

Dear Friends

Welcome to this final newsletter for 2016. As always, we have details of our activities over the next month or so plus other information that may be of interest. There are just a few days left to get involved in our autism and mental health consultation. Tickets for our Tony Attwood conference next year are going fast – so don't miss out! We include details of a number of autism-friendly Christmas events and some advice about getting through the Christmas period.

Finally, we are still looking for one or two volunteers who can help us out at some of our activities – it is just a small commitment.

Support Group Meeting

Our final support group meeting of this year is on **Monday 21 November** at Bishopstoke Evangelical Church at 7.30pm. Please note there will be no meeting in December.

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.

Family Youth Club

Our next Youth Club takes place on **Saturday 3 December** 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. We will also be featuring some Christmas craft activities for our young people.

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 3 December** 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

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 Christmas can be found on our website. The groups restart in the new year on **10 January** (Children) and **17 January** (Adults).

A reminder that any group members who are planning to go to the Mayflower pantomime's relaxed performance on **3 January** need to have ordered and paid for tickets (£9 each) by the last group meeting in November. The Adult group's annual Christmas meal at Toby Inn, Bishopstoke is on **Tuesday 6 December** at 7 p.m. The price is £7.00 for members (subsidised by the group) and £13.50 for non-members. Last date for paying is 22 November.

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

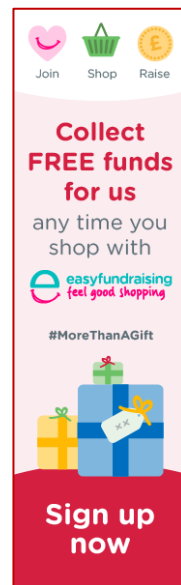
Tony Attwood conference

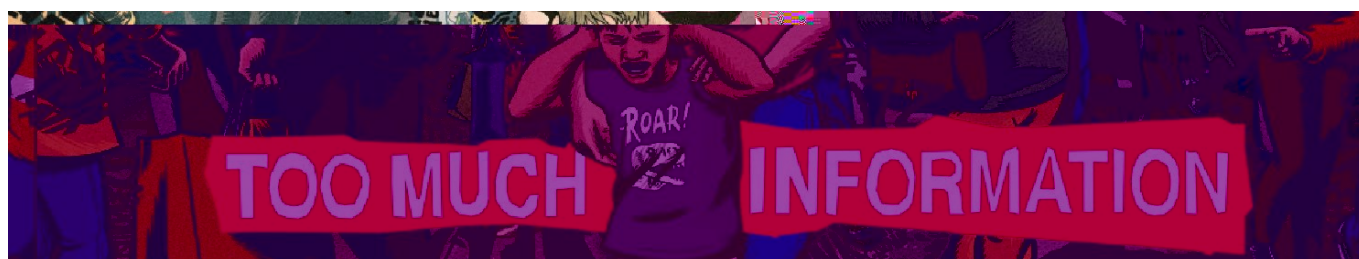


Bookings for our Tony Attwood conference, on **Friday 19 May 2017** at Winchester Guildhall, continue to pour in with almost **300 tickets** now sold – and still over 6 months to go! Therefore, if you hope to attend, please do not delay in booking your places before we sell out! We are particularly keen to promote the event to professionals who we feel would greatly benefit from attending, therefore, please also pass on information to any professionals you think may be interested in coming along.

Prices have been kept as low as possible and include refreshments and buffet lunch. We have special prices for parents/carers, people with autism, Teaching Assistants, accredited Hampshire Autism Ambassadors and other professionals. For full details of this exciting event and to book, please visit our website at www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA. We do hope you are able to make it to this event.

Tony last visited us in 2011 (which was 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.





Just 16% of autistic adults are in full-time paid employment. And, in almost a decade, this appalling situation hasn't improved.

The National Autistic Society is determined to change this, but need your help. Please sign their petition calling on the Government to double the number of autistic people in work by 2020.

Max is the star of a powerful new *Too Much Information* film. He is autistic and has a good job. But his first experiences of job interviews were distressing. "I didn't know what to expect, what to wear, or what questions would be asked. The information overload was too much – I couldn't even speak."

