



Thomas
RIDLEY
foodservice est. 1808

Catering with Care

Specialist Catering
for the Care Sector



Here to Support the Care Sector

At Thomas Ridley we're passionate about good food and the power it has to bring people together, at all stages of life.

Serving the best quality food has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of your residents; bringing joy as well as nutrition to their days.

Together, our high quality, competitive and exclusive products, combined with our excellent service levels and customer-focused approach, can help you achieve quality care for your residents.

Committed to high standards and food safety, we are proud to have the following accreditations :

- BRCGS Storage and Distribution Certification
- Soil Association Organic Certified
- MSC: Marine Stewardship Council supplier
- Dignity at Work Standard
- Red Tractor
- NHS supply chain, ESPO, NACC

HOW WE ARE DIFFERENT

Established in 1808 and based in East Anglia, we are proud to be a part of the Caterfood Buying Group (CFBG), which means we have the background, support and expertise of a wider buying network, giving you better access to a comprehensive range of fantastic food, drink and cleaning products.

At Thomas Ridley, we care about the importance of great food and we're here to support you and your residents with delicious, nutritious and cost-effective menu solutions.

As a reliable and regional wholesaler, this unique position gives us the best of both worlds when it comes to structure, products and competitive pricing, which makes us a better partner for you.

Focused on Quality Food, not just Budget

It's not just about helping you meet that all-important bottom line. We know that serving the best quality food—carefully tailored to each resident's needs—is a vitally important part of the complete care package that your home provides.

THE CATERFOOD COLLECTION

The Caterfood Collection is our highly competitive own-brand range, where every product has been specially selected for flavour, quality and consistency.

By choosing this range, you can buy in confidence that you're putting quality first while also making significant savings. All of this is backed up by our local, efficient service and customer-focused approach. Find out more on pages 5-6.





IDEAS TO HELP YOU SAVE TIME AND MONEY IN THE KITCHEN

We understand that you have tight budgets to work to, complex needs to support and varying skill levels in your teams. That's why we believe the best way to ensure you're providing good quality, budget-friendly and nutritious meals is to use our comprehensive range of affordable, high-quality own-brand products: The Caterfood Collection.

We provide exceptional products, without the premium price tag.

Other ways to save time and money in the kitchen:

- Prioritise menu planning and stock inventory. This will help you create a varied and nutritious menu, and help you save money.
- Where possible, build in using leftovers in your main meals. This reduces time, waste and costs.
- Utilise pre-prepared texture-modified meals to cater to various levels of the IDDSI scale, such as Simply Food Solutions, instead of making these meals yourself. More about this on pages 9-11.
- Choose frozen items over fresh to make meal prep easier, faster and cheaper.
- Use packet mixes and pre-made sandwich fillings to reduce time in the kitchen and provide consistent results.
- If you have a skilled chef, consider batch cooking main meals to improve economies of scale.



SPECIAL OFFERS AND INFUSE MAGAZINE

Every other month we will be in touch with our latest Special Offers, helping to keep your kitchen full of great deals. Plus, each quarter we share with you the latest Infuse magazine – our foodservice magazine, bursting with ideas, recipes, and relevant insights and features.

Save Money with our Own Brand Range, The Caterfood Collection

We know how squeezed your budgets are, but our high-quality own brand range is here to help.

Unlike other own brands, every product has been taste-tested and selected by our panel of Buyers as the best option on the market. Using trusted producers, we're bringing you these great products at a competitive price under our label.

The Caterfood Collection is exclusive to Members of the Caterfood Buying Group and we are proud to be the only Member operating in your area. This range has hundreds of core products, all of which have been specially selected by the CFBG team, meaning you can serve up great food and make considerable savings.


