

Dear Friends

As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so plus other information that may be of interest. We have an interesting speaker at our support group meeting next Monday and have now almost sold out our Tony Attwood conference in May.

There are still places left for a Parent Forum being run by Alex Kelly Ltd in Romsey on Thursday this week – an excellent opportunity for many parents. Do you think you, or someone you know, could be an Autism Ambassador? We are running another free training session to recruit people to join the 180 Ambassadors already in place across Hampshire making life better for people with autism and raising the understanding of the condition. Also don't forget, when visiting Asda in Chandlers Ford, to vote for us! – read on for more details.

## Support Group Meeting

Our February meeting is **next Monday, 20 February** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

We welcome, as our guest, **Dr Emma Wells** who has had a 20 year career in innovation working on P&G's Gillette and Venus brands. Over this time she has actively been involved in developing P&G's learning culture and encouraging diversity in the organisation, both of which are key for innovation and form an integral part of P&G's ethos, "Everyone Valued. Everyone Included. Everyone Performing at their Peak"

Two years ago her son was diagnosed with Asperger syndrome and it was clear his different thinking was ideal for innovation. Inspired by him she started to build a work experience scheme as a pilot for adults on the spectrum. The talk will cover everything from what is possible in innovation, to how you can develop the skills of your young child through play and the types of opportunities available in innovation industries.

There will be plenty of time at our meeting to have a chat and to browse our Resource Library, comprising over 350 books, videos and DVDs on many aspects of autism and Asperger syndrome. **If you have any books due back or overdue, please don't forget to bring them along.**

## Family Youth Club

Our next Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 4 March** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. Children accompanied by their families are welcome.

Our usual facilities will be available and our volunteer play facilitators will be present to help the children and young people enjoy the activities we have on offer.

**PLEASE NOTE: Parents must be responsible for their children during the duration of the youth club and must remain in the same room as their child at all times – thank you.**

£1.50 per child. Entry is via the children's garden at the rear of the church, next to the car park. Full details, including a map, can be found at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/Home/Family%20Youth%20Club](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/Home/Family%20Youth%20Club)

## LEGO club



Our next club is also on **Saturday 4 March** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.

This is for children with autism from ages 8 to 13. The club is currently full but for more information and to express interest in your child joining the waiting list, complete the form at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/home/lego](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/home/lego)

**PLEASE NOTE: We have been advised that, unfortunately, this type of therapy is not successful with children who have an ADHD or PDA diagnosis.**

## Our Southampton social groups

Both our Children's and Adults' social groups are meeting regularly on alternate Tuesday evenings at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. All dates for the next few months can be found on our website.

If any of our Adults' group are interested in taking part in climbing, canoeing, archery, abseiling, etc., at Woodmill Outdoor Activities Centre (dates to be advised), please let Sue know at the next meeting, or by email. There are still a couple of places left for a taster session for the Children's group at Woodmill Outdoor Activities Centre on **Thursday 20 April** (school Easter holidays) from 5.00 to 8.00pm. Again please let Sue know if you are interested. For more details, email [nassouthampton@gmail.com](mailto:nassouthampton@gmail.com) or contact Sue (023 8043 2612) or Tracey (07532 282301).

## Tony Attwood conference



We now only have a very small number of professional tickets available. All other tickets are sold out and our waiting list for any returns is also full – our apologies for any disappointment this may cause. Full details of the day will be sent to all tickets holders nearer the time and can be found on our website at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA). Tony last visited us in 2011 (which was also a sell-out) and we are delighted to be able to welcome him to the UK again in 2017. His programme will cover many aspects of autism across all age groups.



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### Tell the NAS about your experiences of autism and processing time for TMI

In 2016 over 7,000 people completed an NAS survey which they used to shape their Too Much Information campaign. The findings from that survey supported them to show how crucial it is for the public to understand more about autism, and to make a film about autism which was seen by over 56 million people.