But in one interview, when again he couldn't get the words out, he passed his book of notes to the interviewers. They were so impressed with the knowledge these displayed that they offered him an apprenticeship. It hasn't all been easy but with the right understanding from his workplace and some small adjustments, Max has been a real success story – even winning apprentice of the year.

Employment won't be right for all autistic people. But 77% of unemployed autistic adults, or people responding on their behalf, told us they want to work.

The Government has committed to halving the 'disability employment gap'. But the autism employment gap is even wider. The fear is that without a better understanding of autism from both employers and the Government, autistic adults will continue to be left behind, their abilities overlooked.

Please sign The National Autistic Society's petition today to pile the pressure on the Government to take action, so that more autistic people get the jobs they deserve. Visit <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi.aspx>

Consultation on mental health and autism

A reminder that our branch, working in partnership with Hampshire Autism Voice, are currently undertaking a consultation about mental health services for children, young people and adults with autism. The consultation is being funded and supported by Healthwatch Hampshire. (Please note this consultation is about mental health services and not about your personal health issues nor the process of getting an autism diagnosis).

Many thanks to those of you who attended our two recent focus groups. You can, however, still contribute to this consultation, **up until next Monday**, through our online survey which will take 15-20 minutes to fill in.

There are two surveys available:

- This survey is for any child or adult with autism who has accessed or tried to access mental health services in the last 3 years, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/X252KZM>
- This survey is for parents, carers and professionals who have accessed or tried to access mental health services in the last 3 years on behalf of their child or adult with autism, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TVC3YWT>

Please feel free to forward to any other interested parties to circulate as widely as possible. A paper copy is available for those who are not comfortable using the online version. Please contact Vanessa Cosby, HAV Network Coordinator, at admin@hampshireautismvoice.org.uk if required. Please note: the survey will close on **21 November 2016**.

The results of this survey will be made available on our website in due course and will be fed back to Healthwatch Hampshire, the Hampshire Autism Partnership Board and local Clinical Commissioning Groups. Your contact details will not be circulated to any third parties.

Help requested

As you will know, our branch is run entirely by volunteers and it is only because of the great team we have that we are able to achieve anything. We are still looking for some help in two of our activities - both are just a small commitment:

Family Youth Club: We operate a rota of volunteers who assist with this monthly club. We are looking for a couple of parents/supporters who could spare one Saturday afternoon every couple of months from 3.00 until 5.30pm to help with manning the door, serving refreshments, keeping an eye on proceedings and/or setting up/packing away equipment.

Support Group: We operate our resource library at these monthly meetings on the 3rd Monday evening of the month. Our committee member who currently runs this will not be able to attend for a while and so we are looking for someone who can help set up/pack away the library and book in/out library items. The volunteer would need to attend from 7.00 to 9.30pm. We just need someone organised and good at recording accurate information.

If either of these voluntary opportunities appeals to you, we would love to hear from you – many thanks.

Are you ready for Christmas?

Christmas can be an exciting and fun time, but people with autism may be confused or distressed by all the new activity.

With the help of readers of *Your Autism* magazine, The National Autistic Society has compiled a list of tips that may help you through the festive period. Visit <http://www.autism.org.uk/about/family-life/holidays-trips/christmas.aspx>

The Royal College of General Practitioners

The Royal College of General Practitioners has produced an autism charter and resources for GP surgeries at www.rcgp.org.uk/ASD. This links to some excellent resources including an 'Autistic Spectrum Disorder' toolkit.

EsSENTial Learning

Is your child aged between 2–5 years old? Does your child exhibit any of these behaviours? • They are unresponsive to their own name • They find it difficult to follow simple instructions • They are unable to pick up on social cues • They have difficulty communicating their wants and needs • They are unable to convey their emotions • They have speech delay.

Penny Vanderplank is an independent communications specialist. She is the founder of esSENTial learning which offers a high quality, professional service for children with communication difficulties. Penny partners with families to create bespoke communication interventions, which use evidence based practices to improve the communicative repertoires of children with communication difficulties.

esSENTial learning offers: • A home-based service • A free initial consultation • Functional communication strategies using a variety of tools • A personalised development plan • Regular ongoing support • Parental training.

