

# Food & Safety Update

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



## HERE COMES SUMMER!

Please take a moment to read our latest update & share it with your team for a little bit of staff training.

If you've missed previous issues, scan the QR code and check out what you've missed already this year.



July 2025

- Barbecuing Safely
- Ice Machines & Handling Ice Safely
- Shellfish Traceability
- Safe Service of Ice cream
- Flying Pests
- Don't overload the Fridges
- Date labelling & Manufacturers Instructions
- Gas Safety – BBQ's
- Workplace Temperatures
- Inflatables and Play Equipment

### Focus Point: Tea Towels/Oven Cloths

- **DO** consider whether you actually need to use tea towels.
- **DO** ensure that tea towels are replaced throughout the day and they are washed on a hot wash cycle.
- **DO NOT** Tuck the tea towel inside your trousers
- **DO NOT** hang the tea towel over your shoulder
- **DO NOT** use the tea towel to mop your brow
- **DO NOT** leave tea towels lying all over the kitchen.
- **DO NOT** use tea towels to cover foods in the fridge or foods that are cooling.





## Barbecuing Safely

With summer bringing more barbecues at home and in businesses, it's important to be mindful of food safety. Warm weather and outdoor cooking create ideal conditions for bacteria to grow, increasing the risk of cross-contamination and undercooked meats. To keep food safe, follow proper hygiene practices and be careful when handling raw and ready-to-eat foods:

**Hand Washing** – Always wash your hands, even when barbecuing. If there's no sink nearby, set up a temporary handwashing station.

**Refrigeration** – Keep chilled ingredients cold. Use external refrigerators or other cooling methods.

**Surfaces & Equipment** – Prevent cross-contamination by separating food prep and serving areas. Use the right equipment.

**Before Barbecuing** – Clean the grill but be careful if using wire brushes, as they can be a physical contaminant in your food if a piece is left behind. If using charcoal, make sure it's glowing red with a powdery surface.

**Defrosting** – Allow enough time for meat to fully defrost, ideally in the fridge.

**Food Protection** – Keep food covered until it's needed.

**Cooking** – Prevent contamination by keeping raw juices away from cooked food. Use separate equipment for raw and ready-to-eat items.

**Temperature & Rotation** – Rotate food often for even cooking and check temperatures. Don't serve undercooked burgers unless proper safety measures are in place.

Allocate **Dedicated Staff** to handling and barbecuing raw items.

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## Ice Machines

Curious as to why we always check your ice machines?

Ice machines need careful attention because ice can carry bacteria, and freezing doesn't kill them. Contamination can happen as a result of poor water quality, unclean machines and scoops, or improper handling.

To keep ice safe:

**Service the machine** as recommended.

**Keep the door closed** unless getting ice.

**Do not** use a glass to collect the ice & don't leave the scoop inside.

**Never store drinks** like bottles inside.

**Clean the machine** regularly to prevent bacteria and slime buildup.

**If ice looks dirty**, clean the machine and discard the ice.

**Do** store the scoop in a clean and lidded container.



Left: Ice Machine fixed curtain, requiring cleaning, including along the top where a scum line has appeared.

Baby bottle sterilising solution is a food safe chemical that does not taint and is ideal for cleaning ice machines.

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## Shellfish Traceability

Remember to keep the health ticket that comes with your live shellfish delivery for 60 days. This helps track where the shellfish came from and ensures food safety. The tag has an oval health mark showing which place processed the shellfish. It's important for records and checks.

Shellfish should be eaten as soon as possible after purchase. Keeping them fresh ensures they remain safe to eat and taste their best!

If a shell stays open after a tap, it's dead and unsafe to eat. Discard any with cracked or broken shells, and if they don't open after cooking, don't use them.

