



## Welcome to the August-September issue of Surrey News

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*Please note: Some of the articles in the front of the newsletter include information for young people and adults, so please do check for details.*

Apologies to everyone who has been concerned that they might have missed instructions on signing up to our new newsletter email system – the changeover has not been quite as straightforward as we had hoped.

As you have already given us permission to contact you in the past, we will transfer all current subscribers to the new system in September. **If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter you can UNSUBSCRIBE at any time and your name will be removed from the email list.**

During August, you will receive an email from [NASSBLETT-noreply@yahooogroups.com](mailto:NASSBLETT-noreply@yahooogroups.com) explaining that your name and email address will be transferred to our new email system.

You can read our Privacy Policy here <http://www.nassurreybranch.org/privacy-policy.html>

Please email me if you have any concerns.

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Thank you to everyone who attended our AGM in Woking on 11<sup>th</sup> July. As those who came along will know, I was re-appointed as Chair and Hayward Drake was re-appointed as our Treasurer.

We are still in need of regular or occasional volunteers to help out with the growing number of events that we are asked to attend. If you can spare some time during the day, please get in touch.

Sara Truman,  
Chair (volunteer)

**NAS Surrey Branch**

**General email:** [info@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:info@nassurreybranch.org)

**Website:** [www.nassurreybranch.org](http://www.nassurreybranch.org)

**Twitter:** @NASSurreyBranch

**Facebook:** @NASSurreyBranch

**Donations:** [www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch](http://www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch)

## NAS Surrey Branch Contacts

### **Chair:**

Sara Truman 07423 435413  
[nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

### **Treasurer:**

Haywood Drake  
[bobdrake357@btinternet.com](mailto:bobdrake357@btinternet.com)

### **Branch Membership:**

Nancy Rowell  
[membership@mugsy.org](mailto:membership@mugsy.org)

### **Deputy / Website & Newsletter:**

Emma Whitfield  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org)

### **Events, Activities & Fundraising:**

Please email [events@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:events@nassurreybranch.org) with the name of the event in the subject line

Sarah Mead

Emma Searle

Jill Goulding

Jo Dilworth

### **Parents of Girls' Group**

Rachel Pearson  
[racheldpearson@gmail.com](mailto:racheldpearson@gmail.com)

### **Dads' Group:**

Simon Bunch  
[bunch.simon@gmail.com](mailto:bunch.simon@gmail.com)

### **Parents of Adults' Group**

Hilary Dyce  
[hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Weighted Blanket Loan**

E Surrey – Penny Sims [po.sims@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:po.sims@yahoo.co.uk)  
W Surrey – Emma Whitfield  
[emma@mugsy.org](mailto:emma@mugsy.org) Blankets are suitable for a child from 25kg (about 8 yrs)

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### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

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

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

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## Other Useful Contacts

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

**NAS web site:** [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**NAS Helpline:** Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10am – 4pm), or email [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk)

**NAS Parent-to-Parent line** 0808 800 4106

**NAS national membership:** 020 7903 3563

Email [membership@nas.org.uk](mailto:membership@nas.org.uk)

### **Education Support**

**NAS Education Rights:** 0808 800 4102

**SSIASS Parent Support:** 01737 737300

[www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk](http://www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk)

**SOS!SEN** charity to support EHCPs etc, Tel: 020 8538 3731, Web: [www.sossen.org.uk](http://www.sossen.org.uk)

### **Family Support & Representation**

**One Stop** CAMHS / BEN Pathway family support 0300 222 5755

**Portage** – support for children with SEND under 3.5 years 0300 200 1004

**Family Voice Surrey** parent representation  
[www.familyvoicesurrey.org](http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org)

**Action for Carers** tel: 0303 040 1234

[CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk)

### **Parent Programmes**

**PAT-P** for parents of under 5s.

**Cygnets** for parents of children aged 5 – 19. [courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk](mailto:courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk)  
Tel: 020 8330 3009 ex 237

**Redhill CAMHS** group 01737-287002

### **Activities for children and young people**

**NAS Resource Centre, Godalming:** 01483

521 744 [SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk](mailto:SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk)

