

Newsletter

Dear Friends

This is our new-look newsletter following the National Autistic Society's new branding (see below)!

As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so, plus other information that may be of interest. We hope some of you will join us for our fun Quiz Night in November – get your teams together now and book ASAP!

We are planning for next year and have just secured some excellent, nationally renowned speakers – details below.

We look forward to seeing some of you at our forthcoming meetings. As always, if you have any ideas for activities or events you would like us to consider, please let us know.

Quiz Night – get your team booked in now!

As previously circulated, this takes place on **Friday 23 November 2018** at Fleming Park Bowling Club, Kornwestheim Way, Eastleigh, SO50 9NL from 7.30pm to 10.30pm.

This will be a chance to have a bit of fun and help raise funds for the branch at the same time. Get your family and friends together and form a team – also spread the word to others that may be interested – perhaps work colleagues or your friends may like to enter a team?

Teams can be between 6 and 8 persons or, if you cannot get a full team together, we can put you in a team with others. Please note: participants must be 18 or over. Tickets are £5 per person.

Tea/coffee and 'nibbles' will be provided. Bring your own food if you wish. There will be a licensed bar and a raffle during the evening.

For full details and booking arrangements, visit www.shantsnas.org.uk/quiz

Family Youth Club

Our next Family Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 17 November** at Chandler's Ford Methodist Church from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. Children accompanied by their families are welcome. This will be our last club of the year as we will **not be meeting in December**.

We have three rooms available and have activities such as table tennis, air hockey, a craft table, books, board games, LEGO and other toys plus an opportunity to play in the large hall with a ball, bowling and, sometimes, parachute games. One of the rooms is a quiet room where the children can play board games, LEGO or just read. We also offer a structured craft activity which children can join in with if they wish – this time it will be Christmas-themed.

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 LEGO club is also on **Saturday 17 November** at Chandler's Ford Methodist Church.



This is for children with autism from ages 8 to 13. We hope to have some limited vacancies for this club early in the new year, so 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.

Support Group Meeting

Our final meeting for 2018 is on **Monday 19 November** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

We are delighted to welcome, as our guest, **Alex Steffel**, Complex Needs Manager, Argenti Telehealthcare Partnership, Adult Services, Hampshire County Council to talk about **mobile apps for autistic people** and how they can help with independence – both for children and adults.

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.



Partners' Group

The next meeting is on **Thursday 22 November** at Chandler's Ford Methodist Church, Winchester Road, SO53 2GJ, from 7.30 to 9.30pm. This meeting will feature a short presentation about autism to give a general overview of the condition. The group has made a good start this year and we welcome anyone who has a partner with autism. It runs monthly on the fourth Thursday evening of each month but will not meet in December – it is hoped members of the group may arrange a social event before Christmas. Full details at www.shantsnas.org.uk/Home/Partners

Social Skills course

It was no surprise that we had a large number of expressions of interest in our social skills course that will run on Saturday mornings from 3 November until 8 December. 8 children, between the ages of 7 and 9, have been successfully allocated a place. The course is being run, as in the past, by professionals from *Friends of In Touch* who have a great deal of experience in working with children with autism. We are planning a second course in 2019, so those who missed out this time will be reassessed for this new course, once we have dates fixed.

Our Southampton Social Groups

It was great to attend the groups' annual sub-committee general meeting earlier this week – well supported with a lot of very enthusiastic input. Our Children's and Adults' social groups are looking forward to their annual visit to the Mayflower pantomime relaxed performance on 4 January. The Adult group will be enjoying a musical workshop with a visit from a ukulele group on 27 November. Music is known to be beneficial to those on the spectrum, with a chance to express themselves and join in with others socially. Their Christmas meal at Toby Carvery, Bishopstoke is on 4 December. Until then, both groups continue to meet as usual until 4 December. The groups meet during term time on alternate Tuesday evenings at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD and dates for next year will be posted very soon. For more details, email nassouthampton@gmail.com or contact Sue (023 8043 2612) or Tracey (07532 282301).

Branch Facebook page

Don't forget to regularly visit our Facebook page where we post information and news (in addition to our newsletters and emails). Visit <https://www.facebook.com/nassouthhamphshirebranch> and 'Like' and 'Follow' us.

Employment support

As previously announced, we are currently in discussion with Autism Hampshire about employment for people with autism. As you may know, Autism Hampshire ran a very successful funded project last year supporting adults to prepare for employment and highlighting the hidden pool of talent of people with autism to local employers. We hope to fund some further similar work. More news on this early next year.

Autism Hour – Saturday 6 October to Saturday 13 October



It was great to hear of the success of this year's Autism Hour. Autism Hour 2018 saw 11,768 UK businesses hosted over 30,000 Autism Hours across the week of 6-13 October. This represents precious minutes where store lights were dimmed, noise reduced and staff and the public were informed about autism.

