

Catering at Whitefriars

I am very excited to the appointed Whitefriar's first catering manager. Together with my assistant and the rest of the catering committee, I hope to provide members and guests the best catering service possible.

I am a recent new member, joining so that my daughter Rose can learn to sail with the Juniors. I have some experience catering for events during my years at a BSAC scuba-diving club. The main lesson learned there is that people appreciate nutritious well-prepared food after physical activity, but it better be quick and it better be hot!

Catering is new to WSC, and the necessary committee to run the service has only just formed. There is now a catering committee, and if you have any interest and would like to serve we would like to know.

For now, I've put together some FAQ's which hopefully go some way to answering some of the questions you may have. You can always contact me and other members of the committee at catering@whitefriarssc.org.

Steve James, Catering Manager

What sort of catering is proposed

We intend to try and offer three levels of catering. They are a snack service, a partial catering option and a full catering option. The catering options are available to event organisers on request. We have the crockery and cutlery to serve a maximum of 48 meals at any one time (we can serve more, but this represents the limit of what we think we can serve in a one-hour period).

What is the difference in the levels

The snack service is just that – simple snacks such as bacon rolls will be available on a cook-to-order basis. One simple meal will be available at lunchtime, usually on a defrost/reheat/serve basis. Partial catering keeps the simple meal, but adds a more complicated meal, typically cooked on the day. Full catering provides three choices of main meal.

What is happening to tea-bar duty. I'm very confused about what I might be asked to do.

Tea-bar duty is being replaced by 'kitchen duty'. You will be rostered for kitchen duty in the same way as you used to be for tea-bar duty (via dutyman). Since the 'tea-bar' is now self-service, your day will not involve making tea or coffee. Instead, you will be asked to make bacon rolls and other snacks, together with taking a quantity of food from the freezer (or fridge), defrosting it if necessary and reheating it in a pan and then serving it. All members and guests requiring lunch will need to request a meal via a sign-up sheet to be filled in at the start of the day, so you will know how much to cook. You will be responsible for serving the meal and doing any washing up the dishwasher cannot handle. Full instructions will be provided.

Would you still like me to bake a cake

If you would like to bake a cake, we would very much like you to do so. We ask you to follow some guidelines that we will supply if you are doing it at home. Alternatively you can make and bake the cake when you start your kitchen duty at the club. We must keep cakes with fresh ingredients (like cream) chilled and we only have the fridge to do this, and this hides the cake from view, and depresses sales, so we ask you not to bake cakes which require chilling.

Where does the food come from?

Previously tea-bar duty involved buying a quantity of milk before duty. We will extend this slightly to include fresh bread, if necessary. A supply of baps and other freezable products will be kept at the club, so you might not need to buy anything more than some milk. Someone from the

committee will let you know how much bread to buy. All other supplies needed will be in the fridge or freezer.

How is partial or full catering provided?

In addition to the normal kitchen duty volunteers, a member of the catering committee will be present on the catering days and additional volunteers will be provided by the event organisers. The same sign-up process will occur and snack service offered, but there will be more meal choice and volunteers may be involved in food prep, cooking, service or washing up as required.

What sort of food will be offered

One of the committee's goals is to provide food that is safe, nutritious and tasty. We will try our best to prepare food from fresh ingredients. We believe that we can offer an interesting range of dishes using the kitchen we currently have. However, everyone needs to recognise that, based on a volunteer workforce and with the kitchen machinery we have, the types of dishes we will provide will not be 'fine dining'. Dishes that will work well will be those that are scalable in large pots or trays that can be placed on the hob or in the oven to cook, so these are the dishes you can expect to see on menus. We will always provide some sort of vegetarian option on catering days. We will try to reduce the amount of fat and salt we use, but some dishes simply do not allow us to do that completely - bacon baps! All meals will have food-safety vetted recipes and these recipes will be available for reference by anyone who has specific allergies. Not every food service will be kitchen-based – we do propose to run some barbecues when we can.

What price can I expect to pay

The committee is required to run a service that is self-sustaining. We have looked at what other sailing clubs charge for food. The kitchen requires a number of paid-for services and items that wear out need to be replaced. We also need to consider wastage. Every dish will be costed and an appropriate price-point decided by the catering committee taking into account all of the above factors. Based on current dishes (see next FAQ) snacks will be around £1-2 and main dishes £3-6.

I have a great recipe/I want to get more involved

We are really happy to receive recipe ideas from any club member. As you might have guessed, the dishes we are most interested in are those that can be cooked in our kitchen for large numbers and served relatively quickly by a team of volunteers and priced reasonably. Any suggestions are gratefully received and will mainly be assessed on these qualities. If you would like to get more involved, we would welcome you joining the catering committee – send an email to catering@whitefriarssc.org. Membership of the canteen committee will require you to undergo level 2 food hygiene training which the club will pay for, and participate in a rota-system to lead the food preparation team on catering days.

When will all this start

As you can imagine, club event calendars are still being worked on (as of December). The catering committee are working towards getting the snack service established for the work party date on March 9th and thereafter offering a regular catered service by the end of March, working towards a particularly busy April, May and June. We have already tested the kitchen on our inaugural catering event in November. We plan further trials of our procedures during February, so please look out for us offering tasters of what is to come, particularly on 'COLD BATH' days.

