

## Welcome to the April - May 23 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.*

The NAS Surrey Branch marked World Autism Acceptance Week with an information stand on Guildford High Street on Saturday 25th March. A lot of passers-by came to talk to us, and we raised £104.26.

It was great to meet so many local autistic people and their families. Thank you to everyone who supported us, and all those who helped on the day.

I also want to thank two people who are standing down from their roles as NAS Surrey Branch volunteers:

- **Jaq Bouette** joined the committee almost a year ago and became Deputy Chair, Children, running our Parents of Children online support group.
- **Sarah Norris** ran our Woking support group for 7 years.

Both now have other demands on their time, but we are very grateful to them for all that they have done for the Branch and to support branch members while volunteering for us.

We rely on local volunteers to run our face-to-face support groups. If we haven't got one in your area, and you would be interested in running one, do get in touch to find out more by emailing me at [surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk)

Sara Truman,  
Acting Chair  
NAS Surrey Branch

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

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

**Tel:** 07423 435413

**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)

### **Acting Chair /**

#### **Spouses and Partners Group**

Sara Truman

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

### **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)

### **Events & Talks:**

Emma Ellis

[Emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk](mailto:Emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk)

### **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**

Emma Ellis

[Emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk](mailto:Emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk)

### **Other Activities:**

Jill Goulding

Rachel Boyce-Davies

Christine Malik

Jason Malshuk

Stella Smith

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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**

#### **Family Support Service**

**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)

### **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/3ydoXNq>

**Cerebra Downloadable DLA guide:**

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

## Series of Talks about EHCPs

NAS Surrey Branch are hosting a series of three free online talks about Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCPs). The talks will cover the legal process, request for assessment, the EHCP format, appeals, reviews and everything in-between. These talks will be delivered by Nigel Pugh, MD of [Education Advocacy](#) and will be at 7.30pm on Zoom on the following dates:

**Tues May 9<sup>th</sup>: A Guide to the EHCP Process - Part 1** will cover:

- History of SEN
- The legal process
- "Golden ticket"
- Situation in Surrey
- Legal Aid
- Constructing an EHCP for a child with ASD/PDA

**Tues May 23<sup>rd</sup>: A Guide to the EHCP Process - Part 2** will cover:

- Looking at the EHCP format – what needs to be in Parts B, E, F and I.
- Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)

**Tues 6<sup>th</sup> June: A Guide to the EHCP Process - Part 3** will cover:

- Getting an EHCP
- Running an Appeal before SENDIST
- What to do if you fail
- What to do if you win and what powers do you have to cause the Local Authority to make the provision in the EHCP
- Annual Review / Emergency Annual Review

You can attend as many as you wish. To book a place on an individual event, or all three, please go to: <http://bit.ly/3LysSxB>

## Consultation on EHCP Funding in Surrey

Surrey County Council are seeking your views via a consultation about the way children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans attending mainstream schools are funded. They are proposing to adopt a new funding framework from September 2023, which would be implemented over two years. Find out more and have your say via the consultation page:

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/csf/mainstream-banding-review-public-consultation/>  
The consultation closes on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

## Tony Attwood Talks – In-Person and Online

Professor Tony Attwood is a clinical psychologist who has specialised in Autism Spectrum Disorders since he qualified as a clinical psychologist in England in 1975 and now works in Australia.

He is speaking at the NAS South Hampshire Branch in Winchester on 16<sup>th</sup> May and there are just a few tickets left: <https://www.shantsnas.org.uk/tonya>

In a separate online event, Tony Attwood is giving a talk with Q&A on making friends, hosted by the Assocn for Child and Adolescent Mental Health. The online talk is on the 27<sup>th</sup> June from 9am to 12:00 noon UK time. When you book this event, you will have exclusive access to a recording available for 90 days after the event, together with slides. Booking essential: <https://www.acamh.org/event/autism-friends/>

## **Autism Reality Experience in Guildford**

The Autism Reality Experience is an innovative, immersive and hands on training which has been developed to give non-autistic people an experience of the sensory processing difficulties faced by autistic people. It is coming to Burpham, Guildford on Friday 30th June from 9.30 am - 4.00 pm.

You can book a timed hour slot to visit the Autism Experience, with post-experience support from Action for Carers Surrey Advisors. There will also be other talks from carers and autism specialists. To book your time slot, please call Action for Carers on 0303 040 1234, option 1.

