



Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian



Christmas Fair



CHRISTMAS FAIR EVALUATION

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CHRISTMAS FAIR

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report evaluates the success of a Christmas Fair organized by the Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian (SEAM).

2.0 BACKGROUND

In June 2006 SEAM organized a Trade Fair to raise awareness of social enterprises in Midlothian. The event was a success and it was agreed at subsequent SEAM meetings to run a further event in November/December to offer an opportunity to local social enterprises to directly sell their goods to the public.

3.0 ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

3.1 *Preparing for the Fair*

The proposed event was advertised to the social economy sector in Midlothian in September, through MVA's e-briefings and newsletter, and through direct e-mails to organizations SEAM thought would be interested.

A Market Trader's licence was applied for by MVA, in order to be able to legally sell goods. Under the terms of the licence it was not possible to sell reconditioned electrical goods on the day.



The Fair

Organisations that wished to attend were asked to provide some information about their organization, and the goods they would be selling, which formed the basis of an on-line catalogue, downloadable from the SEAM website.

The event was advertised to the public through two adverts in the local paper, posters, the local voluntary sector networks, and the Midlothian Council intranet (Midlothian Council being the biggest local employer).

Funding for the event was provided by Midlothian Council and Midlothian Voluntary Action.

3.2 *The Fair*

The Christmas Fair took place on Wednesday 29 November, from 11am until 3pm, in Dalkeith Arts Centre. Tea and cakes were available for customers, in a café run by the Volunteer Centre Midlothian. Donations were requested, which were kept by the Volunteer Centre.

A free prize draw was also offered, with the prize of a reconditioned computer, which was provided free of charge by Midlothian Advice and Resource Centre.

Flyers were distributed in the town centre and outside the venue on the day.

3.3 Organisations that participated in the Christmas Fair

- 1. Bits and Bobs
- 2. British Red Cross
- 3. Children’s Hospice Association Scotland (CHAS)
- 4. Dalkeith Afterschool Club
- 5. every thing (Business Community Connections)
- 6. Friends of Midlothian’s Children
- 7. Loanhead CLC Parent’s and Tot’s Group
- 8. Midlothian Advice and Resource Centre
- 9. Midlothian Voluntary Action
- 10. One World Shop
- 11. Scottish Pensioner’s Association



Bits and Bobs stall

A full range of the goods on sale and the beneficiaries is to be found in the Catalogue in Appendix B.

3.4 Who attended the day

The Fair was attended by 106 members of the public.

3.5 Cost of the Fair

Costs for the event were as follows:

Adverts in local paper	205.94
Posters and flyers	41.50
Catering	47.16
Rent of Dalkeith Arts Centre	72.72
Total	367.32

4.0 FEEDBACK FROM ORGANISATIONS

4.1 Income Raised

All of the eleven organisations that took part in the Fair were asked to complete and evaluation form, and we received feedback from all of them. The comments can be found in full in Appendix A.

The eleven organizations took a total of £564.79, an average of £51.34 each. The donations for teas and coffees totalled £43.15.

4.2 **Non-financial Benefits**

The organizations identified a range of other benefits from attending the day:

Networking

Networking.

Yes - it was a good opportunity to raise our profile - but unfortunately wasn't a good sales opportunity.

Yes. Networking and raised awareness of the project.

Speaking to different people.

Awareness Raising

Yes, some awareness raising of our shop and of fair trade, can't quantify the benefits as yet.

Our main reason for being involved was to project our image. SPA has nine branches in Midlothian, but as the oldest pensioners' organisation in the UK we want to make the retirees of today and tomorrow aware of the very important work we do on their behalf. The money raised was a bonus.

Gave us a chance to be seen in the community.

Publicity for MARC and its products.

One organisation did not identify any benefits:

Not much benefit I am afraid. We already knew most of the people who were there and it was really very quiet as far as customers were concerned.

4.3 **Repeat Attendance**

Nine organizations said they would attend again, with two saying they were not sure.

