

**Assynt Development Trust, Assynt Community Council
Community Care Assynt, Connect Assynt working together**

Assynt Food Bank

The Assynt Food Bank came into existence in early May as a result of the Covid19 Emergency. With funding from the Scottish Government, Assynt Development Trust, Assynt Community Council, Community Care Assynt and Connect Assynt came together to support those in our community who would have otherwise suffered from food poverty. The weekly food parcels have been received by over fifty people in our community, helped by over twenty volunteers. The numbers have declined in recent weeks but the view of the Resilience Group is that the numbers in need of food aid could start to rise again with the end of the tourist season, possible Covid spikes and with Brexit.

The Covid19 funding from the Scottish Government lasts until the end of September. The Resilience Group have been given consent to use existing funds to establish a successor to the Food Bank, a Community Food Larder but if we choose to do this the funds must be invested by the 30th September.

Community Food Larder

A community food larder is a community run facility that supports individuals and businesses to share surplus food and for anyone to help themselves to quality food that would otherwise be wasted. In Muir of Ord the MOO Community Fridge was established 2-3 years ago and has now expanded to several locations in villages around Muir. The Assynt Resilience Group has made contact with Emma Whitham the founder of the Food Larder and discussed the possible establishment of such a facility in Assynt. Please see their website at <https://moofood-org.stackstaging.com/projects/incredible-edible/>

A community food larder consists of a fridge, freezer and shelving and can accept any type of vegetables, fruit, bread, tinned & dried foods, cooked meat and fish all in sealed packaging with their own use by date. To avoid any issues with food hygiene it should not house raw meat, fish or eggs.

This type of facility is for the benefit of the whole community, anyone can give (givers) and equally anyone can take (takers). This initiative can help address food waste but it also provides social benefits by reducing food poverty and malnutrition as well as encouraging community spirit and increased resilience.

The role of the Assynt Resilience Group would be to provide a clean, safe environment for sharing surplus food to benefit the community. The ARG would not be responsible for the contents of the fridge and it is thought that an Assynt Community Food Larder group would be best suited to run the facility(ies). It is important to get the location(s) right; somewhere in the heart of the community that is visible and easily accessible.

Assynt Community Food Larder(s) - consultation

What the Assynt Resilience Group wishes to know is:

1. Do you think there is a need for a Community Food Larder in Assynt?
2. Do you think that the Assynt Resilience Group should support & promote an Assynt Community Food Larder?
3. What do you think the likely challenges would be for an Assynt Community Food Larder?
4. Would you be willing to get involved in running it and being part of a group who do so?
5. Which would be the best site(s) for the Assynt Community Food Larder? Suggested locations include Baddidaroch, Lochinver Harbour, The Glac, Stoer, Drumbeg, Elphin and others
6. How should this facility be funded?
7. Any other ideas or comments?