



KIND COMMUNITIES-KIND FOOD NEWSLETTER

Friday 29 December 2023

Welcome to the second edition of our Kind Communities-Kind Food newsletter about the Warwickshire Food Strategy 2023 – 2026. In this edition you will find updates on our Food Strategy Delivery Plan, including new initiatives under way.

1. Kind Communities-Kind Food events

'Kind Communities-Kind Food' is our flagship programme for community engagement on the Food Strategy. Partnered by the Equality and Inclusion Partnership (EQuIP) and involving local District and Borough Councils, we held our first Kind Communities – Kind Food events on Saturday 9 September at the Jubilee Sports Centre, Nuneaton and on Saturday 21 October at the Sydni Centre, Leamington Spa. At these events we bring together community groups, voluntary and community sector organisations and partner agencies to raise awareness, stimulate engagement and share knowledge about affordable and healthy food. Cooking demonstrations are proving a very exciting way for everyone to get involved. EQuIP are providing expert support to this initiative, enabling a richer and deeper level of community engagement and with communities most at risk of food insecurity.



Photos from the Sydni Centre on 21 October

As part of the Food Strategy Delivery Plan – we are continuing with these events into 2024. To date, this includes the following events - although more will be planned.

- Mancetter Memorial Hall, North Warwickshire on 13 February 2024
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/kind-communities-kind-food-mancetter-atherstone-tickets-779958566067>
- Lillington Food Pantry, Warwick District during 2 March 2024
- Hill Street Community Centre, Rugby on 27 April 2024
- Stratford District 13 July 2024
- Bedworth 21 September 2024

2. Kind Communities-Kind Food Grant Fund

The Kind Communities-Kind Food grant fund has been launched to encourage grass roots community groups and Town and Parish Councils to apply for funding for projects which support the Food Strategy key priorities. The fund provides a total of £25,000 and applicants can apply for up to £1,000 each for their project. The fund opened for applications on 27 November and closes on 7 January 2024. Grant workshops and online webinars have been held in support of applicants throughout this month, which have been supported by Warwickshire Community & Voluntary Action (WCAVA). The applications will be assessed by

local officers from the Warwickshire County Council Community Partnerships Team and then go on to an awarding panel which will meet on 29 January to consider and approve the projects to be funded. We are working to notify applicants in early February.

3. Warwickshire Food Champions

Warwickshire Food Champions aims to provide a new channel for community participation in the Food Strategy. We have held three online webinars about the planned Food Champions Scheme to give information about the scheme and gain views from people. We have had a great response from volunteers who are interested in becoming food champions. The next steps are that we will arrange a press release on 5 January 2024 announcing the start of the Food Champions training courses – for anyone living, working, studying or volunteering in Warwickshire. We will hold four evening sessions from 7pm – 9pm covering a range of relevant topics. The dates for these are: 24 January, 31 January, 7 February and 21 February. We will have a further meeting on 28 February for course members who wish to go on to formally become Warwickshire Food Champions and after that we will have a launch event for the new Food Champions cohort, bringing them together at a face-to-face event.

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4609/new-volunteer-opportunity-to-empower-local-communities-in-making-affordable-healthy-and-sustainable-food-choices>

4. WRCC Slow cooker courses scheme winter 2023/24

This partnership programme builds on the success of the winter warm hubs programme delivered by Warwickshire Rural Community Council last winter by now offering free slow cooker courses at community venues across the county, enabling people to find out how to cook more healthily and affordably using slow cookers. There are twelve courses each lasting four weeks, which can take up to twelve participants. Cadent are supplying every course attendee with a free family size slow cooker and Warwickshire County Council are funding the cost of a professional cooking instructor and free food ingredients each week. Five of the courses have already been delivered successfully with great feedback from participants. Venues for the remaining courses are planned in for delivery between January and April 2024.

[https://www.wrccrural.org.uk/services/wrcc-warm-hubs/what-are-warm-hubs/#:~:text=Warm%20Hubs%20Slow%20Cooking%20Courses&text=Courses%20run%20over%20a%20period,1.3l\)%20for%20each%20attendee.](https://www.wrccrural.org.uk/services/wrcc-warm-hubs/what-are-warm-hubs/#:~:text=Warm%20Hubs%20Slow%20Cooking%20Courses&text=Courses%20run%20over%20a%20period,1.3l)%20for%20each%20attendee.)

5. Food insecurity workshops at Warwick University

Two workshops on the 26 and 28 September were led by Dr Martine Barons focusing on developing an effective evaluation of food poverty projects and developing a deeper understanding of what data is telling us about other aspects of food poverty and hunger in our region. The workshops were well-attended by partner organisations and local authorities involved in alleviating food insecurity. The workshops made an excellent start to scoping causes and effects in relation to food poverty and in identifying where we are missing information. This strategic piece of work is being carried forward by Dr Barons working with the Food Forum and Delivery Working Group colleagues.

Please contact Mike Slemensek at Warwickshire County Council if you would like any more information regarding this newsletter.

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