



Newsletter

Welcome to the August / September issue of Surrey News

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On 26th June, we held our annual general meeting in Guildford and I was re-elected as Chair, with Haywood Drake being re-elected once again as our Treasurer.

We presented the branch accounts, which showed that during 2017/8 the branch had a deficit for the year of £1,690.59, representing money that we have spent on courses and activities for members.

Every penny that we receive is donated by members and supporters. If you belong to the NAS at national level, you can help us by asking for part of your annual subscription to come to the branch. Just email the NAS at supportercare@nas.org.uk and say that you nominate the Surrey Branch to receive part of your fee.

Just a reminder that you are receiving this newsletter because you opted in via Yahoo. If you no longer wish to receive it, please click on the 'Unsubscribe' link at the bottom of the email, or email info@nassurreybranch.org with UNSUBSCRIBE plus the name(s) of the list(s) you wish to unsubscribe from in the subject line:

- 'NASSBLETT' - email newsletter
- 'NASSB' - email forum. Please note, if you unsubscribe, you will no longer be able to participate in the forum.

Many thanks,

Sara Truman
Chair (volunteer)

NAS Surrey Branch

General email: info@nassurreybranch.org

Website: www.nassurreybranch.org

Twitter: @NASSurreyBranch

Facebook: @NASSurreyBranch

Donations: www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch

NAS Surrey Branch Contacts

Chair:

Sara Truman 07423 435413

nas@mugsy.org

Treasurer:

Haywood Drake

bobdrake357@btinternet.com

Branch Membership:

Nancy Rowell

membership@mugsy.org

Deputy / Website & Newsletter:

Emma Whitfield

emma@mugsy.org

Events:

Please email events@nassurreybranch.org with the name of the event you're interested in in the subject line

Sarah Mead

sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk

Emma Searle

ephillpotts@gmail.com

Jill Goulding

Jill.goulding@gmail.com

Parents of Girls' Group

Rachel Pearson

racheldpearson@gmail.com

Fathers' Group:

Martin Trenaman

trenamans@talktalk.net

Parents of Adults' Group

Hilary Dyce

hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Weighted Blanket Loan

E Surrey – Penny Sims po.sims@yahoo.co.uk

W Surrey – Emma Whitfield emma@mugsy.org

Blankets are suitable for a child from 25kg

POSTAL ADDRESS

Please note, no NAS staff or volunteers work at this address

NAS Surrey Branch
c/o Walton Charities,
2 Quintet,
Churchfield Road,
Walton on Thames KT12 2TZ

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

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

www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk

SOS!SEN charity to support EHCPs etc, Tel:

020 8538 3731, Web: www.sossen.org.uk

Family Support & Representation

One Stop CAMHS / BEN Pathway family support 0300 222 5755

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

Family Voice Surrey parent representation

www.familyvoicesurrey.org

Action for Carers tel: 0303 040 1234

CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk

Parent Programmes

PAT-P for parents of under 5s. Replaces Early Bird course.

Cygnets for parents of children aged 5 – 19.

courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk

Tel: 020 8330 3009 ex 237

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

Activities for children and young people

NAS Resource Centre, Godalming: 01483

521 744 SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk

interAKtive, Epsom-based charity for children with ASCs and other 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 ASCs Tel: 01483 806806, email:

employability@surreychoices.com

Benefits advice

NAS Tips page – via www.autism.org.uk

Cerebra DLA guide: <http://w3.cerebra.org.uk/>

0800 328 1159

Seminar for Parents of Young People Thinking of Going to Uni

We are hosting another seminar for parents/carers of people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) who are considering going to university on **Tuesday 30th October from 10.00am – 2.30pm** in Guildford. The session aims to give parents an insight into some of the difficulties people with an ASC can experience in the transition to Uni; explain what support is available; how to get it and how to navigate the process. The seminar is relevant for parents/carers of young people aged 16 and above. Topics covered will include:

- Things to consider when deciding whether (and which) University is a good choice
- Difficulties often experienced by ASC students
- Sources of support at University
- Disabled Students' Allowance and Assessment Process
- Strategies for Managing at Uni

The seminar is being delivered by AS Mentoring www.asmentoring.co.uk, a specialist organisation that works with adults with ASCs to support them in higher education and in the workplace, to find and retain work.

