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Issue 25

September/October 2011

Huge thanks to Julie Gill & The Golden Lion!

On Saturday 13th August, Julie Gill celebrated her 40th birthday and raised a fantastic £508 with the help of Joe & Kaye Joppling at The Golden Lion pub in Aldershot. They held a raffle and auction and thanks to the generosity of those attending they raised a brilliant amount for the Branch. We intend to put every penny to very good use to benefit as many families as possible.

Thanks also go to Aldershot Football club for the signed football, Farnham Castle for the guided tour prize and Squires garden centre for their voucher.



Do you have an idea to raise funds for the branch? If you do, get in touch with Nikki. We need all the help we can get!

Hook Fun Run donation

Grateful thanks for the wonderful donation from the organisers of the Hook Fun Run (& of course everyone who took part!) We are planning to put the money to good use by adding more items to our very popular resource library.



Committee contact details

Branch Officer:

Nikki Smith
118 Fernhill Road, Farnborough,
GU14 9DR. Nikki@nasHandR.org
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(Please note: I am a parent of 3 boys on the spectrum and I do this in my spare time.)

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Event co-ordinators:

Gaye McGowan and Janette Cutler
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Facebook group

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

Other committee members:

Colin Smith (at Gaming Zone)
Cara & Alan Taylor
Karen Booth



**** This newsletter is printed in colour thanks to the generosity of the Fleet Lions. ****

Dates for your diary...

September

Saturday 3rd 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough

Tuesday 6th 5 - 7pm:
Special needs fun session
@ Fizzy Kids

Saturday 10th
London Zoo trip -
very few places left now!

Saturday 17th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough

Wednesday 21st 10am
Coffee @ Costa in Aldershot

Sunday 25th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Hook

Halloween party

We know this event won't be to everyone's liking, but for those of you who want to join us for some spooky fun in a safe environment join us at the Scout hall, Western Road, Aldershot, GU11 3PL, 5 - 7pm on the Friday of half-term. See pg 11 for the booking form.



October

Saturday 1st 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough

Tuesday 4th 5 - 7pm:
Special needs fun session
@ Fizzy Kids

Saturday 15th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough

Saturday 22nd 2 - 4pm:
Roller disco @
Tomlinscote Sports Centre

Sunday 23rd 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Hook

Tuesday 25th, all day:
PGL activity day for over 8's!

Thurs 27th 4.30-7.30pm:
Intech session -
book your places asap!

Friday 28th 5 - 7pm:
Halloween party

Saturday 29th 10am - 1:
NAS Gaming Zone,
Farnborough



November

Tuesday 1st 5 - 7pm:
Special needs fun session
@ Fizzy Kids

Saturday 12th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough

Sunday 20th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Hook

Saturday 26th 10am - 1:
Gaming Zone, Farnborough



Inspiring You sessions at Connaught Leisure Centre

On Saturday 24th September there will be another sports session at Connaught for children with additional needs and their families.

There's trampolining, a bouncy castle, badminton, table tennis and more! For more info contact the centre on 01252 344438.

These events are monthly:
- Saturday 22nd October
- Saturday 19th November
- Saturday 17th December

Christmas party

@ *Challengers
playcentre* ~
Sunday 4th December
4 - 6.15pm

*Put the date in
your diary!*



Branch PayPal account

We can now accept payment for all our activities online via PayPal - even if you don't have a Paypal account, you can still use your credit or debit card! If you want to pay fees this way, simply go to www.paypal.co.uk and make payment to payment pal@nasHandR.org Please include a message letting us know who it's from and which activity it relates to.



Activities for children & young people



Two NAS Gaming Zone sessions

Farnborough:

10am - 1pm on alternate Saturdays
at Mayfield Community Centre,
Totland Close, Farnborough, GU14 8TX.
(These are currently free)

Hook:

10am - 1pm,
one Sunday a month at The Base,
Ravenscroft, RG27 9NN.
£1 per child.

The games are suited to those 6yrs+ but there are several younger children who come along and play too. There are games consoles, handheld games and PCs. There is always plenty of tea, coffee, juice and biscuits (though donations of additional biscuits are always welcome!)

Please will all parents ensure they supervise their children throughout the session.

Calling NAS gamers and sci-fi fans, young and old!

