

Dear Friends

Welcome to our bumper summer newsletter. As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so, plus other information that may be of interest. We particularly look forward to seeing some of you at our final support group meeting before the summer break, next Monday, when we welcome an excellent international speaker whom we know will inspire and inform you all.

We have information about activities going on over the summer that may be of interest and a very important consultation from Hampshire County Council in which they would like all residents to contribute.

Finally we have advance information of the NAS Autism Hour in which we will be taking an active part next October.

This is our last newsletter before the summer break. We hope you have an enjoyable summer (see summer holiday resources below). We will try and keep you in touch with any important information over the period but access to email will be limited so that all our volunteers can have a break. We look forward to seeing you, once we are up and running again, in September.

Support Group Meeting

Our next meeting is this coming **Monday 17 July** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

We are delighted to welcome, as our special guest, **Alex Kelly**, Managing Director of Alex Kelly Ltd. Alex will be giving a talk about communication – she has nearly 30 years of experience as a speech therapist.

In 2011 she recognised the need for a day service for adults that had a communication and social skills focus, so along with her husband, Brian Sains, she opened Speaking Space – a day service for adults with autism and/or learning disabilities. Alex is a renowned international speaker and offers training in communication and social skills. She spent much of her time working in Wales with Afasic Cymru and also running communication courses for Hampshire County Council.

There will be plenty of time at our meeting to have a chat and to browse our Resource Library, comprising around 400 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 Family Youth Club takes place after our summer break on **Saturday 2 September** 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 we hope the children and young people will 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

LEGO club



Our next club is also on **Saturday 2 September** 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

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 meet during term time on alternate Tuesday evenings at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. Dates for the rest of this term and from September onwards can be found on our website.

There will be, by request, an extra meeting for the Children's group on **Tuesday 25 July**. For the Adults' group, a bowling evening will be booked for **Tuesday 8 August** from 7.00 p.m. at Hollywood Bowl, Swan Centre, Eastleigh, for which £2.00 will be charged and Karaoke at The Robin Hood pub, Middle Road, Sholing, will take place on **Tuesday 22 August** from 8.00 to 11.00pm.

For more details, email nassouthampton@gmail.com or contact Sue (023 8043 2612) or Tracey (07532 282301).

New branch treasurer

Our current branch treasurer, Mel Hickman, is stepping down in September after four years in the post. She has done a fantastic job for which we express our sincere thanks. We are delighted to announce that Caroline Edmonson has volunteered for the role and is currently in the process of taking over from Mel. A big welcome to Caroline.



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Disabled Children's Partnership launches the Secret Life of Us campaign

The National Autistic Society are proud to be part of the Disabled Children's Partnership – a coalition of more than 40 organisations who have joined together to fight for better health and social care for disabled children, young people and their families in England.

The NAS *Too Much Information* campaign is highlighting the negative impact the lack of public understanding of autism can have on families. Research by the Disabled Children's Partnership shows that 97% of parents with disabled children, including children on the autism spectrum, say that people do not understand the challenges they face. To make matters worse, 69% of families with disabled children receive no support in caring for their child.

The Disabled Children's Partnership, supported by The National Autistic Society, has launched the Secret Life of Us campaign to change this and bring to life the challenges disabled children, young people and their families face. We need public support, understanding and empathy to effect change and make a lasting difference to the way disabled children, young people and their families are treated in society. In order to achieve the change we need, the campaign will bring the realities of their lives closer to people across England. It will reveal the part of their lives that the public do not see.

We will reveal the Secret Life of Us. Help us fight to make this change.

Visit <https://disabledchildrenspartnership.org.uk/secret-life-of-us/>



Simple steps to an autism-friendly world

As part of the *Too Much Information* campaign and with the support of shopping centre owner INTU, in the week of 2 October, the NAS is asking shops and businesses to organise a National Autistic Society Autism Hour and take simple steps for 60 minutes that lead to a more autism-friendly world.

We attended the NAS Branches Conference in London last weekend and have further information about this initiative in which we want our branch to play an important part in this area.

