



## Welcome to the Dec 20 - Jan 21 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.*

In the last issue we reported on the fantastic level of feedback there had been to the consultation on the new All Age Autism Strategy for Surrey. There were 1,165 responses, including 109 from autistic people and 756 from parents or family carers. The results are being analysed, and in December, there will be a series of online workshops for anyone interested to find out what Surrey County Council and its partners in health and other services see as the issues to be addressed in the new strategy. These will give another chance for you to have your say before final decisions are made - see p4 for details.

This is the last 'Chair's letter' that I will be writing, as from January, **Carol Teunon takes over as NAS Surrey Branch Chair**. I'm not disappearing, as I'm remaining on the committee as Deputy Chair (Adults) so will still be involved in branch activities and lobbying work, especially for adult services.

However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the committee, the support group leaders and other branch volunteers, for all they have done to help with the work of the branch supporting Surrey families. It really is a team effort, and we look forward to continuing that work under Carol's leadership.

Can I finish by wishing everyone a Merry – if socially distanced – Christmas, and we look forward to restarting our face-to-face activities as soon as we can in 2021.

Sara Truman,  
Chair (volunteer)

**NAS Surrey Branch**

**General email:** [NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk)

**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:**

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[nas@mugsy.org](mailto:nas@mugsy.org)

### **Treasurer:**

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### **Branch Membership:**

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

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

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

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

Sarah Mead  
Emma Searle  
Jill Goulding  
Jo Dilworth  
Emma Ellis  
Lisa Mangum  
Carol Teunon  
Sally Roberts

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

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

**SEND Advice Surrey:** 01737 737300  
[www.sendadvicesurrey.org.uk](http://www.sendadvicesurrey.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

## Other Useful Contacts

## Branch Online Parent Support Groups

We are continuing our Zoom meetings for parents to get together online while we can't meet in person.

The **Parents of Children Group** meets fortnightly, alternating Monday evenings at 8.00 p.m. and Wednesday mornings at 10.00 a.m. The next meetings are:

- Weds 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 10.00 a.m.
- Monday 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 8.00 p.m.
- Weds 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 10.00 a.m.
- Mon 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 8.00 p.m.

To go on the mailing list to receive the Zoom links for these meetings, please email Emma Phillpotts at [ephillpotts@gmail.com](mailto:ephillpotts@gmail.com)

The **Parents of Adults Group** also meets fortnightly, alternating Friday afternoons and Wednesday evenings; their next meetings are:

- Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 7.30 p.m.
- Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2.00 p.m.
- Weds 30<sup>th</sup> Dec 7.30 p.m.
- Fri 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2.00 p.m.

To go on the mailing list to receive the Zoom links for these meetings, please email Hilary Dyce at [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

We also have a group for **Parents of young people or adults who are unable to leave the house**, or perhaps even their room, due to their autism and anxiety. This group meets every 4 weeks on Tuesday evenings. The next meetings are:

- Tues 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 8.00 p.m.
- Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Jan 8.00 p.m.

For more details, contact Emma Ellis: email [emma.dawson4@btinternet.com](mailto:emma.dawson4@btinternet.com)

Don't forget about our email support group, also known as the NASSB forum. This is a great way to link up with other branch members at a time to suit you, via email. To join the forum, go to:

<http://www.nassureybranch.org/moderated-email-forum.html>

For information about NAS groups for children or adults with autism, run by NAS professionals email [SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk](mailto:SEResourceCentres@nas.org.uk)

## Online Mental Health Support for Parents/Carers

Qwell is an app that offers access to online mental health and wellbeing support for parents and carers with children between the age of 0 to 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Qwell is free to use and offers one-to-one online text chat counselling sessions with trained counsellors, along with access to self-help tools and forums.

Parents and carers can register online to access the service at [www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io)

## Autism Strategy Online Workshops

Following on from the public consultation for **Surrey's All Age Autism Strategy**, representatives from Education, Care and Health services have analysed the responses and now invite autistic people, parents, carers and others interested to attend a workshop to discuss the themes which have emerged.

They want to be confident that these themes fully represent the views of those affected, so that the All Age Autism Strategy focuses on the areas that are important to autistic people and their families.

Your feedback at the workshops will help shape what goes into the final All Age Autism Strategy. The strategy will determine what services are offered to meet the needs of autistic people and change the ways our community welcomes and includes those with autism.

For **autistic people**, the workshop is on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

For **parents/carers and others**, there is a choice of a daytime or evening workshop:

- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec. 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon.

