

# STARTING the day the RIGHT WAY

Don't skip that first meal of the day - as Breakfast Week gets underway from Sunday (January 25) until Saturday, January 31, Tracy Carroll, founder of Nutfield-based website Local Food Britain, tempts us to tuck into a brekkie made from locally-sourced ingredients...

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, yet a quarter of us skip it at least once during the week, while more than one in 10 never touch it at all. I admit to being a member of the first group, often making do with a cup of coffee at my desk while catching up on e-mails.

However, inspired by Breakfast Week from Sunday (January 25) to Saturday (January 31) I head off to The Jolly Farmers at Buckland to sample their Jolly Local Breakfast and invite three of the pub's suppliers along: a butcher, a baker and a farmer, all of whom are based within 10 miles of the venue. Every ingredient tells a story, and I'm soon to discover that my breakfast includes historic sausages and eggs from cabbage-loving hens.

The tale of the bangers - or Surrey Hills Heritage Sausages to give them their proper name - is a very personal one for butcher Robert Hewitt of Reigate's Robert and Edwards. They are handmade at the shop from pork, apples and sage to a long-lost (but recently found) recipe devised by Robert's late father. Permission to carry the Surrey Hills name has been granted as a mark of their local credentials.

As well as his prestigious sausages I'm pleased to see that



**HEARTY MEAL:** Tuck into a locally-sourced breakfast at The Jolly Farmers

Photo: Grant Melton REGM20150114A

Robert has brought along the bacon. Turns out this is pretty special, too.

"We use locally produced free-range pork loin and cure it on the premises for 10 to 12 days using just salt, sugar and spices," Robert says, explaining that back bacon with a nice layer of fat is the best for a crisp, tasty result. It's worth being choosy over bacon - go for the good stuff and you won't have to worry about artificial preservatives, nor will it produce an unappealing white residue and divest added water as it cooks."

My fork loaded with sausage and bacon, I'm yearning to dip into the enticingly golden egg yolks. However, in this case, the chickens definitely came before the eggs and I want to know about the flock.

Farmer Hazel Cox of Simon's Free Range Eggs is there to assure me that my eggs have



**IMPORTANT MEAL:** Tracy Carroll is served breakfast by The Jolly Farmers chef Mark Prout - from left to right she tucks into eggs from farmer Hazel Cox, sausages and bacon from butcher Robert Hewitt and bread from baker Chris Robinson

Photo: Grant Melton

been laid by hens which live on the family farm at Horley. During the day, they roam outdoors - all 4,000 of them - foraging for worms and enjoying their favourite food - cabbage - returning to the shed for grain and water. There lighting is carefully controlled to encourage the birds to continue to lay during the darker months. Hazel's right when she says that happy hens produce better eggs.

So to the bread. Any half-baked notion that industrially-produced loaves rushed out of factories in their tens of thousands bear any relation to real bread is quickly dispelled. Chris Robinson from Chalk Hills Bakery at Nutfield greets me with a seductive selection of bread and pastries, including the antithesis of the mass-produced loaf - traditionally prepared sourdough. Fast bread this is

not. Chris tells me that it relies on natural fermentation and contains no commercial yeast, just organic flour and water, and is proved for up to 26 hours. My idea of a really honest loaf, sourdough makes great toast and keeps for ages, but for bacon sandwiches, Chris confides that his light, white bloomer is king. I make a mental note to call into the Chalk Hills Bakery coffee shop in Reigate soon for breakfast.

Alongside the bread, the table is set with Surrey Honey from Redhill and cinnamon jelly produced by The Jolly Farmers' owners, Jon and Paula Briscoe.

My meal finished, I waddle over to the table where Jon is sitting (with coffee) catching up on paperwork. I want to know whether his customers really do care where their food comes from.

"They care very much," is his immediate response. "It's really important that we put local food on the plate to keep food miles down, to support local businesses and the local economy. What's more, it tastes fantastic."

Indeed it does. I bid farewell to the trio of Surrey producers, who have taken time out of their busy schedules to talk to me. They rush off to get on with their working days. I just hope they've all had a good breakfast.

The Jolly Farmers is supporting Breakfast Week from Sunday (January 25) to Saturday, January 31 by offering a free fruit smoothie or milkshake for toddlers (with a dollop of St Joan's ice cream from Leigh) when accompanied by an adult dining from the breakfast menu. The breakfast ingredients are also available from the pub's deli. [www.TheJollyFarmers](http://www.TheJollyFarmers)



**MEATY BREAKFAST:** Butcher Robert Hewitt from Robert & Edwards in Reigate

Photo: Grant Melton REGM20150114A

[Reigate.co.uk](http://Reigate.co.uk)

- Read about Breakfast Week and find more events at [www.ShakeUpYourWakeUp.com](http://www.ShakeUpYourWakeUp.com)
- Find out more about local food providers at [www.localfoodbritain.com](http://www.localfoodbritain.com)