Coming to Gaming Zone in Farnborough from Saturday 3rd September...Warhammer 40,000. Paint Space Marines and Orks and prepare for battle! All ages and abilities welcome. Don't worry if you don't know how to play - we'll learn as we go along. Bring your own bits or help us build our NAS armies from scratch. As well as our Ork and Space Marine army, come along and try painting your very own Space Marine (huge thanks to Rhys from The Game Shop in Aldershot who has provided these.)



Fizzy Kids special needs sessions

The first Tuesday of every month, from 5 - 7pm. The sessions are for **all children with any kind of special need** & their siblings. Usual height and age restrictions do not apply! The price is £3.50 per child. Food & drinks are available to buy. Parents must supervise their children closely at this event.



Please support these sessions or they will stop running.

We try to keep the costs to families as low as possible, but if cost or transport is an issue just get in touch with us and we will try to help!

Donations are always gratefully received - even a pack of biscuits helps keep our costs down.

Please remember that you are responsible for your children at all of our activities and you must supervise them at all times!

We need your votes!!

From 26th September, we need everyone to vote for us to be in with a chance of winning funding from the Natwest Community Force. To see our page with photos and video clip, go to <http://communityforce.natwest.com/project/2895> - make sure you vote and help us to spread the word; please ask your families and friends to vote for us too!



NAS Summer activities!

Thames Valley Adventure Playground

We started the Summer holidays with our annual day out at TVAP; the sun shone on us and allowed all those who attended to enjoy all the outdoor play equipment and water area!



Donutting

Next were our two donutting sessions at Alpine Snowsports; the sessions were full; it was great to see so many smiling faces & brilliant to have so many parents joining their children whizzing down the slope!



Go-karting

Thanks to www.KiddiKarts.com and Connaught Leisure Centre we were able to have nearly a whole day of 30 minute sessions of go-karting for those aged 4 - 14 years. It was fantastic fun and we hope to organise another day soon.



Bocketts Farm

The day at Bocketts Farm in the sun was great fun and so many families said it was relaxing too! It was wonderful feeding all the animals and bouncing on the huge air pillow and so much more. If everyone's up for it, we'll have to do it again next Summer. A huge thanks to Jenni Kenyon for the suggestion for a day out!



Laser-Run

Our two sessions at Laser-Run were great fun as always! It was lovely to see some new faces joining in as well as the regular ones. Everyone divided into their teams without too many issues and a couple of parents happily joined in to help and by the end of it there were plenty of red faces!



Inspiring You fun day at Challengers!

On Bank Holiday Monday, 29th August we had exclusive use of both the play centre and youth centre at Disability Challengers in Farnham.

The weather was on our side and meant that families were able to make good use of all the outdoor space with the climbing frames, bouncy castle and barbeque!

Indoors the gaming zone area was popular, as were the sensory rooms (with the parents as well as the children!) and it was interesting to see so many adults finding the arts & crafts areas so relaxing! ;o) All the feedback was positive and we really hope that funding will allow us to do this again next Summer!



A huge thank you to **Bentalls** for the loan of their BBQ & to Mark for cooking so many sausages, burgers and onions!!

Mr Giant - www.MrGiant.co.uk or call 01420 472525.

Face Art, face painter - 01252 676812

castlesRus - www.castlesrus.net or call 07966 347387

Lewis & Bros - www.lewis-bros.com or 01252 543497

- an extra huge thanks to Fred Lewis & Kaleigh!



News for parents & carers

Facebook group

The branch Facebook group still has plenty of active posts. The events list has been updated until the beginning of November and the documents section now has a "jargon buster". Feel free to come and 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.



Twitter

We now have a branch Twitter account! Just search for NASHandR and you'll find us. So far we have 24 followers, but we are only just getting started (and we are still learning the art of tweeting!)



Branch resource library

The library was very popular at our day at Challengers - hopefully you are all finding the time to read the books you borrowed! We are hoping to buy more books soon so please let us know if there are any titles you think we should add to our collection.

A Guide to Disability, Transition and Family Finance

Working Families have produced a new transition booklet dealing with finances and benefits when your disabled child becomes an adult. The booklet has sections for parents and carers and for disabled young people, a step-by-step guide to better-off calculations and a list of useful publications, organisations and websites. To view the booklet, go to www.workingfamilies.org.uk or call 0207 253 7243.



NAS Help! Courses.....