Learn more at: www.essential-learning.org. Call 07963309392 or email essentiallearning@hotmail.co.uk

The Playhouse Foundation – Enabling Young Children with Autism to Achieve their Full Potential

Seeking New Families! A Hampshire-based charity, The Playhouse Foundation, are looking to offer young children with autism the opportunity to have the educational programme Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA). They will provide a one year bursary for children between the ages of 2.5 and 3.5 who have autism. Their programmes are for means-tested families based in Hampshire, with an income of less than £50,000, who are keen to start an ABA programme. If you are interested and feel that you may be eligible for a bursary, then please contact Vicky Stanley at vicky@theplayhousefoundation.co.uk or phone 07964 667903.

Want to take part in autism research?

The Autism Research Centre (ARC) at the University of Cambridge is headed by Professor Simon Baron-Cohen. The aim of the ARC is to understand the biomedical causes of autism spectrum conditions, and develop new and validated methods for assessment and intervention.

They are currently interested in recruiting additional participants for their research database. Registration is completed online and those who choose to sign up will have access to many different studies both online and in person. Studies include: personality tests, genetic research, cognition tests, and brain scans.

If you are over 16 with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum, or a parent of child/ren with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum, please go to <https://autismresearchcentre.net> for additional information and registration.

Radar NKS Key

Would you like priority access to over 9000 accessible UK toilets? The answer is a Radar key – with your own Radar key you can unlock most disabled toilets in the UK. The National Key Scheme – opening doors to independent living. If you have a health condition or disability finding an accessible toilet that's clean, tidy and available for you to use can be a challenge. And they're often kept locked. Under Radar's scheme, special locks are installed on public disabled toilet doors to give disabled people priority access. Local authorities have adopted the scheme and 'Radar toilets' can now be found in shopping centres, pubs, stores, bus/train stations and other locations nationwide. You can buy a key via Disability Rights UK at £4.50. Important: they only sell the Radar NKS Key to people who require use of the toilet facilities due their disability and health condition. By purchasing a key VAT free you are declaring yourself eligible to claim VAT relief and that the key is for your domestic and personal use only. For more information visit <https://crm.disabilityrightsuk.org/radar-nks-key> or call 020 7250 8191.

Christmas pantomimes and shows – relaxed performances

The Night Before Christmas – relaxed performance

The Haymarket, Wote Street, Basingstoke, RG21 7NE on **Saturday 3 December** at 4:00pm. They are delighted to present this specially adapted performance for those on the autistic spectrum and with other disabilities. Suitable for ages 2 and over. Tickets: £9 (includes £2 booking fee). Please contact the box office to book tickets for this performance on 01256 844244. Email: box.office@anvilarts.org.uk, Web: www.anvilarts.org.uk/your-visit/how-to-book

Cinderella – relaxed performance

Theatre Royal Winchester, Jewry Street, SO23 8SB are staging two relaxed performances of their pantomime on **Thursday 15 December** at 1.30pm and **Sunday 1 January** at 2.30pm. Tickets: Adults £13.50 and Children £10. Please contact the box office on 01962 840440, Email: boxoffice@theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk, Web: <http://www.theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk/cinderella/>

Robin Hood – multi-sensory pantomime

Shepherds Down School, Shepherds Lane, Compton, Winchester, SO21 2AJ, on **Saturday 17 December**. Performances at 11.15am or 2.00pm. Head2Head Theatre's traditional pantomime tale that is accessible to all (reception to adult). It features reduced dialogue, loads of sensory experiences, amusing sound effects and songs, role play and interaction opportunities, a strong sense of sequence using rhyme, rhythm and repetition, brightly coloured sets with puppets, props and costumes that will stimulate and encourage participation, some signing and voice output communication aids, advance pack to familiarise participants (wigdit storyline, songs and characters). Tickets are £5 each. To book a place, please contact: 01372 278021 or 07519 747290. Email: h2hoffice@gmail.com. For further details visit www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/sensory-pantomime

Sleeping Beauty – Relaxed Pantomime Performance

The Anvil, Basingstoke on **Wednesday 21 December** at 2:00pm. Starring Sue Holderness (Only Fools and Horses), Katrina Bryan (CBeebies) and Sarah-Jane Buckley (Hollyoaks), they are delighted to present this specially adapted performance for those on the autistic spectrum and with other disabilities.