(The content will be the same at all workshops – you only need to attend one.)

To book go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/all-age-autism-strategy-workshop-tickets-129712998069?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>

## 'Stepping Up' Courses for Parents of Newly-Diagnosed Children

The NAS Surrey professional service are running two online courses for Surrey parents of newly diagnosed children aged 5 - 16 in the new year.

Each course runs every Tuesday for 8 weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021 (missing out half term week).

For parents of children aged **5 – 11 they are from 9.30 – 11.30a.m.**, and for parents of **12 – 16-year olds they are from 12.30 – 2.30pm.**

Places are free but must be booked in advance. Subjects covered are:

- Understanding autism
- Family wellbeing
- Communication
- Visual supports
- Understanding behaviour
- Managing behaviour
- Sensory differences
- Supporting special skills

For more information and to book your place, contact Jo Barton-Warner at the NAS Surrey Service email: [jo.barton-warner@nas.org.uk](mailto:jo.barton-warner@nas.org.uk)

## **Surrey Carers' Strategy Consultation**

In addition to the Autism Strategy, there is also a consultation on the draft Surrey Carers Strategy 2021 – 2024, which has been developed in partnership with carers, commissioners, stakeholders and providers.

If you're a carer, the teams at Surrey County Council responsible for planning support or services need to learn from your experiences and knowledge to ensure that the draft strategy is fit for purpose and your views are taken into account.

They are particularly keen to hear how well it addresses what you consider to be the most important things for ensuring that there will be a robust offer for carers throughout 2021-2024.

This survey is for anyone who identifies as a carer, including former carers. They are keen to hear from people with lived experience, irrespective of whether you are accessing/have accessed services now or have done in the past.

The Council is also keen to hear from those who work with carers in health & social care, carers' support services, and/or the voluntary, community and faith sector.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete and closes on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2021. Your responses are reported anonymously and your identity will be completely hidden. You can access the survey here: <https://www.surreysays.co.uk/adult-social-care-and-public-health/surrey-carers-strategy/>

There are accessible versions (go to the bottom of the page from the link above). To request a hard copy email [contactcentre.adminhub@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:contactcentre.adminhub@surreycc.gov.uk) call 0300 200 1005 or text 07917 087 560. If you have any questions about the survey, please email [carersstrategy@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:carersstrategy@surreycc.gov.uk)

## **New NAS Surrey Branch Website – Coming Soon**

We are launching a new website shortly to make it easier to find information for parents, carers and people with autism. It will be at the same address as currently: [www.nassurreybranch.org](http://www.nassurreybranch.org). Information will include:

- Information about our meetings and events
- Useful contacts in Surrey for families affected by autism
- Resources including slides from past talks and seminars
- Information about the kids clubs run by the NAS professionals
- Services for autistic adults in Surrey

The site has been put together by volunteers, so do please bear with us if there are any teething issues!

## **Donate Money While you Shop - EasyFundraising**

If you're starting your online Christmas shopping, please remember that you can support the branch by signing up to EasyFundraising, which donates money every time you shop from many online stores, at no cost to you. Our opportunities to collect donations have been reduced this year, so we'd be very grateful for this additional revenue: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/nassurrey/>

## **Consultation: Planned New Autism School in Leatherhead**

The LIFT Partnership is consulting about establishing a new special school in Leatherhead, named Fox Grove School. It would be an all-through school for 152 autistic children aged 4 to 19 with additional social and communication needs.

LIFT stands for Learning and Inspiration for Tomorrow (LIFT). The Partnership already includes West Hill School, Leatherhead and Linden Bridge School, Worcester Park. They are proposing to join The Howard Partnership Trust (THPT), which includes mainstream primary and secondary schools, and which is planning on opening a new special school in Dorking. They expect to join forces before Fox Grove opens.

Establishing Fox Grove School would enable more young people to be educated closer to their home, reduce home to school travel times, and enable pupils to play a more active part in their local communities.

The LIFT Partnership are now undertaking the formal consultation that is required before the Department for Education can approve the opening of Fox Grove School next academic year. You can read more at [www.foxgroveschool.co.uk](http://www.foxgroveschool.co.uk). The consultation runs until 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Please complete the online questionnaire here <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/M6ZJW9T> Do do consider taking part in the consultation even if the school won't benefit your own child.

There is also a public webinar on **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December, at 7pm**, which will give you the opportunity to hear more about Fox Grove School and cover any questions you may have, please email [admin@liftpartnership.org](mailto:admin@liftpartnership.org) to reserve a place.

