

GOSPORT AND FAREHAM BRANCH OF THE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY

**From the Secretary – Juliette Hewitt, 11 Beech Grove, Gosport,
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Email graham@grahamhewitt7.wanadoo.co.uk April 2011

Dear



After a long hard winter it is time for another newsletter to cover the spring and summer period. The sight of the spring flowers, the blue skies and the longer evenings certainly help to raise the spirits!

There are lots of activities in the coming months, both in the Branch and the region.

AGM

Our 30th AGM is to be held on **Saturday 4th June, 11.30am** at St Mary's Parish Centre, Green Road, Alverstoke, followed by a buffet lunch. We held the AGM over the lunchtime period last year and found it worked really well. People didn't begin to "wilt"

This is always an important event. It's your chance to see how our funds have been spent and to review our activities.

Enclosed with this newsletter are the nomination papers for officers and committee members, which will be decided at the AGM. We would welcome two new members to the committee to share the workload.

You can even nominate yourself! Please **return the forms by the 14th May.**

Hillhead Chalet

Mave has booked the chalet for the following dates this summer. They are all on a Wednesday. The dates are as follows:-

Weds 18th May, 15th June, 13th July and 14th September.

We meet up between 11am and 3pm. Coffee, tea and soft drinks are provided. Bring a picnic if you wish. Otherwise fish and chips can be ordered on the day. Do come and join us. It's a lovely spot on a sunny day and it's even nice and cosy on a wet one, looking out at the view. Easy access and toilets.

The Wheelhouse Chalet is located in the car park on the sea front at the end of Salterns Lane.

If you need more details, ring Mave on 02392 641124 or mob 07789 511124.

Hampshire and Islands Region Regional Conference and research update

This will be held on **10th May from 18.00-21.00** at the Holiday Inn, Herbert Walker Avenue, Southampton, S015 1HJ. There will be a buffet, and admission is free.

It sounds a really interesting and practical programme.

The speakers are:-

Dr Giles Elrington, Consultant Neurologist, Barts and The London Hospital - M.S. – can this disease be modified?

Grace Aubrey – Perceptions of exercise and massage in M.S.

Andrew Sible, Senior Research Assistant, University of Southampton – Men as carers – Identifying support needs and preferences.

If you would like to attend please RSVP to either:-

Jenny Alderson 01202 397763, jennyalderson@hotmail.co.uk or

Caroline Birch 01590 623933 carolinebirch@clara.co.uk **by 3rd May**

If anyone would like to attend but needs a lift, contact me on 023 9258 1406.

Regional Quiz – Saturday 7th May

Alton and Petersfield Branch are again the hosts for the Regional Quiz. The format is the same as last year as this was very successful. Location: The Maltings Centre, Alton, GU34 1DT. Times approx 11am until 4pm.

Lunch will be pizza and potato wedges with dips. Cool drinks on each table and hot drinks available. If you would like to be part of a team please contact me **before Friday 22nd April.**

Craft Group

The craft group meets on the second Monday of the month at the Golden Bowler public house in Stubbington. They start at 11am and finish at about 2pm.

Monday 9th May – Painting with acrylics with Rachael.

Monday 13th June – to be arranged

Monday 11th July – Pottery with Debie

There's a real sense of achievement in creating something, even if it doesn't turn out quite as expected! It's really very therapeutic, and the time absolutely flies by.

To book a place phone Ruth on 01329 318451.

MS Week – May 23RD to 29TH

The aim of MS week is to raise awareness and to raise money. Our chairman George has booked a stall at Gosport High St Market on Tuesday May 24th and Saturday 28th May.

He will be selling books which have been kindly donated to the Branch and collecting, together with providing information on MS. Do come along to say "Hello", and I am sure he would appreciate a bit of help.

Summer Outings

We are arranging two summer outings:-

Trip to Regents Park Zoo – on Sunday 10th July.

We had intended to go to Madame Tussauds but on reading the small print I discovered they only allow three wheelchairs into the building at any one time, which is a bit hard on the others!

Regents Park seems to be wheelchair friendly It was also voted London's best tourism experience 2010. There are disabled toilets and accessible restaurants. They also have six manual wheelchairs and two electronic wheelchairs – no hire charge but a returnable deposit. We would need to book these as early as possible. Let me know if you would like to come.

