



## Welcome to the June - July 22 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.

Following our appeal for a new Branch Chair in the last newsletter, we were thrilled that several applicants came forward.

Following an interview process, I'm delighted to announce that **Paul Clements** will take over as Chair at our AGM on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June (see page 3 for details).

We are also very pleased to welcome new committee members: **Rachel Boyce-Davies, Jacqueline Bouette, Suraiya Behardien** and **Jason Malschuk**.

Thank you to everyone who offered to help in order to ensure that the branch would continue - and build on - the work it has done over the last 27 years.

Following on from Autism Acceptance Week in April, this month we have **Carers Week** (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> June) and **Learning Disability Week** (20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June).

Look out for local events and items in the news and other media which will highlight the issues around both topics.

Some support group dates in June have changed from those given in the previous newsletter, so please check the calendar on pages 6/7 to make sure you have the correct dates.

Sara Truman,  
Deputy Chair

### NAS Surrey Branch

**Email:** [surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk)

**Website:** <https://NASSurreyBranch.org>

**Facebook:** @NASSurreyBranch

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

## NAS Surrey Branch Contacts

### **General Information**

Branch Mobile: 07423 435413

[surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk)

### **Chair:**

Paul Clements

### **Treasurer:**

Haywood Drake

[Treasurer.NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk](mailto:Treasurer.NASSurreyBranch@nas.org.uk)

### **Branch Membership:**

Nancy Rowell

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

### **Deputy Chair (Adults) /**

### **Spouses and Partners Group**

Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

### **Events & Talks:**

Emma Ellis

[events@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:events@nassurreybranch.org)

### **Website & Newsletter:**

Emma Whitfield

[emmawhitfieldnassurrey@gmail.com](mailto:emmawhitfieldnassurrey@gmail.com)

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

Sally Roberts

[sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk)

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

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

### **Parents of Children with PDA Group**

Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

### **Other Activities:**

Jill Goulding

Jo Dilworth

Lisa Mangum

Rachel Pearson

Rachel Boyce-Davies

Jacqueline Bouette

Suraiya Behardien

Jason Malschuk

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### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

NAS Surrey Branch

c/o Walton Charities,

2 Quintet, Churchfield Road,

Walton on Thames KT12 2TZ

**NB: No NAS staff / volunteers work here.**

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## Other Useful Contacts

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

**NAS website:** <https://www.autism.org.uk/>

**NAS membership:** <https://bit.ly/3l84tBW>

### **Education Support**

**NAS Education Rights:** <https://bit.ly/3BTfux6>

**SEND Advice Surrey:** 01737 737300

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

**SOS!SEN** charity to support EHCPs etc, Tel:

020 8538 3731, Web: [www.sossen.org.uk](http://www.sossen.org.uk)

### **Family Support & Representation**

**Mindworks** [www.mindworks-surrey.org](http://www.mindworks-surrey.org)

**Portage** – support for children with SEND

under 3.5 years <https://bit.ly/3zLW635>

**Family Voice Surrey** parent representation

[www.familyvoicesurrey.org](http://www.familyvoicesurrey.org)

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

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/>

### **Parent Programmes**

**NAS Stepping Up For Autism course**

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

**Pat-P** (under 5s) & **Cygnnet** (aged 5-16)

<https://family.sendteachingschool.co.uk>

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

**NAS Resource Centre, Godalming:** 01483

521743 [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

<https://bit.ly/3f8WXTu>

**AS Mentoring** specialist mentoring and

employment support for autistic people

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

### **Benefits advice**

**For children:** <https://bit.ly/3xblygN>

**For adults:** <https://bit.ly/3ydoXNg>

**Cerebra Downloadable DLA guide:**

<https://bit.ly/3lpEoyh>

## **Branch AGM and Talk by Michael Barton, Autistic Speaker**

The NAS Surrey Branch AGM will be held over Zoom on **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June**, at 8.00 pm. The AGM business will be short, but most importantly will include the formal appointment of the new Branch Chair, Paul Clements, and re-appointment of our Treasurer, Haywood Drake.

After the AGM business has been completed, our guest speaker will be Michael Barton, who is autistic. Michael is the author of *It's Raining Cats and Dogs* and *A Different Kettle of Fish*. His books are designed to help autistic people understand the confusing world of idioms, metaphors and everyday expressions, and to help neurotypical people understand the difficulties that autistic people can have interpreting language.

His latest book, *What Has Autism Ever Done For Us?*, is about how the autistic way of thinking revolutionised the world. He will talk about this, and pass on tips on how to manage some common difficulties that autistic people may have to deal with.

