

**Somerset Local Group**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May**



**Somerset**  
**Local Group**

**Opening**

The first AGM of the Somerset Local Group was opened by Wendy Hughes, the group organiser.

**Organiser's Report**

Our Somerset Coeliac group has been going for just over 12 months.

Since our inception in February 2017 and our launch in June 2017, we feel Somerset Coeliac group has come a long way. The Committee that was formed in February 2017 has worked really hard to get the group up and running. Having so many people attend our launch at Cossington Hall in June 2017 was fantastic. Since then we have acquired over 600 members.

We have had our launch in Cossinton last June which was well attended, then in September, we had a fish & chip supper event at Knights in Glastonbury and in October we attended and had a stall at the Wells Food festival, which was well supported. In November, we used our Facebook site to good effect and put up a poll to see what events our members would like. This was very successful and we are now trying to put these ideas into practice.

The committee has received lots of useful feedback, from those attending events, including the fish & chips supper, as well as Wells Festival and also from the poll; especially in regard to what future venues and event ideas our members would like over of the next year. This feedback is helping us plan the events for 2018, so thank you all.

In October 2017, I was pleased to be able to attend the Coeliac UK Conference in Birmingham. My first! It was a really great day. It was a pleasure to meet the CEO, Sarah Sleet, who's our guest speaker here today, other members of the Coeliac UK team and a lot of volunteers from around the UK. We had good, informative presentations, and I was particularly interested in the research projects which are testing ways for people to eat food with gluten in them! It was also really helpful and good to be able to participate in smaller groups in the afternoon to raise issues that our local areas have brought up.

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We are now moving forward with our group. We have about 600 members; we have sent out our first newsletter of the year and have started planning events. We have at least one event planned for October and have started our coffee mornings in various parts of the County.

We are also looking for volunteers to help us in any way they can. We would like to have someone who could plan a children's event? Maybe a Christmas party. We would also like to organise an afternoon tea or event in an area so welcome any ideas of where this can be.

Very soon, you will be asked to vote for your committee, the members that are here now & who are asking to be re-elected to continue. We are all willing to be considered for the new committee when you vote soon. We are trying to set up regular events; eg the fish and chip supper at Knights which so many enjoyed as well as regular coffee mornings across the County.

We also, very importantly want to raise money to keep our Somerset Group going and also so that we can send contributions to Coeliac UK to help in the work they are doing. So any suggestions of how we can do this will be much appreciated.

I feel we have a great committee. We have all met up and worked really hard for you, our members. We meet at least four to five times a year and are constantly in touch with each other. We are a strong team that are very committed and have enjoyed our time so far.

After you have heard the reports from the Treasurer and Secretary, you will be asked to vote a new committee in order for our group to continue.

**Future Event's Report**

Just a quick update on events in the pipeline. Some of you will already have attended one of the coffee mornings held in Taunton and organised by Liz, our treasurer. We hope to gradually roll these out across the county. Those in the planning at the moment are one in Sainsbury's, Weston, Martock and one at Bocabar, Glastonbury. We hope, if there's enough interest by members, these will eventually run themselves and become a regular feature in our calendar.

We have had an offer from one of the gastroenterology team at Musgrove hospital to come and give a talk at a future event and we are considering combining this with perhaps a cream tea to follow. Further details in due course.

Some of you might have found the excellent range of GF frozen meals produced by the shops called COOK. They would be delighted to hold a free taster event for us at their Wells shop this summer. It would be a weekday evening just from 6-7pm. Brett, the manager, would tell us a bit about their company and then we would have tastings of their GF range including the wonderful dessert range.

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The shop in Wells is small so there would be a maximum number. I need to know if anyone would be interested to come so that we know whether to proceed. Please come and see me at the end of today's proceedings or email us afterwards.

By popular demand we are returning to Knight's fish and chip restaurant, Glastonbury on Thursday 11th October at 7pm. Please make a note of the change of date from the one originally publicised in the newsletter.