**interAKTive**, Epsom-based charity for children with ASCs and other difficulties 07876 762178 [www.interaktive.org.uk](http://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](mailto:surrey.service@nas.org.uk)

### **Employment Support**

**Employability** for people with disabilities including ASCs Tel: 01483 806806, email: [employability@surreychoices.com](mailto:employability@surreychoices.com)

### **Benefits advice**

**NAS Tips page** – via [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**Cerebra DLA guide:**

<http://w3.cerebra.org.uk/> 0800 328 1159

## Talk on PDA in Redhill - Weds 9<sup>th</sup> October

We are hosting a talk in Redhill on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 8.00 p.m. about Pathological Demand Avoidance – a behaviour profile within the autism spectrum. The talk is by Clare Truman, an autism specialist teacher. The talk will cover:

- The debate surrounding the use of Pathological Demand Avoidance as a diagnosis
- Supporting children who display extreme demand avoidance at home and school
- Adapting autism strategies for children who display extreme demand avoidance

Places are limited, and **must** be booked in advance via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pathological-demand-avoidance-registration-62075032092> There is no charge, but donations will be gratefully received, either in cash on the day or via our JustGiving page: [www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch](http://www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch)

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Clare is also giving a talk on PDA for Action for Carers in Godalming on Tues 10<sup>th</sup> Sept from 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. Places must be booked in advance by contacting Action for Carers: email [CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk) tel: 0303 040 1234. See information on other Action for Carers events on page 8.

## Parent Seminar on Supporting Your Young Person to Find Work

On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October we are hosting a seminar on what parents can – and can't - do to help their autistic son or daughter to get into employment. The talk is for parents of young people **aged 16 – 25**, and will be held in Ashted from 9.45am – 2.30pm. It will help parents understand how to assist their son or daughter to prepare for the world of work and how best to support them to find employment as they leave education. It aims to give parents practical advice and ideas and signpost them to potential areas of further support/funding. Topics covered will include:

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

The seminar is being delivered by AS Mentoring [www.asmentoring.co.uk](http://www.asmentoring.co.uk) a specialist organisation which works with people with autism to help them find and retain work, as well as encouraging employers to develop more inclusive workplaces. Places are very limited and must be booked in advance – for a booking form please email [events@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:events@nassurreybranch.org) (For those who do not have email, text the branch telephone 07423 435413 or leave a message.)

The normal price for this course is £48 per person. Whilst the branch is funding the course, we do ask those attending to make a donation towards the costs, suggested minimum donation is £15. Full details on venue, donations etc will be sent with booking form.

## EmployAbility Survey Findings

EmployAbility has recently released findings from their annual survey, with the views of employers and the people they support into work. You can download a copy here: <https://www.surreychoices.com/latest-news/employability-spring-survey-results-2019/>

## Parent Courses in Guildford and Dorking

There are just a few places left for the two-day courses for parents of newly diagnosed autistic children aged 5 - 18 running this autumn, hosted by NAS Surrey Branch:

- Tues 15th & Weds 16th Oct – Guildford
- Tues 5th & Weds 6th Nov – Dorking

Courses run from 9.30 – 2.30 p.m. The courses are free, but we ask for a deposit of £10 per person which will be refunded on attending the course and we reserve the right to keep the deposits of people who do not attend. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL.**

If you would like to register your interest in a place on one of the courses, please email [events@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:events@nassurreybranch.org)

## Autism and Puberty talk by Mark Brown

There are just a few places left at our talk on Autism and Puberty by Mark Brown of Special Help 4 Special Needs in Woking on Saturday 19th October at 2.30 p.m.

In the talk, Mark will explore the issues faced by children and teenagers with autism when they are going through puberty, and the impact this can have on their family and wider circle. Topics covered will include:

- Identifying the characteristics of puberty that can have a significant effect on young people
- Providing an understanding of anger management related to puberty
- Practical approaches to address inappropriate sexualised behaviours
- How it's never too early to start planning for puberty

Places are limited and **must** be booked in advance via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/autism-and-puberty-registration-62391191734>

## Autism and ADHD Talk in Guildford

On the evening of Wednesday 13th November, we are holding a talk about Autism and ADHD in young people and adults. The talk will run from 8.00 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. and the speaker is Educational Psychologist Denise Thornton.

