it's lovely to be asked what our opinion is as we don't often get the opportunity to express ourselves and say how we feel about the local services we get or don't get but need, things like this remind me that what I have to say is important.

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Feedback from Members

Understanding the needs of our members, and providing the right support at their time and point of need, is a core part of how we operate. Listening to feedback from members plays a key role in how our Charity learns and grows. Each year we ask our members for their thoughts on the role Food Train has in their life.



Members Feedback Survey Summer 2022

- 84% live alone, 75% are aged over 75+ and 37% are aged over 85
- 71% of members have no alternative to Food Train services
- 95% gave Food Train services either a 4 or 5 star rating
- 99% say they look forward to volunteers contact, enjoy the social aspect and it has positive impact on their health and wellbeing
- Poor mobility is the number one reason people use Food Train services
- Members say with help from Food Train they are eating more and eating better, less risk of falling, able to live more confidently and independently, have more companionship and feel less alone



Cost of Living Survey May 2022

This year, we also asked our members to share their thoughts on the cost-of living crisis and how it might be affecting them now and in the winter ahead. Their unique perspectives have been shared at every opportunity in the hope of prompting change.

- 27% of members have already started to buy less food
- 55% are cutting back on non-essential items
- 24% of members don't have spare funds for higher bills
- 37% have already dipped into savings to pay bills
- 61% are planning to heat their homes less as a result of higher bills

Our Volunteers

We count ourselves lucky that so many wonderful, kind, talented and compassionate people come forward to volunteer with Food Train each year. Their lives outside of volunteering are varied and span all corners of Scotland. They are united by the warmth and care they show for our members. Some volunteer for a few weeks during holidays or work breaks and some volunteer regularly each week for many years. Together, they form the unwavering support Food Train has been able to provide older people for over 27 years, and we cannot thank them enough for all they do.

Over the last year Food Train volunteers have carried out an amazing

166,000

hours of volunteering, enriching the lives of our members.

We are committed to providing a positive volunteer experience for everyone who joins Food Train. We asked our volunteers about their volunteer experience in a recent survey, receiving 263 responses. It's great to see so many feel their contribution is valued and that volunteering contributes to their own health and wellbeing.

88% said the main reason they volunteer with Food Train is to help others.

45% said volunteering helps keep them mentally well.

31% said volunteering helps them keep physically well.

84% felt valued as a volunteer with Food Train.

83% said volunteering with Food Train fully met their expectations.

90% said they would recommend Food Train to others looking to volunteer.

89% rated their volunteering experience 4 stars or above (on a scale 1-5).



New Head Office and Community Hub in Dumfries

In July 2022 we were delighted to officially open our new head office building at 118 English Street, Dumfries, fulfilling a long held ambition to have our own place. Following a 6 month refurbishment program, this new building gives us a home fit for the future and provides a welcome social space for older people to meet, chat and enjoy a cuppa.



Friends and Supporters

Throughout the year many companies (like Morgan Stanley pictured left) support us through their staff volunteering program, helping with service delivery and fundraising. We also have a great media partner Message Matters who are a welcome addition to the Food Train family. There are many others helping us throughout the year, and we are grateful to them all.



Fundraising

An amazing total of £28,493 was raised over the last year by our fantastic volunteers and staff. Across the length and breadth of the country they have been completing sponsored events, selling raffle tickets, running 100 clubs, hosting coffee mornings, tea parties, holding car-boot sales, pop up charity shops, stalls at Festivals and Christmas fayres and bag packing in supermarkets.


MESSAGE MATTERS

Donations and Legacies

We are lucky to have many people who provide much needed funds for us all year round. A total of £296,259 was received via donations from individuals, groups and businesses. We also received £92,532 from previous members who left us a gift in their will.

Financial Overview (April 2021 to March 2022)

Food Train's main sources of income are voluntary donations, 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, Gannochy Trust to name a few. During the year many individuals, groups and businesses generously donated funds and other types of help and support throughout the year. Volunteer and staff fundraising during the year also contributes to our income. Thank you to everyone for their kind and generous support throughout the year.

	2022	2021 previous year
Total Income	2,352,585	3,080,794
Total Expenditure	2,426,578	2,394,325
Total Members Funds	1,449,370	1,523,363
Surplus (Deficit)	(73,993)	686,469
Designated Reserve	505,036	204,467
Restricted Reserve	185,198	381,665
General Reserve	759,136	937,231
Income Analysis		
Grant Income	793,952	1,451,774
Earned Income	1,099,041	1,156,640
Donations & Fundraising	459,592	472,380
Expenditure Analysis		
People Costs	1,683,578	1,724,801
Vehicle Costs	271,400	298,117
Premises Costs	123,648	112,525
Running Costs	322,186	246,522
Governance Costs	26,766	12,360

Looking Forward to 2023

2022 has been a busy year, made more challenging by changes that are being felt UK-wide by the charity sector, such as volunteer and staff recruitment difficulties and rising bills. Charities like ours were in the spotlight during the pandemic, bringing us extra funds as well as the extra publicity. Over this last year many funders have changed how they work and changed their priorities, focusing less on older people than before. Despite the challenges, we have much to look forward to in 2023:

- We will be launching a new 3-year business plan focusing on supporting our members with the help that matches their needs.
- We are introducing malnutrition screening for all new members when joining.
- We are planning to test a small scale meals delivery service from our new building in Dumfries, with similar plans in West Lothian working alongside The Larder social enterprise.
- We are working towards reducing our carbon footprint through improvements in our delivery fleet.





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