



How to plan and hold an event safely

Factsheet 2 - Preparing and serving refreshments



Food and drink are a key part of many events held in CCT Churches.

Thinking about preparing and serving refreshments should be included in your risk assessment. Please check CCT's [Factsheet 1 – How to complete a Risk Assessment](#) for helpful guidance on completing a risk assessment template. We hope you will find that if you have thought through all the things in this refreshments factsheet, actually filling in the risk assessment will feel straightforward.

What kind of refreshments can I serve?

You can serve whatever refreshments you like at your event. The facilities, size and layout of your church, and the number of people you expect to attend will determine the kind of refreshments that you decide to serve at your event.

Can I serve alcohol?

You can serve alcohol at your event. If you want to do this, alcohol licensing regulations mean you will need to consider completing a Temporary Events Notice (TEN).

You can do this online at <https://www.gov.uk/temporary-events-notice>.

How do I prepare refreshments?

CCT has found the guidelines produced by [The Foods Standard Agency](#) really helpful for preparing food safely for small scale catering at events. Some common sense things to remember:

- Plan ahead: if you can prepare food in advance, this should make things easier later
- Wash your hands and any equipment you are using in hot soapy water
- Keep food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible
- Always make sure food is properly cooked before you serve it
- Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods apart
- Do not use food past its 'use by' date
- Know what is in the ingredients so information about allergens can be provided (e.g. provide a 'contains nuts' label for cakes)

Good hygiene

When preparing and serving refreshments please remember to frequently wipe down shared items such as sugar bowls, jugs etc. and regularly wash your hands.

Can I use external caterers?

Yes, you are welcome to use external caterers. If you are using external caterers, they are responsible for ensuring that their work practices follow food hygiene guidelines and should provide evidence of their Public Liability Insurance and food hygiene. You can check their food hygiene rating here: <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/>

Many of our churches do not have running water so you may need to consider how you will keep everything clean particularly if you are serving refreshments.



What about homemade cakes etc.?

You can serve homemade cakes, as long as good food hygiene advice is followed and the cakes are stored and transported safely. At home, people making cakes should follow these tips:

- Always wash your hands before preparing food
- Make sure that surfaces, bowls, utensils, and any other equipment is 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 cream or butter icing in the fridge
- Store cakes in a clean, sealable container, away from raw foods, especially raw meat

On the day, people bringing in cakes from home or running the stall should follow these tips:

- Transport cakes in a clean, sealable container
- Wash their hands as frequently as possible, or use hand sanitiser where soap and water are not available
- Make sure that cheesecake and any cakes or desserts containing cream or butter icing are left out of the fridge for the shortest time possible
- When handling cakes use tongs or a cake slice (not fingers!)

Allergies

Unless you are a registered food business there is no requirement in law to provide all the ingredients of the dishes being served. However the more information you can provide about allergens orally or in writing for customers, the better it is, so that they can make safe choices. If someone has a specific query about ingredients it is better to err on the side of caution if you are uncertain, than risk them having an allergic reaction to food prepared for your event.

Clearing up after your event

Please ensure that all food waste is removed to avoid attracting pests and that all other rubbish is removed after the event.

