

OUR NEWS

Huntingdonshire Branch

February 2022

www.huntspds.org.uk



Thoughts of Chairman Malcolm

I hope everything went well for you and your families over the Christmas period. At the time of our last Newsletter, there seemed to be a possibility that we could all end up in yet another lockdown, of indeterminate duration and level of restrictions.

Thankfully the Omicron variant has proven to be as mild as the South African medics

said it would be, indeed, my wife Jo had it and did not realise, evidenced by a PCR test taken as a precaution.

We now seem to be at a milestone in the war against the virus, with the possibility that all restrictions will be lifted – though it is debatable that this may come about through political expediency! I for one sincerely hope this will be the case, a return to something like our prior understanding of normality is long overdue, especially for those of you who may have been under house arrest for nearly two years.

In our latest Committee Meeting, we felt that the length of time between meetings has been so long, that we need to relaunch activities. We decided to keep exercise classes free, to encourage people to meet up face to face, and will extensively advertise on local radio and magazines post January, once the Governments intensions are clarified to let people know we are still here and more than willing to help support everyone.

We would be most grateful for your support.

Malcolm

This Month and Next

Dates for your Diary...

New Walking Group Riverside Strollers

See Activity Dates on page 2 and Article Page 3 for details.

Our Branch Zoom meetings are still the 3rd Monday of each month. Members from all our groups are welcome. Our next meetings are -

21st February, 2022

21st March, 2022

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Free Face to Face Activities!

If you are interested in joining our face-to-face exercise classes, we are currently offering these for free in February and March. Our new walking group Riverside Strollers is also free. An ideal opportunity to give them a try! More details on these activities are on page 2 in the Activity Dates.

Parkinson's UK Activity Dates

(Please check with organiser if any changes given current circumstances)

Online Activities

Dates	Activity	Contact
February 21st Benefits/Support – Disability Huntingdonshire (DISH) Tracy Hyland March 21st Parkinson's and Exercise Gareth Sutton	Branch Zoom all group Meeting at 2 pm Join us by phone on 0208 0806592 ID 837 9312 8063# Passcode 542960#	Malcolm Ryman Tel: 07720 080749 Email: malcolmryman1@btinternet.com
February and March Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 11am Thursday 2.30pm Monday to Friday	Kim Hall's Love to Move Online Exercise (Parkinson's specific group Mondays 10 - 11.30am)	Telephone 07715081402 (Mon-Thurs) or email Kim.hall@britishgymnasticsfoundation.org
February 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th March 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th at 7.30 pm Every Friday Night	Invite to Dave's Friday Night Quiz – invitation from Peterborough Branch	Email Ruth Brinkler-Long at ruthbrinker@hotmail.com
February and March Monday (Pilates) and Thursday (Keep Fit) 2.00 – 3.00 pm	Anita (Monday) and Hannah (Thursday) at Home Exercise Groups Peterborough Branch Invite	Use Zoom log in for all sessions https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83999004446?pwd=MU00NU1qdUQybWZqMWkra2RZYW5DQT09 Meeting ID: 839 9900 4446 Passcode: 184894
February 11th, 25th March 11th, 25th 10.30 – 11.30 am 2 nd /4 th Friday of each month	Cuppa and Cake Zoom Meeting – Cambridge Branch Invite	Email Keith Howlett keithparkinsonscambridge@gmail.com

Caring Together, our local Carers Support Organisation, also run a monthly carers group by Zoom. For more information contact Arda at Hello@caringtogether.org

Face to Face Activities

February 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th March 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th 11am – 12pm Every Friday	St Ives Exercise Group with Becky Meets at the Crossroads Church	Email beckyadamsrehab@gmail.com
February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th 11am – 12 pm Every Thursday	St Neots Exercise Group with Gareth Meets at Pilgrims Hall, United Reformed Church access via Tebbuts Road Car Park	Email gaz_sutton89@hotmail.co.uk
February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th 1.30 – 3.30 pm Every Thursday	Huntingdon Exercise Group with Sarah Huntingdon Methodist Hall	Email sj-performing-arts@hotmail.co.uk
February 14th March 14th 10.50 am meet up, 11am start 2 nd Monday of Every Month	NEW Riverside Strollers Riverside Park St Neots, meet at the Ambience Cafe (see Article Page 3)	Email Huntsbranchnews@gmail.com Tel: 07724 400527

New Walking Group – Riverside Strollers



We are pleased to let you know that we have a new group starting this month - our free to join Parkinson's Strollers Group is a new way of meeting up and having some gentle exercise at the same time. The walk will be held every second Monday of the month at Riverside Park St Neots, we meet at 10.50am at the Ambiance Cafe, and start the walk at 11.00am. As the name suggests, this is a very gentle amble along the pathways for 20 – 30 minutes, and we can have a chat and a catch up as we go along!

