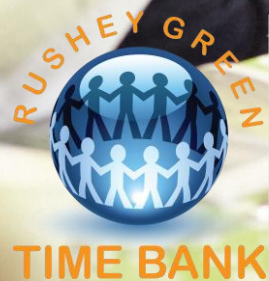




FoodCycle Lewisham: Our Story

Running a Community Meal



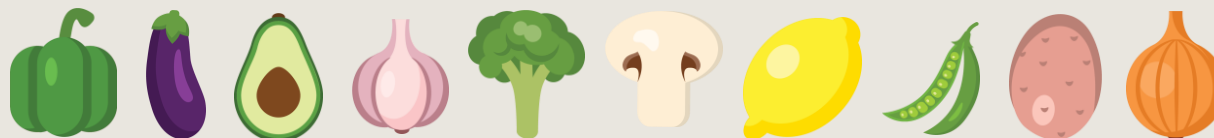


Introduction

1. Who we are
2. How and why we began
3. How it works
4. Our model
5. Our impact
6. What we've learned: volunteer engagement, looking after our guests, fundraising, food waste, Challenges and successes



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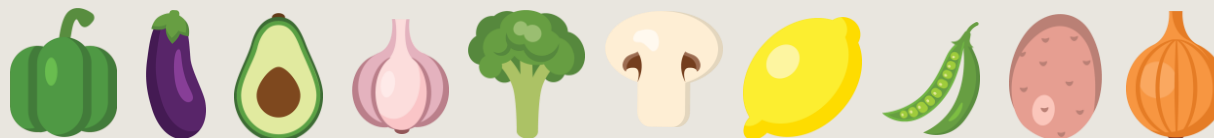
Who we are

FoodCycle is a national charity, founded upon the simple belief that **food waste** and **food poverty** should not co-exist.

FoodCycle Lewisham began in 2016 as a project managed by Rushey Green Time Bank



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**NOURISHING COMMUNITIES
USING SURPLUS FOOD**



Relieve food poverty

**Rescue food from
going to waste**

**Reduce social
isolation**

Our aims



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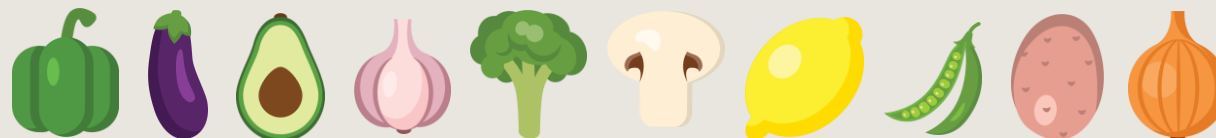


Why we do it: Social Isolation

- Loneliness has a huge impact on mental and physical health –lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as **smoking 15 cigarettes a day**
- **45% of our guests live alone**
- **68% said they often feel lonely**



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Why we do it: Food Poverty

- **Over 2 million people in the UK are estimated to be malnourished, and 3 million more are at risk**
- **8 million people in Britain live in households that struggle to put enough food on the table, with over half regularly going a whole day without eating**
- **45% of our guests said they use a food bank**
- **59% said they often skip meals**



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Why we do it: Food waste

- **12 million tonnes** of food was wasted in the UK in 2016
- ‘Sell by’ dates mean perfectly edible food is wasted
- Stopping food waste would be the **CO₂** equivalent of taking **1 in 4 cars** off the road



A photograph of a group of people, including children and adults, sitting at a table and eating. A man in a dark blue t-shirt with a graphic is standing and serving a bowl of food to a woman. The background is decorated with Christmas lights and a tree. A large, semi-transparent circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'How it works'.

How it works

A group of volunteers in a kitchen, wearing teal t-shirts and black aprons with the 'FOOD Cycle' logo. They are wearing hairnets and are smiling and waving. The kitchen has stainless steel counters, a sink, and various kitchen equipment. In the foreground, there are bags of vegetables and a bowl of breaded items.

