



FAIR TRADE SCOTLAND 2007

Conference Report

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FAIR TRADE SCOTLAND 2007

Welcome

The first Fair Trade Scotland conference was held at the Dewar's Centre in Perth on Saturday 27th January 2007. Attended by over 170 people, the day was considered a great success with delegates praising the opportunity to meet and network with such a diverse range of people with an interest in Fair Trade.

This document aims to summarise the main points of the day and serve as a record as we embark on the Fair Trade Scotland project, discussing structure, targets and points of future development.

Provost of Perth, Bob Scott, and Chair Chris Hegarty (SCIAF) welcomed everyone to this first ever conference of the Scottish Fair Trade Movement. The conference was then addressed Patrica Ferguson MSP, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, and then by Duncan Rees, Chair of Wales Fair Trade Forum.

“Countries in the developing world need financial help, but they cannot grow and stand on their own two feet by relying on aid. Countries like Malawi, with which Scotland has recently rekindled an old friendship, don't want to simply exist on handouts. Trade is one of the key ways that Malawians can escape grinding poverty. But it must be fair trade. Fair Trade is not about charity - it is a way to ensure workers receive fair prices and decent working conditions, something that we in the West take for granted.

The criteria are not set in stone and we do expect them to evolve over time. I know a number of you here today will have views on the targets identified, and that is exactly why we are looking to establish a Scottish Fair Trade Forum. Politicians cannot deliver a Fair Trade Nation in isolation. It requires the people of Scotland and we need an inclusive, democratic, transparent and accountable Forum to take a lead role, to create a mechanism for the Scottish Fair Trade movement - everyone here today - to feed their views into this process.”

Patricia Ferguson MSP, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport

“This campaign in our two countries is politically and socially significant. It has tremendous potential to influence opinion and public policy, and to create a huge improvement in public and consumer awareness of Fair Trade.

However we must never lose sight of what is overridingly the most important aspect of what we are doing and that is guaranteeing a better deal for the producers of Fair Trade products. However much we may bask in the glow of the good work being done by the Fair Trade movement in the UK let's continue to remember and focus upon the problems that Fair Trade seeks to address and recognise the size of the task that will still face us; long after Scotland and Wales have become Fair Trade countries”

Duncan Rees, Chair of Wales Fair Trade Forum

Summary of Morning Session Feedback

Structure

- Steering group should be very representative, including a producer if possible and one youth rep. In terms of communication, a pyramid structure is recommended.
- Group capable of supporting the development officer.
- Focus should lie at the regional level.
- Representatives would be informed by specialist groups – business, educationalists, etc.

Processes

- Representative groups would choose 2 people to represent them
- Membership fees – voluntary for individuals; for groups and organisations, based on ability to pay.
- Political goodwill a big factor in the equation.
- Local or regional groups as well as interest sectors.
- Fees should be used to help people in remoter areas to participate.
- NGOs to fund.
- Variable fees – register on web-site free, but pay if wish to attend AGM.
- Existing group to continue in the interim until forum in place

Communication

- Website to be set up – www.fairtradescotland.org.uk – including a forum for discussion of Fair Trade news and issues if possible.
- Networking between local groups – an internet mapping exercise – as a means to obtain a definitive list of local groups.
- Newsletter for the Forum should be available electronically and in paper form.
- Suggested – design and market a Fair trade tartan.
- Distribute news via Local authority newsletters.
- Each member of management group to take responsibility for reporting back to their own constituency.

Remit

- Ensure ethical investment.
- Push for more Fair Trade public procurement.
- Push wider debate on trade justice – pressure Executive on this.
- Suggested - push for a greater range of Fair Trade products.
- Examine the local/global problem of fair trade – same people causing the difficulties.
- Educate and raise awareness.

Fairtrade Foundation

As an NGO, they cannot award Fairtrade status to a country, but they are supportive. The Scottish Fair Trade Forum has worked with Wales on criteria and can consult with the Fair Trade Foundation for latest information as they sit on the management committee of Fair Trade Wales.

Wales chose Fair Trade as two words and will be including other fair trade products in their campaign, not just those that carry the Mark.

Summary of Afternoon Session Feedback

Business & Retail

- Should have been separated into buyers and sellers.
- Use current Fairtrade at Work campaign.
- Fair trade business – should there be a certification? Very difficult to administer.
- Trade unions – are they talking to management about stocking FT?
- There should be a database of Fair Trade suppliers and where they will supply.
- Should not be limited to products with the FT Mark, but difficult at the moment until different certificate available.
- Suggested - central resource in Perth.
- Are there measurable criteria relating to business? Percentage increase of FT sales per year suggested as such.
- Sliding scale of attainment of targets.