The branch has been looking into the possibility of hosting some Help! courses in Farnborough later this year, to make them more accessible to our members. The topics on offer will be *anger management*, *sensory issues*, *supporting siblings* and *first steps for 5 - 11 year olds* (for those with a recent diagnosis). Early next year there will be other courses available for those with teens and we know that they will be popular! Places will be limited, 15 families (2 places per family) - but as families need to be divided into groups with similar issues, bookings can't be taken on a first come first served basis.



Disability Living Allowance - a form filling session!

As we know the DLA forms are awful to complete. We thought that we would have a get together specifically for those who would like some help with completing theirs.

Once we have confirmed the details we will spread the word. If you are interested in attending a session let Nikki know. If this proves popular we would like to make it a regular thing.



NAS news!

NAS Basingstoke Branch

The Basingstoke Branch website is now available at <http://basingstokenas.terapad.com> - it's a great way to keep up with what's happening. Alternatively join them on Facebook (just search for "NAS Basingstoke" in the groups section. If you're not online, simply call Sam on 07435751193.

NAS Alton Branch



Beverly is doing a fantastic job trying to arrange events in Alton and surrounding areas - they have had two ASD-friendly cinema sessions and both were well attended! They are starting up a chess club on Saturday 24th September at the Kingsley Centre in Bordon at 9.30am - 1.30. It's £1 per player and siblings are welcome. Use the contact details below to find out more info!

NAS Surrey Branch

It's that time again - the Surrey Branch conference is on Saturday 1st October in Guildford. The theme is "Getting support right for people with ASDs - how schools and adult services can meet individual needs. How parents can help." The two main speakers are Prof Rita Jordan (expert on autism and education) and Dr Wendy Lawson (psychologist and writer who has Asperger Syndrome.) For more info go to <http://www.mugsy.org/2011conference/flyer.pdf> or use the contact details at the bottom of the page.

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

www.autism.org.uk/autismdirectory

A comprehensive directory of services
and support for those affected by autism.

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

For advice on **educational** issues for parents
whose children have autism or Asperger
syndrome, call 0808 800 4102

Please note: the Education Rights Service, Autism Helpline and Parent-to-Parent Service numbers have changed.
The ones printed here are correct! Calls to these numbers are now free from landlines and mobiles.

Other local branches & support

NAS Surrey Branch: www.mugsy.org or call Emma (the new Branch Officer) on 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: <http://basingstokenas.terapad.com> or call Sam on 07435 751193.

BAGS (Basingstoke Autism Group): bagsinstoke@live.co.uk or via Speakeasy on 01256 332795.

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

AFASIC helpline (a speech & language charity): 08453 555577.

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

SOS!SEN @ The Games Shop

The excellent volunteers from SOS!SEN will be upstairs in the Games Shop in Aldershot on the first Tuesday of every month, 10.15am - 12.15pm - the next one is on 6th September. Go to www.sossen.org.uk for more info. If you can't get there, call their helpline on 020 8538 3731 for educational advice.

PAG activities

PAG's MADD (Music, Art, Dance and Drama) club is still running during term-time for those aged 5 - 18 years. Contact Ann on info@pagforspecialplay.co.uk or 01252 837 112.



Family Fund

Family Fund have a new telephone system and with it comes a new number: 08449 744 099.



Fun House special needs sessions

Fun House special needs sessions are on the second Saturday of every month, 4 - 6pm. The next couple are: 10th September & 8th October. Entry is £3.50 per child and food and drinks are available to buy. Call 01256 471066 for more info. They are on the Daneshill Industrial Estate, Basingstoke, RG24 8NS.



Playdays special needs night

On the 3rd Friday of every month it's special needs night at Playdays - the next one is 16th September, 6pm - 8pm in Basingstoke (RG24 8NF.) Entry is £3 for under 4's and £3.50 for those over 4 years or go for the Meal Deal - a hot kids meal for an extra £3! For more info call Playdays on 01256 346173. Nikki's boys love the sessions! :o)

Activities at the West End Centre (all aimed at families with a child with a disability)

Play with Clay: Hands on fun with ceramicist Lucy Burley. 5.30 - 6.30pm, £12 per course. Very limited additional care assistance will be on offer.

Wednesday 14th September and 2nd November (2 x 6 weeks)

Pottery Express: Come along and have an inspiring morning creating objects out of clay with Penny Eccles. 11 - 1pm, for 0-19 year olds, £3 per person. On Friday 28th October.

