

The Park

September 2025



The magazine of the Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK

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* Cover is called 'An afternoon Pimms at Great Halfpenny farm'

The Committee of The Guildford and South Surrey Branch would like to thank Oakleaf Enterprises for their efforts in printing and distributing this Magazine

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SOCIAL MEETINGS (2pm)

Venue: Shalford Village Hall, King's Road, Shalford, Guildford, GU4 3JU

All Members (and non members) and their partners, carers, and family members are welcome to attend these monthly social meetings. These meetings are free of charge to attend but we ask people to buy raffle tickets to cover the cost of tea and cake. They allow you to meet new friends, learn from each other's experiences and often hear a guest speaker while having light refreshments.

Date	Event
August, 2025	NO MEETING
30-Sep-25	Chair Exercise Lucy Wyndham-Read
28-Oct-25	Halloween Silliness
25-Nov-25	Parkinsons update/Q&A Amanda or Dawn, PD Nurses
02-Dec-25	Christmas Lunch Godalming Rugby Club
30-Dec-25	NO MEETING
27-Jan-26	TBC
24-Feb-26	AGM
31-Mar-26	TBC
28-Apr-26	TBC

Introduction from the Chair

Happy September and welcome to the latest edition of *'The Park'* Magazine, brought to you by the Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK!

As always, we're here to keep you informed and entertained with the latest updates from the Branch.

I believe this might just be one of the most interesting issues we've had in a long time. In this edition, we delve into two key aspects of what makes our Branch tick.



Firstly, over a number of articles, we explore the financial topics of generating income (aka fundraising) and spending the money we do raise wisely and appropriately (aka good governance). Let's face it, money is effectively the lifeblood of our Branch. Without it, we really can't serve anyone in a meaningful way. It's important to stress that there's no need to panic—nothing in our financial situation has drastically changed—but we do need to be proactive. If we don't work hard over the next 18 months, we might find ourselves in a tougher spot to continue offering the subsidies and support we do.

We recognise (and hence we share in *'The Park'*) that collecting money from the members is a finite pot, and that in the long term we need external funding, such as from third-party corporate sponsors. So if anyone has connections or knows how to help on that front, please step forward. Also, managing this transition will be a big job, and we have a request out for anyone who wants an intellectual challenge to step even further forward :-)

Last but not least, it's really crucial that our current fundraising events—like the Trad Army Dixieland Jazz Band you'll see on the opposite page—are supported as strongly as possible.

Secondly, we've got two especially compelling articles. In my new *'Ponder in the Park'* section, I ask questions of Dr Gratwicke, one of our Consultant Neurologists, who shares his insights on why he chose his specialty and what areas of research and self-care we should focus on. Then, there is a deeply honest interview with Kim Wilson of Surrey Hills Rehab, where she talks about the challenges of her line of business, their motivations, and reminds us that at the heart of it all, it's really about people, not just the money.

David Lowther



Parkinson's UK

Guildford and South Surrey

Welcomes back, by popular demand,

TRAD'S ARMY DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND

**FOR
FALL into
JAZZ**



www.tradsarmy.co.uk

WHEN—SATURDAY 20 SEPTEMBER, 2.15 – 4.30

**WHERE—CHIDDINGFOLD VILLAGE HALL, COXCOMBE LANE, CHIDDINGFOLD,
GODALMING GU8 4QA (near Haslemere to Guildford bus route 71)**

For tickets please apply to Clare Price by email cprice@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

Sincere thanks to our sponsors:

G.M. Luff;

Exercise—A members view...

It is well known that exercise plays a vital role for those living with Parkinson's.

Regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways of managing the condition — it can help control symptoms, improve quality of life, and may even slow progression. Exercise also brings significant mental health benefits, helping to combat depression and anxiety, which are common challenges for people with Parkinson's.

Yet it is easy to find reasons not to join the classes organised by our Guildford Branch. The most common one we hear is:

“I live too far away to attend the classes.”

