



NAtters

Hart and Rushmoor Branch newsletter

www.nasHandR.org

Inside this issue:

Diary dates	2 - 3
The Zone!	4
Christmas party	5
Branch rules	6
Previous activities	7
NAS helplines	8
Other local news...	9, 10 & 11
Snippets from Facebook	12
Booking form	13



Do you know of any companies who might sponsor our newsletter? £500 a year would make a huge difference!

Issue 38

November/December 2013

This newsletter is late out as it's been a bit of a stressful time in my house with Iain, my very challenging 11 year old, not being at school and a 6 month old baby wanting to play all the time. It's finally complete and ready to let you all know what we have planned for the rest of November, December and a little of January - the next issue will hopefully be out early in the new year but will be a thinned out version until things here calm down.

Equipment that is sadly still missing from The Zone!: a PS Vita and the game that was in it, our brand new 3DS Planes game (this was only at The Zone for 2 sessions before somebody took it!), Pokemon Pearl and Lego Battles for the DS and the Sonic Heroes game for the GameCube. Please return these to us - either to The Zone or through my letter box anonymously.

Hope you all have a lovely Christmas and a good start to 2014!

Nikki Smith, Branch Officer

Committee contact details

Branch Officer:

Nikki Smith
118 Fernhill Road, Farnborough,
GU14 9DR. Nikki@nasHandR.org

Branch Treasurer:

Gaye McGowan
events@nasHandR.org

Newsletter editor:

Karen Smith
karen.m.smith@tesco.net

If you'd like to join us, then get in touch and we'll discuss it with you.

The Zone:

Carol Bulman
07825 280274

Teen Zone:

Gaye & Annie McGowan
events@nasHandR.org

Facebook group

www.facebook.com (search for NAS Hart Rushmoor in "groups" and you'll find us!)

Other committee members & volunteers:

Colin Smith, Jenny Thomas, Karen Booth, Jess, Riannon, Kaleigh & Hazel!

Accept difference. Not indifference.

November / December 2013

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
4	5 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	6 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm	7 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm 	8	9 Cyber Zone: 10.30am - 2.30pm	10
11	12 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	13 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm 	14 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm	15	16	17
18	19 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm 	20 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm	21 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm 	22	23 Cyber Zone: 10.30am - 2.30pm	24
25	26 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	27 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm	28 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm	29	30 Challengers fun swim Guildford Spectrum 6 - 7.30pm	1st Dec
2nd Dec Breakfast meet-up The Monkey Puzzle 9 - 11am	3rd Dec Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	4th Dec After School Zone: 3 - 6pm 	5th Dec Building Zone: 3 - 6pm	6th Dec Teen Zone! with Keely Catt 6 - 8pm	7th Dec Cyber Zone: 10.30am - 2.30pm	8th Dec

December 2013 / January 2014

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9	10 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	11 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm	12 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm 	13	14 Christmas Party! See pg 5	15
16	17 Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	18 After School Zone: 3 - 6pm 	19 Building Zone: 3 - 6pm	20	21	22
23 	24 Happy	25 Christmas &	26 here's to a	27 successful	28 2014!	29 
30	31	1st Jan	2nd Jan	3rd Jan	4th Jan Cyber Zone: 10.30am - 2.30pm	5th Jan
6th Jan	7th Jan Coffee Zone: 9am - 12pm	8th Jan After School Zone: 3 - 6pm	9th Jan Building Zone: 3 - 6pm 	10th Jan Teen Zone! 6 - 8pm	11th Jan	12th Jan

The Zone!

at Samuel Cody Specialist Sports College, Ballantyne Road, Farnborough, GU14 8SS

At our sessions at The Zone we have tea, coffee, juice and biscuits

- but donations of supplies are always appreciated.

Please note the timings - we have to request that you do not arrive before the start time and leave by the end time. We have very good setup/pack up routines and it's easier without any help!

If cost/transport is an issue, contact us as we may be able to help but there are no guarantees.

Cyber Zone - term-time only!

