



Newsletter

Welcome to the August / September issue of Surrey News

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Many of us who are bringing up - or have brought up - children with an ASD have often wondered what it would be like to step into their shoes and see the world through their eyes. Well through the wonders of technology, we can (virtually) do so.

Members who attended our AGM in Woking in July had a chance to try out the NAS' new "Too Much Information" virtual reality experience – just using some cardboard goggles, a set of earphones and a smartphone! The virtual reality film lets you 'be' a ten year-old boy with high-functioning autism and sensory issues in a large shopping centre. Personally, I found the experience overwhelming as I think it gave me the best insight I have ever had into what places and situations like that must have been like for my son when he was younger.

There is a bit of a backlog on delivering the goggles but we have ordered some and will be bringing them with us to events for people to try out.

If you want to try it for yourself, or you work in education and want the children you teach to understand more about what pupils with autism may experience, you can download the app for free and buy your own virtual reality goggles <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/virtual.aspx> The app requires a mobile phone running iOS 6.0/Android 4.4 or better.

Emma
Emma Whitfield
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Tel: 07423 435 413 (answerphone)
General Email: info@nassurreybranch.org
Web site: www.nassurreybranch.org
Twitter: @NASSurreyBranch
Donations: www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch

NAS Surrey Branch Contacts

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trenamans@talktalk.net

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Rachel Pearson 01483 727378
racheldpearson@gmail.com

Fundraising

Sarah Mason 07973 379131
slmason78@gmail.com

Fathers' Group:

Martin Trenaman 01737 360069
trenamans@talktalk.net

Parents of Adults' Group

Hilary Dyce 01276 66032
hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Online library – coming soon

Other Useful Contacts

Unless clearly stated, organisations are not endorsed by NAS Surrey Branch or the NAS.

NAS web site: www.autism.org.uk

NAS Helpline: Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10am – 4pm), or email autismhelpline@nas.org.uk (replies within 14 working days)

NAS Parent-to-Parent line 0808 800 4106

NAS national membership: 020 7903 3563
Email membership@nas.org.uk

Education Support

NAS Education Rights: 0808 800 4102

SSIASS Parent Support: 01737 737300

<http://www.surreyparentpartnership.org.uk/>

SOS!SEN charity to support statementing, tel: 020 8538 3731, Web: www.sossen.org.uk

Family Support & Representation

NAS Family Support worker Surrey

Tessa Emery Tessa.emery@nas.org.uk

Tel: 01483 521 744 M: 07436 261 163

Portage – support for children with additional needs under 3.5 years 0300 200 1004

Family Voice Surrey parent representation
www.familyvoicesurrey.org

Local parent programmes

Early Bird (parents of under 5s) / **Cygnnet**

(parents of children aged 5 – 18). Vicky Jones
training@linden-bridge.surrey.sch.uk Tel:

07747 595 155

Redhill CAMHS group for parents of children with ASDs, tel: 01737-287002

Activities for children and young people

NAS Resource Centre, Godalming Tel:

01483 521743

SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk

interAKtive, Epsom-based charity for children with ASDs and other communication difficulties 07876 762178,

www.interaktive.org.uk

Adult Services

Surrey Adult social svcs: 0300 200 1005

NAS Surrey Service Tel: 01483 861600,

email: surrey.service@nas.org.uk

Employment Support

Employability for people with disabilities including ASDs tel: 01483-806806, email:

employability@surreychoices.com

Benefits advice

Carers Support <https://www.carers.org/>

NAS Tips page – via www.autism.org.uk

Cerebra DLA guide: 0800 328 1159

Talk on Surrey SEND in Guildford 14th September

Our next talk in Guildford will be by Gaby Close, the new Interim Head of SEND Operations and Autism Strategic Lead at Surrey County Council. She will talk about what her new role entails, including overseeing the Surrey SEND team (case officers) for under 18s. She will also give us an update on the Surrey Joint Autism Strategy, and will explain how the new joint autism strategy will fit with the Adult Autism Strategy led by Tom Moore. She won't be able to address any individual issues on the night, but she is keen to hear what types of problems parents are facing to try and improve the experience for families. Venue & times in the calendar on p6 - please email emma@mugsy.org to let us know if you are coming along.

