

THE

COONCIL COOKBOOK

TASTY &
AFFORDABLE
MEALS FOR
LOW-INCOME
FAMILIES



Heather Reeves

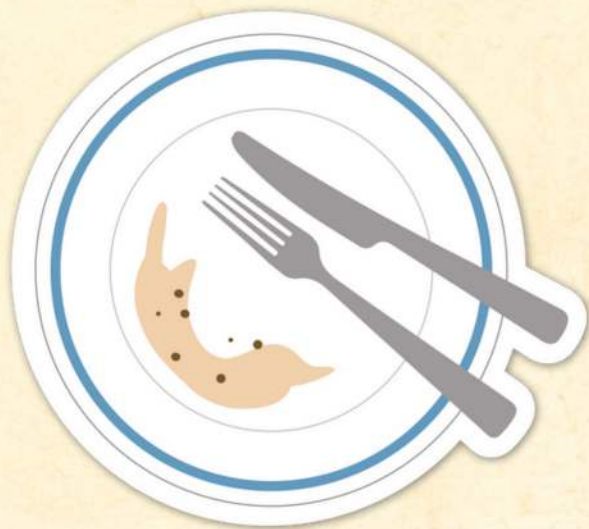
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*This book is dedicated to all the
low-income families who
struggle in day-to-day life but
get up every day & carry on
regardless.*



The Coouncil Cookbook will show you some of my favourite affordable meals that don't take long to prepare.

There's a bloody annoying misconception that low-income families don't know how to cook and just live off junk food.

This simply isn't true.

We know how to cook, we just can't afford the ingredients and we don't have the time for cooking fancy teas.

I've also added some top tips to make your meals better for the environment, so we can all do our bit for the planet.

People living in poverty care about the environment too, and we want to make this world better for our kids.



Introducing Heather

I'm Heather, a forty-year-old working mum of two. I work in social care and rely on top-up benefits to meet the cost of living. My sons live at home with me, aged 21 and 15.

Over the last year the cost-of-living crisis has hit me hard, especially with the increase in rent, council tax, gas and electricity. On top of all this, the cost of food and essentials has more than doubled. I've had to get in to debt to live just a basic life, and had no choice but to change our eating habits to ensure we have healthy and filling meals that are affordable.

I hope that this cookbook will help other families in the same situation as me, and show people that they are not alone in their struggles with feeding the family.

Love Heather x

CREAMY CHICKEN PASTA



Total Cost
£6.26

'This meal is quick and easy to make. It's a great go-to meal in a busy home, and it can be re-heated easily if you can't all sit down at the same time. I love that you can actually change the seasoning if you want, and it becomes a totally different flavoured meal.'

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT:

SWAP OUT THE CHICKEN FOR
QUORN PIECES INSTEAD!

**FEEDS A
FAMILY OF 4**



INGREDIENTS:

3 x chicken breasts
300g pasta (any shape)
1 x onion
1 x bell pepper
1 x pack of seasoning mix
250g soft cheese
100ml chicken stock
2 x tsp of lazy garlic/2 cloves
Oil for frying

METHOD:

- Cook the pasta as directed on the packet.
- Fry off the pepper and onion for 5 minutes.
- Add the garlic and half of the seasoning mix then fry for another 1-2 minutes.
- Add in the diced chicken and the other half of the seasoning mix, fry until the chicken is cooked through.
- Add in the stock and soft cheese and stir for 5 minutes or until the cheese has melted.
- Add the cooked pasta, stir well and serve!

SPAG BOL



Total Cost
£4.61

'I've had to change how I cook spag bol because I simply can't afford all of the ingredients. I used to add loads of veg, spices and herbs, but now it's very basic. It's still a tasty and enjoyable meal that goes down well with the family though.'

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT:
USE VEGGIE MINCE INSTEAD OF
MEAT!

