



## **The Small Idea's Big Impact Fund – Round 2**

### **Project Adaptions in response to Covid-19**

In March 2020, in response to the covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lock down, Eat Well Age Well took measures to halt group interactions and public activities with older people which were funded through the Small Idea's Big Impact Fund.

In light of these extreme circumstances, EWAU supported projects to adapt and create alternative solutions to connect, reach and support older people to eat well, age well and live well during this crisis. Below gives a summary of how 3 Small Idea's Big Impact funded projects adapted to provide continued support & food access for older people in their local communities.

#### **Westland Diners – Supporting Elderly Nutrition, Generating Action (SENGA)**

In 2019, Karen Alford received a grant from the Small Idea's Big Impact Fund to support the setup of 'SENGA' which was a monthly social dinner club within a sheltered housing complex which also involved trialing slow cookers.

Karen tells us about her response to COVID-19 by adapting 'SENGA, to support older residents who are self-isolating in sheltered housing accommodation by providing weekly treats.

"Since March 2020 the project in regard to monthly meals had to temporarily pause due to the diners in our project all being over the age of 70, many of whom were shielding, and the restrictions imposed by the housing provider.

As lockdown continued, we learned how to do things safely and the provider relaxed some rules, we were able to start delivering desserts to 18 residents and stew pots to 7 residents once a week in lieu of the meals.

Despite restrictions being eased the use of indoor communal areas were still prohibited. This meant residents could only meet up in small groups, in the garden. To support this instead of the monthly meals inside, I created an afternoon tea (socially distanced!) in the garden for 6 residents. This included all homemade profiteroles, strawberry tarts, scones with jam & cream, lemon drizzle cake and caramel cupcakes. All miniature sizes along with tea and coffee. They had a lovely time and we were able to give them take home boxes.

What we are doing is a small thing to help them get through this time, things are by no means back to normal for them and there are still a couple of people who are deteriorating I think mainly due to the lack of contact and interaction with people. For some the only people they have visiting are carers and for some they have nobody.

Food has been the conduit to interacting with these elderly people as well as being a benefit to them in itself in terms of nutrition, relieving the monotony of ready meals and encouraging appetites. We really hope we can get back to the meals before too long as eating together has proved to be beneficial not only in terms of social interaction, but feedback has been that they eat more than when they are eating alone. I know from the feedback that the desserts



and Stew Pots are very much appreciated but it feels like a drop in the ocean and if this situation continues much longer it's going to be harder to find ways to keep spirits up”.

**“This is the highlight of my week”**

**“When the trial is finished, I'd be happy to pay something so that I can continue to receive these meals”**

**“The smell of the stew cooking fills the flat, and it's wonderful - makes me hungry”**

**“I look forward to my dessert, it's nice to have something to look forward to”**





### The Nourishing Nosh Box – Cyrenians Edinburgh

In 2019, [Cyrenians](#) received a grant from the Small Idea's Big Impact Fund to support the setup of 'The Nourishing Nosh Box', which aimed to deliver take away food to lunch club attendees, targeting those who are malnourished using screening tools.

Amanda from Cyrenians tells us about their response to covid-19 by adapting 'The Nourishing Nosh Box' to support food access for older people during the pandemic.

"We were noticing that as time in lockdown went on there was more demand for our services, especially amongst many of our older lunch club attendees who are shielding. We used some of our Small Ideas, Big Impact funding to purchase shopping vouchers which our volunteers used to buy the older adults items they need and then leave on their doorstep or to give the vouchers to those clients who are struggling whilst our lunch club is off but they can get out to the supermarkets or go online to arrange a delivery"

From this we were able to buy a variety of Asda, Tesco and Morrisons shopping vouchers and was distributed between the following,

- Golden Years – 32 clients who receive befriending support services from us.
- 8 GameChanger lunch club attendees
- Council sheltered housing complexes. Staff in each of the localities used them only in extreme circumstances for essential supplies for people
- Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre in Moredun. Volunteers and young people used these vouchers to buy essentials and some treats to cheer the elderly up. They made up hampers and delivered them to the older adults that they support
- Vouchers were also distributed by our Community navigator to support older clients living in areas of deprivation with multiple long-term conditions and poor mental health

The older people in our community have greatly appreciated the vouchers

- *"I am really missing the lunch club on Mondays. Without the lunch and the extra portions that I usually take home I have been struggling a bit. This food voucher will help me out massively. I think I may even treat myself to a steak for tea tonight."*
- *"I can't believe you took time out of your day to write me a hand-written letter and send a gift card, it has been a while since I have received one of those! After shielding for over 13 weeks and not seeing a sole it reminded me that Cyrenians haven't forgotten about me and put a smile on my face"*







## Multiple Sclerosis Centre, Mid Argyll – Bingo & a Bite to Eat/Friday Take Away

In 2019, [Multiple Sclerosis Centre, Mid Argyll](#) received a grant from the Small Idea's Big Impact Fund to support the setup of 'Bingo & a Bite to Eat/Friday Take Away, which involved cooking activities meal provision and delivery. It spans evening and weekends and has a central base with an outreach service reaching older people unable to come to the centre.

Karen from MS Argyll tells us about their response to covid-19 by adapting 'Bingo & Bite to Eat/Friday Take Away' to meal deliveries and online classes to reduce social isolation and increase food access for older people.

"Covid-19 has impacted on our project and we have been adapting our original project to continue supporting our community to Eat Well Age Well. Unable to run activity classes in our Centre and bringing older people together to eat we began doorstep deliveries of soup and smoothies during the first phases of lockdown and have now planned to run online cookery classes to create connections and promote eating well. We have distributed the Food Train Eat Well Age Well, [Easy Store Cupboard Recipes book](#) throughout our community and plan to start the classes using recipes from this book"





Below is a snippet of a hart warming message we received from one of our older members

I cannot thank you enough and will be forever in debit and grateful for the help, care and support you have given me since I have been unwell since my last visit to the MS Centre in March 2020 and before I became unwell on 14<sup>th</sup> March with Covid19 symptoms and I have been unwell x 4 with Covid19 symptoms and am unwell at present.

I live alone and if it had not been for you and Claire working from home during lockdown and calling me and checking on me, I would have been very isolated and lonely without people contact. I know fully understand and appreciate how elderly people on their own must feel like as they have no technology and ways of contacting anyone.

I cannot thank you enough for visiting me to deliver my goody bags and it was lovely to have seen a friendly caring face & someone thinking and caring about me at my time of need.

THANK YOU> You helped me immensely with embracing technology and helping me to learn about online communication and use WhatsApp, Zoom Meeting & participate with your Zoom exercise classes and I am really looking forward to the cooker session's and am looking forward to demonstrating my recipes and sharing with everyone.

I would have never done this had it not been for our Zoom Meetings. I always look forward to our meetings. I think this is an amazing service and the new way forward for and I hope that we can continue with this vital service permanently for service users and people at home.

I know it's not the same as attending the Centre but I think this is the new normal way forward and I hope that we can secure funding for the future of this vital link lifesaver for people.

For more information on FREE resources to support older people please visit Eat Well Age Well website: <https://www.eatwellagewell.org.uk/resources>