Suggested Donation: £15. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** - please email events@nassurreybranch.org with 'Going to Uni' in the subject line.

'Autism in the Family' Conference – Last Chance to book

We have a limited number of places available for parents/carers and people with an ASC for our Conference on Saturday 29th September. Entitled, 'Autism In The Family', the full-day session costs £40 for parents/carers (subsidised rate) and people with autism and £70 for professionals.

The Conference takes place at the University of Surrey in Guildford and includes plenary talks and workshops that address specific issues. The morning keynote speakers are:

[Anna Kennedy OBE](#) - the mother of two sons with autism who are now adults. In 1999, after her sons had been turned away by 26 schools, she set up her own school, Hillingdon Manor, for pupils with autism and has since set up a second school and a college for students with autism. She will talk about how autism has affected her family and what advice she would give other parents and professionals.

[Dr Joshua Muggleton](#) - a clinical psychologist working with children with autism and learning disabilities who has autism himself, as well as three siblings on the autistic spectrum. He is the author of "*Raising Martians – From Crash Landing To Leaving Home: How To Help A Child With Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism*". Joshua will talk about his experience of having autism and growing up in a family of four autistic children, and will share his expertise as a psychologist about how professionals, parents and family members can help people with autism.

In the afternoon, you can choose to attend two different talks from a choice of five topics:

- Supporting siblings of children with autism;
- Young people transitioning to adult services and parents "letting go";
- School and home – parents and school staff working together
- Behaviour management
- Couples where one or both partners have autism

For full details and a link to the booking site go to

<http://www.nassurreybranch.org/conference-2018-1.html> or email conference@mugsy.org for a paper booking form, or with any queries.

Retro Video Games Morning: Sunday 9th September in Guildford

The host of Guildford's monthly Gamer's Lounge, **Retro Games Club**, Andrew Smith, has offered to host a special retro computer games morning for the NAS Surrey Branch at The Boileroom, Stoke Fields, Guildford, GU1 4LS on Sunday 9th September from 11.00am – 1.00pm.

You'll get to play on authentic consoles from the '90s including the Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES), Mega Drive, and Nintendo 64 with all of your favourite characters: Sonic, Smash Bros, Mario, Pokémon etc.

There are opportunities to play solo or join in with other players. No booking required - just turn up on the day. We are suggesting a £5 donation per player to NAS Surrey Branch to help cover the cost of the venue - these can be made on the day or via our justgiving page: <http://www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch>. Under-18s must be accompanied and remain the responsibility of their parent/carer at all times.

Free Workshops for Parents by NAS Professionals

The professionals at the NAS Resource Centre are running a series of free workshops for parents and carers of children and young people with autism. These are suitable for families whose child or young person already has a diagnosis, or who is awaiting diagnosis.

The workshops for this autumn are:

Topic: Understanding & Managing behaviour

Date: Fri 21st Sept

Time: 10:30- 1:00pm

Location: Reigate

Topic: Sensory processing

Date: Friday 19th Oct

Time: 10:30- 1:00pm

Location: Shepperton

In November there will be a workshop on social skills (date TBC).

Places must be booked in advance. For more information and to reserve your place, please email: SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk or call 01483 521744 (Please note, these sessions are not connected with the NAS Surrey Branch).

Redhill Coffee Mornings – Which Day is Best?

The number of people attending the Redhill support group coffee mornings has been low recently and we are considering whether or not to continue running them.

They are currently held on Thursday mornings, with the next one on **27th September**. If you are interested in attending, but are not free on Thursday mornings, please let us know as the volunteer who runs them could change the day if that would help. If there is anything else we could change which would make it easier for you to attend, do let us know.

You can either contact the host, Helen Ruffhead, at h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com or email Branch Chair Sara Truman on nas@mugsy.org.

Morrisons Quieter Hour on Saturdays

Morrisons supermarkets are introducing a 'Quieter Hour' in all their stores to help adults with ASCs, parents of autistic children and others who appreciate a quieter shopping experience. It will be every Saturday between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.

During this period there will be no tannoy announcements, music or radio playing. They will even be turning down the volume of the beeps from scanning equipment at the checkouts, lights will be dimmed to reduce sensory stimulus and staff will aim to reduce the movement of trolleys and baskets. Signs will also inform customers that it is Quieter Hour.