THE
CATERFOOD
COLLECTION



Caterfood Select Floured Baps



Caterfood Select Vanilla Flavour Soft Scoop Ice Cream

TOP CATERFOOD COLLECTION PRODUCTS FOR CARE HOMES

Caterfood Select Tuna in Brine
(1 x 800g) 11990

Caterfood Select Buttery Spread
(1 x 2kg) 53003

Caterfood Select Chopped Tomatoes
(1 x 2.5kg) 11319

Caterfood Select Salmon Portion 140-170g (1 x 10) 11837

Caterfood Select Mature White Cheddar
(1 x 5kg) 11335

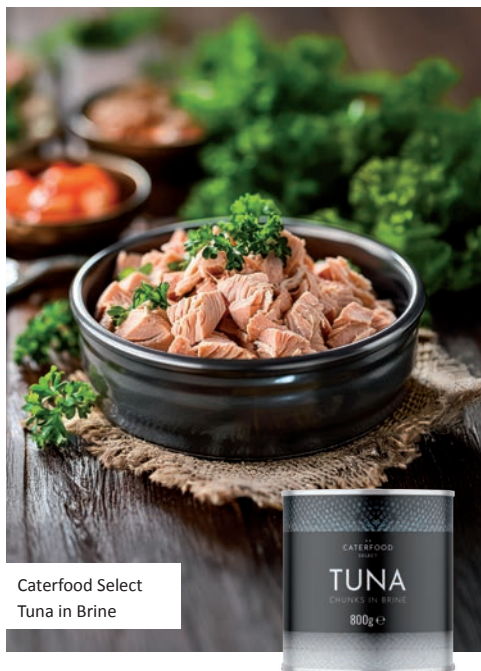
Caterfood Select Vegetable Oil
(1 x 20ltr) 11394

Caterfood Select Vanilla Flavour Ice Cream (1 x 4ltr) 12293

Caterfood Select Breaded Wholetail Scampi (1 x 450g) 11819

Caterfood Select Choice Garden Peas (1 x 2.5kg) 12463

Caterfood Select Cauliflower Florets (1 x 2.5kg) 12462



Caterfood Select
Tuna in Brine



Caterfood Select
Choice Peas



Caterfood Select Mature White Cheddar

Care Home Catering Overview

We understand the importance of every meal and snack to your residents.

Providing something to look forward to at mealtimes stimulates the way someone feels day to day, both physically and mentally.

Here are some ideas to help you feel inspired in the kitchen and to help put smiles on your residents' faces.

TIPS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUILDING YOUR MENUS

- Mealtimes are important social interactions for residents are often the part of the day they look forward to the most. Encourage staff to sit with residents, to increase a feeling of unity
- Finger foods, easy-to-eat bowl foods or ready-made pots all increase independence amongst residents, especially those with dementia, and can reduce kitchen prep time
- Regular menu refreshes and asking residents what they would like to eat and why, can boost interest in mealtimes
- Hydration is particularly important as we age. Serving soups, smoothies, fruit salads and plenty of vegetables are all great ways to introduce more fluids into your residents' diets
- Colourful and creative meal presentation increases mealtime engagement
- Sensible portion sizes can help to monitor what's been eaten and reduce waste
- Nostalgic dishes and family favourites can rekindle memories

Care Home Menu Corner Stones

Putting together care-home-appropriate menus which are achievable and on budget is no easy task. Here are a few key menu 'corner stones' to help you reliably mix up the flavours and format of your menus from time to time.



One Pot Wonders

Hearty stews, mild curries, and creamy risottos are all great options for creating satisfying, flavourful dishes. They can be packed with vegetables and boosted with pulses or healthy grains—like lentils, chickpeas, and pearl barley—to add essential fiber and nutrients. Use these dishes to show off different flavours, proteins and vegetables on rotation.

Soups

Great for aiding hydration, can be easy for residents to eat and switched up with the seasons. Consider making your own, as a great way to use up leftovers and reduce waste, or save time in the kitchen with pre-made products. They can be thickened and fortified to suit individual needs.



Traybakes

A great way to keep seasonal vegetables high on your menu while reducing hands-on cooking times. Vegetable traybakes, topped with chicken or fish, are a great way to cook a meal that is full of different colours and textures, and can easily lend itself to different flavour profiles (such as Italian, British or Mexican).



