

Community Cafes Table Discussion – Volunteering

Riika from The Childrens Woodland other people at the discussion table saw a need for more volunteer support with the big rise in number of community meals across Glasgow. Volunteers were needed in every aspect of running these events from catering to clean-up and entertaining.

At the Children's Wood they have outdoor kitchen with a rocket oven. Volunteers can get training in hygiene & first aid and all get induction days with informal training. They have supervisor and wellbeing support with yoga sessions on offer. There are informal skills training such as running a stall and links to campaign group Nourish Scotland, Love Food Hate Waste learning workshops.

It was mentioned West Integration Network offer volunteers training to work with refugees and asylum seekers.

Malik of Govanhill Community meal agreed about volunteer needs; they run a community meal twice a week sometimes for a 100 people and demand is growing. More cooks and help for cooks in particular.

Social Bites kitchen in Livingston was mentioned offering facilities to groups and hygiene training.

A couple of people also spoke about Glasgow's Southide Milk Café new catering kitchen that is available for hire as a potential place for training.

There was discussion around possible central hub in Govanhill to support volunteers in community food

Several thought that possibly GCFN could co-ordinate volunteers or hubs in different areas to help support community cafes and food projects.

A Big Volunteer Event could be helpful to share skills and celebrate the great work happening across the city.

Sarah of Urban Roots thought some sort of push for volunteer recruitment with those groups most in need could be very helpful. Central resources to find out whats happening and adverts for volunteers. Possibly GCFN could have this online and linked to social media/newsletters etc.

It was mentioned many times more cooking skills for volunteers and local people would be very useful- some certification here too perhaps.

A volunteer driver for Fareshare food service highlighted the struggle to supply food over the summer holidays with lack of volunteers for driving and packing. More transport being needed for community meals.

George a kitchen volunteer at Kinning Park was concerned with finding employment as a chef. He felt there could be closer links developed with employers much like those at Woodlands Community group with Kained Holdings. GCFN could help facilitate these connections.

It was pointed out that not all volunteers would like to work in certain types of kitchen if looking for employment due to industries issues around male dominated kitchens and lifestyle choices like drinking so other links to social enterprises like soul food sisters would be helpful.

Allan from Kelvin College pointed out a need for more Community Learning & Development training/awareness with volunteers. Helping teach them vital facilitation and anti-discriminatory practice where volunteers are keen to run events at community meals.

GCFN could facilitate visits to other community cafes/meals with volunteers, even to market gardens/urban farms where there is an interest. It was noted Social Farms&Gardens visit fund applications (up to £750) could help with this...

A couple of long term volunteers mentioned that they struggled to make ends meet and more could be done to help them with expenses & food as a minimum- possibly other creative ways to help should be further explored. A Volunteer Welfare Fund was floated as an idea.

Promoting volunteers and helping them more with attaining employment, possibly involving in project plans, finding new certification and in some instances training in how to setup food enterprise businesses. There was interest in nutrition and how to setup a catering business.

Woodlands Community group is now providing 1-1 development sessions by paid staff, inductions, health & safety etc. Cookery workshops for volunteers and people at community meals led by volunteers themselves. Connection to employer Kained holdings 15 restaurants in Glasgow & Edinburgh. They offer peer mentoring with Nourish Scotland. They are now looking to build volunteer mentors. Alex from Citizens Advice provides welfare advice at community meals. They are provided with volunteer days and wellbeing classes such as yoga. Social Bite offer volunteer training.

Woodlands volunteers (over 100) were interested in visiting other food projects across Glasgow, potentially supporting with capacity and skill needs. Some were interested in learning about community education techniques.

Some of the woodlands volunteers thought the GCFN could help co-ordinate support between different community meals and growing projects, providing resources and organising where support is most needed across the city.