Since Autism Hour's launch last year, The NAS has doubled the number of businesses involved and almost quadrupled the number of autism friendly hours. Thank you to everyone who encouraged businesses to register, to those who attended events in our area. You may have seen our stand in Eastleigh's Swan Centre at their Accessibility event on 6 October.

These changes have benefited autistic people and their families as well as increased education for staff and the public about how life is experienced for the 700,000 autistic people in the UK.

Top speakers booked for 2019

We are delighted to announce that we have just booked some top speakers for next year.

On **Saturday 2 March**, we have booked one of this country's best autistic speakers, **Sarah Hendrickx**, to give two talks at an **Autism Seminar**:

Sarah has been a keynote autism speaker at national autism conferences in the UK and overseas and specialises in speaking on all aspects of autism and Asperger syndrome. She has an unusually blunt and humorous speaking style which is more informal and 'says it like it is' more than many professionals. She has written six books on the subject of autism. Sarah was diagnosed autistic with Asperger syndrome at the age of 43 – after she had written several books on the subject. Autism in women is so invisible that Sarah did not recognise it in herself!

Sarah will deliver sessions:

- **Women and Girls and Autism: What's the Difference**
- **Social and Personal Relationships on the Autism Spectrum.**

Delegates will have the choice of attending just one or both talks. The event takes place in Chandlers Ford and will run from 10.00am to 3.00pm. Full details and booking details will be available soon – meanwhile reserve the date now!

Monday 29 April will be our Annual General Meeting and, again, have a top speaker booked to attend:

Sarah-Jane Critchley is a keynote speaker, author and parent who spent 10 years building the Autism Education Trust to share good practice with schools across England. Sarah-Jane will be covering two topics:

- **School exclusions**
- **Mental health (both children and adults)**

She is Author of *A Different Joy: The Parents' Guide to Living Better with Autism, Dyslexia, ADHD and More...* and *The Different Joy Planner*. She has spoken at events for TES (formerly the Times Educational Supplement), National Association of Head Teachers on National and International stages, for Local Authorities and for parent's groups.

The event takes place in Chandlers Ford and will run from 7.00 to 9.30pm. Full details and booking details will be available soon – meanwhile reserve the date now!

On **Monday 20 May**, we are delighted to announce a return visit of **Alex Kelly** as our guest at that month's support group meeting at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm:

Alex was a very popular speaker when she last visited us in 2017 and many members asked us to invite her again. She will be giving a talk about **Developing Social Skills and Making Friends**. This talk applies to both autistic children and adults.

Alex is Managing Director of Alex Kelly Ltd – 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.

We are also in discussion with other guest speakers, so watch this space!

Movement 4 Autism

Would your child be interested in a 'Movement 4 Autism' class? An opportunity to be creative in a fun session using music and movement. Branch member, Anna Brown is interested in hearing from parents who would be interested in a movement class designed for those on the autistic spectrum. The classes are designed to develop coordination, balance, self-confidence and emotional and communication skills. Please email Anna with your expression of interest, name of child and age of child to anna_louise_brown@hotmail.co.uk

NAS rebranding

If you look at the top of this newsletter or have visited our webpage or Facebook page recently you will have noticed a new look! The National Autistic Society revealed their new logo in October. We will be gradually changing the rest of our material, leaflets, etc. over the next few weeks. Hear what NAS Ambassador, Chris Packham, NAS President, Jane Asher and Chief Executive, Mark Lever have to say about our new look, vision and mission at <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/about-us/rebrand.aspx>

Swan Centre Accessibility Guide

We are delighted to report that Eastleigh's Swan Centre has created a number of helpful resources for individuals with autism and their parents/ carers: A visual guide (aimed predominantly at children with ASC) and a detailed guide (aimed predominantly at parents/carer or adults with ASC) which aim to support you from the early stages of planning a visit, arriving at the Centre, information about the amenities and what to do in an emergency. They have also developed alert cards that can be used throughout your visit at your discretion. The guides and card can be picked up from the Library which is on the first floor of the Swan Centre or downloaded from <https://www.swanshopping.com/Content.aspx?ContentName=Accessibility>. Last year we ran some autism awareness training for staff at the Centre and will be soon be returning to run some more. Don't forget their *Sensory Sundays* on the last Sunday of each month (see below).

Friends of In Touch young adult group

We are pleased to report that *Friends of In Touch* have just launched a young adult group (approx. 18–30 yrs) with support from the *BIG Lottery*. At the moment this is just for the older members of the existing group but, once it is established, it is hoped it will be open to other young adults. We will keep you posted on progress.

