

Memories

&

**MUNCH**








# Welcome to Memories and Munch!

Memories and Munch is a collaboration between Mary Needham of Munch CIC and Rachel Lewis from The Life Story Team and Presenting Your Past.

The project began when Mary was leading a series of workshops focused on healthy eating with residents in social housing. While the workshops were designed to promote healthier cooking, Mary noticed that conversations naturally shifted toward participants' food memories and personal stories. This sparked an idea — harnessing the power of food memories to connect people, inspire healthier eating habits, and build a sense of community.

Recognising the significance of food stories in shaping identity, Rachel was the perfect partner to bring this idea to life. Over the years, Rachel had seen first-hand how food plays a pivotal role in social, cultural, and religious identity in the Life Stories she supported. She also observed that discussions around food often helped forge deeper connections within groups, promoting emotional well-being.

Together, Mary and Rachel launched Memories and Munch, with the goal of enabling older members of the community to access nourishing, nutritious food, while enjoying a socially enriching and evocative experience.








# How does it work?




## 1. Reminiscence Workshop

An interactive session where participants are invited to share their food stories and memories.

We also take a look at 'comfort foods' and how we can still enjoy these in a healthy way.



"I reallly enjoyed the camaraderie of everyone exchanging ideas and experiences of cooking."

Activities include a 'Memory Lane' food quiz and a multi-sensory experience 'Smell Session' that explores memories and emotions linked to different food smells.

"It brought back memories and gave me ideas, and it was interesting to listen to other people."



## 2. The Cookbook

*Section 1*

This section features the food recipes, photos and memories collected from participants.

86% of participant said they were inspired to try out the recipes from other residents.

*Section 2*

This section highlights multi-sensory food-based activities that can be used throughout the year. The aim is to give people fresh ideas to create new food traditions and celebrations with fellow residents, friends or family.

*Section 3*

Features new recipes from Munch CIC- focussing on cost-efficient, healthy and easy to prepare foods. These recipes are sometimes a new take on a traditional favourite, or an introduction of ingredients that participants often aren't familiar with.




100% of participants said they now felt inspired to try some new recipes

## 3.Cooking Workshop / Celebration and Recognition

Participants will have the opportunity to take part in an interactive cooking workshop led by Mary, nutritionist from Munch CIC.

In this session, new or unfamiliar ingredients will be introduced, highlighting their nutritional and cost benefits. The focus will be on offering healthy, modern alternatives for the group to taste and explore.

"I learnt how to make chilli from scratch instead of packet mix, and how to cook without meat, eg using lentils"

There will be a presentation of the group cookbook, a chance to celebrate everyone's contributions to the project.



"I was reminded of things I used to do, and learnt a few new shortcuts"

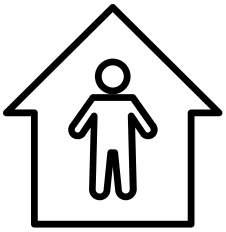
The workshop will conclude with a group discussion on how to use the cookbook, revisiting traditional recipes and experimenting with the new ones. Participants will also reflect on the role that food can play in fostering connections within their community.

# What does this project address?



**1. Improving Health**

Promotes healthier eating habits and food literacy,especially among older adults.



**2. Social Isolation and Loneliness**

Engages people in group activities and shared meals.



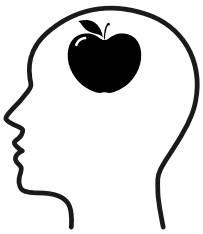
**3. Community Integration and Social Cohesion**

Brings together people from diverse backgrounds bridging differences through food and storytelling.



**4. Independent Living**

Through cooking workshops and skill-building, the project empowers participants.



**5. Emotional Well-Being**

Food reminiscence evokes positive emotions and builds connections, re-igniting an interest in food.

# Who can benefit from this project ?

## Older Adults in Social Housing or Care Homes

- An opportunity to share stories, affirming identity and sense of self.
- Fostering a sense of community, creating a group cookbook and support for building future community food-based activities.

## Cultural and Ethnic Minority Communities

- Sharing and preserving traditional recipes and food stories, is a great way to celebrate heritage while fostering cross-cultural understanding.

## Community Groups and Volunteers

- Participants and volunteers gain skills, meaningful interactions, and opportunities to contribute to their communities.

## Family Carers

- Provides a break from caregiving duties by offering a social and enjoyable activity for both the carer and the person they support.
- Encourages shared experiences, such as reminiscing about food memories, which can strengthen relationships and provide emotional connection.
- Introduces practical cooking tips and recipes that carers can use to prepare healthier, more diverse meals for their loved ones.

# Working With Us

"Mary and Rachel's commitment to empowering every participant truly sets them apart. The workshops are thoughtfully designed to be inclusive, ensuring everyone feels valued and comfortable. This creates a wonderful sense of community, bringing residents together in a shared, creative experience."

"Our residents' overwhelmingly positive feedback speaks volumes. They absolutely loved this project. Mary and Rachel arrive fully prepared, providing all necessary ingredients and equipment and their infectious passion for healthy, delicious food! Our residents left feeling inspired and energised, armed with plenty of new recipes and ideas to try at home."

Trevor Lynas
Local Housing Manager, Housing 21

Prices start from £580 to run the full project, although discounts are available for multiple bookings and registered charities. This includes 2 x 1.5 hour workshops, a bespoke group cookbook, and a tasting lunch for up to 10 people.

If you'd like more info, do give us a call for a chat:

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