10.30am - 2.30pm on alternate Saturdays at The Zone. There are games consoles (PS3, Wii's, Xbox360), handheld games (PSP's, DSI's, 3DS's, laptops and android tablets). We also have an area for arts & crafts, Duplo and wooden train track for those who aren't keen on gaming. **Please note:** that for the time being, there won't be a group lunch at Cyber Zone sessions. You are welcome to bring a packed lunch/picnic and eat in the main area between 12 - 1pm. Sessions will begin in the new year on 4th January 2014.

The cost is £2 for the first child and £1 for each additional sibling.



After School Zone - term time only!

Every Wednesday during term-time, join us at After School Zone! from 3 - 6pm.

These are drop-in sessions for families to come along to when they want. The cost is £1 per child. The Cyber Zone equipment is there, arts & crafts and more.



Building Zone - term-time only!



Every Thursday during term-time you can join us at Building Zone from 3 - 6pm. You are welcome to drop-in at any time during the session. There's Duplo and Lego and we also have some of the Cyber Zone equipment too. The cost is £1 per child. If models are incredibly precious, you're welcome to keep them for a donation in the tin!

Teen Zone - term time only!

These sessions are especially for those aged 11 years + who want to come along and play console games and socialise with those who are a similar age. On one Friday each month (6th Dec & 10th Jan) 6 - 8pm; we will have all the Cyber Zone equipment, as well as the pool table, air hockey table, Hexbugs and a tuck shop too! You may bring 12+ rated games but they must be approved by a committee member FIRST. The cost will be £1 per child & money for the tuck shop. Parents need to stay at these sessions.



Teen Zone Out!

To get our teens socialising more, we are planning a variety of Teen Zone Out events - recent sessions included go-karting in Frimley, Go-Ape at Alice Holt, Bikeability cycling proficiency courses and even driving lessons in Aldershot! You may even have seen the photo in the local paper of the teens at a local wrestling event meeting the wrestlers. For more info or to let us know if you have any ideas for events for the teens, contact Gaye on events@nasHandR.org

Please remember our Branch Rules on page 6 - you are responsible for your children at all of our activities and you must supervise them at all times!



Branch Christmas party

On Saturday 14th December, 6.15 - 8.15pm

At Run-About, Laser-Run & Ignition,
Armstrong Way, Farnborough, GU14 0LP.

£5 per child

- this includes a hot meal (chips + nuggets/pizza/sausage/fish fingers)
and a gift from the branch at the end.

If your child is on a particular diet please bring something suitable with you.

Places **must** be booked in advance - with a booking form & food choices.

**Parents are responsible for their children throughout the session
& you must supervise!**

Run-About is for those up to 11yrs (please contact us if your child is older)

Laser-Run (without the smoke on) is for those 6yrs+

Ignition (racing simulator pods) is for those 11yrs+

We will also have some Christmas arts & crafts for those who prefer them.

To avoid any issues, there won't be any balloons or a Father Christmas this year.

The usual payment rules apply - see page 6/booking form for more details.

Sessions for parents (see calendar for dates/times)

Coffee Zone!

Our weekly drop-in coffee sessions, are for you to come along to at any point and have a coffee, chat and take a look at the branch library. You can stay for as long or short a time as you like. There's always plenty of biscuits and sometimes we even have jam doughnuts too! Please bring DLA forms, letters, or anything you need our help with :o)  Pre-schoolers are always welcome - there's usually a couple of babies/toddlers there each week. If you need help with DLA forms or other paper work, get in touch with us and we can easily setup a session at The Zone.

Breakfast meet-up

On Monday 2nd December we are meeting at the Monkey Puzzle, 9 - 11am, for breakfast. We will be there from 9am, so just turn up and join us if you are available on the day. Breakfast buffet is served until 10.30am and costs £8.25 which includes unlimited Costa coffee too!