Talk on NAS 'Too Much Information' Campaign, Redhill 11th Oct

If you weren't able to find out about the NAS' Too Much Information' campaign at our AGM in Woking in July, you have another chance at our Redhill meeting in October. Sara Truman and Emma Whitfield will take you through the campaign and what it is trying to do to improve understanding of autism for all our families.

We hope to have news about the second phase of the campaign which will focus on how people can improve understanding and support colleagues with ASDs in the workplace. We will have some of the cardboard goggles to enable you to try the TMI virtual reality film for yourself. Venue & times in the calendar on p6 - please email emma@mugsy.org to let us know if you are coming along.

Talk on EHCPs in Woking in November

We are hosting a talk by Wendy Jenkins from the independent parent support organisation Core Assets designed to help parents to understand what is involved as their child transfers from a statement to an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), or as they apply for an EHCP for the first time.

Core Assets is the organisation that has been commissioned by Surrey County Council to provide Independent Support to parents during the introduction of EHCPs. For more information, contact Core Assets on 0800 028 8455 or go to www.coreassets.com. They tell us that there is currently good availability of independent support workers. Date and venue to be confirmed - please check our online forum or the October/November newsletter for details.

Indoor Climbing taster session for children Walton 9th October

We are once again running two indoor climbing sessions for children and young people with ASDs and their siblings and friends aged 6 - 16 at **High Sports climbing, Xcel Leisure Centre in Walton-on-Thames**. The one-hour sessions are at 2pm and 3pm on Sunday 9th October.

Each session caters for up to 10 youngsters, who will learn how to put on a climbing harness safely and be introduced to the basics of rock-climbing. Siblings and friends are also very welcome. Suggested donation per child is £7.50 (subsidised rate). **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** - please complete the enclosed application form and send with a cheque. For more details contact Emma Whitfield. emma@mugsy.org tel: 07423 435 413.

AGM Report

We held our AGM in Woking on 13th July and Emma Whitfield was re-elected (unopposed) as Chair and Haywood Drake (also unopposed) as Treasurer. You can read the report of what we have done over the past year here <http://www.nassurreybranch.org/annual-report-2016.html>

Seminar on helping your young person to find employment

After positive feedback from all previous events, we are running another of the popular one-day workshops to help parents and carers support their young person with ASD to find work. The course will be on **Thursday 17th November**, venue to be confirmed but it will be in central Surrey (Leatherhead or Dorking)

The course is FREE to parents, although a refundable deposit of £10 per person is required to secure your place. It is designed for parents/carers of young people aged 16-25 with an ASD to help parents understand what they can - and can't - do to help their young person to prepare for the world of work and how best to support them to find employment. It aims to give parents practical advice and ideas and signpost them to potential areas of further support/funding. Topics covered include:

- Routes into work and higher education
- Looking for work – the role that parents/carers can and can't play
- Declaring an ASD diagnosis to an employer?
- Reasonable adjustments in the workplace
- Available support

The course is delivered by AS Mentoring www.asmentoring.co.uk, a not-for-profit business working with people with ASDs or other potentially exclusionary conditions to help them find and retain work and to encourage employers to employ people on the spectrum. For more information about the seminar, contact Rachel Pearson rachel.pearson@asmentoring.co.uk

Please complete enclosed booking form and post with deposit (cheque preferred) to Sarah Mead at the address on the form. For booking queries, email Sarah at sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk with EMPLOYMENT COURSE in the subject line.

Parent programmes

Programmes to help parents understand more about bringing up a child on the autism spectrum are run throughout Surrey by the Surrey SEND Teaching School:

- **The NAS EarlyBird Programme** for parents and carers of pre-school children is a 10 week course for parents to attend to help receive strategies and advice for any issues which may be arising
- **Barnados Cygnet Programme** is for parents of children aged 5-19. It is usually run as a 6 week support programme (sometimes as an intensive two-day version) and is designed for parents and carers of children with autism with the additional option of a professional from the child's school attending
- **Fathers ASD Awareness course** – this course is designed for Fathers of children with ASD to provide greater understanding about the support & approaches needed to support the individual with autism and the family

To find out about dates and times of forthcoming programmes contact the Surrey SEND Teaching School at courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk or tel: 020 8330 3009 ext. 237.

