

Free Food

How to safely provide for your community

Food Hygiene

- EHO are there to help – not looking to catch you out and shut you down.
- Always better to [register as a food business asap](#) and to contact them if you're stuck using foodandhealth@southglos.gov.uk
- [Food.gov.uk has some great resources](#) specifically for community groups.
- Food Hygiene levels 2 and 3 are online courses and not too expensive. You can save by buying more in one go. Why not team up with another group?
- The [Safer Food Better Business Guide](#) - a food safety management system to help you plan your food operation, make sure you are doing it safely and help you train food handlers

Food hygiene tips

- Stick to low risk foods – cake, fruit e.t.c
- Avoid high risk foods like meat, peanuts, stews, curries or salad (yes, salad) unless you have professional cooking experience.
- All cooked food should be heated and cooled quickly and stored in a fridge right until eating.
- **Best Before** dates are a guide – legally it's fine to give out food past **best before** – you can use your judgement. Does it look ok? Is it mold free?
- **Use By** dates are a legal matter – [never ignore a use by date.](#)

Food hygiene tips - Allergies

- Avoid the common allergies if possible. These are:
 - celery,
 - cereals containing gluten (such as barley and oats),
 - Fish and shellfish
 - eggs,
 - Milk and dairy
 - mustard,
 - Peanuts, sesame seeds and tree nuts
 - Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
 - Soy beans, soy sauce and soya products like veggie mince

It's good practice to label food with every single ingredient. Any of these allergies should be in bold.

Sourcing Food

- [Fareshare Go](#) and [Neighbourly](#) can connect you with surplus from supermarkets
- Contacting small food businesses directly is a great idea. Bakeries and veg shops are often keen to help.
- If you club together with another community food group, you could save costs when ordering essentials in bulk.
- Foodbanks sometimes have donations they can't use but can pass on. Get in touch.

Getting funds

- Anyone can set up a crowdfunding campaign through websites like [crowdfunder](#), [Just Giving](#) or [Go Fund me](#)
- You don't need to register as a charity or cic.
- To apply for larger grants you need
 - a constitution that states how you will use the money and who would get it if you closed,
 - 3 unrelated people who would control the money,
 - a safeguarding and accountability policy that shows you've thought through what you would do if things go wrong
 - A process for keeping track of your spending – usually a spreadsheet

Support for your Organisation

- [The council provide a community food grant you can apply for](#)
- The council is keen to support small food organisations to build up community resilience.
- [CVS offers support for community groups across South Glos.](#) They can help you with everything you need to become a sustainable project.

Being Responsible

- Don't promise anything you aren't 100% sure you can do.
- Do signpost people onto other services that might be able to help them. [This guide can help you.](#)
- Always check with other services first to make sure they can accept new people. Otherwise you risk sending people on a wild goose chase.
- Do make the time to connect with other organisations in your area. The best support is in areas where groups work together.

Southern Brooks

- Southern Brooks is another organisation here to help. They have lots of people with experience of running food projects.
- You can email louisedelmege@southernbrooks.org.uk for direct help and support.
- Louise runs the South Glos Food Alliance, which you and your group can join for peer support from other food projects.