A couple of other events to mention. As part of Coeliac awareness week Dorchester group are holding an afternoon tea party at Poundbury garden centre, Dorchester this Monday 14th May and also at Dorchester County hospital restaurant on Wed 16th May they will be cutting a birthday cake at 11.30am to celebrate 50 years Of Coeliac UK. Dorchester committee have been a great help to our Group in getting us started and would give any of our members a warm welcome at either event. Some of their members are here so can give you further details.

Further afield don't forget the Coeliac GF Festival on 23rd June in Reading and also the Allergy and free from show at Olympia from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July. This show is relatively easy for Somerset members to get to via Berry's coaches to Hammersmith bus station which is 5min bus ride or 10minute walk away from Olympia. It's a great day out.

I have details of all the things I've mentioned on our table so please come and ask or catch one of the other committee members. We will be publicising all events we organise on both our Coeliac Somerset group website and our Facebook page.

As with all events these things do take some organising and we desperately need members to act as local volunteers if we are to continue to provide events in Somerset. Any help you can give however a short time that might be we would love to hear from you.

**Secretary's Report**

Our group currently has 743 Members within Somerset with 120 joining since our launch event last June.

Of these nearly 800 members we only have email addresses for just over half of our members. We would love to keep in contact with more of you but the group can't afford printing and postage costs for everybody so donations of stamps are greatly appreciated however if we don't currently have your email address and you would like us to have it, please complete a contact form from me.

You may aware the data protection rules for Europe are changing. Coeliac UK are working hard to get everything up to date. The biggest change that you will notice is that you can opt in or out of what kinds of information you want to be

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contacted about. Please remember to opt in to information from local groups to hear about everything that we are up to. You can do this through your online account at the Coeliac UK website or by giving them a call and they will help you.

Hopefully you have seen our newsletters and mailings about events. We are aiming to complete three newsletters a year to give you a full run down of what the group has been up to and any future events.

If you have any comments about how we get in touch with you, please complete a suggestion form and put in the box with Judith.

We would love to have some local contacts. We now have a local contact for North Somerset called Julie Bradbury so if you want any recommendations then please get touch us. Ideally we would to cover every district in Somerset. Our aim for a local contact is to be able to offer recommendations for shops and restaurants in their area, be willing to respond to emails from members including those who are newly diagnosed and maybe if you're comfortable to host coffee mornings in your local area. If this is something you might be interested in, please let me know.

### **Treasurer's Report**

We started the year with start up money from Coeliac UK which was £250 and ended with £303.82. We did the Launch last year in June, this cost £60.00 for the hall hire, £42.10 for refreshments and badge holders. We raised £120.46 with the raffle and donations for refreshments. As we had unexpected printing costs Coeliac UK gave £50 to the group to help with these costs. We have not made the payments yet, so this will be reflected in next year's AGM. We have since spent another £60 on the hire of the hall for the AGM. We have also had 2 books of 1<sup>st</sup> class stamps donated.

There are copies of the Group Finances on the tables. If you do have any questions please ask me at the end of this AGM.

Thanks to all of you who have bought raffle tickets and thanks to those of you who also donated raffle prizes. Your support for this group is greatly appreciated and we look forward to raising more funds at our events over the next year.

### **Elections**

It was proposed that the present committee members be re-elected in the same roles: Wendy Hughes as Organiser, Anika Cox as Secretary, Liz Smart as Treasurer and Judith Middlemiss as Events Coordinator. There were no other proposed committee members. This was proposed by Yvonne Black and seconded by Sue Harte.

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**Local Contacts**

Thank you so much to everyone who has agreed to be a local contact. We nearly have the whole of Somerset covered.

Our local contacts are:

North Somerset – Julia Bradbury

Mendip – Denise Hurr

South Somerset – Moira Vaughan

Dawn Hurd – Children and Young People

We still have spaces to cover the West Somerset and Taunton Deane areas. If you would like to volunteer then please get in touch.

**Close of Meeting**

The meeting was closed and Wendy Hughes introduced our speaker Sarah Sleet the Chief Executive of Coeliac UK to talk about the charity's research aims. This was followed by a raffle and refreshments.