Procurement

- Without getting this right we can't have FT nation.
- Fair employment practices could be included.
- Ethical advice to buyers – possibly by specialist group within forum.
- Licensing bodies for FT certification.

Education

- Educational sub-group of forum from which representative would be chosen.
- Scottish Commissioner for Young People could be consulted on candidates.
- Criteria do not mention FT schools – must be added to the objectives.
- Like to see nurseries, etc. involved.
- Fair trade, Fairtrade, fairly traded? To what extent should we use these definitions?

FT action groups

- 100% targets important.
- Targets should be on a sliding scale allowing groups and organisations to build up gradually.
- Take it steady – this is not a race.
- Education to be added to the criteria.
- Emphasize the Trade Justice link, particularly in the government criteria.
- There should be mention of Fairtrade and Scotland's progression towards Fair Trade Nation status on Scottish Executive web-site.
- Parliament to display Fair Trade information and sell products in a shop within building.
- Push for Fairtrade within tourist boards.
- If targets slip, do we lose Fairtrade status?

Conclusions

The organising working group was authorised to make the preparations for an official launch conference of a Scottish Fair Trade Forum no later than September of this year. The working group was also authorised to bring forward at that conference a detailed proposal for the establishment of a Scottish Fair Trade Forum and an allied full-time Fair Trade Development Officer based on the consensus agreed at this first conference in Perth.

Appendix 1 - Morning workshops

Group 1 (Chair: John McAllion)

Structure

- There was a clear consensus that the AGM of the Forum should elect a management Board or Committee.
- The group was divided in relation to whether the Management Board should be representative of the different sectors within the fair trade movement or whether it should consist of people with different kinds of expertise – e.g. Media and P.R. or advocacy skills etc.
- In the end, it was agreed that the Management Board should consist of elected representatives of the different fair trade sectors but that the Board would then be responsible for setting up specialist sub-committees and appointing to these sub committees people with appropriate expertise/skill.

Processes

- There was a prolonged discussion on how the Management Board might be elected.
- The final consensus was that the election should be based upon different sectors with each sector voting for its own representative at the AGM. The sectors identified were:
 - Business and retail
 - Education
 - NGOs
 - Churches
 - Local Fair Trade Groups
 - Local Authorities
 - Ethnic minority Groups
 - Remote areas
- The maximum size of the Board should be 12
- The Management Board should have the right to co-opt additional members on to the Board
- Board members should serve for three year terms with a third standing down at each AGM so as to keep the balance between experience and fresh talent.

Membership fees

- There should be a free website where people could register as supporters and keep up to date with the latest developments towards a Fair Trade Scotland
- There should be a variable membership fee based upon ability to pay – e.g. with NGOs paying more than fair trade groups or individuals.
- People who could not afford to pay for individual membership could become members through belonging to a group that was a member
- Some people from local authorities expressed the view that if we charged a significant sum (£250) for local authority membership it would simply prevent the local authority from spending that same sum on other fair trade items like banners.
- There was no consensus about the level of membership fee – although £5 was seen as the maximum for individual membership
- It was suggested that there should be a different membership fee for each of the separate sectors listed above.

Group 2 (Chair: Rachel Farey)

Structure

- The response to the proposals was generally positive; it should aim to combine sectoral representatives with geographic diversity. There were also concerns that the Forum should not be overly structured.
- It was felt that some interests that had not been identified should be included in any representative structure (e.g. business, trade unions, Scottish Youth Parliament). On the other hand, a committee which was too big (more than 12?) would not function well.
- The role of the Development Officer was seen as crucial – the job would involve a lot of referrals. A key role of the management committee would be to provide support to the DO. The DO would also need admin support.

Processes

- It was anticipated that the management committee would be elected at a forthcoming AGM. Until

then, people were happy for the present working group to continue.

- A suggestion was made that the management committee could be made up of one representative from each of the following groups (total 12): fair trade shops and businesses; wholesalers/distributors; campaigners; voluntary organisations; local authorities; schools; further and higher education; faith groups; trade unions; youth; action groups; tourism.
- The Development Officer should be able to use networks to draw on relevant expertise without every interest group needing to be represented on the management committee.
- There was some concern about introducing membership fees as this could exclude many smaller groups and could take up a lot of time in administration.
- Duncan Rees commented on the Welsh campaign. The assumption there was that Assembly funding would cease once Fair Trade Nation status was achieved, which was a strong reason to have membership fees (although they did turn a blind eye on occasions). Scotland however may be different. It had already been expressed in the plenary that the campaign was not just to achieve Fair Trade Nation status but to build on that. Continued funding from the Scottish Executive was seen as essential (and achievable).
- There was discussion of the pros and cons of relying on Executive funding. Perhaps a compromise would be to seek some financial support from the larger NGOs, businesses, etc. A suggestion was made to target those companies making money from Fairtrade but not 100% Fairtrade themselves.

