

The Park Gate

Autumn (September) 2025 Reigate & East Surrey Open the gate to learn more





Welcome to The Park Gate – our quarterly newsletter. As a reminder, the name of our newsletter refers to Parkinson's Reigate and as this is a newseltter for our members, we encourage you to provide us with any stories or information that we can share with other members of our Group.

As we edge away from our summer months, we continue to be busy with activities on behalf of the Reigate Support Group. On 16 August, we had a stand at the Walking Rugby Festival being held at the Old Reigatian RFC ground in Reigate.

We had lots of interest from both participants of the rugby teams as well as supporters and raised over £700 from the raffle, donations and an auction which was generously offered to our support group. We also had flyers and brochures to give out and spoke to those who wanted more information about our group and Parkinson's in general. We were even more delighted when the Parkinson's team won the overall team trophy (shown with David below).







Reigate Support Group meeting - 18 September 2025

We are thrilled that John Pettigrew – Senior Product Manager at Parkinson's UK – will be joining our September meeting and presenting on the Parkinson's Tech Guide. Parkinson's UK created the Tech Guide so that people with Parkinson's, and their families, friends and carers, can make the right decisions for themselves about all the devices and apps that claim to be able to help improve their quality of life.

To do this, the team provides trusted reviews based on the lived experience of people with Parkinson's, and maintains a catalogue of the various products that are on the market. They back this up with information about Parkinson's and evidence-based articles that will help you decide what's right for you, in your unique circumstances. The Tech Guide is available on the web, in print and by email, so you can get the information you need in the way that's right for you. If you are not tech-savvy, this is an





ideal way to learn what products are available that could help you in your daily lives.





John will be providing an update on the guide in general and some valuable tips of how to make the most of it at our meeting on 18 **September** at the **Woodhatch Centre** (1400-1530hrs) so please do come along and join us.

Dates for your diary - a reminder of existing events you can join

As a reminder, we have a calendar of events and meetings on our website – please do regularly check this as we'll add anything of interest to this (as well as via our newsletters and email distribution list)



www.parkinsonsukreigate.org

Reigate Support Group Woodhatch Centre Whitebeam Drive Reigate RH27LS 1400-1600hrs					
18 September	John Pettigrew - Parkinson's Tech Guide				
16 October	Hamish Turnbull – Sport Parkinson's				
20 November	Sue Mills – Parkinson's UK Shop				
No meeting December See below for Xmas lunch info					

East Surrey
Café
Bletchingley Golf
Club, Church Lane
Bletchingley RH1 4LP
1100-1230hrs
29 September
27 October
24 November

15 December

Bookings are not needed for the above – just come along and join us Contact info@parkinsonsukreigate.org for further info

Activity	When				
Extend Class	Tuesday 1415-1515hrs / £5 per class @ The Woodhatch Centre				
Seated exercises	Contact Ros Henderson Prhenderson3@live.com				
Mobility Class	Friday 1000-1100hrs / £5 per class @ The Woodhatch Centre				
Active exercises	Contact Pam Rodger <u>Ianrodger34@hotmail.com</u>				
Choir/Singing Group	2 nd Monday 1400-1600hrs @ The Woodhatch Centre				
	Contact David Wallbank david@parkinsonsukreigate.org				
Christmas lunch	Thursday 4 December 2025 @ The Woodhatch Centre (more info to follow)				

Bookings are needed for the above (other than the choir) – contact the nominated team member to find out more information. Classes are run by qualified tutors.

Bereavement group

This is an informal get together run by Maggie Ellwood – it's a small group of people who have all lost their partners or friends resulting from Parkinson's. The group meets at the Beehive Pub (90 Dovers Green Road, Reigate RH2 8EG) for lunch, from midday and those who attend chat and discuss anything from politics to Parkinson's!

The next lunch get-together will be held on 22 September and generally every eight weeks on the third Monday of the month (see table of dates) at the same venue and time.

Please drop Maggie a note via maggie.ellwood@hotmail.com to let her know if you would like to join this or future get-together's and also to receive more information on future events.

Bereavement Group dates:

- 22 September 2025
- 17 November 2025

Please remember that we are always looking out for **volunteers** to help in running the group or help with fundraiser ideas or activities .. and above all, your input to the content of the newsletters and meetings – please contact us via info@parkinsonsukreigate.org to discuss any of the above.

Beehive Social Group

We are aware that the majority of our activities take place during the day and therefore, those who work full or part-time may not be able to join us and make benefit of the social interaction with others affected by Parksinson's.

