



Funded by
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Shared Community Kitchens

Good Practice Guide & Community Tool Kit

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FOOD
Vale



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1. Introduction

This document has been prepared for Food Vale, the sustainable food partnership for the Vale of Glamorgan with support from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

It is intended as an introductory guide for organisations considering setting up or operating from a shared, community kitchen. The document does not replicate or replace regulatory guidance on food safety but can be a helpful starting point to assist in early discussions with local Environmental Health teams.

You may be looking to work together to provide nutritious meals for the local community and need general advice on how to get started. You may want to offer training in basic cooking and healthy eating. Or you may already host a community kitchen and want to expand and encourage wider community use.

Whatever you intend to do, you are strongly recommended to hold early discussions with the Environmental Health team at the Vale of Glamorgan's Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Wales ([link HERE](#)) and explore more detailed guidance and advice from the Food Standards Agency web site ([link HERE](#)).

The guide draws on research work and local consultations carried out by economic development consultants **per Consulting**, working in association with **Lafan Consulting** who specialise in the development of local food supply chains.

There is considerable potential and community interest across the Vale of Glamorgan to encourage stronger links with our local food producers, demonstrate the benefits of healthy eating, better manage food surplus and foster people's confidence with cooking from scratch through basic skill development.

No individual organisation, however, is yet ready to launch a community kitchen. This document will, therefore, guide people through some practical steps and issues to address and signpost you to sources of further information and more formal guidance, especially around food safety.

The guide addresses the following sections

- What is a Community Kitchen Chapter 2
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Please Note This toolkit has been prepared in all good faith to support people considering the potential for a local Community Kitchen. It provides general guidance and suggestions of good practice. It is not intended as a definitive guide nor does it remove your own responsibility for understanding and complying with the law and other food safety regulations as they may apply to you and potentially change in future.

To ensure compliance with the latest regulations readers should contact the Environmental Health team at the Vale of Glamorgan's Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Wales ([link HERE](#)) and explore more detailed guidance and advice from the Food Standards Agency web site ([link HERE](#)).



2. What is a Community Kitchen?

Community kitchens, also known as collective kitchens or shared kitchens, are spaces where individuals and groups can typically come together to prepare meals collectively. The concept is perhaps rooted in the idea of pooling resources, time, and effort to produce meals at a lower cost and supporting others in learning how to cook. The meals produced may be distributed among participants or served to those in need depending on the operating model, provided all relevant food safety standards and regulations are met.

There are of course significant challenges in meeting rigorous food safety regulations whilst using shared kitchen facilities. The regulations and licencing requirements will also differ depending on whether you are serving food direct to the consumer or through other organisations. Early engagement with local Environmental Health teams is essential.

Many community centres throughout the Vale of Glamorgan already have informal, domestic style kitchen spaces, sufficient for preparing light meals or snacks for a community event.



However, there is increasing interest in more commercial facilities spurred on by the cost of living crisis, the drive to mitigate against food waste and rising awareness of local food sourcing.

As a result, there is growing interest in a more formal approach to community kitchens which are collaborative food programs designed to address food insecurity, promote social interaction, and provide nutritious meals to local communities.

Our research and consultation with people across the Vale of Glamorgan has identified local interest in Community Kitchens which can:



Encourage Cooking Skills to build people's confidence with food and encourage healthy eating.



Add Value to Surplus Food through production of simple, nutritious meals and make use of larger catering packs of surplus food.



Promote Use of Local Produce by encouraging more local growing and cooking with fresh produce to raise awareness and demand, supporting the community to create healthy and affordable meals.

3. Potential Kitchen Facilities

The different purposes of a Community Kitchen, whether the focus is on training, cooking and serving community meals on site or the production of chilled or even frozen meals for community distribution will have different demands on the kitchen equipment, space required, layout and configuration as well as food safety regulations. This can vary from informal domestic spaces, full commercial style kitchens through to a food manufacturing set up.

Crucially all potential kitchen facilities must be structurally sound and pest-proofed to prevent the access and ingress of pests and vermin.

There are a range of existing facilities available across the Vale of Glamorgan including fully commercial kitchens such as those at the Cardiff and Vale College in Barry. Many will have constraints on availability for shared use and there will also be strict conditions for use ensuring Food Safety Standards are maintained. Further details on some of the available spaces is set out later in this Section of the Tool Kit.



First, we highlight some key issues to consider in determining whether an existing kitchen may be appropriate for your intended use or if you are considering potential to refurbish/improve an existing kitchen facility.

Space Required

Commercial catering kitchens typically operate a rule of thumb to provide c0.5 m² of kitchen space for every seat in the front of house. This suggests serving say 40 – 80 seated diners will require kitchen space of between will require 20 - 40 m² (215 -430 sq ft). Of course this can be reduced significantly if running a simple menu and service system.