Waiting lists can sometimes be quite long, so when time and money permit, the NAS Surrey Branch hosts two-day Cygnet courses with a qualified trainer to help more people access these useful programmes. Our September course is fully booked, but we are aiming to run another one before the end of the year in Leatherhead (date TBC). Please join our online forum or check our web site for dates and details www.nassurreybranch.org.

NAS Surrey Branch Pub Meetings

Our Weybridge pub meetings (see calendar on p6) are proving very popular and the Hinchley Wood group are also experimenting with running an evening meet-up in September. We would like to get more of these types of events going to cater for parents who would like to meet up with other parents locally but who can't make it to our daytime support groups. If you are interested in running an informal pub meet up local to you on a monthly or half-termly basis, please contact emma@mugsy.org.

Save the Date for our Summer Ball 2017!

We are going to be holding a summer fundraiser next year on 22nd July at the Burhill Golf Club in Hersham. The aim of the event is to both raise funds and give parents a chance to have a guilt-free night out having fun and supporting the Branch at the same time. If you work for a company that might be able to donate raffle prizes, help with providing drinks or contribute to the event in any other way, or if you would like to get involved with decorating and setting up on the night, please let Sarah know slmason78@gmail.com.

Thank you to our supporters

We have once again been fortunate enough to benefit from funds raised or donated by amazing members, their families and friends. Every penny raised is spent on providing events, courses and activities for families that include someone with autism in Surrey. Particular thanks go to:

- ☆ **Epsom Downs School** who raised £114 from a cake sale for Autism Awareness day.
- ☆ **William Cobbett School in Farnham** where SENCO Belinda Romeu and the children, staff and parents raised a spectacular £301.43 for the NAS Surrey Branch through their autism awareness day in June. Volunteer Sarah Mason collected the money and spoke to the children about autism in an assembly.
- ☆ The young people from the **National Challenge Scheme** who spent two days in Epsom high street in July raising awareness of autism encouraging people to sign up to give their support to the NAS 'Too Much Information' campaign and encouraging shops and cafes in the area to apply for an Autism Friendly Award <http://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/autism-friendly-award.aspx>. They also raised £141 via a justgiving page.
- ☆ **Matthew Varney** and classmates who raised £60 by holding a doughnut and cookie sale at their school.

We are one of the charities of the month for **Waitrose in Dorking** during August – if you shop there, please make sure you put a green token in the box as the more tokens we collect, the more money we will receive.

NAS After-School and Lego Club vacancies

Some of the NAS after-school and youth clubs have vacancies for next term, so if you are interested in looking at one for your child or young person, it is worth getting in touch with the NAS Resource Centre over the summer. There are currently vacancies at:

- **Woking Children's club – Fridays 5:00-7:00pm (5-13yrs)**
- **Godalming Social Skills – Saturdays 10:00-12:00am (5-13yrs)**
- **Godalming LEGO Therapy – Mondays 5:45-7:45pm (5-13yrs)**

They have also recently re-launched the Epsom Youth Club, with a new, more central venue and a new team running the club. The club runs on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm throughout term-time and is designed for 13-18 years old. All activities cost £5 per session (£2.50 for families on income support or for second siblings). For details, contact Helen Dunkley at SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk Tel: 01483 521 743.

NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR AUGUST – OCTOBER 2016

NAS Surrey Branch support groups, talks, parent programmes and activities are great places to meet other parents and get support - please contact the relevant parent-volunteer for details.

The events shown in BLUE aren't organised by us: please contact the organisers direct.