Weekly Theme Day

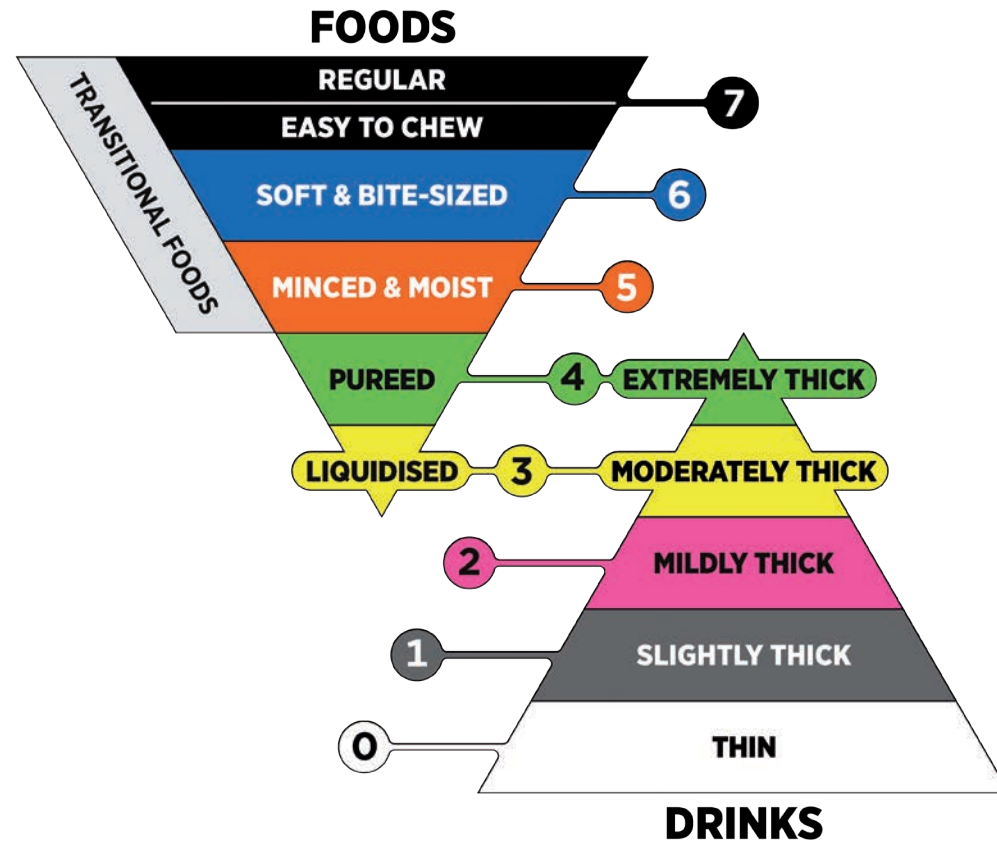
A themed meal such as 'Fish Friday' or 'Pie Wednesday' gives residents something to look forward to. A regular pie night, for example, can cover fish pie, cottage pie, shepherd's pie as well as vegetarian equivalents and traditional short crust of puff pastry pies, stretching to include pasties and lattices, too.

Catering for Residents with Dysphagia

IDDSI

The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) is a global framework for standardising food and drink textures to improve safety for individuals with dysphagia (swallowing difficulties, caused by age-related changes, neurological disorders or physical obstructions).

It defines easy to understand levels (0–7) for textures and thickness, from thin liquids (Level 0) to regular foods (Level 7). When catering to IDDSI levels, you can either blend and/or puree meals yourself, to the required thickness or texture, or buy pre-prepared meals.



© The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative 2019 @ <https://iddsi.org/framework/>
Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution Sharealike 4.0 License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode>.
Derivative works extending beyond language translation are NOT PERMITTED.

BREAKDOWN OF IDDSI LEVELS 0-7

0 Thin - Should flow like water. Can be drunk through any kind of cup or straw.

1 Slightly Thick - Thicker than water. Flows through a straw. Requires a little more effort to drink than thin liquids.

2 Mildly Thick - A liquid which can be sipped. This liquid should flow quickly from a spoon. Mild effort required to drink through a standard straw.

3 Liquidised / Moderately Thick - Cannot be eaten with a fork because it drips slowly through the prongs. Should have a smooth texture with no bits. Cannot be piped, layered or moulded. These foods/liquids can be drunk from a cup and sucked through a standard straw, but with some effort. Should pour from a spoon without sticking.

4 Pureed / Extremely Thick - Usually eaten with a spoon. Can be piped, layered or moulded. Does not require chewing. Should have no lumps and not be sticky. Cannot be drunk from a cup or sucked through a straw. Should hold its shape on a spoon, and fall off a spoon when tilted.

5 Minced & Moist - Soft and moist, with no separate thin liquid. Food can be scooped and shaped, and eaten with a fork or spoon. Small lumps visible within the food (4mm in size). Lumps should be soft enough to squash through the lines of a fork. Food should not flow through a fork.

6 Soft and Bite-sized - Can be eaten with a fork or a spoon, but no knife needed to cut the food. Soft and tender with no separate thin liquid. Should break apart under pressure from a fork or spoon. Pieces can be 15mm in size. Chewing required before swallowing.

7 Easy to Chew - Normal everyday foods of soft/tender textures.
Regular - Normal everyday foods of various textures.

Texture-Modified Ready Meals

Simply Food Solutions is a UK-based specialist in high-quality frozen food, supporting healthcare, catering and foodservice operators with safe, nutritious and great-tasting solutions.