You know which places are already doing great things for autism and you know where you'd love to visit if only they were more autism-friendly. Your local intelligence will help us reach out to our widest audience yet and start making real, positive changes.

We have all noticed that recently some shops are starting to operate a quiet hour, which allows autistic people to access their premises in a low arousal setting. These events have been warmly received by their local autistic communities. We want to see as many of these taking place as possible. That's why the NAS wants to make Autism Hour a national event – potentially becoming a regular fixture for many shops and services. Their aim is to create the **world's first mass participation Autism Hour** where retailers and services hold special shopping hours or sessions for autistic people and their families.

Please make a note of the date and start thinking about who we need to contact to get them involved. More information will follow early in September – we can all help to make a difference. Visit <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/autism-hour.aspx> for more details.

Sensory Sundays at the Swan Centre, Eastleigh and The Marlands, Southampton

Both shopping centres now run a *Sensory Sunday* on the last Sunday of each month. Whilst not specifically an autism-friendly event, this will be of interest to all who have sensory issues. Most of the shops lower their lighting levels and reduce the volume of music and announcements during the day. All customer-facing Swan Centre staff have undergone training with our NAS Branch to help them understand the issues that people with autism face in a busy shopping centre and have an understanding on how to support customers with sensory issues.

On the same dates, alongside the activity in the retail part of the Swan Centre, Partyman World of Play hold SEN sessions (see below) and Vue Cinema (<https://www.dimensions-uk.org/families/autism-friendly-environments/autism-friendly-screenings/vue-autism-friendly-cinema-screenings>) hold special SEN sessions and Autism friendly screenings.

Autism-friendly performances

Fiddler on the Roof:

This performance is being held on **Wednesday 26 July**, 2.30pm, at Chichester Festival Theatre, Oaklands Park, Chichester, PO19 6AP and starring Omid Djalili and Tracy-Ann Oberman. All tickets £15 (no discounts apply). For information or to book call 01243 781312 or email box.office@cft.org.uk.

New! – Introducing Chichester Festival Theatre Buddies - would you love to see the show but can't get carer support to accompany you? New for 2017, CFT can provide you with a buddy for the performance to support all your access needs at the theatre. For more details, click here or call the Box Office as above.

The Harbour Lights Picturehouse (Ocean Village):

'Smurfs: The Lost Village' on **Sunday 16 July** at 10:30am

£3.00 per person – Box Office: 0871 902 5733 (calls cost 13p per minute plus your telephone company's access charge), email: harbourlights@picturehouses.co.uk

Also check out these London musicals:

- Autism-friendly performance of *Aladdin* on **Tuesday 29 August**. Book at www.aladdinthemusical.co.uk/autismfriendly or call 0844 482 5152
- For the latest dates of autism-friendly performances of *The Lion King*, visit www.thelionking.co.uk/autismfriendly

Art of the Brick: DC Superheroes LEGO exhibition

This world-renowned exhibition in London is running autism-friendly sessions on the last Sunday of July (30th) and August (27th) at 9.00am. The early sessions will allow those with autism and their families to experience and enjoy the exhibit in a relaxed environment. Quiet areas will be provided along with advance information sheets to assist with planning and arrival. If you're in or near London, pay it a visit. Book your tickets or get more information from www.aotbdc.co.uk/about-the-exhibition.

Paralympic Personal Bests and Disability Tennis Festival

To celebrate disability sport within the district, Act!veNation have two events running in August for all ages and abilities. The first is their Paralympic Personal Bests event (<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/activewinchester/paralympic-personal-bests/>) on **23 August** from 10.00am to 3.00pm which allows participants to compete in a range of sports with the focus being on what they can achieve. **Please note: Bookings must be made before Thursday 13 July.**

The second is their Disability Tennis Festival (<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/activewinchester/disability-tennis/>) running on **22 August** from 1.00pm to 3.00pm which will celebrate tennis with activities, games and a tea party.

If you require any more information or have any questions please contact Tom Crowe, Sports Development Assistant, Tel: 01962 848496, Email tcrowe@winchester.gov.uk.