Careful consideration will need to be given to the layout of the kitchen facility ensuring safety of people in the kitchen (sufficient space to move around), simplifying the production process (depending on menu) and reducing risks of cross contamination.

It will also be important to establish clear separation of areas for staff hand washing, food storage, food prep, cooking, serving and/or cooling/chilling, washing up, cleaning and waste disposal.

Kitchen Finishes

Normal domestic style kitchen fittings can be perfectly serviceable for use as an informal Community Kitchen.

However, they are designed (and priced) for light use and can become a hygiene risk with wear and tear.

Stainless steel tends to be the choice for fully commercial kitchens to withstand heavy use and with non-porous surfaces, made for easy cleaning. With continued improvements in materials other options are also emerging providing semi-commercial finishes using lighter powder coated finishes. A quick internet search will identify numerous providers such as, for example, Steelplan Kitchens ([link HERE for further information](#)) who specialise in design and fitting various facilities for community centres, schools and emergency services.

Fundamentally, all surfaces in contact with food must be of a sound condition, easy to clean, smooth, washable, corrosion-resistant, and of non-toxic materials.

Essential Equipment

The basic equipment to be expected will typically include oven, hob, microwave, washing facilities (not necessarily commercial dishwasher but

depends on scale of operation), pots, pans, mixing bowls, general utensils, crockery and cutlery. Adequate hand washing facilities will be required for staff, together with hygienic hand drying facilities, separate from the food handling areas.

Each kitchen should also have an adequate supply of hot and cold (and/or a mixed supply) of potable water to meet strict hygiene requirements.

Consideration will also need to be given to the allocation of food storage, refrigerator and freezer space and whether specialist equipment will need to be acquired such as blast chill/freezer and food labelling equipment if preparing meals for sale or free distribution.

Utilities

The cost of running an intense kitchen facility should not be under-estimated especially given the rising cost of energy in recent years. Opportunities to introduce solar power in new or refurbished spaces should be explored where possible. Provision of 3-phase power supply can also help future proof a very busy kitchen running a lot of electrical equipment at the same time.

Community Meals / Shared Use Kitchens

Our research has identified numerous examples of successful community kitchens throughout the UK. Much can be achieved with relatively modest facilities as evidenced in the two summary Case Study examples overleaf for Victoria Park Community Centre in Barry and Abergavenny Community Centre, Monmouthshire.



Case study example:

Victoria Park/Cadoxton Community Centre & School



Making the most of its kitchen facilities with a qualified cook/co-ordinator managing the facility (funded through Greggs Foundation Grant) and working in partnership with the adjacent primary school and Big Bocs Bwyd food pantry.

The wider food projects develop food literacy for the children, making sure there is access to good nutritious food and also encouraging inter-generational support in the community.

Regular activities include:

- Teaching sessions (Ready Steady Cook) for pupils & parents
- Good Food Café on a “pay as you feel” basis
- Soup and song activity every Tuesday afternoon
- Wednesday breakfast club funded by a local philanthropist.

Primary School pupils are closely involved in creating menu cards, helping to prepare some of the food and serving local residents.

Further information, follow the [link HERE](#)



Case study example:

Abergavenny Community Kitchen



The Abergavenny Community Centre is located in the former Park Street infant school. Run by the Abergavenny Community Trust the small Kitchen area was refurbished in 2016 and deliberately designed to meet professional standards for food safety and hygiene and is the beating heart of the centre

The kitchen is now “future-proofed” with 3-phase power, 6 hob oven, industrial standard dishwasher, and stainless steel work surfaces. The adjacent hall accommodates 80 diners with a variety of regular events hosted promoting, simple, healthy meals created by volunteers together with Cooking Skills for Life, pop-up training and other community events. Further information, follow the [link HERE](#)



Case study example:

Cegin Hedyn Community Kitchen – Carmarthen



A community kitchen, allotment and “pay what you can canteen”, Cegin Hedyn operates weekly from The Lammas Street Community Centre in Carmarthen.

Supported by customers, suppliers & volunteers it aims to provide good food for local people, no matter what their financial situation.



Established by Chef Deri Reed in 2022, the project celebrated winning the BBC Food & Farming Award for Community Champion in 2024. Deri also runs his own award winning, sustainable, community driven restaurant in Carmarthen with a strong philosophy of putting people and planet first.



Established in 2016, it serves simple, honest and wholesome food, focussing on also encouraging inter-generational support in the community.

Run as a Community Interest Company, all profits go towards community development programmes to inspire and build local resilience. Deri was, however, initially supported with business start-up funding from the Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs, UnLtd ([link HERE](#)).



The kitchen now retains 6 part-time staff who are all self-employed but contracted to work with the Community Kitchen and supported by additional volunteers. Deri confirms the importance of qualifications and training to maintain high standards of food safety and recommends all staff are at least trained to L2 Food Safety and Level 3 for team leaders.

