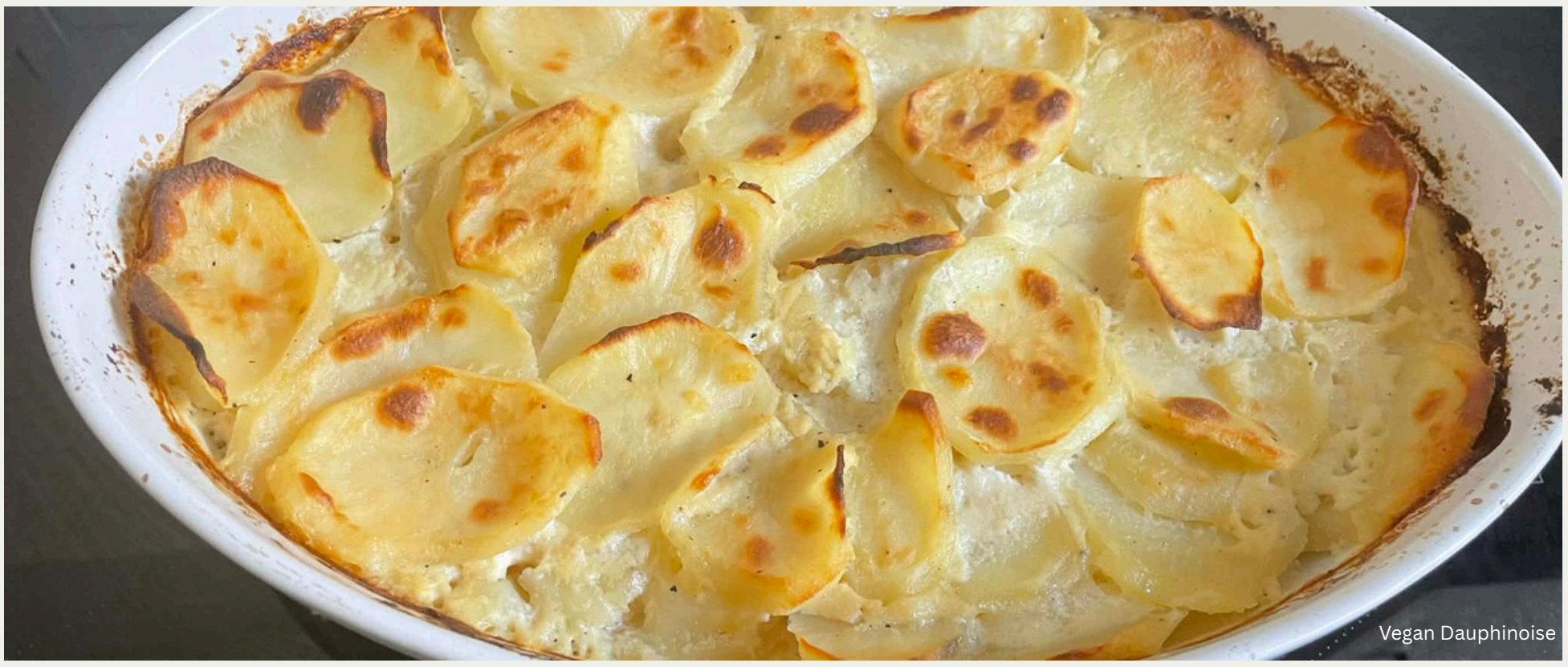
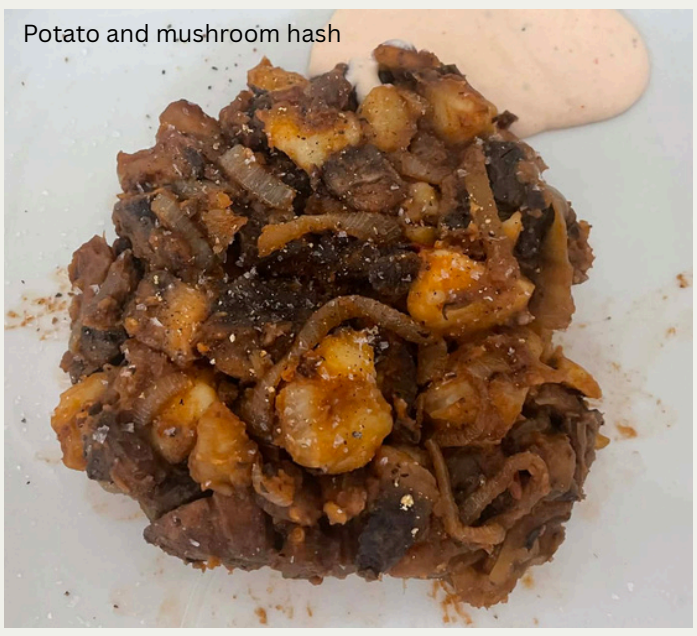