Bean Bag Film Club: This is an exciting new club for disabled young people from 0-19 years of age and their families. Join us in a relaxed atmosphere where you can lounge on our humungous bean bags and watch family friendly films. 2pm, £3 per person
Saturday 8th October - High School Musical, Friday 28th October - Mama Mia & Saturday 17th December - Shrek Christmas Special

To find out more or to book a place please call 01252 408040.
West End Centre, Queens Road, Aldershot, GU11 3JD.



Learning Disability Today Conference & Exhibition

This will be taking place on Tuesday 29th November 2011 at The Business Design Centre, London. It is all about extending choice and control to enable people with learning disabilities to live the life they want. There will be a range of exhibitors including care and support providers, advocacy organisations and training and education providers. There are also seminars around a range of topics including housing, health and transition.

People with learning disabilities, unwaged, full-time students, unpaid carers and unpaid volunteers, can attend for free. Tickets cost £24 for everyone else. For more information or to book your places, go to www.ldtonline.co.uk/events or call 0844 880 5061.

Hampshire's Gateway Card

Hampshire have launched their new Gateway Card; it's free and it will give you access to activities, play schemes and buddy schemes available through Hampshire's short breaks programme (as of 1st April 2012 you will need to have one to access Inspiring You activities, including those run by NAS H&R, so sign-up sooner rather than later!)

The cards are for those aged 0 - 19 years who have a disability/additional need who live in and/or attend a school in Hampshire.



The plan is that the card will give you access to range of short break activities, the buddy scheme and other activities without having to keep filling out forms at each activity your child attends.

For more info, go to www.hants.gov.uk/gatewaycard or call 01962 846399.

Community Buddies

If you have a child with an additional need who is aged 7 - 19 years, you can access Hampshire's Community Buddies scheme.

The buddies are volunteers or paid members of staff who are interviewed, CRB checked, trained and then matched to a child. They are able to take your child out and about at weekends, after school or in the holidays - for a couple of hours or a whole day! There is a standard charge of £5 per hour for the buddy + the cost of the activity + travel.

For more information contact Parent Voice - go to http://www.parentvoice.info/en/Short_Breaks or call 023 8072 1206. They will also supply you with a list of approved providers that you can use to find a Buddy.

Annual Hampshire Carers Conference

At Hampshire County Council, Ashburton Hall, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester on Wednesday October 19th, 2011. The main conference is 9.30am - 3pm or the evening drop in is 4.30 - 7pm.

Refreshments and lunch are provided. Please **RSVP** (stating which event you wish to attend and any dietary or access requests) to Chelsea Webster on chelsea.webster@hants.gov.uk or 01962 847718.



This lovely poem has been doing the rounds on Facebook and we thought we had to share it with you all.

I was like you.....once

If you see me at the supermarket,
and my child is screaming,
rolling on the floor
with anger seeping from his pores.
please don't blame me,
I was like you once,

If you are in a restaurant
and my child throws food and it
hits you in the face,
please, don't be angry,
I can't handle any more rage.

If you see my child
climbing over a very tall fence
with nothing on except his hat.
Please don't call the police,
I only looked away for a minute.

If you see me
crying, as you pull up next to me
at a stop light, at a busy intersection.
Honk and smile, I need a friend.

If you see me,
running down the street
with curlers in my hair
chasing a small child
who runs so fast, I can't catch him
Help me chase him down.

If my child grabs
your child, or pushes him
or bites or kicks him, or
says words that make your hair curl.
Please forgive him, and me too.

If you happen to see us,
Walking in your neighbourhood,
or in the malls, or at the park
Please don't turn away,
I was like you once.

By Sally Meyer
(copyright 1999)

Other sources of support...

We know that our branch provides you with plenty of information and hopefully great support too, but we thought you might like to know what else is out there!

Other NAS branches

The other local branches are listed on page 6. Each branch is run by parents who volunteer to do so and therefore each will be run differently. You are welcome to contact any branch you wish to, but most will give families in their area priority over places at events they run.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers

The centres in Hampshire are in Andover and Winchester, but there are coffee mornings that take place in the North East too. Contact the Hampshire representatives on 01962 869929 or go to www.carercentre.com
The main organisation has an online forum, go to www.carers.org



Online....

NAS community board

<http://community.autism.org.uk/>

The Community is for people on the autistic spectrum, their carers and relatives, professionals working around autism and other interested people to share their thoughts and experiences.

