

Droxford Community Hub CIC (DCH)

(trading as Wilfrid's Café)

ALLERGEN POLICY

DCH is committed to reducing the risk to customers, staff and visitors with regards to the provision of food and consumption of allergens in food, which could lead to an allergic reaction or an adverse reaction with regards to an intolerance.

All working practices are made in line with the following policy decision:-

- DCH makes no claims or assurances that foods are entirely allergen-free or that foods have been prepared in an allergy free environment but do make best endeavours to prevent allergy contamination during preparation and service.
- DCH issues guidelines to all home bakers/chefs regarding allergy contamination and management so they can make all reasonable endeavours to prevent allergy contamination.
- DCH ensures that all team members will be trained fully to ensure that all reasonable endeavours are made to prevent allergy contamination during service.
- DCH complies fully with FSA/FSS rules (regarding signage and communications)
- DCH offers a limited number of frozen, shop bought gluten-free dishes at all times as well as prepackaged items which are toasted on site and packaging can be checked for allergens if required.

CUSTOMER STATEMENT

- Our cakes, bakes and our soups are prepared in household kitchens and we issue guidelines to all of our home bakers/chefs regarding risks of allergy contamination.
- Our bakers/chefs are required to fully check their ingredients and produce an allergy card identifying the 14 allergens in their bakes, cakes or soup.
- Our team members are fully trained regarding the risks of allergy contamination during service.
- Despite this, whilst we fully endeavour to reduce the risk of allergy contamination, it is unfortunately not possible for us to guarantee that our food offerings will be 100% allergen-free.
- Prepackaged items are only guaranteed as per their packaging as these are not prepared on site.
- Selected items are offered as 'gluten-free', and these are primarily shop bought with packaging kept for reference. Should a home baker present a gluten-free cake an allergen card will be completed.
- Our toasties and shop bought teacakes and crumpets are prepared/toasted on site and ingredients are checked for the 14 allergens.

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- *In summary, all reasonable endeavours are made to ensure that there is no allergen contamination during preparation and service but we cannot guarantee that our offerings will be 100% allergen free.*

POLICY OBJECTIVES

DCH have delegated responsibility for allergen awareness and procedures to the DCH Operations Committee who will take all reasonable practical steps:-

- (i) To ensure that all staff, customers and visitors to the site are aware of our food allergy procedures.
- (ii) To provide clear guidance to all staff on their responsibilities for the provision of food both to seated customers and those taking away and to ensure that best endeavours are made at all times to prevent allergy related issues.
- (iii) To ensure that relevant food allergen training and food hygiene training are provided for all staff members including cake bakers.
- (iv) To ensure that customers are provided with enough information to make an 'informed decision.'

BACKGROUND

WHAT IS A FOOD ALLERGY?

Food allergies affect the body's immune system. The body reacts to certain allergens in food by producing antibodies which can cause immediate and sometimes severe symptoms such as: itching, or strange metallic taste in the mouth, swelling of the throat and tongue; difficulty in swallowing or speaking; abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting; skin hives (nettle rash) anywhere on the body. In most extreme cases, difficulties in breathing and a severe fall in blood pressure (anaphylactic shock) can prove fatal.

WHAT IS A FOOD INTOLERANCE?

This does not involve the immune system in the same way and is not usually as severe as a food allergy. Symptoms usually take longer to appear and may include headaches, bloating, fatigue and digestive problems.

Food intolerance is harder to diagnose than a food allergy. The person with a known allergen trigger may know what food ingredient will provoke a reaction. However, they may well have eaten this food or a specific dish previously and had no adverse reaction.

WHAT IS COELIAC DISEASE?