Branch rules

The aim of the National Autistic Society Hart & Rushmoor Branch is to support people with autism and their families. As parents and carers of people with autism, we volunteer our time to ensure that this support reaches the local areas of Hart, Rushmoor and a small part of Surrey. To help ensure that everyone gets the most from our branch activities, we would appreciate it if you would read and comply with the following:

What you can expect from your branch volunteers -

- They will adopt the National Autistic Society's core values, policies and procedures and fairly represent the branch.
- They will do all they can to create a safe and welcoming environment for all those attending branch events.
- They will treat all other volunteers and branch members with respect. Any physical, emotional, verbal abuse or rudeness towards other volunteers or branch members will not be tolerated.
- They will maintain confidentiality regarding the NAS, its employees, volunteers, branch members and its work.
- They will be reliable. They will make it clear when and how they will be available and meet these expectations, or provide as much notice as possible if they cannot.
- They will respond to queries within agreed time limits. This includes acknowledging all event bookings.
- They will listen to all branch member concerns and respond appropriately.

In return, we ask that all branch members -

- Treat all volunteers and branch members with respect. Any physical, emotional, verbal abuse or rudeness towards volunteers or other branch members will not be tolerated.
- Treat all branch property (including the venues we use) with respect and do not deliberately damage anything.
- Communicate with the branch volunteers. We ask that you tell us if you have any concerns and respond to our questions or queries within the agreed time limits. This includes ensuring that you pre-book for all events* and tell us how and when you will cover the cost (if there is one).
- Supervise and be responsible for their children at all times. As a result, they must do all they can to ensure that their children also follow this code of conduct.
- Pay in advance for branch events when booking places (for drop-in activities it is fine to pay on the day.) We can accept any of the following:
Cheques; made payable to "NAS Hart & Rushmoor" and posted with a booking form to NAS H&R, 118 Fernhill Road, Farnborough, GU14 9DR.
Cash; at any of our Zone activities or through the door at the address above.
Paypal; whether you have a Paypal account or not, you can use your credit or debit card.
 Simply go to www.paypal.co.uk and make payment to paypal@nasHandR.org
- Seek committee permission before taking photos at our branch events - and if you prefer not to have your photograph taken and used in our newsletter etc. Please let us know.

* When responding to advertised events on Facebook, do not just click "attending" as this does not guarantee you a place. Please send a message with the details required. All bookings will get a response confirming receipt and places.

If a branch member fails to comply with the above they may be asked to leave the branch and will no longer be able to attend activities. Equally, if a branch member has concerns over the conduct of a volunteer, these should be raised with the Branch Officer via nikki@nasHandR.org / 07825 280274 or through NAS Head Office via Alessia Mitchell on alessia.mitchell@nas.org.uk or 020 7923 5770.

By being a member of NAS H&R you agree to these rules - please contact us if you have an issue with this

Our previous activities...

Sunday bowling fun!

Our first trial session of a Sunday event on 13th October was incredibly popular with several families joining us for a couple of games of bowling at Farnborough Bowl. A great time was had by all, enjoying the cosmic lighting and relaxed atmosphere. We will definitely be organising some more family fun Sunday events in 2014 - let us know if you have any suggestions.



Teen Zone Go-Ape

On 19th October Teen Zone headed to Go-Ape at Alice Holt for a very cold session up high in the trees. They had a great time with only a few nerves (more from the parents joining in than the teens!)



Intech evening



On Monday of half-term, 28th October, we had a fantastic time at Intech, now called the Winchester Science Centre. It was wonderful to see so many families enjoying the hands-on activities without the place being too busy or noisy for them. The coach journey was straightforward too (thanks to Carol!) and from the feedback, we realise that we need to organise transport more often.

Teen Zone wrestling evening



On Wednesday 30th October, the Teen Zone group went to the wrestling match at Princes Hall - thanks to Denise they were allowed to arrive early and meet the wrestlers before the match and had their photo taken for the local paper too!



