

Press Release: Immediate Issue

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NATIONAL TRUST'S BASILDON PARK NEAR READING 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.

Research¹ 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 Berkshire, people with coeliac disease need only travel as far as Basildon Park, near Reading for a delicious gluten-free afternoon tea. The National Trust is supporting Coeliac UK for the second year, and this beautiful property is hosting an afternoon tea on Saturday 15 May as part of Coeliac UK's Awareness Week, **Free for Tea?** campaign.

The Berkshire Local Voluntary Support Group of Coeliac UK will be hosting a gluten-free afternoon tea in the main hall of the property, which was previously used as a location for the 2006 film *Pride and Prejudice*. There will be gluten-free goodies to sample, as well as information on coeliac disease available. This event is likely to attract more than fifty people who have an interest in eating out gluten-free from all over the region.

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 Basildon Park who cater for their condition."

Andrew Lenaghan, catering manager at Basildon Park said: "We realise the importance of providing gluten-free alternatives for our visitors and hope that this event will enable those people across Berkshire the opportunity to enjoy a day out at the property with the option of 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/freefor tea

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For further information on coeliac disease please contact:
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Or Jo Archer jo.archer@coeliac.org.uk 01494 796131
Or visit the website: www.coeliac.org.uk

Notes to editors:

¹ 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.
- For more information on the local Group please contact Dr Ian Severn on ian.severn@dsl.pipex.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>.