**Do not** Store live shellfish in airtight containers.

**Do not** Re-immers the shellfish in water.

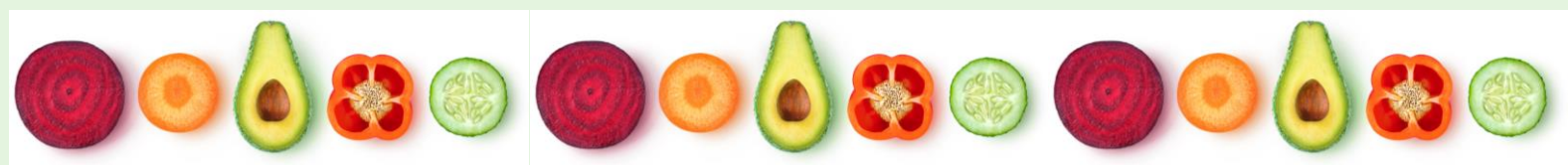
**Do not** Freeze live shellfish – you'll kill them!

**Do** Store oysters in the concave shell pointing downwards to avoid the loss of liquor.

**Do** Store at the temperature of melting ice.

*And remember, shellfish is one of the recognised 14 allergens, so check your menus and allergen matrix*





## Safe service of ice cream

Ice cream can get contaminated if not handled properly, so hygiene is key. Staff must wash hands regularly, with soap and hand-drying facilities always available.

### Whipped Ice Cream:

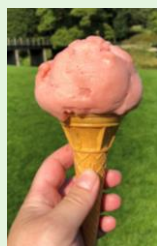
- **Discard mix** – never use the mix if the use by or best before date have passed.
- **Sanitise before opening** – clean the icecream mix box/pack with a clean cloth and ensure utensils are clean.
- **Don't reuse dispensed ice cream** - never return it to the hopper.

Keep machines clean by following these steps:

- **Clean thoroughly and often**—regular cleaning is essential.
- **Follow manufacturer instructions**—the cleaning method depends on the machine type.

### Soft Scoop Ice Cream

- **Check for ice crystals**—if ice cream shows signs of thawing and refreezing, discard it.
- **Use clean utensils**—always ensure they're properly washed.
- **Sanitise lids**—wash, sanitise, and dry them before putting them back on the tub.



### Cleaning Utensils

- **Before use**, wash utensils in warm water and sanitise with food-grade sanitiser.
- **During service**, rinse and sanitise frequently using two containers—one for rinsing and one for sanitising.
- **Refresh sanitiser**—empty and refill both containers with fresh solution at least every 4 hours.

## Flying Pests

While rodents often steal the spotlight in discussions about pests, flying insects pose an equally serious threat to hygiene and food safety. Flies are notorious for spreading bacteria, viruses, and parasites picked up from contaminated surfaces.

Flies can transfer harmful microorganisms by:

**Physical Contact:** When they land on food or surfaces, bacteria from their feet, body, and mouth can be deposited instantly.

**Regurgitation and Excretion:** After consuming food, flies regurgitate and defecate, further spreading pathogens.

House flies should not be underestimated as research shows that a single house fly can carry up to **6 million bacteria externally** and **25 million internally**; and they have been found to harbor over **200 different pathogens**, including those responsible for foodborne illnesses.

**Fruit flies** are also a major concern; and they can lay up to **100 eggs per day**, which develop into reproductive adults in just **seven days**.

Fruit flies can indicate issues such as:

- Poor-quality or decaying produce
- Unclean drains
- Inadequate sanitation in drink stations and cellar pipework

To reduce the risk of contamination, it's crucial to implement effective pest control measures.

Consider the following preventive steps:

**Proper Food Storage:** Ensure all food is securely covered to prevent exposure.

**Waste Management:** Avoid allowing waste to accumulate indoors, and always keep bin lids closed to prevent attracting pests.

### **Pest Control Solutions:**

Use electric fly killers and sticky boards as proactive deterrents; and keep them switched on overnight & change bulbs regularly.

### **Seal Entry Points:**

Regularly check door seals to minimize access for flies.

**Delivery Precautions:** During deliveries, avoid leaving doors propped open for extended periods.

**Window Protection:** Install well-fitted mesh screens on windows to keep pests out while allowing ventilation.

**Door Management:** Keep doors closed whenever possible to limit opportunities for flies to enter.

By maintaining strict hygiene and implementing these preventive measures, businesses can significantly reduce the risk of contamination from flying pests; and reduce the risk of complaints.





## Don't overload the Fridges this Summer

With the change of summer menu's we often find that space in the chiller is in great demand; and we find that they are being overloaded.