Despite its modest kitchen facilities, the team regularly serve 100 – 120 meals each week. This is enabled through careful menu selection, a focus on plant based produce (thereby also avoiding added hygiene risks from handling raw meat) as well as supporting local produce and a well thought out structured process of preparation, washing, cooking, cleaning and washing up at the end of service. Further information, follow the [link HERE](#)



Each of these Case Studies show how food and cooking can galvanise local community cohesion and inter-generational benefits.

Community Cooking is a core part of the community centre offer in these examples and other evidence shows how this works best in a structured, organised way with dedicated and trained cook/co-ordinators providing leadership for community volunteers.

This also ensures legal obligations for food safety are maintained in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1990 (See further details in Chapter 4).

There are various Community Centres throughout the Vale of Glamorgan managed either by Community Associations or Town Councils. Most contain one or two open plan halls supported by a small, basic kitchen which typically caters for re-heating food brought onto the premises or small batch party catering at the venue and tea/coffee making facilities.

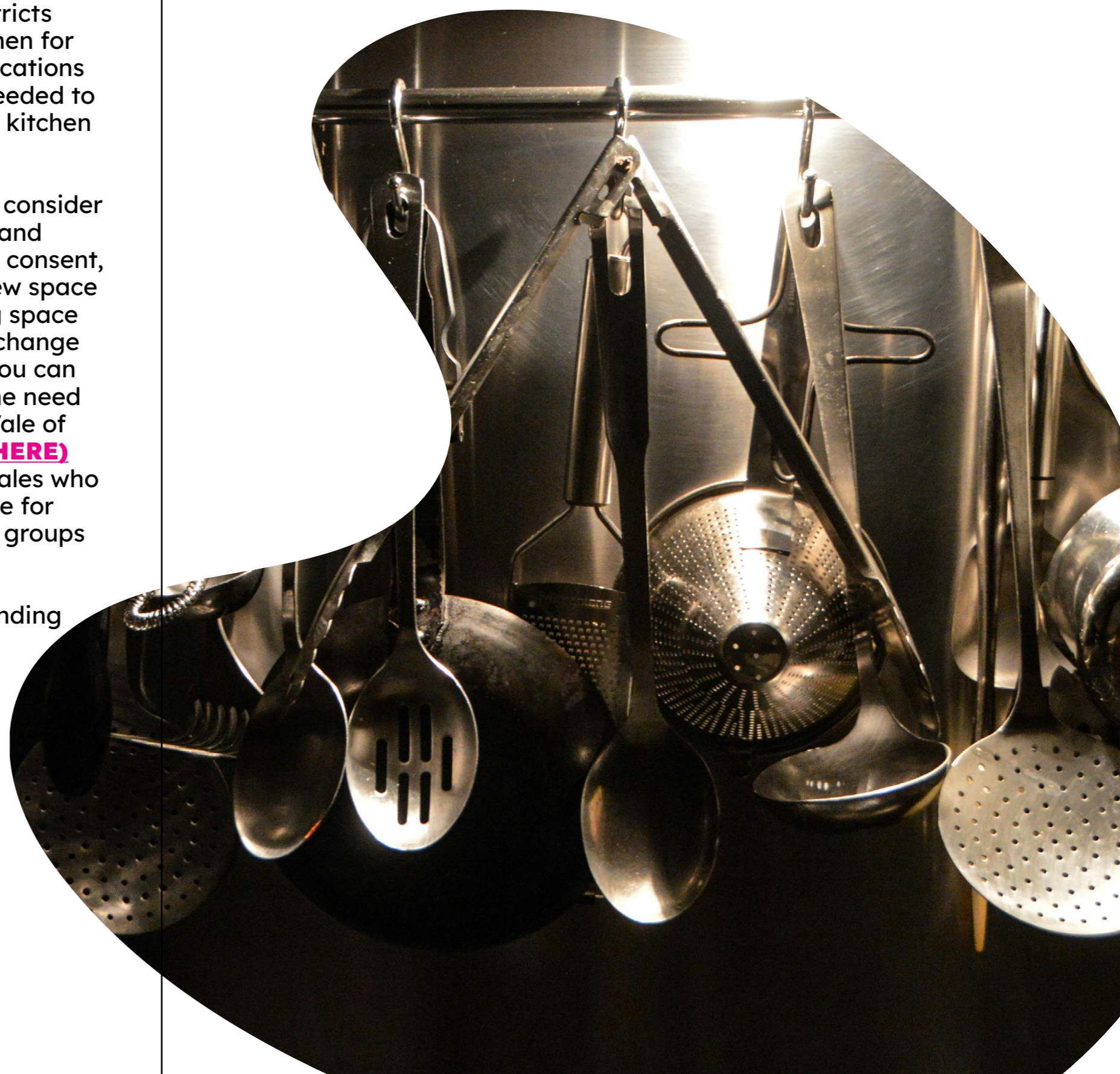
Although subject to change, the Centres are typically hired out at £10 to £18 an hour (including use of the kitchen) depending on whether a regular or occasional booking is made.

