



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 IN 2025



Participants engaged with

**3,040**



Hours of cookery education

**490**



Meals produced

**5,239**



Kitchen kit donations

**155**



Food donations distributed

**590kg**



Social Source jars produced

**796**



Food projects completed

**46**



Venues in Gloucestershire

**22**

## A LOOK BACK AT CHRISTMAS WITH WIGGLY



Although we are knee deep into 2026, and Christmas seems like a lifetime ago, the Christmas season at Wiggly is a special time, so we couldn't let it pass without celebrating some of the very special moments that we enjoyed with our wonderful participants and partners.

Across our three main Christmas lunch events, at **School House Cafe**, **Gloucestershire Deaf Association** and **ENRICH**, our amazing Chefs Ryan and Jane served up some classic Christmas dishes, served up with a helping of Wiggly magic on the side, supported by Kitchen Assistant Tom and a group of fantastic volunteers.

**100 people** gathered at **School House Cafe** for their annual community lunch, joined by High Sherriff of Gloucester, Julie Kent MBE, as well as reporter Jo Durrant recording a report for BBC Radio Gloucester. The team from **DAISI's** digital support service run by **GRCC** also came along, as they regularly attend the Monday community lunches to offer free IT support to anyone who needs them.



We also cooked for **40 regulars** at the **Gloucestershire Deaf Association** Christmas lunch, where reindeer antlers and comedy Christmas hats were the order of the day for team Wiggly!

At **ENRICH**, an amazing project for vulnerable and marginalised people, which runs all year round in St Mark's Cheltenham, coordinated by Clare Davies of Cheltenham Borough Council, our Chef prepared a delicious Christmas lunch for around **35 guests**, with pigs in blanket as an essential side dish.

And at the final session of our **Thriving Communities course**, which runs seasonally across the year, participants learned to cook their own Christmas lunch on a budget - with smiles all round and lashings of gravy!

This has been a fantastic course, and participants have learned to make a wide range of dishes across the seasons, from Spring Risotto to Winter Casseroles, so we are delighted that **Gloucestershire County Council** have committed to supporting another Thriving Communities Course at Wiggly in 2026 starting in March.

**Details of how to enroll are on page 6 of this newsletter and on our social media.**

The importance of bringing communities together, particularly in the Christmas season, cannot be overstated. At Wiggly, we work to ensure that everyone is welcome in our kitchen and that no one who joins us feels isolated or alone.



We know that festive seasons can be a hard time for many, whether they live alone, have been bereaved, or face food insecurity or employment worries. So we were delighted to be able to share Christmas lunch with almost 200 people this year - who knows, perhaps next year we will be able to lengthen our Christmas table even further!

TO DONATE, SUPPORT OR VOLUNTEER, PLEASE CONTACT US AT: [OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG) OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT: [WWW.WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG](http://WWW.WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG)



## SUGAR MICE AND ALL THINGS NICE



They say the best laid plans of mice and men can still go wrong...

... ironically, that was most certainly the case with the detailed plans that our lovely Chef Jane had put in place to run a Christmas wreath and sugar mice workshop in December, as a fundraiser for Wiggly.

Jane had put meticulous arrangements in place, right down to foraging the berries and foliage, preparing all the instructions and ingredients for sugar mice, and gathering together all the kitchen paraphernalia that goes along with running an interactive workshop.

The tickets were sold out, the venue booked and then the dreaded pre-Christmas lurgy struck and Jane was incredibly disappointed to have to reluctantly step back from running the event.

But the Wiggly Board are not ones to shy away from a challenge, and so our amazing Chair of Trustees, Hannah, and one of our Directors, Miranda, stepped in at the last minute to coach the enthusiastic group in the art of wreath making and sugar mice creation!

Thankfully, Hannah is a wonderful cook and Miranda has experience of running willow wreath workshops of her own, so we couldn't have wished for a better pair of substitutes.

The group of adults and children went full-on Christmas creative, and as you can see from the photographs, some absolutely delightful sugar mice were made (and eaten)!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for this event, and to GDA for allowing us to use your brilliant venue.

We were so encouraged by the feedback from the workshop that we are hatching some plans to run some more fun workshops in 2026 - watch this space for news!

All funds raised from our paid workshops enable us to provide cookery tuition for vulnerable people across Gloucestershire - thank you for your support



# KINGSHOLM PRIMARY COOKERY CLUBS



Our Grow with Wiggly programme 2025, funded by an NHS ICB Health and Wellbeing Grant, spanned a number of different projects, all with a focus on improving health and wellbeing in Gloucester and increasing community capacity.

One of our favourite projects under this banner was a series of after school cookery clubs which our Chef Jane ran for parents and children at **Kingsholm Primary School**.

Our starting point for developing the recipes for each session were the vegetables grown by the children in the school's own allotments, Our partners at Project Grow CIC have run regular hands-on gardening sessions and seasonal growing activities at the school, showing the pupils where food comes from, how to care for soil and plants, and educating children in why fresh, local food is important for their health and the planet.



