

COMMUNITY Kitchen

What are Community Kitchens?

Community Kitchens are community-based cooking programmes in which **small groups of people meet** on a regular basis to plan, **cook** and **share healthy, affordable meals**. Community Kitchens are typically designed for anyone to attend and can be run anywhere there is a kitchen.



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Community Kitchens in Leicestershire

The Community Kitchen scheme in Leicestershire started in **2017** with the aim to educate attendees to reduce Household Food Waste (HHFW)

There are currently **6 active Community Kitchens** in the Borough of **Hinckley** and **Bosworth**

The University of Bristol worked with Leicestershire County Council to try and identify:

- Who attends the Community Kitchens
- What health and wellbeing benefits the Community Kitchens have for the people who attend them
- How are the health and wellbeing benefits achieved

Who attends the Community Kitchens?

Surveys found that most of the people attending the Community Kitchens were **retired, living alone, carers** or had **cognitive or physical needs**.

What health and wellbeing benefits do the Community Kitchens have for the people who attend them?

Council staff, Community Kitchen volunteers and attendees told researchers from the **University of Bristol** during interviews and observations of the Community Kitchens that the primary health and wellbeing benefit experienced was **socialisation**. They also reported that the Community Kitchen sessions:

-  Were highly valued
-  Provided an opportunity to socialise with others while learning new skills or trying something new
-  Encouraged attendees to learn to be healthier, and reduce household food waste
-  Were inclusive, offering a safe environment to everyone regardless of background, ability and gender
-  Helped build confidence and independence
-  Offered respite from caring responsibilities or from being cared for

How are the health and wellbeing benefits achieved?

Attendees told researchers from the **University of Bristol** during interviews and observations that socialisation was achieved by offering them opportunities to **actively participate collaboratively** with others in an activity within an **inclusive group environment**.

