



Newsletter

Welcome to the November issue of Surrey News

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We are planning our next Conference for October 2018 which will be on the subject of Autism in the Family.

To help keep the cost down for parents, we have applied for funding in the **Aviva Community Fund**, but WE NEED YOUR VOTE TO SECURE THE MONEY!

It just takes a few minutes to register. You get 10 votes which you can give to one project, or share among several local causes. The link to vote for us is here: <https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/voting/project/view/17-3983> VOTING CLOSES ON 21st NOVEMBER.

The more votes we get, the better our chance of securing funding to help reduce the cost of places for parents.

If you have attended our conferences in the past, you will know that we have used external funding to make the day as affordable as possible for parents. The event is put together and staffed by volunteers, but costs for the venue, AV equipment, catering, printing and expenses and fees for professional speakers are considerable. Please take the time to vote and share the link within your own networks such as Facebook groups etc.

We are still looking for volunteers to join our committee, or just to help out at events from time to time. If you feel you could help, please email me at info@nassurreybranch.org

Many thanks,

Sara Truman
Chair (volunteer)
NAS Surrey Branch
General email: info@nassurreybranch.org
Website: www.nassurreybranch.org
Twitter: @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

Events:

Please email events@nassurreybranch.org with the name of the event in the subject line

Sarah Mead

sarah_mead@hotmail.co.uk

Emma Searle

ephillpotts@gmail.com

Jill Goulding

Jill.goulding@gmail.com

Website and Newsletter:

Emma Whitfield

emma@mugsy.org

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

Postal library Service

Susan Salters

nassblibrary@gmail.com

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

SOSISEN charity to support EHCPs etc, Tel: 020 8538 3731, Web: www.sossen.org.uk

Family Support & Representation

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

Family Voice Surrey parent representation

www.familyvoicesurrey.org

Parent Programmes

PAT-P (Parenting Autism Together – Preschool) for parents of under 5s. Replaces Early Bird course.

Cygnnet for parents of children aged 5 – 19.

Contact Vicky Jones, email:

courses@sendteachingschool.co.uk

Tel: 20 8330 3009 ex 237

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

Activities for children and young people

NAS Resource Centre, Godalming: 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

NAS Tips page – via www.autism.org.uk

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

Update - NAS After School & Youth Clubs and Post-16 Service

As many members know, following a review by Surrey Short Breaks, there have been changes to the NAS Children's Clubs and Youth Clubs. These clubs are run by the NAS professionals from the NAS Resource Centre in Godalming and are now at the following venues:

Children's Clubs

Godalming – Tues 6.00 – 8.00 p.m. (age 5 – 11)

Reigate - Thurs 6.00 - 8.00 p.m. (age 7-14)

Staines - Tues 5.00 – 7.00 p.m. (age 5 – 11)

Youth clubs (Age 11 - 18 year olds)

Woking - Thursday 7.00 - 9.00 p.m.

Godalming – Thursday 7.00 – 9.00 p.m.

All Ages (5 – 18 years old)

Horsham – Thursdays 5.30 – 7.30 p.m.

Clubs run in term-time and are open to all children and young people with autism and Asperger syndrome who live in Surrey, or Sussex for the Horsham club. The clubs offer a variety of fun activities in a safe, structured, autism-friendly environment and are all about having a good time. Everyone gets time to meet new friends, learn and play. The clubs aim to help youngsters to develop their communication and social skills, become more independent, develop confidence and boost self-esteem.

Cost: £5 per session (£2.50 for families on income support or for second siblings).

Find out more on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NasSurreyResourceCentre>

To apply for a place for your child, contact the NAS Resource Centre by email:

SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk or tel: 01483 521 743 (option 3).

ASSIST Service (Age 16+)

Asperger Support, Signposting & Information Services Team

(For those who do not qualify for support from Adult Social Care.)

Co-ordinator: Mike Leat

Email: mike.leat@nas.org.uk

Tel: 07436 261194 (answerphone).