A number of years ago, we had a social event called the Beehive Group where anyone who was affected by Parkinson's (or other similar conditions) met socially once a month at the Beehive Pub, 90 Dovers Green Road, Reigate RH2 8EG. This event had to be disbanded when Covid hit us all and sadly was not brought back into running until now!!

We are delighted to resurrect the Beehive Group and invite you to come along on the 4th Thursday of each month to join us for a drink and just very relaxed social interaction. If you are newly diagnosed or had PD for many years, it's always great to chat with likeminded people. Depending on how these gettogethers succeed, we may mature this in various ways .. but for the time being, please do come along and join us. Partners and friends are more than welcome.



Beehive Group

Monthly social event

Meet, Socialise, Support

The Beehive Pub 90 Dovers Green Road Reigate RH2 8EG

Thursday 25 September 1930hrs onwards

Buy your own food/drinks
Bring your friends
Have a social evening out!

Here is some feedback from those who used to go to the Beehive Group social event pre-pandemic:

"I found the group very useful to share experiences of a wide range of Parkinson's issues, especially around treatments, drugs, research etc. I have had Deep Brain Stimulation and I was able to help people to understand this technique and subsequently for them to build their own thoughts on whether this would be beneficial for them.

I met some inspiring people and found it was also a really good group for carers to meet and share their thoughts and experiences."

David Eccles

Diagnosed with Parkinson's over 16 years ago, I thought it was the end of the world for me! However, not to be beaten, I went along to my local Evening Parkinson's Group meeting held at the Beehive, Reigate which was one of the best things I could have done. Talking to others with Parkinson's and sharing our problems helped me enormously, inspiring me to fund raise, as well as making lifelong friends.

Claire Frost-Gaskin

Attending a PD group meeting for the first time can be daunting. But Steve and I found the Beehive Group friendly, supportive and informative. We appreciate the friendships formed over the years as they have certainly helped us to remain positive and determined to live life to the full!

Rebecca O'Connor

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council honours local heroes at awards ceremony

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council recently honoured 41 local heroes for their selfless service to the borough and its communities. The awards ceremony which took place on Monday, July 28 at the Town Hall recognised individuals and in some cases groups of individuals, for their exemplary voluntary service in five categories, including Young Volunteer Award (three winners), Individual Volunteer Award (18 winners), Individual Trustee Award (four winners), Volunteer Team Award (six winners), and Long Services Award (10 winners).

The Reigate & Banstead Volunteer Awards are organised each year in partnership with Voluntary Action Surrey East (VASE). Presenting the awards, the Mayor of Reigate & Banstead, Cllr Rich Michalowski who was accompanied by the Mayoress, Mrs Michelle Gibney said: "As volunteers, you go above and beyond to serve our communities. Having read your stories, I can only describe you as local heroes. As a council, we are grateful for your contributions and these awards are one way for us to recognise your contribution."

Stuart Matthew, Trustee of VASE said: "In these troubled times it is important to remember and celebrate those who willingly volunteer their time and energy to help others across our communities. These awards allow us to recognise outstanding individual contributions and to thank volunteers for the vital roles they play in supporting essential services."

We are so proud of one of our Parkinson's Group member - Jennifer Marks — who was nominated for her many years of service volunteering at East Surrey Hospital and helping so many patients whilst they have been in the hospital. Jennifer is very well respected by the nursing and support staff at East Surrey Hospital and this award is on behalf of them — well done Jennifer from all of us at Parkinson's Regiate.



Text and photo via Sussexexpress.co.uk

Parkinson's UK

Walk for Parkinson's

7 September: Battersea Park 1100hrs, £12 per person, 1.5 miles or 6.1 miles

28 September: Henley-on-Thames 1100hrs, £12 per person, 1.3 miles or 6 miles

Register via https://events.parkinsons.org.uk/event/walkparkinsons/home







Join us for

Parkinson's Walking Football, Edenbridge

Fridays, 10:30-11:30am Edenbridge Leisure Centre, Stangrove Park, TN8 5LU ***Starting Fri 12 September ***

A new friendly and welcoming walking football session for people with Parkinson's and their family and friends. You don't need to have played before to join us. Initially sessions will be free.



To book call: 01732 442364 Did you Know... Everyone Active also offers free membership to people with Parkinson's.





everyone

Par-Con

Par-Con is your Parkinson's community convention about living well with Parkinson's and gives you the chance to hear directly from trusted experts. This is a free 2-day event which you can attend in person (although in-person tickets are now all sold out) or join sessions online for talks, activities and to connect with others.



Par-Con takes place at the VOX Conference Venue in Birmingham on 24 and 25 October and is free to attend – read more about the event and register to join online via <u>www.parkinsons.org.uk</u>.

