

# ADVICE FOR HOME BAKERS



This guidance is intended for anyone who intends to run a food business from home baking food. This might include preparing food to sell in shops, at a market, or selling to other businesses or consumers. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have produced guidance for starting a food business from home which should be read in conjunction with this document. It can be viewed here: <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/starting-a-food-business-from-home?navref=search-global-all-3>.

**Before you get started make sure you have considered the following.**

## **1. REGISTRATION**

Your home will need to be registered with the Council as a food business. This is free, and there is only one simple form to fill in, but it is a legal requirement and you can be prosecuted if you do not register before starting. Please visit <https://www.gov.uk/food-business-registration> to see ways to register.

## **2. PLANNING PERMISSION**

You may need planning permission to run a business from home, so take advice from the Planning & Building Service of the Council. Contact them at <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning/contact-us-about-planning/>.

## **3. BUSINESS RATES**

You may have to pay increased rates if you use part of your property for a business. Contact the Revenues Service at <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/your-council/customer-services/contact-details-and-opening-hours/>.

## **4. INSURANCE**

Just in case things go wrong, we strongly recommend you to take out insurance to cover claims against you (third party insurance) in the same way as any other business. Unfortunately this can be quite expensive. You can consult your solicitor or insurance agent about this.

## **5. RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS**

Especially in older properties, you may find that the deeds contain clauses that prevent you from carrying out certain activities, and running a food business may be one of them. You should consult your own solicitor about this.

## **6. MORTGAGE RESTRICTIONS**

If you have a mortgage on your property you must contact your lender and talk to them about your intentions.

## **7. FOOD SAFETY LAW**

The laws on food safety apply in the same way to a business run from home as they do to all other commercial premises. You will be liable to regular inspections by officers from the

Council's Environmental Health Team. At domestic premises these inspections are done by appointment. You may face legal action if you are found to be breaking the food hygiene laws. This also applies if you use a kitchen somewhere else to prepare food, for example a village or community hall kitchen although these inspections would normally be unannounced.

In addition you must also meet the requirements of the Food Information Regulations 2014. These Regulations state that all pre-packed foods must be labelled with certain information relating to ingredients, name of producer, use by dates, allergens etc. Further advice on these requirements can be found on the FSA website at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/packaging-and-labelling>. You can also get advice on food labelling from Devon County Council's Trading Standards Service by e-mailing [tradingstandards@devon.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@devon.gov.uk).

## **8. FOOD HYGIENE RATING**

Home baking falls under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. These Regulations lay down the requirements relating to persons engaged in the handling of food, the methods and practices used in food businesses and structural matters in food premises. If you are producing foods to be sold to other businesses you may fall under additional legislation. If in doubt contact us on 01884 255255 or e-mail [health@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:health@middevon.gov.uk).

Once you are registered as a food business we will visit your premises to assess your hygiene practices, the facilities where baking is carried out, cleaning and management of the business. It may be that you also get a visit from Trading Standards.

What is expected of a food business will depend upon a number of factors such as the type and quantity of food you intend to prepare, and what else the kitchen is used for. The following has been produced as a guide on what is expected in most cases to meet the requirements of food law.

If you have any questions before we arrive please let us know, in most cases we will be giving your business a score between 5 and 0 under the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme with 5 being the best. Getting it right first time can help achieve the highest possible score.

## **9. FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME**

This is a national scheme which rates a business based on compliance in the three areas stated above. If you receive a rating following your inspection it will be published at <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>. Your address will not be published unless you give permission in writing. Further information about ratings can be found here: <https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-hygiene-rating-scheme>.

## **THE INSPECTION**

***“We’re not expecting a commercial kitchen when we arrive. We appreciate that you will be continuing to use the kitchen as part of the family home.”***

## **FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

All food businesses are required to implement safe methods and consider how they will prevent the food that is prepared from being contaminated and ensure it is safe to eat. Contamination falls into three categories: Chemical, Physical and Microbiological.