Extending Facilities

Most Community Centres are hugely popular with residents primarily making use of the open halls for local events and activities for all ages. This often restricts the availability of the kitchen for other users and in some locations new investment may be needed to develop a new community kitchen should demand emerge.

Organisations will need to consider the potential implications and possible need for planning consent, especially if developing new space or even extending existing space where there is significant change in external appearance. You can seek informal advice on the need for planning through the Vale of Glamorgan Council ([link HERE](#)) or contact Planning Aid Wales who offer a free helpline service for the public and community groups ([link HERE](#)).

Any public sector grant funding to develop new facilities is likely to need to be supported by a robust operational business plan and clear business case demonstrating the local community benefits.



Shipping Container Kitchens

Where existing space may be limited there is a growing trend towards creative use and adaptation of old shipping containers. There are numerous companies that provide bespoke fit-out services with a range of containers available from 10 – 20 – 40 feet long or more (all typically 8 ft wide) depending on requirements and available space.

These can be designed and fitted for professional kitchen use and would typically provide:

- Sealed and proofed structures to prevent access or ingress of pests.
- Hygienic surfaces, worktops, floors
- Ready plumbed for water connections and provision for sinks, dishwashers and toilet facilities if required.
- Electrical wiring and connections for ovens, fridges, freezers and mixers.
- Internal and external lighting
- Windows, staff doors and serving hatches as required

- Insulation and suitable air vents making the space comfortable all year round
- Internal storage, shelving and racking for food and materials

The external finish is also adaptable to meet your needs and can be either painted or timber clad. Prices will, of course, vary depending on size and specific layout requirements. By way of an example, Containers Direct web site provides further information and Case Studies [\(Link HERE\)](#)

Care will be needed in siting and positioning a container kitchen to connect to existing water supply, power and waste services. Specific planning consent is also likely to be needed.

A more sophisticated approach could bring a trolley type work station which could be used as the demonstration point or for individual use.

These can, however, be expensive in large numbers. The example illustrated costs around £1,400 from Edusentials [\(link HERE\)](#) and many other suppliers will be available.



Organisers will, however, need to have somewhere to store equipment either on or off-site as well as take time to transport and set-up.

Many Primary Schools in the Vale of Glamorgan are exploring innovative ways to link their community work via food pantries and community cafes and also engage with parents to introduce basic cooking skills and encourage confidence in the kitchen.

There may, however, be restrictions in the wider community use of such facilities in primary schools due to safeguarding issues and out of hours use. This may be overcome via structured and managed training delivery such as the “Little Cooks” programme being trialled in Cardiff by the Nutrition & Dietetic Therapy Service at the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board.

Local High Schools have more formal cooking stations for group teaching and enabling hands on practical skills. Some schools are open to the potential for shared use of facilities which help extend the delivery of cooking skills and engage with parents of pupils furthering community relationships.

There remain concerns of course around maintaining hygiene regulations and safety standards and will expect adequate health & safety supervision and high standards of cleaning after each lesson.



Chilled Meal Production

More extensive meal production will demand more sophisticated, commercial style kitchen facilities, depending on the intended scale of operation. There will also be different regulations for operations which supply direct to the consumer or indirectly through other organisations where there may be greater regulatory concerns about the suitability of a shared kitchen facility.

The Cardiff & Vale College operate two full-size commercial kitchens at the Colcot Road Campus in Barry. These will also be replaced when the College relocates to a new campus facility at Barry Waterfront in 2026/27.

The College is open to potential for shared use with experienced community groups provided appropriate food safety regulations are maintained and managed by qualified supervisors.

The College previously partnered with Fare Share Cymru in a Redistribution Kitchen pilot scheme where employed chefs and volunteers prepared, cooked and packaged over 4,000 meals for distribution to local charities and community groups.

Additional specialist equipment will be required for meal distribution including, for example, a rapid chiller or blast freezer and for packaging and labelling in accordance with food information requirements.

Further guidance and advice on setting up a food production facility and steps to take to meet food safety regulations can be obtained through Food Innovation Wales with support from Welsh Government. The South East Wales region is covered by ZERO2FIVE based at Cardiff Metropolitan University (see further details in the box below)



Food Industry Centre
Cardiff Metropolitan University

ZERO2FIVE

Canolfan Diwydiant Bwyd
Prifysgol Metropolitan Caerdydd

ZERO2FIVE is a purpose built centre to support the food and drink manufacturing industry in SE Wales.

Employing experienced food technologists, business specialists and academics they specialise in all aspects of food and drink innovation, manufacturing, commercial, operational and food safety.

ZERO2FIVE's facilities include a bakery, new product development kitchen, sensory analysis suite and a state of the art perceptual experience laboratory.