The draft programme for the 2 days is as follows (some sessions still to be confirmed)

Day 1: Friday 24 October 2025

Session 1 Live Parkies in a Pod podcast

Session 2 Cutting-edge research

Session 3 Get moving and creative (in person)

AGM (in person)

New diagnosed and campaigning

(online)

Drinks and entertainment reception (in person)

Day 2: Saturday 25 October 2025

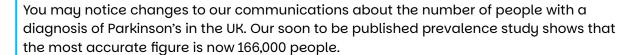
Session 1 Managing mental health

Session 2 Diet and nutrition

Session 3 Movers and Shakers

In addition, there are some parallel sessions – all information is on the above site.

Prevalence figures





We're also replacing the reference to Parkinson's being the fastest growing neurological condition globally with the following message: 'Parkinson's is on the rise. In the UK today, someone is diagnosed every 20 minutes. By 2050, the number of people with Parkinson's worldwide will double to 25 million.'

National Fitness Day 2025



On **Wednesday 24 September**, we're asking the collective Parkinson's community to join us for the day that celebrates all things physical activity and wellbeing, National Fitness Day.

Whether you choose to organise an event, share your top tips for being active, or tell us what keeps you motivated, we want to hear from you. Share any content with Philip Lindley, Physical Activity Communications Officer on plindley@parkinsons.org.uk before Wednesday 24 September.

For more information about National Fitness Day and ways to get involved, visit: https://www.nationalfitnessday.com/

We're partnering with Oxford Mindfulness Foundation

We're partnering with Oxford Mindfulness to help people living with Parkinson's across the UK get access to physical activity, wellbeing and mindfulness resources.



Oxford Mindfulness Foundation offers a range of resources, tools and support to help people living with Parkinson's enjoy an active lifestyle.

We're partnering with the organisation to offer a wider range of wellbeing and mindfulness services for the Parkinson's community across the UK. The partnership includes further development of the Oxford Mindfulness Foundation app, which now features a dedicated section for people with Parkinson's. It also includes a guide with top tips on the best ways to improve your wellbeing and an awareness course for people living with the condition.

The partnership won't just support people with Parkinson's, anyone with a connection to the condition will be able to access support and guidance to help them improve their wellbeing.

Research studies into mindfulness programmes have shown that with regular practice, symptoms such as anxiety and depression can be greatly reduced for people living with Parkinson's. Research has also found that mindfulness practices can improve many of the cognitive symptoms and motor skills associated with the condition, including strength, balance, muscle stiffness and coordination.

Our new partnership is part of a long-term programme to learn from the Parkinson's community and identify how more mindfulness tools and support services can be developed in the future.

Top Tips from Laura Sweeney - Community Occupational Therapist

Laura joined our May 2025 Support Group meeting and we've had so much feedback that we asked her to give us some top tips that you can consider within our daily lives to help with Parkinson's symptoms.





Think BIG

01

Think BIG when writing or taking steps – use lined paper and write in capital letters to improve size and quality of writing



Rhythm

02

Try a metronome or music to help with walking in rhythm



Improve grip

03

Use chunky handled or weighted cutlery to improve grip and reduce tremor



Ease to move around

04

Consider use of satin base sheets to aid movement in bed



Have a clear out

05

Clear narrow walkways and rooms of obstacles and clutter to reduce freezing and falls risk, also clearing away rugs and mats can prevent trip hazards



Safety alarm

06

Consider use of pendent alarm and/or falls detector, particularly if you live alone or spend long periods of time alone



Handrails

07

Consider rails to support safety on steps or in/out of the bath and shower



Long handles

08

Use long handled aids to maintain independence, such as: long handled sponge, long handled toe cleaner, helping hand grabber and sock aid



Manage tiredness

09

Manage your fatigue through pacing your energy throughout the day, planning your activities daily/weekly and prioritising the more essential tasks (delegating where you can)



Teamwork

10

The Community Neuro Rehab Team* are there to help with therapy needs and equipment. Social services help with longer term equipment needs (such as for manual handling) and adaptations.

^{*} made up of Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists



Do you know about the "sunflower lanyards"?

If you have a condition where you may need extra time, more space or just some additional support, you may wish to consider the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyards.

These lanyards and widely recognised in the UK to show that the wearer may have additional needs. They come with a card or card holder where you can identify that you have Parkinson's (or any other condition). This is a unique way to tell people visually that you might need support, extra time or space without having to verbally speak to them and explain your circumstances.