Overloading fridges and freezers can reduce air circulation, making the unit work harder; leading to higher energy use and damage to your appliances, and food spoilage.

**Organise smartly,** don't block air vents or fans, this will help the efficiency of the appliance. The smallest piece of paper or cling wrap can also block these,



so ensure that foods are well covered. Keep them clear, keep them clean.

**Leave space** - rotate stock & avoid overfilling shelves, ensuring the cold air circulates properly.

**Monitor temperature** - check your temperatures regularly to confirm food is stored at the correct temperature. And don't rely on the digital reading alone.

### In addition:

Don't leave the doors open for extended periods as this is making the chiller that much harder.

**Check Door Seals:** don't forget to check the door seals. If you overload the chiller with containers which are too large this may affect the door getting a full seal and allow cold air to escape.

Door seals can also deteriorate and split which may also allow cold air to escape, these should therefore be replaced as soon as possible. This is also important so as not to encourage mould growth in your fridge from condensation.

**Adjust your Temperature Settings** - If your fridges/freezers are overcooling, check the temperature settings and adjust them to a more appropriate range. Date Labelling & Manufacturers Instructions.

## Follow Manufacturer's Instructions

Shelf life is a key consideration in food safety. While your Food Safety Management System may set the durability date for foods you produce, it's equally important to **follow the manufacturer's shelf life** on any ingredients or pre-packaged products, once they have been opened.

Why It Matters:

- **Safety** – food past its use by date can lead to bacterial growth and contamination.
- **Quality** - using food past its best before can affect taste, texture, and freshness.
- **Compliance**—following both your Food Safety Management System and Manufacturer guidelines ensures food safety standards are met.

Some foods have a short shelf life once opened, which may be less than the standard shelf life you apply. As a result, you must check packaging and follow the manufacturers instructions in relation to storage and shelf life.

These dates are which the manufacturer guarantees the food to be safe, once it's opened.

### Examples:

**Frozen, Sliced Ham** from a manufacturer had a date of more than one month; however once defrosted shelf life was reduced to 14 days; and once opened it must be used within 48 hours.

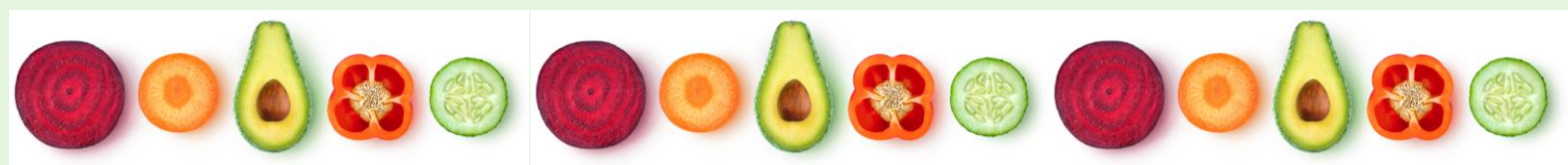
### Tinned Tuna & Other Tinned Foods

Manufacturers have decided to reduce their shelf life of many tinned items. Resulting in 'once open use within 2 days'. As a result, you must not exceed the 2 day period; (remember, this includes the day of production).

**Cooked Frozen Prawns**, dependent on supplier/manufacturer, the use by date of the prawns once defrosted may vary. Some manufacturers offer 2 day shelf life others may be three.

**These dates are which the manufacturer guarantees the food to be safe, so it's important that you follow them and check products regularly to determine if the shelf life has changed.**





# HEALTH & SAFETY

You may not see health and safety officers routinely, but they are still around. Are you aware that both you and your employer have duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974?

## Gas safety & LPG

Getting out the BBQ and Patio heating out of storage for summer?

These appliances and their associated pipework need inspecting before use to ensure that nothing has been damaged or deteriorated over the winter months.

### Setting Up

Check surfaces are stable.

If cylinders require change over, make sure that gas taps are turned off and that you do this in the open air.

At the end of each day, always turn off the cylinder before the appliance.

Follow the manufacturers guidance and instructions for specific advice on use, ventilation and maintenance.

Before using the BBQ, you should check for gas leaks, and remember, if you're not sure how to do this, ask a competent person.