NAS Autism Hour 6th – 13th October

If you run, or work for, a retailer, café or other business that is open to the public, please consider signing up to the NAS 'Autism Hour' this year from Saturday 6th – Saturday 13th October.

As part of its 'Too Much Information' campaign, the NAS is asking shops and businesses to organise an Autism Hour and take simple steps that will make their business more autism-friendly through steps including:

- Turning down music and other noise such as in-store tannoy announcements
- Dimming the lights, particularly fluorescent strip lighting which can be overwhelming for autistic people
- Sharing information about autism with employees – you can download information from the NAS website
- Helping the public understand autism – the NAS will be asking participating shops and business to share information about autism with their customers.

Last year, more than 5,000 retailers took part in Autism Hour. To sign up your business to take part this year, go to <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/autism-hour/form.aspx>. Or you can download a poster to publicise your involvement here <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/autism-hour/about.aspx>

Blue Badge Parking for People with ASCs

On 29th July, the Government announced that it is planning to make important changes to Blue Badge rules, which will mean that many autistic people in England will now qualify for a Badge that allows you to park in a disabled parking space.

This move follows years of campaigning from the National Autistic Society, our supporters, and other autistic people and families across England. Under the new rules, there will be two important new ways that autistic people may qualify for a Blue Badge:

- If you can't undertake a journey without being at risk of serious harm, it causing 'very considerable psychological distress', or if you have considerable difficulty when walking
- If you receive PIP Mobility Component for 'planning and making a journey' and score at least ten points.

Children who get Higher Rate Mobility Disability Living Allowance (HRMDLA) will also continue to qualify, as before.

The Transport Minister, Jesse Norman MP, said: "The changes we have announced today will ensure that this scheme is extended equally to people with hidden disabilities so that they can enjoy the freedoms that many of us take for granted."

You can read the story in full on the NAS website <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/media-centre/news/2018-07-27-good-news-blue-badge.aspx>

NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR AUGUST - OCTOBER 2018

NAS Surrey Branch local meetings are a great way to meet up with other families who understand autism to share experiences, find out information and seek support. **Please always contact the volunteer host before going along to make sure nothing has changed.** Most meetings run during term-time only.

If you can't see a meeting in your area, why not host one yourself? To find out more, contact us at info@nassurreybranch.org

Frensham – The Holly Bush, Frensham, GU10 3BJ.

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

- Mon 17th Sept 9.15 – 11.30 a.m.
- Mon 29th Oct 9.15 – 11.30 a.m.

Godalming – Costa Coffee, 74 High Street, Godalming GU7 1DU

Contact: Lizzie Reszowski numpadzo@hotmail.co.uk tel: 07748 645466

- Mon 10th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Mon 15th Oct 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Guildford – Caffè Nero, 66 North Street, Guildford GU1 4AH

Contact Sara Truman nas@mugsy.org 07423 435413

- Fri 7th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Mon 8th Oct 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Hinchley Wood – Hinchley Wood Primary School, Claygate Lane, Esher KT10 0AQ

Contact: Emily Gorvy email: emily.gorvy@hotmail.co.uk

- Fri 21st Sept 2.00 – 3.15 p.m.

Milford – The Cullum Centre, Rodborough School, Petworth Road entrance, Milford GU8 5BZ

Contact: Hilary Baldwin HBaldwin@rodborough.surrey.sch.uk

- October, evening meeting 7.30pm (date to be confirmed)

Oxted - morning and evening venues, ask contact for details

Contact: Anne Pearce annepearcemcl@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 07946 461566

- Tues 11th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Redhill – In a member's home

Contact: Helen Ruffhead h.ruffhead@ntlworld.com 01737 212043

- Thurs 27th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

Woking – Wyevale Garden Centre, Egley Road, Mayford, Woking GU22 0NH

Contact Sarah Norris sarah4ian@ntlworld.com 07543 920917

- Weds 12th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Weds 3rd Oct 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

NAS Surrey Branch Calendar / Cont'd

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Dads' Group – In a member's home

Contact Martin Trenaman trenamans@talktalk.net

A quarterly social meeting for fathers of children or adults with ASC.

- Date and venue to be confirmed.

Mum's Group – Weybridge, Dorking and Guildford

A social evening for mothers of children or adults with ASC. Contact hosts for venue and time.