## **Book of Positive Stories About Living with Autism**

Melanie Cosgrave is a mother of three children, two of whom are autistic. She is collecting positive stories about autism and hoping to publish them in a book. She says, "Sometimes there is a lot of negative portrayals or stereotypical portrayals of autism and I would like to help change that. I know my children would certainly enjoy hearing about positive/funny/light-hearted stories connected with autism, especially if they have had a tough day."

She already has stories from Autistic author, Michael Barton and Autism advocate Anna Kennedy as well as stories from children, parents, siblings and grandparents. If you would like to contribute, your stories should be at least a paragraph, but can be as long as you wish. To contribute or if you have questions, please email Melanie at [autism.positive@btinternet.com](mailto:autism.positive@btinternet.com)

## **1:1 Counselling from Express CIC**

The not for profit company Express CIC offers 1-1 counselling sessions for parents/carers of children with additional needs at the Express offices in Tolworth (socially distanced) or via Zoom. The sessions are 50 minutes long and run weekly on Monday or Wednesday evenings, or Tuesday mornings. They offer up to 12 sessions. All their counsellors have training, knowledge and experience of additional needs and its impact on families. They are a low-cost service so fees are £30 per session (about half the price of local private counsellors). To apply, please email [counselling@expresscic.org.uk](mailto:counselling@expresscic.org.uk) . If costs are a barrier to you accessing this service, please get in touch to discuss.

## **Online Access to Talks about Preparing for Adulthood**

Family Voice Surrey held a series of talks and interviews during early November around the theme of 'Preparing for Adulthood'. All of the virtual talks can be freely accessed online. Talks include:

**Steve Hook, Assistant Director for Learning Disability, Autism and Transition Services, Surrey County Council (SCC)**

He gave a summary of the joint plan to improve the journey for young people with SEND into adulthood, focussing on those who meet the eligibility for adult social care support <https://bit.ly/2lYKZPz>

**Gail Bedding and Grainne Saunders: Expert Parent Training** - How to support young people in the transition from child to adult health services. <https://bit.ly/2HpOuxD>

**Christina Earl, Surrey Choices** – Employment Support Programmes, day services, housing support programmes and transport assistance. <https://bit.ly/2Ky4YFh>

**Susan Harris, lead Educational Psychologist, SCC Children's Services and Tom Moore, SCC Commissioning Manager, Adult Social Care, Autism Lead** – developing an all age autism strategy. <https://bit.ly/3pLfVTU>

**Lynne Davis, psychotherapist** – Managing Anxiety. <https://bit.ly/3nT29Nv>

**Mark Brown, Special Help 4 Special Needs** – Neurodiversity and Relationships <https://bit.ly/2J2VbX8>

**Eamonn Gilbert, Assistant Director for Commissioning SEND and Corporate Parenting, SCC** – Next steps, employment pathways for those who do not qualify for adult social care. <https://bit.ly/3nKsEEE>

If you are planning to contribute to the Autism Strategy consultation or attend one of the workshops (see p4), you may find it useful to watch the talks by Susan Harris and Tom Moore beforehand. Live question and answer sessions were held with each of the speakers after the initial webinar and can be accessed by joining the Family Voice Surrey Facebook page at <https://bit.ly/3nT2ik1>

## **Webinars for Parents of Children with Autism**

Dr. Mark Brown at Special Help 4 Special Needs is making some of his webinars available to parents online for a fee for one month's access. Topics are specific to children with autism and special needs and include:

- Obsessions and anxiety
- Managing Behaviour by understanding the individual
- "Just a Few More Minutes Please" - sleep problems in neurodiverse people
- Puberty and Neurodiversity – ready or not here it comes
- Toilet training – beating the toilet monster
- The Online World – keeping your child/teenager safe

For more information or to pay for access to the webinars, contact Mark Brown at [sh4sn@sky.com](mailto:sh4sn@sky.com) or go to [www.sh4sn.co.uk](http://www.sh4sn.co.uk)

## **Online Talks by The Curly Hair Project**

The Curly Hair Project (CHP) is a social enterprise founded by autistic author and entrepreneur Alis Rowe for autistic people, families and professionals. There are webinars several times a week, with topics including:

- Meltdowns and shutdowns
- Autism and anxiety
- Understanding masking
- Females and autism
- Sensory processing and autism
- Communicating and autism

There is a charge to attend: <https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk/services/events/>

## **Two-day Learning Event on Education, Mental Health & Wellbeing**

Autism Learns, the organisers of the Autism Show, are running an online learning series for parents, carers and professionals on 11th & 12th December on Supporting Autistic Teenagers & Young Adults with mental health.