Sometimes traits of autism and ADHD can be confused and they also very often overlap. Many young people and adults with autism also have ADHD and are frequently misdiagnosed and unsupported due to a lack of understanding on how these conditions can co-occur.

Denise Thornton has worked with young people and adults with autism and ADHD for over 20 years and has helped them thrive in school and as they reach adulthood. Denise will provide insights and advice in this area, and also discuss how autism and ADHD may present differently in boys and girls, and men and women. After the talk you will know if you or your young person should seek further assessment or input for Autism or ADHD.

Places are limited and **must** be booked in advance via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/autism-and-adhd-registration-66584320495>

There is no charge to attend the talks we host or organise, but donations towards costs will be gratefully received, either in cash on the day or via our JustGiving page:

[www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch](http://www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch)

## **NAS 'Stepping Up for Autism'**

The NAS Surrey Service run by professionals based in Godalming is launching a series of new courses for parents called 'Stepping up for Autism'. These run one day per week over 8 weeks and are designed to be an introduction to autism as a diagnosis, with a focus on practical ideas and strategies for parents and carers of school-age children.

### Understanding Autism

- Parent and Child Wellbeing
- Communication
- Visual Supports
- Understanding Behaviour
- Managing Behaviour
- Developing Social Skills
- Sensory differences

For parents of children and young people of secondary school age, a session on puberty is also included.

The service is primarily for families of children and young people with an autism diagnosis living in Surrey. Referral can be made by any supporting professional via Mindsight Surrey CAMHS <https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/mindsightsurreycamhs/referrals>

The service also runs monthly topic-based workshops for parents of children who have an autism diagnosis or who are seeking one. To find out about upcoming topics, please email [SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk](mailto:SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk)

## **Jaz Bush Football Funday – Sun 29th Sept in Haslemere**

Friends and family of the late Jaz Bush are once again organising a fundraiser in her memory at Haslemere Rugby Club on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September: it will be 2 years in August since the Bush family sadly lost Jaz.

This year they will once again hold a football tournament with a mixed game first, followed by six men's teams. There will also be a raffle, auction and bottle tombola, as well as a hot food van, activities for children and live music.

Their previous events have been a huge success and have raised over £22,000 for the National Autistic Society Surrey Branch and Young Minds. Please let the team know if you can support the event by going along, donating items for the raffle or buying tickets: [https://www.facebook.com/events/1142067025999880/?active\\_tab=discussion](https://www.facebook.com/events/1142067025999880/?active_tab=discussion)

## **Support Group For Parents and Grandparents of Children with SEND**

There is a group for the parents and Grandparents of children with any type of special needs at Ruxley Church in West Ewell on alternate Friday evenings. For details contact Jessica Moore [wright.jessica8474@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wright.jessica8474@yahoo.co.uk)

## **Book About Supporting a Young Autistic Man at University**

NAS Surrey Branch member Mike Thorpe has published a book about supporting his son Christopher through University. You can find out more about the book by emailing [mikerthorpe@btinternet.com](mailto:mikerthorpe@btinternet.com) or going to their Facebook page: <http://facebook.com/anautisticsun>.

## NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR August - October 2019

NAS Surrey Branch local groups are a great way to meet up with other families who understand autism to share experiences, find out information and seek support. 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](mailto:info@nassurreybranch.org)*

**NB Please always contact the volunteer host before going along to make sure nothing has changed.**

### **Ashtead – The Leg of Mutton and Cauliflower, 48, The Street, Ashtead, KT21 1AZ**

Contact: Sam Caine [sjcaine@hotmail.com](mailto:sjcaine@hotmail.com)

- Weds 11<sup>th</sup> Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

### **Dorking**

Meetings currently not taking place due to lack of numbers. *Anyone interested in an evening support group in Dorking, please contact Helen Trenaman at [trenamans@talktalk.net](mailto:trenamans@talktalk.net) 01737 360069*

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

Christine Malik [christinemalik@btinternet.com](mailto:christinemalik@btinternet.com) or Bonnie Noyce [jbnoyce@yahoo.com](mailto:jbnoyce@yahoo.com)

- Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept 9.15 – 11.30 a.m.
- Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 9.15 – 11.30 a.m.

