

Dear Friends

As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so, plus other information that may be of interest. We were pleased to meet so many of you at our successful Professor Tony Attwood event and hope you enjoyed it. We have information about Eastleigh's Swan Centre's Sensory Sunday event later this month and the start of CAMHS support groups in Southampton (following Hampshire's example); also rather disturbing news about the appalling targets the DWP has for benefit assessments.

## Support Group Meeting

Our next meeting is this coming **Monday, 19 June** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

We are delighted to welcome, as our special guest, **Angie Barrett, Senior Educational Psychologist, Southampton City Council**. Angie will talk about the work of the Educational Psychologists in relation to autism.

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.**

At our following meeting on **Monday 17 July**, our guest will be **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.

## Family Youth Club

We are pleased to report that numbers picked up a little for our June Family Youth Club and we hope this is now an upward trend following a few months of low numbers.

Our next Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 1 July** 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](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/Home/Family%20Youth%20Club)

Please note we have no club in August due to the summer holiday period and we restart on **Saturday 2 September**.

## LEGO club



Our next club is also on **Saturday 1 July** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.

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

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

Again, we have no club in August due to the summer holiday period and we restart on **Saturday 2 September**.

## Our Southampton social groups

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 can be found on our website.

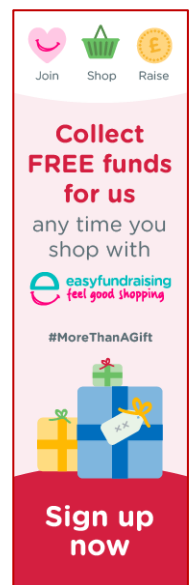
Both groups will be enjoying a Picnic at Victoria Park, Netley Abbey, on **Sunday 9 July** from 12 noon until 4pm. The Children's group are visiting the activity centre at Woodmill on **Tuesday 4 July** from 5:30 to 8:30pm.

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

## Tony Attwood conference



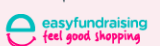
Our sell-out event in Winchester Guildhall last month was a huge success. Over 400 delegates were able to enjoy a highly interesting and informative talk from Professor Tony Attwood. We were also pleased to welcome Mark Lever, Chief Executive of the National Autistic Society, who gave the opening address. Photos from the event and a copy of the full presentation can be found on our website at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA). Our thanks go to our dedicated team of volunteers who organised this event and those who acted as stewards on the day to make sure it all went smoothly. We hear that Tony is likely to be back in the South of England next year, so will keep you informed in due course.



Join Shop Raise

**Collect FREE funds for us**

any time you shop with

 **easyfundraising**  
feel good shopping

#MoreThanAGift

**Sign up now**



After looking at how autistic people can get too much information in public places, the National Autistic Society then moved their focus to getting too much information in the workplace. Only 16% of autistic people are in full-time employment. They talked to autistic people and found out they felt that employers don't see their ability, but rather their autism. The NAS wanted to work with them, their colleagues, employers and the Government to get autistic people the jobs they deserve. Over 29,000 people signed their petition to close the autism employment gap, which they presented to Penny Mordaunt MP, the Minister for Disabilities, at Westminster in March 2017. They continue to lobby behind the scenes to help autistic people to get the jobs they deserve.

Watch the film, *Could You Stand the Rejection?* at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8iF0TAmyr4>

## Autism-friendly performances

The Harbour Lights Picturehouse (Ocean Village) has two upcoming autism-friendly film performances:

'Sing' on **Sunday 18 June** at 10:30am.

'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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.thelionking.co.uk/autismfriendly)

## Sensory Sunday at the Swan Centre

Eastleigh's Swan Shopping Centre is launching its first *Sensory Sunday* on **Sunday 25 June**. They will then be repeated 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. We have been advising the centre over the past month and have given autism-awareness training to all of the centre's staff and management team. Most of the shops have agreed to lower their lighting levels and reduce the volume of music and announcements during the day. The Centre Manager is very keen to receive feedback on their first *Sensory Sunday*, so if you get a chance to go along, please let us know what you think – what worked and what did not. We will then feed this back so they can be sure that these events really make a difference.

