



Welcome to The **Gate** – our monthly newsletter with updates about our own activities as well as those of local branches.

Thank you to those who attended the recent **support group meeting** where we celebrated all the activities that we ran in

2025 and showcased our plans for 2026's calendar of events. In addition, Rebecca O'Connor provided an update on the group's financial position as it stands this January 2026. The key take-away points are:

- Monies received from the Florence Pite Legacy and Mark Hearn Tennis Tournament over the last 10 years have now almost been exhausted
- This means that monies for events and meetings has to come from locally raised funds in future
- We currently have sufficient funds to allow us to continue offering classes and groups throughout 2026 and will be focussing on many fundraising opportunities throughout the year
- Anyone wishing to provide a donation (one-off or regular) should speak to Rebecca via rebeccaconnor@btinternet.com to ensure the process and maximum value is achieved

We were grateful to **Zoe Sole – Local Volunteer Officer** from Parkinson's UK for joining our meeting. Zoe provided an update on many key topics – you can find them overleaf and more information is available from the committee if needed.

Our next support group meeting will take place on **Thursday 19 February**, at the Woodhatch Community Centre. We will have a representative from **Co-Op Financial Planning** joining the meeting to provide updates and information about financial planning. Although you may already have your own financial planning in hand, products and legal requirements do change so this will give you a good range of information along with hints and tips for you to consider in your own environment. We hope to see you at this meeting.

Also, please remember that we hold two café events each month. The **Bletchingley Café** takes place on the last Monday of the month at the Bletchingley Golf Club (1100-1230hrs) whilst for those who live in the west of the region, the **Dorking Café** take place at the Watermill Inn on the first Tuesday of the month (1100-1230hrs). Both events are purely social and a great opportunity to get to know fellow "Parkies" and to chat about everything from holidays to grandchildren.

Whilst talking about social events, our **Beehive Social** get together each month is available for anyone who wishes to come along (friends and family more than welcome). This takes place on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Beehive Pub just south of the Woodhatch Centre from 1930hrs. Again, this is purely social with no presentations or formality .. just turn up, grab a drink and spend time getting to know everyone else who attends.

A calendar of events is available on our website and this will be kept updated allowing you to view the full schedule on a weekly, monthly or annual basis – click [here](#) to see the online calendar.

We also have small laminated cards with a summary of our events throughout 2026. If you haven't picked up one yet, please just ask one of the committee members at meetings, cafes or exercise classes.



2026



Support Group Meetings*

Woodhatch Centre, Whitebeam Drive, Reigate, RH2 7LS (1400-1530hrs)

19 February	Co-op Financial Planning
19 March	Clare Addison - educating the NHS
16 April	TBC: Deep Brain Stimulation
21 May	TBC: Mark Mardell - Movers and Shakers
18 June	Social afternoon tea
No meeting July	
20 August	TBC
17 September	TBC
15 October	TBC
19 November	TBC
No meeting December (Christmas lunch on 3 December)	



East Surrey Café*

Bletchingley Golf Club, Church Lane, Bletchingley, RH1 4LP (1100-1230hrs)

23 February / 30 March / 27 April / 18 May / 29 June / 27 July / 24 August
28 September / 26 October / 30 November / 14 December



Dorking Café*

The Watermill Inn, Reigate Rd, Dorking RH4 1NN
Monthly - First Tuesday of the month - 1100-1230hrs



Beehive Social Group*

Beehive Pub, 90 Dovers Green Rd, Reigate RH2 8EG
Monthly - Fourth Thursday of the month - from 1930hrs



Bereavement Group Lunch

Beehive Pub, 90 Dovers Green Rd, Reigate RH2 8EG (from midday)
16 March / 18 May 2026 / 20 July / 21 September / 16 November
Contact Maggie Ellwood (maggie.ellwood@hotmail.com) if you wish to attend



Extend Exercise Class

Weekly - Tuesday - 1415-1515hrs - Woodhatch Centre (see above for address)
Contact Margaret Monnery (margaretmonnery@gmail.com) to book a place



Mobility Exercise Class

Weekly - Friday - 1000-1100hrs - Woodhatch Centre (see above for address)
Contact Pam Rodger (lanrodger34@hotmail.com) to book a place



Choir/Singing Group

Monthly - Second Monday - 1400-1600hrs - Woodhatch Centre (see above for address)
Contact Rebecca O'Connor (rebeccaconnor@btinternet.com) for more information



Golf Masterclass

Monday - 1100-1300hrs - Bletchingley Golf Club (see above for address)
Contact David Wallbank (david@parkinsonsukreigate.org) to join a session



For more information, contact info@parkinsonsukreigate.org
Calendar of events is available on www.parkinsonsukreigate.org

* no booking needed - just come along

World
Parkinson's
Day
11 April 2026

As mentioned on the front page, Zoe Sole provided an update on some topical Parkinson's UK news – here's a summary:

The Nurse Appeal: Someone in the UK is diagnosed with Parkinson's every 20 minutes, and we recognise how important Parkinson's nurses are to living well with Parkinson's. Our Nurse Appeal has successfully raised £6.7 million so far—reaching 75% of our goal. This funding is already having a real-world impact; we have created 32 new specialist roles across the UK, 25 of which are already in post. These specialists provide a vital lifeline, significantly reducing waiting times and ensuring that patients and carers have the professional support they need.

