

## Food safety guidance for shared kitchens in church and village halls, community rooms and sports clubs

**Our Food and Occupational Safety team are responsible for enforcing food safety within the Harrogate district, church and village halls, community rooms and sports club kitchens.**

This type of premises are often the centre of community life and are used for various functions throughout the year including wedding receptions, children's parties, scout groups and many other social and fund raising activities. The catering at these events may be carried out by professional caterers or by a number of volunteers joining together. This raises a number of key food safety issues that you must consider.

This guide provides key information to anyone running, operating or hiring catering facilities in communal halls or similar establishments where occasional food handling takes place.

This could be at social or fund raising events whether or not for profit. You might only provide drinks and biscuits or hire the kitchen to other users but there are still food safety issues you need to consider.

### Registering your business

If you fall into any of the above categories you may have already registered with our Food, Licensing and Occupational Safety team.

If you have a shared kitchen that is available for hire and if you do not operate a regular food business, such as a lunch club you may not need to be registered and subject to inspection by an Environmental Health Officer.

The Food Standards Agency has issued guidance on the application of food hygiene law. This guidance can be found at [www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events](http://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/providing-food-at-community-and-charity-events) - FSA Guidance

If you are a new venue or not yet registered, and you regularly prepare or serve food, you are required to register 28 days before using the facility by completing a Food Premises registration form. You can do this on-line at [www.harrogate.gov.uk/myservices](http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/myservices). There is no charge.

### Safer Food Better Business

'Safer Food Better Business' is a pack produced by the Food Standards Agency which can help you with the management of food safety. It is based on the 4Cs:



To manage your food operations it is recommended that you use this pack. You can view and download a pack for free on the Food Standards Agency website at [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers)

The symbols indicated in the information following will help you identify which of the 4Cs apply.

## General – conditions of hire



### Q. Is it the responsibility of the kitchen user to make food safely?

- A. Yes - but there are certain things which need clarifying between yourself and the hirer at the time of booking. Conditions of hire may include the following:
- Arrangements for ensuring the refrigerators are switched on in sufficient time to make sure they are cold enough
  - Who will switch on water heaters to ensure adequate hot water is available?
  - What cleaning arrangements are already in place and what is the hirer expected to do?
  - How waste food is to be stored and disposed of after the event
  - What cleaning materials should be provided by the hirer?

## Structural requirements



### Q. Our kitchen is only used now and then, does it still have to be fitted to a commercial standard?

- A. No - the law does not require that your kitchen is fitted out to a commercial standard. However the kitchen/preparation area must be kept in good repair and be of sufficient size for the type and quantity of catering to be carried out.

Most domestic grade finishes will satisfy these criteria, the minimum requirements being that:

- **walls, floors, ceilings and work surfaces** – must be in good repair and easy to clean
  - **wash basins** – should ideally be separate and additional to the sink unit, but a half bowl section to the main kitchen sink may suffice for hand washing in some circumstances. Hot and cold water must be available; soap and hand drying facilities are also needed
  - a minimum of **one sink** will be needed which is large enough to wash any equipment or food. A supply of hot and cold water should be provided.
  - **ventilation** – must be appropriate for cooking being carried out. If you have a cooker, you will need extract ventilation either directly over the cooker or an extraction fan fitted into either the ceiling, wall or window. Where very little fumes or heat are generated it may be sufficient to open a window for ventilation providing that this does not allow access for pests.
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## Kitchen equipment



### Q. Won't the user group or outside caterers bring their own equipment with them?

A. Possibly yes, but to promote food safety, you must still provide the following:

- a refrigerator for ready to eat food. This is important as food poisoning can occur due to inadequate temperature control.
- a suitably sized washable bin with a close fitting lid.
- however a supply of the following would also be useful in the kitchen:
  - refrigerator thermometer
  - digital probe thermometer with probe wipes
  - supply of disposable dishcloths
  - bin liners
  - food safe detergents and disinfectants
  - colour coded chopping boards
  - brushes and mop and buckets.

## Food handling and safety



### Q. Can volunteers prepare food at home?

A. It is always better to prepare food in a registered premises, where the kitchen is inspected by the Local Authority. If volunteers do make food occasionally in their own home kitchens you must be satisfied that they are following these rules:

- **pets** and/or children must not be fed or allowed into a shared kitchen whilst food is being prepared
  - many domestic kitchens contain a washing machine. No **dirty laundry** should be brought into the kitchen whilst preparing food
  - a **clean apron** or overall should always be worn
  - any **personal items** generally found in a domestic kitchen e.g. plants, keys, money etc. should be removed from work surfaces prior to food preparation as they could potentially contaminate food
  - frequent **hand washing** is essential. Do not use your tea towel as a hand towel!
  - fabric tea towels and dishcloths should be avoided in favour of **disposable cloths** e.g. kitchen rolls and j cloths etc.
  - if you are involved in preparing ready to eat foods you must ensure they are **refrigerated** whenever possible.
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**Q. My volunteers prepare sandwiches at home every week to bring in and serve at our premises. Is this OK?**

A. **NO** - if you find your volunteers are regularly preparing ready to eat food at home for functions, meal clubs etc. you must contact us for further advice.

## Volunteers



**Q. All our food handlers are volunteers. Do they have to have any formal food hygiene training?**

A. It depends on what food is being prepared and served. Persons who prepare and handle food e.g. sandwiches, cooked meats, hot lunches should be supervised, instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters. Ideally, when the volunteer rotas are drawn up, one person on each shift should have a minimum of Level 2 food hygiene training. It may be possible to arrange training onsite for your volunteers with an appropriate company if there are a sufficient number. For those volunteers who have no food hygiene training whatsoever it may be useful to initially to send them this information, which includes the 10 top tips for food handlers (located on the last page).

## Cleaning



**Q. Who is responsible for keeping the food preparation areas clean?**

A. There will be joint responsibility between the hirer and the caterer to keep the kitchen clean. Some premises employ a separate cleaner and it is up to you to decide if the kitchen is included in their rota. If you do not employ cleaners then each user of the facilities should be made aware of their responsibilities to clean up properly, remove refuse etc. after their session. This should be made clear in the hire agreement.

**Q. What cleaning equipment and materials should be available?**

A. It is important to provide the basic equipment and cleaning materials for use in your kitchen. Any mops, buckets, cloths etc, should be for use solely in the kitchen to prevent cross infection from other areas. An adequate supply of cleaning chemicals to clean and disinfect the kitchen should be available.

## Cleaning



**Q. I have heard that I need to employ a pest control contractor, is this true?**

A. No - but you must regularly check for signs of infestation in your premises. Simple measures like routine cleaning, removing rubbish regularly and keeping doors and windows closed when preparing food will help reduce the risk of pest infestation. However if you see any evidence of pests you may need to seek professional help.

## 10 top tips for food handlers

1. Always wash your hands before starting food preparation, after cooking raw food, eating, smoking or going to the toilet
2. Always wear clean overalls or aprons whilst preparing food
3. Do not prepare or display food too far in advance
4. 'Clean as you go' and regularly disinfect surfaces that come in contact with food
5. Keep raw and cooked food apart
6. Keep food out of the 'DANGER ZONE' (8°C – 63°C)
7. Do not cough or sneeze over food
8. Cover cuts or sores with a waterproof dressing
9. Do not leave buffet food out in a warm environment
10. Do not handle food if you have had vomiting or diarrhoea in the last 48 hours.

For further information on food safety please contact:

Safer Communities

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Telephone 01423 500600 ext 58515

Email: [foodandoccupationalafety@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:foodandoccupationalafety@harrogate.gov.uk)