The whole meeting will run from 8.00 to 9.30 pm on 27<sup>th</sup> June. It is free to attend but places must be booked in advance. To book go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nas-surrey-branch-agm-michael-barton-registration-345117855797>

For questions about the event, please email [events@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:events@nassurreybranch.org)

## **Suicide Prevention Workshops**

Surrey County Council is working with Grassroots Suicide Prevention to provide free one-day courses for Surrey residents, delivered over Zoom.

There is one on understanding suicide interventions (known as "suicide first aid") relating to people of any age, and one specifically about suicide interventions for young people. The courses are for professionals and for family members of people who may feel suicidal.

For dates go to <https://prevent-suicide.org.uk/training-courses/sfa-suicide-first-aid/> and look for the courses which specify Surrey in the title.

Please note, these are generic courses, not aimed at families of autistic people. If you are unsure whether the course would be relevant for you, or have questions, please email [training@prevent-suicide.org.uk](mailto:training@prevent-suicide.org.uk)

## **NAS Christmas card**

Every year the NAS at a national level holds a competition for autistic children and adults to design Christmas cards to be sold in aid of the charity. The judges choose a shortlist of 3 designs by children and 3 by adults, and the final decision in each category is made by a public vote on Facebook.

This year we are delighted that the winning design by an adult was by **Poppy Boyce-Davies from Surrey**, whose mother is a branch member. Many congratulations to Poppy on her fantastic achievement.

Look out for Poppy's design when the NAS Christmas cards go on sale in early autumn.

## Survey Results on Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance

Family Voice Surrey has worked with Surrey Youth Focus to analyse data from the survey on school non-attendance earlier this year. The report was compiled from 366 responses gathered between December 21 and February 22. Key findings included:

- Similar proportions of girls and boys were experiencing EBSNA
- 72% had a diagnosis, with a further 16% having an undiagnosed or suspected additional need or disability
- 56% were in secondary education, 29% in junior school and 4% in infant school. A further 11% were in post 16 education
- 75% were on roll in mainstream; 19% in a specialist setting and 6% were off-rolled because of their anxiety.
- 55% had an EHCP or were at assessment stage. 42% did not have an EHCP.

The report summarised parents' views including:

- Guilt of feeling that they are forcing their child to attend school
- "Battle" and "fight" to access support
- Not feeling heard or understood. Feeling lonely and isolated
- Not knowing what support is available or where to find it
- Managing difficult behaviour at home not replicated in school due to masking
- Experiencing/exacerbating stress and mental health issues as a result of EBSNA
- Managing siblings' mirroring behaviour and worries about being late for school
- Financial impact from giving up work/reducing hours and / or paying for home education at home, counselling/therapy & assessments

Family Voice Surrey has set out key recommendations and there will be a second stage of the survey which is gathering more in-depth stories from families on the themes that emerged from the survey. They will share more information on this work soon.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback about the survey data analysis please do not hesitate to get in touch with Leanne [leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org) You can download the full report here: <https://bit.ly/3IL2BOt> and there is an overview here: <https://bit.ly/3a9lDvu>

## Autism Show in London in June

The Autism Show <https://london.autismshow.co.uk/>, in association with the NAS, runs from Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 9.30 am – 4.30 pm and Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 10.00 am – 4.00 pm at ExCel in London. Talks from autistic adults are on subjects including:

- Insights from an autistic teacher
- My positive approach to living with Asperger's
- Why masking can make autistic people vulnerable
- How to survive as an autistic teenager
- An autism friendly guide to periods
- An introduction to sensory differences
- The benefits of late diagnosis: self-awareness and self-acceptance

Tickets are bookable through Eventbrite: Parent/Family Carer tickets are £18.00 + £1.99 booking fee. Concession tickets are £16.00 + £1.84 booking fee.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-autism-show-london-tickets-292529241837>

## **New 'Hubs' Open for Surrey's Unpaid Carers**

Action for Carers are opening new Hubs across Surrey where all family/friend unpaid carers can drop in for advice and support.

At the Hubs, you can meet with Action for Carers' staff and volunteers to get information and advice on your caring role and the support available, and also enjoy a cuppa and a chat. Carer Practice Advisors who work for Surrey County Council or the local NHS will be on hand at many of the Hubs.

