

Dear Friends

A Happy Easter to you all. As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so plus other information that may be of interest. We look forward to welcoming many of you to our AGM later this month and to our fast-approaching Tony Attwood conference in May. We also have news of the free Autism Support and Information Programme for parents run by CAMHS and Autism Hampshire which has recently opened up to any parent/carer that has a child either going through diagnosis or has already received a diagnosis – these are excellent sessions that we highly recommend. Another opportunity this month is to meet the Hampshire Special Educational Needs Team.

Annual General Meeting and Support Group Meeting

This meeting is also our **Annual General Meeting** and will take place a week later than usual due to Easter. The meeting is on **Monday 24 April** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

The meeting will commence with a short AGM.

We are delighted to welcome, as our special guest, **Mary Lilley, Service Manager for the Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Service** run by Barnardo's. Mary will talk about this service (HSPSS) which has been commissioned by the Children and Maternity Collaborative of the five Hampshire CCGs. It 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.

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.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to our Tony Attwood conference, there will be no support group meeting in May – we resume our usual monthly meetings on Monday 19 June when our guest will be Angie Barrett, Senior Educational Psychologist, Southampton City Council.

Family Youth Club

Our next Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 6 May** 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 6 May** 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

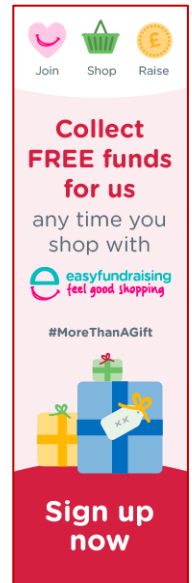
We are pleased to report that Southampton City Council has awarded our Children's Group a one-off grant, through CAMHS, to enable our children to take part in a number of activities in the next year. This will include speakers for parents on subjects relevant to our children's needs.

Both our Children's and Adults' social groups are meeting during term time on alternate Tuesday evenings at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. Dates from Easter onwards can be found on our website.

Our adult group will be enjoying bowling on Tuesday 18 April at the Hollywood Bowl in Eastleigh.

There will be a disability taster session at Woodmill Outdoor Activity Centre on Thursday 20 April which some of our Children's group will be attending (aged 5+ years, so long as safety equipment fits for an activity, and parents must accompany and help them with archery).

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



Introduction to Autism parent/carers seminar

Despite an initial slow take-up, we held a very successful *Introduction to Autism* parent seminar for 17 parents/carers last week – it was great to be able to welcome some of them as new branch members. We hope to be able to run more specialist parent seminars in the autumn and are currently in discussion with the NAS' training team about this.

Special Needs Information Day 2017, Yateley

It was good to meet a number of our members at this annual event last month which was very well supported.

Tony Attwood conference



Our sell-out event on **19 May** is fast approaching. Full details will be sent to all tickets holders nearer the time and will be found on our website at 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. We are also pleased to inform you that, in addition to stands from a number of local organisations, we will have three book stands present: [Jessica Kingsley Publishers](#) (the UK's largest publisher of books on autism), [The Curly Hair Project](#) and [Talkabout Books](#).

New Branch Treasurer required

As previously announced, our Branch Treasurer, Mel, who has done a great job over the past few years looking after our accounts, will be standing down in a few months' time due to other personal commitments. We are, therefore, looking for a volunteer willing to take on this vitally important role within our Branch. NAS Branches can only operate if they have both a Branch Officer and Branch Treasurer.

We are looking for someone who has a good understanding of how to manage finances, is numerate, dedicated and willing to give flexible hours to suit. The role of branch treasurer typically takes around 1½ to 2 hours a week (depending on how active the branch is at any one time). The amount of time required during school holidays tends to be minimal. The role involves working closely with me and there is support available from the NAS Branches Team in London. Free training is provided.

A full 'job description' can be found on our website at www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/Newsarchive#120417_01

Like all our volunteer roles, this can be very rewarding. It is an opportunity to get involved and make a difference for people with autism and their families. If you are interested to find out more, or know of someone who may be interested, please get in touch as soon as possible. The sooner we can find a new volunteer, the longer and smoother the hand-over can be.



During World Autism Awareness Week 2016, 10-year-old Alex showed over 56 million people what it's like to have sensory overload in a shopping centre. One year on, in the [NAS' unnerving new film](#), 12-year-old Holly will show them how not getting enough processing time feels... Like everything's building up. Like your brain is too crowded – and about to explode.

77% of autistic people feel the public don't understand their need for extra processing time. Holly says:

"If just one person sees the film and is more understanding of autistic people, I'll be happy. People can do really simple things to help, like not rushing someone to respond to a question. Small changes can often make the biggest difference."

She's right. We need to move people from understanding to real action.

Big change can come from lots of little actions. You'll already know what these small things can be, but we need to come together to teach the public too. Pledge to make a small change today to help reduce the overload. Then share it with your family, friends and colleagues.

Make your pledge at <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/actions.aspx>

Whether you're at the shops, on public transport, at work or out with friends, a change as simple as using clear language, having a bit of patience, or avoiding last-minute changes can help to reduce the overload.