Laser-Run



Once again our sessions at Laser-Run were good fun for all. On Friday 1st November, during half-term, a good time was had by everyone, from those who were trying it for the first time to those who were experts and knew exactly what they were doing and wanted to storm the tower! A huge thanks to the parents who willingly joined in to make sure the children were having fun and staying safe in the arena.



Bikeability courses

Following up on feedback received, Teen Zone organised some Bikeability cycling proficiency courses at The Zone! Several people completed the level 1 course and have now begun the level 2 course. If you think your child would be interested in these courses please get in touch with Gaye as we are hoping to run more in the new year.

We need your feedback: Fun Zones & Cyber Zones are as popular as always but we are wondering what we can do to encourage more families to attend our Wednesday & Thursday sessions - would different days work better? Or age specific sessions? Tell us...we can't change if we don't know!

NAS helpline numbers...

Facebook, Twitter & Pinterest

The branch Facebook group is constantly growing and is very active.. Please join us, introduce yourself, ask a question or simply read the other posts. Just go to www.facebook.com and search for NAS Hart Rushmoor in the "groups" section.



Find us on Twitter - just search for NASHandR and you'll find us. Jess is now in-charge of our tweets, so hopefully you will now be receiving regular updates about the branch!

We are now on Pinterest, a new online pinboard where we have pinned all sorts of useful info and links. Why not take a look at www.pinterest.com/nashandr

Branch resource library

The library is always available at The Zone! and books can easily be returned there or at any of our events. If you have borrowed books or equipment from the branch please can you return them. We intend to have a major reorganisation of the library books and replace any that have gone missing or been torn, as well as purchasing new titles too.



Fundraising news!

At the end of October The Thatched Cottage pub were delighted to let us know that they had raised a fantastic £907 from their fundraising day on the bank holiday Monday in August and gave us a cheque (this means they also raised the same for Lauren's Wishes too!) A huge well done and thank you to everyone who was involved. We are still planning what to purchase with these much needed funds.



Co-operative Community Fund

We are beginning to organise delivery of various items for The Zone! using the grant money from the Co-op too, so watch this space for more details!

We're supported by
The **co-operative** membership
Community Fund

NAS helplines

The **Autism Helpline** - 0808 800 4104
Open Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm,
e-mail autismhelpline@nas.org.uk
or go to www.autism.org.uk

The NAS **Parent to Parent line**
0808 800 4106 is a free and confidential
telephone support service offered by volunteer
parents of those with an ASD.

www.autism.org.uk/autismdirectory
A directory of services/support available.

Education advice for parents whose children
have autism or AS, call 0808 800 4102

Other local branches & support

NAS Surrey Branch: www.mugsy.org or 07423 435413.

NAS South Hampshire Branch: www.shantsnas.org.uk

NAS Alton Branch: call 07824 372034 (you may need to leave a message) or www.nasalton.com

NAS Basingstoke Branch: call 07435 751193 - the website is currently unavailable.

Contact a Family: Free helpline 0808 808 3555 open 9.30am - 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Parent Voice: www.parentvoice.info or phone 02380 721206.

Other local news...

Gateway Cards

Hampshire Gateway Cards allow your child to attend Inspiring You funded events, please complete a form at www.hants.gov.uk/gatewaycard To view activities available to Gateway card holders, go to www.hampshiregateway.info Please let us know your Gateway number!



SOS!SEN @ The Games Shop

The SOS!SEN walk-in sessions at The Games Shop in Aldershot will now be held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (10th Dec, 14th Jan, 11th Feb) 10.15am - 12.15. Go to www.sossen.org.uk for more info about what they do!



Autism Friendly Screenings

More cinemas are now running these special screenings including Odeon (Basingstoke), Cineworld (Aldershot) & Vue (Camberley):

- Cineworld at 11am on the 1st Sunday of the month.
- ODEON at 11.30am on the 3rd Sunday of every month.
- Vue at 10am on the last Sunday of the month.

The lights will stay on low, the volume is lowered, there's no trailers at the beginning of the film, you can take your own food & drinks and you're able to move around if you need to.