- Fri 21st Sept – Weybridge. Contact Fi Phippen f.phippen@talktalk.net 07377 549490
- Oct (Date to be confirmed) – Dorking. Contact Helen Trenaman trenamans@talktalk.net 01737 360069

Parents of Girls Group – Woking and Guildford

Contact Rachel Pearson racheldpearson@gmail.com

A group for parents of girls that meets approximately once a month during term-time.

- Fri 14th Sept 10.30 a.m. Guildford
- Tues 9th Oct 10.00 a.m. Woking

Parents of Adults Groups – Locations around Surrey

A chance to meet parents and carers who have an adult offspring on the spectrum for an informal meal or drink. Meetings start at 7.30 p.m.

- Thurs 6th Sept – Weybridge. Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk
- Weds 3rd Oct – Farnham. Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Spouses and Partners Group, Guildford

Contact Sara Truman 01483 822630 nas@mugsy.org

Evening meetings for the partners of people on the spectrum (no diagnosis necessary).

- Weds 26th Sept 8.00 – 9.30 p.m.
- Weds 31st Oct 8.00 – 9.30 p.m

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Pegasus Police Scheme

People with a learning disability, or those who find it difficult to communicate, can register with Surrey Police's 'Pegasus' scheme. The scheme will issue them with a Personal Identification Number (PIN) which they can quote when contacting the police to help them find their details. They will also be given a Pegasus card, which they can show to the police or emergency services to let them know that they may require additional help and support. For details call 01483 571212 or email 101@surrey.pnn.police.uk The website is at https://surrey.police.uk/.../easy_read_pegasus_leaflet.pdf

The Bright and Light Boys and Girls Group

Member Simone Siddle is running another therapeutic art and social skills group for boys and girls age 7-10 in her art studio in Epsom. The group is for children who find making friends, meeting new people and engaging in different social situations challenging, particularly those with ASACs, and is designed to help them to develop their skills and confidence through a range of fun communication games and art activities.

Sessions run on alternate Saturday mornings from 11.30am -12.30pm on 15th & 29th September, 13th October, 3rd & 17th November and 1st December. Six sessions can be booked in advance for £120, which includes a pre-group consultation and a parents' evening to share strategies and provide support. There will be no more than six children in the group.

For more details go to: <https://brightandlightgroup.wordpress.com/>

Parent/Carer Break Grants Now Available

Surrey short breaks are once again offering grants of up to £300 per family, which can be used for a wide range of things to support that a child with SEND and their family. Examples of grants that have been made include: the purchase of camping equipment, family days out, short break play and youth activities and family trips away.

The grant is for families who are not known to social care and all requests need to be submitted in partnership with a professional who will complete an early help assessment. Alternatively, families can approach [Action for Carers \(Surrey\)](#), tel: 0303 040 1234.

You can find out more about [Short breaks in Surrey](#) via their website or follow them on [Facebook](#). To contact the team call 01372 832896 or email: shortbreaks@surreycc.gov.uk

For details about the **Surrey Children's Disability Register** (SCDR) and how you can receive a **free MAX CARD**, which offers access various activities around the country at a discounted rate, email SCDR@surreycc.gov.uk or call 020 8541 8792.

Positive Autism Support and Training Workshops on PDA

The independent consultancy Positive Autism Support and Training is running two workshops in Leatherhead for parents of children with autism and challenging behaviour, including Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA).

- Friday 14th September - 09.30am - 3.00pm - £60 - Leatherhead
- Friday 14th December - 09.30am - 3.00pm - £60 - Leatherhead

To book, go to <https://www.positiveautismsupportandtraining.co.uk/>, email them on info@positiveautismsupportandtraining.co.uk or tel: 07969 555947 / 07769 116 382

SEND Teaching School Workshops for Parents

The SEND Teaching School will be running two workshops for parents this autumn in Worcester Park:

- **Raising Girls with Autism** - Wednesday 14th November, 10.30am – 12.30pm
- **Preparing for Puberty: Dealing with Adolescence** - Weds 21st Nov, 10.30am -12.30pm

Places must be booked in advance. To reserve your place call: 020 8330 3009 ext. 237 or email: courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk.