ASSIST runs on Thursdays and Saturdays in Godalming, on Tuesdays in Reigate, and on Saturdays in Aldershot. It offers one-to-one discussion sessions, usually once a month.

Challengers Clubs in Elmbridge

Challengers is opening new Play and Youth schemes in Elmbridge, starting in December.

Challengers Esher Playscheme - Esher Church School, Milbourne Lane, Esher, KT10 9DU

Every Saturday, Easter and Summer Holidays from 9.30am – 4pm.

There is an afternoon drop in session on the 2nd December from 1pm – 4pm.

Challengers Molesey Youthscheme - Molesey Youth Centre, Ray Road, Molesey, KT8 2LG.

Every Saturday, Easter and Summer Holidays from 10am – 4pm.

There is an afternoon drop in session on the 2nd December from 1pm – 4pm.

For details call 01483 230 939 or email EsherPlayscheme@disability-challengers.org

or MoleseyYouthscheme@disability-challengers.org

Workshop on Supporting your Young Person into Employment in Nov

We are hosting a seminar for parents/carers of young people aged 16-25 with an ASD to help understand what parents can - and can't - do to help their young person to prepare for the world of work. The workshop is in Guildford from 10.00am – 2.30pm on Monday 20th November.

The workshop explains how best to support them to find employment as they leave education, offering practical advice and ideas and signposting parents 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 ASD diagnosis to an employer?
- Reasonable adjustments in the workplace
- Available support

The seminar is being delivered by AS Mentoring www.asmentoring.co.uk a specialist organisation which works with people with ASDs to help them find and retain work, as well as encouraging employers to develop more inclusive workplaces. Tea and coffee are provided, but please bring your own lunch. The cost of the course is being met by the NAS Surrey Branch, so donations from attendees are gratefully received.

To request a booking form, contact Sarah Mead events@nassurreybranch.org with 'Employment Workshop' in the subject line.

NAS Christmas Party 3rd December: Booking Now Open

Our annual Christmas party for children with ASDs and their siblings aged 9 and under will take place on Sunday 3rd December from 4.00 – 6.00pm (meet at 3.45pm in the foyer). The suggested donation is £5.50 per child.

We have exclusive use of the soft play area, plus a timed slot in the newly refurbished sensory room from 4.00pm - 5.00pm. Tea, consisting of sandwiches, sausages, pizza etc, is served at 5.00pm and there will be a visit from Santa during the meal - we will give you plenty of notice, so you can take your child out if they would rather not meet Santa. He will hand out a small gift for each child - PLEASE BRING A WRAPPED GIFT FOR EACH CHILD, LABELLED WITH THEIR NAME. Older siblings are welcome to join us for tea only at a suggested donation of £4 per head.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL You can book your tickets here

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/national-autistic-society-surrey-branch-8492155868>. If you have any queries about the event, please email events@nassurreybranch.org

Workshop on Behaviour in Guildford January 2018

We are hosting a workshop on behaviour in children with ASDs on **Thursday 18th January 2018** from 8.00 – 9.00 p.m., with coffee being served from 7.45. Booking Essential.

The workshop is being delivered by Sue Goldman, who has taught autistic children for over 20 years at locations including the NAS Sybil Elgar School, The Little Group and Papillon House. She has experience in The 'Attention Autism' approach, Makaton and TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children).

To book please email events@nassurreybranch.org with 'Behaviour Workshop' in the subject line. You can let us know specific issues you would like Sue to address prior to the session.

Please Support Charity Football Day in Haslemere

On the 10th December, there will be a **charity football event and fun day at Haslemere Rugby Club, Woolmer Hill, Haslemere, GU27 1QA** which will raise money for the NAS Surrey Branch and Young Minds, the charity that works to try and prevent mental illness and to help young people who suffer with mental illness. Please do try and go along to support this event if you are local to Haslemere. The day is in memory of Jasmine Bush. The Bush family lost Jasmine in August after a two and a half year battle with depression and anxiety. She had been diagnosed with autism and PDA.