Safety in Hospital: The Away-From-Home Kit
When staying in a hospital, timing is everything. For people with Parkinson's, the "30-minute rule" is critical; taking medication late can cause symptoms to worsen and recovery to take longer. To help you advocate for your care, we are offering the **Away-From-Home Kit**. This free resource includes a 'What Matters to Me' form, a medication card for ward staff, and a specialist-signed letter requesting that you be allowed to self-medicate if safe. We encourage everyone to order a kit and keep it packed with an up-to-date prescription, so you are always prepared for an unexpected stay.

➤ **Order the documents [here](#), and the bag [here](#).**

Inclusive Travel: "Patience Please" Badges We know that navigating busy train stations and last-minute platform changes can be incredibly stressful and can exacerbate symptoms. In partnership with **Trainline**, we have launched a new initiative to make rail travel more inclusive. This includes a new badge designed in consultation with the Parkinson's community that reads: *"Patience please, travel is challenging for me."* These badges are designed to foster understanding from fellow travelers without the need for a long explanation.

➤ **Order your free badge [here](#).**

A Lasting Legacy: The RHS Chelsea Flower Show

2026 We are thrilled to announce our 2026 Chelsea Flower Show garden, *"A Garden for Every Parkinson's Journey."* Designed by Arit Anderson, the garden is filled with symbolic touches, such as scentless roses to represent the loss of smell and the *Mucuna pruriens* plant, a natural source of Levodopa. Most importantly, the garden is designed for a life beyond the show; it will be permanently relocated to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford to provide a peaceful sanctuary for outpatients and their families.

➤ **Read more about the garden [here](#).**

A Note on Volunteering Finally, a huge thank you to the volunteers who make this group possible. Our local activities only exist because of the time and energy of people like you. If you or someone you know could give even an hour every so often to support us, it would make a tremendous difference. Whether it's ad-hoc help or a regular role, we would love to have you on board.

Mayor of Sutton's Charities
are delighted to announce

Back by public request!!
An unforgettable and epic karaoke evening
on Saturday 14th March 2026
6.30 – 9.30pm
("Melodies and memories in the making")



Sutton United Football Club
Gander Green Lane, Sutton SM1 2EY
("What happens at karaoke, stays at karaoke!")
Audience singing, individual & Group requests
Open bar
Raffle
("Karaoke brings people together – the perfect blend of laughter and music")

Tickets are £10 per head
Please email chair@skeparkinsons.org.uk to confirm your places
Name: Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom Sort: 20-00-00
Account Number: 93476758 add reference Karaoke

Mayor's Charities:
Sutton, Kingston, Epsom and Merton Parkinson's Branch
Sutton Women's Centre

 **Parkinson's UK**
Sutton, Kingston, Epsom
and Merton Branch



Sport Parkinson's Try-Athlon

SAVE THE DATE – TRY-ATHLON – 10 MAY 2026

You may recall Hamish Turnbull showcasing the benefits that Sport Parkinson's offer both to organisations but also to those affected by Parkinson's. Their Try-Athlon event gives you the opportunity to try various activities – sport as well as therapeutic – all in one venue.

This year's Try-Athlon takes place at the Twickenham Stoop Stadium on **Sunday 10 May** – please put it in your diary and more information will be shared about how to get tickets in due course.



Please save the date
Sunday 10th May
2026

and join us at
Sport Parkinson's Try-Athlon
Twickenham Stoop Stadium

Newly diagnosed webinars are back

The next newly diagnosed webinar will take place on Thursday 12 February at 1900hrs.

The webinar will focus on getting the right nutrition when you live with Parkinson's 🧠 🍰

All the newly diagnosed webinars are free, and registration is available on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

A bit of fun

Time for a **good laugh** as laughter therapy is as good as physical therapy! If you have a funny story to tell, please let us know (to info@parkinsonsukreigate.org)

I've lived a bit and realise there are so many unanswered questions:

- If money grew on trees, why do banks have branches?
- Why do we press harder on the remote when the batteries are dying?
- Why does my dog bark at nothing?
- Why is the person who snores always the first person to fall asleep?
- Why do we say "sleep like a baby" when babies wake up every two hours?
- Why is it called "fast food" when the line is always so slow?

Information in The Gate newsletter is correct as of the date of publication. Any views expressed in the newsletter are those of the relevant authors and may contain information, not advice.

Parkinson's UK, 50 Broadway, London SW1H 0DB

Free confidential helpline: 0808 800 0303
Monday to Friday 0900-1900hrs / Saturday 1000-1400hrs (interpreting available)
hello@parkinsons.org.uk / www.parkinsons.org.uk

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