4.4 **Publicity**

There were a range of suggestions for improving the publicity for the event:

Press release a few weeks early - Evening News/Herald and Post and Penicuik Town Crier as well as Advertiser (?), followed by one the week before to remind people.

Posters in street (lamp posts etc)

Leaflet local shops.

It needs a lot more publicity to the general public, eg people outside handing out flyers, more brightly coloured posters (dayglo paper!) on the street, a banner would be good, more adverts in papers etc -with editorial, local radio.

Possibly look at stating earlier to advertise and keep reminding people. Posters in local shop windows may be helpful.

A couple of organizations identified things that they could do to advertise the

event:

Cannot think of others, but we would certainly use our premises in Edinburgh to highlight the event.

We could put a note in our newsletter to our members and also as an event on our website.

One organization did not identify any additional suggestions:

I think you really did a lot of work and frankly I am not sure what else you can do. The Christmas Fair on sat 2nd was poorly attended as well and there doesn't seem to be a lot of interest. I suspect people are going elsewhere, apart from Dalkeith, to shop at this time of year.

4.5 Venue

Several comments were made regarding the suitability of the venue and timing:

Venue

Venue is probably most practical that is available.

Somewhere in the town centre where passing shoppers might drop in.

It is a good venue apart from the parking. The only other venues I can think of are either Loanhead Miners club or Penicuik Town hall.

The Arts Centre is centrally situated, but should the Fair become an annual event, then I believe there would be more involvement, and larger premises would be required. But where?

Art centre was fine but most people would know the venue better as the library so maybe putting this on the poster would be useful. Time 10.00 - 13.00 the day was fine could look at a different day next year to see if that makes any difference.

It was ok given the lack of venues in the area.

Day

Another day might be better as Wednesday turned out to be half day at the library so less people popping in from library. Friday might be a good day as King's Park children on a half day (? I think) Time: was busiest earlier then tailed off - so suggest starting 10 am and finishing 2 pm?

Saturday the 2nd wasn't any better. I am not sure you can ever get the day or times right. I am beginning to have a feeling after a number of fairs at the Arts Centre that it simply doesn't work.

Venue fine. Times fine. Suggest holding event on Saturday.

Probably not the best day or venue - a Friday or a Saturday would be better, 10 - 4pm.

I think a Saturday or Sunday would have been better.

4.6 Activities

Organisations were asked for suggestions for activities that could be run on the day to attract people into the building, such as face-painting or Santa Clause.

Yes - face-painting would be good (run by ready disclosed people!). Not so sure about Santa - disclosure issues, costs of gifts etc.

Another possibility? Running an art competition either in one or more local schools (or restricted to voluntary sector groups e.g. after-school clubs, MYPAS etc) - and exhibiting paintings in the café bit - could have the presentation as well or just the exhibit - would probably bring in lots of proud mums and grans (though, could we manage number of children?)

Santa (if event held on a Saturday).

On Sat Dec 2nd the Rotray were outside with Santa's sleigh and there was a carousel. We also had face painting inside - still didn't work. The weather isn't helping at present either.

Definitely! Make more activities, talks, food tasting, eco/green activities, not just for children but for adults too.

Yes we do believe other activities would attract more visitors, perhaps live music e.g. accordionist or keyboard player in the tea room area.

Tea / Coffee available for sale is a good draw for people specially if it is a cold day.

Big banner outside.

Face painting, what about sort of master classes in a craft.

4.7 The Catalogue

None of the organizations identified any sales from the catalogue. Some suggestions were made about improving the use of the catalogue:

Possibly we could put a few copies in libraries?

... perhaps a bigger advert in the advertiser would let people know about the catalogue.

Suggest handing out catalogue at Fair.

4.8 Other comments

Organisations were given the opportunity to add in any other comments:

We could do with another two or three able bodies to put up/move tables, chairs; displays etc - and liaise with various folk.

Perhaps we should advertise the event through the local schools ask the head teachers to put a note in their schools newsletter, you could also get the day centres advertise it.

Just a thank you for putting in so much effort.

Thank you for organising it.