Their offer is structured across three tiers: Simply Puree, providing IDDSI-compliant texture-modified meals; Simply Healthcare, delivering specialist solutions for allergies, intolerances and clinical diets; and Simply Worldfoods, an internationally inspired range designed to add cultural variety and menu choice.

SIMPLY PUREE, IDDSI LEVELS 3 – 6

Simply Puree offers a premium selection of high-quality, texture-modified meals, all prepared to the highest safety standards. Each meal is fully compliant with IDDSI guidelines, covering levels 3 to 6—including Moderately Thick, Extremely Thick/Pureed, Minced and Moist and Soft and Bite-Sized textures.

Designed for convenience, the meals can be cooked directly from frozen with minimal preparation, helping to simplify operations in your kitchen. Each meal is halal certified, and allergen-aware options are available for those looking to reduce allergen risks.

The product range includes breakfast and main meals as well as pureed hot desserts. Simply Puree believe texture-modified foods should be as visually appealing and flavourful as traditional meals. That's why every dish is carefully crafted to retain its authentic taste, supporting greater meal satisfaction and encouraging higher consumption at mealtimes.

TOP TIP

When serving residents with dysphagia, presentation is important to stimulate appetite and to help make mealtimes an enjoyable experience.

Assemble pureed meals in an attractive way, or in a way that reflects parts of the original dish.



LEVEL 3 Lancashire Hotpot



LEVEL 4 Lemon Sponge



LEVEL 6 Macaroni Cheese

SUGGESTED PRODUCT LIST

Simply Puree Frozen Level 3 Mixed Meals
& Soups (24 x 170g)
12671

Simply Puree Frozen Level 5 Allergen Aware
Mixed Case (12 x 380g)
12672

Simply Puree Frozen Level 6 Bitesized
Allergen Aware Meals (12 x 380g)
12673

Simply Puree Frozen Level 4 Puree Allergy
Aware Mixed Case (12 x 380g)
12674

Simply Puree Frozen Level 4 Pureed Meals
Mixed Case (12 x 380g)
12675

Simply Puree Frozen Level 4 Individual Serve
Hot Desserts (24 x 150g)
12676

Simply Worldfoods Frozen Ethnic Mixed Halal
Meals (12 x 380g)
12677

Simply Healthcare Frozen Allergy Free Meals
Mixed Case (12 x 380g)
12678

Simply Puree Frozen Level 5 Minced & Moist
Mixed Main Meals (12 x 380g)
12679

Simply Puree Frozen Level 6 Soft & Bite-
Sized Mixed Case (1 x 12)
13264

Catering for Residents with Diabetes

Did you know that diabetes affects up to 27% of care home residents?

Promoting a healthy, balanced diet which is full of fruit, vegetables and whole foods while low in sugar, salt, starchy carbs and processed foods, is incredibly important for managing both type 1 and type 2 diabetes in a care setting.

It is essential to work closely with your medical teams to make sure that personalised dietary plans are in place for every resident with diabetes. This will help you to balance nutritional needs whilst maintaining healthy blood sugar levels and minimising diabetes-related complications.

Poor or irregular eating can often be a cause of low blood sugar, so ensuring residents with diabetes eat often and stay hydrated can make a big difference to their overall health and wellbeing.

Here are some practical tips for catering for residents with diabetes:



Encourage a Balanced Breakfast

Offer nutritious options like porridge, wholemeal toast, eggs, Greek yogurt, natural muesli, and fresh fruit.



Monitor Salt Consumption

Keep salt intake low, around 6g per day.



Promote Hydration

Ensure access to low-sugar drinks and dilute fruit juices to reduce sugar intake.

Choose Healthy Fats

Reduce saturated fat and trans-fats, opting for olive oil and rapeseed oil for cooking.



LOW SUGAR PRODUCTS

For many residents reducing sugar intake can be beneficial, especially for those with diabetes. Here are our top low-sugar swaps.

Freshers No Added Sugar Blackcurrant Cordial (2 x 5ltr) 12035

Freshers No Added Sugar Whole Lemon Drink (2 x 5ltr) 51035

Freshers No Added Sugar Whole Orange Drink (2 x 5ltr) 52006

Robinsons No Added Sugar Orange Squash (12 x 1ltr) 47190

Stute No Added Sugar Fine Cut Orange Marmalade (6 x 430g) 00204

Stute No Added Sugar Strawberry Jam (6 x 430g) 00208

Canderel Red Granular Low Calorie Sweetener (1 x 1kg) 87211

Caterers Pride Reduced Salt & Sugar Baked Beans (1 x 2620g) 11794U



Limit Sugary and Processed Foods

Remove sugary, processed, and starchy foods, and replace refined grains with whole grains like brown rice, quinoa and rye.