## **LinkAble Activities in Woking**

LinkAble in Woking runs a range of activities for people with learning disabilities, including evening and weekend activities for young people aged 12 – 18 or 19 in their LinkAble Next Steps project. On Tuesday evenings they run a game night for young people with autism or ADHD aged 12 – 19. It runs from 6.30 – 8.30 and activities include board games, sports, group games, crafts and baking. The cost is £8 plus the activity cost.

Other groups for young people with learning disabilities include drama, dance, life skills and more. For details see the LinkAble website: [www.linkable.org.uk](http://www.linkable.org.uk), email: [info@linkable.org.uk](mailto:info@linkable.org.uk) or call 01483 770037.

## **Recent Programmes about Autism**

There have been some interesting TV & radio programmes about autism on recently. If you missed them, you can catch up on iPlayer:

- **Chris Packham: Inside Our Autistic Minds**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0f2cxgn>
- **Christine McGuinness: Unmasking my autism**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001k31t/christine-mcguinness-unmasking-my-autism>
- **My Name is Hayley** – a Radio 4 programme about a parent appealing to tribunal to get her autistic son into his local special school:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001jc2b>

## **New Information Booklet for Parent/Carers of Children with SEND**

Charlotte Harrow, Additional Needs & Disabilities Quality Manager for Education and Life Long Learning at Surrey County Council is putting together an information booklet for parents/carers of children with additional needs and/or disabilities, and would value your input into this so she can make sure she can include the right topics.

The booklet will be aimed at parents and carers of school age children and young people (aged 4-16) who have or may have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) who are new to the SEND world and would benefit from some information and signposting.

Please go to <https://bit.ly/3Kp9NwV> if you would like to share your views, or contact Family Voice Surrey at [contact@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:contact@familyvoicesurrey.org) (for the attention of Kate) if you would like to pass on any specific thoughts, questions or details.

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

## **Family Voice Workshop on Transitions – Have Your Say**

Local parent participation organisation, Family Voice Surrey (FVS), are hosting a workshop in May at an event run by Surrey County Council as part of the All Age Autism Strategy. It is aimed at education professionals in early years settings, schools and colleges in Surrey and is called 'Smooth Transitions', and is a follow on to a pilot that happened last year in Reigate and Banstead on Autism Friendly Communities.

The event is designed to raise awareness around what makes a smooth transition for autistic children and young people. Parent carers, children and young people will be co-producing this event and will be running a workshop to ensure a lived experience perspective is reflected throughout. Further events will be held throughout the county over the coming months.

FVS would like your help to shape the workshop and ensure they are covering all the things that settings need to know when thinking about transitions for autistic children at the varying stages. They aim to include:

- What makes a good transition
- What things are not helpful
- Communication & collaboration with children, parents, professionals & settings
- Early planning
- Ways that schools can make small changes to support autistic children when transitioning from one setting to another
- Ideas on ways to ensure that transitions that happen all the time - e.g. moving from one activity to another - are planned and considered sensitively and carefully to ensure autistic children's needs are met.

FVS want to ensure that they represent as many families with autistic children and young people as possible, so would like to hear your views on:

- What would you love schools to know about transitions?
- What could settings do that would make life easier for you as a parent carer of an autistic child or young person during a transition?
- What would be your top tips to a setting when planning a transition?
- If you have experienced challenges with a transition that wasn't very successful – what were the challenges? What would have helped? How did/does it make you feel?
- Have you had a good experience with a transition? What made the difference? They wish to share positive stories with leaders to enable them to replicate these in their own schools.

Please send your thoughts on the above and anything else you would like to share on transitions to Leanne at Family Voice Surrey [Leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:Leanne.h@familyvoicesurrey.org) by 1st May. All responses will be treated in confidence and will be used to develop the content of the workshop, but no personal or identifying details will be included.

## **Healthwatch report on the value of diagnosis**

In the last issue of Surrey News we publicised that Healthwatch Surrey were doing research into the value of a diagnosis of autism or other neurodiverse conditions. The report has now been published and can be seen here:

<https://www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk/report/neurodiversity-the-hidden-value-of-diagnosis/>

## NAS SURREY BRANCH CALENDAR April - June 2023

NAS Surrey Branch support groups are designed to enable parents or other family members of autistic children or adults to meet up with others and share their knowledge and experiences.

