

Dear Friends

Please find details below of our activities over the next month or so plus other information that may be of interest. In particular we are asking for your help, having been shortlisted by Ordnance Survey for their Charity of the Year. Also Hampshire Autism Voice has another survey out – this time for adults with autism and their families to respond to. Plus there's another opportunity to visit Winchester Science Centre. Meanwhile we may see some of you at The Mayflower Theatre's relaxed performance on Sunday.

Support Group Meeting

Our next support group meeting is on **Monday next, 15 February** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

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. This includes around **40 new books** we have recently purchased for our library.

If you have any books due back or overdue, please don't forget to bring them along.

Family Youth Club

Our next Youth Club is on **Saturday 5 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

LEGO club

Our next club is also on **Saturday 5 March** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.



This is for children with autism from 8 to 13 years of age. The club is currently full but for more information and to express an interest in your child joining the waiting list for the club, please complete the form on our website 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

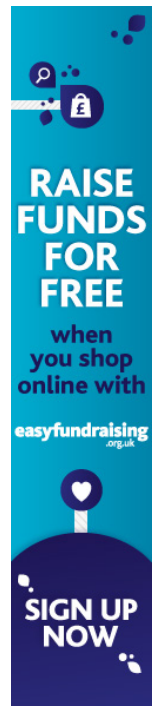
Both our Children's social group and Adults' social group continue to meet at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. All dates through to the end of March can be found on our website.

For more details, email aspsg.shants@gmail.com or contact Sue on 023 8043 2612 or Tracey on 07532 282301. New members are always welcome to attend.

A funding opportunity – can you help please?

Ordnance Survey have shortlisted our branch, along with 3 other very worthy charities, for their **Charity of the Year** for 2016-17. We will be visiting the business in a few weeks' time with a stand to promote our activities to all staff during the lunchtime period (along with the other 3 charities). Staff will then be invited to visit all the stands and then vote, over the following week or two, for their choice. If successful, the money raised over the course of the year could make a big difference to what we can offer you in the future. *So we have a 25% chance!*

We want our stand to clearly show what we do and the benefit it has for all our members. Therefore, **in the next week**, would you be able to email (shants@nas.org.uk) a short sentence or two about what our branch has meant to you or how it has helped? We can then display your comments (which will be anonymous). Thank you.



Until everyone understands

Social Skills group

We are running our next social skills course after Easter for children with autism aged 7 to 11 and are currently assessing all the registrations of interest received. We will be able to confirm places very shortly.

The course will be run, as in the past, by Chris Parsons, from *Friends of In Touch*. Chris and her team have a great deal of experience in working with children with autism and our previous courses have been excellent. We have offered these courses since 2006 (whenever funding has been available) and, to date, over 80 young people have benefitted. We hope to offer more courses, for this and other age groups, in the future (subject to availability of funding).

Hampshire Autism Voice Survey for adults with autism and their families

Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VD62CZY> for the latest survey from Hampshire Autism Voice which is aimed at adults with autism (18 and over) and their families. If this does not apply to you, you do not need to complete it. This short survey relates to diagnosis, services, housing and benefits and will take 15-20 minutes to fill in. The survey will close on **29 February 2016**.

Please feel free to forward to any other interested parties to circulate as widely as possible so that we get a good response to report back to the Hampshire Autism Partnership Board.

A paper copy is available for those who are not comfortable using the online version. Please contact admin@hampshireautismvoice.org.uk if required.

The full results of Hampshire Autism Voice's last survey on transition is available on their website at www.hampshireautismvoice.org.uk.

Relaxed performances at the Mayflower

Don't forget, there is another relaxed performance coming up at the Mayflower Theatre, Southampton this weekend:

- *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* on **Sunday 14 February** at 5.00pm.
Tel: 02380 711811, Web: https://www.mayflower.org.uk/Whats_on/ChittyChittyBangBang2016

The-Zone! evening at Winchester Science Centre

Former NAS Hart and Rushmore Branch, now The Zone!, have invited our members to join them on **Wednesday 17 February** from 5.30 to 7.30pm. They have exclusive use of Winchester Science Centre and Planetarium. The planetarium show will be a suitable for all the family and the cafe will remain open too. Places cost £5.50 per person and can be booked and paid for at <http://www.The-Zone.org.uk/booking>. If you enjoyed our branch visit last October (or missed it) then this is another opportunity for you.

