

Dear Friends

Please see below for our latest news update. We look forward to welcoming you at any of our events and hope the other information below will be useful.

Family Youth Club

Our next club is **this Saturday, 7 November** 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



We meet again **this Saturday, 7 November** at Chandlers Ford Methodist Church.

We have now extended the age-range from 8 to 13. Applications received for additional places are now being assessed. 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.

Support Group Meeting

Our next support group meeting is on **Monday 16 November** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm.

We welcome **Kathryn Cornish**, Community Access Project Officer from Autism Hampshire as our guest. Kathryn would like to speak to individual parents as part of a Healthwatch consultation. Autism Hampshire are being supported by Healthwatch Hampshire, to consult with Hampshire adults and young people with autism, their families and carers (including parents of younger children) to find out and record their experiences of using local health services such as GP surgeries, dentists and accident and emergency units. They want to find out which strategies work well in supporting access and what barriers they find to using these services. They have had many verbal reports that accessing these services can be challenging and this consultation will provide them with further evidence to share. Healthwatch Hampshire attend all clinical commissioning groups and will ensure that the findings of this consultation are seen and heard by the local medical professionals.

There will be plenty of time at our meeting to have a chat and to browse our Resource Library, comprising over 300 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.

Our Southampton social groups

Both our Children's social group and Adults' social group are continuing to meet at St Patrick's Church, Portsmouth Road, Woolston, Southampton, SO19 9BD. All dates for the autumn term can be found on our website.

For more details of both of these social groups, email aspsq.shants@gmail.com or contact Sue on 023 8043 2612 or Tracey on 07532 282301. New members are always welcome to attend.

Our 10th anniversary events

It was great to see so many of you at Winchester Science Centre on Friday 16 October for the second of our 10th Anniversary events. Everyone appeared to have a great time. Pictures of this event and our earlier cruise on SS Shieldhall can now be found on our website at www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/10thAnniversaryphotos.



Accept difference. Not indifference.

Big Day In

This event is a meet-up for Facebook support group *Aspergers Adventures-Minecraft and Meltdowns* (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aspergers.adventures/>) and takes place at St James Methodist Church, St James Road, Southampton, SO15 5HE on **Saturday 21 November** from 1.00 to 4.00pm – entry is free. This is an autism-friendly fun day for families with workshops, costumes, cakes, robots, 3D printing, crafts, a talent stage (optional!) and they will be joined by several local charities and organisations such as our own NAS Branch, Mencap, Autism Hampshire, Carers in Southampton and Rose Road, so that parents can seek advice and discover services. For more details visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/169007436772913/>.

NAS Staff and Volunteer Awards 2015

Nominations for the NAS Staff and Volunteer Awards 2015 are now open and this year they are launching a category just for branches! You can make your nomination(s) for Branch of the Year online by going to www.surveymonkey.com/r/staffvolawards2015.

There are five categories – employee, manager, team, volunteer and branch of the year – so select the branch option when you are completing the form. The nomination form is simple and easy to complete but please do give as much detail as you can as this will really help your nominee(s) get noticed during the shortlisting process. Branch volunteers or those that attend our branch can nominate our branch!

This year, all nominations will focus on the exceptional work nominees do to support the NAS' pillar most relevant to their role. Details of the pillars and enablers are given on the nomination form so all you need to do is tell us how your nominee(s) contributes to the NAS' work in one of these key areas. Nominations will close on **1 December** at 5.00pm.

Challengers Playschemes and Youthschemes

Challengers Playscheme in Eastleigh is for disabled and non-disabled children ages 4-12. There are lots of staff so that you can leave your child with them to play and there will always be someone to play with.

Challengers Youthscheme in Southampton is for young people aged 13-18 and have a programme of activities and trips out. As well as this, there is also time to hang out and make friends.

Booking for Spring Term 2016 opens on **Tuesday 17 November** for all events running on Saturdays between 1 January and 25 March. For further details visit www.disability-challengers.org/WhatWeDo.

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. The group meet at the Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre fortnightly on Friday afternoons from 1.30-3.30pm. For more information on the group, dates and project please contact: Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre, 111 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 9DS, Tel: 023 8063 3951, Email: Jamie.pratt@autismhampshire.org.uk

Aspergers and High Functioning Autism Social Skills Workshops, Lymington

A social skills workshop, for those with Aspergers and high functioning autism, is being held on **Monday 16 November** from 9.30am to 3.00pm at Adult Learning and Skills, Lymington Community Centre, New Street, Lymington, SO41 9BQ. The course tutor, Sandy Teal, is an expert in this field and tailors the course material to suit the needs of the group. The workshop is for all ages and aimed at parents, grandparents, carers, teachers, health care professionals, teaching assistants and anyone else who is interested! You need to take your own lunch but tea and coffee is provided. The cost is £45 per person per course. Other courses planned are: Relationships – Tuesday 12 January 2016 • Behavioural Skills – Monday 8 February 2016 • Sex Education – Monday 7 March 2016. For more information or to book, contact Lymington Adult Education Centre on 01590 679457 or email Lymington@brock.ac.uk.