### **Godalming**

*Meetings currently not taking place due to lack of numbers. Anyone interested in a Godalming group, please contact Sara Truman [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) tel: 07423 435413*

### **Guildford – Mornings: Caffè Nero, 66 North Street, Guildford GU1 4AH. Evenings: TBC**

Contact: Sara Truman [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) tel: 07423 435413

- Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon.
- Mon 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 7.30 - 9.30 p.m. Venue to be confirmed.

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

Contact: Emily Gorvy email: [emily.gorvy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:emily.gorvy@hotmail.co.uk)

- Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 2.00 – 3.00 p.m.

### **Redhill – Home Cottage, Redstone Hill, Redhill, RH1 4AW**

Contact: Leila Gregory [leilagregory@gmail.com](mailto:leilagregory@gmail.com)

- Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 8.00 p.m.
- Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 8.00 p.m. (to be confirmed)
- Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct 8.00 p.m.

### **Weybridge – Oatlands Chaser, 25 Oatlands Chase, Weybridge KT13 9RW**

Contact: Fi Phippen [f.phippen@talktalk.net](mailto:f.phippen@talktalk.net) 07377 549490

- Weds 18<sup>th</sup> September 8.00 p.m.

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

Contact Sarah Norris [sarah4ian@ntlworld.com](mailto:sarah4ian@ntlworld.com) tel: 07543 920917

- Weds 11<sup>th</sup> Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### Dads' Group – Redhill

Contact Simon Bunch [bunch.simon@gmail.com](mailto:bunch.simon@gmail.com)

*A monthly social meeting for fathers of sons or daughters with autism.*

- Friday evenings – please email Simon for next dates.

### Parents of Girls Group – Woking and Guildford

Contact Rachel Pearson [racheldpearson@gmail.com](mailto:racheldpearson@gmail.com)

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

#### **Morning venues:**

Woking: Twelve Thirty Café, Christ Church, Jubilee Square, Woking GU21 6YG

Guildford: Costa Coffee, Spectrum Leisure Centre, Parkway, Guildford GU1 1UP

#### **Evening venues:**

Woking: The Sovereigns pub, Guildford Road, Woking GU22 7QQ

Guildford: The White House, 8 High Street, Guildford GU2 4AJ

- Fri 20th Sept 10.00 a.m. Guildford – Spectrum Leisure Centre (see address above)
- Tues 15th Oct 10.00 a.m. Woking – Twelve Thirty Café (see address above)

### 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.*

- Weds 7<sup>th</sup> August – Farnham - Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk) 01276 66032
- Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> Sept – Camberley - Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk) 01276 66032
- Tues 24<sup>th</sup> Sept – Redhill – contact Sara Truman [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) 07423 435413
- Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct – Guildford – contact Sara Truman [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) 07423 435413

### Spouses and Partners Group, Guildford

Contact Sara Truman [nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org) 07423 435413

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

- Weds 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 8.00 – 9.30 p.m.
- Weds 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 8.00 – 9.30 p.m.

### Branch Talks:

Weds 9<sup>th</sup> Oct 8.00 – 9.30 p.m. Redhill. Talk on PDA – see page 3.

Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2.30 – 4.30 p.m. Woking Talk on Autism and Puberty – see page 4.

Weds 13<sup>th</sup> Nov 8.00 – 9.30 p.m. Guildford. Talk on Autism and ADHD – see page 4.

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## Autism Hour 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October

The NAS is once again running a campaign to ask businesses to commit to making minor adjustments regularly, like dimming lights and reducing noise, so that autistic people and their families feel welcome and safe whilst shopping or attending venues and activities.

