

Community Recipe for Wellbeing

Shirley Jarman and her team at **Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches** go beyond food delivery

A consistent five-star food safety record and the ability to provide nutritious hot meals for the elderly, the vulnerable, and those who simply don't have time to cook are not the only reasons Shirley Jarman and her team at Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches are so popular in the local community.

Shirley's home-cooked meal delivery service goes far beyond simply dropping off food. It provides a vital lifeline to her clients, as well as crucial social interaction and a caring watchful eye.

Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches prides itself on its freshly prepared, hot meals, a key differentiator from many other services. 'Our unique selling point is that it's hot. We keep it hot,' explains Shirley. Meals are cooked and immediately delivered in specialised, insulated boxes, ensuring they arrive ready

to eat. This eliminates the need for clients to reheat food, which can be a barrier for those with limited mobility or cognitive function.

Lovely Lunches was established in 2000 and the company has maintained five-star food safety records since it first opened. Drivers diligently check temperatures to ensure quality and the focus is on providing a quality, healthy food experience in the comfort of a person's home.

Eggardon Country Cooks offers a vital piece of the puzzle for independent living

Menus are prepared monthly, taking into account seasonal ingredients and catering for a variety of dietary needs, including gluten-free, diabetic, vegetarian, and pescetarian options. This flexibility allows them to adapt to individual preferences.

Brought up on an arable farm in rural Lincolnshire, Shirley developed a passion and understanding about the value of fresh food at an early age. Alongside her late business partner, Judi Gifford, she started the business in 2016 with over forty years' experience within the catering industry, working her way through the ranks in restaurants, kitchens and cafes from washing dishes, chopping vegetables, cooking and all kinds of management. She lived in Berlin for fifteen years expanding her interest and experience of world cuisines and different food cultures, and before setting up the business was Senior Food & Beverage Manager for the National Trust at Studland Beach.

Shirley emphasises how Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches is built on empathy and genuine care. Their drivers are carefully selected not just for their ability to deliver, but for their understanding and



Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches focuses on high quality, nutritious meals delivered hot and ready to eat.



compassionate nature. 'You've got to have empathy with people. You've got to be able to talk to people,' Shirley explains. 'This personal touch is evident in the drivers' interactions with clients, who are often lonely and isolated.'

The bespoke nature of the service means drivers encounter a variety of situations. Some clients are reclusive, while others might welcome the driver in for a chat. The drivers often serve as informal welfare checks and frequently build relationships with clients, being the first to notice any changes in their health or circumstances. 'We're like another person going in and can see changes happening' Shirley states.

If a driver expresses concern, Shirley phones the client's next of kin to ensure they are fully aware of the changing situation. Sometimes just delivering a simple lunch goes beyond their direct responsibilities. Shirley recounts a crucial incident where a driver's timely presence likely saved a client's life, demonstrating the critical role they play in the social care network.

'At the moment we have customers with family living as far away as Dubai or the USA and they are relieved that we provide our service to their loved ones' explains Shirley.

Despite the invaluable service they provide, Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches operates as a commercial business with no external funding or government grants. Shirley is passionate about the wider implications of their service, highlighting a significant gap in social care provision. She firmly believes that services like hers prevent more serious health issues and reduce the strain on the NHS. 'If they invested in social care, they wouldn't have to pump so much into hospital services; it makes a huge difference.'

For many elderly individuals, a daily hot meal and a friendly face are crucial for their quality of life. Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches offers a vital piece of the puzzle for independent living, providing not just sustenance but also essential human connection in an increasingly detached world.

Eggardon Country Cooks—Lovely Lunches is a testament to the power of community-focused businesses. By prioritising the holistic well-being of their clients, Shirley Jarman and her team provide a service that is both essential and deeply personal, making a tangible difference in the lives of many.

For more information visit: <https://eggardoncountrycooks.co.uk/>

Through her associate company, **The Gnarley Tree Food Events Ltd.**, Shirley also offers a range of outside catering options to all kinds of events including birthdays, christenings, bereavement farewells, corporate & business catering, academy & schools, and family get togethers as well as private chef services. She also supplies food to nearby holiday properties. **For information visit www.thegnarlytree.co.uk.**



Lovely Lunches



In need of some support with your meals or just don't want to cook?
We have the solution
with our **Lovely Lunches**.

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from our kitchen at Brown's Farm
and deliver it hot straight to your
door within the local area.

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