SEND Travel Assistance – Get In Touch Now for September

Surrey County Council's new SEND Travel Assistance Policy comes into effect in September and is available to parents/carers who are applying for the 2018/19 academic year and for those currently receiving assistance. **No changes will be made to the type of assistance currently received without consulting parents/carers.**

To check if your child/young person is eligible for assistance, please see the [September 2018 Travel Assistance Policy](#) or contact the SEND Travel Assistance Team.

Travel assistance may take one of the following forms:

- **Independent Travel allowance** – this can be used by families and young people to help fund their own transport arrangements, including helping towards the running costs of a family car, or paying a member of the family or trusted friend to take your child to school.
- **Option to share school runs with the council** - you transport your child or young person on set, regular days and the council covers days/times that you can't do.
- **Assistance with getting your other children/young people to school** - so that you can take your SEND child/young person, where this is the most cost-effective option.
- **Support for independent travel** - supporting your child/young person with the cost of a bus/train pass if they are able to travel independently.
- **Independent travel training** - 1:1 tailored practical assistance with an experienced travel trainer who will accompany your child/young person on their journey to school and back.
- **Transport on wheels** - where other options are not suitable, the council will organise transport for eligible children and young people who will normally travel with other children/young people attending the same, or nearby school/college.

If you have not already applied for travel assistance for September, you need to contact the council urgently via your child's SEN Caseworker or by contacting the SEND Travel Assistance Team: sendtravel.assistance@surreycc.gov.uk, tel: 0300 200 1004

Slides From Talk on Managing Anxiety in June

The speaker at our AGM in Guildford was Clinical Psychologist Dr Michelle Conn who gave a talk entitled *'Why Do People With Autistic Spectrum Conditions Suffer From so Much Anxiety?'*

Dr Conn explained some of the reasons why people on the spectrum are particularly susceptible to anxiety and gave some very useful strategies that people can use to help reduce their own anxiety, or which parent / carers can use to support someone. Dr Louise Connor was due to co-present, but was unable to come due to family issues.

You can download a copy of the slides from a link on the NAS Surrey Branch website www.nassurreybranch.org

'Prevent Avoidable Deaths' Petition

There is a UK Parliament petition calling for more training for health professionals on understanding people with autism which was set up by Paula McGowan, whose autistic son Oliver tragically died last year in hospital.

The NAS supports this petition and believes that training is vital so that health professionals, like doctors and nurses, understand the needs of autistic people and how to communicate with them. The Autism Act and its guidance say that all health staff should be trained, but implementation of this is patchy, meaning that too many autistic people don't get the support from understanding professionals that they need. You can help by signing and sharing the petition here <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/221033>

Research Requests from Kingston University

We have three separate requests for participants in academic research projects connected with Kingston University. If you can help, please contact the relevant person.

1. What support do children need?

The researchers are looking to understand the impact of your child's diagnosis to help change policy. As part of the research, the team is interested what kind of support children with Williams syndrome, Down syndrome and Autism need. This information will allow them to inform professionals and stakeholders such as the government, about the type of support that needs to be put into place for children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Currently, they are interested in how children, parents, and/or the families are affected in their daily lives by a child's neurodevelopmental disorder. Therefore, they ask you to send a personal message electronically about how your child's neurodevelopmental disorder has impacted on him/her or your family, and to send an example of this from the past week. You will be asked to include your child's age and diagnosis in your message but not their name. Your example will be treated as confidential and will remain anonymous at all times.

This research is being conducted by Dr. Jo Van Herwegen (Kingston University) and Dr Olympia Palikara (University of Roehampton). If you have any questions, please email Dr Van Herwegen at j.vanherwegen@kingston.ac.uk.

2. Emotional understanding in children with autism.

The aim of this study is to examine whether children with ASAC are able to understand and infer emotions/intentions in complex and naturalistic everyday situations. Previous studies have shown that some children with ASAC are able to infer mental states and emotions of other people. However, further research is required into whether they understand the reasons behind how other people feel in more real-life social situations.

The study is open to typically-developing children and children diagnosed with ASAC between the ages of 6 to 11 years old.

Participants will view videos that represent everyday life situations and will be asked comprehension questions related to the videos. Also, children will take part in verbal and non-verbal IQ tests.