There are also organised events and meetings and you can see dates and locations here: <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ACS-Hubs-A5-Flyer-3.pdf>

### **Weekly Hubs – one day a week**

Camberley  
Guildford  
Horley  
Knaphill  
Leatherhead

### **Satellite Hubs - twice a month**

Addlestone  
Caterham  
Cranleigh  
Epsom  
Farnham  
Haslemere  
Hersham  
Shepperton

Some hubs are opening during June. For addresses and start dates please go to: <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/how-we-help/carer-drop-ins-for-support/>

## **Manor Mead School Expansion**

It has now been confirmed by the cabinet of Surrey County Council that Manor Mead School will expand by 60 places, from 83 places to 143 places with a new satellite site in Virginia Water.

The school will change designation from Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) to a dual designation of Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

## **Government SEND Review Proposals and Consultation**

The Government SEND Review Green Paper for England was published in March: <https://bit.ly/3G7cKi1> Key proposals include:

- Improving and standardising the EHC Plan processes
- More inclusive teacher training, qualifications and development opportunities
- Improving accountability within the SEND system
- Clear national standards and the introduction of mandatory mediation
- Improving standards for transitions

There is now consultation on the Green Paper and you can submit your views by completing the survey on the Government website **by 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022**.

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-review-division/send-review-2022/>

You can read more about the Review on the NAS website here:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/news/send-review-first-impressions>

## NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR June - July 2022

**Please note: all dates are provisional and could change due to unexpected events.**

**Please contact the host if you are planning to attend a meeting so that they know numbers and to confirm that the meeting is going ahead.**

### ZOOM SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS/CARERS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN IN SURREY

*Meets monthly. Your child does not need a diagnosis for you to attend.*

For Zoom links for these meetings, email [support@nassurreybranch.org](mailto:support@nassurreybranch.org)

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> June 8.00 pm **NB Date changed from previous newsletter**

Weds 13<sup>th</sup> July 10.00 am

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### LOCAL IN-PERSON SUPPORT GROUPS

*In-person support groups run by parent-volunteers for parents/carers of autistic children in Surrey. Your child does not need a diagnosis for you to attend.*

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

Contact: Tarah Basu [tarahbasu@googlemail.com](mailto:tarahbasu@googlemail.com)

Weds 15<sup>th</sup> June 10.00 am - 12.00 noon

Weds 13<sup>th</sup> July 10.00 am - 12.00 noon

#### **Frensham - Squires Garden Centre, The Reeds Road, Frensham GU10 3BP**

Contact: Christine Malik [christinemalik@btinternet.com](mailto:christinemalik@btinternet.com)

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 9.15 – 11.00 am **NB Date changed from previous newsletter**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 9.15 – 11.00 am

#### **Guildford**

Contact: Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

Fri 24<sup>th</sup> June 10.00am – 12.00noon **NB Date changed from previous newsletter**

#### **Caffe Nero, 66 North St, Guildford GU1 4AH**

Mon 11<sup>th</sup> July 7.30 – 9.30 pm **The White House, 8 High Street, Guildford GU2 4AJ**

#### **Hinchley Wood – via Zoom**

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

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June 9.30 – 10.30 am

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

Contact: Sarah Norris [sarahnorris2003@gmail.com](mailto:sarahnorris2003@gmail.com)

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 10.00 – 11.30 am

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 10.00 – 11.30 am

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

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

*Face-to-face meetings in West and East Surrey alternate with Zoom meetings. Contact hosts for venues/links.*

Fri 10<sup>th</sup> June 2.30 pm **Zoom** Contact Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

Mon 20<sup>th</sup> June 7.30 pm **Zoom** Contact Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

Weds 6<sup>th</sup> July 7.30 pm **TBC Woking** Contact Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

*If you have problems clicking on any links, you may need to paste them into your browser*

### **Parents of Girls Group – Woking and Guildford**

Contact Sally Roberts [sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk)

*A group for parents of girls. Meets about once a month during term-time.*

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

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

Monday 13th June 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Guildford

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Woking

### **Spouses and Partners Group, Guildford**

Contact Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

*Evening meetings in Guildford for the partners of autistic people (no diagnosis necessary).*

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 8.00 – 9.30 pm **To be confirmed.**

### **Parents of children and young people with Pathological Demand Avoidance**

This group meets over Zoom. To receive the Zoom link contact Sara Truman

[strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 8.00 pm

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### **Give As You Shop**

You can support NAS Surrey Branch by going to [easyfundraising.org](https://easyfundraising.org) to raise FREE donations with your everyday shopping. It's quick and easy to sign up! They are currently running an offer where, once you've raised your first £5, easyfundraising will double it! You can sign up here: <https://bit.ly/3sUfIGF>

### **Learning Disability Week 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June**

Mencap is once again running a week-long campaign to show how people with a learning disability are reconnecting with friends and their communities and talk about the issues many people still face after the end of COVID restrictions, such as still having to isolate or dealing with poor mental health and anxiety.