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Example</b>
Chemical Contamination	Using cleaning materials that are not ‘food safe’ / storing chemicals around food
Microbiological Contamination	Not cooking food properly / leaving high risk food (such as fresh cream) out at room temperature / storing baked goods below raw foods causing cross contamination
Physical Contamination	Items falling into bakes (hair / nail varnish) / poor structure of the kitchen (peeling paint / damaged sink seals) / pest control

All food businesses are required to have a written food safety management system. Included at the back of this document is a system that you are free to use. Once the blanks have been filled by yourself the document should be kept on-site and reflect the practices carried out. Alternatively you are free to use other systems or write your own. For example, Safer Food Better Business is the Food Standards Agency’s own system which can be found at [www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business) and downloaded and completed.

## **TRAINING**

The law requires you to have suitable and sufficient food hygiene knowledge to ensure that you prepare food safely. You may wish to undertake a food hygiene training course to help achieve this. Courses can be done online or in person, such as at a local college. The recommended base line qualification is Level 2 Food Hygiene in Catering.

## **TRACEABILITY**

You need to ensure that you can show where all of your ingredients have come from and who you have supplied except when you are retailing at a stall etc. Your receipts and packaging will have all the information you should need. You should keep a record of all the premises/persons you have supplied in case you need to contact them to withdraw a product. Keep a record of your supplier and purchaser details which we recommend you keep for 6 months.

## **HYGIENE**

### **SINKS AND HAND WASHING**

Most people do not have a separate wash hand basin in their kitchen. You must ensure that you do however have “adequate facilities for the cleaning of utensils and maintaining adequate personal hygiene”.

If you only have one sink, you need to consider how you can meet this requirement. As you will be using your sink in your household's day to day activities, you must ensure that before you start undertaking any baking you thoroughly clean and disinfect the sink, taps and surrounding area. It can then be used for hand washing whilst you bake.

If utensils are washed in the sink, you must ensure that again the procedure for cleaning and sanitising the sink after use is implemented.

Washing hands effectively can help prevent the spread of harmful bacteria. ***Always wash your hands before handling food and:***

- After going to the toilet
- After changing nappies, handling potties etc.
- After handling rubbish
- After touching uncooked meat
- After handling or feeding pets
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose

## **FITNESS TO WORK**

You do not want to be the cause of an outbreak of norovirus or food poisoning (sickness and diarrhoea illness) at a function you have prepared food for!

If you suffer from sickness and/or diarrhoea you must ensure that you are symptom free (no sickness and/or diarrhoea) for at least 48 hours before you undertake any baking or cake preparation. Take the time to consider now what you would do if you had a large order to fulfil and came down ill.

## **HIGH RISK BAKING**

Although most cakes and biscuits are classed as low risk products, some fillings and finishes are more high risk. Fresh cream, some cheese cakes and royal icing made from raw egg whites are all high risk and require extra thought to ensure they are prepared safely.

Cakes that require refrigeration must be kept at or below 8°C at all times with limited time out of temperature control (a single maximum period of up to 4 hours).

Royal icing is traditionally produced using raw egg whites. This method can still be used and providing that you use lion marked eggs then there is minimal risk to vulnerable groups (the young, elderly or pregnant). You can now purchase pasteurised dried egg whites or pasteurised royal icing mixes which remove this risk.

## **FRIDGE**

Any items being kept in the fridge must be stored in a way which does not cause contamination. Raw meat and unwashed salad and vegetables must be stored below ready to eat foods at all times.

You must ensure that your fridge is well organised and running at a temperature of 8°C or below. Use a fridge thermometer to check the temperature regularly.

Don't overload your fridge. The efficiency of the fridge will suffer if the cooling air circulating within it cannot flow freely. Keep the fridge door closed as much as possible. Leaving the fridge door open raises the temperature.

If you prepare a large amount of food that needs to be kept in the fridge you may need a separate fridge which is only used for your business.

### **USE BY/BEST BEFORE DATES**

Cakes and biscuits sold in supermarkets often contain preservatives and may have been specially packed to allow the products to have an extended shelf life.

Best before/use by dates can only be established by microbiological testing of a product. As this is something which is costly, we suggest a short shelf life erring on the side of caution. Whilst most cakes are generally a low risk product, there could be mould growth and loss of cake quality. As a general rule, we would recommend that products are given a shelf life of the day of production +2 days.