AUGUST

Wed 3rd Aug, 7.30pm Farnham Parents of Adults Group

Contact Hilary Dyce on 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

SEPTEMBER

Thurs 1st 7:30pm, Parents of Adults Group, Weybridge

Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Weds 7th 8.00pm, Spouses & Partners Group, Guildford

Contact: Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822630

Thurs 8th, Pub meet up, Hinchley Wood

For details contact juliettesturges@gmail.com

Wed 14th, 10.00am, Woking Support Group

Contact Sarah Norris sarah4ian@ntlworld.com 07543 920917

Wed 14th Sept 7.45 for 8.00pm TALK

Guildford Institute, Ward Street, Guildford GU1 4LH

Gaby Close Interim Head of SEND Operations and Autism Strategic Lead at Surrey County Council will talk about her new role overseeing the Surrey SEND team (case officers), plus give an update on the Surrey Joint Autism Strategy and how you can contribute. Please email emma@mugsy.org to let us know if you are coming along.

Fri 16th 10.00am, Parents of Girls Group, Guildford

Contact Rachel Pearson racheldpearson@gmail.com 01483 727378

Mon 19th, 9.15am Frensham Support Group, The Holly Bush, Frensham

Christine Malik christinemalik@btinternet.com or Bonnie Noyce jbnoyce@yahoo.com

Mon 19th & Tues 20th Sept Cygnet parent programme, Leatherhead.

FULLY BOOKED. To go on the waiting list for the next programme in Leatherhead / Dorking, or for more details, contact Sarah Mead sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk

Friday 23rd 10.00am Guildford Support Group

Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822 630

Weds 28th, 10am - 12noon, Family Voice Surrey AGM

Leatherhead Leisure Centre. For details sign up to the FVS newsletter go to <http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org/> or email contact@familyvoicesurrey.org

Thurs 29th 10.00am Redhill Support Group

Contact Helen Ruffhead h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com 01737 212 043

Thurs 29th 8.00pm, Weybridge pub meeting, The Oatlands Chaser

Contact Fi Phippen f.phippen@talktalk.net 07445 668925

OCTOBER

Sat 1st Oct 10.00am – 4.00pm WOMEN & GIRLS WITH AUTISM Information Day **Limited places remaining – see below.** For parents, people on the spectrum and professionals. Leatherhead Leisure Centre. For enquiries contact Sara Truman conference@mugsy.org
Tel: 07989 – 315609

Mon 3rd 7:30pm, Parents of Girls Group, Woking
Contact Rachel Pearson racheldpearson@gmail.com 01483 727378

Wed 5th 7:30pm, Parents of Adults Group, Camberley
Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 Hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Sun 9th Oct 2.00 – 3.00pm OR 3.00 – 4.00pm Indoor Climbing taster session
Xcel Leisure Centre, Walton on Thames. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL.** Contact Emma Whitfield on 07423 435413, email: emma@mugsy.org

Mon 10th 9.15am Frensham Support Group, The Holly Bush, Frensham Contact Christine Malik christinemalik@btinternet.com or Bonnie Noyce jbnoyce@yahoo.com

11th Oct 7.45 for 8.00pm TALK
PNL Centre at St Joseph's, 122 Ladbroke Road, REDHILL RH1 1LF
An overview of the NAS 'Too Much Information' Campaign plus a chance to try the virtual reality film. Please email emma@mugsy.org if you are coming along.

Wed 12th 10.00am, Woking Support Group
Contact Sarah Norris sarah4ian@ntlworld.com 07543 920917

Fri 14th 9.15am Chertsey Support Group, St Anne's School, Free Prae Rd. Contact Emma Whitfield emma@mugsy.org

Wed 19th 7.30pm Milford Support Group, The Cullum Centre, Rodborough School (Petworth Road entrance), Milford. Contact Sue Briggs, home-school link worker sue.briggs@hotmail.co.uk 01483 411100 x185

Fri 21st Oct, 10.00am Guildford Support Group
Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 01483 822 630

Thurs 27th Oct, 8 – 10 pm, The Oatlands Chaser, Weybridge
Contact Fi Phippen on 07445668925 or Email f.phippen@talktalk.net

Mon 31st Oct 10 am, Parents of Girls Group, Woking
Contact Rachel Pearson racheldpearson@gmail.com 01483 727378

Women and Girls Information Day

There are only a few tickets left for our information day about Women and Girls with Autism, being held at Leatherhead Leisure Centre on Saturday 1st October.