As part of the campaign, they are asking people with LDs to share something about their lives, such as what they love, what they want to change, what they're proud of and what they are worried about. Find out how you can get involved here:

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/LDWeek>

### **Carers Week 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make.

It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support.

During the campaign, individuals and organisations come together to provide support for carers, run activities, highlight the vital role carers play and draw attention to just how important caring is. You can find out more about it here:

<https://www.carersweek.org/about-carers-week/>

## Mindworks Surrey Online Event

Mindworks Surrey is holding a short online event from 2.00-3.00pm on Thursday 14 July to give an overview of the services it offers, and how Surrey and Borders NHS Partnership Trust works with its partners.

Mindworks Surrey is the relatively new name for Surrey's emotional wellbeing and mental health service for children and young people. It has been running for approximately one year and replaced Mindsight Surrey CAMHS.

The event will end with a Question-and-Answer session. If you would like to attend, please email [engage@sabp.nhs.uk](mailto:engage@sabp.nhs.uk) to register and receive the meeting link.

## Video on EHCP Process

Family Voice Surrey (FVS) has produced a bitesized video with the SEND and L-SPA team at Surrey County Council on the process of an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan). It is designed to answer questions that parents asked and you can view the video here: <https://www.familyvoicesurrey.org/single-post/ehcp-processes-the-process>

FVS would love your feedback on the video and your own experiences of the EHCP process. If you have any further questions after watching the video, please email Leanne at [leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org)

## Reminder of Useful Resources

You can get advice about education rights, tribunals or exclusions via the NAS national specialist helplines <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/help-and-support>.

For a list of local special and mainstream schools with units compiled by parent volunteers, go to the NAS Surrey Branch website:

<https://nassurreybranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/NAS-Surrey-Branch-Schools-list-updated-JANUARY-2022.pdf>

## Autism Strategy Update

The All Age Autism Strategy for Surrey was launched in September with the aims:

- To achieve an autism-friendly approach across the county in education, health, social care, work, and communities.
- For services to have a more joined-up, proactive, timely and autism-accessible offer so autistic people have equality of access
- For community and service settings to be understanding and welcoming for autistic children, young people and adults.

Here's a summary of what has been achieved in the first 6 months:

### Training

Surrey County Council's Children, Families and Learning Department has trained 1,100 staff in autism awareness. The Adult Autism Partnership Board has funded a team of autistic people, called *Autism by Experience*, to develop a modular training approach in line with Skills for Care / Skills for Health requirements. **(cont'd)**

**(Continued from p 8)**

This has been delivered to the Learning Disability and Autism Team, and Transition Team, with plans to deliver to Mental Health, Housing support and other services.

*Autism by Experience* has developed some printed material to help raise awareness and understanding in the wider community.

**Autism Friendly Communities**

A pilot Autism Friendly Community project has been running in Redhill. This work has delivered autism training to 65 people working in public facing roles in Redhill, such as GP receptionists, libraries, leisure centre and theatre staff.

More courses are planned. Autistic people have been involved in the design of the process, and the training was developed and delivered by autistic people. See *page 11* for details of how you can be involved with contributing to the plans.

**Inpatient Services**

Funding has been gained to run a pilot of improvements to the sensory environment in mental health hospitals for autistic people.

**Health services**

Work is underway to improve access to health services for autistic people. Autism is now specifically included in the work to identify reasonable adjustments people may need, to flag them on medical records, and in the mortality review process.

**Mental Health**

Funding has been secured to review recent crisis hospital admissions of autistic people and identify where pathways could be improved.

The Surrey and Borders NHS Trust Neurodevelopmental Team is supporting mental health colleagues to understand the overlaps between autism and mental health.

As part of the Children's Neurodevelopmental Pathway, Mindworks now specifically includes support for autistic children and young people with mental health needs.

**Diagnosis**

Improvements are being made to the diagnostic process, including more support pre and post diagnosis.

**Partnership Working**

Work is underway to improve communication between services, to identify and plug the gaps that people experience.

Surrey County Council Adult Social Care Mental Health, Learning Disability, Autism and Transition Teams have agreed a process for joint assessment where needed.

**Police and Criminal Justice**

Surrey Police is carrying out a review of their autism training. Health and Social Care services are working together to develop housing and the wraparound support needed for autistic people at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

## **New Online/Phone Hub for Financial, Health or Welfare Support**

Surrey County Council has set up a new online hub, to help Surrey residents find the financial, health or welfare support they need during these challenging times.