While that may be technically true, there are always pragmatic alternatives. To give an example, here is my own daily routine — perhaps you might find elements of it useful:

- Before breakfast: 4-minute workout ([Zach Bush](#)), 5 minutes of [yoga asanas](#), followed by 5–15 minutes with Lucy Wyndham-Read ([YouTube selection](#)).
- A couple of times a week I also add a 30-minute session on the exercise bike
- Before lunch: Repeat the 4-minute [Zach](#) workout, followed by 5 minutes of weight-bearing exercises.
- Before dinner: Another 4-minute [Zach](#) workout plus 5 minutes of [yoga asanas](#).

And if I have the energy, I add a touch of Tai Chi (Qigong, Ba Duan Jin). Then repeat the next day. Every day. That way, I feel ready to take on the world!

Special Guest: [Lucy Wyndham-Read](#)

As if by design, Lucy Wyndham-Read — our “remote coach” for the past ten years — will be joining our Tuesday meeting at Shalford to talk about exercising with a chair.

Keith Black



Christmas is only 3 months away!!

It is time to start thinking about your attendance at our **Christmas Lunch**. This year it will be on **Tuesday 2nd December** at **Broadwater Pavilion, Godalming**. Doors will be open at noon, with the meal served at 1.00pm



As in previous years this will be a full three course traditional Roast Turkey meal with all the usual trimmings, with red or white wine, followed by coffee or tea and mince pies. For those who prefer something different, there are alternate choices. There will be the usual Christmas crackers and optional wearing of silly paper hats!

The heavily subsidised price this year will be £30.00 per member and their first guest. Additional guests are welcome, but they will not be subsidised and will need to pay the full meal price of £49.00 per person. Wine with the meal is paid for by the Branch, however any pre meal drinks are for your own account.

Could those of you who wish to attend either:

email your name, address, telephone number, and any guest names to our Treasurer, Steve at sheron@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk He will email you the menu choices and payment details.

or

Write to Steve at his address below with your name, address, telephone number, and any guest names, including a stamped addressed return envelope. Steve will then post to you the menu choices and payment details.

Mr S Heron

Guildford and South Surrey Parkinson's Branch

11 Merrow Woods

Guildford

GU1 2LQ

You need to respond by no later than Wednesday 15th October to ensure you are included in this great annual event!



Exercise—SHR the jewel in our crown

As you know, we strongly believe in the mantra that it's crucial for everyone with Parkinson's to do their part by engaging in exercise, social activities, and intellectual pursuits. In my opinion — and supported by the evidence — exercise is key to slowing the progression of the condition as much as possible.

We are fortunate to have two excellent providers, both with fully qualified and capable neuro-physiotherapists. This month, I'd like to take some time to highlight Surrey Hills Rehab and what they offer. I'd also like to introduce you to Kim Wilson, who runs Surrey Hills Rehab and is the main presenter in a **fantastic video** I've just watched, which I can wholeheartedly recommend — you can find it here: <https://vimeo.com/788588710>.

Question 1: Kim, why do you think it's important that Cranleigh has such a rehab facility, and how does it support the local community?

Pragmatically, Surrey Hills Rehab is based in Cranleigh because that is where many of the team live! Most of us are working mums juggling life with young children but with many years of very specialist health care professional experience under our belt. Before setting up SHR many of us worked in NHS settings across London, Surrey and Sussex in specialist neurorehabilitation units and felt instead of sitting for hours commuting for the benefit of people in other counties, why not make the most of our skills and our available time for the benefit of our local community. The team appreciate that for a weekly ongoing therapy session to be practical it is important for people with long term conditions that it is as near to home as possible. Having said that we do have people travel to use our service from as far as Epsom, Woking, Dorking and Horsham

Question 2: You have excellent people skills. Can you explain why you feel it's so important to have the best people providing these neurological services?

Health care professionals go into these vocations with other people's needs at their hearts (let's face it, in healthcare it's not for the money!) With neurological services there is something particularly special about it. We get to really know the person, their family, the ups and the downs as they navigate life with a diagnosis, in some cases over many years. Exercising as intensely as you need to when you have Parkinson's is tough and quite a time commitment. So it is important that our team not only understand the science behind 'Exercise is medicine' but can also apply the science in a fun and engaging way to make it enjoyable. We are so fortunate to have

such passionate and driven people on our team. They are always challenging the boundaries for people to be the best they can, to live well with a neurological condition. This is through reviewing current scientific research, updating training, trialling new equipment and ideas. There is so much thought and planning that goes into each and every person in every class.