For details contact Dr Elisa Back e.back@kingston.ac.uk or Angela Barhouch (Researcher): k1734058@kingston.ac.uk

3. Humour comprehension in ASAC and Downs: the Smiles and Laughter Project

This research team are investigating humour understanding in order to develop interventions to improve humour comprehension in children with ASAC and Down's syndrome aged 7 to 10 years old. Each participant will watch videos of people telling jokes. Then he/she will be asked to show how funny he/she thinks the jokes are and why. They will also record participants' facial expressions with the laptop camera, to see how much they smile or laugh and there will also be a brief measure of verbal and nonverbal ability. The whole session will take no longer than 1 hour and your child will receive a small present in return for his/her participation.

The team can arrange a visit to your home or your child's school during afternoons or weekends or you can book a session at a convenient time for you and your child at Kingston University. If you and your child are interested in participating in this study or if you have any further questions please contact Erica Ranzato at e.ranzato@kingston.ac.uk or go to <https://mathautism.wordpress.com/>

Information for Adults

Access to Work – Funding for Support at Work

If you want to work but have a disability that makes working a problem (or you anticipate that you're going to have difficulties), the government's Access to Work scheme could help you. If your health or disability affects the way you do your job, or you need help during the recruitment process, the scheme can give you and your employer advice and support with any extra costs that may arise because of your needs. You can seek support from a line manager or HR, or you can contact Access to Work direct.

If you have an Autistic Spectrum Condition, your employer (or a prospective employer) is obliged, under the Equality Act 2010, to make reasonable adjustments should you need them. The reasonable adjustments might be (but are not limited to):

- Coaching to help you develop strategies to improve workplace performance around organising your work or managing your time, for example
- Ongoing workplace mentoring to support you in your communication(s) with your employer and managing anxiety
- Training for your company to develop more inclusive/supportive practice
- Changes to your workspace, where you sit or the equipment available

The amount of help which you receive will vary depending on how long you have been employed, what support you need and whether you are self-employed. It can also fund support to manage communication during an interview.

To apply for Access to Work funding you will initially need to check your eligibility and make an application online. If you think you are eligible, speak to your employment adviser (if you have one) or contact the access to work centre where you will be offered advice and guidance from an access to work advisor <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>. There is a list of centres on the Disability Rights UK website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org/access-work

Online Carers' Assessment

If you look after someone, you have the right to ask for a carer's assessment by completing an online carers' support needs assessment at any time. A carer's assessment looks at the impact your caring responsibilities have on your life and what social care support you might be eligible for. If you are eligible, your needs could be met by a range of options, including paid services or services provided by the voluntary sector. If you are not eligible, you can get information and advice on where you can get help. For more information go to:

<https://adultsocialcareportal.surreycc.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/help/carerassess>

Tell CQC About Your Care

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They are running a project called 'Tell us about your care' designed to get information from people they don't usually hear from. This aims to make it easier for autistic people, their families, and the professionals who support them to pass on information about the experiences and needs of children and adults with autism directly to the CQC to help them improve how services across the country support people with autism, including hospitals, dentists, GP practices etc.

To share information about your care, good or bad, go to <https://www.cqc.org.uk/share-your-experience-finder?referer=promoblock>

Suicide Prevention

A video has been produced for people with learning disabilities who are feeling suicidal. It can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZpjtvAgJns> The video was made with the help of an organisation called GrassRoots Suicide Prevention <https://www.prevent-suicide.org.uk/>

Surrey County Council is consulting on its updated Suicide Prevention Strategy. If anyone would like to comment, you can see the draft strategy and make your comments online here: <https://www.surreysays.co.uk/adult-social-care-and-public-health/suicidepreventionstrategy/>

Disability Empowerment Network Surrey

The Disability Empowerment Network Surrey enables disabled people to keep in contact with their local communities and encourages all to have a say in local health, social care and other public services. Made up of four local groups (North, Mid, South West and East) who meet quarterly, the network is run by disabled people and carers in close partnership with Surrey Coalition of Disabled People.

Some of the priorities members have recently campaigned on include: Blue Badge parking charges in hospitals and local council car parks, compliance of health organisations with the NHS Accessible Information Standard, issues with accessibility on local train services, as well as giving views on recent consultations run by health and social care commissioners.

To find out more about the network and to join, go to: www.surreycc.gov.uk/disabilitygroups
Phone/SMS/text: 07970 749933 or email: asc.engagement@surreycc.gov.uk

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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