**FEEDS A
FAMILY OF 4**



INGREDIENTS:

*500g of beef mince
250g of spaghetti
1 x onion
1 x carrot
500g of tomato passata
1 x beef stock pot
4 x tbsp of tomato puree*

METHOD:

- Boil your pasta as directed on the packet.
- Dice your carrot and onion and fry for 5 minutes to soften them.
- Add in your beef mince and cook until browned.
- Add in your stock pot, passata and tomato puree.
- Simmer for 5 minutes.
- Add in your cooked pasta, stir and serve!

END OF THE WEEK SOUP



Total Cost
£2.16

'End of the week soup can be made with any leftover vegetables, even those that are on the turn. It's a great way to put these ingredients to good use and is always a winner with a tasty sandwich on the side. You can have it for lunch or tea at home, or you can heat it quickly at work.'

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT:

**THIS SOUP IS A GREAT WAY TO
REDUCE WASTE - JUST BUNG IT IN
A POT INSTEAD OF THE BIN!**

**FEEDS 4 - 6
PEOPLE**



INGREDIENTS:

*1 x cup of red lentils
1 x vegetable, ham or
chicken stock cube
Any leftover vegetables
that you have!*

METHOD:

- Rinse the lentils and put them into a soup pot.
- Chop all of your veg and add to the pot.
- Add the stock cube and add enough hot water to cover all of your vegetables.
- Cook for 20 to 30 minutes.
- Blend or leave chunky.
- Add salt and pepper to season then serve!

'LITE BITE' BAKED TATTIE



Total Cost
£5.32

'This is a favourite in our house as it is super tasty and goes a long way. You can also bulk it out by adding mashed potato into your pork and bean mix. Pop it under the grill with a bit of grated cheese on top to make it even more appetising.'

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT:

REDUCE YOUR MEAT INTAKE BY
BULKING UP WITH ANOTHER VARIETY OF
BEANS SUCH AS CANNELLINI OR KIDNEY
- STILL HEALTHY AND FILLING!

**FEEDS A
FAMILY OF 4**



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 x pack of ready made pulled pork*
- 1 x tin of baked beans*
- 4 x baked potatoes*
- A sprinkle of grated cheese*

METHOD:

- Cook the pulled pork as directed on the pack, then remove from the oven and shred.
- Add the sachet of BBQ sauce provided with the pulled pork to the baked beans and heat up in a saucepan.
- To save on electricity, pop your potatoes in the microwave or air fry - please refer to manufacturers guide for times.
- Fill the potatoes with the pork and bean mixture, sprinkle on your cheese and grill if you prefer.

WEEKEND FAKE-AWAY



Total Cost
£7.34

'This recipe is a great alternative to an expensive takeaway, and the kids love it. It's filling and very quick to make; it's probably ready in half the time a take away order would take to arrive and saves us around £40.'

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT:

USE QUORN CHICKEN PIECES INSTEAD OF CHICKEN; STILL FILLING AND TASTY!

**FEEDS A
FAMILY OF 4**



INGREDIENTS:

*3 x chicken breasts
1 x pack of curry flavored
marinade
1 x pack of microwave rice
Half a bag of potato
wedges or chips
Half an iceberg lettuce
2 x spring onions
Half a cucumber
A tub of coleslaw*

METHOD:

- Slice or dice your chicken and coat in the marinade. Leave it to absorb the flavour for at least ten minutes.
- Put your wedges or chips in to the air fryer and cook according to the instructions on the packet.
- Fry off the chicken until it is cooked through
- Prep your salad and enjoy!

**TRY SWAPPING
YOUR CHIPS FOR A
PITTA BREAD OR
WRAP INSTEAD!**

So how hard is it to cook for a family when you're on a tight budget?

Being able to cook healthy, hearty meals has become far more difficult with the cost-of-living crisis. Trying to find good quality fresh ingredients locally has been a challenge, and I often have to travel to my neighbouring town to do my shopping. The local bus service is atrocious, so I have to drive. This adds to the cost of my shopping and takes time that I just do not have. All of the ingredients I use are budget range, such as ASDA's own brand products and things I've got from food banks. Gas and electric costs, and rising rent and council tax have also had an impact on how I feed my family.

Life is difficult but we have to keep going. What choice do we have? Our kid's future is our priority.



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