A team of leading autism specialists will take you through strategies and approaches which can make a positive difference including:

- The principles for creating the best learning environment
- Understanding sensory processing in educational environments
- Understanding the causes of behavioural issues
- Reducing bullying and raising self-esteem
- Understanding depression and what therapies can help
- Developing friendship and relationship skills
- Teaching autistic teenagers about puberty and sex

You'll also be able to learn from the experiences of other attendees and to ask speakers for personalised advice. You can re-watch the webinars for up to 30 days. Cost: £29.99 for parents and family carers, and £49.99 for professionals. Content is CPD certified. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/autism-learns-supporting-autistic-teenagers-young-adults-tickets-129607336031>

## **Appeer Group for Girls and Women**

Appeer Community Interest Company has been set up by parents/carers to benefit girls and women with autism and other neurodiverse conditions and those around them, including their families and professionals. They provide online and in-person sessions (when possible) and resources. Upcoming events include:

- Monthly hobbies and social interest-based online sessions for autistic and neurodiverse girls aged 7-12 including Lego, baking, arts & crafts, Forest school activities and more. The sessions cost £10 or £5 for assisted places and include resources sent to your door beforehand <https://www.appeer.org.uk/7-12-years-old-girls>
- Two online sessions every month for parents/carers of autistic daughters including Wreath Making and Social (3rd Dec) and 'The Future' with AS Mentoring (6th December) <https://www.appeer.org.uk/parents-carers>
- Hobby-based workshops for autistic teenage girls in Surrey, to be delivered between December and March. Please complete the survey to help decide topics <https://tinyurl.com/y6a8bj4u>

For details contact [paige@appeer.org.uk](mailto:paige@appeer.org.uk) to find out more or with any queries, and/or spread this appeal to anyone you think might be interested. Find them on Facebook <https://m.facebook.com/positivepeerapproach/?refid=56>

## **Single Point of Access for Learners' Support**



The Learners' Single Point of Access (L-SPA) has been created as part of Surrey's vision and drive to ensure that all children have access to a good quality education and receive help and support where there is a concern about the development and/or learning needs of a child, in a timely way.

If you have a SEND-related enquiry or concern, you can call the Learners' Single Point of Access on 0300 200 1015. It is mainly for professionals working with children or young people in Surrey, but parents can also use the L-SPA to request support if your child doesn't already have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

In cases where children and young people's needs are so complex that a statutory assessment of their Education, Health and Care needs might be appropriate, professionals can submit a request to the L-SPA <https://bit.ly/3l3wl6r>

## Helpline for Carers

Bild is offering a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) helpline to support families and carers of people with learning disabilities, mental health issues or autistic people with the challenges of living with Covid-19 restrictions.

Supporters, carers and family members might want to discuss how they are doing, to gain reassurance that they are doing the right thing, or they might want to talk through some ideas and get some practical suggestions. The overall aim of PBS is to improve the quality of a person's life and that of the people around them. PBS is especially appropriate when someone is distressed or if their behaviour is concerning or challenging.

Free appointments can be booked via Eventbrite: <https://bit.ly/39j1Ebv>

## RESEARCH REQUESTS

### Parenting Experiences of Autistic Fathers

Amelia Turner is a trainee clinical psychologist at Royal Holloway, University of London. As part of her Clinical Psychology Doctorate, she is conducting a research project exploring the parenting experiences of fathers who have a formal diagnosis of autism, and is looking for autistic fathers to be interviewed for the research. The study has been approved by the Department of Psychology Ethics Committee at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Participants would be asked to have an interview lasting approx. one hour, to take place over a video call. Those who take part will receive £10 as a token of gratitude.

Information about the study can be accessed via this link: [https://rhulpsychology.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1TQVdrcsrpsilwh](https://rhulpsychology.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1TQVdrcsrpsilwh) where you can submit your contact details if you would like to take part in the research.

If you would like any more information about the study, please feel free to contact Amelia at [amelia.turner.2018@live.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:amelia.turner.2018@live.rhul.ac.uk)

### Preschool Brain Imaging and Behaviour Project

Julia Koziel is a researcher at King's College London, working with Dr Eva Loth and colleagues on the [Preschool Brain Imaging and Behaviour Project](#) (PIP). They are currently recruiting participants (young children and parents).