The Hub is at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/health-and-welfare/support> and accessible by phone on 0300 200 1008 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays).

There's also a Relay UK number so you can type what you want to say: dial 18001 then 0800 144 8884.

## **Mental Health & Wellbeing Plan Consultation Call For Evidence**

The government is committed to improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes and plans to develop a new cross-government, 10-year plan for mental health and wellbeing for England.

The Department of Health and Social Care wants to ensure the new plan responds to people's priorities so are launching a discussion paper and call for evidence to help develop the new plan. They want to hear views from people including:

- Children and young people, adults, and older adults who have experienced mental ill-health
- People who have cared for someone affected by mental ill-health
- People who work or volunteer in health and social care services
- People who work or volunteer in places where they meet people who are affected by mental ill-health
- Academics and experts who work on mental health

To participate in the call for evidence you can complete the online survey here <https://bit.ly/3ajFiJm> 7<sup>th</sup> July, or print and return your completed response.

There is an easy read version here: <https://bit.ly/38LRqCj>

## **RESEARCH REQUESTS**

### **RESEARCH: Young People Receiving An Autism Diagnosis**

Nathan Armes is a trainee clinical psychologist who is doing research into the experience of young people receiving a diagnosis of autism.

He is looking for participants aged between 11 – 17 who have received a diagnosis of autism in the last 5 years, and who would be willing to talk about it in an online interview.

The questions would be about what it was like to go through the autism assessment process and to receive the diagnosis.

If your son or daughter would be interested in helping with this research, please email [N.arnes@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:N.arnes@surrey.ac.uk) for more information.

## **RESEARCH: Social Processing Differences**

Atalia Welch is part of the Neurodevelopmental Research Lab team at the University of Surrey. They are working with Cerebra on a project looking at how individuals who present with autism traits process social information from the world around them.

Some people who have a genetic syndrome, such as Down syndrome and Prader-Willi syndrome, also have a diagnosis of autism. The researchers are interested in whether autistic individuals without a genetic syndrome process social information in a way that is similar to or different from individuals who also have these genetic syndromes.

They hope the work will lead to improved understanding of the social processing strengths and difficulties of autistic people with and without a genetic syndrome.

The researchers are looking for individuals aged 3-17-years-old to take part. Individuals will be asked to:

- watch videos of social information whilst their eye-movements are tracked
- engage in a semi-structured social interaction with a parent/carer
- solve puzzles, look at pictures, and listen to stories

They will also ask parents/carers to complete an interview and questionnaire.

The whole study takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete. This can be conducted over multiple sessions, online and in-person. Travel expenses will be paid if you choose to visit the University. If you would prefer not to travel, researchers can visit you at home or another place that is convenient for you.

Children and young people are given a small gift and certificate to say thank you for their participation. Parents/carers will receive a £20 Amazon voucher and are offered a personalised feedback report.

Please contact **Atalia Welch** ([aw01555@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:aw01555@surrey.ac.uk)) for more detail.

*Project funded by Cerebra and the Faculty of Health & Medical Sciences, University of Surrey and has been approved by the University of Surrey Ethics Committee.*

## **INFORMATION FOR ADULTS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

### **Plea for Help for Disabled Households with Energy Costs**

Contact, the group for families with disabled children, is lobbying the government to stop them asking disabled households to repay their energy bills rebate, as part of its technical consultation on its Energy Bills Support Scheme.

This means that electricity customers receive a £200 reduction off their bills from October 2022 which will be recovered over five years from 2023-2024.

They have written an open letter to the Chancellor and Energy Minister calling on his government to do more to help disabled households with energy costs. If you'd like to support the campaign, you can add your name here: <https://bit.ly/3MGzd8d>

## Getting Involved with Autism and Learning Disability Services

There are various ways to get your voice heard as an autistic adult and contribute to plans being delivered from the new Autism Strategy or Learning Disability services, including:

The Autism reference group: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/disability/spb/apb/reference-group>

Surrey People's Network: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/disability/spb/spn>

Local Valuing People groups: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/disability/spb/local-valuing-people-groups>

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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 the partners of people with autism, 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 run an active email forum and produce this email newsletter every two months. We also host talks on a variety of topics, parent and partner support groups online and across Surrey, and annual Children's events. To join for free, go to [nassurreybranch.org](http://nassurreybranch.org) or email [surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk) to request a membership form.

*If you are a member of 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).*

**We are part of the National Autistic Society** which works for autistic people and runs services such as schools, clubs and adult centres. It has over 20,000 members, over 100 local 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, policymakers, 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).  
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**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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