SPA Head Office wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity of participating in the event.

Thanks very much for the invitation.

The girls that done the event said it was like a jumble sale and not a craft fair. It is hard to ask what people are selling.

5.0 LESSONS LEARNED

On a purely cost-based analysis, the Fair did not raise enough money to justify running it again, particularly as staff time was not factored in. However, the above feedback would indicate that the Fair was worth doing for other reasons, including networking and awareness-raising.

In addition, this was the first time that such an event had been held by SEAM, and valuable lessons were learned that could feed into an improved event next year. For SEAM, the event provided a useful way of stimulating awareness of local social economy organizations, which is one of SEAM's key aims.



Scottish Pensioner's Association stall

The following suggestions incorporate the stallholders' feedback, and the experiences of the organizers.

Timescales

Planning for the day needs to start much earlier, particularly publicity to potential participants. There were several other potential stallholders who would have liked to attend the day, but who were unable to find volunteers for the event as the volunteers were committed elsewhere. Earlier publicity may also stimulate other organizations to participate.

Day and time

There was some discussion regarding whether the event should be held on a Saturday. However, previous experience of running events on a Saturday has found Dalkeith to be very quiet at a weekend. In addition, Midlothian Council is the largest local employer, and it might make sense to hold the event on a day when the Council staff are in town.

There might be benefit from holding the event on a Friday, as this is the half-day for school children, and it could be possible to link with the local schools to encourage parents to attend after picking up their children.

Of the 106 people that attended, 50 arrived in the first hour. Therefore it is suggested that the timing of the event is changed to 10am to 2pm.

Venue

A number of comments were raised regarding the venue. However, it has not been possible to identify a more suitable venue to date, and the Arts Centre does have the advantage of being centrally located. Unless there is a change in the availability of buildings, it may be that the Arts Centre remains the most suitable venue.

Publicity

The event would benefit from additional publicity. A press release was sent to the local paper but was not used; the event would benefit from additional interaction with the Advertiser to encourage them to support the event. Press releases could also be sent to the Evening News, The Herald, and the Penicuik Town Crier.

The community radio station will be up-and-running by next Christmas and will provide another method of advertising the event.

Activities

There was general agreement that some kind of activity run on the day would raise attendance; both face-painting and Santa could be linked to the local primary schools earlier closing on Fridays, and the local nurseries. Activities were also suggested for adults, such as food tasting.

One suggestion was for an arts competition for children, with the presentation on the day - an earlier start to the planning of the event would assist this type of initiative, but would provide a valuable way to involve a range of agencies in the event.

Catalogue

No organisations identified significant sales through the catalogue. Better use could be made of the catalogue through, for example, copies in the library.

Baselines

If the event is to be run again, the following is the baseline information against which to measure the event:

Number of organizations participating: 11

Number of customers: 106

Total income raised by the event: £607.94

Average income per stallholder: £51.34

Ratio of expenditure to income raised: 1: 1.66 (i.e. every pound spent on the event generated £1.66 in income)

6.0 MORE INFORMATION

For more information on anything in this document contact SEAM care of:

Dr Lesley Kelly, Midlothian Voluntary
Action, 0131 663 9471

Rebecca McKinney, Midlothian Council,
0131 271 3458

APPENDIX A: STALLHOLDERS' EVALUATION

CHRISTMAS FAIR EVALUATION FORM

This form seeks to evaluate the success of the Christmas Fair, and asks for suggestions of how we could improve the event if we ran it again next year.

ORGANISATION NAME:	
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- 1 How much money did you make in total from your stall at the Christmas Fair? *[NB This information will be kept confidential - we just want to use it to work out the total amount taken on the day].*

Total for eleven organizations plus tea and coffee donations = £607.94

- 2 Did you gain other benefits from the event, for example, raising awareness of your project, networking? If so, please tell us what the benefits were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • Yes - it was a good opportunity to raise our profile - but unfortunately wasn't a good sales opportunity. • Yes Networking and raised awareness of the project. • Speaking to different people. • Not much benefit I am afraid. We already knew most of the people who were there and it was really very quiet as far as customers were concerned. • Yes, some awareness raising of our shop and of fair trade, can't quantify the benefits as yet. • Our main reason for being involved was to project our image. SPA has nine branches in Midlothian, but as the oldest pensioners' organisation in the UK we want to make the retirees of today and tomorrow aware of the very important work we do on their behalf. The money raised was a bonus. • Gave us a chance to be seen in the community. • Publicity for MARC and its products.