Coeliac disease is a condition which causes the body to react when gluten is consumed. The villi in the small intestine are attacked and damaged by the body's immune system, which

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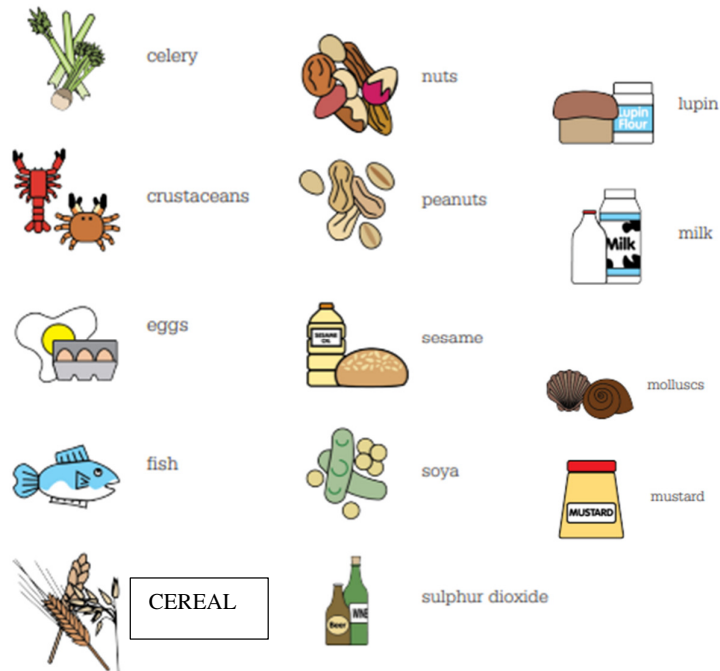
means the body can't absorb nutrients from foods. The only way to prevent symptoms of coeliac disease is to avoid altogether consuming even trace amounts of gluten.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anybody can develop a food allergen or intolerance at any time in their life, irrespective of whether they have consumed the food previously. A person with an allergy is at risk even if they consume a small amount of the food allergen.

Anyone with food allergies or intolerances are at risk, DCH will collect full ingredients for all food offerings sold on site and will provide as much information as possible to any customers with food allergens or intolerance, to allow them to make an informed choice, whether eating in or purchasing products to take away.

COMMON FOOD ALLERGENS



There are currently 14 allergens which must be clearly stated if they are present in the food on offer and our bakers/chefs are aware that some of these products are considered 'hidden allergens'. People may report allergies to other foods not on the below list. Some other common allergies in the UK are kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans, etc.), other seeds and other fruits and vegetables. Full ingredients will be made available to enable the customer to make an informed choice.

- Celery, a hidden allergen, refers to the stalks, leaves and seeds of both celery and celeriac, including celery salt.
- Crustaceans include lobster, prawns, crab, scampi and pastes made with these.
- Eggs can be found in pasta, quiche, sauces, cakes, mousses and mayonnaise, or items may be brushed with an egg glaze.
- Fish can be found in salad dressings, on pizza and in Worcestershire sauce.
- Cereals containing gluten include bread, pasta, pastry, cakes, royal icing, sauces, soups and batter.

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- *Nuts, such as almonds, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios and cashews, macadamia and walnuts, are commonly used in desserts, bread, ice cream and sauces, whether whole, ground or as an oil. **N.B. Coconut is not a nut!***
- *Peanuts, including peanut flour (groundnuts) and groundnut oil, can be found in desserts, cakes and sauces.*
- *Sesame seeds and sesame oil are often found in bread, hummus, tahini and stir-fried dishes.*
- *Soya refers to soya protein, flour and beans and can be found in tofu, sauces, edamame beans, desserts and many vegetarian and vegan products.*
- *Sulphur dioxide and sulphites are preservatives commonly found in dried fruit, fruit juice, meat products, wine and beer. (Concentrations of more than 10mg/kg or 10mg/litre)*
- *Lupin flour and seeds are used in some pastries and bread and often in products labelled as gluten free.*
- *Milk can be found in cheese, butter, cream and yoghurt. Items may also be brushed with a milk glaze or contain milk powder.*
- *Molluscs include squid, snails, mussels and oysters, including oyster sauce.*
- *Mustard, a hidden allergen, refers to seeds, powder and liquid mustard and is often found in dressings and marinades, sauces, curries and soups. Cress also contains the substance which causes a reaction to mustard.*

RESPONSIBILITIES

- DCH will ensure that there is a full allergen list (for the 14 required allergens) held for every item being sold on site.
- DCH will ensure that all goods for sale on site are labelled correctly and all displayed information regarding food offerings is fully up to date.
- DCH team will ensure that all home bakers/chefs are issued full guidelines with regards to the handling of 'allergens' and will ensure that any bakes, cakes or soups are presented with the correct allergen paperwork.
- DCH Ops will ensure that all team members are aware of the correct procedures for handling allergen items and have been provided with the correct equipment to prevent allergen contamination.
- DCH will ensure that all team members are trained fully on allergens with regular scheduled refreshers.