Communications

- In terms of the role of the Forum, the key elements were seen as communication, co-ordination and information. There must be a good website, including a discussion forum. It was also agreed that there needed to be a regular printed newsletter (quarterly?).
- The Fairtrade Foundation would not be directly involved but would provide support and feed into the Forum's discussions. It was noted that a representative of the FTF attends meetings of the Welsh campaign.
- A particular point was made about the need to co-ordinate information about producer visits.

Group 3 (Chair: Neil Watt)

Structure

- Consensus on electing a central Management Committee of between 10-12 people.
- Majority of members elected to represent main sectors.
- Some members with specific skills (eg media) but need for flexibility.
- At least one representative for local groups, elected via regional pyramid structure.
- 2 permanent members.

Processes

- Chair elected by committee
- Quarterly AGM to coincide with All Party Group meetings.
- Transparent central mechanism to elect members to represent following sectors/groups:
 - Education
 - Media & PR
 - Lobbying and Advocacy
 - Regional Groups/Local Authorities
 - Procurement/Finance
 - Retail/Business
 - NGOs
 - National Organisations (eg trade unions)
 - Producers
 - Young People
- Membership fees based on Welsh breakdown. Voluntary for individuals.
- Greater contributions from Scottish Executive, bigger NGOs and businesses.
- Consensus on current interim arrangements.

Communications

- Develop dedicated website and e-forum.
- Important to also produce printed material, eg Newsletters.
- Use all networks available to disseminate news – churches, NGOs, Unions, email lists, politicians and media.

Remit

- Examine and revise Fair Trade Nation criteria.

- Awareness Raising
- Education, particularly on trade justice issues.
- Lobby MSPs, MPs, MEPs to act.
- Take long term view.
- Encourage a more participative society.
- Look at fair trade processes, eg mark ups on jarring.
- Look at fair trade in Scottish context, eg Scottish workers and farmers.

Group 4 (Chair: Carol Clarke)

Management committee

There should be a management committee, but it is important this comes from the grassroots. Business community, Trade Unions and Finance groups should also be represented.

Smaller working groups

Each member on the management group should report back to group they are representing. i.e. 32 local authorities should elect 1 representative who feeds back to the management group. Local groups should have a representative from north and south or east and west. These groups must be representative.

Process

- Election at annual AGM
- If seven rather than 6 groups management should be 14, two from each group.
- Membership necessary to enable everyone to vote or each representative group would recommend people (but would this ensure diversity?)

Membership fees

Strong disagreement on this, various comments included

- The Scottish Exec should pay for it.
- If the Scottish Exec paid we would be too dependent them.
- A token fee was suggested, but others felt this would be too costly to administer.
- There should be a sliding scale with big NGO's paying the most.
- What about sustainability
- Not good to start off relying on grants

Communications

- Each of us (all present) are responsible for spreading it through our networks
- Scottish Exec partnership libraries
- Website (funded by Scottish Exec)
- Local authority newsletter

How should we communicate and interact with members

- Website
- Each group have designated people whose responsibility is to feed back to its own constituency
- Remember not everyone has access to internet (I know it is available free to all in libraries)

Meeting frequency

- 1 AGM per year
- Management group depends on elected group

Remit of Forum

- Really push in procurement.
- Wider debate on Trade Justice – call Executive to account.
- Push for investment in development of more products (major disagreement on this within group – could be seen as an extension of FTF & BAFTS)
- Ensure ethical investment, pension funds etc (on a wish list)

Group 5 (Chair: Lexi Barnett)

Structure

- Both sectors and geography need to be represented. Preference for geographical groups, with sectoral steering groups within - easier to measure progress. Three tier structure proposed:

Eight geographical areas- each member elects the area committee, the area committee elects the national representative. People from different sectors would be present in the area group (along co-op model).

- Allows grassroots to feed in to local unit - local networks/groups would be on one axis, sectoral groups on another axis, with both overlapping and intertwined. (image of tartan was used to help visualise) Other forms of networking should not be excluded, and local authority support would be needed.
- Audit of our progress so far is essential.
- Annual conference should allow all to feed in, management committee should be elected from AGM (but no decision reached on how they would be elected)
- Development officer would need admin support e.g. forum secretariat, for feedback from national group to local groups, focus on enlargement, supporting new and existing groups and sharing experience/problem solving.

