



**December 2023 Newsletter**  
**Welcome to the latest update from the Swindon**  
**Local Group**

**Email:** [swindon@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:swindon@coeliac.org.uk)

**Web:** [www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon)

**This month we're talking about...**

**Swindon Coffee afternoon** – [Tesco café](#), Ocotal Way, this coming Wednesday, 13th December at 2pm.

**RWB Coffee afternoon** – the [Dandelion Gifts and Coffee Shop](#) – Royal Wootton Bassett, Wednesday 20th December 2pm.

Have you got **skills or advice** that could help the group?

**Christmas competitions** - there is plenty to win this month over at Coeliac UK.

**Venue recommendations**

**Travelling gluten free**

Read on for more details...

**5 Years On**

# 5th Anniversary



14 Nov  
2023

It's five years since the Swindon group, in its current form, began. Do you remember coming along to the New Swindon Academy on Beech Avenue to hear our Group Leader, Martin, share his vision for the group? Can you spot yourself in this photo? Do let us know.

Since then, the group has grown to over 500 members, based within travelling distance of Swindon. It's great to know that we are not the only ones trying to live a gluten free life and that there are so many others around that face the same challenges that we do.

Over that time we have tested venues and recommended many of them or warned about a few. We have met up for meals, coffee and drinks, been bowling and tested our brains with quizzes.

It was wonderful to catch up with so many people at the Christmas dinner last week. Thank you to everyone who joined us.

Our volunteers assist the Great Western Hospital by participating in the sessions for the newly diagnosed run by the dietician team there, and by advising local GPs. The whole group helps to raise awareness through the regular campaigns, such as the 'Is it Coeliac Disease' campaign run by Coeliac UK in May each year.

If you were living gluten free back in 2018, you will probably be aware just how much easier it is now than it was then, with far more food options available in shops and many more venues catering safely for Coeliacs. This improvement has been brought about by people like you asking in stores and restaurants what food they can provide.

Let's hope that when this email is sent out in another five years, we are talking about how every venue offers safe, gluten free meals and every supermarket

has a wide range of suitable free-from foods.

## Coffee Afternoons



Our next coffee afternoon in Swindon is on this coming Wednesday, **13 December**, where we shall enjoy gluten free cakes, tea and our friendly and jovial chatting from **2:00-3:30pm** in a café. New faces, family and friends are always very welcome. No booking is required.

This event is led by Chris who is sure to give you a warm welcome. These are always the second Wednesday of every month at the same time, in Swindon. Meet in the café at the large **Tesco Extra store, Ocotal Way**, Swindon SN1 2EH.

Our next coffee afternoon in Royal Wootton Bassett is on **Wednesday 20th December**, upstairs in the, always delightful, [Dandelion Gifts and Coffee Shop](#), 49 High Street from 2pm – 3:30pm. Feel free to drop in at any point during that time.

For more information about all future events, please do visit our events page: <https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon/events/>.

## Skills and Advice Wanted

Your local group is run by a small team of volunteers. We are always looking for new ways to support our members. If you have any skills that you can offer, we'd be delighted to hear from you. It doesn't have to be a regular commitment but perhaps a bit of advice, from time to time. Whether it's in advertising, social media marketing, event planning or any other area that you think would benefit the group, please do get in touch if you can help by e-mailing [swindon@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:swindon@coeliac.org.uk).

## Christmas Competitions

Coeliac UK are running several giveaways and prize draws in December. All of the competitions are open to anybody. You don't need to be a member of Coeliac UK. Don't miss out. [Enter now](#).

## Venue Recommendations





Yoti had a lovely meal today at [The Garden](#) in Chippenham. They had lots of homemade Gluten Free options and gave great service. He would definitely return.

Christine tried the Gluten Free fish and chips at [Dobbies Garden Centre](#) in Stratton. She said it was delicious and the batter was light and crispy.

Unfortunately, Marian didn't have a great experience with the Weighbridge's Gluten Free Afternoon Tea. She felt the quality and quantity of items received were not fitting of the price paid. There wasn't even a scone.... oh dear, oh dear.

Finally, we have a new venue in Royal Wootton Bassett. [Brambles of RWB](#), (formerly Nodens Café) located next to Boots. One of our own members, Latisha, helps to run this new venue. She told us they have gluten free bread for sandwiches or toasties and gluten free rolls to go with their soups, as well as crumpets, bagels, tea cakes and cakes ☺. Plus they offer as many dairy free and vegan option as they can.

Don't forget, if you're looking for a venue to eat at within Swindon and/or surrounding villages, then download our **Food Venue List** from one of the following links:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/swindoncoeliac/files/files>

<https://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/swindon/eating-out-gluten-free/>

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cb4WaLf9\\_fc6rzL18eOKnF72MDmGECGI/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cb4WaLf9_fc6rzL18eOKnF72MDmGECGI/view)

If you see a venue missing, or believe one should be removed or updated, then drop us an email at [Swindon@coeliac.org.uk](mailto:Swindon@coeliac.org.uk), or contact us via Facebook.

Keep your recommendations coming, folks, the venue list gets updated monthly using your feedback. And, as always, please check the venue's suitability before ordering.

## Travelling Gluten Free

If you're travelling around the UK, it can take a bit of planning to find places that are safe to eat. As well as our local guide, updated by our members, Coeliac UK has a national list of accredited venues to help you find somewhere safe to eat if you are travelling further afield. You can search the [Eating Out](#)

[Venue Guide](#), using the filters to find the type of venue and food that you would like.

Why not help to keep this list up to date by becoming a [Mystery Diner](#), reporting back to Coeliac UK on your experiences, good and bad, of eating at accredited venues.

## And Finally.....

We hope you enjoy receiving our e-mail updates. We really enjoy hearing from you, too. If you have any tips, recipes, or recommendations, please do send them to us or drop them onto one of our social media channels.

Wishing you a very happy, gluten free Christmas and good health in the New Year,

**Claire, Gareth, Lisa, Martin and Zoe**

*The Committee*

Special thanks go out to our local volunteers: **Chris, Kristyna & Marian**

Our next issue of this monthly newsletter will be published on:

**Monday 8th January 2024**

We very much welcome contributions from local members. If you have anything to share, drop it onto our Facebook group or e-mail to us at

[Swindon@Coeliac.org.uk](mailto:Swindon@Coeliac.org.uk)

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