### **LABELLING**

You can find out more information about packaging and labelling on the FSA website here: <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/packaging-and-labelling>. If you pre-pack foods you may also wish to contact Trading Standards for labelling advice by e-mailing [tradingstandards@devon.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@devon.gov.uk).

If you do not pre-pack or pre-pack for direct sale you still need to provide allergen information. The 14 ingredients causing allergies or intolerances are: **celery**, **cereals containing gluten** (such as barley and oats), **crustaceans** (such as prawns, crabs and lobsters), **eggs**, **fish**, **lupin**, **milk**, **molluscs** (such as mussels and oysters), **mustard**, **peanuts**, **sesame**, **soybeans**, **sulphur dioxide** and **sulphites** (if they are at a concentration of more than ten parts per million) and **tree nuts** (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts).

Food allergy training is available online at [www.food.gov.uk/allergy-training](http://www.food.gov.uk/allergy-training).

### **E. COLI**

Making cakes is a low risk activity, however if you prepare raw meat and un-washed salad and vegetables in your home you could be causing an *E. coli* risk. You must take care when preparing your food at home to reduce the risk of cross contamination.

You must ensure that before you begin work your kitchen is prepared to be your “working kitchen”. This will generally mean removing anything not required in the kitchen and thoroughly cleaning and sanitising the surfaces.

*E.coli* bacteria and other food poisoning bacteria can grow on the smallest food source on a dirty work surface. Proper cleaning and sanitising should also remove all the bacteria from surfaces and equipment involved in food preparation.

### **CLEANING CHEMICALS**

You must ensure that you have appropriate cleaning chemicals to keep the kitchen clean and so you can sanitise surfaces and equipment. Antibacterial sprays and sanitisers should meet a certain British Standard (BS EN: 1276 or 13697).

Different types of disinfectants require different dilutions and contact times. These are specified and validated by the manufacturer and you must follow the manufacturer’s instructions for dilution and contact time to ensure the product is effective.

**Cloths** can easily spread bacteria in the kitchen. Use 'single use' cloths wherever possible.

If you use reusable cloths then:

- Always use a new or clean cloth to clean surfaces or utensils that will be used for ready to eat foods.
- If a cloth is used for uncooked meat or eggs it should be removed for washing.
- Wash or disinfect cloths and fabric hand towels every day, either on a hot cycle in the washing machine, or by hand using a disinfectant and hot water.

## **STRUCTURE**

### **THE KITCHEN**

You must ensure that the structure of your kitchen is kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition so as to avoid the risk of contamination.

Walls	Need to be a smooth impervious finish (for example tiled or smooth plaster painted with a gloss or silk vinyl paint).
Floors	Need to be smooth, impervious, non-absorbent, washable and of non-toxic material (for example sealed lino or sealed floor tiles with water proof joints).
Ceilings	Need to be smooth, impervious, non-absorbent, washable and of non-toxic material.

### **TOILETS**

Toilets should not open directly into your kitchen. However in some houses the toilet leads straight from the kitchen and cannot be avoided. In these situations you must ensure that the toilet is well ventilated and the door to the toilet kept shut. People should not use the toilet whilst you are baking.

### **VENTILATION**

You must ensure that you have adequate ventilation in place in the kitchen to prevent condensation, mould growth, and damage to decoration – but make sure open windows don't create a problem with flies and other pests!

### **EQUIPMENT**

All equipment must be in good condition and not be a potential source of contamination due to its condition or cleanliness.

All equipment should be carefully cleaned, sanitised and stored. You must regularly check equipment and repair/replace anything damaged.

### **PEST CONTROL**

You must ensure that your kitchen is always pest free. This can be achieved with regular checking of the kitchen for evidence of pests (droppings/nibbled food) and ensuring that no food is left out and that the kitchen is kept clean.

### **STORAGE**

You need to ensure that at all stages of storage, production and delivery the food that you produce is free from microbiological, chemical and physical contamination.

Storing equipment, tins and ingredients should be kept separately from your day to day items wherever possible. Lidded containers are useful for preventing contaminants falling into tins/equipment whilst it is being stored.