**Every Saturday,
volunteers, reclaim
surplus food from
local supermarkets
and cook it into
tasty, healthy
three-course meals
for people in
Lewisham**



**We work with
Sainsbury's,
Tesco's and Aldi
to collect food
that would
otherwise go to
waste**



**Our projects are run by
local volunteers, who
don't just cook, but also
host and eat with our
guests**



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**In 2018 we
provided over
800
volunteering
opportunities
for local people**



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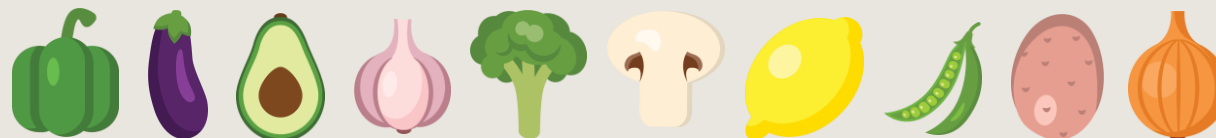
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Our Model of a Community Meal: The Magic Ingredients



- Powered by **volunteers**
- Using **surplus food** to reduce cost, hot topic
- create a welcoming and friendly space for guests where people can connect with one another and **build community**
- Provide a sit down, healthy, warming **three-course meal**
- Work **in partnership** with others to provide holistic support and signposting



Our Impact

- Welcomed over 5000 guests
- Served over 6000 meals
- We have saved over 11,000 kilos of food from landfill
- 82% said they eat more fruit and veg as a result of coming
- 94% said they met people from different backgrounds at the meal
- 82% of our guests have made new friends
- 94% look forward to coming
- 79% feel more connected to their community



“A very enjoyable part of my week.”



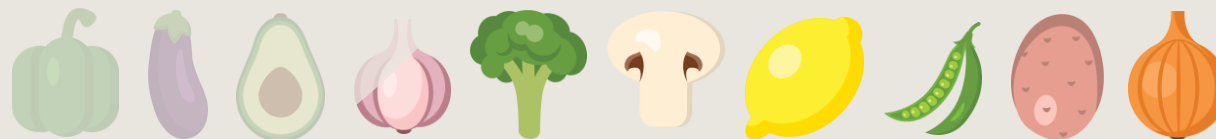


What we've learned: Volunteer Engagement

- Food waste is a hot topic
- rewarding experience - impact of a community meal is tangible
- FoodCycle volunteering model attractive to busy professionals, accessible
- ran by a core team of Project Leaders, commitment is key
- WhatsApp works
- social media presence is important
- identify potential leaders from volunteer pool
- volunteer recognition
- fun & social



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What we've learned: Building Community / Guest Base



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- Continuity is key
- Venue & accessibility
- Welcoming environment
- Volunteers sit and eat with guests
- Table & customer service, guests feel valued
- Recommendations, word of mouth
- Knowledge of the sector and community organisations through RGTB
- Holistic approach - table of info, monthly talks, linking to other services



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What we've learned: Food Donations



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- Using surplus food keeps costs low
- See what's on already, where there's a gap
- Work with local suppliers and restaurants, establish relationship
- Boxes for takeaway
- Local Allotments
- Work with partners - Catford Fridge
- Food collection drives
- Storage is key



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What we've learned: fundraising



- Our budget - £7,500 minimum, £10,000 ideal per year
- Donations from guest – every little counts
- Bags of Help, Coop, Rotary, Waitrose
- Find businesses to support you
- Supplies – in kind, create a wish list
- schools
- Find experienced volunteers with fundraising experience



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The Challenges

- Slow to build up volunteer & guest support
- Increasing competition for food donations
- Volunteer drop-outs
- Fundraising
- Storage/venues
- Working with vulnerable adults



Successes – what we've learned

- Developing and maintaining good relationships with venues, suppliers, partners, local councillors
- Support from local businesses – Parlez
- Model, issue and branding of FoodCycle – popular volunteering opportunity
- Reporting our impact – tangible, monitoring is key
- Nurturing and developing volunteers
- Giving guests best experience possible



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Our Magic Ingredients: Getting Involved



Space: to develop ideas and create

Working: together in a team with a common purpose

Time to Socialise: to meet new people in a relaxed environment

Building connections: to feel part of a community and family, belonging, included, safe, making friends

Learning and sharing: knowledge and skills

Pride: making an impact, over-coming challenges

Satisfaction: contributing, feeling needed, progressing towards a goal

Positive impact on self: health, well-being, sense of self-worth, self-confidence, therapeutic

Reciprocity: giving and receiving, inspiring ourselves and others

Time together: sharing food, having fun, for free!



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In summary

- Be clear on your aims and objectives and the need/gap your project will fill
- Do your research – where will volunteers/food come from, what are potential guests looking for
- Food and meals are effective ways to build community
- Continuity and quality is key
- Despite the challenges, the results are worth it!





Thank you for listening!
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