**Brooklands Museum in Weybridge** is holding another Autism Hour called 'Flying Starters' on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October** from 9.30 – 11.00am when families will be able to explore the motoring village before the museum opens to the public. To register email the museum direct at [bookings@brooklandsmuseum.com](mailto:bookings@brooklandsmuseum.com)

## Action for Carers Events -

Action for Carers are holding several talks during September which may be of interest:

- Weds 4th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon Benefits talk, Horley
- Tues 10th Sept 10.00 a. m. – 2.00 p.m. Autism Forum on Pathological Demand Avoidance, Godalming
- 12th Sept 10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. ASD, Sleep and food, Shepperton

Places must be booked in advance by contacting Action for Carers: email [CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk) tel: 0303 040 1234

There are parent / carer consultations about Action for Carers being held around Surrey during Aug/September. For more details, see p5 of the Action for Carers newsletter: [https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/files/8915/6171/6756/Newsletter\\_July\\_2019.pdf](https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/files/8915/6171/6756/Newsletter_July_2019.pdf)

There is also a survey currently running about Action for Carers website – if you take part, you could win a voucher for £75. For details go to: <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/>

## Head2Head Theatre Interactive Sessions

Head2Head theatre are running two 'Walkabout Theatre' sessions in Surrey designed to introduce Theatre for children and young people with neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism. There are 12 free places per session - pre-booking is essential : <http://www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/families/walkabout-theatre>

These are quiet sessions with small groups exploring a sensory tent, craft & game activities. You can also have a conducted tour of the set, exploring the multi-sensory props & meeting the characters from the story. If your child settles you can, on the day, pay £5 per person and stay for the 2pm performance (see below)

- Caterham: Mon 5th August
- Camberley: Mon 19th August

You can also just come along to the afternoon autism-friendly performances, which will be 'Toad on the Road'. There are additional dates at West Hill, Leatherhead on Monday 28th October, 2pm and Tuesday 29th October at 11.15am or 2pm

To check availability or for enquiries, contact <http://www.head2headtheatre.co.uk> , email: [office@head2headtheatre.co.uk](mailto:office@head2headtheatre.co.uk) or call 01372 278021 / 07519 747 290

## Rodborough School Cullum Centre visit

The NAS Cullum Centre at Rodborough School in Milford near Godalming provides educational places within a mainstream school in a specialist resource base for pupils aged 11-16 with autism who would otherwise find it difficult to access a mainstream education. On Wednesday 23rd October from 5.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m., parents of autistic children are invited to visit the Cullum Centre to see what it is like, meet the Head of Centre, and network with other parents to share ideas on helping young people to succeed at secondary school.

For more information email Hilary Baldwin at [HBaldwin@rodborough.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:HBaldwin@rodborough.surrey.sch.uk)

*NB This meeting is for parents only, so those attending are asked not to bring their children with them.*



## **Meeting Report: Work Options for Autistic People – June 2019**

We hosted a talk in Guildford on Thursday 27th June by Christina Earl from Surrey Choices EmployAbility (Surrey's supported employment service) and Rachel Pearson from AS Mentoring, a company which provides specialist mentoring and employment support to people with autism. They were also joined by Justine McManus, Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) from Guildford Job Centre.

Rachel and Christina spoke about the voluntary and paid work options for people with special needs, including autism. For many autistic people, it can be hard to visualise a new job, so organisations such as AS Mentoring can arrange work shadowing placements, that allow people to work alongside someone. Work trials, supported by an employment advisor, are not usually paid, but you can get travel costs paid via the DEA, and, if you are on benefits, you can arrange 'easements' during the period of the work trial so you don't have to check into the job centre on days when you are working.

Rachel Pearson also explained that self-employment can be an option for some people, and that there are New Enterprise allowances which can help someone set up in business.

AS Mentoring are a good source to find out about projects such as Deutschebank, which is actively seeking 15 autistic employees, or the civil service which offers work experience placements for autistic people.

Christina Earl from Surrey Choices EmployAbility, part of Surrey County Council, explained that they support people to find a job (paid or voluntary), help them to learn how to get there and what to do, and support the employee and employer with any problems.

They are running a new programme called Future Choices for 16 – 24 year olds which can offer access to supported internships. It is open to young people who don't have – or want to study – English or Maths and offers 3 days a week work experience with a commercial employer. It is funded, but you have to be assessed by the specialist Learning Disability and Autism Team in Surrey Adult Social Care to apply, although Christine warned that there is currently a backlog of assessments.

She advised young people who have an EHCP to try and keep it open whilst looking for work: you should tell the Local Authority that you wish to maintain education in employment.