Magical Winter Inclusion Weekends, Avon Tyrrell

Enjoy a magical family adventure weekend at Avon Tyrrell on **Friday 4–Sunday 6 December** or **Friday 11–Sunday 13 December**. These inclusion weekends offer families with a child that has a disability an affordable opportunity to go away and spend time together, try an exciting range of fully accessible adventure activities and make new friends. The cost for Gateway Card holders is £55 per person and includes: Two nights' full board accommodation, high quality catering including roast dinner, outdoor adventure activity programme, hot chocolate and marshmallows and breakfast with Santa. Every family will have their own room but not all are en-suite. A range of specialist equipment is available to support you but it is recommended that you discuss your requirements with Avon Tyrrell to ensure that they can cater for your specific requirements. For more information, contact the Guest Services team.

Contact: Avon Tyrrell, UK Youth Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE, Tel: Guest Services team on 01425 672347, Email: <https://www.avontyrrell.org.uk/index.html>.

New Science Museum 'Early Birds' and 'Night Owls' Events

The Science Museum in London presents 'Early Birds', an experience for families with members who have an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). The next 'Early Birds' is on **12 December 2015** when the Museum will be open from 8.30am for families to come along and enjoy the Museum free of the general public. Please visit www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/visitmuseum/Plan_your_visit/events/other/early_birds_event.aspx for information about how to book. Booking will open at 10.00am on Friday 13 November 2015. If you would like to receive a reminder, email: familyprogrammes@sciencemuseum.ac.uk and they will add you to their 'Early Birds' mailing list.

'Night Owls' is an event at the Museum aimed at young adults (16-25) on the Autistic Spectrum since, at present, they do not have an offering for ASC individuals over the age of 15. The first one will be running on **Saturday 28 November** from 18:45 to 21:30. The museum will be completely free and, similar to their 'Early Birds' event, will be at a time when the museum is closed to the general public – ensuring that ASC visitors can enjoy the museum in a much calmer and more relaxed environment. Bookings for this event are not yet open but information can be obtained from the museum.

Relaxed Performances over Christmas

For the second year running Lighthouse, Poole, are proud to be showing relaxed performances for two of their Family Christmas shows – Otto and the Robin (**Monday 14 December**, 1.45pm) and Peter Pan – The Magical Christmas Adventure (**Tuesday 15 December**, 1.30pm). Tickets are £5 and £9 respectively and carers go free. To find out more about the performances or to book tickets, customers should call their ticket office on 01202 28 00 00.

Also, don't forget The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton present a relaxed performance of their pantomime, *Aladdin*, on **Tuesday 29 December** at 1.30pm. Tickets are £9.00. Please call the Box Office on 023 8071 1811.

Short Breaks for Disabled Children Funding 2016/17

We are delighted to tell you that a full council meeting at Hampshire County Council has approved an increase in the Children's Services Budget to protect Short Breaks Funding for 2016/17. Many of you will know there was a very real possibility of a cut of £1.8 million to the short breaks budget from next April.

Hampshire Parent Carer Network and Parent Voice have worked hard this year with the Hampshire County Council short breaks team and providers, Kids, Andover and District Mencap, Challengers and The Rose Road Association, to assess the impact of the cuts and the reality of what could be delivered with the drastically reduced funding anticipated.

Hampshire Parent Carer Network is looking forward to continuing to work with Hampshire County Council to shape the Short Breaks Programme to deliver the best possible service to families in 2016/17 and beyond.

Autism Hampshire Try Before You Buy Resource Lending Service

Why try before you buy? There are many resources available to purchase which may help people who have Autism. This service enables people with Autism to try a resource to see if it meets their needs before they purchase it. They also aim to raise awareness of assistive resources that are available.

Who can borrow? The resources are available to borrow for children, young people and adults who are on Autistic Spectrum and who live in Hampshire, including Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight. A small deposit is required.

Items currently available to view or borrow: Pocket weighted blankets for children, young people and adults, with various weights. Other weighted items such as lap pads, shoulder wraps, caps, wrist weights and weighted jackets. Compression vests (various sizes and styles), Timers and Ear defenders.

For more information contact Autism Hampshire: Suite 1C Fairways House, Mount Pleasant Road, Southampton, SO14 0QB, Tel: 023 8063 3951 or email communityaccess@autismhampshire.org.uk.

Southampton City Council Autism Information

The Integrated Commissioning Unit (ICU) is a joint commissioning team for NHS Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group and Southampton City Council. It was established in November 2013 and is based across both organisations.

Visit <http://sid.southampton.gov.uk/kb5/southampton/directory/advice.page?id=DHOpNJQM9oE> to open the ICU web information page, where up-to-date Autism related documents are available to download, such as the Southampton City Council Autism Strategy and recent consultations.

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/>

NAS Christmas cards are now on sale!

Get an early start to the festive season in 2015 by buying the National Autistic Society's Christmas cards. This year, yet again, they have a fantastic selection of cards to choose from, with something to suit every friend or relative. Whatever may take your fancy, remember that by buying and sending these cards you're raising vital awareness of autism. For more information visit www.autism.org.uk/shop/christmas-cards-2015.aspx.

NAS T-shirts

A number of you who attended our 10th Anniversary events expressed an interest in purchasing NAS 'I'm having an amazing day for autism' T-shirts (as modelled by our committee). These can be ordered through us at £3.50 each. Sizes are (in inches) XXL (44) XL (42) L (40) M (38) S (36) and Children's 3-5, 5-6 and 7-8.

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 at 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.

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.

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 have purchased over 40 new books which will be added to the library shortly, bringing the total number of books, videos, DVDs and games to around 350 items. 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 £400.

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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amazon.co.uk John Lewis M&S ASDA Sainsbury's

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.