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GOOD PREPARATION AND SERVICE PRACTICES

- All cakes bakers and chefs will be supplied with full allergen/intolerance information and guidance.
- All team members will be trained and reminded to ask customers if they have any allergy or intolerance before ordering.
- Where dishes contain any of the 14 allergens this information must be made available to the customers.
- Whilst customers should be asked if they have any allergens or intolerances, they must be made aware that we cannot guarantee to be 100% free from any allergens due to the nature of the business, our set up and the fact that our cakes, bakes and soups are made in domestic kitchens.
- Customer statement to be available for the customer.
- All team members will be provided with continuous allergen/intolerance training.
- Allergen sheets/Ingredient sheets will be kept for the relevant day in the blue allergens box and this should be kept readily available during the shift next to the cake display stand.
- Best endeavours should be made to ensure that food offerings containing allergens are displayed away from other foods
- Separate utensils strictly used for foods containing allergens and foods likely to cause intolerances and these should be stored separately during service – RED for allergy, purple for gluten free.
- Separate colour coded chopping boards to be used for preparing different food types
- All surfaces to be kept fully cleaned when preparing foods containing allergens – all surfaces to be fully cleaned down with a kitchen cleaner after preparing foods containing allergens.
- Trays to be cleaned with kitchen cleaner between orders.
- Foods with allergens/likely intolerances are to be kept separate during order preparation where possible.
- Team Leaders should provide information on the food on offer before the shift starts so that all team members are knowledgeable about the food products on offer and the associated allergens/intolerances. If in doubt check with the team lead who in turn should fully check with the allergen information before advising the customer.
- All aprons to be washed regularly with clean aprons kept separately and used when required.

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COMMUNICATION

- Clear allergen and intolerances signage will be displayed at all times in a prominent position.
- A customer statement clearly identifying the company policy decision regarding allergies and intolerances will be displayed and available for a customer to read should they identify that they have a food allergy or intolerance.
- All team members are encouraged to communicate with customers who have specific dietary requirements and to help them to find a suitable product which is safe for them to eat.
- All team members to be made aware that if a customer asks about the allergens in our products it is okay to say “I can’t answer that question but will go away and check fully”, They should then check with the allergy cards and if still not sure the team lead on duty. The customer should then be provided with the correct information and along with reading our customer statement will then be able to make an informed decision.
- When talking to a vulnerable person, team members will be made aware that they should take care to ensure that the person is able to make an informed decision about allergens/intolerances.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY – ACTION REQUIRED

If a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:

- Ensure the casualty is comfortable, ideally lying down or sitting in a chair. If breathing is difficult, assist them in lying down, and raise their legs.
- If the person has an auto-injector, such as an EpiPen, Jext Pen or Emerade Pen, ask them to locate and use it. The casualty might be able to inject themselves, otherwise, you can assist them if you know how. The company policy on administering auto-injectors is that the qualified first aider can administer it as they have received adequate training if permission is given.
- Call 999 for an ambulance as soon as possible and explain that the person is having a severe allergic reaction, mentioning anaphylaxis specifically.
- If there’s no improvement after five to 10 minutes, use the second auto-injector if a second dose is available. Ensure this is in the opposite leg this time.
- Notify the qualified, on-site first-aider/team leader.
- Reassure the person and do your best to keep them calm.

DCH CIC requests that this Policy is respected, a copy of which will be available on demand.

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Approval

Approved by:.....(Name)

Signed..... Date

(Chair of DCH)

Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed at least biennially in response to new legislation, policies or guidance or specific demand and feedback, under the direct supervision of the DCH Board of Directors.

Date of next review: June 2028