

As a local support group, our purpose is to offer friendship and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's in the Reading area. No one should face Parkinson's alone and so we aim to be as accessible as possible offering a wide range of social and therapeutic activities.

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Edition 14

Please note that the views expressed in the newsletter are those of the editor and contributors and do not necessarily represent those of Parkinson's UK.

Welcome to the latest edition of the PUK Reading Branch Newsletter. I hope you find it informative. If you have recently joined the group, then a very warm welcome to you. If you are not yet a member then you are invited to join – see **Branch Membership Information** below. For the very latest news and information don't forget to visit our website at:

www.parkinsonsreading.org.uk

Annual General Meeting: February 7th, 2024

The AGM was well attended with all members of the 2023 committee being elected back into their existing roles (see below). After the formalities, Sarah Mindham reminded us of the importance of regular exercise and had us off our seats practicing some basic moves. The 2024 committee members are:

Andrew Last – Chair	Penny Inglis – Social Events
Geoff Gee – Vice Chair & Membership	Krys Lewis – Fundraising
Alison Gee – Treasurer	David Adby – Therapies
Nigel Crabb – Secretary	Colette Wood – Therapies
Zoe Crabb – Minutes Secretary	Ricky Duveen – Tilehurst Meetings

Branch Membership Information

The suggested donation for 2024 is £10 per person. The easiest way to pay annually is by setting up a Direct Debit to **Parkinson's Disease Society of the UK, Sort Code 20-00-00, Account Number: 43353958 using the reference "Reading Membership"**. Alternatively, you can pay by cash or cheque, made payable to **'PDS Reading Branch'**, at any of the Reading group meetings. Thank you.

Not yet registered to receive regular updates? Download the registration form from the "Contact Us" page of our website and follow the instructions.

From the Chair

The often-quoted phrase *“One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”* is currently in vogue following the recent moon landing, but the sentiment applies in many different areas. For those of us with Parkinson’s, each day is a small step (for some, very literally!), but some days are much more significant than others. For me, as someone who had never previously used a gym, a big step was my first group exercise class - a room full of strangers, doing strange things, but it proved to be a big step in so many ways. It was the start of a change in mindset - acceptance that exercise made me feel better, and more in control of my condition and that the company of other people with different-but-the-same symptoms of PD offered real comfort. Being able to relax and share worries and experiences without having to explain the weirdness of many aspects of PD was quite liberating.

As a Branch, we already organise our own therapy and exercise classes and try to signpost other activities that are available in our area. But for those recently diagnosed, the first step is a big one, especially with so many sources of advice available from the internet and elsewhere. And deciding what to do is made so difficult because we are all very different - not just our PD symptoms, but who we are, and our personal situation. Consequently, we hope soon to be launching a new initiative for members who are relatively new to exercise. Participants will benefit from a personal assessment of what exercise options are best suited to them and will be encouraged to try out those that seem most relevant.

Of course, all our support for the local Parkinson’s community is entirely dependent upon locally raised voluntary donations. Fortunately, much of our fundraising is also highly enjoyable, as was demonstrated with our very successful concert in Woodley on February 3rd featuring the Reading Male Voice Choir and the Barberettes Ladies Choir. It was a great evening. Many thanks to the choirs, to all of those who attended the concert and to the team “behind the scenes” who did a tremendous job of ensuring the event ran smoothly.

Finally, as this newsletter shows, there is much more to come in 2024.

Hope to see you at some of these activities!

With very best wishes

Andrew Last, Chair.



Sarah Mindham leads the AGM attendees in some welcome exercise!

Parkinson’s UK is the operating name of the Parkinson’s Disease Society of the United Kingdom. A charity registered in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554)

Dates for your Diary

Find further information on our [website](#)

MARCH 2024

Wednesday March 6th 2:15pm to 4.00 pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: "Diet and nutrition for people with Parkinson's", Sue Vaughan, clinical nutritionist

Friday March 8th 10.30am to 12.00pm

Wokingham Café at the Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

Friday March 22nd 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

APRIL 2024

Wednesday April 3rd 2:15pm to 4.00pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: Overview of the Parkinson's Research Landscape. Dr Becky Jones, Parkinson's UK

Friday April 12th 10.30am to 12.00pm

Wokingham Café at the Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

Saturday April 20th

Pangbourne (Whitchurch) Art Café. Please come along to the community **art cafe** on Saturday 20th April from 10:30 to 12:30 at **The Old Rectory Stables, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames, RG8 7DF**. There will be tea, coffee and delicious homemade cakes sold on behalf of the Reading Branch of Parkinson's UK. There will be some artwork on display and a raffle to help boost funds for local people living with Parkinson's.