Remember your BBQ should never be used indoors, (this also includes temporary structures such as marquees, gazebos and yurts.

And always be aware of the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning, such as headaches, nausea, breathlessness, dizziness, collapse and loss of consciousness.

## Workplace temperatures

Kitchens get extremely hot in summer, and employers must take steps to protect staff.

### First Steps:

- Identify vulnerable staff—some may need extra support or alternative tasks.
- Recognise heat stress symptoms—difficulty concentrating, muscle cramps, heat rash, fainting, exhaustion (fatigue, nausea, headaches), and heat stroke (confusion, convulsions, loss of consciousness).
- Raise awareness—staff should know the signs and look out for each other.
- A safe work environment keeps everyone healthy and productive!

### Reducing the Risk

Keep everyone safe and productive

- Make sure staff have plenty of drinking water available. Staying hydrated helps prevent heat stress.
- Give staff breaks from the heat & rotate them away from hot equipment and ensure they have time to rest in a cooler area.

- Fully open air vents, extraction systems should be on full and open windows and doors (if they have flyscreens in place).
- Use local fans in the hottest spots for extra cooling.
- Save energy and reduce heat—turn off unused equipment and only light stoves when needed.
- Check staff uniform: Dressing appropriately helps manage heat and keeps everyone feeling their best.

Staying cool is important, but never at the cost of safety (so no swapping full shoes for flip flops).

For more information:

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)



**HSE:**  
Temperature  
in the  
workplace



**NHS** How to  
cope in hot  
weather





## Play Equipment

Play is essential for a child's development and well-being, and summer is a great time for fun! However, it's important to manage risks to ensure a safe environment. Safety doesn't mean stopping the fun—it ensures carefree play all summer!

### Inflatables

Check maintenance & ensure the equipment is properly maintained.

Check whether the inflatable has had a full PiPA inspection.

Get the correct manual, it provides crucial safety instructions specific to the inflatable.

#### Operating Safely:

Monitor wind speed inflatables shouldn't be used in winds over 24mph (check the manual for specifics). Use an anemometer to measure wind speed, don't rely on weather apps.

Check pressure levels required, for safe operation, under or over the recommended pressure is dangerous.

#### Setup & Placement:

Choose a suitable location - indoor or outdoor placement affects anchoring methods (stakes vs. ballast).

Consider surroundings & use impact absorbing matting where falls could happen.

Use the correct blower and power settings for the inflatable. And make sure the connection tube is firmly attached.

Inspect for stability—no sagging, over-tension, or pulled-out anchor points.

#### Structural Integrity:

Check for damage—no holes, rips, or torn seams.

Ensure symmetry—if misshapen or deformed, don't use it.

#### Deflation Safety Test:

Before each use, switch off the blower and observe deflation.

It should deflate gradually, allowing safe evacuation while keeping its shape.

If it deflates too quickly or collapses, don't operate it—it's unsafe

#### Safe Use, Supervision & Monitoring

For inflatable safety, constant supervision by a trained person is essential.

Limit users—stick to the operator manual's capacity and separate larger users from smaller ones.

No shoes, glasses, or sharp items—users should empty pockets before entering.

No intoxicated users—anyone visibly under the influence shouldn't be allowed on.

No climbing or hanging on walls.

Check anchor points regularly & ensure they remain secure.

For further information:

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### Play Equipment

All play equipment should be regularly checked and maintained to ensure safety.

While inflatables require specific precautions, **other equipment** such as climbing frames, swings, slides, and trampolines also need care.

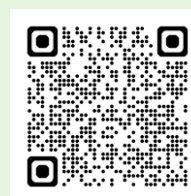


**Routine Inspections** - check for wear, damage, or loose parts; and that there is no exposed sharp parts and corrosion.

**Secure Installations** - ensure structures are stable and properly anchored; and that bolts and other fixings are in place.

**Surface Protection**—use suitable impact-absorbing material where needed. Where bark or sand is used it should go through routine maintenance and replacement. Also check the area for any sharps

**Supervised Play**—monitor usage to prevent accidents and misuse.



For a full checklist on inflatables scan the QR Code.