Meet your Hampshire Special Educational Needs Team in Winchester

Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN) are organising this opportunity on **Wednesday 26 April**, to go along and meet Liz Flaherty (County Services Manager for special educational needs and specialist teacher advisory service) and her team from Hampshire Children's Services. Find out how Hampshire is working to do things differently for children and young people with special educational needs. Discover more about Education, Health and Care plans in Hampshire and put your questions directly to Liz and her team.

At The United Church, Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8RZ from 7.00 to 9.00pm. Tickets are free but must be booked in advance. Go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/winchester-meet-the-hampshire-sen-team-registration-32402536860?aff=es2>

Free Autism Support and Information Programme for parents

As some of you will know, during 2015 and 2016 we ran a monthly joint support group with Eastleigh CAMHS. We were delighted when, following discussions with Hampshire's NHS Commissioning Officer and senior CAMHS managers, the new tender for CAMHS in Hampshire included commissioned ASC support groups across the whole county, facilitated by Autism Hampshire, and based on our original model. We still regularly attend the Eastleigh group.

Hampshire CAMHS and Autism Hampshire would like to invite you to a free programme of six 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. It is beneficial to start at the beginning and work through the first 5 sessions as they are designed to create a context for the final session which focuses on behaviour. If, however, you are unable to attend on any of the dates, you have the option of catching up next time around as this is a rolling programme.

Each group is 3 hours long. The first part consists of a presentation on the given topic, after which there will be an opportunity to put questions to a panel comprising representatives from Autism Hampshire and CAMHS. If you prefer a less public forum, you may also book a 15 minute 1:1 slot with any of the panel members. If you have previously attended the round of presentations, or just wish to access support, you are welcome to attend the second part of the meeting separately for ongoing support.

These groups take place in each of the seven Hampshire CAMHS areas – full details and dates can be found on our website at www.shantsnas.org.uk/Support/camhs

To book your place, please call Community Access Autism Hampshire on: 02380 766162 or email outreach@autismhampshire.org.uk

Help with research

We have received a request from Liz Siemaszko for assistance with her research...

I am the mum of a 19 year old girl with Asperger Syndrome. For my BA in Education (University of Wolverhampton) I am writing a research project about the mainstream inclusion experiences (at secondary school) of children who have autism/Asperger's Syndrome. As part of this project I need input from parents/carers. I have asked leaders of parent groups to forward this questionnaire to you on my behalf. I do realise that as parents/carers of children with autism and Aspergers we are all very busy, but I would be extremely grateful for your time to fill out the questionnaire below (it takes about 20 minutes). There is a section for parents/carers' feelings about how they themselves were dealt with by the school; and another section for how they feel their child was dealt with by the school. In this way I am hoping to contribute anonymous feedback in order to improve the lives of parents and children with autism/Asperger's at mainstream school. Your feedback is therefore invaluable to me. Your answers will be valued even if your child is no longer at mainstream school.

Please visit

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSez1VcRxFagmBzPUju5CZNbq2B5l2gCg452HtG1U4N_t-4cMQ/viewform?usp=sf_link to access the questionnaire; when you have finished please click 'Submit'. If the link for any reason does not work, please copy and paste it into a browser window and the questionnaire will appear. Please do not hesitate to contact me at elizabeth@futuremediasystems.co.uk if you have any concerns or require further information. Thank you.

Autism videos

We have recently come across two short films about autism that are well worth a watch:

- Amazing things happen – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JdCY-cdgkl&t=2s>
- Know your normal – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLJACPxcojg&mc_cid=9b5e7b0b3e&mc_eid=c7d84dc639

Tea Time Classics

The full Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra will be playing a relaxed concert at the Lighthouse, Poole on **Sunday 23 April** at 3.00pm.

The concert is specifically designed for audiences who benefit from a less formal environment, with the option of bringing bean bags, leaving and entering the concert hall during the performance, and a relaxed attitude to noise.

For full details, please visit www.bsolive.com/events

Aerobility

Aerobility offers disabled people, without exception, the opportunity to fly and participate in aviation based activities. By removing barriers through aviation disabled people are given a real sense of achievement and life changing freedom. Aerobility's specially adapted light aircraft fly from various airfields around the UK and every year support over 400 physically disabled, learning-disabled, wounded soldiers and sensory impaired people. Participants are supported to learn to fly and gain independence or employment in aviation.

For more information contact Aerobility, Blackbushe Airport, Camberley, GU17 9LQ. Phone 0303 303 1230, email info@aerobility.com or visit their website at www.aerobility.com

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.

Anxiety and Sensory Integration

New Forest Parent Social Support is running a meeting focusing on Anxiety and Sensory Integration. It is scheduled for Thursday 27 April from 7.00 to 9.00pm at Milford on Sea Library, Village Hall, Park Road, Milford on Sea, Hampshire, SO41 0QU. If you are interested, please contact Lynne Franklyn at office.sjtealconsultancy@gmail.com

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 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 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: 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

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 **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 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/>

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-MUxgc 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).

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. Anyone interested should contact 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 well 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 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.



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 | 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.*