Now you've told them what you want the public to know, they want to know more about autistic people's experiences and what you would like the public to change about their behaviour. They particularly want to hear your experiences of needing extra time to process information and how the public's understanding of this affects you.

You can find the survey at: <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/AutisticTMI/>

If you are a parent or carer to an autistic child or adult who is not able to complete the survey for themselves, they would like you to do so on their behalf.

Surveys make a difference. With what you told the NAS in last year's survey, they were also able to take these important messages about autism to BBC Breakfast, The Guardian and many other mainstream newspapers and websites and to start transforming public understanding of autism. Please help the second year of Too Much Information be just as impactful.

Please be sure to share this survey with autistic friends and family too.

### The Farooqi Award for Diversity and Inclusion 2016

We are delighted to announce that our branch is the 2016 winner of this award. At a ceremony on Saturday 21 January, we were presented with the award by Nick Tustian, Chief Executive of Eastleigh Borough Council, Jean Roberts-Jones, Chief Executive of One Community and Mohammed Mossadaq, from the Asian Welfare and Cultural Association (AWCA). The Farooqi Award is awarded to those who have made a positive contribution to diversity and inclusion in the Borough of Eastleigh. This award is organised by the Eastleigh-based AWCA and is supported by a range of public, private, voluntary and community organisations, including Eastleigh Borough Council and local council of voluntary services, One Community. The Farooqi Award is sponsored by Mohammed Mossadaq, a trustee of the AWCA, and named in honour of his parents, who passed away recently.



### Vote for us at Asda Chandlers Ford

We have been chosen as one of the three charities in the store's *Chosen By You Given By Us Scheme*. When visiting the store, please vote for us. Once the allotted time has ceased a cheque will be sent to us or either £500 for the winner or £200 for each other the runner ups. Many thanks to member, Renata, for nominating us.

### Parent Forum – Alex Kelly Ltd

Speech therapist, Alex Kelly, is running a training session on *Developing social & friendship skills* at Speaking Space, Fleming House, Alma Road, Romsey, SO51 SEP on **Thursday 16 February** from 7.00 to 9.00pm. She will also give an introduction to Alex Kelly Ltd and Speaking Space, and hold an informal discussion on future topics. The cost is £5.00 and refreshments will be provided. If you are interested email [office@alexkelly.biz](mailto:office@alexkelly.biz) or phone on 023 8098 7134.

### DWP – Work, Health & Disability: Improving Lives Consultation

The Government wants to help everyone to be able to enjoy independence, security and good health that being in work can bring. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is seeking views on what it will take to transform employment prospects for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. The consultation closes on **Friday 17 February**. For more information and to respond on the consultation, visit <https://consultations.dh.gov.uk/workandhealth/consult/>

### Autism Ambassador Training Day



The next Autism Ambassador Training Day will be held on **Thursday 2 March**, from 9.00am to 3.30pm, at Falcon House, Winchester. This event is free, and is open to anybody in Hampshire who would like to help make a difference for people with autism in their organisations and communities. For full details of what this entails, visit [www.ascambassador.org.uk](http://www.ascambassador.org.uk). Please note we expect to be oversubscribed, so to reach as many organisations as possible, are restricting bookings to one person per organisation. To register your interest to take part, email [admin@ascambassador.org.uk](mailto:admin@ascambassador.org.uk) or call 07480 615037 – registration requests must be received by Friday 17 February so that all information can be processed.

### Help with research

Graeme Robinson, a final year student at Southampton Solent University, is looking to create a website featuring specially designed games to help people on the autistic spectrum learn life skills. He would welcome responses to his survey which is intended to obtain research on how many ASD people play games such as Minecraft and if those games help improve their ability to learn and develop independently. To complete his very short survey, visit <https://graeme28.typeform.com/to/KTRNXN>.

