



52, Westsgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL 2NF

# WIGGLY NEWSLETTER

Registered charity "The  
Wiggly Worm Ltd"  
Charity no: 1124647



## LEARN - COOK - SHARE

Wiggly Charity believes in the power of food to build confidence and self-esteem. We bring people together through food and make community connections. Wiggly is proud to support vulnerable, marginalised and disabled adults and children with inclusive cookery workshops and community meals

## OUR IMPACT SO FAR THIS YEAR...



148 course  
hours

920  
participants

54 volunteer  
hours

241kg food donated  
to local food banks

1270  
meals



## SPRING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

We were delighted to welcome a new group of participants for our Spring Thriving Communities cookery course in March. Funded by Gloucestershire County Council, all recipes for this course are designed around using the freshest of seasonal vegetables provided by We Are Project Grow CIC. Grown only a few minutes' walk away at the Gloucestershire Heritage Hub, our first session kicked off with our participants preparing a selection of spring soups using delicious local spring greens including lettuce, spring onions, herbs and even pak choi, which seems to be thriving in the Gloucester climate!





# RECIPE FOR SUCCESS!



Take a handful of customers from the **Gloucestershire Skills and Employment Hub**, one Wiggly Kitchen, a generous spoonful of everyday Maths and sprinkle with Employability Skills. Mix thoroughly and allow to mature for four weeks.....and these are the results!

Working in partnership with **The Gloucestershire Gateway Trust**, with funding via the **Skills For Life "Multiply"** scheme, our new Wiggly Cook Educator Sue ran a four week course for customers from the Employment Hub, designed to help them overcome personal barriers and support them in their search for appropriate employment. The group formed a positive and respectful dynamic and achieved some fantastic cookery outcomes, building their maths skills in the process. From knife skills to weighing and measuring, sauce making, doughs and pasta dishes, the group developed team-work, communication and health and safety awareness and produced some delicious dishes in the process, using recipes from our Follow the Flow cookery books.

All of the group achieved 100% attendance and at the end of the course, each group member was presented with a certificate and a copy of the recipe book to take home. Friendships were formed, contact details swapped and confidence boosted .....definitely a "Recipe for Success".



We are grateful to the fabulous **Barnwood Trust** for supporting us to run regular courses for adults with learning disabilities and family workshops.

Working in partnership with **PACE LD Support**, we have now run three successful five-week cookery courses welcoming their clients into our kitchen to produce a variety of tasty dishes. One session fell on Valentine's day so the group made "Marry Me Chicken" which went down a treat.

We also partnered with **Young Gloucestershire** and **Glos Young Carers** to run some family cookery sessions. It is fantastic to support parents to cook alongside their children, building confidence, skills and sharing quality time together.





# GROW WITH WIGGLY



Last year, Wiggly teamed up with local social enterprise Project Grow to run a pilot project called “**Grow with Wiggly**”.

We started with a simple aim - for **Project Grow** to grow 50% of the vegetables used in our Gloucester cookery course in the beautiful community gardens at the Gloucestershire Heritage Hub, less than half a mile from our Wiggly kitchens. We coordinated the harvest each week for our Wiggly courses, and together we set up and marketed **Social Source** products, made with the produce from the gardens to generate a new income stream for both our charitable organisations.

Fast forward to 2025 and our Grow with Wiggly project is now fully embedded in both the Wiggly and Project Grow programmes, funded by the **NHS ICB Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Grant**. Our growing space has increased four-fold and now encompasses the fabulous vegetable plots in the Bishop of Gloucester’s garden.

The team of Project Grow volunteers, who deserve a huge shout out for their dedication and hard work whatever the weather, have set up zero-dig beds at both the Hub and the Bishop’s garden and are busy planting a wide variety of vegetables which Wiggly will use in our cookery projects.

This time last year, as a pilot project, we were starting off without the benefit of having over-wintered any vegetables. This year however, there are already roots and greens in the ground and Project Grow have begun delivering a weekly vegetable box to Wiggly to use in our courses.

As well as our exciting **Social Source** project, which will get into full swing later in the growing season (watch this space!), Wiggly have already run three successful cookery workshops for people on our waiting list as part of this project. We have more individual workshops planned later this year, and will advertise places to our waiting list and on our social media.

We are also very excited to be planning a project in collaboration with **Kingsholm Primary School**, where we hope to support parents and children on low incomes to enjoy community cookery sessions and share healthy meals.



As a small charity rooted in the local community, partnerships are incredibly important to us at Wiggly. We are proud to support the vital work by Gloucestershire Deaf Association by cooking at their monthly lunch clubs as well as other special events. We rely on some fantastic volunteers to support us in the kitchens and we love to hear the feedback from our guests.

So far this year, we have served up steak pie with mash and vegetables, a Valentine’s meal with a delicious dessert of lemon posset and chocolate dipped strawberries (yum!) and some healthy fish cakes with seasonal veg. We also ran a fun pancake workshop, with some unusual varieties of pancake on the menu, including spinach crepes and Japanese pancakes which were super fluffy!



TO DONATE, SUPPORT OR VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:  
OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

# COMMUNITY LUNCHES FOR ALL



It seems the word is spreading about the fantastic pay-as-you-can Monday lunches at **School House Cafe!**

Wiggly has been involved since the start with these lunches, which serve up a healthy hot meal every week to anyone who would like to come along for food and friendship, whether or not they can afford to pay.

Run on a token system, our Chef ensures that week after week, there is a delicious lunch available, with veggie, vegan, dairy and gluten free options.