Thursday 25th April 2.00 to 4.00pm

The Carers and Supporters meeting will, once again, be held at Salvation Army Hall, Chalfont Close, RG6 5HZ. You are invited to suggest alternative venues for future meetings by emailing: penny.inglis@btinternet.com

Friday April 26th 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

MAY 2024

Wednesday May 1st 2:15pm to 4.00 pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: Why exercise is important, and how to get into it Beccy Oliver, Thorpes Neuro Rehab

Friday May 10th 10.30am to 12.00pm

Wokingham Café at the Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

Friday May 24th 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

Regular Activity Classes

We regret that we are currently unable to offer the Singing Café voice exercise class. As soon as we have more information, we will update you.

Activity	Location	Details
Hydrotherapy	Lynden Hill Clinic, Kiln Green	Men: Every Monday 2.30pm – 3.00pm Women: Every Thursday 2.30pm – 3.00pm
Nordic Walking	Thameside Promenade Car Park, RG1 8BD	Every Thursday 3.00pm to 4.00pm Please contact Derek Holloway on 07843 584 900 or derekholloway1@gmail.com No experience needed. Poles available for loan.
Dead Sea Saltwater Flotation Pool	Nirvana Spa, Mole Road, Wokingham	Times to suit your individual needs. Please contact David Adby if interested. £10.00 per session, carer goes free. Nirvana Spa contact is Jane Whiston, mobile 07760 423652. Email: Jane.whiston@nirvanaspa.co.uk .
Pilates	Our Lady of Peace, Earley	Every Wednesday 12.45pm to 1.45pm; £5.00 per session
Ballroom Dancing	Our Lady of Peace, Earley	Every Wednesday 11.40am to 12.40pm; £5.00 per session.
“BEAT Parkinson’s!” group drumming sessions	Stoneham Court, 100 Cockney Hill, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4EZ	Hosted by the Berkshire Music Trust every other Thursday from 11.00am to 12.15pm. Next sessions are on March 7 th , March 21 st , April 4 th , April 18 th , May 2 nd , and May 16 th . £5.00 per session.
Walking Football	Bracknell Leisure Centre	Every Tuesday, 2pm to 4pm, Bracknell Leisure Centre, Bagshot Road, Bracknell, RG12 9SE, no charge, organised by Callum Salhotra of Berks and Bucks FA, 07399 249038, or email callum.salhotra@berks-bucksfa.com .

Please contact the appropriate coordinator with any questions or if you wish to try a session.:

Hydro, Flotation Pool, Pilates, and Dance: David Adby (david.adby@outlook.com)
 Group Drumming: Andrew Last (andrwlst@compuserve.com)
 Nordic Walking: Derek Holloway (derekholloway1@gmail.com)
 Walking Football: Callum Salhotra (callum.salhotra@berks-bucksfa.com)

Neuro Physiotherapy Exercise Classes

Here is a summary of all the neuro-physio sessions available which should allow you to select the class most suitable for your individual needs.

Weekly Movement and Balance Exercise Session (via Zoom) – see special feature on Page 6.

Every Thursday from 12.45pm to 1.30pm

Exercise from the comfort of your home or anywhere that has an internet connection. Session led by Sarah Papworth. Feel free to contact Sarah directly to find out more: 07775 647054. **Zoom meeting ID: 859 771 2511 / Password: nD42pD.**

Bradbury Centre, Wokingham

Every Tuesday 10.30am to 11.15am

Every Thursday 1.00pm to 1.45pm

Medium intensity classes

£7.00 per session

To find out more about the Wokingham sessions and which class is best for you, please email david.adby@outlook.com.

Caversham classes at Mapledurham Pavilion, signposted off the Woodcote Road, Caversham RG4 7EZ (Free Car Park)

Every Monday 2.30pm to 3.30pm

PD-specific exercises at a medium/high intensity including PD-Warrior style exercises.

Every Wednesday 3.00pm to 4.00pm

PD-specific exercises at a medium/high intensity including circuits and PD-Warrior style exercises.

To find out more about the Caversham sessions and to get advice on which class is best for you, please email PDExercise@hotmail.com.

First session is free; £30 per month for one class per week.

For anyone who doesn't want to commit to the monthly payment there is a £10 drop-in fee.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

We are pleased to offer you your first visit to most physio and therapy sessions free of charge. Currently the offer does not apply to Hydrotherapy, Nordic Walking, or the Flotation Pool.

Spotlight on

Weekly On-line Movement and Balance Exercise Session (via Zoom)

Every Thursday from 12.45pm to 1.30pm you are invited to attend a Parkinson's specific exercise class from the comfort of your home or anywhere that has an internet connection.

