How to...plan a fundraising dinner

1. Determine the theme for your fundraising dinner and source a suitable restaurant or if you enjoy cooking you could host something at home. You will need to consider how many guests you plan to invite and how much you hope to raise from your event.
2. Contact a restaurant or plan your own menu.Agree a date for your dinner, negotiate the menu and costs. Try to keep costs to a minimum. The restaurant may offer you a reduced rate if you host your event on an evening when trade is normally quiet as this will boost custom for the restaurant! You might find a restaurant which fits well with your Global Village destination, for example the local Indian Restaurant.
3. Work out a suggested donation per person. This will be based on the cost of reserving your venue plus the cost of food, you fundraising target for the event and the estimated number of guests. By asking for a donation rather than a fixed ticket price for your event, Habitat NI is able to claim Gift Aid! Ask your guests to complete a Gift Aid form for all donations they make to Habitat NI. Contact the Habitat NI office to make use of our donation envelopes at your event.
4. Create invitations and other marketing materials to promote your fundraising dinner. Get friends and family to help you spread the word. Remember to use Social Media. It may be helpful to set a closing date after which you will no longer take bookings. This should encourage people to book early and help you gauge numbers. Print your own tickets, or create a master list of guests as individuals confirm attendance.
5. Determine your final number of guests after the closing date and contact your venue with the numbers
6. Plan activities to entertain your guests throughout the evening and boost your fundraising potential**.** Can you make use of any contacts to line up a band to donate their time as entertainment? You could also organize a raffle or auction and sell tickets on the night. Keep costs to a minimum by asking friends or local businesses to donate prizes. Make sure you have materials and if possible a powerpoint or film to showcase the work of Habitat and how their funds will help families in need.
7. Create a simple menu or programme outlining the evening's events and ensure you have sufficient donation envelopes, collection tins for raffle donations and any resources needed to decorate your venue.