AS Mentoring: <https://asmentoring.co.uk/>

EmployAbility: <https://www.surreychoices.com>

You can view the slides from the talk here:

<http://www.nassurreybranch.org/resources.html>

## **Crossroads Saturday Club in Walton-on-Thames**

The charity Crossroads Care runs a Saturday Club in Walton-on-Thames for children aged between 5 and 18 who have complex health needs and challenging behaviours.

Play Workers create a safe, fun and welcoming environment where children can meet others in a relaxed social setting and enjoy some fun activities, providing parents and carers with much needed respite. For further details call: 01372 869970 or email [enquiries@crossroadscare.surrey.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@crossroadscare.surrey.org.uk)

## Research Studies – Participants Needed

### 1) Autism and bilingual language learning – University of Cambridge

A PhD student at the University of Cambridge is recruiting for a research project to find out more about how speaking one or more languages affects children with an autism diagnosis and their families. The project is in collaboration with a larger MEITS (Multilingualism Empowering Individuals Transforming Societies) project. The researchers are looking for bilingual and monolingual children age 3- 12 anywhere in the UK.

Your child will be asked to complete short one-to-one tasks with a researcher across two sessions each lasting approx. 60 minutes, and parents/cares will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about the language use at home and around the child (approx. 30 mins). The study can take place either at children's home, school (subject to their agreement) or at the University of Cambridge, in which case travel expenses will be reimbursed.

For more information please contact Rosie Penford on [rcp50@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rcp50@cam.ac.uk) tel: 07593 799469 or Sarah Crockford on [skc48@cam.ac.uk](mailto:skc48@cam.ac.uk) tel: 07857 117824.

### 2. Understanding Conversation – Oxford University

A researcher at Oxford University is carrying out research about the conversation and communication skills of children with autism which they hope will help identify more specifically some of the difficulties that autistic children sometimes have with conversation.

The research involves some questionnaires and an informal telephone interview with parents/caregivers, and some online language tasks for children. The language tasks can be completed with a researcher in Oxford or at home/school, or alternatively under the supervision of the family at home. We are keen that the research is as accessible as possible, so we offer these range of options for completing the tasks. For more details contact [alexander.wilson2@psy.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alexander.wilson2@psy.ox.ac.uk) or go to <https://bit.ly/2SjIMzy>

### 3. Stay Calm Project - School of Psychology, University of Birmingham

The Stay Calm project is being led by Justin Chung, under the supervision of Dr Kate Woodcock and aims to develop and evaluate an informant-report questionnaire, which will be used to assess the characteristics of emotional outbursts in more detail compared to existing measures. This will be a valuable tool for researchers and clinicians, allowing information to be obtained quickly, which could contribute to our understanding of the cognitive and emotional underpinnings of emotional outbursts.

The team is specifically looking for parents and caregivers of individuals from 6 - 25 years old, who have emotional outbursts at least once a month. The questionnaire (online or post) should take around 30 mins to complete and can be found here:

[https://bhampsiology.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_25dCk3mw4PS3Q8t](https://bhampsiology.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_25dCk3mw4PS3Q8t)

Alternatively, visit the project webpage for more information about the research:

<https://www.katewoodcock.com/staycalm/>

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## Tea and Evensong for Carers

The Diocese of Guildford is holding a free Carers afternoon Tea and Evensong at Guildford Cathedral on Thurs 10th October including a performance by a gospel choir.

To apply for a ticket go to <https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/whats-on/events/detail/carers-afternoon-tea-2019>

## INFORMATION FOR ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

### Aldershot Adults Groups

For those living near the Hampshire border, Autism Hampshire runs two groups for adults with autism in Aldershot fortnightly on Monday afternoons from 2.00 – 4.00 p.m. One is the Serendipity Social Group, the other is a group for playing roleplaying board games. For information about either group, email [serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk](mailto:serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk)

### Free Online Training in Employment Skills

The NAS has developed a new online employment training module which is available on the main NAS website [autism.org](http://autism.org). If you are an autistic person looking for work or are in work and want to make the most of your employment, this module is designed for you. The content has been created with autistic people and employers and covers topics such as identifying personal skills, CV writing, positive disclosure of your diagnosis, getting the adaptations you need at work and skills for the workplace. You need to create an online account on the Training section of the website if you don't already have one, but there is no charge. For more details, go to:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/professionals/training-consultancy/online/finding-employment.aspx> then scroll down to the Free Modules and Resources section.

