

GOOD FOOD STORY

Name: Stuart King
Project: Hartnells Community Cafe
Location: Townhead St, Lockerbie



Describe your project

Hartnells Café is a not for profit social enterprise at Trinity Lodge in Lockerbie. Our vision is to make food affordable for people locally and offer a warm and inviting place to come and socialise.

Hartnell's is open to everyone on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.30am – 2pm.

We very much want to give back to our local area and support other community groups by making the facility available for free so groups can have meetings or small events, we can provide snacks and drinks too if people would like. Booking can be made outside of our general opening times.

As a longer term vision we aim to provide training opportunities for people in the care of Trinity and the wider community. We already have one person from our organisation who volunteers in the kitchen and this has become his life filling him with a sense of worth and pride and helping him to integrate into the community. We also have another volunteer from one of our care homes in Dunblane who travels down every Friday!



How did you get started?

Cygnat bought the building which is now Trinity Lodge to create 4 ensuite bedrooms and 2 flats for supported living accommodation. We had the space which was the old hotel dining room and wanted to do something good with it for the community. Ideas started to spring up between staff and residents and we came up with our café and community centre model.

We are funded by Cygnat Health to run this amazing initiative. The people who work in the cafe are Trinity staff who go above and beyond in their working time to allow the space to be open for the community. The money we take in the café goes into buying and making quality food using as much local ingredients as possible.

What are the challenges?

Procurement is something we are working on and are increasing our local suppliers all the time. This can be a challenge as we are part of a national organisation that has approved suppliers and we are trying to get more control over buying our own food going forward.

Another challenge is that the staff involved in the community café are also staff in Trinity Lodge. Our residents always come first so sometimes this is a juggling act!



What good food changes need to happen in D&G?

Government legislation needs to change in order to provide better social care moving us to a place of thrive not just survive!

As it stands people are struggling with the basics and can't afford to make better food choices, or at least don't know how to do this on a budget.



What does sustainability mean to you?

We are always looking to source as much as we can locally from services to food, for example we use local butchers in Dumfries. Everything is cooked from fresh and there is almost no food waste as anything left over gets used in Trinity Lodge and House.

Reducing packaging is very important to us and we recycle as much as is possible having regular extra pick-ups for waste reduction. Providing affordable food for the community improves financial sustainability in the food system locally too.

What are your plans for the future?

We would like to be able to offer formal qualifications in catering and hospitality which can give people an active role in the community and for some people may help towards getting meaningful paid or voluntary work.

It is also important that we work with other community organisation around this, for example, someone who has gained their qualification from the Usual place in Dumfries is now moving on to volunteer with us in Hartnell's café. This is a great example of a person moving on to a positive destination along their journey!

You can contact Hartnell's via:
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