Question 3: You mentioned that you're a non-profit organisation. Can you explain why you set it up that way?

The financial costs of services is always very difficult for health care professionals to ethically work through. We are just humans, with other people's needs at our hearts. Many of us have worked under the NHS and the 'free at the point of delivery' ethos for decades and it is very difficult to adjust to the business life outside of the NHS. Working in private practices I did not always agree with some of the business models of care. I did not feel comfortable with the concept of 'profiting' from others misfortune when I could see there could be another way. Many people think of people of Surrey being home to the rich and famous, but neurological conditions happen to anyone of all walks of life. When we started SHR we made the commitment that we would never turn anyone away, we would always find a way to make it work for people. We work alongside lots of local charities and organisations, with the Guildford and South Surrey Parkinson's branch being one of them to make sessions more affordable for people. We run our service with different options according to people's health needs but also their financial situation. If people can only afford one session, then we will give them our all in that one session for them to be skilled up to navigate their condition with more knowledge. Around 80% of our patients attend one of our 9 specialist exercise groups which is the most affordable option for those with long term neurological conditions such as Parkinson's who need to commit to exercise for the long term. The evidence is strong for group sessions like these with the many added benefits of gaining peer support and feeling less alone but also exercising with others makes people work harder and thus more effective to get their 'exercise dose'.

Question 4: What should a newly diagnosed person expect from Surrey Hills Rehab when they come in for their first assessment? In particular, could you talk about how your team understands that it's often a nervous and difficult time for the individual?

Making that first step can be very difficult for people. We will never forget a particular man with young onset Parkinson's who said it took a year for him to pick up the phone to us, and after he had met us he immediately regretted how long it



had taken him. He vowed to always help others to make that first step quicker than he did and he amongst many others in our groups for people newly diagnosed offer to chat over a coffee, meet in the car park before the first session, or their families and children meet up at the park next to us. Some people when they are newly diagnosed just don't want to meet others with Parkinson's yet for fear of seeing what may happen in the future, and we respect that. But we do also

explain that everyone is on their own journey, that people that are diagnosed now are in a different position to those diagnosed years before the 'Exercise is Medicine' research about how it can slow progression through neuroplasticity and that we assess everyone so that they join a group that is stratified according to the research for their specific impairments, fitness, age and an appropriate peer group. We have actually had people in tears of relief at their initial assessment when we explain that those people behind the glass door who are running, jumping, boxing, turning, spinning, throwing and most importantly laughing, are people who have lived with Parkinson's, in some cases for years and years.

Question 5: I think most people would expect there to be significant conflict and competition between our two suppliers. I know this not to be the case. Can you explain your relationship and the reason you work so well together?

Adam who leads Foundations Physio and myself as the founder of SHR go back a long way. We worked together in our NHS roles many years ago and believe in each others ethos of how and why we deliver our services. In fact, I personally recommended Adam and the Foundations Physio team when Sam Goodwin had to sadly stop the Haslemere and Godalming leisure centre groups all those years ago. Adam and I, the Foundations Physio team and SHR share training and peer support together, for the greater good for our wider community. 'Competitors' are not the same in healthcare like the commercial business world. The way we were all trained is that we put the patient's needs first. If a person self-refers to our service but they live nearer Foundations Physio, then we give them the information to go there instead to save their precious travel time and vice versa. If a person has needs best met under our service then we do that, or vice versa, but always in harmony, for the greater good for that person.

Question 6: Can you describe your future vision — where you want Surrey Hills Rehab to be in the next few years, and what you hope to achieve?

