# Warm Spaces Food Safety Information

If you are preparing food for a community meal, it is important to make sure that the food is prepared safely and hygienically and that those who receive the food know what it contains. It is advised you try and keep community meals simple to minimise risk, create vegetarian meals where possible or minimise raw preparation. For example you can purchase pre prepared meat that can be put straight into a pan or oven, like mince for Spaghetti Bolognese. Try and cook meals and serve straight away, this reduces the need to cool foods, store and re-heat.

Whilst the requirements listed below are not an exhaustive list, they are some key principles that you must consider and implement in order to ensure that you prepare food safely and comply with Food Hygiene legislation when preparing meals for community groups.

Further information on each of these points is given on the next pages

Register with the Local Authority:

1. Provide a documented Food Safety Management System
2. Have evidence of Food hygiene training (level 2)
3. Provide adequate hand wash facilities
4. Kitchen structure
5. Fitness to work
6. Protect all foods and equipment from contamination
7. Temperature control
8. Chill down hot food
9. Employ a diligent stock rotation system
10. Allergens

**Further Advice**

The Food Standard Agency has lots of free information for new businesses of all kinds:

[www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events](https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events)

[www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-safety-for-community-cooking-and-food-banks](https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-safety-for-community-cooking-and-food-banks)

[www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/setting-up-a-food-business](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/setting-up-a-food-business)

You can also contact the Environmental Health team at Stroud District Council for advice.

Email: [Environmental.health@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:Environmental.health@stroud.gov.uk)

Also be aware of the new PPDS laws that came into force on 1st October 2021:

[www.food.gov.uk/allergen-labelling-changes-for-prepacked-for-direct-sale-ppds-food](http://www.food.gov.uk/allergen-labelling-changes-for-prepacked-for-direct-sale-ppds-food)

1. **You will need to register with the Local Authority:**

A food business is anyone preparing, cooking, storing, handling, distributing, supplying or selling food. Once registered you will receive an awaiting inspection letter and an officer will then carry out an unannounced initial food hygiene inspection when you are operating. You can begin providing food prior to your initial inspection.

Registration can be done for free on the Stroud District Council website below:

[www.stroud.gov.uk/business/licensing-permits/food-premises-registration](https://www.stroud.gov.uk/business/licensing-permits/food-premises-registration.)

1. **Provide a documented Food Safety Management System**

You must be able to demonstrate that you have thought through all the hazards that can make your food unsafe to eat and put in place suitable controls to ensure these hazards are managed effectively. You must also by law record this system, in proportion to the activities that occur in your kitchen. The easiest way for small businesses to comply with this requirement is to use the Food Standards Agency’s Safer Food Better Business Pack, this is free to download and you can then print it and complete as applicable

[www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.food.gov.uk%2fbusiness-guidance%2fsafer-food-better-business-for-caterers&c=E,1,jMw86o5DvP8uceMtpHki5fFUjqrE4YFdotO471rSPCaRSdFh62DIN10TbovdRz0sxs6DcMAXSat3PZm54rVyUqeYt5on5ePlFAhg8TxUSWuVq_Ycuvo2pNsk&typo=1)

1. **Evidence of Food hygiene training (level 2)**

This is required for all those handling food and working unsupervised or independently. It would be advisable to have a few trained staff/ volunteers and to ensure that someone with a level 2 food hygiene training is always on-site during the meal preparation and service, in order to supervise volunteers who have not undertaken any food hygiene training. You should also ensure that volunteers are trained in food hygiene and safety basics to ensure that they are preparing food safely. The Safer Food Better Business pack mentioned above is a brilliant tool for training staff. Ensure volunteers read and understand and follow the documented safe methods in the pack, there is also a training section that allows volunteers to sign to evidence that this training has been undertaken.

1. **Ensure that you provide adequate hand wash facilities**

There must be hand wash facilities separate to other food/ equipment washing sinks. You cannot include hand wash sinks in the toilets as separate hand wash facilities. There must be a dedicated hand wash basin within the kitchen. Hand washing facilities must have a supply of hot and cold or appropriately mixed hot water, antibacterial soap and hand drying facilities (ideally disposable towels).

1. **Kitchen structure**

All surfaces within the food preparation area (work surfaces, floors, walls, ceilings, shelving, food contact and storage surfaces) must smooth, impervious, easy to clean and where necessary disinfect, made of non-toxic materials and be maintained in a clean and sound condition.

1. **Fitness to work**

Ensure that high levels of personal hygiene are maintained and that clean clothing is provided for food handlers. Staff & Volunteers should be ‘fit for work’ at all times. This means that they must not be suffering from, or carrying, an illness or disease that could cause a problem with food safety. food handlers who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not prepare or handle food until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours

1. **Ensure that all foods and equipment are protected from contamination**

You must also ensure that you have systems in place to prevent harmful cross-contamination when preparing food.

* Ensure separation between raw and ready to eat foods at all times
* Always store raw foods below ready to eat foods in the fridge
* Cover cooked foods and other raw and ready-to-eat food using lids, foil or cling film.
* Prepare raw foods in different areas. If this is not possible, separate by preparing them at different times to ready-to-eat foods and thoroughly clean and disinfect between tasks using the ‘2 stage clean with an antibacterial sanitiser’. Where possible, ready-to-eat food preparation should take place before raw food preparation. Dedicated coded chopping boards and utensils should be used.

1. **Temperature control**

Foods must be subject to temperature control requirements. It is recommended that fridges should be set at 5°C or below. This is to make sure that chilled food is kept at 8°C or below. This is a legal requirement in England. You should check the temperature of your fridges at least once a day.

* Chilled foods in the fridge should be stored at 8oC or below
* Food in Freezers should be stored at -18oC or below
* Ensure cooked foods reach 75oC or above (use a temperature probe to check this)
* If you are keeping food hot for more than 2 hours it must remain above 63oC
* When you display cold food (e.g. on a buffet) you should use suitable chilled display equipment to keep it at 8°C or below. If this is not possible there is a ‘4 hour rule’ exception: You can display food out of chilled storage for up to four hours, but you can only do this once.

1. **Chilling down hot food**

Harmful bacteria can grow in food that is not chilled down as quickly as possible. You should aim to cool foods to 8oC within 1 ½ hours from cooking. If you have cooked food that you will not serve immediately, chill it down as quickly as possible and then put it in the fridge. Some useful ways to do this include; Dividing food into smaller portions, cutting joints of meat in half, spreading food out on a tray e.g. rice, or using iced/ cold water in a sink to cool pots of stews, soups etc., stir regularly to cool down quickly.

1. **Ensure that employ a diligent stock rotation system**

Ensure that you check the *use-by* dates on the products that you are using. The *use-by* date is the date until which the manufacturer of the food guarantees it is safe to eat. Check and follow the *use-by* dates of the food you serve. Food cannot be supplied in any circumstances if its *use-by* date has passed. This also applies if you are supplying people with packaged food from a food bank.

1. **Allergens**

You must ensure you can correctly communicate any allergens within your foods to the consumer. Please also provide some signage to direct customers to speak to a staff member if they have an allergy. Please see the attached link for further advice:

[www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.food.gov.uk%2fbusiness-guidance%2fallergen-guidance-for-food-businesses&c=E,1,NBV3mjuM-iBA3EOCZqV892TZwexPFF3FT8WBOgEbOy7z_8HxuW2x3NFzTzIFNEPeojnyphk5gTkNaxeIw4RLa6oM5SXWQSX2VAkU9Fj5Ba6yvNTlEz1seztacA,,&typo=1)