## Support for partners

You may recall, we have a number of members whose partners are on the autistic spectrum (both diagnosed and undiagnosed). Although we have had no response from the last newsletter, we would still like to hear from any of you interested to get together on an informal basis to discuss issues around living with a partner with autism? Drop us an email and we'll see if we can arrange something. Let us know if a daytime or evening meeting (or either) is best and whether you would be happy for your email address to be passed to others interested in forming an informal group.

## Special Needs Information Day 2017, Yateley

Support4SEND and Parent Voice's next Special Needs Information Day will be held on **Saturday 25 March 2017**, 10.00am to 3.00pm, at Yateley School, School Lane, Yateley, GU46 6NW. These popular free events are for parents and carers of children with special needs, young people, and those involved in supporting them. You can drop in and browse displays on a variety of topics related to special needs. We will be present with our autism information stand. There will also be the following free bookable workshops and talks, which will be held throughout the day:

- Autism awareness
- Outcomes and EHC plans
- Introduction to PECS and the Pyramid Approach to Education
- Dyslexia – advice for parents and carers
- Dyslexia – clearer sounds for easier spelling
- Resilience
- How to parent the anxious teenager
- Supporting children with sensory processing difficulties
- Wills, Trusts and Powers of Attorney

There will also be a keynote speech from **Alex Kelly** on developing social and friendship skills.

Information on how to book places on the above sessions will be available soon on their website.

There will be free parking on site, and if you bring children along there will be face painting and craft activities with Caterpillar Crafts, and they can practise their circus skills with Mr Giant. There will also be food and refreshments available to purchase. To find out more, contact 01962 845870 or email [enquiries.support4send@hants.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries.support4send@hants.gov.uk).

## PEDALL – New Forest Inclusive Cycling

This organisation run two different types of sessions:

Starter sessions – for new riders who want to try out different bikes or those who want a shorter ride, and Guided rides – a longer ride for experienced riders who have been before.

Helmets are provided and there is no charge for sessions, distances are tailored to the ability of the group and there are regular stops. Booking is essential as they need to ensure that they have enough bikes and they have the right ones to suit people's needs, you can view the bikes at <http://www.pedall.org.uk/the-bikes/> as well as the locations. Please email [info@pedall.org.uk](mailto:info@pedall.org.uk) to book or if you have any further queries.

## Challengers Easter Holiday & Summer Term 2017

Challengers run a Playscheme for disabled and non-disabled children aged 4-12 at Colden Common Primary School and a Youthscheme is for disabled young people age 13-18 at The Bridge Education Centre, Newtown Road, Eastleigh. Easter schemes will be running from **Monday 10 to Saturday 22 April** and the summer term will run from **Saturday 22 April to Saturday 22 July**. For full details of all the schemes and activities available and booking instructions visit <http://disability-challengers.org/bookings/the-booking-process/> or call 01483 230060.

## Blue Apple Sessions at The Point

New weekly creative theatre and drama sessions are being held at The Point, Eastleigh. If you enjoy drama, creating plays, and trying out different types of theatre techniques such as puppetry, mask, and movement skills then this is for you! Open to all, no previous experience of theatre or drama needed, and definitely no auditions! Just go along and enjoy. Explore, play and devise your own work with local professional companies Blue Apple and Tree Creeper. This is suitable for those aged 16+ and for those with learning disabilities. Sessions take place Tuesdays, 10.30am-12 noon, and your first session with them is free. Further sessions are £5 per person, per session. To book onto the next session, email [admin@blueappletheatre.com](mailto:admin@blueappletheatre.com) or telephone Blue Apple on 07510 844480 or Tree Creepers on 07582 949755.

## Partyman World of Play SEN sessions

Partyman World of Play (formerly Gambado), Unit L10, Swan Leisure Centre, Eastleigh, SO50 5SF is a children's soft play centre that focuses on great customer care and making children smile. The venue has a café, slides, ball cannon areas, climbers, rockers, and not to mention a designated toddler and baby area. They are proud to offer complimentary morning and evening sessions dedicated to children and young adults with special needs where they close the entire venue just for you. These sessions are aimed at 0-13 year olds and are free to attend.