Food in the fridge should be wrapped/covered to prevent items falling/dripping onto others.

## **TRANSPORT**

When transporting food it is important that it is protected from the risk of contamination e.g. pet hair, dust, dirt and insects. If the food contains high risk ingredients e.g. fresh cream, they should be transported in cool boxes to maintain the temperature at 8°C or below. Consider the type of boxes/containers you use to transport or present the food. It must be food grade and protect the food from contamination.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **PETS**

Having pets is absolutely fine! However you must consider this as part of how you prevent any animal hair etc. from ending up in the food you prepare.

Pets must not be allowed in the kitchen when you are preparing food.

All surfaces/equipment that they may have come into contact with must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised prior to you beginning a baking session.

Cleaning tropical fish and reptile tanks has been associated with outbreaks of salmonellosis.

### **WASHING MACHINES**

A common query is that of having a washing machine in the kitchen. We understand that washing machines are generally in domestic kitchens. You therefore need to consider this and ensure that no washing is undertaken at the same time as you prepare food for the business.

### **EDIBLE DECORATIONS**

The Food Standards Agency has issued guidance on the use of glitters and dusts on cakes. Only glitter or dust clearly labelled as 'edible' should be applied to food for consumption. Further advice can be found on the FSA website: [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk).

### **EGGS**

We know that cake makers prefer to use eggs that are at room temperature. It is best to keep eggs in the fridge and to get them out a few hours prior to baking to bring them up to room temperature. Leaving eggs out at room temperature in your kitchen exposes the eggs to lots of changes in temperature, whilst keeping them in the fridge keeps them at a constant temperature.

Eggs which are Lion Marked meet a specific safety standard. You should use graded eggs with this marking. For post baking application use pasteurised egg products.

**If you have any questions about any of the above please contact the Environmental Health Team at [health@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:health@middevon.gov.uk).**

## Food Safety Management System

Name of food business: \_\_\_\_\_

Person responsible for food safety matters: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>1. Hygiene Practices</b>	
<b>Hand washing and protection</b>  Where do you wash your hands?  What type of soap do you use?  What do you dry your hands with?  What do you wear whilst preparing foods? (i.e. hat, apron/clean clothing, remove jewellery)	
<b>Cloth usage</b>  What type of cloths do you use?  If re-usable how do you disinfect them?	
<b>Allergens</b>  How do you ensure that customers are aware of ingredients that may cause an allergic reaction?	
<b>Transportation</b>  Do you deliver foods?  If so how do you protect them from contamination?	
<b>Food washing</b>  Do you wash any foods?  If so is the sink cleaned before use or are they washed in a colander?	

<b>2. Structure</b>	
<p><b>Pests, pets and family</b></p> <p>How do you ensure that pets and other persons are kept out of the preparation areas whilst baking?</p> <p>Do you check foods, materials, building and equipment for signs of pest activity?</p> <p>What would you do if discovered?</p>	
<p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <p>What do you clean before production starts?</p> <p>How do you clean? i.e. anti-bac</p> <p>What do you clean after production ends?</p> <p>What do you need to regularly clean?</p> <p>What chemicals do you use?</p>	
<p><b>Fetes/stalls</b></p> <p>If you sell at the above how do ensure that foods that need to be chilled are kept at suitable temperatures and protected from contamination?</p>	

<b>3. Management and checks</b>	
<p><b>Cooking</b></p> <p>How do you check that the food you produce is thoroughly cooked?</p>	
<p><b>Chilling</b></p> <p>Do you produce cakes that need to be chilled or hold ingredients that must be?</p> <p>How do you ensure that they are held at 8°C or below?</p>	
<p><b>Cross-contamination</b></p> <p>Where do you store your ingredients and finished products?</p> <p>How are they protected from cross contamination? Especially if you are claiming free-from i.e. gluten</p>	
<p><b>Training</b></p> <p>What relevant training do you hold?</p>	
<p><b>Shelf-life</b></p> <p>How many days shelf life do you give your products?</p>	
<p><b>Stock rotation</b></p> <p>How do ensure that ingredients and your stock do not pass their Use By dates? i.e. FIFO (First In First Out)</p>	