Lanyards can be purchased from the <u>Hidden Disabilities website</u> where you can have it personalised with your details and more information about your specific needs. Alternatively, just the lanyard can be purchased via the likes of Amazon – just search for Hidden Disabilities Lanyard (and select the ones with green background and yellow sunflowers).

https://hdsunflower.com/uk/personalised-parkinsons.html





Private Occupational Therapy

If you are finding it hard to get a referral to the NHS Occupational Therapists in your local area, you may wish to consider the services of a private OT. The following is a private OT who has contacted us via Zoe Sole at Parkinson's Head Office. We cannot vouch for the services that this lady offers but would be interested to have feedback if anyone does use her services.

My name is Kyla, and I'm a local HCPCregistered Occupational Therapist based in Molesey. I've recently launched Rehab on Wheels, offering private home-based OT assessments for adults, post hospital discharge or those needing falls prevention, equipment support or further neuro rehabilitation. Kyla Loya Occupational Therapist Rehab on Wheels E: kyla@rehabonwheels.co.uk M: 07794392179 W: rehab-on-wheels.co.uk

Meet Soumya Philip - Parkinson's Specialist Nurse - East Surrey Hospital



Many of you will know Soumya who is the Parkinson's Specialist Nurse based within East Surrey Hospital. We asked Soumya to tell us a little about herself and her job.

What is your background and how did you get into the role of a specialist Parkinson's Nurse?

I have a background in acute medicine and outpatient settings, with several years of experience. My interest in Parkinson's developed as I worked closely with patients who required consistent and specialised care. I pursued additional training and was allowed to specialise at East Surrey Hospital.

What training did you need to do to learn more about Parkinson's and the needs of your patients?

I completed specialised courses on Parkinson's and attended national training events. Additionally, I finished modules on symptom management and actively engage in continuous professional development to keep informed about new treatments and best practices.

How does your role differ from that of a community Parkinson's Nurse such as Fiona Watchman?

Community Parkinson's Nurses typically visit patients at home and manage their care within the community. In contrast, my role at East Surrey primarily involves supporting patients during their hospital admissions. I work closely with inpatient teams to ensure that medication is administered on time and that proper discharge planning is in place.

If someone with PD needs to get hold of you to ask a question, what's the best way for them to do this?

Patients can contact me directly by phone or email if they have clinical questions related to their care at East Surrey. For general advice or support outside of regular hours, reaching out to the Parkinson's UK Helpline or their Local Adviser is typically the quickest option.

How are you educating the staff within East Surrey about the special needs of a Parkinson's patient?

We conduct regular training sessions and provide quick-reference guides on Parkinson's care, highlighting the importance of administering medication on time. The "Get It On Time" campaign is actively promoted in the wards, featuring yellow wristbands and alerts in patient notes to prevent delays.

What can the Reigate Support Group team do to help you in your role?

I recognise that the group offers excellent community support, assisting with non-medical needs such as emotional support, social activities, and guidance. Their feedback helps me understand patients' challenges outside the hospital, enabling us to enhance the service together.

If you have one wish with regards to Parkinson's, what would it be (other than finding a cure which is the ultimate goal!)

I wish every person with Parkinson's had fast access to a specialist and a personalised care plan, regardless of where they live. Early intervention and consistent support make a huge difference in quality of life.

What is your greatest personal achievement in life?

Becoming a Parkinson's Specialist Nurse and making a real difference in people's lives has been one of my proudest achievements. This work is incredibly fulfilling, and bringing my two children into the world is equally rewarding.

Is there anything major that you still want to achieve in your lifetime?

I would love to travel more, particularly to places like New Zealand and Japan. I am also interested in pursuing further study, possibly completing a Master's degree.

Parkinson's Progress Magazine - Summer 2025

In this issue, we explore depression and anxiety in Parkinson's, spotlight the latest research tackling these challenges, introduce 3 innovative management technologies, and share practical tips you can apply today.

<u>Click here</u> to read this online or download and read at a later date. If you wish to receive this magazine and the <u>Parkinson magazine</u> in print, just join Parkinson's UK and this will be sent to you as and when new copies are printed so you won't miss out on any information.



Research Studies that you may be interested in

How do changes to face and body movement affect people with Parkinson's?

Researchers at the University of Manchester want to understand how symptoms of Parkinson's which cause changes to face and body movement, affect people with the condition. They are particularly interested in how these changes impact communication and social relationships.

Who

320 people with Parkinson's.

Unfortunately, those diagnosed with any other neurological conditions such as dementia or severe mental health issues such as depression are unable to take part.

What

- Completing an online questionnaire which will take up to 80 minutes to complete
- 20 people will be asked at random to take part in an online interview that will take 1 hour to complete

Participants can take part with the support of a family member, friend or a member of the research team.