Autism Ambassadors



As you may be aware, we are heavily involved in this scheme which runs across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight. In the two years that the scheme has been running we have recruited over 270 Ambassadors – including a number of Branch members. A number of dates have been fixed in the autumn for more recruiting/training days, so if you think you or someone you know could be an Autism Ambassador, why not visit the website at www.ascambassador.org.uk and find out more. Autism Ambassadors are really making a difference for people with autism and raising the understanding amongst the public.

Inspiring You Inclusion Weekends

At Avon Tyrrell Outdoor Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE: Go along to Avon Tyrrell for an unforgettable weekend with the family. Enjoy two nights in the main house, a range of exciting adventure activities and delicious meals to help you refuel. Have a go at Climbing, Archery, Pioneering, Bushcraft, Kayaking and more... The activities are led by experienced instructors who will support you and help you challenge yourself, build confidence and try something new. You will also make new friends and develop life skills. These Inspiring You events are a fantastic opportunity for families to spend time in a safe and friendly environment, with specialised equipment and fully trained staff. Thanks to funding from Hampshire County Council, they are able to offer this for just £55pp. If you live outside of Hampshire, they would love you to join them too, so please contact them for alternative pricing. The next break is being held on **Monday 21 to Wednesday 23 August**. For details and to book, contact Helen Smith, helen.smith@ukyouth.org or online by visiting https://www.avontyrrell.org.uk/inclusion_weekends.html or call 01425 672347.

Summer holidays: resources to support families

The summer holiday can be a difficult time for families with autistic children. Whether going away for some of the summer or staying at home, the change in routine can be a challenge.

The National Autistic Society has gathered together a number of articles offering advice on managing the challenges of the summer holidays which can be downloaded to give to parents and carers in preparation for the forthcoming break.

The downloadable document covers:

- Finding support services and leisure activities
- Preparing a person with autism for change
- Preparing for the holiday
- Using visual supports
- Sensory issues in the summer
- Travelling
- Transition
- Personal stories

Visit <http://network.autism.org.uk/knowledge/insight-opinion/summer-holidays-resources-support-families>

Serving Hampshire – Balancing the Budget - Consultation

Hampshire County Council anticipates it will face a budget shortfall of £140 million by April 2019, on top of the £340 million savings already delivered over the last nine years. This is due to ongoing national austerity measures; demographic changes reflecting increases in demand for some services; and inflationary pressures.

Through this public consultation, the County Council is seeking residents' and stakeholders' views on a range of options for balancing its budget. These include:

- reducing and changing services;
- introducing and increasing charges for some services;
- lobbying central Government for legislative change;
- generating additional income;
- using the County Council's reserves;
- increasing Council Tax; and
- changing local government arrangements in Hampshire.

The County Council is obliged to present all possible options for making savings, regardless of its policy position. At this stage, the County Council is setting out high-level, strategic options, and is not proposing specific changes to services. Any proposals will be informed by feedback from this consultation and subject to further, more detailed public engagement. Therefore, only examples of potential service changes have been provided.

A detailed Information Pack, providing important background information to the consultation, is available on the County Council's website. Residents and stakeholders are invited to respond to the consultation online (<https://www.hants.gov.uk/consultations>). Alternatively, paper copies of the Information Pack and Response Form can be requested by emailing insight@hants.gov.uk, and will be available from Hampshire libraries.

They very much hope you will take the time to respond to this important consultation and would appreciate all you can do to promote participation more widely.

Housing options event

Housing options event for people living with a Learning Disability and/or Autism. This is a drop in event with information stands on housing. Discovery Centre, Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8SB on **Tuesday 19 September** from 10.00am to 2.00pm Information stands will include:

- Keeping safe
- Local councils
- Health

There will be a talk at 10am and at 12pm. Tea and coffee will be provided. Part of the Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight & Portsmouth (SHIP) Transforming Care Partnership. For more information contact Louise Osborne on 023 8062 7890, Email WHCCG.SHIPTCP@nhs.net.