Prioritize Whole Foods and Lean Proteins

Incorporate beans, pulses, and lean proteins like fish, eggs, and low-fat dairy while avoiding red and processed meats.

Additional Tips and Ideas

Prioritise Presentation

It may sound simple, but thinking about how food looks on the plate, the colours, the textures and its presentation - especially when catering for a resident with IDDSI needs – is really important and easy to overlook when you're busy.

Stop to think - does the food that you are serving look appetising? Can you use molds to help?



Use Flavour to Avoid Menu Fatigue

Add variety by using different spices and seasonal ingredients. Try dishes inspired by global cuisines—like stews, tagines, chowders, and curries. Anything that is slow cooked and contains loads of soft, healthy and tasty vegetables can be easily pureed for residents with dysphagia.



Incorporate Fun and Nostalgia into Your Menus

In a care setting, mealtimes are often important for evoking fond memories of food, family and life events. From birthdays to holidays, food has the power to unite people.



Cater for a Growing Plant-Based Audience

As the population ages, more vegetarians and vegans will enter the care sector and it's important that their wishes are protected. Why not get a head start and consider the health, environmental and cost benefits of serving more plant-based meals now?

Often being naturally higher in fibre and lower in saturated fats, these meals can also provide a healthier option. Instead of focusing on plant-based meat substitutes for traditional dishes, try making plant-based meals on your menu exciting in their own right, such as risottos and tray bakes which celebrate different seasonal vegetables.



Celebrate Occasions and Themes Through Food-Based Activities

From annual sporting events like Wimbledon to British celebration days such as VE Day or the abundance of themed days such as 'Afternoon Tea Day' or 'National Fish and Chip Day' - there are endless foodie themes to provide regular opportunities for special dishes, or to link food with other activities going on in the home.

From biscuit decorating to celebrating the food of a certain country or culture, to running a one-off tasting event or themed evening, these events and ideas can all help to engage residents with their food and to mix things up in the kitchen without adding a lot of extra cost.



Ask Your Residents What Their Favourite Meals are and Why?

Tapping into their likes - and their memories - and providing them with some choices, can help to boost engagement in your food, and help you to create more effective and profitable menus. In addition, offering retro dishes, which might use cheaper cuts of meat, can be a way to make savings as well as help with menu fatigue.



The Power of Pudding

Often the highlight of someone's day, pudding presents the biggest opportunity to encourage a resident to eat well and to fill up on calories - without necessarily being 'unhealthy' foods.

Whether you're looking to whip up your own desserts from scratch or to defrost and serve a high-quality product, we have lots of options to suit your requirements and budget.

Here are some of our top products for crafting your pudding menu:

- Riverdene Peach Slices in Juice (1 x 2.5kg) 89017
- Fructus Italian Solid Pack Apple Slices (1 x 2.6kg) 24044
- Golden Acre Thick & Creamy Mixed Yogurts (20 x 125g) 10806
- Birds Instant Custard Mix (1 x 3kg) 32012
- Millac UHT Gold Double Cream Alternative (12 x 1ltr) 49041
- Muller Vitality Thick & Creamy Mixed Case Yogurts (12 x 110g) 05164
- Ambrosia Devon Custard Pots (12 x 120g) 76147
- Angel Delight Strawberry Flavour Dessert Mix (1 x 600g) 06867
- Caterfood Select Carrot Cake (1 x 14ptn) 13415





THE ULTIMATE COMFORT FOOD WITH ADDED BENEFITS

From a generous slice of cake to hearty warm sponges, delicious pies, or seasonal crumbles, comforting desserts offer plenty of opportunities to add stewed fruits or soft currants for extra nutrients and fibre. It doesn't stop there—topping them with cream, custard, or ice cream makes it easy to adjust the calorie content to suit each resident's needs.

In the summer months, trifles, mousses, jellies and ice creams all work well, especially when incorporating seasonal fruits and flavours. Making your own ice lollies from scratch is always a great way to keep residents cool and hydrated on a hot day.



A Trip Down Memory Lane

Catering for care home residents comes with a unique set of challenges – dietary restrictions, medical needs, budgets and nutrition to name a few – but crafting a menu that resonates with diners should always be a top priority.