To get to there, the address is The Paddock, St Neots, Cambs PE19 7SD. Parking bays are well marked, up to 2 hours parking is £1.60, though there are free parking bays if you have a Blue Badge. Just be aware - you need to keep to the bays marked, as there is a fine if you are not parked properly.

There are a variety of routes we can take through the park, the majority of paths are very good, but some of them can be slightly uneven or narrow. There are lots of benches if you need to take a break along the way, and take in the lovely views.

All you need is clothing suitable for the weather, walking boots or strong shoes, and feel you are able to undertake the walk safely on the day. If you have any questions, please contact the branch email huntsbranchnews@gmail.com or phone the Branch Mobile on 07724 400527.

We hope you can join us,

David and Marianne



PARKINSON'S
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.

FIND OUT

Cambridgeshire Younger Person's
Event
Free to attend

Saturday 5th February 2022 10.30-1.30pm
See [Eventbrite](#) for more info

Come and meet other working age people living with Parkinson's. Find out about living well with Parkinson's

Lunch and drinks provided free.

Cambridgeshire Younger Person's Event

This event is to give younger people living with Parkinson's in Cambridgeshire an opportunity to come together for information and social support. There will be local group representatives available and a range of information to take away with you.

There will also be the chance to talk about the opportunity of starting a local working age group, you can meet up with other younger people living locally and find out how you can live well with your Parkinson's.

Complimentary refreshments and a sandwich lunch will be available.

Meet up is at Hemingford Abbots Village Hall, High Street, Hemingford Abbots PE28 9AH. Please go to [Eventbrite here](#) for more information and to book for this event.

Parkinson's Nurse Tip

"During these cold months, remember to wrap up warm when you are inside and outside. Continue to do your daily walks, but just add on some extra layers and wear a hat and gloves. Parkinson's affects the nervous system therefore you can feel cold quicker during the winter months. If you can't go out during the cold months for a walk, then consider doing some light exercises at home. Warmer and brighter days are soon to come..."

The Parkinson's Nurse Team are still providing a blended approach for current support, with clinics and home visits if required. A new nurse is starting in March, who is replacing Amanda Eady who retired in December.

Becky Slimmon, Parkinson's Specialist Nurse

Parkinson's and Mindfulness



A recently published study in the Journal *Parkinson's Disease* - "Stress and mindfulness in Parkinson's Disease – a survey in 5,000 patients" found that people with Parkinson's experienced greater levels of stress than the general population, and this stress can appear to worsen both physical and mental symptoms. However, the study also demonstrated the significantly positive effect of mindfulness on these symptoms, particularly on anxiety and mood.

So, what is mindfulness, and how can it help? Mindfulness is being aware of the present moment, without judgement, being aware of your thoughts and feelings - but without being caught up in them. By practicing and training your mind to be present, it can help you feel the benefits in your everyday life. By acknowledging your situation as it is, you can create the space to help you choose how to respond.

Parkinson's UK has resources to help you try mindfulness yourself, in the form of videos teaching you how. These cover -

Conscious breathing - a technique to help you focus on your breathing which will help calm you slow the heart rate

4,7,11- A technique to help you when you are trying to get to sleep

Body Scan – That helps increase awareness of the mind and body

Stop – A quick way to help you more aware of your surroundings

2 feet, 1 breath – A technique enabling you to be aware of each foot in turn, grounding you in the present, which can help if you experience freezing when walking.

These videos are between 1 and 5 minutes long, can be used indoor and out. You can use some or all, whichever are easier and the most effective for you, and the resources/toolkit can be used not just if you have Parkinson's. There is also a [15-minute audio session here](#), that can help develop your mindfulness, help manage your mood and enhance your quality of life and wellbeing. All you need is a quiet space and somewhere you feel comfortable and will not be interrupted. You will also find a video with hints and tips around mindfulness here.

These helpful resources were developed by the charity with people with Parkinson's and staff, but please contact your GP or Specialist if you have any concerns about the effects of using them or practicing mindfulness. Like all therapies, effects and benefits can be different for different people.