Signs of Autism – new Training Film

The Welsh Autism Research Group has developed a new training film for professionals, on the early signs of autism. It can be viewed by visiting www.asdinfoales.co.uk/autismchildsigns.

Reminders:

Parent Forum – Alex Kelly Ltd

Speech therapist, Alex Kelly, is running a programme of seminars at Speaking Space, Fleming House, Alma Road, Romsey, SO51 9EP from 7.00 to 9.00pm during the year. All the dates and topics can be found at <http://alexkelly.biz/2017/03/15/parent-forums-2017>. Entry is a £5.00 contribution at the door towards the costs and cake! If you are interested, email office@alexkelly.biz or phone on 023 8098 7134.

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 at 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/>

Free Autism Support and Information Programme for parents in Hampshire and Southampton

Hampshire CAMHS, Southampton City Council and Autism Hampshire invite you to a free programme of sessions offering learning, support, and advice in various aspects of autism during your child's assessment, or following their diagnosis. Each session will cover a different aspect of the condition with the aim of increasing your understanding of your child's unique way of looking at the world, and how this may show itself in how they behave. If you prefer a less public forum, you may also book a 5-minute 1:1 slot with any of the panel members. These groups take place in each of the seven Hampshire CAMHS areas and in the city of Southampton – full details and dates at www.shantsnas.org.uk/Support/camhs

Clarks Trials Quiet Hour Appointments

Clarks is working with the National Autistic Society to trial Quiet Hour appointments. This service is available in the Southampton, Above Bar store on Sundays, 9:30am – 10:30am to offer consumers a quiet and relaxed environment for fitting appointments. You are also encouraged to bring toys, sensory aids, tablets and other appropriate items to ease the experience. To ensure that your appointment goes as smoothly as possible, you are encouraged to make an appointment in advance by calling the Southampton store on 023 8022 4515.

Rose Road Association Stay & Play Family Coffee Morning

Every Saturday, 9.30-11.30am, at The Bradbury Centre, 300 Aldermoor Road, Southampton, SO16 5NA. Music, arts & crafts, sensory and soft play and lots more activities. Suitable for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs aged 3-16 years. Siblings are also welcome. There is no charge, this is a free session for all families! Donations for refreshments. For more information contact Claire Headington on 02380 721234 or 07823 353887 or email claireheadington@roseroad.org.uk. The sessions are funded by BBC Children in Need.

Alice's Tea Party

Head2Head Theatre are holding their popular event for children/young people with SEND (ages 0-25) and their siblings. The half-day session includes interactive, multi-sensory walkabout performance and lunchtime games, craft activities & sensory tent. The cost is £5 per person. The nearest performance is in Alton on **21 and 22 August**. Full details can be found at <http://www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/family-holiday-activities/summer-2017>

Partyman World of Play SEN sessions

Partyman World of Play, Unit L10, Swan Leisure Centre, Eastleigh, SO50 5SF is a children's soft play centre. The venue has a café, slides, ball cannon areas, climbers, rockers, and a designated toddler and baby area. They offer complimentary morning and evening sessions dedicated to children and young adults with special needs where they close the entire venue just for you.

Morning sessions will be held from 9.00 to 10.00am on Sundays: **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: **2 August, 6 September, 4 October, 1 November and 6 December**.

For more information or to book, call Jessica on 02380 018336 or email jessica.campbell@partyman.co.uk

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 **21 July and 4 August**.

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>

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 and sign up at 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). Both groups are currently full but anyone interested in being added to the waiting list should contact info@friendsofintouch.org.uk or call 07474 539539. Both groups 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.

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 nearly £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 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.

Whatever you buy online, you can raise free donations for us by simply buying through **easyfundraising**.
www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas

As always, for full details of all our meetings, other dates, news items and information, please visit our [website](#).

Regards

David & Rachel Carter

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch
Email: shants@nas.org.uk | Website: www.shantsnas.org.uk
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You will have received this news update because we have your contact details on our list. Should you no longer wish to receive information, please let us know and we will remove you from the list. Thank you.