**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 during term-time. 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)

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 8.00 pm  
Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 10.00am  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 8.00pm

### **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**

For venue contact: Tarah Basu [tarahbasu@googlemail.com](mailto:tarahbasu@googlemail.com)

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 12.00 noon  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 10.00 a.m.  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 12.00 noon

#### **Frensham**

For venue contact: Christine Malik [christinemalik@btinternet.com](mailto:christinemalik@btinternet.com) and  
[Bonnie Noyce JBNoyce@yahoo.com](mailto:BonnieNoyce@yahoo.com)

NB Note new start time of 9.30 am

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 9.30 – 11.00 am  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 9.30 – 11.00 am  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 9.30 – 11.00 am

#### **Guildford**

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

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April 10.00 am – 12.00 noon  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 – 9.00 pm  
Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June 10.00 am – 12.00 noon

#### **Hinchley Wood – via Zoom**

For the link contact: Emily Gorvy email: [emily.gorvy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:emily.gorvy@hotmail.co.uk)

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 9.30 – 10.30

#### **Woking**

We are not currently running a meeting in Woking. If you are interested in a Woking meet-up, please contact Sara Truman at [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com) and let her know what days and times would work for you, or if you are able to help with hosting.

## **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**

### **Parents of Adults Group**

Face-to-face meetings in West and East Surrey alternate with Zoom meetings. Some dates are provisional, please contact hosts to confirm dates and venue/Zoom link.

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2.30 pm **Zoom** Contact Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

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

Weds 10<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 pm **Guildford** Contact Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

Weds 17<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 pm **Redhill** Contact Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> June 2.30 pm **Zoom** Contact Hilary Dyce [hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hilarydyce@yahoo.co.uk)

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 7.30 pm **Zoom** Contact Sara

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

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

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

For venue contact Sally Roberts [sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sallyaroberts@hotmail.co.uk)

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Woking

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Guildford

Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> June 10.00 am – 12.00 noon Woking

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

Meetings for the partners of autistic people (no diagnosis necessary).

For details of future meetings, contact: Sara Truman [strumansurrey@gmail.com](mailto:strumansurrey@gmail.com)

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

This group meets over Zoom. To receive the Zoom link contact Emma Ellis at

[emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk](mailto:emma.ellis@nas-volunteers.org.uk)

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April 8.00 pm

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May 8.00 pm

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 8.00 pm

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### **Waiting List for Crazy Golf Day in May**

All the places have been reserved for our branch outing to the crazy golf in Woking on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May.

However, we are keeping a waiting list in case anyone has to cancel, so if you would like to go on it, please email [surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk)

### **Banstead Rotary Charity Walk 21<sup>st</sup> May**

Members of The Rotary Club of Banstead have been a great support to the NAS Surrey Branch over many years.

On 21<sup>st</sup> May the Club is holding their annual charity walk. Anyone can apply to join the walk to raise funds for any charity they would like to support, For more information and to apply to join the walk, go to:

<https://www.bansteadrotary.com/charity-walk-2023>

Please let us know if you are going to walk for us, by emailing [surrey.branch@nas.org.uk](mailto:surrey.branch@nas.org.uk) so that we can encourage members to support you!

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

## Parent Workshop in Haslemere

Tugboat SEND Navigation is running a workshop entitled Family First, Disability Second: balancing caring and parenting. In this two-hour in-person workshop, Benedicte Symcox will share her experience of raising three children with complex additional needs and how she learnt to navigate the systems while trying to maintain a semblance of “normal family life”.

You will have the opportunity to consider what practical solutions would help your family in a small and interactive setting.

The workshop takes place at Haslemere Youth Hub, Saint Christopher's Road Haslemere GU27 1DQ from 9.30 – 11.30 on Monday 24th April. Booking essential via Eventbrite <http://bit.ly/40z8Ms1>

## Autism Trust Events this Half Term

The Autism Trust in Camberley is hosting two events this Easter for families:

- Lego club - Weds 12th April 11.00am - 2.00pm. Cost: £3 per player
- Easter Fun Day - Thurs 13th April 11.00am - 2.00pm. The day includes Easter Crafts for all ages, a Tombola and a Lucky Dip

For details, go to <https://www.theautismtrust.org.uk/pages/coffee-and-support-mornings>

## Spectrum Gaming Online Community for Autistic Gamers

Spectrum Gaming is an online community designed to enable autistic young people to build friendships and increase self-acceptance. It is run by and for autistic people and they also offer advocacy around education, youth loneliness and autism post-diagnosis.

There are groups for under-13s and 13 – 17 year-olds. To find out more, go to <https://www.spectrumgaming.net/parents>

## Action For Carers Hubs

Action for Carers runs a range of activities and talks at their 14 local hubs. The main Hubs are open for drop-ins weekly in:

- Camberley
- Guildford
- Horley
- Leatherhead
- Woking

There are also Satellite Hubs which open twice a month in: Addlestone, Banstead, Caterham, Cranleigh, Epsom, Farnham, Haslemere, Hersham and Shepperton.