Families wanted for an accessible adventure! New Forest

Spend a special weekend on an *Inspiring You* event at the Avon Tyrrell UK Youth Outdoor Activity Centre in an exciting, safe and supportive atmosphere. There is full board accommodation and a range of activities on offer for the whole family to enjoy together – there is plenty to do. Their next weekend is on **Friday 26 to Sunday 28 February**. It's a very welcoming and inclusive place to be, with new friends to make and experiences to share. Cost for Gateway Card holders is £55 per person, which includes full board accommodation and all of your activities. To find out more information, discuss the individual requirements of your family or secure your place, contact their friendly team on 01425 672347 or email info@ukyouth.org.

Becky Bolger Siblings Workshop, Hythe

A workshop, for parents and siblings of children affected by autism, is being held on **Saturday 27 February**, 10.00am to 2.00pm, at Cornerstones Church, Hythe, SO45 6BR. This interactive workshop is being hosted by WASSP, costs £15 per workshop and is designed to explore thoughts and feelings, build confidence and pass on practical strategies. At the workshop, Becky Bolger provides an opportunity for parents and siblings to: Discuss what autism means to their family • Discuss behaviours that are triggers for them personally • Explore practical strategies that may or may not be helpful to themselves and the individual on the autistic spectrum. For more information or to book, contact Steff James-Brown on 07801 563959 or email wasspnet@hotmail.com.

Abundance Music Festival

This festival is from **Friday 15 July to Sunday 17 July** at Foxlease Activity Centre, set in 65 acres of woodland in the heart of The New Forest. Friday 15 July is exclusively for people with learning disabilities and their family and carers, and the weekend (16-17 July) will be inclusively open to the public, so you can invite your friends to come and join you.

There will be a sensory tent, toilets and shower with a hoist, a first aid centre and fire trained security guards to keep you safe. There will be lots of workshops, activities, amazing live music and DJs to watch and dance along to. There is a camp site for you to camp in with lighting and showers.

Tickets can be purchased from www.abundancemusicfest.org in March. £80 for all three days, including camping, if you have a learning disability, or £80 for the weekend (Saturday and Sunday) if you are a member of the public. Also check out the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/newforestspectrum2016 for updates on the festival:

There is limited hotel type and dorm room group accommodation on the festival site at very reasonable prices for those who do not wish to camp. This is available to be booked, on a first come first served basis, right now by contacting Foxlease at www.foxlease.org.uk, email: foxlease@girlguiding.org.uk, Phone: 02380282638 (mention you are booking accommodation for the music festival).

Independent Support and Young People aged 16-25 years

The National Development Team for Inclusion is doing research to find out what people think about Independent Support. Visit <http://www.ndti.org.uk/major-projects/current/national-evaluation-of-the-independent-support-programme/> for further details about the evaluation. If you are 16-25 and have had support from an Independent Supporter during the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) process in your own right, the team would love you to share your experience by taking part in a short confidential survey at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Independent_Support. The closing date is **Friday 29 January**. If you are a parent of a Young Person who has received support, please forward the survey to them. If you would prefer to complete the survey over the phone, please contact Naomi Harfleet on 01225 789135. To find out more about the help you can receive from an Independent Supporter, contact 0300 303 8604 or email independentsupport@roseroad.org.uk.

Face2Face Support Service

Does your child have a disability, condition or impairment? Would you like someone to listen and who understands? Face2Face is a support service for families who have recently discovered their child has a disability, their child is in the early stages of diagnosis or are in a particular challenging transitional phase or time of their disabled child's life. The service provides a network of trained volunteers who are able to provide parents or primary carers emotional support, advice and signposting to relevant services a parent/carer may feel helpful to them. To read more about the service, visit www.kids.org.uk/Event/face-2-face-project. Alternatively, contact Kim Steele on 01329 242954.