Your autism survey

There is still so much to do to increase opportunities, reduce social isolation and build a brighter future for people on the spectrum. The National Autistic Society need input from autistic people and their families to allow them to:

- shape their information, guidance and other services in line with your needs
- identify the issues that are most important to you, to help them decide where they need to focus their efforts
- find out how you use the charity's services and what you think about them
- find out what you think of the charity and how they can continue to improve it

Visit <https://www.autism.org.uk/survey> to take the survey by **9 November**. When you complete the survey, you will be given the option to enter a prize draw to win a £100 Amazon voucher.



P.A.C.E. (Parent and Carer Events)

These events, run by CAMHS, help families to better understand the needs and difficulties that young people can face, and how to manage potential issues or concerns they may have about their young person.

The next is on **Monday 12 November** at Lyndhurst Community Centre, New Forest, Main Car Park, Lyndhurst, SO43 7NY from 11.00am to 7.00pm. There are information stands available which provide relevant information on the numerous organisations and charities, including our branch, that provide support for families in Hampshire.

We will be presenting two Autism Awareness talks during the day (at 1.00pm and 6.00pm) and there will be numerous other workshops. For full details and list of all workshops (which can be booked online), visit <https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/events/p-a-c-e-november/>

Autism Centre for Research on Employment

Dr Beatriz Lopez, from the Autism Centre for Research on Employment at the University of Portsmouth, has requested our help to contact HR managers and employers who may be willing to participate on the development of an employment portal designed to support the recruitment and management of employees on the Autism Spectrum. Specifically, she is looking to interview HR managers and line managers with or without personal experience of autism so she can get views on what managers' experiences have been but also what may be possibly preventing managers from hiring people on the Autism Spectrum. This information will help to design the content of the portal that best helps in addressing the most common concerns of employers. The interview would last between 45-60 minutes and could take place either in person, over the phone or via skype, whichever is more convenient for you.

If you would like be interviewed, please contact her directly at Beatriz.Lopez@port.ac.uk

Casting – The Reason I Jump

Angharad Scott, Assistant Producer for Metfilm productions has been in touch regarding a new feature film they are making entitled *The Reason I Jump*, which is based on the book of the same name, written by the non-verbal, autistic author, Naoki Higashida. The film aims to be a cinematic translation of the experience of autism, drawing on Naoki's words and the experiences of other autistic, young people. They are looking to cast the role of a young Japanese boy (playing age 9-13) in the film and wondered if there was anyone in our area that might be interested in this opportunity? They are keen, given the purpose of this film, to cast performers who are on the autism spectrum. They are looking for someone with Japanese or of Japanese heritage. For further information, email Angharad at angharad@metfilm.co.uk.

Film explores the experiences of autistic pupils

The **Autism Voices** film features a number of young autistic students exploring their experiences of school and being autistic. In their own words and through the use of improvised scenes, the students discuss a number of difficulties they have experienced at school and give advice to teachers on how to best support them. The film developed from a series of drama projects with young autistic people, led by Act for Autism, and won an award at the Golden Door Film Festival this year. It can be viewed at <https://actforautism.co.uk/info/projects/>

Jessi C'Artoon: 'Girl in a mask' draws out school fears

Jessi Crowther has autism and has for years drawn cartoons to express her hidden feelings. Following her recent move from primary to secondary education, she shared her drawings in the hope it would help other children. View this BBC report at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-45422985>

Reminders:

Totton Support groups

Youth and Families Matter at Testwood Baptist Church, 283A Salisbury Rd, Totton, Southampton, SO40 3LZ, run two support groups aimed at supporting parents of children with autism and ADHD.

- The Daytime Support Group - 9.30 to 11.30am on the last Thursday of the month.
- The Evening Support Group - 7.30 to 9.00pm on the second Monday of the month.

For more information visit their website at www.youthandfamiliesmatter.org.uk/parent-support-groups or email: info@youthandfamiliesmatter.org.uk

Scottish and Southern Electric

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks provide a free Priority Service Register (PSR); this is to register vulnerable people on their system. In turn, this allows them to highlight PSR customers when there is a fault, or if there are planned power outages. This alerts them so they are able to visit and check if any requirements are needed. There is also a free phone number whereby, once registered, PSR customers can call them and not queue for a quick response to any worries about their power. For further information and to register, visit <https://www.ssen.co.uk/PriorityServices>

Family Information and Services Hub

For activities taking place in your local area visit the Leisure and Play–Hampshire Gateway section on the Family Information and Services Hub – <https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/results.page?familychannel=3&searchtype=event>

Shine – a new support group for Under 5s and their families

A new parent and toddler group specifically aimed at children with additional needs, and their siblings. It will feature sensory play, music, sensory stories, accessible arts and crafts, refreshments for all (including home-made cakes) and support for parents/carers. The group runs on Friday mornings from 10.00 to 11.30am at St Andrews Methodist Church, Blenheim Road, Eastleigh, SO50 5SD. Further information from Angela at shinefamilies@gmail.com or visit <https://www.facebook.com/shineeastleigh>

Parent Forum – Alex Kelly Ltd

Speech therapist Alex Kelly is continuing to run a programme of seminars at Speaking Space, Fleming House, Alma Road, Romsey, SO51 5EP, from 7.00 to 9.00pm during the year. Entry is a £5.00 contribution at the door towards the costs and cake! Visit www.speakingspace.co.uk/communication-2/, email office@speakingsspace.co.uk or phone 023 8098 7134.

