

# NORTH SURREY LOCAL GROUP NEWSLETTER



North Surrey  
Local Group

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## WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Well, the challenge presented to us by Covid-19 has continued to plague the lives of so many, affecting work, school, socialising, sports and exercise and much more.

It is with a heavy heart that I inform you of the passing of at least one of our members due to Covid-19, and I am saddened to recognise that there may have been more that we have not yet been notified of. I am sure I speak on behalf of the whole committee when I offer our condolences to the families who have lost a loved one during this terrible time. While many are looking forward to the future and getting back to normal, we acknowledge that it will be a more difficult struggle for some. Please know that we will be here for you when you are ready and when we can host events once more.

This week has seen a little light appearing at the end of this very long tunnel that we have been travelling through as a nation for the past 11 months. My committee and I are looking forward to starting to arrange events for us all to meet up and have a good chat, share the GF experiences that lockdown presented us and just be able to eat out!!

Sadly, we are not quite there yet, and we are unable to advise you when we will be planning to reinstate our events and meetings at this point. The safety of our members is paramount. But *'watch this space'* as they say, and you will know as soon as we know!

**Jonathan Cranefield**

## Upcoming 2021 Events

So that we are in a better position to provide the sort of events and activities our members would like and most benefit from, we did send out in the last newsletter a link to a survey we created. Thank you to the few that did participate.

From the responses, we found:

- The highest proportion of those responding were over 40
- Events associated with a meal was most popular
- More than 50% of those who responded were interested in a quiz night
- 67% of those who responded were interested in afternoon teas
- Saturday lunchtime came out as the most popular day and time
- Evenings of both midweek and weekends proved least popular
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This obviously does not represent the preferences of everyone in the group, but we can only go on the responses we are given. So if you feel differently, please do click on the link below and share your preferences with us as to the sorts of activities and events you would like from the group. The information taken from the survey will inform the direction of the first lot of events we plan when we can.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8SWYPZD>

## Awareness and Fundraising

Recent months and the hard times that have befallen so many, has seen more people than ever before turning to their local Foodbank to feed their families. It hit me the other day just how difficult it must be for those with food allergies, intolerances and medical conditions to find safe food when relying on the foodbanks



when I even struggle to get the Gluten Free products needed for my family from a range of local supermarkets! Add to this the problem that so little is now being offered on prescription for coeliac, and I wonder if it is an issue that we as a group could do something productive and proactive to address? Could we, as a group, support our local foodbanks within the North Surrey area by gathering and donating Gluten Free Foods? The plan would be to first identify where the foodbanks are and then who within our group would be willing to act as coordinators for each foodbank. Then we would ask you, our members, to donate GF food to the

coordinators (straight into collection boxes in porches/at the front of their property) 4 times throughout the year. Finally, the coordinators will deliver the parcel of donations to their local Foodbank Centres. We are already aware of the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank (along with its five collection stations: Tadworth, Banstead, Epsom, Leatherhead and Ewell) and will begin collections for this very soon. We are currently sending out emails to initiate contact with other Foodbanks collection points in the KT and SM postcode areas. Messages will go out on email, Twitter and Facebook to let you know when a GF collection is being made and where.

Who is with me on this? Please do email us if you know of a local foodbank within the KT or SM postcode area of Surrey or if you are willing to act as a coordinator to receive GF food donations into a crate/box on you property (or place of work) and take them to your nearest centre four times a year. If the initiative is well supported, we can increase the number of collections made throughout the year to perhaps monthly.

## Product Recommendation

### Wheat Free Bakery Direct

If you fancy a little indulgence of the sweet kind and are fed up with the GF chocolate brownie or GF Madeira sponge that is found in most Free From aisles for Coeliac, then Wheat Free Bakery Direct is the place to order from! They have a huge range of cakes and pastries to choose from, all of which are gluten free!! The cakes are delivered directly to your door, ready to devour!!

The most difficult part of the whole process is deciding what to have because, sadly, the products won't stay fresh for long. In our house, the day the divine box of treats arrives is a major sweet fest, and we binge out on cakes and sweet pastries until we are all far beyond uncomfortable. And to make the cost of the delivery justifiable – we order a lot!!

However, if you were catering for a large number of people for, say, a party or afternoon tea (obviously post covid), then this is an ideal way to get a whole selection of cakes (including those filled with cream and jam) and all gluten free, so no fears of cross-contamination at the table and none of that unfairness where coeliac are left with minimal or no choice at the buffet.

Simply order online at

[www.wheat-freebakerydirect.co.uk](http://www.wheat-freebakerydirect.co.uk), sit back and wait for the delivery, then enjoy!!



**Kirsty Cranefield**

## Points of view

We would like to have in each edition of the newsletter an article or contribution from members regarding an experience, a review of a new GF product or perhaps some research that they have read about.

Recently we had an email from a member regarding Burn's Day (25<sup>th</sup> January) and GF Haggis, which recommends a wonderful source of online GF meat products.