There will be four teams participating in a tournament, plus a raffle, an auction, a bouncy castle, face-painting, food and a bar as well as plenty of other activities going on to raise funds. For details, go to <http://www.eventgoat.co.uk/haslemere/jaz-bush-football-charity-day/> or contact Ben Susans bensusans@aol.com.

Surrey Short Break 'Meet the Providers' Sessions

To inform parents, carers and their families about the new short breaks offer, which will start 1 December, Surrey Short Breaks will be hosting three 'meet the providers' events in November:

- Thursday 2 November - Woking - 7th Scouts Hall 09.30 – 11.30 am - New Community Building, Woking Park, Kingfield Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 9BA (parking available).
- Wednesday 8 November - Little Bookham Village Hall 4.30 – 6.30 pm - Little Bookham St, Great Bookham, Leatherhead KT23 3AF (parking available, with additional spaces on Burnhams Road).
- Thursday 16 November - Ashted Peace Memorial Hall 09.30 – 11.30 am - Woodfield Lane, Ashted KT21 2BE (pay and display parking next to the venue).

These sessions are informal 'drop-in' sessions, for parents and carers to browse, mingle and have a chat over a cup of tea or coffee and maybe a biscuit or two!

NAS Annual Survey – Please Give Your Views

The NAS annual Big Survey to gather the views of autistic people, their families and professionals who work with people with autism is now open and **closes on 30th November**.

Last year 6,500 people gave their views. You can find out more about why the NAS needs your views and take the survey by clicking on the link from this page: <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/media-centre/news/2017-10-04-big-survey.aspx>

Thank Yous and Requests

- Thank you to **Simon Abrams and Datapharm** for an amazing donation of £250.
- Thanks go once again to **Hilary Richardson** and friends who has raised £45 by running the refreshment stall at Hersham craft fair.
- Thank you to **all our supporters who have donated via our Justgiving page:** www.justgiving.com/nassurreybranch. Every penny you donate goes towards providing information, support or training for families in Surrey.
- **PLEASE HELP:** If you're starting to think about Christmas shopping, please do sign up to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/nassurrey/> - this lets you support the branch as you shop without it costing you a penny!
- **VOTE FOR US!** Please spend a few minutes to vote for us in the Aviva Community Fund to help us secure money to subsidise the cost of tickets for parents for our 2018 Conference 'Autism in the Family'. Link below.

NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR NOV – DEC 2017

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 relevant volunteer 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

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

Contact Sara Truman to confirm date: nas@mugsy.org 01483 822630

- **Mon 13th Nov**

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

Contact Sarah Norris sarah4ian@ntlworld.com 07543 920917

- Wed 15th Nov, 10.00am – 12noon

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

Contact Juliette Sturge juliettesturge@gmail.com

- Friday 1st December 2.00 – 3.15pm

Weybridge/Cobham – *NEW VENUE* Silvermere Golf Club, Redhill Road KT11 1EF (see details overleaf). Contact Fi Phippen f.phippen@talktalk.net Tel: 07377 549490

- Fri 24th Nov 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon
- Fri 15th Dec 8.00 – 10.00 p.m.

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

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

- Mon 20th Nov, 9.15 – 11.30am
- Mon 18th Dec, 9.15 – 11.30am

Godalming – In a member's home

Contact Cindy Barry cindybarry75@gmail.com, Tel: 07961 279518

- Tues 21st Nov 9.30 – 11.30
- Mon 11th Dec 9.30 – 11.30

Redhill – In a member's home

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

- Thurs 30th November 10.00am – 12noon

Parents of Girls Group – Woking and Guildford

Contact Rachel Pearson racheldpearson@gmail.com

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

- 10 am Tuesday 14th Nov, Guildford
- 10 am Friday 8th Dec, Woking

Dads' Group – In a member's home

Contact Martin Trenaman trenamans@talktalk.net

A quarterly social meeting for fathers of children or adults on the ASD spectrum.