### National Self-Assessment of Adult Autism Services

At the end of last year local authorities (LAs) throughout the country were asked to assess autism services in their area, with a view to seeing what progress is being made towards the goals of the national Autism Strategy. Results were analysed and compared to the results of the last assessment in 2016, and have recently been published on the Government website: <https://bit.ly/2MuHy2l>

Authorities are asked to rate themselves against a set of standards, giving Green if they meet the standard, Amber/Green or Amber if they are part way to reaching it, and Red if they are not meeting it. Some of the questions or standard descriptions had changed since 2016, so a direct comparison was not always possible, but the assessments give a rough idea of how LAs are providing for people with autism. In Surrey the assessment is done by the Autism Partnership Board, which comprises professionals from a range of different services along with autistic people and parents of people with autism.

Surrey achieved a total of 13 Green scores (39%), 1 Amber/Green (3%) 16 Amber (48%) and 3 Red (9%). In many sections Surrey was around average compared to other areas. Differences were that a higher-than-average number of autistic young people were identified in years 12 & 13 i.e. going through Transition to adult services. Autism training in the Criminal Justice System in Surrey was ahead of most local authorities, and Surrey's Autism Partnership Board was more inclusive than most.

The number of autistic people receiving services from adult social care was average, however, Surrey scored Red for whether mental health services were meeting the crisis needs of autistic people who did not have a learning disability, putting it in the bottom 22% of the country. Furthermore, in Surrey only 1.6% of autistic people who are getting mental health treatment are supported by social services, whereas nationally the figure is 10.2%. Adult diagnosis waiting times scored red (as did two thirds of other local authorities) but the number of people diagnosed was well above average, as well as the number on the waiting list.

## Arts Training at Blooming Arts

Blooming Arts in Lingfield offers opportunities for people with learning disabilities to enjoy, develop skills, perform and work in the arts, whether you are interested in learning how to be an actor, artist, dancer, musician, singer, stage manager, costume designer, lighting and sound operator, film maker, props maker or scenery designer.

Contact them to find out about courses starting in September: [info@bloominarts.org.uk](mailto:info@bloominarts.org.uk).  
More details at [www.bloominarts.org.uk](http://www.bloominarts.org.uk)

## Elmbridge Community link

Elmbridge Community Link offers activities for people with varying degrees of learning disability and/or autism. Weekly activities include working on an allotment, arts and crafts, allsports and Boccia. Fortnightly activities include music sessions and Monthly activities include days out, activities in the community. Activities cost only £5 a session which includes refreshments. Fees are payable termly in advance.

<http://www.eclwalton.org.uk/our-activities/>

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For other organisations that offer activities for people with learning disabilities, see Surrey information Point <https://www.surreyinformationpoint.org.uk/>

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## About NAS Surrey Branch

NAS Surrey Branch is a volunteer-run, parent-to-parent support group for the of autistic children and adults. It's FREE to join (although a small donation is appreciated) and we have around 1,500 members. We hold regular support group meetings, organise social events and special interest groups and represents parents in meetings with health, education and social services. We host an active online forum and produce this email newsletter every two months. To join, go to [www.nassurreybranch.org](http://www.nassurreybranch.org) or email [info@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:info@nassurreybranch.org) to request a membership form.

If you are a member of the National Autistic Society at national level, you can nominate us to receive part of your subscription by emailing [supportercare@nas.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@nas.org.uk).

**The National Autistic Society** works for autistic people and runs a wide range of services such as schools, clubs and adult centres. It has over 20,000 members and 100 branches and works in partnership with more than 50 local autism societies. The NAS exists **to transform lives** by being a trusted source of support and practical advice for autistic people and their families at key stages in life and **change attitudes** by working with businesses, policy-makers, autism professionals and the public to reduce isolation and open up opportunities in society as a whole.

**National Autistic Society, 393 City Rd, London EC1V 1NG [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk). Registered charity, number 269425. Company limited by guarantee number 1205298.**

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