- 3 If we ran a Christmas Fair next year would you attend again?
 YES 9 NO 0 Not Sure 2

If no, why not?

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- 4 This year the Fair was advertised in the Advertiser, through the Council's Intranet, through posters, and through e-mails and briefings to the voluntary sector. Do you have any suggestions for what else we could do to publicise the Christmas Fair?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release a few weeks early - Evening News/Herald and Post and Penicuik Town Crier as well as Advertiser (?), followed by one the week before to remind people. • Posters in street (lamp posts etc) • We could put a note in our newsletter to our members and also as an event on our website. • Leaflet local shops. • I think you really did a lot of work and frankly I am not sure whatelse you can do. The Christmas Fair on sat 2nd was poorly attended as well and there doesn't seem to be a lot of

interest. I suspect people are going elsewhere, apart from Dalkeith, to shop at this time of year.

- It needs a lot more publicity to the general public, eg people outside handing out flyers, more brightly coloured posters (dayglo paper!) on the street, a banner would be good, more adverts in papers etc -with editorial, local radio.
- Cannot think of others, but we would certainly use our premises in Edinburgh to highlight the event.
- Possibly look at stating earlier to advertise and keep reminding people. Posters in local shop windows may be helpful.

5 Do you think the venue (Dalkeith Arts Centre), day (Wednesday) and time (11-3) of the Fair were suitable? Do you have a suggestion for another venue/day/time?

- Venue is probably most practical that is available. Another day might be better as Wednesday turned out to be half day at the library so less people popping in from library. Friday might be a good day as King's Park children on a half day (? I think) Time: was busiest earlier then tailed off - so suggest starting 10 am and finishing 2 pm?
- Somewhere in the town centre where passing shoppers might drop in.
- It is a good venue apart from the parking. The only other venues I can think of are either Loanhead Miners club or Penicuik Town hall.
- Venue fine. Times fine. Suggest holding event on Saturday.
- Saturday the 2nd wasn't any better. I am not sure you can ever get the day or times right. I am beginning to have a feeling after a number of fairs at the Arts Centre that it simply doesn't work.
- Probably not the best day or venue - a Friday or a Saturday would be better, 10 - 4pm.
- The Arts Centre is centrally situated, but should the Fair become an annual event, then I believe there would be more involvement, and larger premises would be required. But where?
- Art centre was fine but most people would know the venue better as the library so maybe putting this on the poster would be useful. Time 10.00 - 13.00 the day was fine could look at a different day next year to see if that makes any difference.
- It was ok given the lack of venues in the area.
- I think a sat or Sunday would have been better.

6 Do you think we should have activities at the Fair to draw people in (e.g. visit Santa, face-painting)? If so, what activities should we provide?

- Yes - face-painting would be good (run by ready disclosed people!). Not so sure about Santa - disclosure issues, costs of gifts etc.
- Another possibility? Running an art competition either in one or more local schools (or restricted to voluntary sector groups e.g. after-school clubs, MYPAS etc) - and exhibiting paintings in the café bit - could have the presentation as well or just the exhibit - would probably bring in lots of proud mums and grans (though, could we manage number of children?)
- Santa (if event held on a Saturday).
- On Sat Dec 2nd the Rotray were outside with Santa's sleigh and there was a carousel. We also had face painting inside - still didn't work. The weather isn't helping at present either.
- Definitely! Make more activities, talks, food tasting, eco/green activities, not just for children but for adults too.
- Yes we do believe other activities would attract more visitors, perhaps live music e.g. accordionist or keyboard player in the tea room area.
- Tea / Coffee available for sale is a good draw for people specially if it is a cold day.
- Big banner outside.

