

Allergen labelling and alternatives in Union and College Services

Proposer: Michael Kohn (FONS UG Representative)

Seconder: Sam Lee (DPFS)

Union notes:

1. There are 14 major allergens as outlined by the government in [1]
 - a. Between 10 and 20% of people have some form of dairy intolerance, 1% are Coeliac (gluten free), a further 4% are wheat intolerant and many have sensitivity to gluten and dairy (used as an example)
2. The majority of college catering outlets in South Kensington do not mark allergens/special diets on their menus (with the exception of vegetarian and vegan)
 - a. This includes on boards, meaning that the information is not known before queuing at busy hours
3. Staff in Union catering and College are not adequately trained to answer questions about allergen content of food or drinks
4. There exists 'hidden allergens' i.e. additives of dairy, gluten or soy often in mass catered drinks
5. Since the refurbishment of the FiveSixEight kitchen, the change in menu has removed the clear marking of allergies, in addition it has removed the readily available bread substitutes for food items [2] [3]
6. The majority of the college catering outlets in South Kensington that catered for allergens have been phased out over the last few years and not replaced with options that cater for all needs.

Union Resolves:

1. Include basic allergen awareness training for union staff involved in catering
2. Indicate as many of the 14 allergens above on the menu of all Union services, with at minimum nuts, fish, gluten, dairy. This includes checking the basic allergens for drinks where it is not obvious, and where viable, stocking an alternative.
3. Stock long-life or freezer-friendly gluten and dairy substitutes to allow more of the menu to contain gluten and dairy free alternatives as for pre-renovation.
4. To mandate the DPFS to lobby the College to set as much of the above as possible as a minimum standard for their catering outlets, with particular regards to clear marking not only on the products but also on the boards at the start of queues.

References

[1] <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/top-allergy-types.pdf>

[2] <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/FiveSixEight%20Menu.pdf>

[3] <https://www.facebook.com/beitbars/photos/p.10154489458807362/10154489458807362>