

Visit to Strathmartine Larder 8th of March 2024

Steve Flack (Deacon) and Mhairi Towler (Charity Convenor) of the Dyers Trade visited Strathmartine Larder at 24 St. Giles Terrace, Dundee to have a look at how The Nine Trades Charity funding awarded to the Larder had been spent.

Background to the Larder

The Strathmartine Community Larder is a modern food co-operative tackling food poverty in the Kirkton area of Dundee initially, which operates across Strathmartine with another larder in St. Mary's. They provide a service where users pay £4.00 and can take a bag of shopping away which includes tinned goods, toiletries, cleaning products, cupboard items, etc. To include 2 items from the fridge or freezer is another £1. They also offer bags of fresh fruit and vegetables for £1.00. The Larder allows users to choose their items which change every week at a discounted price, while also helping to reduce food waste in the local area.

The Visit

We were welcomed by Heather Breen and Melanie Kiyani (Chairperson of the Larder) and given coffee. The Eco-wall was the first thing we saw, which is very impressive and quite a solid structure that Mel had assembled herself. It contains various dry larder goods, such as pasta, rice, and cereal, with smaller containers below containing tea, coffee, sugar, etc. A set of scales had also been purchased with the money so dried goods could be weighed out. Photo of Eco-wall below.



We were introduced to the team of volunteers at the larder and were told about an origami night that had taken place the night before and shown some of the outputs. This activity is part of building community. There is also a postcard wall where users of the larder can send a postcard from their holidays. They hold a bingo night frequently at a local venue and are looking for someone to host a race night. It is clear there is a community spirit here and Heather knew the names of users coming into the larder for their 'shopping experience' - one of the key aspects they wanted to

highlight. They were also proud that users of the larder did not have to queue, which takes away the stigma.

Steve gave a background to the Nine Trades of Dundee and explained how we make money from students renting apartments owned by the Trades and that this money is then donated to charities.

We were then shown the unit next door which sells second-hand goods, the proceeds from which, go to buy food for the larder. Every month goods in the shop are turned over and if not sold they are donated to local schools, nurseries, or other organisations/individuals in need.



There is another unit sitting empty next door, something Mel has her eye on for a community café. However, this will take some negotiation as there is still someone else renting it.



The Larder have received funding from Dundee City Council for another year and are looking to fill the post held by Carly Stewart-Macleod, who attended the last Dyers Supper to speak to members about the charity.

Mel requested that we offer help developing her business plan which we agreed to. Mel was invited to the next Dyers Supper to say a few words about how the funding had helped them and to raise awareness of the charity.

Steve gifted them some aprons that he had procured from another event, as he thought they might be useful for the cooking classes, and Mel suggested putting their logo on them as they were plain white.

Mhairi was given a bunch of flowers from the larder as a gesture of thanks to the Dyers.



Other pictures of the larder from the day.