- Fri 24th November, Shere

CALENDAR / *Cont'd*

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 29th November 8.00 – 9.30pm

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 and to seek support. Meetings run throughout the year.

- Thurs 2nd Nov, Weybridge – Contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk
- Tues 21st Nov, Reigate – Contact Sara Truman 01483 822630 nas@mugsy.org
- Weds 6th Dec – Farnham – contact Hilary Dyce 01276 66032 hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk

Change of Venue for Weybridge Support Group

As it is very difficult to park at Cafe Rouge Fi Phippen, the parent volunteer who runs our Weybridge meeting, has decided to change the venue to Silvermere Golf Complex.

Although the address is Cobham, it is actually just off the Byfleet Road which runs between Brooklands and Cobham. There is ample parking, it is in a beautiful setting and the cakes are amazing – and it is not at all stuffy as some of the local golf clubs are! There is more information and detailed directions here <https://www.silvermere-innonthelake.co.uk/inn-on-the-lake/>. If you have any questions, you can email Fi at f.phippen@talktalk.net or text her on 07377 549490.

SSIASS Workshop and Event on Special Needs Education

Surrey SEND Information Advice and Support Service SSIASS is holding a workshop and market place at Nutfield Lodge, Nutfield Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 4ED on Thursday 9th November, from 10-2pm. At the event you can:

- Access workshops to understand Surrey's graduated response to SEND support and information on the processes related to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Speak to professionals from various organisations both internal and external from Surrey CC that can offer support to parents/carers and/or professionals during the process of seeking additional support for children and young people with SEND.

For details go to <https://www.sendadvice.surrey.org.uk/calendar/item/15415206>

Aladdin Multi-Sensory Pantomime in Great Bookham

Head2Head Theatre is staging multi-sensory performances of Aladdin on Sunday 10th December at 11.15am and 2pm at The Dawnay, Griffin Way, Great Bookham KT23 4JJ. The play is suitable for people with autism or other sensory issues and has reduced dialogue, lots of sensory experiences, amusing sound effects and songs. There is an advance pack to familiarise participants and a quiet with sensory room for chill-out periods. To book a place, email office@head2headtheatre.co.uk or call 01372 278021 or see the website: <http://www.head2headtheatre.co.uk/sensory-pantomime/public-performance>

PAST ASD / PDA Support Group

Positive Autism Support and Training (PAST) runs a support group for parents and carers of children with autism, PDA and challenging behaviour. The next one is on Friday 3rd November from 10.00 – 11.30am at 10.00am at Sainsbury's Cafe Cobham. Contact Laura Kerbey of PAST info@positiveautismsupportandtraining.co.uk

Curly Hair Project Talks

The Curly Hair Project holds regular talks for parents and professionals around the UK, including many in locations around Surrey and Kingston. Charges apply. For details go to <https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk/events/>

Eagle House 'Getting Started' Workshops for Parents

A programme of Free Parent workshops offering expert advice, guidance and support to families and carers of young children with a diagnosis of autism or Asperger syndrome. The workshops run on Wednesday mornings 10.00 am- 12.00 pm at Eagle House School (Mitcham). For details, contact Parent Liaison Officer, Adele either by phone on 0845 074 2972 or email parent.support@eaglehousegroup.co.uk.

SOS!SEN Anniversary Gala and Conference

The charity that supports families dealing with educational issues for their special needs child, SOS!SEN, will be 15 years old and they are planning two events to celebrate.

The first is a **gala evening with dinner, dancing and bubbly** to celebrate. The charity would like to reach all those family and friends that have used SOS!SEN in the past or are still using the charity's services so that they can help raise a toast to SOS!SEN and the children and young people it helps.

The gala evening is on **Saturday 11th November** at Blossom House School in Motspur Park. It will be an evening event with reception, supper, birthday cake and dancing. Tickets are £45 per head and can be purchased online from <https://sossen15event.eventbrite.com/> or by calling 020 3409 3855. Children over 11 are welcome (discounts available if you are bringing more than one child – please call for details).

