



West Hatch Village Hall

West Hatch Village Hall Registered Charity Number: 282641

Guidance regarding the preparation and storage of food items. (Guidance for Trustees and Volunteers)

As we handle, prepare, store and serve food occasionally and on a small scale, we are not required to register as a food business with Somerset Council. The allergen labelling law, sometimes called Natasha's Law, applies to registered food businesses. As our activity does not need to be registered as a food business, we don't have to provide information for consumers about allergens present in the food as ingredients.

However, the more information we can provide about allergens orally or in writing for our customers, the better it is, so that they can make safe choices, particularly for those with allergies.

We do not need a food hygiene certificate to make and sell food for charity events. However, we need to make sure that we handle food safely.

Keeping food safe

Following the 4Cs of food hygiene will help all volunteers to prepare, make and store food safely. The 4Cs of food hygiene are:

- cleaning
- chilling
- cooking
- avoiding cross-contamination

Here are some general practical tips for when we're making food for large numbers of people:

- prepare food in advance and freeze it, if you can, but ensure the food is properly defrosted before you use it
- wash your hands regularly with soap and water, using hand sanitisers if hand washing facilities are not available
- always wash fresh fruit and vegetables
- keep raw and ready-to-eat foods apart
- do not use food past its use-by date
- always read any cooking instructions and make sure food is properly cooked before you serve it. The hall has a **temperature probe** that you are encouraged to use to check that food is heated throughout.
- ensure that food preparation areas are suitably cleaned and sanitised after use and wash any equipment you are using in hot soapy water
- keep food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible
- ensure cooked food is hot and ready to eat (if in doubt use the **temperature probe** to be certain)
- use the colour coded preparation boards for chopping and cutting different food/vegetable types to avoid cross contamination.

Chilled food

Food that needs to be chilled, such as sandwich fillings served as part of a buffet, should be left out of the fridge for no more than **four hours**. After this time, any remaining food should be thrown away or put back in the fridge. If you put the food back in the fridge, don't let it stand around at room temperature when you serve it again.

Use-by dates show how long the food remains safe to eat or drink. 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.

Foods that need extra care

Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning than others. These include:

- raw milk *
- raw shellfish
- soft cheeses *
- pâté
- foods containing raw egg
- cooked sliced meats

(*Unpasteurized food should be highlighted for others)

Cakes

You can serve home-made cakes at community events. They should be safe to eat if:

- a recipe from a reputable source is used
- the people who make them follow good food hygiene advice
- the cakes are stored and transported safely

Making and transporting cakes

If you make a cake at home:

- use recipes from reputable sources
- always wash your hands before preparing food
- make sure that surfaces, bowls, utensils, and any other equipment are clean
- don't use raw eggs in anything that won't be thoroughly cooked, such as icing or mousse
- keep cheesecakes and any cakes or desserts containing fresh cream in the fridge
- store cakes in a clean, sealable container, away from raw food

On the day, when you bring in cakes from home or run the stall, you should:

- transport cakes in a clean, sealable container
- make sure that cheesecake and any cakes or desserts containing fresh cream are left out of the fridge for the shortest time possible, ideally not longer than 4 hours
- when handling cakes use tongs or a cake slice

Storing cakes

You can keep cakes and baked goods with high sugar content in:

- airtight containers - this will prevent mould growth through absorption of moisture from the atmosphere
- the fridge - cakes will last for longer, but their quality may be affected

Any cakes with high moisture additions, such as cream added after baking, should not be left at room temperature. They must be stored chilled (in the fridge) and eaten within the use-by date of the added product.

There are some types of icing, such as ganache and buttercream that can be kept outside the fridge. It's best to store them somewhere cool and dry. Check the guidelines for storage of the particular icing product you will be using.

Using jam jars

It is safe to re-use glass jam jars occasionally to supply home-made jam or chutney as long as the jars are properly washed. If jam jars are re-used, they should be free from chips and cracks, and should be sterilised prior to each use. Well-fitting lids will also minimise any hygiene risks to the food in the jars. The regulations on food contact materials, which may limit the re-use of jam jars, apply to businesses. These regulations are unlikely to apply to the use of jam jars for occasional community and charity food provision.

Wear an apron

We ask you to bring a clean apron and wear it when making and serving food to members of the public at our events. This and regular washing of your hands will help ensure the cleanliness and welfare of all who attend our events.

At the end of an event

Tea towels and dishcloths must be washed, dried and returned to the hall.

All crockery, cutlery, and cookware used must be washed and dried before storing away.

Thank you for your support and help! It is much appreciated.

Date issued and authorized by the Committee on 20th April 2026

Review Date: March 2027