Processes

- Fees are good for sign up commitments, but need clarity and transparency on where they're spent. Can be used to ensure all local reps are able to attend meetings for e.g. Also possibility of voluntary contributions. Can't rely on funding from the Executive- too restrictive, top-down rather than bottom up.
- Group happy for existing working group to continue with organisation in the interim until forum can be established. They would like us to circulate a proposal of structure after the conference.
- No decision on fees to be taken until it is known and consulted upon where they will be spent.

Communications

- Video conferencing, online voting, tiered sign-in on website for individuals through to board members. Fees could be used to cover communication development costs.
- Not everyone has internet, important to have ability to send paper newsletters, fees could cover this. A good structure for communications means the committees won't need to meet in person so often.
- A meeting calendar should be set out as far in advance as possible to enable those travelling from afar to attend as often as possible.

Publicity is also a part of communications - idea put forward that a Fair Trade Scotland Tartan could be commissioned to reflect the entwined nature of sectors/geography/individuals/grassroots/MSPs/Executive etc. within the forum.

Appendix 2 - Afternoon Workshops

1. Business and Retail (Chair: Phil Cotton)

- It is imperative to raise awareness of Fair Trade amongst businesses, perhaps by using:
 - Web-links, LAAs, Chambers of Commerce
 - Trades Unions to promote to the large organisations
 - Certification, Fair Trade wholesalers and retailers
- Develop individual campaign cards, tools to encourage/enable people to campaign.
- There is need for clarification on what are 'Fair Trade' goods and 'Fairly Traded' (also is Fair Trade one word or two?).
- Create a logo for Scotland as a Fair Trade country.
- Create customer awareness of Fair Trade educate staff, show comparison of costs between Fair Trade and non-Fair Trade.
- Compile a percentage of listed Scottish companies using Fair Trade.
- Create a wholesale database- suppliers for businesses
- How can we measure the number of Fair Trade products bought? Co-op example, examine the status of Fair Trade goods (when so many non-Fair Trade goods are also available).
- Measure percentage of market-share.
- Promotion of Trade Justice issues
- Fair Trade accreditation for businesses- use a logo, marker for quality.
- Separate businesses i.e. workplaces that BUY Fair Trade products e.g. accountancy firms and retailers that SELL Fair Trade products e.g. supermarkets, catering, tourism. [These are two different groups that must be represented separately].

Competitive awards for Fair Trade workplaces (but this may potentially lead to unethical policies).

2. Public Procurement (Chair: Gerry Hendricks)

- How can small bodies get into public procurement?
- Scotland can't be a Fairtrade Nation unless we get public procurement right.
- Can Fairtrade/ labour policies be included in public authority conditions?
- It is important to address wider trade justice issues, including trade justice in Scotland and not only in developing countries.
- There is need to address the licensing laws for selling Fairtrade products in Scotland.

Can the Forum act as 'ethical advisors' to public procurement agencies? Emphasis was placed on this issue during discussion.

3. Education (Chair: Sally Romilly)

- The Forum should aim to develop a criteria for all educational sectors/groups both formal and non-formal.

- Must be clear on the meaning of Fair Trade, Fairtrade, Fairly Traded and Trade Justice - they do not all mean the same thing!
- Should compile information on the number/proportion of Fair Trade schools and schools working towards the award.
- It is important to develop measurable objectives.
- Fair Trade must be for the right reasons- it is not just about achieving an award!

How can we establish representation for education on the management group?

- Education sub group:- Primary, Secondary, 3rd level, Local Authorities, Non-gov. pupils, Non-formal
- Must have knowledge of curriculum and Fair Trade
- Regional groups with education representatives feeding back to main representative
- Scottish Commissioner for young people?
- Key individuals: someone with time, someone who can represent all sectors and liase, good communication. Post must be advertised.