## Free Autism Support and Information workshops for parents in Southampton

Following the success of the free Autism Support and Information Programme for parents jointly run by Hampshire CAMHS and Autism Hampshire (see our *Reminders* below), we are pleased to announce that a similar programme is now being introduced in Southampton. Autism Hampshire, in partnership with Southampton City Council, will be holding 5 free Autism Support and Information workshops for families of children and young people with autism, across Southampton. Each workshop session is 2½ hours long. The first part consists of a presentation after which there will be an opportunity to put questions to a panel comprising representatives from Autism Hampshire and a person experienced in workshop's key topic. If you prefer a less public forum, you may also book a 5-minute 1:1 slot with any of the panel members. Full details with times and dates can be found on our website at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/Support/camhs](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/Support/camhs)

## Functional Reflex Therapy workshops

Workshops for parents of children with autism, learning difficulties, special educational and additional needs on **Thursday 22 and 29 June** from 9.30am to 12 noon at Bursledon Village Hall, Long Lane, Bursledon, S031 8BZ

You will learn techniques which will help your child to relax, reduce anxiety and relieve tension. Two 2½ hour workshops with easy-to-learn hand & foot routines, handouts to support your new skills, functional reflex therapy (FRT) 'tool kit' bag, Small groups to ensure the best learning experience.

Cost £60, which includes the FRT bag. For more information and to book a place please contact Victoria Horne MAR, Qualified Reflexologist trained to lead FRT workshops, [victoriahorne@outlook.com](mailto:victoriahorne@outlook.com), 023 8026 9809 or 07769 867 261.

## ActiveAbility Autism Awareness

On **Thursday 20 July** from 6.30 to 9.00pm at Woodmill Outdoor Activities Centre, Woodmill Lane, Southampton, SO18 2JR. This is a great workshop for developing or taking a fresh look at your everyday coaching or volunteering work with autistic adults and children. Delivered by Autism Hampshire, this is a workshop not to be missed for any budding coaches or experienced instructors alike. Recent developments have seen Autism Hampshire trainers collaborating with people with autism to re-develop and re-design training courses to include personal perspectives. The workshop will include information sharing, resources and an active element. Just £10 per person which includes all resources and training. The course is arranged and run in line with Active Nation UK's ActiveAbility Southampton programme – a Sport England funding programme to make sport and exercise accessible for disabled adults aged 14 years +.

## ASD New Forest dates

The next meeting of this group is on **Wednesday 12 July** at 10.30am to 12.30pm at the Place, Carvers Recreational Park, Ringwood BH24 1JR. Details from [asdnewforest@gmail.com](mailto:asdnewforest@gmail.com)

## 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>

## Autism, Asperger's & Communication

Featuring Richard Brooks, an engaging, popular speaker and autism advisory teacher with 40 years' experience of working with autistic children, young people and adults, Annie Brooks, a knowledgeable and popular specialist Speech & Language Therapist with 20 years' experience of working with autistic children and young people and Autism Oxford UK's highly acclaimed autistic training team. **Saturday 8 July**, 9.30am for 10am to 3.30pm at Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot OX11 7JN. Professionals: £55 plus VAT, autistic people & family members: £35 plus VAT, concession rate: £25 plus VAT (Autism Oxford's hope is that all who want to attend can afford the entry fee: if not, please contact them!) Drinks provided; please bring your own lunch. For fast, easy, secure booking: <http://www.autismoxford.org.uk>

## DWP has 80% targets for refusing benefit reconsiderations

We have received many recent examples of people with autism being refused Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independent Payments and having to go to tribunal to attempt to get justice.

A DWP response to a Freedom of Information request from Disability Rights UK has revealed that it has a target to refuse 80% of mandatory reconsideration requests as a Key Performance indicator. In addition, the DWP's performance measures for April 2016 to March 2017 show that nearly nine out of 10 reconsideration requests (87.5%) are refused.

Ken Butler, DR UK's Welfare Benefit Adviser said: "That the DWP has an actual target for refusing benefit decision reconsideration requests is bad enough, but that it has set and exceeded a figure of 80% is appalling. It's unsurprising that a key conclusion of the recently published second independent review of PIP was that "public trust in the fairness and consistency of PIP decisions is not currently being achieved, with high levels of disputed award decisions, many of them overturned at appeal" [Note there are no actual KPI targets for PIP, as yet, but refusals of PIP reconsiderations are high].

Many disabled people are having their right to a disability benefit withheld due to poor face to face assessments and the further evidence then supplied effectively ignored by the DWP in favour of Atos and Capita medical reports. There is little doubt now that such behaviour is officially sanctioned DWP policy." Read the full report from Disability Rights UK at <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2017/may/dwp-has-80-targets-refusing-benefit-reconsiderations>

## Share your experiences of education in England with the parliamentary enquiry on autism

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism (APPGA), supported by the National Autistic Society, is carrying out a parliamentary inquiry into education and support for children and young people on the autism spectrum in England.