All this information can be found in more detail at [Parkinson's and Mindfulness here](#).

If you would like to take mindfulness further, there are a number of apps available for your smartphone, most available on both iOS and Android. For example, Medito and Smiling Mind are completely free, others such as Headspace, Calm, Simple Habit and Aura may have some initial free sessions, but then are chargeable. There are also many books (some with attached CD's such as "Mindfulness a practical guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World" by Mark Williams and Danny Penman that you can try, or you can find some good meditations on YouTube.

Parkinson's UK does not endorse any particular therapies, but it is helpful to know what options are available to you to try.

Worst Day Ever (Read from top to bottom, then bottom to the top)

Today was the absolute worst day ever
 And don't try to convince me that
 There's something good in every day
 Because, when you take a closer look,
 This world is a pretty evil place.
 Even if
 Some goodness does shine through once in a while
 Satisfaction and happiness don't last.
 And it's not true that
 It's all in the mind and heart
 Because
 True happiness can be obtained
 Only if one's surroundings are good
 It's not true that good exists
 I'm sure you can agree that
 The reality
 Creates
 My attitude
 It's all beyond my control
 And you'll never in a million years hear me say that
 Today was a good day

Chanie Gorkin

Sudoku – Can You Solve it?

7	2	3					4	
		9	1					
1			9	4				
	3				4	7		
6	1			3			9	4
		7	8				2	
				7	9			5
					1	9		
	5					6	7	1

Answers on Page 6 Credit www.sudokuoftheday.com

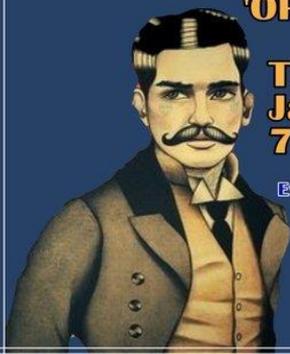


We cordially invite you to the Parkinson's Art

'OPEN MIC NITE'

**Tuesday 25th
 January 2022
 7.00 pm Gmt**

Evening Wear Optional



Parkinson's Art – Poetry with Parkinson's

Parkinson's Art are holding a regular Zoom Open Mic Night on Zoom at 7 pm on the last Tuesday of every month. This is a free event, open to all whose lives are touched by Parkinson's Disease and you love poetry.

If you would rather not read for whatever reason, someone will read it for you, or you can just come along and listen. There is no critique, no judgement, and it is just an opportunity to share your love of poetry with others.

If you have any questions, or wish to book a place please email martin@parkinsons.art

Join us as a Volunteer!

As we are now opening up and arranging activities at the Branch, we are keen to expand our committee. Can you help us? We are looking for a Vice Chair and a Membership Secretary and also general volunteers such as Speaker Finder and activities supporters. Your experience of living with Parkinson's is vital to help us develop our activities.

If you or someone you know wish to join us, please contact Lisa Lowe on 0344 225 3614 or email llowe@parkinsons.org.uk.

Research Talk Roundup

Parkinson's UK is the largest charitable funder of Parkinson's Research in Europe, spending 8.3 billion last year. They are currently supporting research projects with a focus on [Cure Projects](#) for treatments and strategies to stop, slow, reverse, prevent or cure Parkinson's, and [Life Projects](#) to improve symptoms and quality of life with better therapies and management of the condition.

For those who were not able to make our Branch Zoom on 17th January with Katherine Fletcher from Parkinson's UK Research Communications Team, here are some of the subjects she covered with some useful links.

[The Research Network](#) – This is a way for you to get more involved and updated on research information, and an opportunity to receive a regular email with research news and opportunities. There are 6,000 members, 400 volunteers and 12 regional groups. For more details, please follow the link parkinsons.org.uk/ResearchNetwork

[Research Volunteering/shaping Research](#) – If you have Parkinson's, you are experts in the condition and Parkinson's UK want to make sure your voices are heard in Research. This can include helping choosing projects to fund, prioritising what areas to work on, communicating research and identifying new insights and sharing what it is like living with Parkinson's on a day-to-day basis. It is an ideal way to help shape the future of Parkinson's research, and you can find out more here at parkinsons.org.uk/research/volunteer-help-shape-research

[Interest Groups](#) – Research Interest Group Members are Research Support Network volunteers, often led by a steering group. They arrange meetings and presentations, visits to labs undertaking Parkinson's research, keeping up to date with new developments, working with researchers to help shape research and raising funds. Our local research interest group is the East of England (SERIG), you can find out more at parkinsons.org.uk/research/local-parkinsons-research-groups or you can contact them by email at rsn@parkinsons.org.uk.