- Face painting, what about sort of master classes in a craft.

7 This year we produced a catalogue of items for sale at the Fair, which was downloadable from the SEAM website - the website address appeared in all the publicity. Are you aware of whether you've had any potential customers contact you after having seen the catalogue? Do you have any other suggestions of how we could use the catalogue?

- Not aware of any contact about calendar. Possibly we could put a few copies in libraries?
- No contacts so far.
- Not that I was aware, perhaps a bigger advert in the advertiser would let people know about the catalogue.
- Not aware. Suggest handing out catalogue at Fair.
- No customers at all from the catalogue.
- Didn't notice anything.
- To date, we have had no feedback regarding the catalogue or any of the items contained therein.
- We have not had any further contact after the event.

8 Any other suggestions or comments?

- We could do with another two or three able bodies to put up/move tables, chairs; displays etc - and liaise with various folk.
- Thanks very much for the invitation.
- Perhaps we should advertise the event through the local schools ask the head teachers to put a note in their schools newsletter, you could also get the day centres advertise it.
- Just a thank you for putting in so much effort.
- Thank you for organising it.
- SPA Head Office wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity of participating in the event.
- Maybe the organisations who are attending could help advertise the event in their venues.

Thank you!

Christmas Catalogue

The following organisations will have stalls at the **SEAM Christmas Fayre, Dalkeith Arts Centre, Wednesday 29th November, 11am - 3pm**. Please come and join us!

PS If you can't make it, we've included details of where else you can purchase the goods!

One World Shop Ltd



One World Shop will be selling an exciting range of festive fair trade products from across the world. Come and see our jewellery, handmade paper, toys and Christmas food and drinks - all fair trade!

Any profit goes to our producers across the world for more orders.

Come to our shop at St John's Church, Princes St, Edinburgh.

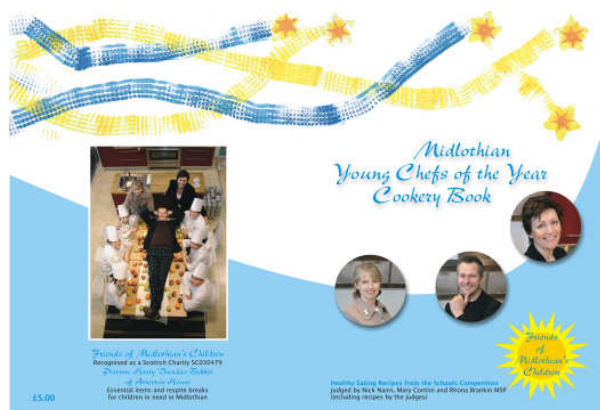
Open 10am - 5.30pm Mon - Sun.

Tel: 0131 229 4541

Friends of Midlothian's Children (SC030479)

The Midlothian Young Chefs of the Year Cookery Book - a great Christmas gift!

We ran a healthy eating competition earlier this year at Ikea, which was very successful and which resulted in this lovely cookery book. It contains recipes by the judges, Nick Nairn, Mary Contini and Rhona Brankin MSP, as well as recipes by the winning schools - St David's RC High School, Beeslack Community High School, Dalkeith High School and Saltersgate School.



This is a delightful little book and would make a great Christmas gift or stocking filler. It is available for £5! All the proceeds from the book are going towards a respite centre for children in need in Midlothian.

Please e-mail c.pelling@fomc.co.uk or call 0131 561 5302.

Midlothian Advice and Resource Centre



Midlothian Advice and Resource Centre (MARC) sell a range of recycled goods.

At the Fayre we will be taking orders for used personal computers with Microsoft packages from £40, and used Bicycles for all ages from £10. *Perfect Christmas presents for both young and old!*

All the money that MARC raise is used to support the work we do in the community.