There's more information and downloadable social stories available at: www.dimensions-uk.org/what-we-do/autism-care/autism-friendly-films or you can talk to staff at your local participating cinema.



Disability Challengers Spring 2014 booking dates

PLAYSchemes for children age 4 - 12yrs:

- Children who have 1:1 support should call from 18th November
- Children who do not have 1:1 support should call from 20th November
- To top up your bookings you should call from 2nd December

YOUTHschemes for young people age 13 - 18yrs:

- Young people who have 1:1 support should call from 25th November
- Young people who do not have 1:1 support should call from 27th November
- To top up your bookings you should call from 9th December

YOUNG ADULT schemes for young people age 18 - 25yrs : should call from 29th November

To book your place, call 01483 230939 between 9.30am - 5pm. To find out more about the schemes Challengers offer, click here. Remember to ask about their Sleepovers, Activity Weekends and spaces for siblings age 4 - 12yrs.



Challengers Fun Swims

Challengers Fun Swim sessions take place on the last Saturday of each month at Guildford Spectrum, 6 - 7.30pm. Entry is by donation, suggestion of £2 per swimmer. There's no need to book but all children must be accompanied by an adult or carer. Call 01483 230 939 for more info or go to www.disability-challengers.org

He's behind you!.....oh no he isn't!

Parent Action Group for special panto performance - Peter Pan

PAG have opened booking for their special needs friendly performance of Peter Pan at the Princes Hall, Aldershot, Sunday 8th December. Tickets are allocated first come, first served and cost £4 per person. For more info, email info@pagforspecialplay.co.uk or call 01252-837112.

Starburst's Aladdin panto

The Starburst Foundation is staging 'Aladdin' and invite children with special needs and their families and/or carers to attend a special "by invitation only" performance of the pantomime, free of charge. This performance is on 15th December, 11.30am at Samuel Cody School in Farnborough and will be a signed performance.

For more info call 07011 000782 or e-mail boxoffice@starburst-foundation.org.uk or www.starburst-foundation.org.uk/theatre/aladdin-2013/



Aladdin in Basingstoke

At 2pm on Thursday 2nd January at The Anvil in Basingstoke, there will be a relaxed performance of Aladdin. Contact the Box Office for more info or to book tickets for this performance on 01256 844244. www.anvilarts.org.uk/whats-on/aladdin-relaxed-performance

Further afield there is also....

Jack and the beanstalk in Reading

The Hexagon will be hosting their first 'Relaxed Performance' specifically aimed at families with children with special needs, including ASD and Learning Disabilities on Friday 3rd January at 10.30am. There will be a Makaton interpreter for the performance as well as extra dedicated venue staff on hand to assist patrons where needed. All tickets are £10 and can be purchased by contacting storme.gibson@reading.gov.uk or calling 0118 937 2011.

www.readingarts.com/thehexagon/whatson/event.asp?id=SXA9AB-A781F4C4

Jack and the beanstalk in Newbury

Jack & the beanstalk at The Corn Exchange in Newbury on Saturday 4th January:

www.cornexchangenew.com/learning/info/jack-and-the-beanstalk-relaxed-performance

New equipment at The Zone!

We now have some wonderful new toys and games at The Zone! From a variety of toys for our younger members: HappyLand sets (including the pirate ship, submarine, lift off rocket, funfair, Cherry Lane cottage, country train set, construction set and some fairies too!) and some wooden food, cakes and a tea set. We've a LeapPad 2, wooden dolls house and a wooden car garage with several vehicles. There are several new 3DS games (the two new Pokemon X & Y, the just out Lego Marvel Heroes, Lego Chima and a few more), Fifa 14 on the PS3 and some new games just for Teen Zone that they requested.

There's more on the shopping list too!