[Research Talks](#) – An opportunity to catch up on current upcoming events and recordings of recent research talks from Parkinson's researchers is available at parkinsons.org.uk/research/research-events

[Brain Bank](#) – The Parkinson's UK Brain Bank based at Imperial College London, is the world's only brain bank solely dedicated to Parkinson's Research. Donation of brain tissue has already led to major advances in understanding Parkinson's, and new are treatments being developed and tested. More information is here at parkinsons.org.uk/research/parkinsons-uk-brain-bank

[Par-Con Sessions](#) – In 2021 the charity held an online event - Par-Con, which focused on improving life through research. There are a number of sessions including topics such as diet and exercise. You can access this information at the link <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1ixQpbHed3ZV1AzTWbGM4IVN-ZWaTiVY>

[Gretchen Amphlet Lectures](#) – For those that missed it, it is still possible to see last year's lecture on Cannabidiol and its effects on Parkinson's psychosis at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3zYhXgvAkc>

The next lecture is yet to be confirmed, but there may be one in May. Due to current circumstances, it is being decided if this will be online or in person.

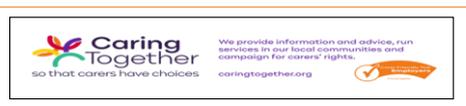
[Research List](#) – For those that would like a full list of Parkinson's UK funded research 2021-2022, you can find at more at the link https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-11/CS3726%20Active%20research%20projects%20PDF%20November%202021_Final.pdf

[Current Projects](#) – These include Predict PD, with the potential of finding out the environmental and genetic factors in Parkinson's with a view to creating a risk calculator, so that Parkinson's can be identified earlier and research can be targeted. Another project is the use of Symprove, a probiotic, to see if boosting good bacteria in the gut can help, as there are current thoughts Parkinson's may be linked with the gut. There is also some research on handheld devices and how these may help with walking, by providing stimulation to cells in the neck and brain to reduce falls. The charity has also committed £80,000 to a new GDNF trial, and are looking at different ways this may be administered in a less invasive way, potentially through the nose.

Katherine advised that if anyone has any questions, the team would love to hear from you. You can contact them at their email research@parkinsons.org.uk or you can phone them direct on 020 7963 3964.

The Branch would like to thank Katherine for her interesting talk, and follow up information.

Carers Update from Caring Together



Carers Activities

Wednesday 8 February, Tuesday 8 March – 10am-12pm – Huntingdon Carers hub

Face to face meet up for carers and the people they care for in the Huntingdon area. Cambs Therapy Centre, Bradbury House, Mayfield Road, Huntingdon, PE29 1UL

Thursday 9 February, 9 March 2022 – 10.30am-11.30am – Carers mixed hub Zoom group – First Aid session

Wednesday 9 March 2022 – 10.30am-11am – Carers mixed hub Zoom group

Available to all carers and the people they care for, available for carers from across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. [Click here for more information on Carers Hubs.](#)

If you would like further information on these or other support available to you if you are a carer, please contact Caring Together by emailing them at hello@caringtogether.org, or by phone on 0345 241 0954.

Getting to Know You

Each issue of our Newsletter we would like you to get to know a member of the Huntingdonshire Branch Committee a little better, and this issue we are putting the spotlight on Marian Appleton.

I was born the 2nd daughter of 4 girls and 1 son in 1934. I started School in the September that the 2nd World War was declared. We didn't know a lot about the war. 3 of my uncles were invalided out of the services, my Mum's eldest brother was in the Navy and spent most of the war at the American end of the North Atlantic, shooting mines out of the sea. Dad was in a reserved occupation, in the scrap metal business which was essential for making tanks, guns, ships and aeroplanes.

I don't remember learning to read or learning numbers, they just seemed to be there. Mum used to read to us every night on weekdays in the wintertime while we were waiting for Dad to come home for the evening meal. Hence my love of reading I suspect. When I was able to borrow library books I was often in trouble because I had my head in a book and was so absorbed in the story that I just didn't hear my mother asking me to do something.