I am confused about the food hygiene rules

The kitchen is a food preparation area under food hygiene regulations that the club cannot opt out from. This leads to a number of changes to the way the kitchen area is used. For **anyone** doing kitchen duty, or **anyone** using the kitchen to prepare food, they **have** to follow the hygiene regulations that apply to the club. In practical terms this involves viewing a 20 minute DVD (one time only) and each day the kitchen is used, reading a sheet of paper, following the procedures described and making a declaration. The rules are very straightforward and similar to those you would use in your own home prior to preparing food (like washing your hands and cleaning the

surfaces you are using to prepare food). Remember during catering days there will be a member of the catering committee present who has been fully-trained in food hygiene and will know how the system operates.

Can I bring in my own food and prepare/cook it at the club

To be clear, nothing in our food safety procedures or legislation stops you from bringing in food to share amongst yourselves at the club.

There are foods which are high-risk (basically most of the foods you would find or keep in a fridge/freezer) and there are foods that are considerably lower in risk, such as the cakes you find outside the fridge in a supermarket. The main emphasis in the food safety regulations is to prevent poorly prepared food causing you harm, and regardless of your view on the legislative framework, it is what we believe you would expect of food that people prepare for you - under any circumstances. The legislation merely formalises that. The old tea-bar arrangements came under the same rules and we should have adopted food safety procedures even for this, but did not simply because the kitchen was being planned. Had the kitchen not been constructed, we would have had to go through the hygiene regulations.

So, the kitchen at the club comes under food hygiene regulations. Because of this, all of the food stored in the kitchen, including the fridge and freezer, is from a known contamination-free source, is in-date and quality controlled and can be tracked to its origin and tracked through to the preparation, cooking and serving of the food. Behind the scenes in any establishment which provides food that you use, from supermarkets, garages, snack bars, restaurants and take-aways, some form of statutory regulation applies and the club is no different. We cannot (and have indeed tried to establish under what conditions we could) have an 'opt-out' just because we are a sailing club.

There is no reason why stories of food poisoning outbreaks and resulting illness, including death, would never happen at the club. Indeed, because of the high level of faecal matter in the grounds of the club, we need to be especially careful. Fines resulting from an outbreak can run into many thousands of pounds, enough to bankrupt the club and land the officers of the club (and me) in jail. The only mitigation is that we can provide documented proof we have followed an approved food safety system.

What we do have is the ability to be sensible.

On days when there is no catering, you are free to use the kitchen area, the crockery and cutlery, the saucepans, ovens, hob, microwave, fridge, freezer, ladles, chopping boards, knives etc. to prepare your food. However you **MUST** follow the basic food hygiene rules. There seems to be a lot of confusion as to what these are but they are very similar to what you could expect if you were preparing food at a friend's house - you wash your hands, you clean the work surfaces you are about to use, you put on an apron, you cover up any cuts you might have and you don't cough and sneeze over the food and wash your hands again if you go to the toilet. You make sure the food is fully cooked and don't mix raw meat/fish with cooked food (separate knives/surfaces). Also, you must store food which requires refrigeration or freezing in a container in the appropriate fridge. Oh, and you tidy up thoroughly after yourself! There are a few more things but this is essentially it. You will have to sign a declaration (because everyone who uses the kitchen has to) saying you have followed the food hygiene rules and are in good health and also a separate disclaimer removing any liability from the club for food prepared and consumed by yourselves.

On days which have catering arranged you will not be able to use the kitchen. However the kitchen duty staff will be happy to provide you with crockery and cutlery etc. so that you can eat your meal. They will also tidy up and do the washing up. We are working on the catering schedule, but currently catering is only planned on some Saturdays and most Sundays. The full calendar should be available shortly.

There is no issue with outside commercial caterers and indeed it is probable that particularly large events at the club will use these companies. They have their own similar food safety systems which are compatible with ours.

Events to which any reasonable invitee would assume are being run at club level, should have catering arranged by the catering committee or outside registered catering organisations.

Prior to any use of the kitchen area for food preparation, our procedures require a cleaning of surfaces in the kitchen area. So, if **no food preparation** is being performed you are free to enter the kitchen area and fill the kettle and get some milk etc. as the surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized before next use. However to help those who have to clean the kitchen, we ask you to consider using the fridge in the tea/coffee area to hold milk and filling the kettle before you go onto the water, especially if it is particularly muddy.

Food preparation includes heating soup and making sandwiches.

Can I use the barbecues/what if I want to have an event at the club

A barbecue will be provided exclusively for members to use for themselves and their guests. Members are free to use the kitchen on the same basis as anyone else – i.e. they have to follow the food hygiene rules if they are preparing food, which includes following the procedures. In addition, since the food being supplied is prepared outside WSC, it can only be supplied to the party using the barbecue/attending the event, and a disclaimer will need to be signed to cover the use of the barbecue and WSC facilities. The barbecue should be cleaned after use, as it will not be cleaned by anyone else. Unused food should be disposed of outside of the club. We would not expect any private barbecues or events to be run on the same day club catering is being provided.