KEYSTONE
Building Lives Stronger

THE WALRONDS







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CULLOMPTON COOKING ON A BUDGET PROJECT

November/December 2025

COMMUNITY FUND

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CULLOMPTON - COOKING ON A BUDGET PROJECT

Involve has been awarded funding to run 'cooking on a budget' sessions in partnership with The Keystone Project and The Walronds in Cullompton.
The first session took place on November 10th 2025, offering a welcoming space where people came together to cook, connect, and learn. It was designed to support: Skills-based learning and develop stronger community connections.

The Keystone Project is based in Cullompton and it supports those suffering from economic and/or emotional hardship. Their support includes assistance with homelessness, unemployment, mental health, abuse and addiction.
Because there are individuals within the Keystone group who are unable to socialise with vulnerable individuals, we decided to have two separate groups of attendees for our cookery sessions - The Keystone group were the first group, starting on 10th November and the second group were individuals from the wider community, who started on 17th November. Each group attended on alternating weeks for the 6 week block, attending 3 sessions each.

WEEK ONE - KEYSTONE GROUP SPAGHETTI BOLOGNAISE

Knife skills and basic food hygiene learned
Two Attendees



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WEEK TWO - WIDER COMMUNITY GROUP
LEEK AND POTATO SOUP



4 new Attendees
4 recipe 'reducing food waste' books provided
4 Signed up to basic food hygiene courses
11 People provided with an evening meal







WEEK THREE - MIXED GROUP CHINESE SPECIAL SESSION COCA COLA CHICKEN

6 Attendees (3 new)
8 people provided with their evening meal





WEEK FOUR - MIXED GROUP CHICKEN CURRY



4 Repeat attendees
11 people provided with their evening meal
Leftover chicken distributed to avoid wastage

WEEK FIVE LASAGNE AND GARLIC BREAD

5 Repeat attendees
12 People provided with their evening meal







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MESSAGE FROM CARLA, CULLOMPTON COMMUNITY BUILDER

When I teamed up with The Walronds and The Keystone Project to provide community cookery sessions, I didn't imagine how much it would help some in the community.
We've had a fantastic 5 sessions and the group have learned new skills, fed themselves and their families and made new friends. I've received some great feedback on the sessions and I'm very excited to announce that we are now in the position to offer a further 6 sessions in the new year, which is amazing as the original sessions were run as a trial.



Each participant of this run of sessions has joined for different reasons, some to learn to cook on a budget, others to learn to cook at all. Some to access food and some to learn new skills to help them into a job in the hospitality industry. We were able to fund 4 participants to complete a basic food hygiene course to give their CV a boost.

It's been really interesting to hear everyone's reasons why and has been a privilege to get to know everyone and support them with their aims.

Thank you to the following charities and organisation for support with funding our cookery sessions -
Devon County Council Building Communities Fund
Cullompton United Charities
James Buckowski - Councillor

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QUOTES AND FEEDBACK

I'm taking home enough soup to feed me for days and I would normally spend this on one meal

I never thought I would eat this but I actually like it

I really liked it and made it again the next day

Will you be doing anymore sessions after christmas because i would be interested if you do

I think this has been a fantastic opportunity to meet new people and get a chance to mix, make friends and learn new things

MB

This group gets me out socialising and learning new cooking skills. It's made me try new things

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CASE STUDY

Maisie - I love this, it's well fun. It gets me out and takes me away from stress. It gets me out of the house and it's enjoyable. I've learnt how to make new things that I didn't know how to make before. I would recommend the cooking sessions to others.



Favourite recipe - Chicken curry (tikka masala)

Anonymous - I've done a bit of cooking before but I don't really know what I'm doing. I use jars of sauces which I know aren't as healthy and they can be more expensive but I didn't know how to make things without using them. Now I do! And I'm looking forward to making more things so I know how to make them when I'm at home. My housemates have been asking where I got the meal from and they're interested in joining now too

Favourite Recipe - Spaghetti bolognaise



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SURVEYS

We asked all participants to complete two surveys, one before the course and one after completing the course. This enabled us to compare answers and learn how helpful the course was, whether new skills have been learnt and new confidence found. We can clearly see favourite meals, feedback for future courses and recipes that participants would like to learn.



IMPACT SNAPSHOT

9 Participants Total

100% of surveys stated they wanted us to make no changes to the sessions

100% felt more confident in their cooking abilities

> **I loved learning new things and meeting new people but the course has also done wonders for my mental health**

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WHAT NEXT -

After reviewing the first course, their are some points for us to take away and learn from.

- We provided drink and snacks - We would repeat this. The snacks and drinks were appreciated by the participants.
- As part of the course, we gifted each participant a small oven dish so that they could carry on practicing their cooking at home.
- We originally set a maximum of 8 participants per session. When the sessions were full, the kitchen was very busy so actually the ideal number would be 6-8.

New block of sessions starting January 2026

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