The sessions are led by Sarah Papworth, a who has had years of experience working with Parkinsons groups and people with a wide range of abilities.

Before the 12.45pm start time, **open the Zoom App**, previously installed on your device, and click on **'Join a Meeting'**. Then enter the **parameters given below**. No notice is required. You may contact Sarah directly to find out more on 07775 647054. You can also reach out to David Adby at david.adby@outlook.com.

A typical session consists of 10 minutes stretching and seated warm up followed by practicing "sit-to-stand". A variety of standing exercises then follow with a focus on big, powerful movements and balance - but always working with the limits of your abilities. We finish back on our chair concentrating on arm and shoulder strength and a 5-to-10-minute stretch and cool down.

You will need a hard-back chair and some hand weights (approx. 1kg) – tins of beans or a couple of heavy books work just as well! Use a weight that is comfortable for you.

Try before you buy! Come along to your first session for free. Thereafter the cost is £5.00 per session, invoiced quarterly.

Zoom meeting ID: 859 771 2511 / Password: nD42pD.



Sarah Papworth

We would like to thank everyone who donates to our branch funds. Special thanks this month to one of our member's grandsons, aged just 14, who has started his own business making and selling cork products and has donated some of his first profits to the Reading Branch. Every donation is very gratefully received.



SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday 17th July 2024 (evening), Wokingham Theatre presents *Blithe Spirit*, the classic farce by Noel Coward.



This is a charity night performance with all proceeds going to the Reading branch.

Tickets are on sale at all branch meetings at £16 each. We hope to see as many of you as possible for, what promises to be, a very enjoyable evening. Please help by encouraging family, friends, neighbours etc. to come along.

Cantley Park, Twyford Road, RG40 5TU
<https://www.wokinghamtheatre.org.uk/>

Easy access from the car park with no steps. Please let Geoff or Alison know ASAP if you need level seating. Theatre has a bar and terrace for pre-show drinks and the auditorium is air-conditioned.

Any queries to Geoff and Alison Gee:
membership@parkinsonsreading.org.uk

Call Companions telephone befriending service for Parkinson's

Parkinson's UK has partnered with **Re-engage** to offer older people with Parkinson's, and the people who love and care for them, a telephone befriending service.

To use the service, you must be a person with Parkinson's or their carer, aged 60 or above, and able to speak on the telephone. You can sign up, or refer someone else, on the Re-engage website or get in touch with Parkinson's UK.

All volunteer befrienders are fully trained and will be familiar with the symptoms of Parkinson's, but you don't have to talk about Parkinson's on the call.

To read more or to sign-up, go to www.parkinsons.org.uk/call-companions or call us on 0808 800 0303 or email us on hello@parkinsons.org.uk.

You can also call Re-engage on 0800 716 543.

Fundraising Outlook

Saturday April 20th

Please come along to the community **art cafe** on Saturday 20th April from 10:30 to 12:30 at **The Old Rectory Stables, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames, RG8 7DF**. There will be tea, coffee and delicious homemade cakes sold on behalf of the Reading branch. Artwork will be on display and there will be a raffle to help local people living with Parkinson's.

Sunday July 7th

Walk for Parkinsons at Dinton Pastures. We will be the host branch for this event which is very exciting! If you are interested in joining the sub-committee to help with the organisation, please let one of the committee members know. Much more information to follow.

Wednesday July 17th

Wokingham Theatre Fundraiser. *Blithe Spirit* by Noel Coward. See above.

Friday/Saturday July 26th/27th

Bucket collection at Waitrose, Wokingham

Blue Badge Campaign

Phil Heathcote, a volunteer from Sheffield, has set up a www.parliament.uk petition to lobby the UK Government to make changes so that every person who is diagnosed with Parkinson's should be automatically entitled to a Blue Badge for parking, rather than their eligibility being decided by their local authority.

It would be great if we can help Phil get to 10,000 signatures before 8 March 2024 then the Government must respond to this petition. [Please sign the petition here](#) and share widely with your friends and family.

An opportunity to join a research team at Sheffield University

Jessie is an Academic Clinical Fellow in Special Care Dentistry starting recruitment to a study entitled '**exploring the experiences of mouth care in people with Parkinson's**'.

[Here](#) is a link to the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form.

Are you interested in finding out more about research? [Sign up to our Research Support Network!](#)

Are you interested in finding out more about campaigning? [Sign up to our campaigns network!](#)

And finally... A huge thank you to all who helped with or attended the very successful RMVC and Barberettes concert on February 3rd. It contributed a fantastic total of nearly £2,000 to Branch funds.



Caroline Russell, Chief Executive of Parkinson's UK, attended the RMVC and Barberettes concert on February 3rd.

Here she is being swept off her feet by Andrew and David!!