Further information, follow the [link](#) **HERE**

4. Meeting Food Safety Standards

All food supplied outside of the domestic and family setting is required **by law** to be safe to eat regardless of whether it is sold or free.

Anyone who sells, cooks, stores, handles, prepares or distributes food will be considered a “food business” and **MUST** register with the Local Authority at least 28 days before commencing operations. Further details on the regulations for food provided at community and charity events is available from the Food Standards Agency [\(HERE\)](#)

The premises to be used will then be inspected by Environmental Health Officers and will maintain regular checks on:

- How hygienically food is handled – prepared, cooked, re-heated, cooled and stored preventing contamination and cross-contamination during these process steps.
- The condition of the premises – cleanliness, (adequate and regular cleaning and disinfection), layout, lighting, ventilation, pest control and other facilities.

- How food is kept safe and management procedures – including food safety management system, handling processes, training and document procedures, systems to ensure good hygiene is maintained and adequate monitoring checks to ensure procedures are followed and maintained.

Once registered, the “awaiting inspection” notice must be displayed at the premises and replaced with the final Food Hygiene Rating once issued.



The detail and scope of food safety regulations are inevitably complex but absolutely essential for the protection of the public. An overview of the current legal framework information is presented overleaf.



Individuals, organisations and businesses failing to meet food safety standards and supplying unsafe food can potentially face criminal prosecutions and big fines.

This document can only highlight the main features of food safety regulations as they currently apply and it remains your own responsibility for understanding and complying with the law.

Further guidance and information on all relevant legislation is available from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) [\(link HERE\)](#).

The FSA also produce advice on Food Safety Management Procedures for small business which will also apply to community organisations. [\(Safer Food – Better Business link HERE\)](#).

Vale of Glamorgan’s Environmental Health team can be contacted on 0300 123 6696 [\(link HERE\)](#).

Food Safety Standards Legal Framework

All community kitchens and those organisations considering preparing food for the community **MUST** understand and comply with the following legal responsibilities:

- **Food Safety Act 1990 (UK):** Establishes obligations to ensure food is safe for consumption, is of the nature, substance or quality demanded by the consumer and is not falsely described.
- **The Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006:** outlines specific requirements for food hygiene.
- **The General Food Law Regulations 2004:** Sets out the obligation for food businesses to comply with assimilated Regulation (EC) 178/2002 on the overarching principles for food safety in the UK.
- **The Food Information (Wales) Regulations 2014:** Established requirements for accurate food information for all types of food including the provision of allergen information.
- **Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act 2013,** mandates organisations to be subject to the food hygiene rating scheme (including displaying an “awaiting inspection” sticker before inspection, then be awarded a rating after inspection. It is a legal requirement to display the rating.)



5. Food Safety Training & Qualifications

The law requires anyone handling food must be trained to an appropriate level. This is regardless of whether they are a paid employee or volunteer.

Formal, certified training is encouraged as best practice to demonstrate the training has been completed appropriately. Ideally, anyone in charge of the community kitchen or food business should be trained to a level higher than those they supervise.

The following minimum training levels are recommended:

Level 2 Food Safety – for most volunteers & staff

Level 3 Food Safety for managers/supervisors

There are separate qualifications depending on whether you are handling food in Catering / Retail or in a Manufacturing environment. An overview of each qualification level and an indication of potential costs is illustrated overleaf.

Whilst there are a variety of independent training organisations and the potential to take on-line courses, the more formal in person events are recommended to provide a greater level of confidence.

The Vale of Glamorgan's Shared Regulatory Services team is a registered training centre for the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and delivery of Highfield Courses (food training) with regular courses run locally in Cardiff, Barry and Bridgend

Further information is available from the [link HERE.](#)



Casual Volunteer	Regular Volunteer	Food Processing	Supervisor
<p>L1 Food Safety</p> <p>Introduction to food safety</p> <p>Microbiological hazards</p> <p>Food poisoning /control</p> <p>Contamination risk /controls</p> <p>Handling and storage of food</p> <p>Personal hygiene</p> <p>Food pests and pest control</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfection</p>	<p>L2 Food Safety (Catering & Retail)</p> <p>Food Safety</p> <p>Microbiological hazards</p> <p>Food poisoning /control</p> <p>Contamination risk/ control</p> <p>HACCP - delivery to service</p> <p>Personal hygiene</p> <p>Premises & equipment</p> <p>Food pests and control</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfection</p> <p>Food Safety enforcement</p>	<p>L2 Food Safety Manufacturing</p> <p>Introduction to food safety</p> <p>Microbiological hazards</p> <p>Food poisoning and its control</p> <p>Contamination hazards and controls</p> <p>HACCP - delivery to service</p> <p>Personal hygiene</p> <p>Food premises and equipment</p> <p>Food pests and pest control</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfect</p> <p>Additional Training</p> <p>Food Labelling</p> <p>Traceability</p>	<p>L3 Food Safety Catering</p> <p>L3 Food Hygiene & Safety in Manufacturing</p> <p>Introduction to food safety</p> <p>Microbiology</p> <p>Contamination hazards and control</p> <p>Food poisoning</p> <p>Personal hygiene</p> <p>Design, construction and use of food premises and equipment</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfection</p> <p>Pest control</p> <p>HACCP and food safety management systems</p> <p>Control measures from purchase to service</p> <p>Supervisory management</p> <p>Food Safety legislation and enforcement</p>
£48 half-day in person	£80 1 day in person	£80 1 day in person	£225 3 days in person