Can you help? The Face2Face Befriending Service in Hampshire is growing. KIDS want to recruit more parents to join their team. If you: Are a mum or dad of a disabled child • Can spare some time to make a difference and become a befriender • Can commit to training and support sessions • Feel you can support other parents, then they would like to hear from you. Contact the coordinator on 01329 312312 or kim.steele@kids.org.uk.

Do you have a baby aged under 12 months old?

Does your baby have a brother, sister or parent with ADHD?

A research project, in which Southampton University are involved, is looking for families to take part in a new research study called INTER-STAARS. The aim of which is to see whether an attention control training intervention helps to improve attention skills in babies who have a parent or older sibling with ADHD. They hope that this study will help to develop earlier and more effective intervention for babies at risk of ADHD. Please contact them (on 023 8059 2655 or email inter-staars@soton.ac.uk) if you are pregnant or have a baby between the ages of 0–10 months and your baby has a sibling or parent diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Friends of in touch

Friends of in touch is a registered charity, in Eastleigh, that supports emotionally and socially vulnerable children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions, and behaviours associated with them. 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 their self-confidence, self-esteem and their coping skills.

There are currently vacancies in their Junior (9 to 13) and Senior (13 to 21) Youth Groups. They 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). For more details visit www.friendsofintouch.org.uk. Anyone interested should contact Chris@friendsofintouch.org.uk or call 07474 539539. Please do not just turn up at the youth centre without having contacted Chris.

Reminders:

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/>

Community First New Forest groups

Community First New Forest's ASD meetings for the next two months are on Wednesdays **24 February** and **16 March** from 10.30 to 12.30, all at Ringwood Fire Station. For further information contact Carol Malky at CYPservices@cnf.org.uk.

The Eastleigh Social Group

Part of the Serendipity Social Groups Project run by Autism Hampshire, the Eastleigh social group is for people 18 or older who have High Functioning Autism or Asperger's. They meet at the Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre fortnightly on Friday afternoons from 1.30-3.30pm. For more information contact: Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre, 111 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DS, Tel: 023 8063 3951, Email: Jamie.pratt@autismhampshire.org.uk

Schools' Autism Awareness Week

The first ever Schools' Autism Awareness Week will take place from **14-18 March 2016**. Hosted by the NAS, this week has been conceived as part of the run up to World Autism Awareness Week (2-8 April 2016). They are calling to all schools to join them and help spread autism awareness. Schools who sign up will receive a bumper pack including lesson plans to help children learn more about autism in a fun and interactive way. Contact your local schools to let them know – [full details are available here](#).

My World, National Autistic Society

The NAS is offering 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/Working-with/Education/teacher-form.aspx.

World Autism Awareness Week

Saturday 2 April to Friday 8 April. Last year, almost 5,000 people took part in the National Autistic Society's first ever World Autism Awareness Week. It was their biggest ever fundraising campaign, and it raised over £200,000 to help autistic people and their families across the UK. They are to do even more this year, watch out for updates about what they've got planned and how you can take part. Visit <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/world-autism-awareness-week.aspx> to download your pack!

AutismCon returns in 2016!

The National Autistic Society's unique, annual convention on **Saturday 5 March** is run by autistic people, for autistic people and friends. Join them in London for a day of talks, workshops and relaxation. There's something for everyone. Full details can be found at www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/raise-money/special-events/autismcon.aspx.

Autism Alert App

The Autism Alert App, from Autism Hampshire, enables people with autism to share information about their autism and support their autism. It can be used by young people and adults who live in Hampshire (including Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight). It functions on a smartphone and you can also have an Alert Card. It can be used to explain your condition to the emergency services, any professional, family member or friends who you choose to share it with. Contact Community Access team on 02380 633951 or email communityaccess@autismhampshire.org.uk for an application form. For further details visit <http://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/assets/files/Outreach/Project/Insert%20-%20Community%20Access%20Helpful%20Apps%20&%20Smart%20Phone%20Loans.pdf>.

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 £1200.**

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.

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What do you buy online?

Whatever you buy online, you can raise free donations for us by simply buying through **easyfundraising**

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www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas

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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 | 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.