Tickets: £10 (includes £2 booking fee). Contact the box office to book tickets for this performance on 01256 844244 or visit www.anvilarts.org.uk/whats-on/sleeping-beauty-relaxed-performance

Peter Pan – Relaxed Pantomime Performance

Chichester Festival Theatre on **30 December** at 2.00pm. Join Peter Pan and the Darling children on a swashbuckling adventure to the magical world of Neverland. With music, puppets, beautiful set design and costumes, this show is the perfect festive treat for groups and families. The performance welcomes individuals, groups and families with children on the autistic spectrum, sensory and communication disorders, a learning disability, or anyone who would benefit from a more relaxed theatre environment.

Tickets: £12. Contact: Chichester Festival Theatre, Oaklands Park, Chichester, PO19 6AP, Tel: 01243 781312, Email: Box.office@cft.org.uk, Web: <https://www.cft.org.uk/whats-on/event/peter-pan>

Robin Hood – Relaxed Pantomime Performance

The Mayflower Theatre, Southampton on **3 January** at 1.30pm. A sensational cast led by Shane Richie and Jessie Wallace in the South Coast's biggest family pantomime! The show is specifically designed to welcome people who will benefit from a more relaxed performance environment, including people on the autism spectrum, with sensory and communication difficulties, or a learning disability. There is a relaxed attitude to noise and movement and some small changes may be made to the light and sound effects.

Tickets: £9. Contact: Box Office 02380 711811 or visit https://www.mayflower.org.uk/Whats_On/Panto2016

Reminders:

Gambado, Eastleigh – exclusive admission times for SEN guests

Gambado hold SEN indoor soft-play sessions for young children with all types of disabilities and special educational needs at Unit L10, Swan Leisure Centre, Eastleigh, SO50 5SF from 9.00 to 10.00am. Upcoming dates are **Sundays 20 November and 18 December**. Standard child ticket (includes 1 adult) £5 and additional adult £1. For more information or to book, visit www.gambado.com/events/eastleigh/sen-sessions or call 023 8001 8336.

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 to 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/>

Avon Tyrrell Inspiring You Events 2016-17

Avon Tyrrell UK Youth Outdoor Activity Centre, Bransgore, BH23 8EE. A wide variety of activities are available. The dates can be found at <https://www.avontyrrell.org.uk/IYou.html>. In addition to the Inspiring You weekends, they also offer additional support to enable young people to attend Funday sessions throughout the year, which are a great way to develop independence and confidence, while experiencing some of the activities Avon Tyrrell has to offer.

Save the Date! Special Needs Information Day 2017, Yateley

Support4SEND and Parent Voice's next Special Needs Information Day will be held on **Saturday 25 March 2017**, 10.00am to 3.00pm, at Yateley School, School Lane, Yateley, GU46 6NW. These popular free events give families and practitioners opportunities to gather information about local support and services. The event is free to visitors (refreshments and food are available to buy). There is ample free parking on site and disabled access. Several workshops and talks will be on offer, alongside the exhibition, and further details about these will be published in the coming months. They also hope to offer activities for children and young people. Our branch will be there with our stand. If you would like to know more about the event, email enquiries.support4send@hants.gov.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>

Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Services (HSPSS)

The Hampshire Specialist Parenting Support Service (HSPSS) has been commissioned by the Children and Maternity Collaborative of the five Hampshire CCGs. The service 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.

Please either email hampshire.parenting@barnardos.org.uk or call 01489 799178 to find out more.

Friends of In Touch

This registered charity in Eastleigh supports children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions. 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.

The Monday Night Project

The Monday Night Project is a weekly social group for young people with additional needs aged 10 to 14 years, based at The Box Youth Centre, Hedge End, every Monday, 5.30pm to 8.00pm. It will help young people with autistic spectrum difficulties/SEN or confidence issues. Young people take part in cookery, arts and crafts, table tennis, films, games, trips, music, recreation and fun activities! Membership is by referral only. This may be through parent/carer, school, self/young person or partner agency. For more information or a referral form please contact Youth Team Manager Donna Love on 01489 789638 (Mob: 07534 563424) or email donna.love@hedgeend-tc.gov.uk.

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/myworld

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 £1700.**

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.*