Whenever we get business advice, they want us to talk about growth in a financial sense and how to gain 'more profit', 'more assets' like a commercial business. Indeed we do have to 'grow' to keep up with rising costs of premises, insurance, equipment, a fair living wage. For us, as a team and for our patients, we just want to be sustainable. There have been extremely tough times. It has taken us 5 years to recover from the pandemic because unlike many other businesses, as a healthcare business we were not closed down officially by the government as we were 'keyworkers' and therefore did not receive any financial help. However, we were also unable to work in the same way with online only services, children off school and then a very long and gradual return with social distancing and high PPE costs. Without the same income we could not cover the same outgoings, and thus had significant losses that nearly ended us. But we are still here and continue to pay off the loans. We have to make the difficult balance of being kind and supportive of people's needs, but also being able to pay the bills in order to be sustainable through any other future tough times. Ultimately, what we want for SHR is to provide an evidence based service to meet the needs of our current and future patients and to continue to love our jobs working with people.

Kim Wilson

Carers – Parkinson's Branch is here for You



Guildford and South Surrey Parkinson's Branch tries to support carers wherever it can.

In-person meetings for Carers



The Carers Group is now meeting once a month on the **first Monday afternoon** at the Inn on the Lake, Godalming.

If you wish to discuss your needs, to hear about any current activities, or to join the meetings, please contact **Myra Newnes-Smith**

01483 422440

Branch Subsidies

As an update to my article in the last (May) edition of The Park, we have advised our exercise class Providers that we will only provide a Branch subsidy when a member has attended the class.

We had to take this step because it became clear that non-attendance at booked classes was becoming a significant financial burden. By June this year the accounts showed that missed classes had already cost the Branch £2,000 in wasted subsidies and could potentially become £4,000 for the full year 2025. This is a totally unacceptable drain on Branch funds and is unsustainable. We had to intervene with a clearer policy stating what the Branch is able and willing to subsidise.

Whilst we appreciate some members may have valid reasons for non-attendance and are prepared to lose their part of the class fee, they may be unaware of the cost to the Branch of the subsidy paid for that missed class. Similarly the Providers are business organisations and need to cover staff wages, facilities hire and various taxes; these overheads apply whether a member attends or not. We have agreed with the Providers that we will only pay the subsidy for the members attending the class. However we have asked them to use their discretion when a member misses a class; we suggest they contact the member and attempt to reschedule the class. If this is not possible, the Providers are at liberty to charge the full cost of the missed class by billing the member for the lost subsidy. We have also asked the Providers to put a statement on their invoices making it clear that members may be charged their full class fee if they fail to attend a booked class.

Finally we have created a '**Fair and Transparent Branch Subsidy Policy**', based on prior Branch decisions about what to subsidise, or not subsidise which took effect 1 July 2025. .

Steve Heron
Treasurer

Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK

Fair and Transparent Policy for Branch Subsidised Activities

Underlying Principles:

The Branch has an ambition, not a commitment to subsidise Branch activities for members in some way, either directly or indirectly, from local Branch Funds.

All Branch funds are raised locally through donations and fundraising. There is no financial support from Parkinson's UK.

All the Branch Committee are volunteers and they expend considerable personal time and energy in to both running the Branch and fundraising.

It is vital therefore that there is a 'Fair and Transparent' process for spending the Branch's funds on subsidising activities.

This 'Fair and Transparent' process must be clear to both members and to the various activity Providers.

It covers:

- when an activity will be subsidised, and what is not subsidised,
- aims to encourage a commitment for members to attend activities
- attempts to ensure activities (and their Providers) can run in a financially viable manner

Fair and Transparent Process:

1. Activities are only introduced to Branch members if they are considered by the Branch Committee to meet at least one of the three important elements
 - o Stay physically active
 - o Stay mentally active
 - o Stay socially active
2. Activities that are subsidised are normally provided based on groups of members attending. Activities just available to one person are NOT usually subsidised, or if subsidised it would be at the same financial actual amount as applies to those members attending a similar group activity.