Morning sessions will be held from 9.00 to 10.00am on Sundays: **26 February, 26 March, 30 April, 21 May, 25 June, 30 July, 27 August, 24 September, 29 October, 26 November and 17 December**.

Evening sessions will be held from 6.00 to 8.00pm on Wednesdays: **1 March, 5 April, 3 May, 7 June, 5 July, 2 August, 6 September, 4 October, 1 November, 6 December**.

For more information or to book, call Jessica on 02380 018336 or email [jessica.campbell@partyman.co.uk](mailto:jessica.campbell@partyman.co.uk).

## Family Adventure Weekend at Avon Tyrrell, Friday 24 to Sunday 26 February

Avon Tyrrell, UK Youth Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE. Looking for a Half Term Adventure in the New Forest for your family? Join Avon Tyrrell on their Family Inclusion Weekend. Enjoy a full activity package which can include: Climbing, Archery, Bushcraft, High Ropes, Shelter Building and more... Spend two nights in their Grade I listed house and refuel each day with three hot cooked meals. Outdoor activities give you and your child the opportunity to develop their confidence, increase their communication and challenge themselves, and with fully accessible equipment, they can do things they may have never done before. All this for just £55pp for Gateway Card Holders.

For more information, or to make a booking, please contact [Helen.smith@ukyouth.org](mailto:Helen.smith@ukyouth.org) or call 01425 672347. They offer a supportive and friendly environment, with staff that are highly qualified and there for you throughout your visit. They guarantee you will be looked after and leave with some great memories.

### Reminders:

#### Free fundraising packs for World Autism Awareness Week from The National Autistic Society

Getting involved with World Autism Awareness Week next year will change lives. Help NAS to raise money and awareness so that as many people as possible learn about the reality of living with autism. Register online at <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/world-autism-awareness-week.aspx> to get a free fundraising pack to give you lots of ideas for how to get involved in your community, at work or at school. We will quiz, bake, walk, collect... Until everyone understands. Join us!

#### Minecraft and Meltdowns Fun Fridays

Relax with your friends and family over coffee and meet members of Aspergers Adventures–Minecraft and Meltdowns. Plus, from Dobble to Warhammer, the expert Games Masters from Board in the City will help you rediscover how fun board games can be. Only £1 each to access the huge games library. Barista style coffee; WIFI; Meepcraft demos; Homemade food and drinks; Gluten-free and vegan options; Quiet room; Be yourself! At Board in the City, 38–40 Onslow Road, Southampton, SO14 0JG from 6.00 to 8.00pm on **3, 17 and 31 March, 14 April** (4-8pm), **28 April** and **12 May**.

#### Visiting the Hampshire Countryside and Exploring the New Forest by Bus booklets

We still have a few of these booklets left which will be available to our next support group meeting. These are designed for families and teachers of children with autism and can also be downloaded free from <http://autismandnature.org.uk/>

#### Dimensions autism-friendly cinema screenings

Dimensions work with ODEON, Cineworld, Vue and Showcase to host Autism Friendly Screenings at over 250 cinemas nationwide. See what autism-friendly cinema screenings are coming to a cinema near you at <https://www.dimensions-uk.org/families/autism-friendly-environments/autism-friendly-screenings/>

#### Hampshire Local Autism Directory

The Local Autism Directory (LAD) is funded by Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth (SHIP), 8 CCGs and Adult Services, Hampshire County Council. Information within it covers children and adults. Visit the LAD at <http://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/local-autism-directory/directory/>

#### First Steps to Autism Information – local guides

Autism Hampshire's set of useful local guides for Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth for people when they first want to know more about autism and the local support services available. Available from the Hampshire Local Autism Directory at <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/local-autism-directory/directory/#stepbystepguides>

#### Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Services (HSPSS)

The Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Service (HSPSS) has been commissioned by the Children and Maternity Collaborative of the five Hampshire CCGs. The service provides parenting programmes across Hampshire both in a group setting and individually in family homes for parents/carers who have children aged 5-17 that are:

- diagnosed with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC)
- diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- displaying troubling or challenging behaviours associated with mild-moderate conduct disorder
- teenagers displaying anti-social behaviour including child-to-parent violence.