*Monday this week was Burns Night (my wife is Scottish). So we had a Burns Night supper shared via Zoom with our daughter and her family. I washed down my haggis, tatties (mashed potatoes) and mashed neep (aka swede) with a nice glass of a Speyside malt.*

*We did look around to try to buy a gluten-free haggis locally, but Tesco, where we shop for online deliveries, didn't seem to have any. I just thought that I would share with the Group details of where to get a range of gluten-free meat products, including gluten-free haggis, or GF vegetarian haggis. This is Findlays of Portobello, the seaside area just outside of Edinburgh. See Findlays of Portobello Online Butchers, Award Winning Haggis, Sausage, Black Pudding. Buy Online! [www.findlaysthebutchers.co.uk](http://www.findlaysthebutchers.co.uk) They have a wide range of GF products apart from haggis. It includes a range of sausages – Gyros (Greek sausages), Merguez (spicy Moroccan pork and beef sausages), chorizo, Casalingo Piccante (spicy Italian sausages), and Lorne sausage. They also sell yummy black pudding. Online orders are shipped in a protective insulated container via a courier. It obviously pays to make up an order for the freezer.*

*I found out about Findlays a few years ago when I attended one of the Coeliac UK Volunteers Conferences. One of the speakers asked the audience about things that they wished they could get gluten-free. I mentioned 'haggis' as on my wish list. The lady sitting next to me turned out to be the Organiser for the Edinburgh Group. They organise a Burns Night Supper for their members and buy the haggis from Findlays. And of course they do the whole thing – pipe the haggis in, and have someone perform the Address to the Haggis by Burns, before they all tuck in.*

**Tony Cartwright**

## Top Tips for our newly diagnosed members (By Kirsty Cranefield)

With Easter approaching and two children in the house, its time for me to start buying those chocolate treats for them and our family and friends. We are a two coeliac household (one child of 8 and a big kid of 44!), but we try and keep everything fair by purchasing or making products that everyone can eat and enjoy rather than separating the GF and non-GF.

Now, while there is an abundance of Gluten Free chocolate products appearing in the Free From aisles of the supermarkets, I would caution newly diagnosed coeliac and their families from purchasing these often higher priced chocolate items and instead learn (as we did) that there are many chocolate bars and goodies in the main confectionary aisles that are Gluten Free, made on a gluten free production line and at the same price as the big brands' other products. For my family, the GF chocolate is often too bitter for their taste buds (usually being dark plain chocolate based to make it lactose or dairy free also).

However, by using my Coeliac UK GF Food Checker app on my Smartphone, I can quickly check products from the main chocolate section to see what is safe (smiley orange face) and what is not (sad grey face).

If that seems rather daunting, could check out <https://www.coeliac.org.uk/document-library/6682-easter-list-2020/>, which was correct at the time of publishing in 2020, to give you a starting point of what items you might want to check first.

Please note that not all products from one brand are gluten free; for example, some smaller Cadbury bars may be safe, but the larger bars of the same product may not be GF as they are made on different production lines, which could have cross-contamination. Be wary of the phrase "not suitable for those with an allergy to gluten due to manufacturing process", which can appear under the ingredients list even if the ingredients don't contain Barley, Wheat or Rye anywhere.

So, my top tip this time is: don't get drawn into buying the higher-priced products just because they are branded as Gluten Free. Use the Coeliac UK Gluten Free Food Checker App and save yourself some money and open up a much wider choice of chocolate delights for yourself or your family. Enjoy!

## Recipes *(Please check individual links for nutrition information)*

Quick and easy Gluten Free chocolate cake, chocolate muffins, brownies or choc rice crispy nests (see recipe links for each below) can all easily be turned into a fun and easy Easter treat by adding all or some of; Betty Crocker Chocolate Fudge Icing; Cadbury's Mini Eggs; Quality Street Mint or Orange Matchmakers; Elizabeth Shaw Dark Chocolate Mint Crisps; or flaked white, dark and milk cooking chocolate (please check as some supermarket makes of cooking chocolate are not suitable for coeliac).

Alternatively, if you don't fancy the chocolate base, why not buy or make a large or individual plain meringue nest/s and top with some whipping cream whipped with added cocoa powder or even chocolate Nesquik, then top with the chocolate goodies!!

Recipes based on using the Betty Crocker Gluten Free Chocolate Cake Mix:

<https://www.bettycrocker.co.uk/recipes/gluten-free-chocolate-raspberry-layer-cake>

<https://www.bettycrocker.co.uk/recipes/gluten-free-chocolate-cake-with-fig-hazelnut-caramel-drizzle>



Recipes using Doves Farm Free From flour:

<https://www.dovesfarm.co.uk/recipes/gluten-free-chocolate-cake>

All things chocolate by Becky Excell:

<https://glutenfreecupatea.co.uk/?s=chocolate>

<https://glutenfreecupatea.co.uk/2015/09/01/recipe-gluten-free-dairy-free-rice-krispie-cakes/>



For something different, why not take inspiration from Mary Berry with her Easter Lemon Pavlova:

<https://www.maryberry.co.uk/recipes/great-british-bake-off-recipes/easter-lemon-pavlova>



Or why not mix the ideas up and come up with your creation. We'd love to see a photo of what you create, and please do share your creation recipes with us for others to try!