3. Activity Providers are encouraged to charge the participating member directly for an agreed percentage/amount of their normal full cost for the activity and then invoice the Branch for the agreed remaining balance amount (the subsidy amount), following the below approach:
 - a. The charge from the Provider to the participating member should ideally be for a set period (a 'month') in advance to encourage a commitment from the member to regular participation in the activity.
 - b. The charge from the Provider (e.g. invoice) to the participating member should clearly state that the activity is subsidised (see subsidy statement at end) by the Branch and the amount of the subsidy.
 - c. The invoice from the Provider to the Branch should clearly detail how many members are covered by the invoice, the member names and activity date/dates.
 - d. The invoice to the Branch should ideally be sent at the end of each calendar month or at the end of a set period ('term') agreed with the Branch.
4. The Branch will only pay a subsidy for a member to the Provider for an activity or class that the member has attended/participated.
5. The Branch will not pay any subsidy amount to the Provider if the member has not attended for any reason. This is because Branch funds are limited and the Branch must be prudent with spending these funds.
6. It is appreciated that at times, a member who has committed to attend an activity/ series of exercise classes, may miss one or more of the classes for a variety of reasons, e.g. sickness, clash with holiday or consultant appointment, etc.
7. Providers are requested to use their discretion and be as flexible as possible when members are booking classes where it is already known the member cannot attend some of the class dates.
8. Providers are also requested to use their discretion and be as flexible as possible to when a member misses a class(es) due to sickness, etc. to allow members to make up any missed class(es) whilst recognising the Provider must maintain a viable business.

9. If a member misses a pre-booked class(es) the Providers are to use their discretion on whether the member should forfeit their prepaid fee, and in extreme cases require the member to pay the balance of the Providers full/normal class fee (i.e. the amount the Branch would have paid the Provider as the Branch subsidy).
10. The Provider should include the below Branch Subsidy statement on their invoices to members:

GUILDFORD AND SOUTH SURREY BRANCH OF PARKINSON’S UK

BRANCH SUBSIDY STATEMENT

This class fee is lower than the Providers normal class fee because it is subsidised by the Branch from local fundraising. This subsidy is paid to the Provider only for the classes a member has attended.

If you miss a class for any reason and the Provider is unable to reschedule, as well as forfeiting the subsidised fee you have paid, the Provider at their discretion may additionally charge you for the balance of their normal class fee.

Steve Heron
Treasurer

Would you like to improve your speech?



We have spaces available on our subsidised monthly online speech therapy classes, "Loud & Clear".

For more details contact our Treasurer (email - treasurer@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk) or look on the Branch Website.

Annual Raffle

For the second year we are running a Raffle as a fundraiser for the Branch. This year we have the following prizes:

- **1st Prize- A week stay at a fabulous Lake District Holiday cottage.** Situated in the village of Hesket Newmarket, near Caldbeck in the north of the Lake District the cottage sleeps 5 and is comfortably equipped. The accommodation is spacious with open plan living/dining room and well equipped kitchen. No pets allowed.
- **2nd Prize- A luxury Festive Food Hamper**, value £100.
- **3rd Prize – A tour for 2 around the Silent Pool Gin Distillery**, value £50.



All these prizes have been generously gifted to the Branch.

Raffle tickets are £2.00 each, and the draw will take place at 2.00pm on 2nd December at our Branch Christmas Lunch.

Accompanying this edition of The PARK are 2 raffle books, each of 5 tickets. We encourage you to help us fundraise and make the raffle a success by selling these tickets to your family, your neighbours and your friends. If you can sell more tickets, please contact our Treasurer Steve Heron (sheron@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk) and he will send more.

When you sell a ticket, make sure you clearly write the purchasers name, address, phone and email details on the ticket stub (left of the detachable ticket). These ticket stubs should be sent by post to Steve at the below address to be received by no later than 21st November. Ticket sale monies should ideally be transferred online to the Branch's bank account (details below) or by cheque payable to 'Parkinson's UK' sent with the ticket stubs. Do not send cash by post. Any unsold tickets should be returned to Steve.

Branch Bank details for online payments:

- Account name: Parkinsons Disease Society of the United Kingdom
- Sort Code: 20-00-00
- Account No: 03859762
- Please reference the payment 'Raffle'

Address for returning sold tickets (and unsold tickets, etc):

Steve Heron
Treasurer
Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK
11 Merrow Woods
Guildford
GU1 2LQ

The Branch is relying on your help to fundraise. Let's all make this Raffle a success!