Please either email [hampshire.parenting@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:hampshire.parenting@barnardos.org.uk) or call 01489 799178 to find out more.

#### My World, National Autistic Society

The NAS offers a FREE autism classroom resource pack and fortnightly resource emails for teachers who sign up to *My World*. Please pass this information on to all teachers you know. For a video with more information, please visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv66Q-MUxqc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv66Q-MUxqc) and sign up at [www.autism.org.uk/myworld](http://www.autism.org.uk/myworld)

#### Friends of In Touch

This registered charity in Eastleigh, funded by the BIG Lottery, supports children and young people with autism. The aim is to enable anxious or socially-vulnerable children and young people to feel more engaged with mainstream education and social activity by helping them develop self-confidence, self-esteem and coping skills. Lots of fun activities include cooking, arts and crafts, bushcraft, games, construction toys for the Junior group (9 to 13) and cookery, pamper evenings, film nights, quizzes, bowling, book club, sports, meals out and BBQs for the Senior group (13 to 21).

There are currently vacancies in both groups which meet at Y-Zone Youth Centre, Fair Oak on Tuesdays during term time (Juniors 4.30 to 6.00pm and Seniors 6.30 to 8.30pm). Holiday groups are also planned. For full details visit [www.friendsofintouch.org.uk](http://www.friendsofintouch.org.uk). Anyone interested should contact [info@friendsofintouch.org.uk](mailto:info@friendsofintouch.org.uk) or call 07474 539539 prior to attending the groups.

## Our Resource Library



Our library is available to members at our support group meetings and a small selection is available at our family youth club. Members can join the library for a one-off donation of £5. We now have around 350 books, videos, DVDs and games. Up to 3 items may be borrowed for a maximum loan of 2 months. We do ask that items are returned promptly to enable others to borrow them.

## Calling all coffee drinkers!

Do you, your friends or colleagues use Tassimo coffee machines?  
If so, you can help us raise funds.

Tassimo wants to save TDISCs and outer flow wrap packaging from going to landfill. For the total weight of the TDISCs and outer foil packaging we collect, we get TerraCycle points which are converted into cash for us. **To date we have raised over £2000.**

Please bring along your TDISCs and outer flow wrap packaging (they do not have to be cleaned) to any of our meetings/activities. Even better, get all your friends involved too.

Also, if you have a link with a local supermarket or place where a collection bin could be situated, please let us know.

## Help us boost our fundraising

A great way to raise money for us for free – shopping online through *easyfundraising*.

Whenever you buy anything online (presents, groceries, clothes, books, train tickets, hotel rooms, etc.) you can raise a free donation for our Branch. Over 2,700 retailers have registered with the site, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco who donate a percentage of what you spend to us to say thank you for shopping with them.

1. Sign up – go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas) and click on the button to sign up.
2. Shop – from the *easyfundraising* website, search for the retailer you'd like to shop with and click through to the retailer to make your purchase. This tells the retailer you came from *easyfundraising*. The price is exactly the same as if you'd visited the retailer directly.
3. Get a donation – after you've made your purchase, the retailer will give you a cash reward that *easyfundraising* turn into a donation for our Branch

Please be assured that using the *easyfundraising* website will not cost you a penny. There are no catches or hidden charges and we benefit from any donations you make once registered.

Thank you for your support.



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As always, for full details of all our meetings, other dates, news items and information, please visit our [website](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk).

Regards

**David & Rachel Carter**

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch  
Email: [shants@nas.org.uk](mailto:shants@nas.org.uk) | Website: [www.shantsnas.org.uk](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk)  
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