A 2024 One Poll survey* of 2,000 adults revealed that a third of people often eat foods specifically to remind them of years gone by, with 52 per cent associating particular foods with certain people and memories. “A meal using a recipe enjoyed in the past creates an opportunity to remember and reflect on the people and places which inspired the dish,” says Andrew Mussett, Hotel Services Manager at Care UK. Tapping into the past using nostalgic dishes can be an effective way for care home catering teams to revive those cherished memories and transport residents back to meaningful moments in their lives.

The good news? Many nostalgic British classics, like stews, pies, jam roly poly and trifle, are also both affordable and easy to make.

ON THE TIP OF YOUR TONGUE

There are an estimated 982,000 people with dementia in the UK, with this number expected to rise to 1.4 million by 2040**. Although there is no cure for this devastating disease, familiar foodie comforts can trigger joyful recollections and help to build a sense of familiarity. “Whether it’s the aroma of a family recipe or the first bite of a childhood treat, nostalgic foods have the power to evoke happy memories and emotions and are a wonderful way to encourage reminiscence in older people, especially for those living with dementia,” explains Andrew.





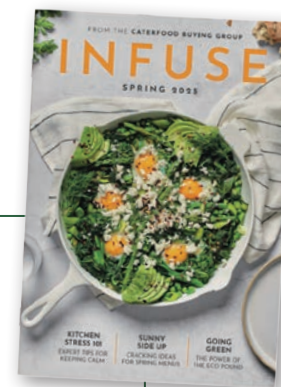
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Creating a nostalgic dining experience for residents is about more than just the food. Immersing diners in memories by playing the right music and putting up decorations or old photos from the decade you're trying to emulate can help set the mood.

"Our activities teams are amazing, they come up with wonderful events daily, reminiscing of times gone by," says Steven, Group Support Chef at Carebase. "The chefs work closely with the teams to deliver fun and exciting food occasions. We've had full afternoon teas, Saturday night takeaways, old-fashioned sweet shops with pear drops and lemon sherbets, pancakes with the chefs on Shrove Tuesday, BBQs on sunny days and Halloween cupcake decorating." These lively events also help to build relationships throughout the care setting. "As a chef who likes a joke, our residents' humour [at these events] has had me in tears of laughter," says Steven.

"There's a certain joy in rediscovering the flavours of our childhood or the meals we once shared with loved ones," reflects Andrew. "Nostalgic foods offer a unique blend of taste and real emotion, creating a culinary journey that resonates with the essence of who we are, where we've come from, and all the people with whom we've enjoyed meals throughout our lives."

Explore the full article, plus more inspiring stories, fresh recipes, and expert catering tips at infusemagazine.com



* One Poll research for WPR Agency and Care UK April 2024

** Alzheimer's Society alzheimers.org.uk/about-us/policy-and-influencing/local-dementia-statistics



Combine your Food and Cleaning Supplies Order

Just as important as your food and nutrition, we know that keeping your care homes clean and safe is paramount to the health of your residents.

Our professional cleaning products are all of top industry quality, brought to you as part of our own brand - offering you incredible value.

The Professional Supplies portfolio offers a comprehensive range of UK-manufactured cleaning chemicals, specifically developed to meet the rigorous demands of care home environments.

Each product is formulated to deliver exceptional cleaning performance, supporting high standards of hygiene, infection control, and regulatory compliance. From everyday surface cleaning to targeted solutions for specific challenges, our range is designed to help you maintain safe, welcoming spaces for residents, staff, and visitors.





Professional Supplies, brought to you exclusively through the Caterfood Collection

A SELECTION OF OUR PROFESSIONAL CLEANING AND CHEMICAL RANGE

Professional Supplies Alcohol Hand Sanitizer Gel (5ltr) 12322

Professional Supplies Antibacterial Hand Soap (500ml) 12316

Professional Supplies Concentrated Washing Up Liquid (5ltr) 12323

Professional Supplies Dishwashing Detergent (5ltr) 12304

Professional Supplies Floor Cleaner (5ltr) 12329

Professional Supplies Extra Thick Bleach (5ltr) 12318

Professional Supplies Apple Toilet Cleaner (1ltr) 12300

Professional Supplies Biological Laundry Powder (5ltr) 12325

Get in Touch

We're passionate about great quality food and the power it has to connect people.

If you're looking for fantastic products that are competitively priced and from a reputable, local and people-focused foodservice supplier - we believe we can tick all of the boxes for you.

Get in touch today with the team and let's start a conversation about working together to bring great-tasting, nutritious and affordable food to your residents.

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