

Newsletter 1
Autumn 2018

coeliacuk
Swindon Local Group

Yes! It is back!

Dates for your diaries :-

Tuesday 11th December

Christmas drink & social gathering at the Jovial Monk, St Andrews Ridge, SN25 4YD — in the Conservatory from 7:30pm— Everyone is welcome, just turn up — Christmas jumpers are optional!

Tuesday 12th February

Local Group Quiz night at the Jovial Monk, St Andrews Ridge, SN25 4YD — 7:30pm start — informal and fun with a GF theme — everyone welcome

Tuesday 14th May

Group AGM and Bake-Off at the Swindon Academy, Beech Avenue, SN2 1JR — 7:30pm start

Saturday 13th July

Group Summer Picnic in Lydiard Park with activities for all ages. Further details to follow.



And we have come a long way in such a short time...



In the Summer a few words were posted on a local Coeliac Facebook group asking whether anyone would want to see a new Local Group started in Swindon for Coeliacs, their families and friends. A few willing volunteers said yes! They met for the first time one evening in August and then Coeliac UK attended their next meeting in September to formalise the start of the committee and the group. And then it was full steam ahead. Every hall in the town was called to find a venue for the launch, a flyer was created and posted onto noticeboards across the area, social media accounts were started, and our webpage and group email set-up on the Coeliac UK website, all alongside many other tasks a brand new group requires. So from meeting just 3 months ago — here we are — a small group of passionate volunteers that have started something amazing. However the future success of the group is now dependent upon providing what members want so please do share your ideas.

Are your chips gluten free?

Yes (...but they are cooked with other things...). Many of us are aware of the Coeliac UK accredited venues but what about other places in and around the town? We all want to know of venues where we can eat with confidence where we do not feel like we are giving the staff the Spanish inquisition or that we appear to be a problem customer.

We want to create a **Safe Venue List** for local establishments like cafés, pubs and some retail establishments. We are looking for a volunteer to join us who can be the groups contact point to own and update this document with input received from members and other local people. We already have a template, we will post it on our group page and social media for all to see. If you would be willing to take on this role please speak with a committee member.

Email addresses — IMPORTANT!

We want to keep all our members regularly updated and we will really struggle if we do not have your email address. Nearly a third of the Coeliac UK local members have not provided an email address so our voluntary time is not going to be used effectively. We would rather our time is focussed on arranging events and supporting members instead of buying stamps, writing envelopes and folding newsletters and mailings. Please check that we do have your email address — **Speak with Suzanne.**

Area Coverage — We'd love to know you

Due to Coeliac UK Local Group rules we have to define our local group area by postcodes. As a committee we decided on SN1 to SN6 and SN25 and SN26 which is Swindon and the surrounding towns and villages. However as a local group absolutely anyone can join us —whether inside or outside these postcodes, whether a Coeliac UK member or not, whether diagnosed or not, whether junior or not. However if you are a Coeliac UK member who has declined to be contacted OR you do not live within the postcodes above then due to the GDPR regulations we are not allowed to contact you. There are forms to complete on the entrance desk so that we can stay in touch.

Money money money.....



Although run by volunteers as a group we do have costs for venue hire, purchase of refreshments and printing costs. Therefore we are relying upon the very kind generosity of our local members to help us with running costs. All donations received via the buckets or taken for the raffle will be going into a Swindon Local Group bank account which we will issue accounts for at our AGM's. Whatever you can donate really does help the group and ensures that we are not restricted from arranging future events due to a lack of available funds to make a booking. Your support is very much appreciated.

Martin's Ramblings.....

We would never have come this far in such a short space of time without an incredible team of people. The committee have just been amazing and I want to thank each and every one of them for what they have achieved. If you like what you've seen and heard then please have a chat to one of them and say thank you. Not all of them are actually diagnosed Coeliacs but each of them are impacted by the disease in some way.

The launch evening has had wider family and friends helping out prior to and on the night so thank you also to each of them for giving up their time, and we thank Coeliac UK who have supported our start-up activities.

We are somewhat chasing our tail currently what with requirements of a new group and planning a launch so our 2019 calendar of events is not yet finalised for the second half of the year. It is your group so we want to hear your ideas for what you want the group to provide to support you, to entertain, to educate, to share. What events would you like to see arranged? We need to start thinking about and arranging these soon.

We look forward to your continued support and contributions, so this group improves the lives of Coeliacs within the area. Our next event is an informal meet in December, we would love to see you there.

Our grateful thanks to.....

We would like to send out a massive thankyou to the suppliers (local and national) who have been very generous and provided us with raffle prizes, samples for you to take home and some of our refreshments tonight.

Thanks for raffle prizes go to: Pure Gluten Free, Delicious Alchemy, Nandos, David Lloyd Gym, LoveMore, Tesco's, Morrison's, Asda, Juvela and Gluten Free Foods.

Thanks for samples for you to take home go to Nairns, Juvela and Nature's Path.

For helping with tonight's refreshments thanks go to Get Fruity, Lovemore and Gluten Free Foods.

We really hope that you enjoyed tonight's raffle, it is a great way for us to make some funds to redirect back into the group for future events, and if you - or anyone you know - could help with future raffle prizes/samples/refreshments then please speak to one of the committee.



Inclusive not exclusive....

We want to be a part of a group that caters for all ages, wherever they may live, whether diagnosed or not, whether diagnosed recently or in the previous millennium! To this aim, for instance, we will be setting up a sub-group for teenagers and arranging some events for our much younger members. We do know that living gluten free can be difficult for these ages so we will endeavour to help them. They may not actually know many other Coeliacs of the same age but we intend to change that. For the teenager group we are looking for names of people who want to be involved in the sub-group.



The Committee.

The current committee has been accepted by Coeliac UK which is the process for new local groups until the first AGM in May, when the opportunity will be given for people to stand again (if they wish) or other members may offer themselves up for roles. The committee is Martin Hiscock (Group Organiser), Claire Huckerby-Brown (Group Treasurer), Cara Hooper (Group Secretary), Suzanne Marshall (Membership Secretary), Louise Harney (Social Media Lead) and Lisa Evans (Fundraising). We would welcome a little extra help so if you wish to contribute to the local group please speak with us or contact us on the details below — it does not need to be a formal committee role.

Contact details.....

Our next newsletter will be published in February. Your submissions are very welcome — via email please. Closing date is 13th January 2019.



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