

# Our first year ends

## Dates for your diaries:-

### **Wed 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

*Coffee Social* - McCtuffs Tearoom, 39a Brunel Centre, Swindon, SN1 1LL, at the top of the moving walkway. Just pop in for tea and some gluten free cake. All welcome. 2.30-4.00pm

### **Wed 15<sup>th</sup> January**

*Evening Social* - The Dockle Farmhouse, 2 Bridge End Road, Swindon, SN3 4PD. All welcome. Just look for our bright orange t-shirts. All welcome, drop-in from 7.30pm

### **Wed 12<sup>th</sup> February**

*Coffee Social* - McCtuffs, details as above

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March**

*Coffee Social* - McCtuffs, details as above

### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

*Evening Social* - The Dockle Farmhouse, details as above

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April**

*Coffee Social* - McCtuffs, details as above

*Coeliac Awareness Week 2020 is Monday 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May*

## And it has been a busy but thoroughly enjoyable time



As a new Coeliac Local Group we had an amazing and successful launch in November 2018 with over 100 people attending. It was lovely to see so many people there - all ages young and old, those recently diagnosed and those diagnosed many years ago, supportive faces and voices from the original Swindon Coeliac group, members from the Great Western Hospital (GWH) Dietician team, several colleagues from the Coeliac UK headquarters and many others. So we know that there is demand for our group locally. A small committee of volunteers worked incredible hard in such a very short space of time to get the group up and operating so quickly and to arrange a launch event that so many enjoyed.

Since then we have arranged a steady stream of events including a quiz, AGM and regular social events. It is lovely to have met many more local people and we are particularly pleased to welcome some newly diagnosed Coeliacs to our events, many of whom were informed by the Dietician team at GWH. As we know being a recently diagnosed Coeliac can be the most challenging time, and through our events we hope that everyone who attends can offer them some advice and support.

### Is It Coeliac Disease?

You may have seen the "Is It Coeliac Disease?" message during National Coeliac Awareness Week back in May. Despite increased awareness, around half a million people in the UK are still undiagnosed and living with symptoms that could be alleviated by following a gluten free diet. We estimate that around 1,500 of them live in the Swindon area, maybe several in your street.

If you know anyone who exhibits any of the key symptoms: stomach pain, fatigue, mouth ulcers, anaemia, diarrhoea or a very itchy rash, point them to the online assessment at <https://isitcoeliacdisease.org.uk/> and advise them to talk to their GP.

Getting a proper diagnosis is not only beneficial for them but helps to raise awareness of the disease ensuring that better food products and facilities are available for all.

If you follow Coeliac UK on social media, you can also help to raise awareness by liking, re-tweeting or commenting on their posts.

### Venue Review—The Compass Inn, Winsor, Hampshire

There are an increasing amount of places that are becoming totally gluten free establishments, the Compass Inn believe that they were the very first pub/restaurant. It's a gem!

It is a truly wonderful relief to order food without any worry whatsoever, without having to look for a GF logo or interview the staff. There were around 20 main options. They cater for other dietary requirements — their menu was marked with Vegan, Vegetarian and Dairy Free options—all gluten free. The mains we each chose were delicious and the portions large. This created a new challenge—did we have enough space for the crumble and custard? This was solved by asking for extra time between courses to make space for the scrumptious crumble.

It is 75 minutes from Swindon but a convenient stop off with just a short diversion when returning from the New Forest or Bournemouth. They are dog friendly and have a charity shop onsite that welcomes your donations. We were glad we had pre-booked a table, the pub was quite busy even on a mid-week evening.

## Ramblings from the Group Organiser...

I want to share our plans for 2020 that the committee have been busy working on — We will be having regular events supplemented with some bigger events, and our communications will be much more frequent. Our Coffee Afternoon Socials will continue to be monthly, the Evening Socials will be every other month. Our AGM will be brought forward a month to April and we will be having another local Christmas Event for Coeliacs in November early enough that they can prepare for their gluten free festive time. We have other events in planning that we may be able to fit into our calendar.



We have started issuing Monthly email updates, our Newsletters will be distributed quarterly to all our contacts and more information will be made available on our website. We shall continue to publish and share plenty throughout all our social media channels so make sure you are signed up. The Dietician team at the GWH have been very supportive of our work, for which we are very grateful, and we have already started working closely with them to help those diagnosed so people locally can live well, gluten free. *Martin — Group Organiser*



**Held at Olympia, London – Would you like to go? Then let us know**

This show is being held from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020. At our launch event we were asked whether we could arrange a coach from Swindon on the Saturday. We could, we just need to know that a booking is viable.

Please contact us by 31st January 2020 if you would want to purchase a seat or two. The cost would be no more than £15 per adult, with entry to the show being free. There would be one central Swindon pick-up/drop-off location.

### Our grateful thanks to.....

We would like to send out a massive thank you to Schar who provided a raffle prize for our AGM and to Barkat who joined us at the AGM to tell us about their business and provide free samples of their products for us to try.

The raffles at our events are a great way for us to make some funds to redirect back into the group. If you – or anyone you know – could help with future raffle prizes/samples/ refreshments then please speak to one of the committee or e-mail us at [swindon@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:swindon@coeliac.org.uk)

Finally, thank you to you, our local members. We can't run a local group without you. If you have ideas about events that you would like to attend, places to go for a day out or venues that you have successfully tried, do let us know. See the contact details section for how to get in touch.



*Everyone of any age is welcome on our events or being involved in our group, including family and friends – you don't need to be a member of Coeliac UK and you don't even need to live in Swindon*

### Food fairs coming up

A trip to a food fair is a fantastic way to try new foods, speak to the experts and, possibly, grab a bargain. For further details of these and other events nationally visit:

<https://www.coeliac.org.uk/get-involved/events>

Do remember that not all events are solely for gluten free products. so ask each stall holder which of their products are gluten free and whether any samples out on display are safe and free from contamination.

**East Lancs - 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020 - Held at Preston—** quite a long drive!



### Competition Time...

Each month on the Coeliac UK website they have one or two competitions with a chance to win some GF goodies. Anyone can enter for free.

### What is your favourite Gluten Free Flour?



In our next newsletter we will have a piece on gluten free flour. In the gluten free world, unlike normal flour, not all flours are the same. Use and bake with flour and get something great out of the oven — but use flour from another manufacturer using the very same recipe and you might find you have made something that not even the garden birds will eat!

So please share with us what flours work best for you, what you cook and whether you add an additional magic ingredient. We know some people are struggling so we look forward to sharing your experiences.

### The Committee

The current committee was elected/re-elected at our AGM in May and comprises: Martin Hiscock (Group Organiser), Claire Huckerby-Brown (Group Treasurer), Zoe Thomas (Group Secretary), Louise Harney (Social Media Lead) and Lisa Evans (Fundraising).

We would very much welcome some extra help. If you can contribute to our local group, please speak with one of us on an event or contact us on the details below. With a larger committee we could do more locally. It does not need to be a formal committee role, it may be helping out in preparing, assisting or tidying up at our larger events.

### Contact details.....

For event suggestions, newsletter contributions or for anything else:



[swindon@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:swindon@coeliac.org.uk)



[www.coeliac.org.uk/swindon](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/swindon)



[www.facebook.com/CoeliacUKSwindon](https://www.facebook.com/CoeliacUKSwindon)



@coeliacswindon



Contact: 07766 558842 Group Organiser - Martin Hiscock

*To be added to our email distribution list please send your details (including your name and address) to the email address above, next to the envelope.*