Group 4: Fair Trade Action Groups & Local Authorities: (Chair: Sue Good)

- Develop easy short term targets and more challenging longer term objectives (compromise)- some amount of 'shelf life' is desirable!
- It is up to grass roots organisations to sustain the involvement. Should resolutions be imposed? (possible backlash!).
- Measurable Countrywide Criteria:
 - 100% = good target (local authorities).
 - How does local authority achieve Fair Trade status (county) - no criteria.
 - 100% cities = achieved.
 - 55% towns (% of towns in local authority?).
 - 75% and 40% are meaningless - how is this evaluated? One geobar a year?
- Parliament:
 - Annual public statement- but statement is not enough!
 - Should ONLY use Fair Trade.
 - Fair Trade fortnight if there is nothing on the Scottish Executive website now, something must be put on now.
 - Fair Trade only at all outlets of the Scottish Executive.
 - Devise and implement pro Fair Trade public sector procurement, not just best value but social justice (not just tea and coffee!).
- Schools = essential, filtered up from primary school. Eco school? (Is this measurable?).
- Campaigning on Trade Justice.
- How to establish a representative sectoral group?
 - Difficult to go across all groups.
 - Open to those prepared to come to forum.
 - Potential conflict of political views- SNP v Labour etc...
 - Groups must talk to one another.
 - Avoid too many meetings.

Group 5: Fair Trade Action Groups and Local Authorities (Chair: Maureen Brough)

Measurable Fair Trade criteria

- Target fair trade people as a priority and set realistic figures
- Achieve Fair Trade nation status over a longer period with slower build up using sliding scale of criteria
- When target are achieved, will this act as a disincentive to smaller groups?

- If target figures slip, do we stop being a Fair Trade Nation?

Parliament

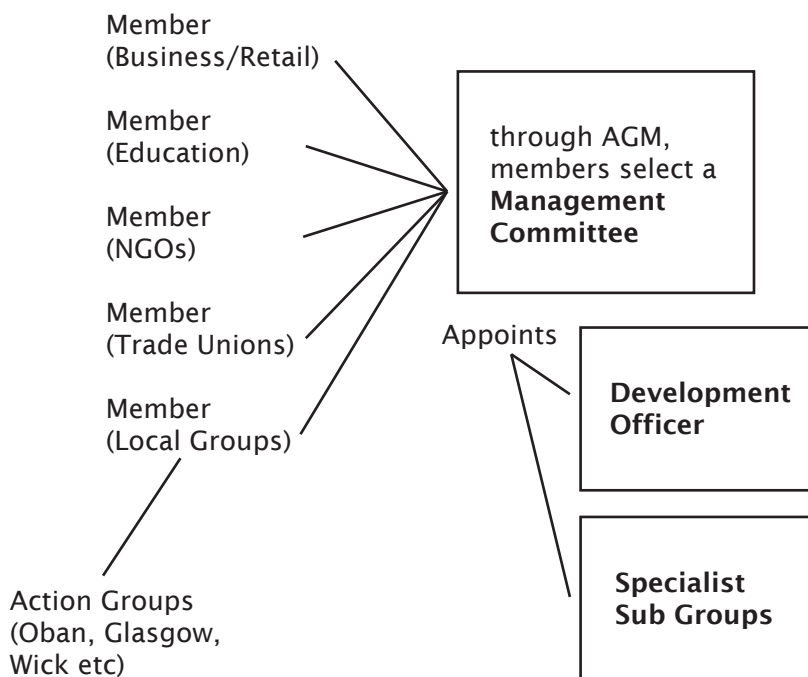
- Use Fair Trade logo around Parliament
- Parliament to use only Fair Trade goods
- A Fair Trade shop inside the parliament building
- MSPs to declare their Fair Trade interests in a register to show that they are not just concerned with Fair Trade issues during Fair Trade Fortnight.
- Emphasise trade justice
- Can “promotion” be defined to include support (financial) to include local shops
- Tourist Boards should be Fair Trade
- Fair Trade footballs to be used at all sporting events
- National Fair Trade Marketing campaign

Government

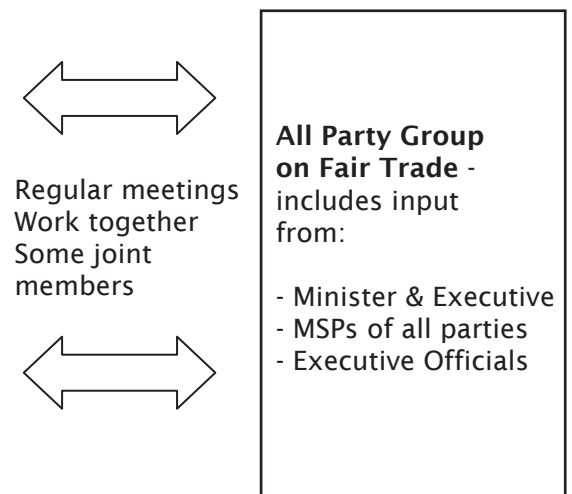
- Work towards integration of fair trade/trade justice principles in economic development and international trade policies.

Appendix 3 - Structure of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum

Fair Trade Movement side



Political/Govt side



National Fair Trade Forum