Vegan Dauphinoise

PINCH PUNCH … IT'S VEGAN MONTH!

Sunday morning, 1st March. The big day had arrived, and "Times They Are A-changing"! We have a Sunday morning ritual where one of us (usually me) gets up to make a cup of tea. We have used oat milk for quite a while, but neither of us likes it in tea. So, tea without milk it was, but as it was Earl Grey (and apparently should be drunk black anyway), it was fine. Tea won't be a problem.

I would normally have had toast or a crumpet with far too much butter – I will not be doing this with vegan butter! But no issues this Sunday, as "Can't Cook Won't Cook" Wendy had decided that, as we were at the cinema over lunchtime, we needed a brunch and she was making a vegan Potato and Mushroom Hash with sriracha vegan mayo. It was very good and a great start to our first vegan day.

But sadly not for long … We were off to pick up Wendy's Mum, Shirley and watch the new Elvis EPIC movie (which incidentally, we could only get into at the strange time of midday. Would it feature "Vegan Las Vegas" we wondered?! (Sorry, we are here all month!! It was excellent, by the way!)


Potato and mushroom hash



Back to Shirley's for a cup of tea. No oat milk or Early Grey, but no probs even though the usual piece of cake was off the table, so to speak. After a quick Google, to check they were vegan, some Ritz crackers were produced. (Google was used constantly throughout the day and wasn't always conclusive. Are vegans used to this?!)

Just before we left, we were outlining what we'd have for our main Sunday meal. We'd made a nut roast for the kids at Christmas and had frozen part of it. Might this do? Unfortunately, not. When we looked up the recipe, it had cheese, eggs and butter!!! A close call, but now no planned meal, so we dashed to M&S and used Google again to see what their plant-based range was like. As it turned out, not very extensive, and we ended up with vegan sausages. I made a decent vegan onion gravy, but that didn't rescue the meal. And we won't be having them again.

The day before, I had tried to make a vegan potato Dauphinoise to go with the nut roast. Based on a few people's recommendations, I used silken tofu to replace the cream. But it didn't really work. It was edible, but not remotely moreish like the creamy Dauphinoise we're used to. I should add, I'm a decent cook and don't usually make below-par meals, but this was probably the worst Sunday meal we've ever eaten!!

Nearly falling at the first hurdle and eating a non-vegan nut roast (and who would have thought it?!), we stopped ourselves. We refused to be disheartened – and we refused to quietly cheat. We are taking this month seriously and although we may fail occasionally by accident, it won't happen by design.


Vegan lasagne

We have meals planned this week that I am confident will be vegan AND nice. We gave up mince a few years ago, and I have successfully (and deliciously) replaced it with green lentils and mushrooms in a ragu. Or we've enjoyed IKEA's plant balls in a chilli. We also have three meals from Planthood coming this week and they sound very tasty. Watch this space for my review.

By the way, my blogs won't normally be this long, but our first day turned out to be an eventful one. We can already see the problems and challenges faced by vegans but are looking forward to overcoming them and creating some great plant-based meals that will stay in our repertoire. (The potato and mushroom hash certainly will. Wendy the cooking star in our house!! Times certainly are a-changing!!)

By: Councillor Andrew Woodward