The closing date for booking is given as 3rd September, but bookings may close earlier if all tickets are sold, so don't delay if you want to come. Full details and booking forms can be found at <http://www.nassurreybranch.org/women-and-girls.html> or call 07989 315609.

Tony Attwood talk in Winchester May 2017

The NAS South Hampshire branch is hosting a seminar for parents and professionals featuring Professor Tony Attwood MSc, PhD, AFBPsS, MCCPs on Friday 19th May 2017 from 9.00am to 4.30pm. Tony Attwood is one of the most respected Asperger syndrome experts in the world. He is a clinical psychologist who has specialised in autism spectrum disorders since he qualified as a clinical psychologist in England in 1975 and has worked with over 3,000 individuals of all ages with Asperger syndrome. He works in private practice in Australia and his books include Asperger's Syndrome – A Guide for Parents and Professionals and The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome.

The programme will cover:

- Cognitive Abilities: A Different Way of Thinking and Learning Profile (incorporating the different profile of girls/women)
- Adolescent Issues for Teenagers
- Adults: Employment and Relationships

Tickets (including refreshments and light lunch - *suggested minimum donation)

- £40* Parents/carers of children, young people and adults with autism /people with autism
- £60* Teaching Assistants and accredited Hampshire Autism Ambassadors
- £120* All other professionals

To book go to <http://www.shantsnas.org.uk/News/TonyA>. Places are limited, so it is worth booking early. If you need to pay by cheque or have any queries, contact events@shantsnas.org.uk

Free Daytime Classical Piano Concert for Carers in Surrey

Japanese concert pianist and NAS Cultural Ambassador Noriko Ogawa is holding a series of free classical piano Concerts in Japan and the UK specifically for parents and carers of children with autism. The concert is also suitable for adults on the spectrum.

There are only two UK dates set and one is in Woking at 10.30am on 29th September. Called 'Jamie's Concerts' after a young man with autism who is a friend of Noriko's, they aim to give parents and carers a rare chance to relax and listen to live classical music in a supportive environment. The concerts are suitable whether you are new to classical music or regularly attend concerts. To register for your free place go to <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/raise-money/special-events/jamies-concerts.aspx>

Cathedral event for Carers

The Diocese of Guildford would like to invite carers to Guildford Cathedral, for Afternoon Tea and a dedicated Evensong to give thanks for all Carers in Surrey and North East Hampshire. It is being held on Thursday 13th October, at 3.00 p.m. Everyone is welcome including those who are currently being cared for. Booking is required for catering purposes, (so that they know how many cakes to bake!) Please contact: Emma Beswick, email: emma.beswick@cofeguildford.org.uk tel: 01483 790 324.

Max Discount Card

Families with a child or children on the Surrey Disability Register should have already received new Max Cards which are designed to offer discounts on days out for families of children with additional needs. If your child is on the disability register or if you think you should have received one, contact Surrey Short Breaks <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/support-for-children-with-disabilities/surrey-short-breaks-for-disabled-children>

GPs and Autism

The Royal College of General Practitioners (GPs) has produced a range of information for GPs about autism, and an Autism Patient Charter. The Charter says that GP surgeries will:

- Ensure all surgery staff are more 'autism aware' through access to the provision of guidance
- Work with people with autism to develop an autism-friendly environment, responding proactively to suggestions people with autism may have
- Make reasonable adjustments should staff suspect a patient or carer has autism, creating an environment where people feel comfortable disclosing their condition should they wish to
- Ensure staff are aware of the different ways people with autism may choose to communicate, and will try to communicate by the most appropriate means for the individual concerned
- Make staff aware of the likely causes of challenging behaviour and how to communicate effectively with someone in distress

To see all the resources from the Royal College of GPs, go to: <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/ASD>

Family Voice Surrey News & Consultations

Family Voice Surrey (FVS) is seeking contributions from parents and carers for a number of important consultations:

- Joint Autism Strategy – we are working jointly with FVS to improve the information that people get before, during and after a diagnosis of autism in the family. Please share your experiences so that Surrey can look at ways of improving this – we need examples of good practice as well as things that have not worked. Email contact@familyvoicesurrey.org with your experiences with 'Views about ASD' in the subject line
- Changes to Speech and Language therapy in 2017
- Respite
- OT & Physiotherapy
- Transport

To contribute, go to <http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org/#!current-initiatives/c1y4e>

Family Voice has a new co-chair, David Izatt, who joins Andrea Collings. David is taking over from outgoing co-chair Fran Morgan and has been involved with Family Voice Surrey since last year. Fran Morgan is stepping down to spend more time on her business. She has been a joy to work with and has helped to deepen the strong links between the branch and Family Voice. Also to note, FVS are holding their AGM on Wednesday 28 September from 10am - 12noon, at Leatherhead Leisure Centre – details of the Agenda will be published during the summer.

The Autism Awards for Professionals and Volunteers

The Autism Awards, run by the NAS, are designed to acknowledge outstanding contributions and achievements of individuals, teams and organisations who have demonstrated excellence, dedication and commitment to improving the lives of autistic people.

Entries are welcomed from individuals wishing to recognise their colleagues' efforts, from managers nominating a member of their team, and from autistic people who use the service or their parents or carers. Individuals cannot nominate themselves for an award.

Nominations are now open: <http://www.autismprofessionalsawards.org.uk/index.html>

Autism-Friendly School Uniform at M&S

The National Autistic Society has teamed up with Marks & Spencer to support the development of their brand new autism-friendly 'Easy Dressing' school uniform collection, which is available online from 1 August.

After consulting with professionals working with autistic children, M&S has developed an 'Easy Dressing' school uniform range, working with the NAS and students from the Helen Allison School. The pupils told the designers what they like and don't like about clothes – particularly the kind of things like labels and fastening that can feel very fiddly, and even painful and distracting because of their sensory sensitivities.

As well as working with the charity to develop the range, M&S will also be donating 10% from every item sold to The National Autistic Society.

New Surrey Hills Community Radio SEND Show

Laura Kerbey of Positive Autism Support & Training is presenting a fortnightly radio show about special needs, which runs on the first and third Wednesdays of the month on Surrey Hills Community Radio.

Laura is inviting guests to join her fortnightly show to chat about working and living with conditions such as Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Physical Difficulties and more. The show will also be providing vital information about groups, training and events happening in and around Surrey that support and raise awareness of special needs. Find out how to listen here <http://www.surreyhillradio.co.uk/how>

Research Project into Number Development in children with ASDs

Kingston University is looking for boys and girls between 4 and 8 years of age with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) to participate in a new study focusing on number development. As yet it is still unclear what causes the number strengths and difficulties in children with ASD, so the study is aiming to find out how the correct assistance can be put in place for children with ASD.

Taking part in the study would involve a one-off visit by a researcher to your home or one visit from you and your child to the university (whichever is easiest for you) at a time convenient to you and your child. The visit will take about 1.5 hours including breaks and during this time your child will be playing a number of short games either on a computer or pen and paper tasks.

Your child's data will remain anonymous and they are happy to write a report about your child's performance. All researchers have a clean DBS (formerly CRB) check and have experience in working with children with ASD.

If you are interested in finding out more about this study, please email one of the researchers below:

Alaa k1004167@kingston.ac.uk
Neesha k1543902@kingston.ac.uk
Sarah k1542567@kingston.ac.uk

The project is led by Dr Jo Van Herwegen, Associate professor in Child development, Kingston University London

Information for Adults:

Spouses and Partners Group

We have started a support group for spouses or partners of people with autism/Aspergers. The group will be meeting once a month in Guildford, with the next meeting on Wednesday 7th Sept from 8.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. For more details please contact Sara Truman email: nas@mugsy.org tel: 01483 822630.

Employment Works for Autism

Places are now available for the second half of the Employment Works for Autism project - supported internships for people with autism that provide unpaid work experience to develop the skills required to find paid work.

Staff help participants to identify their skills and aspirations and support them during all stages of the job search. The programme also includes on-going support for participants and their employer to settle into the role. After work experience, participants will also receive personalised support and advice to find a job.