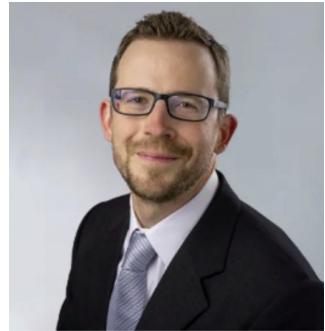
AN ACTOR'S LAMENT (a sonnet)

Shall I audition for this Shakespeare play?
There is no part in it I really want.
Break wind and blow the lead away –
he was utter rubbish in Charlie's Aunt!
Though I often think I was born too late
by, say, half a thousand, six hundred years,
I possess a marked tendency to prate
And my tragic and comic roles are feared.
But the stars have placed me miles from Stratford
and the nearest am-dram, many leagues thence,
the bus fare to get there I can't afford
a round of drinks after is coin ill spent.
So long as my talents put men to sleep
myself to myself I had better keep.

© Peter Taylor

‘Ponder in The Park’ with a Consultant Neurologist

Welcome to ‘Ponder in the Park’ the new article where David and a guest talk about Parkinsons and other topics. Today we get to find out more about Dr Gratwicke, one of the Consultant Neurologists working for the Frimley Health Foundation Trust.



Q1. Titles in Medicine – I’ve always been intrigued by the tradition of doctors being called “Dr” and consultants reverting to “Mr” (or “Ms/Mrs/Miss”). Given the many years you’ve invested in your education, it feels almost understated to call you simply “Mr”. Does that distinction matter to you personally?

The tradition of the title 'Dr' reverting back to 'Mr/Ms' only applies to surgeons, not physicians. This comes from the 19th century: at that time 'barber surgeons' did not undertake a medical degree. Therefore, they were not allowed to have the title 'Dr', which was reserved for physicians who were members of the Royal College of Physicians. Later on, surgeons were required to study for a medical degree and thus do attain the title 'Dr', but uniquely in the UK (as opposed to the rest of the world), the tradition is upheld that on becoming a surgeon, the title reverts to the traditional 'Mr/Ms'. However, all physicians remain with the title 'Dr', according to tradition. The distinction does not matter much to me personally, it simply reflects the historic distinction between surgeons and physicians in the UK.

Q2. Career Choice – You’re typically described as a neurologist specialising in Parkinson’s disease. What led you to choose neurology over, say, pathology? And what drew you specifically to Parkinson’s?

When I was at medical school in Oxford, I originally thought I wanted to do clinical genetics. In my second year of studies, we devoted half the year to studying neurosciences, which had been a subject I'd never been taught at school. I was absolutely fascinated by learning how the brain works, and from that point onwards decided that I would become a neurologist. During my studies in neurosciences I was taught by the prominent neuroscientist Professor John Stein (brother of the chef), who has a particular academic interest in brain motor circuitry and Parkinson's disease, and my interest in Parkinson's disease and other disorders of movement stemmed from there.

Q3. Bedside Manner – You score highly in patient reviews, which is echoed by my own surveys among members. People consistently describe you as kind and thoughtful — qualities I feel some other neurologists could develop further. Is this something you consciously work on, and can it be encouraged more widely?

You're very kind in your comments about my bedside manner. It is not something I consciously work on, more a reflection of my natural personality. You ask whether a more personal approach can be encouraged more widely. My view is this is largely a generational phenomenon - neurologists in the generations above me come from a time when academic achievement was regarded much more highly in medical school training compared to communication skills. In my generation, and subsequent generations, the value of teaching communication skills in medical school has become much more of a focus than it used to be, which has led to a change in culture with younger generations of physicians being better trained in this area.

Q4. A Slightly Cheeky Question – You're sometimes described as “pedagogic”. Do you know exactly what it means without reaching for Google?

I'm interested to hear that I am sometimes described as pedagogic. I do know what this means without googling it! - it refers to somebody having a teacher-like manner. The word 'doctor' from Greek antiquity denotes the role of teacher (this is why doctor applies to both those with a medical degree and those with a PhD, because both have a level of knowledge where they can teach others). Therefore, I feel that being described as pedagogic very much aligns with my role as a doctor, to teach both younger trainees, but also to educate my own patients about their condition - I feel that if a patient has a better understanding of their own condition, they are empowered to take control of it and do more to help themselves.

Q5. Research Breakthroughs – What recent developments in Parkinson's research give you the most optimism for the future?