Across the weekly cookery sessions, family engagement was incredibly positive and the group made a whole range of easy, fresh dishes, designed to be re-created at home in their own kitchens.

From fresh pesto for the palmier biscuits, mixed vegetable frittatas, toad in the hole and home-made sausage rolls with salad, each week the parents and children worked side by side to create their own meals and learn new skills together.

**Below is a selection of the wonderful feedback from parents who took part, to give a flavour of the difference that a course like this can make.**



*"It's been wonderful to cook with my children, it's not something we do at home. To also have a meal, that we actually cooked, to take back with us, has just been brilliant."*

*"My child is normally really fussy, but it has been great to see them eat. Money is really tight and this has helped."*

*"Because of this club we have tried different foods, and because we have cooked them, my children have been happier to eat them. Thank you!"*

*"It's been great to have advice and help, I love cooking with my Mum, it's been really fun."*

*"We don't cook, just buy takeaways, this has been really fun, and healthier for us."*



As this is my final Wiggly newsletter before I move on to a new role, I wanted to grab a few column inches to simply say **thank you**.

It has been an absolute privilege to lead Wiggly for the last 2.5 years and I am immensely proud of all that our small but dedicated team have achieved. Thank you to Ryan, Jane, Tom and Indi for all their incredible hard work and flexibility, and to our Wiggly Board for their engagement and support.

During my time at Wiggly, I have been lucky enough to work with a wide range of partners, funders, businesses and individuals across the sector, and in doing so, have developed a deep appreciation and respect for everyone who runs a small charity or voluntary sector organisation.

Whilst running a charity is rewarding, it is also demanding, requiring adaptability to make the most of limited resources and determination to reach as many people as we can. Finding funding is universally competitive, and demand for services is high, but despite a challenging environment, I am proud that our team has maintained a sharp focus on using food as a tool for supporting people in our communities to boost their health, wellbeing and self-esteem, and to combat social isolation.

Since I joined Wiggly in mid-2023, we have expanded our range of services across Gloucestershire, serving over 10,000 hot meals in that time, and engaging with more than 6,000 people, all with a single mission of empowering people through food. We have run cookery workshops and courses for children as young as 4 and adults in their 80s, and everyone in between. Our Chefs have adapted their lessons, menus and approaches to meet the needs of the individual, ensuring that everyone feels welcome in our kitchens and no one gets left behind.

I could wax lyrical about the many projects and partnerships we have developed, from community lunches to employability courses, from low-waste cookery sessions to making preserves but instead I will simply say this...

**Thank you to everyone who has supported us, funded or engaged with us and above all, cooked, learned and shared with Wiggly.** As we prepare to welcome a new GM to take Wiggly into 2026 and beyond, I look back with fondness on all that we have achieved across in the county and I look forward to seeing Wiggly continue to deliver amazing food projects across Gloucestershire..

*Claine Foote*

## NEW FOR 2026!

We are excited to expand our portfolio and introduce some new projects for 2026.

Wiggly is looking forward to working with the **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner** to support young males ages 14-16 at risk of violent crime through provision of interactive cookery workshops.

We have also kicked off a pilot programme of cookery sessions for patients at risk of certain health conditions, working in partnership with a local **NHS GP** surgery in Cheltenham and we will be expanding our partnership with **Gloucestershire Deaf Association**, to pilot a new lunch club for their Hard of Hearing members.

We are also very excited to have received funding from the **National Lottery Awards for All**, which will enable us to expand our reach and offer some wonderful new cookery and food projects to communities across Gloucestershire.





# OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, COOK AND SHARE



## WHAT'S ON AT WIGGLY



### Thriving Communities Cookery Course: Spring

Following a successful seasonal cookery course in 2025, our Thriving Communities Cookery Course is running again this Spring!

Beginning **Wednesday 4th March**, the 5-week course will run every Wednesday from 11am to 1pm at The Wiggly Kitchens, 52 Westgate Street, Gloucester (GL1 2NF).

These relaxed, practical sessions support adults of all abilities to build cookery skills, confidence, and connections — all while cooking with seasonal ingredients in our welcoming community kitchen.

**SPACES ARE LIMITED** 🎉

✉️ **CONTACT US AT [OFFICE@WIGGLYCHARITY.ORG](mailto:office@wigglycharity.org) TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST!**

### School House Community Lunch

Or come along and meet our Chef at School House Cafe in St Paul's Cheltenham every Monday at 1230 and join the pay-as-you-can Community Lunch!

## 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

# WITH ENORMOUS THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND THE COMPANIES WHO SUPPORT US



Garfield Weston  
FOUNDATION



## HIGH FIVE TO OUR FABULOUS PARTNERS WHO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE, POSSIBLE EVERY DAY



The Butterfly Garden



WE APPRECIATE YOU ALL 