The programme is open to any job seeker with an autistic spectrum condition, whatever age, ability or previous work experience. Priority will be given to those who can demonstrate a commitment to finding work. To apply, you must claim either Job Seekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance, and not be linked with another employment support provider or programme. To apply or find out more, call 01483 806806 or email: info@surreychoices.com

Transforming care

'Transforming Care' is the Government programme to provide better services in the local community for people with a learning disability and/or autism who have behaviours that challenge. The aim is that fewer people will need to go into specialist hospitals or other provision a long way from their families. You can read about the work that is taking place in Surrey here: http://www.surreypb.org.uk/Transforming_care.html

Parents of Adults Group in Haslemere?

Our support groups for parents of adults on the autism spectrum currently meet in Guildford, Farnham, Camberley, Weybridge and Reigate. We would like to find out if there is interest in adding Haslemere to our list of venues. If any parents of adults would be interested in occasional get-togethers in Haslemere, please contact Sara Truman email: nas@mugsy.org or tel: 01483 822630.

Funding approved for new adult provision

Surrey County Council has agreed the funding to build new accommodation for young adults with autism and complex needs near Cranleigh. The plans for Lindon Farm now have to be submitted for planning permission by Waverley Borough Council. Artist's impressions of the accommodation can be seen here: <https://news.surreycc.gov.uk/2016/06/27/in-pictures-artist-impressions-of-new-homes-for-people-with-autism/>

Surrey Health Action

The Surrey Health Action website has been updated recently. It provides a range of information for adults with learning disabilities (LDs) and their families/carers about health provision, including easy read information about visiting the doctor, dentist etc. It also has information about Health Action Plans, helping to keep the person with LD in good health. The website is at: <http://www.surreyhealthaction.org/>

Disability Register

Surrey County Council (SCC) would like to encourage more adults with disabilities to join the Adult Disability Register. When you register, you will be sent information relevant to your disability or impairment and you can work together with the Council and others to find ways to influence what is important to you.

Upon registration, you will receive an identity card (ID) which is written proof that you have registered a disability with SCC. The ID card can be used in any places like leisure centres, cinemas or theme parks that offer discounts for disabled customers, or to obtain VAT savings on equipment and services purchased in connection with your disability. In addition, for your peace of mind, SCC work with Surrey Fire and Rescue and if needed will share your address for emergency purposes, such as emergency evacuation, flooding, fire etc. This means that they will have a record that shows any address where someone may need additional assistance in an emergency.

The Register is about empowering you through information and contacts. You do not need to be on the Register to obtain services, apply for welfare benefits, or to ask for an assessment of your social care needs. The information you provide is confidential and will not be given to anyone without your specific agreement. However, to help plan services SCC will use the information in the Register to help them identify what people find most helpful, but they will always make sure your personal details remain anonymous.

For more information or to register online go to: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support-for-adults/care-and-support-where-to-start/surrey-disability-register> or call 0300 200 1005

About the NAS Surrey Branch

The Surrey Branch of the NAS is a volunteer-run parent-to-parent support group for families in Surrey affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders. It's FREE to join (although a small donation is appreciated) and we have around 1,500 members. The branch holds regular meetings and organises social events, local coffee mornings and special interest groups, and represents parents in meetings with health, education and social services. We host an active Yahoo! online forum, and produce this newsletter every two months. To join, go to www.nassurreybranch.org or email emma@mugsy.org for a membership form.

If you are a member of the NAS at national level, you can nominate us as your branch by emailing supportercare@nas.org.uk which means we receive a percentage of your annual subscription.

*We're part of **The National Autistic Society**, a national charity founded by parents in 1962 which runs a wide range of services such as schools, clubs and adult centres. It has over 20,000 members, 100 branches and works in partnership with more than 50 local autism societies. The NAS exists to champion the rights and interests of all people with autistic spectrum disorders and to ensure that they and their families receive quality services appropriate to their needs. **National Autistic Society, 393 City Rd, London EC1V 1NG** www.autism.org.uk. **The National Autistic Society is a registered charity, number 269425. Company limited by guarantee number 1205298.***

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