April 2023 update from the Swindon Local Group

Hi from the Swindon group of Coeliac UK.

It was lovely to meet so many of you at our new, regular venue in Royal Wootton Bassett last month. We hope to be able to support people living their gluten free lives in a wider area by providing more opportunities to meet up. Thank you to our Swindon regulars who came to support the new coffee afternoon, and to the Dandelion Gifts and Coffee Shop who hosted us. Please see the events section below for more details of this and other upcoming events.

GP Training

In March, our voluntary secretary, Zoe, gave a presentation to around 30 GP's from the Great Western Hospital Trust area, about Coeliac Disease. She was able to talk to them about the less common symptoms which are often overlooked, about the problems facing patients who have to continue consuming gluten while they wait for tests, and about how the gluten free prescriptions aren't working as well as they could be. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet with GP's and the Gastroenterologists at the GWH. We are hoping to make this a regular event and reach out to more GP practices. During the talk, Zoe gave them all some homework to go back to their practices to see how many of their total number of patients had been diagnosed with Coeliac Disease. Nationally, it is believed that about 1 person in 100 has the disease so we would expect the rate to be similar at each practice. Unfortunately, we know that only about 36% of people with the disease have a formal diagnosis which means that there are about 500,000 people nationally who are living with symptoms that could be relieved with a gluten free diet.

Coeliac Awareness Week

Raising awareness of Coeliac Disease both within the medical profession and more generally, benefits us all. If more people are diagnosed, there is more demand for gluten free food, which results in a wider range of better quality food and more understanding in food establishments, at schools, in hospitals etc. Coeliac UK will be running their Awareness Week from 15 to 21 May and will be focussing on the less well known symptoms such as fertility problems. We need your help to identify ways in which we can all spread the message, *Is It Coeliac Disease?* Would you be able to put a few posters up in local shops? Could you share some of the social media messages via your friends or your work's intranet page? Would you be willing to give a talk to a local school about living with Coeliac Disease? Please let us know what you can do and we will provide suitable materials for you.

Social Media Coordinator - vacancy

Please consider stepping forward for this important and exciting vacancy of Social Media Coordinator for us. If you enjoy using social media then you almost certainly have the skills required, and the time commitment is low, we estimate 1 to 2 hours per week, performed at any time, at your convenience at home. Further details are here, contact us for a chat, we'd love to hear from you: https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon/documents/7405-social-media-coordinator-volunteer-role-description/.

Upcoming events

 Coffee Afternoon Wednesday 12th April, from 2pm Marks & Spencer, Regent Street, Swindon SN1 1JY Coffee Afternoon Wednesday 19th April, from 2pm
 Dandelion Gifts and Coffee Shop, 49 High Street, Royal Wootton

 Bassett SN4 7AQ

For more details, visit https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon/events/.

AGM

Each year, we are required to hold an Annual General Meeting so that you, our members, can let us know that you are happy with the way we are running the Swindon Group on your behalf. This year, the AGM will be held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at The Community Rooms at the Orbital Shopping Centre (the same venue as last year). Doors open at 7:00pm and the meeting will start at 7:15pm. The main business of the meeting will be to review what has happened over the last year, the state of the Group's finances and for you, our members, to give us feedback on what you would like from us in future. There will also be an opportunity to buy tea, coffee and a slice of cake baked by Kristyna of Spellbound Arts and Bakes. Some of you tried Kristyna's amazing gluten free cakes at Swindon Open Studios in September and all agreed they were delicious.

Venue lists

Zoe told us that she very much enjoyed a meal at the Himalayan Yak in Old Town and was surprised to have such a good choice of gluten free dishes: https://www.yakthehimalayankitchen.co.uk/.

Don't forget if you're looking for somewhere to eat out, we have the following resources to help you:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/swindoncoeliac/files/files https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon/eating-out-gluten-free/ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cb4WaLf9 fc6rzL18eOKnF72MDmGECGI/view

If you see a venue missing, or believe one should be removed or updated, then drop us an email us at Swindon@coeliac.org.uk, or contact us via Facebook.

Competitions

This month you can win a bundle of gluten free frozen meals from Field Doctor: https://www.coeliac.org.uk/information-and-support/competitions/.

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We hope you enjoy receiving our e-mail updates. We really enjoy hearing from you, too. If you have any tips, recipes, or recommendations, please do send them to us or drop them onto one of our social media channels:

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/CoeliacUKSwindon
Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/swindoncoeliac/

Twitter: @CoeliacSwindon
Instagram: coeliacukswindon
W: www.coeliac.org.uk/swindon
Or e-mail swindon@coeliac.org.uk

From the Committee of the Swindon group: Claire, Gareth, Lisa, Martin & Zoe