The Hubs host regular talks on topics including completing applications for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The next talks about PIP and DLA in our area are in Horley on 10th May, Shepperton on 17th May and Caterham on 25th May. For details go to: <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/how-we-help/carer-drop-ins-for-support/>



## ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

If you're looking for activities for your children, here are some places you might like to try. Please check availability and prices where relevant directly with the venues. Please note, some SEN sessions are during term-time only.

### **Sports & Activities**

#### **The Pirates Landing soft play centre, Camberley**

SEN sessions from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on Mondays during term-time. The sessions have reduced numbers and quieter music. Places must be pre-booked. For prices and details go to <https://pirateslanding.co.uk/> or call 01276 425265.

#### **Soft Play, Horley**

A three-storey soft play venue which runs SEN sessions. For details, call 0330 055 3336 or go to <https://lets-explore.com/soft-play-centre>

#### **Inflatazone, Woking**

A giant inflatable with challenges and obstacles, with SEN sessions from time to time. Call 01483 771122 or go to <https://www.freedom-leisure.co.uk/centres/woking-leisure-centre/childrens-activities/inflatazone/>

#### **Holiday Camps, Activity Days and Specialist Sports, Farnham**

Parasports Coaching runs holiday camps, activity days and specialist sports provision for children with special needs and learning disabilities. Based at Badshot Lea Primary School, near Farnham [www.parasportscoaching.org](http://www.parasportscoaching.org)

#### **Inclusive Sports for SEND children and siblings, Staines**

Sessions at Spelthorne Leisure Centre for young people from 5 - 25yrs and their siblings with activities and sports including football, basketball, boccia, new age curling, trampolining, table cricket, polybat, goalball and unihoc. <https://www.surreyinformationpoint.org.uk/Services/4763/Spelthorne-ParaSport>

#### **Inclusive Football, Hersham**

Elite Sports runs inclusive football sessions for children aged 6 – 12 with special needs at the three Rivers Academy in Hersham, Walton-on-Thames on Saturday mornings. For details email [info@elitesportingprovision.com](mailto:info@elitesportingprovision.com)

#### **Woking Wolves Football Club**

Weekly organised, structured football training and monthly tournaments for disabled children and adults who can't access mainstream football clubs. Find out more at <https://www.wokingwolves.com/about>

#### **Inclusive Cycling Woking, Leatherhead and Epsom**

Wheels for All is a national scheme offering inclusive cycling activities for children and adults with disabilities. Surrey locations are Woking, Leatherhead and Epsom. See <https://cycling.org.uk/wheels-for-all>

#### **Disability Cricket, Various Locations**

The Lord's Taverners offer 'Super 1s' inclusive cricket sessions in Epsom, Kingston, Reigate & Banstead, Rowledge, Surrey Heath and Sutton. <http://bit.ly/3K68Yb3>

## ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS / Cont'd

### **Trampolining in Guildford**

Airhop Guildford offers SEN-specific sessions for children with autism who want a calmer environment. Sessions have fewer people, there is no music and reduced lighting to avoid glare. <https://www.airhop-guildford.com/sessions/airhop-sen/>

### **Inclusive Movement Classes, Various Locations**

Synergy Dance offers inclusive movement classes for children or adults with disabilities, including autism. Children's sessions are in Guildford or Haslemere. Adults sessions are at White Lodge Chertsey, and Surrey Choices centres in Sunbury-on-Thames and Walton-on-Thames. <https://synergydanceoutreach.co.uk/>

### **Gaming**

#### **Gamers Lounge, Guildford**

Monthly retro gaming sessions – these aren't autism-specific events, but many adults and children who attend are autistic. Tickets available from <https://www.theboilerroom.net/> For information, contact Andrew Smith [Andrew.smith38410@gmail.com](mailto:Andrew.smith38410@gmail.com) tel: 07885 723243.

#### **Arcade Games, Farnborough**

High Score Farnborough is an amusement centre with over 60 arcade games. They hold SEN sessions and offer 50% for children with SEND and their carers. <https://www.highscorearcades.co.uk/farnborough>

### **Animals**

#### **Animal Assisted Therapy and Events, Caterham**

Kingswood Shetlands and friends offers animal interactions. For details, go to <https://kingswoodshetlands.org/>

#### **Animal Assisted Therapy and Learning, Shamley Green**

Elysian Animal Assisted Therapy centre offering one-off events for families. Book on Evenbrite for more details <http://bit.ly/40S6Vy6>

#### **Manor Farm Animal Therapy, Lower Kingswood**

Learning barn at Manor Farm, Lower Kingswood, offers sessions for children who are home-educated groups for home educated children during term-time. The groups are suitable for children with SEND. <https://www.manorfarmssurrey.com/about-3-1>

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### **Yoga Sessions for Autistic Girls and Women**

Appeer is running a Yoga Sessions for autistic girls and women over the age of 15, which Parent/Carers of the Teens attending can also come along to if they wish. The session offers be a gentle introduction to yoga for beginners and includes relaxation and breathing techniques to help attendees feel calm and rested.

