



News Release

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## **New Chief Executive Officer Announcement**

Coeliac UK, the national charity for people who need to live gluten free, has appointed Hilary Croft as its new CEO from 3 June 2019, succeeding Sarah Sleet.

Ms Croft's professional background lies in business transformation within complex, multifaceted organisations. Her senior management career started in marketing with Capgemini, a global leader in consulting, technology and digital transformation services, where she worked with a variety of organisations, such as Virgin Atlantic, Sky, Lego and Royal Mail.

Hilary Croft also has vast knowledge and interest in the food and drink sector through previous positions with Marks and Spencer, Coca-Cola, Compass Group and World Duty Free Europe. More recently, as CEO of the Felix Project, she developed significant partnerships with food suppliers and re-distributors to reduce food waste and food poverty across London.

About her appointment, Ms Croft said: "I am excited to be taking up the CEO role at Coeliac UK, a charity with a truly unique health and food scope. I look forward to developing the charity's strong reputation, bringing fresh ideas and strategic insights. Naturally, my direct experience of coeliac disease, through my son's condition, further motivates me to achieve real and lasting change for the gluten free community."

Mike Elliott, Coeliac UK's Chair of Governors, said: "Hilary's business and strategic acumen will bring new drive and impetus at this exciting time in Coeliac UK's journey. The charity is currently entering a new ten year strategic review and requires an experienced change leader to adapt to a constantly evolving, complex environment. We feel Hilary is exceptionally qualified to lead Coeliac UK into the future and we look forward to welcoming her."

Ms Croft is also a trustee of Age UK Ealing and a global fundraising committee member for Tearfund, a charity that helps communities around the world escape the very worst effects of poverty and disaster.

## About Coeliac UK

Coeliac UK campaigns for better access to diagnosis of coeliac disease and funds critical research into potential cures. It provides expert and independent information to 65,000 members to manage their health and gluten free diet.

The charity also fights for wider availability of gluten free food by working with food manufacturers, service providers and venues. Currently 3,000 products and 200 companies use the charity's Crossed Grain certification scheme and 3,200 food outlets, cafés and restaurants have achieved its Gluten Free accreditation. In 2018, the charity's total income was £4.1m with research expenditure increasing from £204k to £496k.

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### Notes to Editors:

- Coeliac UK is the national charity for people who need to live without gluten, whether due to coeliac disease or another medical condition requiring a gluten free diet.
- Coeliac disease is a serious autoimmune condition where the body's immune system reacts to gluten found in food, making the body attack itself.
- 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease but half a million people in the UK are undiagnosed.
- Average time to diagnosis is 13 years.
- Gluten is a protein found in wheat (including spelt), rye and barley. Some people are also sensitive to oats.
- Coeliac UK has a Helpline on 0333 332 2033 and further information can be found at [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk)