

Dear Member

Hope everyone is well and looking forward to the gradual easing of the restrictions which have been part of our lives for almost a year now. We will be thinking hard over the coming weeks about which of our activities can resume "in person" and when, and which will still be available via our new best friend "Mr Zoom". A mixed economy may well be the way forward.

In the meantime, here are a few reminders of our forthcoming events and possible new activities:

- * Carers Group - Monday 8 March 2pm. This group began in January for mutual support and information. It is working well on Zoom and new members are very welcome. Names to Myra Newnes-Smith on mnsmith@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- * Working Age Group - Wednesday 17 March 7.30pm. A friendly chat between some of our "younger" (all things are relative...) members, who currently meet on Zoom but would really rather be in the pub! New members very welcome. This month, Helen Crouch, Speech and Language Therapist from the Royal Surrey Hospital Trust, will speak about what SLT the NHS can provide (see item below). Names to Sharyn Bullen on sbullen@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- * Members' Meeting - Tuesday 30 March 2pm. Our speaker this month is Baroness Virginia Bottomley, former local MP and Health Secretary. If you do not normally join these Zoom meetings, and would like to attend this one, please contact Sharyn Bullen on sbullen@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- * Newly diagnosed - Wednesday 31 March 6pm - 7pm. This drop-in Zoom group met for the first time last month to offer support and information to those coming to terms with a diagnosis. New members welcome. Names to Sharyn Bullen on sbullen@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- * Possible new service - Speech and Language Therapy (SLT). Many people with Parkinson's find that, over time, their speech becomes quieter and less distinct, which is quite a barrier to communication. Some of you may have already benefitted from a course of Speech and Language Therapy, either from the NHS or from a private provider, and may now like to attend a regular group to maintain the skills they were taught. Others may feel that they would like to try for the first time. We are currently in discussions with public and private therapists, and hope to let you know soon what could be available. It would be very helpful to know how many of you might be interested and what your experience with SLT has been to date. Please drop me a line (contact details below.)
- * Possible new service - Dance for Parkinson's. Parkinson's UK have put us in touch with a charity called Inclusive Intergenerational Dance (www.iid.org.uk <<http://www.iid.org.uk>>) who, among other things, run dance classes for people with Parkinson's. Their website says: "These dance classes are specifically created with people living with Parkinson's and their carers in mind. The classes focus on developing strength, balance, and flexibility and give the opportunity to practice fluidity of movement. All classes will comprise a warm up, longer dance sequences, and the opportunity for free movement and to develop choreography. There is also tea and biscuits. No previous dance experience necessary." IID have some funding from Waverley Council, so we are exploring how that might help our members.

Watch this space!

* Possible New '100 Club'- We need to increase our fundraising to continue to provide the current levels of support activities. One idea we are considering is to start a '100 Club', which is a form of private lottery for our Branch Membership. Those wishing to participate would set up a monthly standing order to the Branch for a small sum (say £2.00 as an example) which would give them a number (1 to 100). There would be a monthly draw with the winner getting say £40 (again an example). The rest of the money would remain in Branch funds to subsidise our other activities. We need to see how much interest there is for setting up a 100 Club, so could those interested in joining please e-mail Steve Heron, our Treasurer on sheron@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

Best wishes to everyone

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