Additional Training: Allergens, Health & Safety, First Aid, Use of Cooking Equipment
HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) Training Level 1 (Awareness) Level 2 (Understanding) Level 3 (Managing)

Note: costs shown are indicative only and subject to change

6. Operating Models to Consider

Provided you follow the health and safety rules and good hygiene practices set out by the kitchen host, there is no real need to create a formal operating model of your own; especially if intended as very occasional use and you are simply cooking food for your own consumption.

If you propose to serve meals to the local community, even if intended to be distributed free, then a formal operating model will help establish a clear governance structure, define areas of responsibility and provide protection for individuals together with appropriate insurance. A formal structure is also often a requirement of external funding sources.

Firstly you should set out what your group intends to do and broadly how you will achieve your objectives. The founding partners are likely to have this clear in their own minds but it helps to document the Aims & Objectives so others can think about joining and any funders have a clear idea of your stated purpose.

Your founding document should also establish the key principles for decision making between members, identify roles and responsibilities for designated members (e.g. Chair, Treasurer etc) and intentions for voting rights, terms of office and process of appointment. Be sure to include rules for when things might go wrong such as arrangements to change the established rules over time.



Having established your new group you should consider what formal structure will work best for the organisation now and in the future. This should address whether you wish to operate with Charitable Objectives, a not for profit Social Enterprise or as a co-operative organisation.

It is not the role of this document to provide detailed guidance on the implications of different legal structures. The following organisations can, however, provide further support and advice:

- Glamorgan Voluntary Services link [HERE](#)
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action link [HERE](#)
- Business Wales – Social Enterprises link [HERE](#)
- Cwmpas – a social development agency link [HERE](#)
- Cooperatives in Wales link [HERE](#)

7. Informing a Business Plan

Once you have thought about the key operating principles it is good practice to develop a clear Business Plan for your intended organisation.

The Business Plan pulls a lot of information together in a structured way. It helps you move your idea into delivery and ensures you address your operating costs, resourcing and sources of income to cover your costs.

The key elements to cover in your Business Plan include:

Aims & Objectives

At the outset you need to present a clear description of your intended purpose and describe what you hope to achieve in the first, second and third year of operating.

This helps the reader understand your ambition, the reasoning behind the idea and what makes you distinctive if seeking funding support.

Understand your Target Market

Next, it is important to demonstrate you can evidence a real need for your intended activity. Who are your intended beneficiaries? How many people are expected to need your support and how will you engage with them?

This evidence base is essential to show your aims and objectives are realistic and achievable and underpins your financial assumptions later in the Plan. Local research will be needed to engage with the community, partners and other stakeholders. This may be supported by other published data say on age, low income levels etc. You can use on-line surveys or ask people face-to-face about their opinion on your cause, asking how they would use your support and how much they may be willing to contribute (if anything).

In researching your intended market it is good practice to also explore what others are doing in the same area. How might you help fill any local gaps in provision and/or collaborate with other partners.

How you will deliver

Next, you'll need to get into the specifics of the day-to-day running of your operation. For this section, you should outline:

- What you intend to produce, where and how.
- How will you promote your activities in the local area.
- What additional equipment you may require and how intend to source this (seek donations, purchase or lease arrangements).
- How will you go about sourcing your supplies, managing deliveries and distribution.
- Who is responsible for what roles – what skills/ qualifications do they have.
- What skill gaps you may have and how you will resolve these over the plan period (volunteer recruitment, paid staff, training etc).
- Food Hygiene licensing requirements and business insurance.

Financial Forecast

In this section, you'll need to address in as much detail as you can, your assumptions on costs and expenditure. This should typically cover the first 3-5 years of operations. Where possible, you should also look to provide a monthly or at least quarterly break-down over a 12-18 month rolling programme to ensure you address the operating cashflows and show how you propose to cover any shortfalls in income.

You will need to consider what elements are fixed costs regardless of activity and what may be variable costs depending on volume/produce - e.g. energy cost per meal etc. You may need specialist help in setting out the details and asking enough questions to cover all eventualities.