Roger will be driving one of the adapted buses. If more people want to go than can be fitted in the bus, I will book a mini bus. Cost is £9 per person for entry to the Zoo and the Branch will cover travel costs.

Secondly – a trip around Poole Harbour, Dorset on Sunday 21st August

Poole Harbour is one of the largest natural harbours in the world. They have a specially-adapted boat. This is somewhat advance notice and we don't usually do anything in August but there is such a lot going on during the summer weekends that it was difficult to fit the trip in any earlier. However the weather should still be good.

Could you please indicate on the enclosed slip if you are interested in joining us on these trips.

Fundraising – Karen, our fundraiser has arranged the following events

Pamper Day – We are holding another Pamper Day on Saturday 25th June at the Crofton Community Centre, Stubbington.

Last year's Pamper Day was so successful that this year we are holding it in the main hall where we can have even more treatments going on.

The cost of the day will be £1 entry fee Tickets available from Karen or Juliette. Treatments cost £5 each and will include everything from pedicure, manicure and facials to massage and reflexology. Each session lasts ten to 15 minutes.

There will be food and drink to buy on the day and a raffle with lots of prizes. Doors are open from 11am to 4pm.

We are giving you plenty of notice so please spread the word around. We hope to see you there.

Quiz Night with fish and chips supper at the Crofton Community Centre on **Friday 1st July**. Bring your own drinks. Tea and coffee available for a small charge. Team of 6 to 8 people please, Please come along and support this very enjoyable event. Rally round your relatives and friends to come. Cost £8 per person. See the attached flyer and booking form.

Store collections:-

Fareham Shopping Centre on **Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th June** – with an information stall. Please contact Karen on 01489 570450 or mob 077799 96004 if you can help, even if it is only for an hour.

You are under cover and people are very friendly. Everyone seems to have a family member or friend with MS. We are very well received.

Morrison's Gosport - Monday July 25th. Collectors required all day, please

Physio, yoga and coffee mornings

Please see enclosed diary for the dates of our regular events. Please note that **we do not usually operate during August** to allow us all to have a holiday.

So the last physio will be Thurs July 28th; restart Thurs Sept 8th

Coffee morning Thurs 21st July at The Wyvern; restart Thurs Sept 1st at the Golden Bowler

Yoga last one Tues 19th July; restart Tuesday 30th August

Wheelchair service

For a very long time, the Gosport and Fareham Branch has been fighting to improve the local wheelchair service.

We are very concerned that the waiting time is totally unreasonable and far longer than anywhere else in Hampshire. We have found that the service is inefficient and very difficult to contact.

There is no consistency of service and if you live in Gosport or Fareham you are the victim of a "post code" lottery.

Following our and other representations to the PCT, I am very pleased to tell you that the contract to provide wheelchairs has been given a new provider from April 1st.

There is a backlog of 340 wheelchair cases in our area, which includes Havant. The aim is to clear these cases and work to a maximum waiting time of 18 weeks. If you have been waiting for a wheelchair (either manual or powered), please let me know how long you have been waiting and what sort of wheelchair you are seeking.

Multiple Sclerosis Specialist Nurse

Good news on the replacement of the specialist nurse following the resignation of Sheila Chartres.

After a period of uncertainty, I am pleased to be able to tell you that the Hampshire Health Authority plan to replace the part-time post with a full-time post as originally intended. This is urgently needed given the huge area covered and the high number with Multiple Sclerosis

We were worried that if there were to be cut in services, then the role of the MS Nurse Specialist could have been a target.

Graham attended a meeting where Paula Hull, the senior manager responsible for Specialist Nurses, gave an assurance that the authority was firmly committed to the provision of an MS Specialist Nurse. The vacancy had been advertised and applications had been received,

The Authority is to recruit three new posts in Hampshire - neurological nurses who are to complement and assist the specialist nurses where appropriate.

Graham reported that Paula Hull said the Hampshire Area Health Authority was seeking to improved neurological services and had set up neurological Steering Group which had been given three immediate objectives –

- 1 Providing personal care plans for patients
- 2 Co-coordinating specialist care for patients
- 3 A Review of the work force who assist neurological patients: T therapists, OTs, nurses, physios and incontinence nurses

In Conclusion

I hope you find something of interest in this newsletter and that you will come along to as many events as you can.

Have a good summer

Best wishes