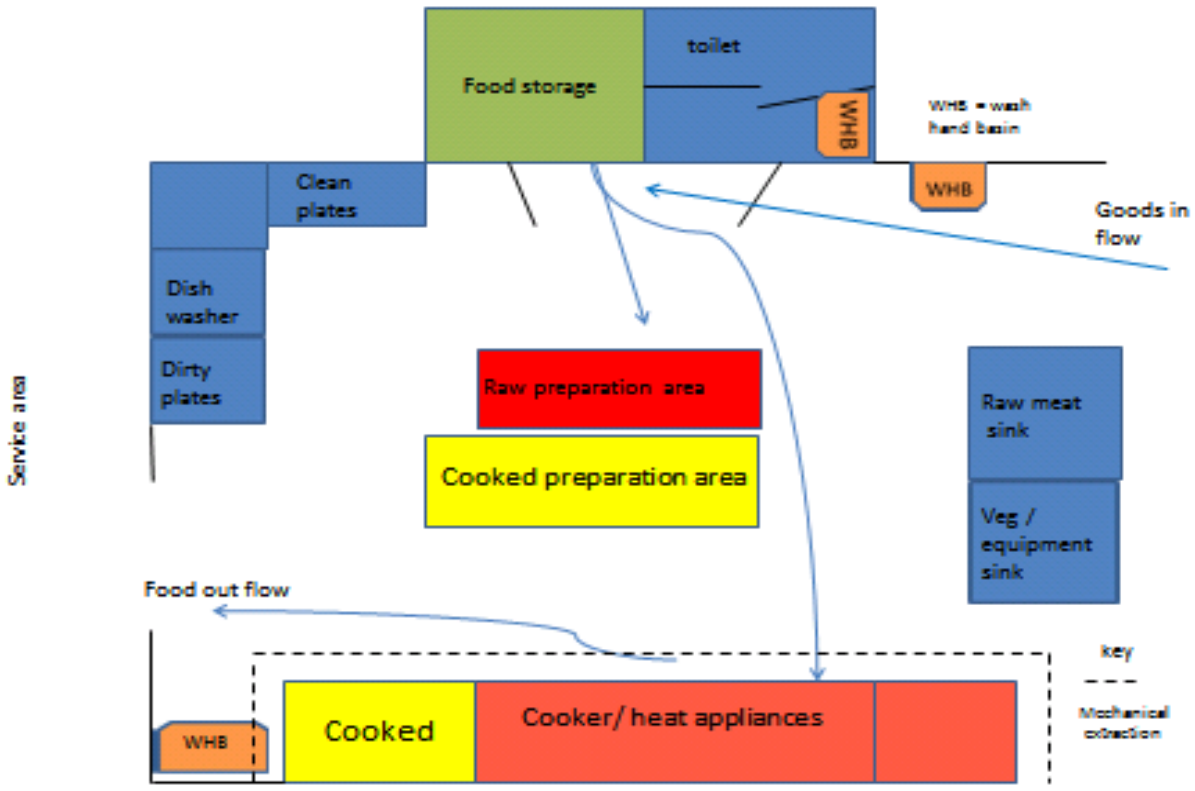
# Design and Layout

Food premises must be big enough. They must have sufficient space to do all that is required to run a hygienic and efficient food operation. The amount of space required depends on the complexity of the operation. You don't need much space to make cups of coffee but you need a lot of space to run a full blown restaurant kitchen. So don't take on premises which are far too small unless you intend to start small and then move when the business grows.

The design and layout of a food room should:

- Allow access to all areas for cleaning and maintenance.
- Allow a natural flow of production from raw to ready-to-eat which will minimise cross contamination.
- Where drainage gullies or channels are provided the floor should be sloped to ensure that water drains naturally to these.
- Walls and roofs (especially flat roofs) should be well insulated to avoid the formation of condensation and mould




Example of linear flow of an ideal kitchen layout.

# Structure

Surfaces in rooms in which open food is prepared, handled or stored (including equipment surfaces) must be:

- Smooth
- Impervious / Non-absorbent
- Washable
- Non-toxic
- Non-corrosive
- Durable

in order to permit adequate cleaning and disinfection and to minimise the risk of contamination.

Some examples of acceptable materials are, ceramic tiles, plastic wall board, stainless steel


Some examples of unacceptable material are, breeze block, carpet, artex .



WARNING ! Many small businesses rely heavily on the use of plastic covered chipboard for worktops and shelving as it is comparatively cheap. When new, this may be considered to be smooth and impervious, but it is not durable. It is very easily damaged, exposing the porous chipboard underneath. It is therefore a false economy to use this material in food areas as it will continually have to be renewed.

# Floors

Floor surfaces in food premises tend to get wet. They must therefore be impervious and level so that water does not accumulate. Where floor drainage is provided the floor should slope towards the drain. Sealed coving at the wall/floor junction will help prevent water penetration at this point and allow complete cleaning. Carpet is permitted in dining areas but is inappropriate in food preparation or storage areas. In addition to any hygiene issues, health and safety must also be considered. Kitchen floors can become very slippery, especially when contaminated with water or grease. A surface material that will keep its slip resistance in these conditions should be selected. Even so the floor should be regularly cleaned and degreased as any build-up of grease will cancel out any slip resistance properties. A lighter coloured floor will help in identifying grease build up compared to a darker coloured one.

Example of resin floor

Example of slip resistant floor

# Walls

Plastic wallboard is often used in kitchens as it is very easy to keep clean. However, although it is resistant to fire spread, it will melt if it gets too hot, so should not be used directly behind cookers. Ceramic tiles or stainless steel sheet should be used in this small area. Small food businesses often extend the space available by constructing a lean-to extension at the back or side of the property. What was once an outside wall then becomes an inside wall, and this is usually unsuitable to allow the handling of open food in this new area without significant improvement to the wall surface. Food must be protected from dirt,

dust or other materials falling onto it from above. Where there is no ceiling and the internal surfaces of the roof are not of a suitable construction, or where the roof is simply too high to readily keep clean, it may be necessary to install a false ceiling at a suitable height.

## Ventilation / Extraction

All food businesses must have suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. This is to stop the build-up of grease and condensation which can lead to cleaning and mould problems within the premises. Toilet areas must also have similar means of ventilation. All gas appliances must be positioned under mechanical extraction and depending on the year fitted this extraction system must be interlocked with the gas supply. Extraction or ventilation systems / filters must be cleaned on a regular basis to ensure they operate efficiently. Failure to carry out this routine maintenance can reduce the performance of the extraction or ventilation.