You'll need to include:

- Venue costs - hire of premises and equipment, business rates where applicable
- Utility Costs - will you only pay for what you use or will you also have standing charges to cover when not in use if using your premises.
- Repairs and maintenance costs - including any replacement equipment
- Supplies including ancillary purchases (herbs, seasoning, oils etc)

- Packaging and distribution/transport costs
- Cleaning costs including materials
- Waste disposal costs
- Licensing, fees, insurance etc
- Staff costs - training,
- Income Projections - sales, donations, fundraising and grants

Social Impact

Finally, it is useful to consider the outcomes you hope to achieve in your local community. This will be especially important if forming a charitable organisation to evidence delivery against your charitable objectives. You should also consider what you propose to measure to prove this impact and how you intend to measure it.



8. Summary Requirements

This document is intended as a general guide to community groups and individuals considering establishing or hosting a shared community kitchen.

Anyone involved in preparing, handling or distributing food other than for their own household consumption MUST comply with the law on food safety for the public.

Further information on all relevant legislation is available from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) [\(link HERE\)](#).

Food handling operations MUST establish and document a Food Safety Management System (FSMS) to identify potential risks and establish procedures for controlling them and ensuring food safety.

The FSA produces clear guidance on Food Safety Management Procedures for small business which will also apply to community organisations. [\(Safer Food – Better Business link HERE\)](#).

You may also be classified, technically, as a “food business” regardless of whether you give food away or charge for your produce and MUST register with Environmental Health and have your premises and processes inspected.

The Vale of Glamorgan’s Environmental Health team can be contacted on 0300 123 6696 [\(link HERE\)](#).

All staff, whether paid or volunteers, MUST be trained to an appropriate level.

We recommend Level 2 Food Safety in either Catering or Manufacturing as the minimum level required, with managers/supervisors being trained to at least Level 3.

Anyone considering establishing a Community Kitchen should think carefully about the aims, objectives and purpose of the Kitchen. This should be informed by an understanding of local community needs and clear understanding of the potential operating costs, risks and responsibilities.

Community kitchens must have adequate insurance, including public liability and employer’s liability insurance, to cover risks associated with food preparation and service.

You should consider creating a formal operating model which can help in securing grant funding and provide some legal and financial protection for individuals.

The following organisations can provide further advice:

- Wales Council for Voluntary Action [link HERE](#)
- Business Wales – Social Enterprises [link HERE](#)
- Cwmpas – a social development agency [link HERE](#)
- Cooperatives in Wales [link HERE](#)



9. Community Kitchen Top Tips & Checklist

The following reflections present some top tips for consideration in establishing a Community Kitchen.

Plan Thoroughly

Establish clear aims and objectives for your Community Kitchen based on a thorough understanding of local needs. Be realistic about your capacity and potential for success, know your own limitations and be clear about the likely costs involved in running a kitchen.

Seek Advice

Before proceeding, consult the local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) at the earliest opportunity.

The guidance provided will be specific to the location and operations of the kitchen and must be followed throughout the process to ensure compliance with food regulation standards and safety.

Consider your Kitchen Design & Layout

A well-thought-out kitchen layout is critical to preventing cross-contamination. The design should allow for separate areas (and equipment) used for handling raw foods away from those for cooked foods and ensure a smooth workflow that minimises risks.

Your kitchen should have smooth, washable surfaces on walls, floors, and ceilings to facilitate easy cleaning.

Adequate ventilation is necessary to maintain air quality and temperature, while proper lighting ensures a safe working environment.

Effective drainage and pest control measures must also be in place to avoid contamination risks.

Establish Safe Handling Practices

Wash all fresh vegetables thoroughly to remove contaminants. Use running water and scrubbing tools when necessary.

Prevent cross-contamination by using separate preparation areas and utensils for raw and cooked foods, aided by color-coded equipment. Regularly clean and sanitise preparation tools and surfaces to maintain a safe environment. Consider if separate areas and/or separate equipment is needed for allergen-free foods. Specific guidance on managing the risk of E.coli cross-contamination is available from the FSA ([link HERE](#))

Train all Staff & Volunteers

Train all team members on hygiene and food safety, emphasising handwashing, temperature control, and cross-contamination prevention. Refresher training ensures consistency and reinforces best practice.

Allergen Management

Ensure you provide clear allergen labelling on all food items, avoid cross-contamination and maintain staff awareness of the risks and how to respond to potential allergic reactions.

Menu Planning

Design menus around fresh, seasonal produce to enhance flavour, nutrition, and cost-effectiveness. Seasonal ingredients are often readily available and support operational goals.

Avoid recipes requiring high-risk ingredients like raw seafood or perishable dairy unless proper storage and handling are guaranteed.

Focus on versatile, plant-based, dishes such as soups, stews, or casseroles.

Select meals that align with the kitchen's storage capabilities to ensure efficiency and safety.

Maximise Nutrition

Use cooking methods that retain nutrients, such as steaming, roasting, or baking, and minimise reliance on processed ingredients.

Incorporate whole grains, fresh vegetables, and unprocessed proteins to ensure meals are both nutritious and appealing.