This session will run alongside the Appeer Teen Group which is held each month at St. Andrew's School, Woking. The Yoga will take place in a separate building to the Teen Group. You will be sent joining instructions after you have booked – please book via Eventbrite here: <http://bit.ly/3MaHB2c>

## Booking Now Open for the Autism Show, London

The Autism Show, in association with the National Autistic Society, takes place from 9 – 10 June at Excel, London. It's a great source of information and direction, pre or post diagnosis. You get 20% off if you book in advance

<https://london.autismshow.co.uk/>

## INFORMATION FOR ADULTS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

### Employment Works for Autism

It was identified during the Surrey Autism Strategy consultation that some autistic people struggled to find appropriate help to find work, particularly those people not eligible for support from adult social care.

Thanks to funding from the All-Age Autism Strategy, 25 autistic or neurodiverse people across Surrey will be able to benefit from the Employment Works for Autism project to help support them into paid work or volunteering. Surrey Choices has successfully piloted a similar programme in the past which was very successful in both user satisfaction and job outcomes.

Participants for the new programme starting April 2023 are encouraged to attend at least two supported work placements to gain work skills and help to find roles they will enjoy. The support offered will be as much or as little as they need with the aim to fade over time.

Alongside work placements, people are encouraged to keep fit, attend volunteering or social groups, building skills and improving their ability to interact with others in their local communities.

All ages over 18 are supported. There is no eligibility criteria, and it is open to all people living in the Surrey County Council area who identify as autistic or neurodiverse and who aspire to find paid work. For details, email [employability@surreychoices.com](mailto:employability@surreychoices.com) or go to <https://www.surreychoices.com/what-surrey-choices-does/employment-and-learning/employment-works-for-autism/>

### Mental Health Crisis Research

Compassion in Crisis is a research project, which explores and documents experiences of crisis which may have led to an unplanned admission to mental health hospitals and specialist units.

It focuses on the experiences of autistic individuals, individuals with learning disabilities and/or both.

The researchers are looking for 10 Surrey-based participants for a research conversation and an optional follow-up focus group. Research conversations can be either in-person, online, by telephone or e-mail.

If you or your family member have an experience of a mental health crisis which may or may not have led to an unplanned admission to mental health hospital or specialist unit, are autistic and/or have a learning disability, and are interested in participating, please email Alex Hird at Surrey Coalition for Disabled People at [alex.hird@surreycoalition.org.uk](mailto:alex.hird@surreycoalition.org.uk)

## **New Weekly Group for Autistic Adults in Epsom**

The Mary Frances Trust (MFT) are starting a weekly group for autistic adults who are able to manage their autism independently and wish to meet others to learn and share experiences. It will be every Monday starting on 24th April 2023, from 10am to 12pm in Epsom.

You need to register with MFT first and then contact them to reserve a space.  
Email: [info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk](mailto:info@maryfrancestrust.org.uk), call: 01372 375400 or text: 07929 024722

## **Action for Carers Zoom meetings**

Action for Carers are hosting a Zoom meeting for parents/carers of autistic people age 17 and over on Thursday 18th May, from 7.00 - 8.30 pm. Speaker Marie-Anne McKee from Space 2B will talk about ways to manage angry responses and behaviour in someone with autism.

They also hold a regular online meeting over Zoom on the last Tuesday of every month from 7.00 - 8.30 pm for carers of over 17s with a Learning Disability or autism. To register for the event on Tues 25th April go to <https://bit.ly/40zjZsy>

To register with Action for Carers and get the links for these meetings, email: [CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk](mailto:CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk) or call 0303 040 1234, option 1.

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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 over 2,500 members in and around Surrey.*

*We run an active email forum and produce an email newsletter every two months. We also host talks, parent and partner support groups online and across Surrey and family 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're 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.

**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.**

<p>The views expressed in Surrey News are not necessarily those of the National Autistic Society, and reference to any specific services or approaches to autism does not imply endorsement. All material is copyright NAS Surrey Branch and cannot be reproduced without permission.</p>
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