In February, **BBC Radio Gloucestershire** came along to cover the lunch and chat to some of our guests, including local students and older members of the St Paul's community.

Cheltenham Mayor Paul Baker joined us in March to try it for himself, timing his visit to coincide with pancake day - a very wise choice!

Our paella week was a particular highlight, proving popular with our guests. We are always grateful for donations of food supplies from Creed Foodservice which help keep ingredient costs down.

If you'd like to try our community lunch for yourself, why not come down to School House Cafe at 1230 on a Monday? Simply pick up a token at the counter for whatever you can afford and join us for a friendly, informal and guaranteed-to-be-tasty meal. We'd love to see you!



## BUILDING KITCHEN CONFIDENCE

Everything we do at Wiggly is designed with the client in mind. Our starting point for building any course or workshop is learning about the requirements of our participants and what they are hoping to gain from our sessions. Whether that is building confidence, reducing anxiety, addressing social isolation or developing employability skills, our sessions are as individual as the wonderful people we work with.

Recently we have been pleased to work with **GCC's Employment and Skills Hub** to run specially designed courses for young people not in education, employment or training. Our sessions cover a range of foundational kitchen skills, from setting up a chopping board and basic food hygiene and health and safety to essential knife skills and deboning a chicken thigh. The young people have thrived in our kitchens, with one young man enjoying the session so much that he will be returning to volunteer with Wiggly to build his skills even more!

We have also enjoyed working with clients from **Kingfisher Treasure Seekers'** Lighthouse service for adults with learning disabilities. KFT are generous hosts to Wiggly at Westgate Street and we are always happy to support their clients to cook delicious dishes and boost their self-esteem.



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# SPOTLIGHT ON PARTICIPANT STORIES




When Percy first came to Wiggly last year, he had never really learned to cook. Growing up, he told us, "boys did woodwork and girls did domestic science". Later, surrounded by talented family cooks, he found he never had to step into the kitchen.

But when his wife Jen developed dementia, something changed. Family meals - once a central part of their life - began to disappear. That was where Wiggly came in.

Percy completed our four season **GCC Thriving Communities course** last year, and recently told us: "One thing you can add to my appreciation of Wiggly is the restoration of family meals. I am very pleased to say that I can now do a reasonable job, and once again, we can enjoy each others' company around the dining table".

For Percy, as for so many other of our participants, cooking wasn't just about food. It symbolised confidence, family connection and reclaiming a piece of life that had been lost. "As a carer, you can feel quite isolated. To spend time as a "normal" person is highly beneficial".

Percy is such a fabulous example of how Wiggly's services are supporting people of all ages and abilities, connecting them through the power of food. Thank you Percy for letting us share your story 

**If you'd like to cook with Wiggly, or if you support someone who would benefit from cooking with us, keep an eye on our social media and website for course availability, or reach out to us at [office@wigglycharity.org](mailto:office@wigglycharity.org) to join our waiting list.**

## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

Wiggly are thrilled to be supported for the first time with core funding grants from the **Garfield Weston Foundation** and the **Notgrove Trust**. We are living in challenging times and the reality of keeping a small charity afloat is hard. Finding salaries and running costs is not always the most glamorous of activities, but it is absolutely essential to enable us to keep supporting vulnerable people through food and delivering social impact across Gloucestershire.


That is why we are absolutely delighted to welcome the Garfield Trust Foundation and Notgrove Trust to the Wiggly family.

Your support means the world to us. With your help, we look forward to reaching even more people through food.



We couldn't keep our small charity running without the essential basics - kitchen equipment, IT and ingredients!

That is why we are also so grateful to our friends at **ProCook Gloucester**, **The ITSA Digital Trust**, **Creed Foodservice** and **We Are Project Grow CIC** for supporting us with practical donations that mean that we can keep teaching, cooking and sharing food with people of all ages across Gloucestershire.

Big love from Team Wiggly 



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR WONDERFUL PARTNERS, SUPPORTERS AND PARTICIPANTS WHO HELP WIGGLY TO SPREAD CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE THROUGH COOKERY



# Coming Soon!

## Join our FREE cookery workshops!



At the Wiggly Kitchens on Westgate Street, Gloucester.

Our summer **Thriving Communities** course runs for **5 weeks** offering an opportunity to learn cookery skills while building community connections using seasonal vegetables to create nutritious well-balanced meals.


 **Every Wednesday, June 4th – July 2nd**

 **11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**



Bring the **whole family** and **enjoy hands-on cooking**, delicious recipes, and quality time together in one of our **upcoming family workshops**.

 **Wednesday, April 16th**

 **Wednesday, May 29th**

 **Thursday, May 30th**

 **11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**



**SPACES FOR BOTH ARE LIMITED** 🎉

 **CONTACT US AT [OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG) TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT!**



And finally....Wiggly was delighted to have one of our recipes featured in the **Tastes of Memory** cookbook published by **Gloucestershire Libraries!** From Nan's Welsh Cakes to Katie's Excellent Crumbly Fudge, the recipes are inspired by local people's memories and stories of food and what it means to them.

The books can be purchased from your local library, with £1 from every sale going to the Alzheimer's Society.

### Can you help?

With the help of your donations we can reach more vulnerable people across Gloucestershire with our cookery courses and workshops. Please scan the green QR code to make a donation or follow the DONATE tab on our website

Thank you for your support



**DONATE HERE**



**OUR WEBSITE**