I went to the local grammar school until the day before my 18th birthday and because of the then situation regarding birth dates and school years, I had to wait a year before I could go to teacher training college. I did one year of training but was not happy doing it, I took an office job for a year, I had already met my husband to be, we married in 1955 and had 3 sons. I have 8 grandchildren, 4 of each and now have 6 greatgrandchildren the eldest of whom is coming up to his 21st birthday. 3 of my great grandchildren are autistic, I don't know how my granddaughter copes but she is always bus if not looking after the family, she is running the local junior football teams.

I did go back to teaching and taught for 20 years before taking early retirement and then did many other jobs and enjoyed doing most of them.

My husband died of a very sudden heart attack in 2004 at the age of 72, my life was devastated as you can imagine. My sons and their families rallied round, but I was still very lonely once the initial shock had worn off.

I had both hips replaced in 2010, very successfully I must say. I met Ralph just as I was getting fully mobile again and he told me that he had Parkinson's. I had no idea what that was. He explained what it involved, and I joined him at the local group gatherings at St Neots and thoroughly enjoyed the functions and visitors that we had, invited along by David Rudd. The people who came to these meetings were all very friendly and helped to make the meetings most enjoyable. David Rudd hinted several times he would like me to get more involved, and when I felt I could commit myself to such involvement I did.

It is becoming increasingly interesting as I learn more and more about what happens this side of the equation.

Marian Appleton

Research Opportunities

A Trio of Research Trials exploring SNCA, Parkin, DJ-1 and PINK1 Gene Mutations and How it Affects Serotonin, Inflammation and Brain Scans

Research by Dr Edoardo De Natale and the Neurodegeneration Imaging Group at the University of Exeter are looking at how chemical levels are affected if you have SNCA, Parkin, DJ-1 and PINK 1 gene mutation whether or you not have been diagnosed with Parkinson's. This study is for people who have previously had their genes profiled. Each trial requires slightly different activities and time commitments, and the research and scanning will be arranged at Imperial College West London, so you need to be able to travel there, all travel expenses will be covered.

To find out more please contact Edoardo and his team via email e.de-natale@exeter.ac.uk or phone 07503 741242.

Deadline – 1.7.24

Imagining and Visualising Movements in Parkinson's

Research by Charlotte Growcott a PhD student at the University of Manchester is exploring at how people with Parkinson's imagine making movements in real time without actually physically moving (motor imagery). They need 250 people diagnosed with Parkinson's who have access to a tablet or laptop. The research involves completing a 45-minute online questionnaire (assistance can be given by the team to help you complete it). For those who identify as having later stage Parkinson's you may be offered a one-to-one interview that will be conducted remotely.

For more information, please see the [Participant Information Sheet here](#), if you are interested in taking part in the research the please go to the [Online Questionnaire here](#). To contact the team about the research or you need help with the questionnaire please email Charlotte at Charlotte.growcott@manchester.ac.uk or phone 0161 275 7333.

Deadline – 30.4.22

Sudoku Solution

7	2	3	5	6	8	1	4	9
5	4	9	1	2	7	3	6	8
1	6	8	9	4	3	2	5	7
8	3	5	2	9	4	7	1	6
6	1	2	7	3	5	8	9	4
4	9	7	8	1	6	5	2	3
2	8	1	6	7	9	4	3	5
3	7	6	4	5	1	9	8	2
9	5	4	3	8	2	6	7	1

Join Our Campaigns



Parkinson's UK have a campaigns team that has been successful in the past with many issues - such as protecting Attendance Allowance, getting Duodopa funded across the UK, Improving PIP and fighting for Parkinson's Nurse posts.

Can you help them with current and future campaigns? You can join the Campaign Network, become a Campaigns Volunteer, or let the Team know if you have any issues you need support on. [Full details are here](#) or contact the team on 0207 932 8080.

Useful Contact Numbers

BRANCH CHAIR

Malcolm Ryman

07720 080749

VICE CHAIR

Vacant

PARKINSON'S UK CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

0808 800 0303

(Also access to Parkinson's Local Adviser)

Email: enquiries@parkinsons.org.uk

PARKINSON'S DISEASE SPECIALIST NURSES

0330 726 0077

BRANCH MOBILE

07724 400527

FACEBOOK PAGE

Parkinson's UK Huntingdonshire

BRANCH EMAIL

Huntsbranchnews@gmail.com

PARKINSON'S UK WEBSITE

www.parkinsons.org.uk

This Newsletter is compiled to the best of our knowledge from information available at the time of publication.