The PIP project is the first Europe-wide study on brain development in pre-schoolers. Their goal is to better understand how differences in brain development are related to a child's social, emotional, behavioural and cognitive development.

They are particularly keen to recruit:

- Autistic children (between 3-4.5 years), and/or
- Children with ADHD (between 4-5.5 years), and/or
- Children with developmental delay (between 3-4.5 years), and/or
- Children with epilepsy (between 3-4.5 years).

The team hopes that in the future the research will help with earlier diagnosis and improved support that would improve outcomes for children and young people with different neurodevelopmental conditions.

Due to COVID-19, Part One of the study is via remote assessments only with online questionnaires and interviews for parents to complete at home. If you want to take part in the second part, you will be invited to King's College London (post lockdown) for touchscreen tasks, interactive games, and an MRI brain scan.

Participants are offered a £25 gift voucher for completing the remote assessments as compensation for their time and energy. If participants decide to take part in the second part of the study, they will receive a £50 gift voucher for each in-person visit as compensation for their time and energy.

For details, please email the research team [pip.brainexplorers@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:pip.brainexplorers@kcl.ac.uk) or find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3pVI3Up>

## INFORMATION FOR ADULTS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

### **Inclusive Football Workshops from Middlesex FA**

Middlesex FA, together with London FA will be running a FREE virtual disability event to celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities on Thursday 3rd December.

'Let's Get Inclusive' is a series of inclusive workshops to support and develop disability football in Middlesex and London.

There will be 8 workshops throughout the day via zoom, whether you're a parent / carer or player, coach, club, volunteer, teacher, school, organisation supporting disabled people organisation/ parent/carer there is something for everyone.

You can attend as many workshops as you would like. For details email [development@middlesexfa.com](mailto:development@middlesexfa.com) or call 07908 408773.

### **Surrey People's Group**

The Surrey People's Group is a Surrey wide network for people with a Learning disability, autism and acquired brain injury. At the group people can talk about issues important to them and work together to make real change.

Currently the group is meeting on Zoom, on the first Wednesday of every month from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon. For more information go to [www.proactivecommunity.org.uk](http://www.proactivecommunity.org.uk)

## **Free Online Course on Applying for Work**

The NAS is offering a free online course where you can find out more about applying for work or starting a new role.

The employment module has been designed to support autistic adults and young people into employment. It looks at the steps involved in applying for work, interviewing tips and starting work and allows you to create a personalised profile, which you can then use when attending interviews or starting a new job.

It is suitable for autistic people looking for work or starting a new role, as well as teachers, parents or professionals who would like to support someone to find work. Topics include:

- Understanding your own strengths and abilities.
- Choosing a role.
- Applying for work and creating a CV.
- Preparing for interviews.
- Starting work and reasonable adjustments.
- Identifying your autism profile.
- Building your personalised CV and cover letter.
- Disclosure document.
- A reasonable adjustments request form.

The training is funded through the City Bridge Trust's 'Bridge to Work' project. For more information go to <https://bit.ly/33ed4cy>

## **Valuing People Groups**

Valuing People Groups are for adults with learning disabilities (LD), including those with LD and autism, parents/carers and professionals to meet up, share information and have their say on issues such as housing, transport and employment. They meet four times a year and there are four groups covering the different parts of Surrey: South West, North West, East and Mid Surrey.

By joining your Local Valuing People Group you'll be working alongside people with a learning disability, family carers, local councils, community organisations, health workers, social care providers, and other local people keen to make a difference in your community

To find out more about joining your local group email [ldcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:ldcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk) or call 01483 519433 or text 07929 863582. See also <http://www.surreypb.org.uk/>

## **Managing Money Free Online Course**

Offered by MoneySuperMarket.com in association with the National Autistic Society, this module covers a range of money-related topics and can be completed in one visit or section by section over as many visits as required.

The module was created to assist learners to recognise their strengths as well as the challenges they may experience with managing their money. It shares real-life experiences of autistic people about the sorts of difficulties they encounter, and how they successfully manage their money. For details go to <https://bit.ly/2Hwc4ZB>

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## About NAS Surrey Branch

*NAS Surrey Branch is a volunteer-run, support group for the parents of autistic children and adults and is part of the National Autistic Society. It's FREE to join (although a small donation is appreciated) and we have around 2,000 members in and around Surrey.*

*We hold regular support group meetings, organise social events and special interest groups (currently online) and represent 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 [NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk) 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 2,000 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.**

**The NAS Surrey Branch is part of the National Autistic Society - Registered charity, number 269425. Company limited by guarantee number 1205298.**

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