The second event is a **'changing lives' conference on Saturday 13th January 2018** at Amnesty International in London. Further speakers are to be confirmed, but both Tribunal Judge Jane McConnell and Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow will be speaking. Further details will be available soon.

SOS!SEN was started by Martin Dean, Bob Parslow and Marion Strudwick from Marion's front room with the clear aim of helping empower parents to fight for the rights of their children to an education that will help them achieve their full potential and to give training to professionals who wanted help to understand the legal side of providing this through statements and now Education, Health and Care plans. It is now a national charity receiving over 4,000 helpline calls per year, operating 9 free walk in advice centres around the UK, workshops and one to one advice. <http://www.sossen.org.uk/>

Autism Professional Awards – Extended to 10th November

The 2018 Autism Professionals Awards are now open for nomination. Winning an award brings unparalleled recognition for the teams and individuals behind the outstanding achievements. Categories are:

- Achievement by an Individual Education Professional (includes teachers, TAs)
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Outstanding Achievement by an Individual on the Autism Spectrum
- Most Inspirational Volunteer
- Outstanding Healthcare Professional
- Most Inspirational Social Care Professional

<http://www.autismprofessionalsawards.org.uk/index.html>

Information for Adults

Event About Services for Adults and Young Adults with ASD

There is an event about services for adults with ASDs at Godalming Rugby Club on Thursday 16th November 2017 9.30 – 3.00pm Lunch is provided. There will be presentations from agencies, stalls of providers (including NAS Adult Services), an opportunity to meet the commissioners and a chance to voice your concerns about the provision of services for adults with ASD.

Please Note: This event is for parents/carers only, and they must be registered with Action for Carers. If you would like to attend or would like more information then please ring 0303 040 1234 or email CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk

Surrey Adult Learning Yoga and Cookery Courses

Surrey Adult Learning is running a 5-week taster Yoga course starting at the Guildford centre on 1st November, and a 5-week Cookery Improvers course starting at Molesey Centre on 8th November, from 1.00 – 3.00pm. The Cookery course costs £5 (subsidised amount) for the whole course, ingredients included.

More details about the courses are available on: www.surreycc.gov.uk/supportedlearning or by speaking to their Customer Service Team on 0300 200 1044.

Furniture and Motor Projects for People with LDs

Specialist support provider County Care is running two projects for people with learning difficulties and special needs:

- The Furniture Project lets you learn carpentry and woodworking skills. Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am – 3pm, £65 per session.
- The Motor Project is designed to give people skills for employment and runs on Mondays 9.30am – 2.30pm in Albury.

For details contact County Care on 01483 224183 freya.parkersmith@countycare.co.uk

Inclusive tennis

Bright Ideas for Tennis are providing free disability tennis sessions at venues in Weybridge, Guildford, Wimbledon, Worplesdon, Croydon and Reigate. Open to all disabilities, they are specifically hoping to target players with Learning Difficulties.

This pilot project has been funded by Sport England, which has enabled them to provide all the equipment, train the volunteers and source some fantastic coaches / venues. The more successful this project is, the more chance they have of receiving additional funds to expand this project to more venues.

The link to their webpage is <http://www.brightideasfortennis.org/iplay30.php>

Chobham Mixed Ability Rugby

There is a mixed ability Rugby session every Saturday morning from 10.30am – 12.00noon in Chobham, with trained staff and support help people learn and improve your skills, whatever your ability.

For more details, contact Michael O'Regan at mike.oregan@waitrose.com

New Surrey Disability Network Facebook Page

Surrey County Council has set up a Facebook page - Surrey Disability Network - for anyone living in Surrey with a disability or a mental health issue, as well as their family and others who provide care. The Facebook page includes news, events, local groups and initiatives related to disability and mental health in Surrey and nationally.