Efficient Procurement and Storage

Source ingredients from reliable local suppliers improve local connectivity and sustainability.

Store perishables promptly at required temperatures, and implement stock rotation using the “first in, first out” method. It should be noted that food past its marked “use-by” date is unsafe and it is a criminal offence to use such foods.

Timely Preparation and Service

Prepare meals as close to serving time as possible to maintain freshness and prevent bacterial growth.

Community Feedback

Solicit feedback from beneficiaries to tailor meals to their dietary needs and preferences. Organise workshops to educate the community on healthy eating and meal preparation, empowering individuals to make informed food choices.

By following these practices, community kitchens can provide safe, nutritious meals while promoting sustainability and engaging effectively with the community.



Good Practice Checklist

A simple checklist is presented overleaf to help guide local community organisations and individuals considering the potential to establish a shared community kitchen.

Such a checklist can only provide a general outline of the key things to consider.

The actual issues relevant to your organisation will, of course, depend on what you intend to do. For example whether you are looking to host a community kitchen for shared use or preparing to cook meals for the local community.

The checklist does not remove your own responsibility for understanding and complying with the law and other food safety regulations as they may apply to you and potentially change in future.

To ensure compliance with the latest regulations readers should contact the Environmental Health team at the Vale of Glamorgan’s Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Wales ([link HERE](#)) and explore more detailed guidance and advice from the Food Standards Agency web site ([link HERE](#))

Category	Task	Details	Status
STARTING OUT	Engage local community	Identify local needs Establish volunteer network & identify available skills (e.g. cooks, assistants etc) Establish local partnerships/suppliers Develop marketing/promotion plan	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Inform your Business Plan	Confirm Purpose - Aims & Objectives Who, What & How will you deliver your aims Consider the detailed cost plans Start-up investment - Kitchen set up & Equipment All staff costs, including Volunteer Training Costs Ongoing revenue costs - e.g. venue hire, rent, business rates, utility costs, supplies, waste disposal, insurance. Establish pricing model and income projections	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Consider Operating Model	Decide whether to set up as a charity, social enterprise, community interest company or for profit business. Seek specialist advice and register with Charity Commission and/or Companies House	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Fundraising & Grants	Explore all local and national grants, community programmes, crowdfunding etc. Consider both capital and revenue sources.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
SETTING UP	Identify Suitable Premises	Consider existing kitchen facilities Explore potential to expand/improve facilities, in partnership with host. Review potential need for planning and other permissions for use/development of space Think about location, space, services and suitability for your project	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Register Your Kitchen	Comply with Food Safety Act 1990 and register with Environmental Health - seek Hygiene Rating Display "awaiting inspection" sticker until awarded your hygiene rating Establish Food Safety Protocols and prepare for Inspection Work with EHO to implement changes/improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Insurance	Obtain appropriate insurance (public liability, employer's liability, product liability etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
FOOD SAFETY COMPLIANCE	Food Safety Management System	Prepare, Document & Implement a FSMS Follow FSA Guidance (HERE)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Staff Training	All staff/volunteers trained to Level 2 Food Safety Supervisors trained to Level 3 Food Safety as minimum Additional training needs identified and implemented- Health & Safety, First Aid, Allergen Controls	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Food Preparation Controls	Dedicated personal protective clothing, separated from preparation area to cooking Separate preparation areas & surfaces where possible Colour coded chopping boards, utensils and protective clothing - separate use for raw & cooked food Two-stage cleaning procedures established, implemented, supervised and recorded Follow the FSA E-Coli guidance (HERE)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Food Storage Controls	Separate storage provided for raw and cooked foods All produce clearly labelled and dated for safe use	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Food Temperature Controls	Systems in place to manage & test food temperatures All temperature checks (e.g. refrigerator, core cooked food, hot-holding food etc) formally recorded Thermometers regularly checked and calibrated All staff aware of FSA requirements (HERE)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Allergen Management	Clear labelling of all food items Cross-contamination avoided by regular cleaning and/or careful menu/produce management Staff & Volunteers trained to respond to questions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Hygiene & Cleaning	Robust cleaning and disinfection schedule documented, implemented and supervised	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Waste Management	Waste separated and stored away from fresh produce Formal arrangements in place for removal of all waste Strict controls in place to reduce risk of pests/vermin	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Monitor, Audit & Review	System established to review & update FSMS Nominate lead person to monitor changes in regulation	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
KITCHEN OPERATIONS	Develop Kitchen Schedule	Set operating hours Confirm rota with staff/volunteers/kitchen host Establish booking procedures for shared use (host)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Meal Plan & Production	Establish menu, supply chain, Establish workflows and allocate responsibilities: deliveries/prep/cook/serve/packaging/labelling	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Emergency Procedures	Clear protocols for accidents, fire, leaks. Appoint first aider	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