Marwell "Superstar Day"

On Wednesday 4th December, Marwell Wildlife are hosting a 'Superstar Day' for families of children or adults with additional needs. It will have various adapted features to cater for guests with additional needs such as the pace of the day will be a lot slower taking into consideration that activities may take a little longer. There will also be an alternative entry available for those that have trouble coping with enclosed spaces and more elves will be on hand to create a more personal & exciting experience for guests. Tickets cost from £5-£20 & include entry into the zoo which is open from 10am - 4pm as well as complimentary access for carers of disabled guests. For tickets & more information please contact their helpful team via the elf hotline 0844 736 4200 or email christmas@marwell.org.uk

**Science Museum early bird session:**

Booking is now available for the next Early Birds event which is to be held on the Saturday November 30th. The Science Museum will be open from 8.30am for families who have members on the Autistic Spectrum to come along and enjoy the Museum free of the general public.

A pdf version of their Visual Story, which you can use to prepare your child for their visit to the museum, will be available to download shortly on the Science Museum Early Birds webpage. The webpage will also give you more detailed information about the activities that will be running on the day and practical information to help you plan your visit.

Please note that due to great interest in this event they have had to limit the numbers to ensure that the event remains intimate and personal.

It is necessary to register in advance. You can register by ringing 0870 870 4868. This event is free so there is no charge when registering your place. You should receive a booking confirmation e-mail once you have registered your family.

www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/visitmuseum/accessibility.aspx

**Lending library for 0 - 5 year olds with additional needs**

Farnborough Grange Nursery & Infant School now have a lending library for sensory resources (sensory bags, dark dens, balance cushions, treasure baskets and more.) All loans are free! For more info, contact claire.lutas@farnboroughgrange.hants.sch.uk or call 01252 541879.

Radar Keys

A quick reminder that you can obtain a free key from your local council office by showing a diagnosis letter but if you need an additional key, we have some available to purchase at The Zone for £2.50 each. Get in touch if you need one.

For more info on Radar Keys go to www.radar.org.uk or call 020 7250 3222.

**Wizzy World special needs sessions**

Every Monday, 4 - 6pm, Wizzy World are running a session especially for families with a child with additional needs. It costs £3 per child including siblings (under 2's are free), food is available to purchase (the usual chips + chicken nuggets, sausages or fish fingers.) It's for those aged 12 years and under (but contact them if you have a child who is older as they may be flexible) and no proof of diagnosis is required. Call 01252 513001 for more info or to confirm sessions are running.



From our Facebook Group...

Ipod insurance...

"My son's Ipad insurance has expired and I rang several companies trying to get it covered. Eventually found that Argos will cover it through domestic and general insurance which covers accidental damage etc and if they can't fix it they replace it. It's £140 for 2 years which is 10 × £14 a month. Considering Apple charge £230 for a replacement screen and he has had previously had 2 screens replaced on insurance already."

From Angie on the Facebook group.



Deodorant suggestions!

One mum asked about tackling the need for deodorant when her ASD child has sensory issues... Some of the replies included the following tips:

- Maybe you could show him some TV adverts of men using deodorant and tell him that he's growing up now, so he can start using it too.
- Would it help to take him to the shop to choose his own?
- How about practising on a teddy or other toy first.
- Maybe he could just test the roll-on on his hand so he knows how it feels.
- Roll-on is very sticky, spray is noisy and sticky. There is a product called PitROK which is a solid natural crystal that you either put on wet skin or add water to the end then wipe across skin. It doesn't really smell either, so is fragrance free. Quite expensive but lasts much longer than anything else.

Having looked into PitROK, it does seem to be a good solution to the issue of deodorant for those with sensory issues - it's £6.59 for a 100g stick but maybe worth a try!

Go to www.PitROK.co.uk for more info. It is available in most supermarkets and high street stores.



This is the newsletter of the Hart & Rushmoor Branch of The National Autistic Society. Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of The National Autistic Society, and reference to specific services or approaches to autism does not imply endorsement.

The National Autistic Society is a charity (No.269425) and a company limited by guarantee (No.1205298) registered in England, registered address 393 City Road London, EC1V 1NG.

All material is copyright © 2013 NAS Hart & Rushmoor and may be reproduced but please acknowledge the source.