Talk About Autism

www.talkaboutautism.org.uk

This is an online community for parents and carers of children with autism and others to talk about how autism impacts on their lives. Talk About Autism can also be found on Facebook.

Asdfriendly

www.asdfriendly.org

ASD Friendly is a community of parents and carers of people with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome. Established in April 2003 and now also on Facebook.

Aspergers and ASD UK Online Forum

www.asd-forum.org.uk

This forum aims to provide help, support and friendship to people whose life has been touched in one way or another by ASD, Asperger or any other forms of autism.

Netmums

www.netmums.com

Netmums have a section called Coffee House, full of online forums where you can find other mums to "talk" to - there's one called Special Needs & Disabilities.

Mumsnet

www.mumsnet.com

Mumsnet have a thriving area of their "Talk boards" for parents of children with special needs, or for parents who themselves have special needs.

Have you found any other sources of support?



118 Fernhill Road,
Farnborough,
Hampshire,
GU14 9DR

01252 694934

07825 280 274

info@nasHandR.org

We're on the web!

www.nasHandR.org

Make sure you let us
know if you move or
change your e-mail
address.

If you don't, we can't
get this newsletter to
you!

Useful things & websites!

Some useful information that has been posted on our Branch Facebook Group:

Following several comments from parents who had given out the NAS "this child has autism" cards to people, that they were too detailed and small print for most passer's-by to bother with. We began to look at an alternative design, that said what parents wanted it to and also had our branch details on the back. Here is what the front of them will look like and they will hopefully be printed and ready to go soon!



"We've discovered 2 places today in Hyde Park that would suit our sensory children really well. Firstly the Diana Memorial Fountain is a water lovers dream. It is quite a long way round with varying depths of water (no deeper than my knees) but there are different surfaces along the bottom, some smooth, some bumpy etc. Then after a little walk there is the Diana Memorial Playground which is based on the senses. There is the biggest pirate ship on sand and you can climb to the crow's nest; a large fort on wood chippings; water play area with huge natural stones; a sound area with lots of instruments in the ground to play; hidden walkways; swings; sand area; clean toilets and most importantly, a coffee bar!"

Kerry.

www.ipsea.org.uk have a page of downloadable letter templates, from requesting an assessment of your child's needs to a resource pack if the Local Authority refuse to assess your child. You can also contact IPSEA on 0800 018 4016.

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.

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Half-term activities for those in Hart & Rushmoor



There are limited places at these events,
therefore they are only for members who live in the Hart & Rushmoor areas.
(If there are additional spaces, we will open the activity up to other areas.)

Roller disco in Frimley



Tomlinscote sports centre, Tomlinscote Way, Frimley, Surrey, GU16 8PY
Saturday 22nd October, 1-3pm

We have organised an exclusive use roller disco for ASD families.
The skates start at a junior size 13 and go up to an adult size 9
(but there are very few pairs of adult skates.)

You are welcome to bring your own skates if you prefer.

There will be disco lights and music (not too loud!)

The cost is £5 per person skating.

PGL activity day for over 8's



Action & Adventure

Marchants Hill Camp, Tilford Road, Hindhead, Surrey, GU26 6RF
Tuesday 25th October - all day

There will be 4 fantastic activities to take part in during the day
which will hopefully include quad biking and a long zip wire!
(Exact activity details can't be confirmed until PGL know the ages of those involved.)

Spaces won't be allocated on a first come, first served basis
as children will be grouped by age.

You will need to pay a non-refundable deposit of £5 to guarantee your child's place and
the remaining payment of £10 will need to be made by 3rd October 2011.

Intech in Winchester



Morn Hill, Winchester, SO21 1HZ.

Thursday 27th October, 4.30 - 7.30pm

We have the whole centre booked just for ASD families!

2 Planetarium sessions to choose from: cardboard rocket or astronauts.

Hot and cold drinks and snacks will be available to purchase from the cafe.

£3 per person.



Halloween party - dress-up and join us!

Scout hall, Western Road, Aldershot,

Friday 28th October, 5 - 7pm

Come and join us for some wicked games!

£2 per child + bring a plate of food

**please note that there will be various sorts of food and sweets at this event,
as well as people in costumes and wearing masks!**

Payment must be made in advance -

via cash at meet-ups, cheque or Paypal (see the booking form for details)

Contact Nikki - nikki@nasHandR.org or 01252 694934 for more info.