



Castle Douglas Food Town Initiative Newsletter August 2009.

www.cd-foodtown.org

Food Town Events draw excellent crowds

Many projects were delivered in 2009 to help promote the Town and also enhance the events in the area for locals and visitors throughout the year. These events were delivered under the chairmanship of Keith Irving since the tragic death of our previous Chair Jack Martin who has been greatly missed.

New Food Town Banners go up to brighten King Street for the new season and Food Town Initiative promotes Galloway at Visit Scotland Expo.



Sides 1&2 of the new Food Town Banners located in King Street

Following on from the successful Late Night shopping event in December the Initiative looked at ways to help promote the Town and Galloway region by organising a stand at the 2009 Visit Scotland Expo in Glasgow in April. This was very successful and created opportunities for Overseas Tour operators and UK companies to see what Galloway has to offer to visitors and make them more aware of the fantastic visitor experience that can be had here in Galloway. Many enquiries were forwarded on to members of the Glorious Galloway consortium and familiarisation visits were planned for overseas tour operators during 2009 and 2010.

In April it was also felt that new Food Town banners were needed to be designed and produced to replace the older ones that had seen better days hanging over the shops on King Street. 20 new banners were produced and erected over shops in the Town in time for Food Town Day in May.



Image of Finalists of the Local Food menu competition with the main Judge local chef Tony Budde

Food Town Initiative worked in Partnership with the Schools and the Councils Safety / Wellbeing Group with a competition for Pupils to create and cook menus using local healthy produce.

The competition involved all the primary schools in the area and the S1 pupils at CD High. The competition was very well supported and excellent menus were entered by the pupils. The winners from each school were asked to cook their menu at CD High one evening before Food Town Week and excellent skills were shown by all.



Willie Pike during his great cooking demonstration at the Lochside Theatre.



FOOD TOWN DAY EVENTS proved to be a big commercial success for the town with the majority of retailers, hotels and cafes reporting record sales.

Food Town Cooking demonstration by Willie Pike at the Lochside Theatre was a great success. Willie's main theme was healthy, easy to cook meals using local produce all available in the Town. He did, however, show some amazing cooking and presentation skills that left the audience amazed with the plates of wonderful food cooked during a very entertaining evening.

Food Town Day on Saturday 26th May with many attractions for all the family was opened by Russell Brown MP. These attractions included the local producers market in the Douglas Arms Hotel car park where a very wide range of locally produced meat, game, venison, cakes, confectionery, fudge, cheeses and smoked products were offered. There were also stalls on King Street from local community groups helping to raise money for particular causes. These included the local Churches and Rural Associations as well as Schools.

Tom Kirkpatrick, the owner chef of the Restaurant "Kirkpatrick's" in Kirkcudbright, hosted an excellent Cooking demonstration in our Food Marquee. We were also pleased to have a demonstration with Children from our schools, where local food was the focus of the children's favourite menu at home. (the young winners from each of the local schools worked with Tony Budde and Tom Kirkpatrick on the day to prepare their winning recipes in our Food Marquee.)

Many other attractions on the day included Scottish Dancing from local children, Mountain Bike skills test on Market Hill, which was a favourite for many Youngsters. Children's Rides and fun fair, Local IT facilities and training was on show and a "have a go" demo was available to all. Careful driving simulators were also in a special Police demo exhibition.

Again the Food Town Day increased the number of visitors to the Town with over 30% more visitors on the day than last year and estimates indicated that over 6,000 people were in the Food Town during the Day.



Excellent Crowds on the day were treated to many activities for all the family. These images show a few of the images of the Food Town Day's events.



Glorious Galloway Stand at the Visit Scotland Expo in Glasgow 2009.



Images of some of the Fundraising activities for Schools and Fun for the Children on Food Town Day 2009

Example of adverts placed in Quality life style magazines such as Scottish Field.

Food Town Initiatives objectives

are to create and promote Castle Douglas as an excellent visitor attraction and develop the Unique Shopping Experience the town can provide for locals and visitors throughout the year. Also increase awareness of local food & drink to help healthy eating. This is done in a number of ways :-

Quality web site www.cd-foodtown.org with over 3,000 visitors to the site each month.

Attendance at VisitScotland Expo in Glasgow 2009 to help promote Galloway and our town to overseas and UK tour operators.

Organising events in the town to enhance the visitor experience during the year.

Promote through advertising and brochure distribution the Food Town and the Galloway region.

Look at ways of helping the town to have commercial success through Stakeholder and Council partnership working and the seeking out of funding to support the promotional and event programme.

Help local Artisan Food & Drink producers to develop their business with our local retailers and give them an opportunity to showcase their products at the Monthly markets held in the town.

Work in partnership with local food and service providers to promote the Savour the Flavours image of quality local food produced and offered at accommodation and service providers and help to increase Food Tourism awareness.

Work in partnership with Local authorities and schools to increase awareness of healthy food and wellbeing.



Websites are really helping The Food Town Branding

www.cd-foodtown.org the Food Town's website has been attracting a number of visitors on line. There have been over 12,000 new visitors to the web site during 2009. Our Whats On and Event pages attract many visitors to the site and we know that

www.gloriousgalloway.com is also now attracting over 800 new visitors each month to its web site.

Food Town AGM will be in March 2010 at the Douglas Arms Hotel final date to be advised (see "what's on" at www.cd-foodtown.org for details.)

We really would like to ensure our events programme and general promotions are what the Business and Community sectors wish to see. The AGM is open to all and we welcome anybody who wishes to hear our plans for the future and especially anybody who has ideas or views on how we should be going forward in the year to come.

Looking to the future there are a number of challenges that will need to be addressed in these difficult economic times and we are pleased to report that we have been successful in obtaining a grant to help promote our town and the Stewartry Area from the Councils Special Target support fund. Our Initiative have put forward a marketing programme in conjunction with the Glorious Galloway Consortium to promote the Stewartry through a series of marketing initiatives focused on increasing visitor awareness of our area. These include advertising in quality lifestyle magazines such as Cheshire Life, Yorkshire Life etc, Having a proactive PR campaign in similar lifestyle magazines. Support and organise Familiarisation visits to the Stewartry for journalists and Tour operators, as many potential customers are still not aware of the area and the quality of the experience we can offer in this part of Scotland. Other tools we shall use will be improved web site marketing and search engine optimisation. Finally a 100,000 leaflets will be printed and distributed at information racking throughout Northern England.

If you would like to become involved with the Food Town Initiative please note that regular Meetings are held in the Douglas Arms Hotel on the second Monday of every month at 7:00pm or contact one of the following members of the Committee.

Keith Irving current Chairman, email keith@homes-style.demon.co.uk

Brian Haining Treasurer email HainingBrian@aol.com

Robert McClaren email enquiries@douglasarmshotel.com

Steve Groome Coordinator email stephengroome@btinternet.com

or phone 01557 814428

We do appreciate members of the public as well as businesses joining our group. Any ideas or suggestions on how you would like the town promoted and events you would like to see, please let us know.