Those who take part in an interview will receive a £10 e-voucher for their time.

For more information, please read the participant information sheet for the survey and the participant information sheet for the interview. Or contact the study team at Karen.lander@manchester.ac.uk or 0161 275 7997.

https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/research/how-do-changes-face-and-body-movement-affect-people-parkinsons

Improving pain management for people with Parkinson's

A researcher at Northumbria University is developing a training package for healthcare professionals. They want to hear about healthcare professionals' experiences of providing pain management and understand their training needs.

Who

15 healthcare professionals who work with people with Parkinson's in the UK

What

- Completing 3 surveys. They will take 15 minutes to complete.
- Taking part in an online focus group or interview for 1 hour
- For more information, please read the participant information sheet

https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/research/improving-pain-management-people-parkinsons

Tips for making getting ready easier

Parkinson's symptoms can make getting ready in the morning a bit tricky. Here, people with Parkinson's share their tips on making their daily routine easier.

- "I have all my outfits complete and colourcoded on hangers so that I can grab a hanger, sit on my bed and get dressed slowly."
- "My other half finds it difficult to get into tops, so we try to choose garments that are slightly larger or looser but which will drape well so the fit still looks right. Jersey fabrics are good for this if not too thick."
- "We had a seamstress sew the buttons on the front of Dad's shirts, and add a hidden velcro button behind the shirt opening to make it easier to dress himself."
- "My barber trims my beard with each haircut."
- "I have a mobile hairdresser come out to my house who is very good. She knows I have Parkinson's and totally understands the problems I have. It's been a good solution for me."
- "When buying an overcoat, look for one with a slippery, satin lining that makes it easier to put on and take off."
- "I find a long-handled shoe horn and slip-on shoes helpful."
- "If you find it hard to use two hands when drying your hair (hairdryer in one hand, brush in the other), then use one of those heated dryers that has the brush on the end. That way, you can do everything with one hand."
- "I got my husband some soap-on-a-rope for the shower. He doesn't like shower gel and can end up slipping."
- "Use a zip-pull or attach a leather or loop of material on the end of the zipper to help with gripping."

Practical ideas to help with handwriting

People with Parkinson's may have problems with their handwriting. It may become 'spidery' or difficult to read. Some people notice that their writing starts off normally, but becomes smaller over time (known as 'micrographia').

Not being able to write as well as you used to can be frustrating, but there are some things you can do to make it a bit easier.

- **1** Use pens and pencils with a thick or padded cover to help you get a better grip.
- 2 If you have a tremor, a weighted cuff may give you more control. This is a heavy padded strap that you wear around your wrist. The <u>Disabled Living Foundation</u> can advise you on where to get one.
- **3** Use a clipboard or a non-slip mat to stop your paper slipping.
- **4** Write on lined paper, so it's easier to keep your writing straight.
- 5 Take your time to write so it is not as tiring.
- **6** If your voice is loud and clear you could record voice messages instead of writing things down. Try using your mobile phone or a dictation machine.
- 7 If you need to sign a cheque or document, you could ask someone else to fill in the details for you, so you just have to add your signature.



Useful Parkinson's UK information

Become a member of Parkinson's UK

www.parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/become-member

Volunteer for Research projects

www.parkinsons.org.uk/research/take-part-research

Need help, support or advice?

Helpline: 0808 800 0303 / hello@parkinsons.org.uk / www.parkinsons.org.uk

Stay active

www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/physical-activity-and-exercise

Recently diagnosed?

www.parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/first-steps-programme

Get the right healthcare

Parkinson's have launched a new 'Getting the right healthcare' booklet which can be ordered via the Parkinson's Shop (<u>Information</u>) or downloaded as a PDF <u>here</u>

Recycle for Parkinson's

Parkinson's have a recycling scheme where you can help raise funds by recycling items such as stamps, clothes, electricals and even cars! Head to the PUK website to see what you could be recycling and how to do it: https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/recycle-parkinsons-uk

A bit of fun

This month's puzzle to unscramble the flower names			In the August newsletter, we	The sum is 34.				
				played "Magic	13	8	12	1
RICNAATNO _	NAATNO	SMROERIP	Squares" – here's	2	11	7	14	
GRDMLAOI _		NAEEVRLD		the answers where	3	10	6	15
DICRHO _		IIRS		you had to add numbers into THE	16	5	9	4
ERSO _		ILLY		grid and make				
ОРҮРР _		ASDYI		each row, column & diagonal total to 34				
JAIMNES _		ODFFDILA						

The 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).