You can also buy these goods at our shops at Mayfield and Bonnyrigg, as well as a range of furniture and recycled white goods:

14/15 Bogwood Court, Mayfield
High Street, Bonnyrigg



Children's Hospice Association Scotland (CHAS)



A range of quality Christmas goods including Christmas cards, soft toys and Christmas ornaments.

All proceeds to CHAS - the Scottish charity committed to the provision of Children's Hospice Service in Scotland.

To purchase further goods contact David Ledner
c/o Cheryl Prior at Volunteer Centre Midlothian Tel: 0131 663 6165

Bits and Bobs Scrapstore



The Card making packs, which consist of 60% recycled materials, will be on sale along with other Christmas decorations; such as Christmas baubles, tinsel and candles. A selection of other art and craft materials from the scrapstore will also be on sale. Priced between 10p to £3.00.

The funds help to provide work experience and training opportunities for people with disabilities. Buying from us also helps the environment by recycling, reusing and reducing waste.

You can buy these goods by coming into the store at:

New Lairdship Yards,
Broomhouse Road,
Edinburgh, EH11 3UY.

Phone for more details on
0131 443 9490 or buy online at
www.bitsandbobsscrapstore.org.uk



Loanhead CLC Parents And Tots Group



We have a wide range of products hand made by our talented mums; everything has been handmade and is of the utmost quality. To name but a few of our products on offer are:

- Glass angels and glass ornaments for your Xmas tree, each piece is unique;
- Hand Painted candle holders;
- Rag dolls; Beaded stars; and baubles.

All our profits will be shared between our local community centre and to give the tots a fantastic Xmas party.

If anybody would like to purchase any of our products e-mail Renee at
reneemclay@yahoo.com



Midlothian Voluntary Action



Midlothian Voluntary Action will be selling a range of handmade Christmas cards, and photographs of Midlothian.

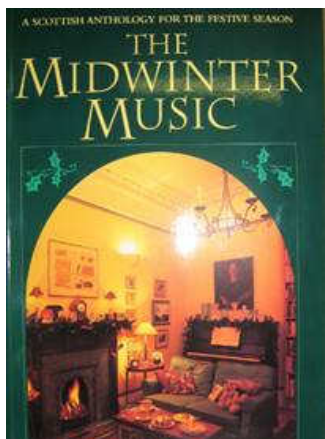
All the proceeds will be used to provide free training to charities and voluntary organisations on issues such as charity law, health and safety etc.

You can also buy these goods directly from:

Midlothian Voluntary Action
4/6 White Hart Street
Dalkeith
EH22 1AE



Scottish Pensioners' Association



The Scottish Pensioners' Association will be selling T-Shirts with SPA design, Baseball Caps, SPA Badges, and a book 'The Midwinter Music' (new donated). This is 159 pages of stories, poems, recipes and songs. All with a very strong Scottish festive flavour. An excellent Christmas present.

The funds we raise will be used to support older people, including the SPA Annual Christmas Party, National Conference Entertainment & other Social Activities.

You can also buy these goods direct from the SPA. Contact:

SPA Head Office at
207 Pleasance,
Edinburgh EH8 9RU.
Tel. 0131.668.1001
Email: spahq@aol.com



British Red Cross



The British Red Cross will be selling a range of Christmas Cards, Diaries. Other items can be purchased from our Christmas catalogue.

The British Red Cross helps people in times of crisis. We provide a range of high quality services in local communities across the UK every day. These services offer short-term help to those most in need. The funds raised will help to support the services in the local area.



You can also buy these goods directly from the British Red Cross website at www.redcross.org.uk or from the catalogue which will be available at the Fayre.

every thing



every thing will be selling Christmas gifts for everyone at great prices. A wide range of jewellery, gifts, crafts and candles and much more.

Funding raised on the day will be used for supporting activities for school children in disadvantaged areas

You can also buy these goods directly from www.every-thing.co.uk or our shop at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

The Social Enterprise Alliance Midlothian (SEAM) support social economy organisations in Midlothian. They can be contacted care of Midlothian Voluntary Action on 0131 663 9471.



Merry Christmas!