It is now nearly three years since the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms were introduced in England, and they want to review how well the system is meeting autistic children and young people's needs. They want to hear from parents and carers, and from young people themselves, about their experiences of the SEND system and what needs to change.

If you are a parent or carer of a young person in England under the age of 25, the APPGA wants to know things like whether your child is in the right school or college, how long they had to wait for support, and what you have done if you disagreed with what support was offered.

If you are under 25 and at school or college in England, the APPGA wants to know about your experiences at school, what type of support you have found helpful and what was missing.

To access the surveys, visit <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/media-centre/news/2017-06-01-appga-enquiry.aspx>

They would like to hear from as many people as possible before the closing date of **10 July 2017**.

## Transition to Adult Life – Mental Capacity, health and social care assessments and FE

Action for Kids are organising a parent/carer/professional seminar on **29 June**, in central London, with a range of expert speakers including lawyers and care experts, on transition to adult life and the Mental Capacity Act, including welfare deputyship and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS), also covering all the assessments from age 18 and innovative ways to organise further education and manage challenging behaviour. It is heavily subsidised for parents and carers, only £15 including lunch. The cost for professionals is £45.

Visit [https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/3-transition-to-adult-life-i-mental-capacity-health-and-social-care-tickets-26306113293?mc\\_eid=828cd6e849&mc\\_cid=b72ff57610](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/3-transition-to-adult-life-i-mental-capacity-health-and-social-care-tickets-26306113293?mc_eid=828cd6e849&mc_cid=b72ff57610) for full details.

## 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 SEP 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](mailto:office@alexkelly.biz) or phone on 023 8098 7134.

### **Free Autism Support and Information Programme for parents in Hampshire**

Hampshire CAMHS and Autism Hampshire 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. 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 at [www.shantsnas.org.uk/Support/camhs](http://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.

### **Inspiring You Weekends at Avon Tyrrell**

Stay for two nights in their Grade 1 listed house. Enjoy a full activity package which can include climbing, archery, bushcraft, high ropes, kayaking and much more. Refuel each day with three hot cooked meals. If you have a child with a disability, join them at Avon Tyrrell Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE. The next inclusion weekend is being held on **Friday 14 to Sunday 16 July**. The cost for Hampshire Gateway Card holders is £55 per person (if you do not have a Gateway card, contact them for alternative pricing). For more information call 01425 672347 or to book at <https://avontyrrell.cinolla.com/avontyrrell/courses/hampshire-inclusion-events>

### **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](mailto:claireheadington@roseroad.org.uk). The sessions are funded by BBC Children in Need.

### **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: **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: **5 July, 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](mailto: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 **23 June, 7 & 21 July and 4 August**.

### **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-MUxqc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv66Q-MUxqc) and sign up at [www.autism.org.uk/myworld](http://www.autism.org.uk/myworld)

## Friends of In Touch

This registered charity in Eastleigh, funded by the BIG Lottery, supports children and young people with autism. The aim is to enable anxious or socially-vulnerable children and young people to feel more engaged with mainstream education and social activity by helping them develop self-confidence, self-esteem and coping skills. Lots of fun activities include cooking, arts and crafts, bushcraft, games, construction toys for the Junior group (9 to 13) and cookery, pamper evenings, film nights, quizzes, bowling, book club, sports, meals out and BBQs for the Senior group (13 to 21). Both groups are currently full but anyone interested in being added to the waiting list should contact [info@friendsofintouch.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/shantsnas) and click on the button to sign up.
2. Shop – from the *easyfundraising* website, search for the retailer you'd like to shop with and click through to the retailer to make your purchase. This tells the retailer you came from *easyfundraising*. The price is exactly the same as if you'd visited the retailer directly.
3. Get a donation – after you've made your purchase, the retailer will give you a cash reward that *easyfundraising* turn into a donation for our Branch

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

Thank you for your support.



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

Regards

**David & Rachel Carter**

The National Autistic Society, South Hampshire Branch

Email: [shants@nas.org.uk](mailto:shants@nas.org.uk) | Website: [www.shantsnas.org.uk](http://www.shantsnas.org.uk)

Registered as a Charity. No. 269425

*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.*