

**Press Release:** Immediate Issue

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## **NATIONAL TRUST'S ARLINGTON COURT IN BARNSTAPLE HOSTING EVENT SUPPORTING CAMPAIGN FOR PEOPLE WITH COELIAC DISEASE**

Coeliac UK, the national charity for people with coeliac disease, is working with the National Trust and calling on chefs across the country to provide more gluten-free options on their menus which would enable thousands of people to eat out.

Research<sup>1</sup> of more than 3,000 people with coeliac disease found that nearly one third of respondents said that they never eat out, or eat out less than once every other month. Nearly a quarter said they have travelled for an hour or longer in order to find a restaurant that provides a gluten-free meal.

In North Devon, people with coeliac disease need only travel as far as Arlington Court near Barnstaple for a gluten-free treat. The National Trust is supporting Coeliac UK for the second year, and this beautiful property is holding an afternoon tea on Saturday 8 May as part of Coeliac UK's Awareness Week, **Free for Tea?** campaign.

The North Devon Local Voluntary Support Group of Coeliac UK will be holding the event in the restaurant of the property from 3pm on the Saturday. There will be a choice of either gluten-free cakes or gluten-free scones and jam available to those who have booked their places. This event has 33 confirmed guests who have an interest in eating out gluten-free.

1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease which is an autoimmune disease caused by intolerance to gluten. Damage to the gut lining occurs when gluten is eaten; there is no cure or medication for the condition and the only treatment is a strict gluten-free diet for life. Without a gluten-free diet, the disease can lead to other conditions, such as malnutrition, osteoporosis, bowel cancer and infertility.

Coeliac UK is running the Awareness Week from 10 – 16 May 2010 to raise awareness of the condition and promote understanding about coeliac disease and the need for increased gluten-free provision in the hospitality industry.

Sarah Sleet, Chief Executive of Coeliac UK said: "People with coeliac disease want to eat out more often and are ready and willing to spend their money, if only they felt more confident about gluten-free provision. We are very pleased that some National Trust properties are again supporting the campaign this year and would like to see further gluten-free provision in all catering establishments across the country, so that more people have venues on their doorstep such as Arlington Court who cater for their condition."

Andy Lilley, Catering Operations Manager for the Arlington Court said: "We realise the importance of providing gluten-free alternatives for our visitors and hope that this event will enable those people across North Devon the opportunity to enjoy a day out at the property and a delicious gluten-free treat.

Coeliac UK has recently announced chef Phil Vickery as Food Ambassador and judge of Coeliac UK's Gluten-free Chef of the Year competition. Alongside Health Ambassador Dr Chris Steele MBE, who has recently been diagnosed with coeliac disease, they have both been working towards raising awareness of coeliac disease and the gluten-free diet.

For more information on this year's Awareness Week see [www.coeliac.org.uk/freefortea](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/freefortea)

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For further information on coeliac disease please contact:  
Kate Newman at [kate.newman@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:kate.newman@coeliac.org.uk) 07952 071014  
Or Jo Archer [jo.archer@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:jo.archer@coeliac.org.uk) 01494 796131  
Or visit the website: [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)

#### **Notes to editors:**

<sup>1</sup> Statistics taken from a survey of over 3000 Coeliac UK Members, December 2008

- A range of case studies of men, women and children are available on request from Coeliac UK.
- Coeliac disease is a serious illness where the body's immune system reacts to gluten found in food, making the body attack itself.
- 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease, however only 12.5% of these have been diagnosed and average length of diagnosis is 13 years.
- Gluten is a protein found in wheat (including spelt), rye and barley. Some people are also sensitive to oats. Obvious sources of gluten include breads, pastas, flours, cereals, cakes and biscuits. It is often used as an ingredient in many favourite foods such as fish fingers, sausages, gravies, sauces and soy sauce.
- The symptoms of coeliac disease range from mild to severe and can vary between individuals. Not everyone with coeliac disease experiences gut related symptoms; any area of the body can be affected.
- Symptoms can include bloating, abdominal pain, nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, wind, tiredness, anaemia, headaches, mouth ulcers, recurrent miscarriages, weight loss (but not in all cases), skin problems, depression, joint or bone pain and nerve problems.
- Around 1000 newly diagnosed people are joining Coeliac UK every month. For further details on membership please call the Helpline on 0845 305 2060 further information can be found at [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk).
- For more information on the local Group please contact Louise Webber on [webber\\_louise@hotmail.com](mailto:webber_louise@hotmail.com)
- The National Trust is involved in the whole food chain, with 500,000 acres of food producing land, over 150 restaurants and tearooms, and historic kitchen gardens, orchards and mills. The charity has community growing spaces – from allotments to kitchen gardens – at over 50 locations around the country and is increasing these annually. These spaces inspire the Trust's 3.7 million members, 56,000 volunteers and visitors to think and learn about food. The National Trust is creating 1,000 new allotment plots on its land in the next three years to give local communities the space to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Find out more at: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/food>.