Friends of In Touch

Friends of In Touch is a small registered charity based at Y-Zone Youth Centre in Fair Oak, Eastleigh, supporting children and young people with autism and funded by the *BIG Lottery*. The charity runs two weekly youth clubs, involving over 40 children/young people with autism, during term time and in school holidays. 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). Some places in both groups may become available soon. Anyone interested in being added to the waiting list should contact info@friendsofintouch.org.uk. The 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

ActiveAbility Solent – New Timetable

Visit <https://www.activecommunity.org.uk/activeability> to see their timetable which will include any updates and new sessions. They offer a range of accessible and fun activities that run seven days a week, including martial arts, athletics, boccia, ten-pin bowling and many others. Locations are mainly in Southampton but do also include Totton, Eastleigh, Chandler's Ford and Warsash. On average the sessions are just £3 each and it is as simple as just turning up, and their experienced and qualified coaches will take it from there. You can also make bespoke bookings where they can supply equipment, coaches and facilities. Contact Tom Grave, Activities Coordinator on 02380 784131 or email tom.graves@activenation.org.uk

Clarks Quiet Hour Appointments

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 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, it is best to make an appointment in advance by calling the Southampton store on 023 8022 4515.

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**. Most of the shops lower their lighting levels and reduce the volume of music and announcements during the day. 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.

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. It 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 are held from 9.00 to 10.00am on the **3rd Sunday of every month**. Evening sessions are from 6.00 to 8.00pm on the **1st Wednesday of every month**. For more information or to book, call Jessica on 02380 018336 or email jessica.campbell@partyman.co.uk

SEN sessions at Monkey Bizness, Southampton

Monkey Bizness, a soft play centre with huge play frames, games, machines, slides and more, special areas for toddlers, free WiFi, comfy seating and a bright airy cafe serving freshly prepared food, at 234 Empress Road, Southampton, SO14 0JY, is running SEN sessions on the **last Thursday of every month** from 5.30 to 7.00pm at just £3 per child. For further details call 023 8055 0580.

Flipout sessions

Flipout, the biggest trampoline arena in Hampshire, at Unit 1a Chandlers Park, School Lane, Eastleigh, SO53 4DG, is running Rebound Therapy sessions on **Wednesdays** and **Fridays** between 9.00 and 11.00am or 3.00 and 5.00pm for these hourly group sessions. Prices: Ages 1 to 5: £4.50, Age 6+: £7.50 dependant on disability. Between 12.00 and 3.00pm they run half an hour one to one sessions at £18 per 30 mins. They also run SEN sessions **every Monday** at 16:00pm – £7.50 for a jumper and up to two carers. For further information, phone 023 8214 7811, email southampton@flipout.co.uk or visit <https://www.flipout.co.uk/locations/southampton/>

Dimensions autism-friendly cinema screenings

Dimensions work with ODEON, Cineworld, Vue and Showcase to host Autism Friendly Screenings at over 250 cinemas nationwide. For a limited time at nine selected cinemas, including Southampton, ODEON are showing autism friendly screenings for older audiences. See what screenings are coming to a cinema near you at <https://www.dimensions-uk.org/families/autism-friendly-environments/autism-friendly-screenings/>

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

Inspiring You Inclusion Weekends

At Avon Tyrrell Outdoor Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE: 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. These 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 partnership funding, they are able to offer this for just £60pp for Gateway card holders. If you live outside of Hampshire, they would love you to join them too, so please contact them for alternative pricing. Remaining 2018 breaks are on **Fri 7 – Sun 9 December** and **Fri 14 – Sun 16 December**. They have also run one-night breaks and one-night camping experiences. For details and to book, visit https://www.avontyrrell.org.uk/inclusion_weekends.html, email info@ukyouth.org or call 01425 672347.

Rose Road Association Stay & Play Family Coffee Morning

Every **Saturday**, 9.30am–12.00pm, at The Bradbury Centre, 300 Alder Moor 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. 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.

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 <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/local-autism-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/first-steps-guides>

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 400 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.

Help us boost our fundraising

A great way to raise money for us for free – shop 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.

1. Sign up at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas.
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, visit our [website](#) and/or [Facebook page](#).

Regards

David & Rachel Carter

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch

Email: shants@nas.org.uk | Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nassouthhampshirebranch> | Website: www.shantsnas.org.uk

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