The page is designed to support and encourage conversation, idea sharing, the promotion of local events & groups and to raise awareness of and access to the resources and support available: www.facebook.com/SurreyDisabilityNetwork/

For further information, contact Surrey County Council at sdr@surreycc.gov.uk Tel: 0300 2001005 SMS: 07527182861

Dept for Transport Consultation

The Department for Transport is seeking feedback on a draft accessibility action plan which sets out their proposals to improve the travel experience for people with disabilities. The action plan covers a range of transport modes including flights, rail, buses and taxis

The document also considers ways that the Department for Transport can improve public space to make it more accessible for people with disabilities.

The document and answer booklet are available in Easy Read. For more information, or to give your feedback, please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-transport-accessibility-action-plan>

Call for Evidence About How People with Disabilities Vote

In September, the Minister for the Constitution launched a Call for Evidence, asking for views on how people with disabilities experience registering to vote and voting itself.

Responses received to the Call for Evidence will:

- Enhance the government's understanding of the experiences of disabled people in registering to vote and casting their vote
- Help identify if current mechanisms to support disabled people to participate in the democratic process are sufficient; and
- Identify examples of good practice provided by electoral service teams to disabled people at elections.

Follow this link for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/access-to-elections-call-for-evidence>

Updated Eligibility Criteria for Disability Bus Passes

Surrey County Council updated the eligibility criteria for disability bus passes in September which may mean that anyone who recently had an application rejected *could* now be entitled to receive a free bus pass.

For full details, please refer to the Surrey County Council website:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/buses-and-trains/bus-tickets-passes-and-travel-discounts/documents-that-can-prove-you-are-disabled-for-a-free-bus-pass>

Annual Health Checks for People with LDs

The Annual Health Check scheme is for adults and young people aged 14 or above with learning disabilities who need more health support and who may otherwise have health conditions that go undetected.

People aged 14 and over who have a learning disability and are on their GP's Learning Disability Register (called QOF) are entitled to a free annual health check.
What are the benefits of an Annual Health Check?

The health check can take up to one hour, although it can be much quicker depending on:

- how often the person normally visits their doctor
- their overall health and wellbeing
- their lifestyle (for example, whether they drink alcohol or smoke)
- how much of the consultation they decide to consent to

During the health check, the GP or practice nurse will carry out the following for the patient:

- a general physical examination, including checking their weight, heart rate, blood pressure and taking blood and urine samples, assessing the patient's behaviour, including asking questions about their lifestyle, and mental health
- a check for epilepsy
- a check on any prescribed medicines the patient is currently taking
- a check on whether any chronic illnesses, such as asthma or diabetes, are being well managed
- a review of any arrangements with other health professionals, such as physiotherapists or speech therapists

If the person's learning disability has a specific cause, the GP or practice nurse will often do extra tests for particular health risks. For people with Down's syndrome, for example, they may do a test to see whether their thyroid is working properly.

The Annual Health Check may also be a good opportunity to review any transitional arrangements that take place when the patient turns 18.

Making eye care accessible for all

A new partnership was launched on World Sight Day (12 October) between charity SeeAbility and Ophthalmic wholesaler Mid-Optic designed to make eye care accessible for people with learning disabilities and autism.

Adults and children with learning disabilities and autism are more likely to have serious sight problems than other people and yet are much less likely to get the eye care they need.

Working closely with Mid-Optic, SeeAbility hopes to change this by increasing awareness of the problem within the optical sector and providing the specialist information and support they need to make their practice more accessible.

The charity is calling on eye care professionals across the UK to download its new practical guide and make the changes needed to support people with learning disabilities and autism through an eye test from their website here: <https://www.seeability.org/accessible-practice>

Adults with learning disabilities are 10 times more likely to have serious sight problems than others, yet less than half have not had a sight test in the last two years and children with learning disabilities are 28 times more likely to have serious sight problem than other children but fewer than 7% have accessed a community optician for a routine sight test

www.SeeAbility.org



PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO VOTE FOR US IN THE
AVIVA COMMUNITY FUND TO HELP FUND OUR 2018
CONFERENCE
"AUTISM IN THE FAMILY"

<https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/voting/project/view/17-3983>

VOTING CLOSSES ON 21ST NOVEMBER

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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