

Sevenoaks Area Coeliac Group

TALKABOUT

For all your gluten-free gossip, news and events

**November 2017
Edition 43**



Branch Committee

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Note from the Editor

Dear Reader

Welcome to the autumn edition of Talkabout!

As most of you will know the Sevenoaks Coeliac Group is run by volunteers and the core part of the group have been working together for the past 13 years. We have seen many positive changes during that time - eating out has become easier and what products are available to buy in the supermarkets. However, we still find that newly diagnosed enjoy having the support of the local group when trying to get used to their new diet. That's why the monthly coffee mornings are so important.

Some of our commitments in our personal lives have changed recently and therefore, we need to make a few changes to the committee and that is where we need your help. Please see Page 4 to see if you can help out with the future running of the group. Even if you can offer a little bit of help – it all makes a difference.

As usual, if any of you have any recommendations of places to eat locally please do email them to me at gillieh@tiscali.co.uk.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Talkabout and we hope to see you at one of the forthcoming events.

Gill – The Editor

Your Help is Needed!

We are writing to ask for help from our members as the Sevenoaks Committee needs some more support. The group is run by volunteers and might be unable to continue if we cannot find some more support from our members. Please take time to read the following and see if you can help us at all.

Newsletter Editor

We are looking for someone who would be prepared to take over the preparation of our newsletter, Talkabout. We publish 3 editions every year and help is on hand from the rest of the committee with write-ups from events and ideas for the content. Please get in contact if you might be interested in helping out and I can talk you through what's involved – gillieh@tiscali.co.uk.

Coffee Morning Organiser

A key part of the committee's role is being there for newly diagnosed coeliac's and new members are always grateful to attend one of our coffee mornings to meet other coeliac's and get some useful advice on how to manage their new diet. We need someone who can co-ordinate the monthly meetings and ensure someone from the group can host each meeting. Please get in contact if you can help – fi.turnbull@talktalk.net

Children's Party Co-ordinator

Would you be able to help organise the children's party in January? Do you have a child who would love to attend a party that is completely dedicated to their needs – all the food is gluten free so they can enjoy everything on offer without worrying. We are looking for someone who would be able to help with the planning and organising for the party. Please contact Fiona on fi.turnbull@talktalk.net if you can help. We may not be able to run this event if we can't find anyone to assist.

Forthcoming Events

**Please come along to one of our events.
We look forward to seeing you soon.**

Coffee Morning - Third Saturday of every month

No December meeting,

20th January in Tunbridge Wells

17th February in Sevenoaks

17th March in Tunbridge Wells.

If you are newly diagnosed and want to find out more this is a very relaxed way to meet with other coeliac's to share ideas and have a chat. We welcome all members.

We meet between 10.00am - 11.30am. We look forward to seeing you soon - look out for the Crossed Grain magazine on the table. We meet at alternate locations each month. One month at Sainsbury's Café in Sevenoaks (Otford Road, TN14 5EG) and the next month in Sainsbury's Café in Tunbridge Wells (on Linden Park Road, TN2 5QL, just off the A26 Eridge Road).

Coffee and Cake

Saturday 25th November 2017 ~ 3pm - 5pm

Christ Church, URC Hall, Littlecourt Road, Sevenoaks TN13 2JG

Please come along to our pre-Christmas meeting where we will be serving tea and home-made gluten free cakes. This is a great opportunity to come along and meet with other coeliac's.

2 Dates for your diaries

Children's Party

Saturday 27th January 2018 ~ 2pm - 4pm

Otford Methodist Church Hall, TN14 5PH

AGM

Saturday 28th April 2018 ~ 2pm - 4pm

Otford Methodist Church Hall, TN14 5PH

Please note that both of these events will be in Otford.

Eating Out – Advice from Coeliac UK

There's no reason why you can't eat out if you have coeliac disease. There are some ways in which you can make the experience easier and safer.

The GF Symbol



Look out for Coeliac UK's GF symbol on menus and in the windows of **accredited venues**. The GF symbol on a menu tells you that the dish is gluten free according to the law and that the caterer meets all requirements of the Gluten free standard which covers all aspects of gluten free preparation and ensures training is in place.

Allergen information in restaurants

Caterers must, by law, be able to provide you with information on any allergens, including cereals containing gluten, in all the dishes they serve. This means if a recipe uses cereals containing gluten such as wheat, rye, barley or oats in the ingredients, they will have to tell you. This is as a result of legislation that was brought in at the end of 2014 to improve allergen information for consumers.

Call ahead to talk to the chef or waiter

Although caterers have to provide allergen information for all dishes they serve, they don't have to offer a gluten free meal so it is best to call ahead or check their website to see if they offer gluten free options. If you speak to restaurant staff, explain why you need to ensure you don't have food that contains gluten. Highlight what foods are naturally gluten free and suitable to eat.

If there is nothing suitable on the menu, ask if the chef could cook something else for you. Many restaurant chefs are happy to do this once they know the reason for the request. By law they will need to be able to tell you which dishes contain any allergens, including wheat, rye, barley and oats.

Communicate with the waiting staff

Talk to the waiter(s) once you arrive at the restaurant to explain why you can't eat gluten and what you can and can't eat. Ask what menu items might be suitable. Restaurants have to tell you if a dish contains a gluten containing cereal. Be careful to check soups, dishes with sauces or gravies, stock cubes, and foods like sausages and chips. Some may have a coating that contains gluten or they may be fried in the same oil as products that contain gluten, like onion rings.

Avoiding cross contamination

Look at the menu to see if breaded items such as chicken or fish are offered. These may be sautéed in the same pans as non breaded dishes or fried in the same fryer. Ask your waiter or the chef if they are able to use separate pans to avoid cross contamination.

Menu choices

Check out our advice about different world cuisines and the options they offer to people with coeliac disease. We also have advice about takeaway options. Aside from choosing suitable dishes, the main thing to do is to ask enough questions so that you feel happy that the venue and staff understand your dietary requirements.

Tell them about our training and accreditation

Our training and accreditation helps caterers understand your needs better. With our expertise we can help chefs, waiters, managers and anyone involved in food to work within the law and deliver gluten free food. Tell them about us and how we can help.



Talkabout

Sevenoaks Area Coeliac Group

<https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/sevenoaks>

Please send your letters or enquiries to:

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Westerham Hill, Kent TN16 2HP***

Email: gillieh@tiscali.co.uk