I think that recent clinical trials of monoclonal antibody therapies directed against alpha-synuclein (for example, prasinezumab) are the most promising avenue for developing a disease modifying therapy to slow the progression of Parkinson's disease. I also specialise in Alzheimer's disease, and you will have seen in the media in recent years the breakthrough of the first disease modifying monoclonal antibodies for this condition. There are similarities in the pathophysiology underpinning Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease in that both are caused by accumulation of toxic proteins in the brain. Development of monoclonal antibodies to clear toxic proteins from the brain in Alzheimer's disease is around 10 years ahead of similar developments in Parkinson's disease. I think that it is simply a matter of time before we develop similar effective therapies in this area via this approach.

Q6. Lifestyle Impact – What simple lifestyle changes do you think can make the biggest positive difference for people living with Parkinson's?

I say to all my patients that the most important thing they can do to help themselves with their Parkinson's disease is to keep physically fit and active. A better conditioned musculoskeletal system weathers the effects of Parkinson's disease better over time. I do see a real difference in symptom impact over time between patients who maintain good physical activity versus those that do not.

Q7. Positivity and Management – In your experience, what role does a positive outlook play in living well with Parkinson's?

A positive psychological outlook has an enormous role in living well with Parkinson's disease, as with any other neurological condition. There's an enormous interplay between one's psychological perception of one's disease and the physical symptoms from it. I do see that those with a positive outlook tend to generally cope better with their condition compared to those who do not.

Q8. Advice for the Newly Diagnosed – What would you say to someone newly diagnosed to help them remain hopeful and proactive?

Giving a patient a new diagnosis of Parkinson's disease is always a difficult thing, as people typically have very negative preconceptions about the condition. When I give the diagnosis, I emphasise to them that Parkinson's disease is a condition which they will 'live with', rather than 'suffer from'. I emphasise the fact that we do have many medications which are broadly effective at improving the symptoms to maintain good quality of life, and that that can be maintained for a long period of time in some cases.

Q9. The Role of Charities – From your perspective, how can charities and volunteers make the greatest impact in improving the lives of people with Parkinson's?

I believe that charities make the biggest impact on improving the lives of people with Parkinson's disease through funding real world support services, such as funding Parkinson's disease clinical nurse specialists in the community. As one of my favourite British neurologists, Dr Oliver Sacks, often commented in his books, one of the core driving forces in human nature is the desire to connect with others. Providing real world support services, through volunteer support, local branch groups and community nurse support helps patients to connect with others, which I believe is key to improving their resolve and outlook in living with a chronic condition.

Qu10. Looking Ahead – Has this interview been a worthwhile process? And if so, will you commit to persuading a colleague to take part in the January edition of *The Park*?

Conducting an interview with you has indeed been a worthwhile process from my point of view. My work is so busy that I often lack the time to look up and take a wider perspective on things, and this interview has afforded me that opportunity. I would be very happy to help persuade one of my colleagues to join you in interview for your next edition.

Dr James Gratwicke MA(Oxon) BMBCh MRCP PhD
Consultant Neurologist

Gadget for People with Parkinson's (PWP's) – the Beech Band

There are several gadgets on the market aimed at making life easier for PWP's by relieving some of their symptoms. Sadly, they don't work for everybody – it's as hard to develop an aid that would decrease the severity of such a broad spectrum of symptoms as it is finding a wonder drug. However anything is worth a go so when Dave offered me the Beech band to try I happily accepted and put it on the other wrist from my falls alarm watch. Now I had two bulky wrists to manipulate into sleeves!

The Beech band was promoted as helping with speech problems, improving clarity and volume, and/or reducing the standard problems of tremor and rigidity. It works by sending a low buzzing vibration to the brain, felt by and audible to the wearer but not unduly intrusive. The battery is quoted as lasting 3 hrs and it then takes 45min to recharge. I didn't always notice that it had stopped, only realising when, without recharging, the vibration started again! Unfortunately I didn't notice any change to any of my symptoms either so handed it onto Ann Lear to try, in the hopes that she will be the lucky one and finds it helpful. This was the second gadget I have tried that worked (or not) through vibration. The other was a CUE which was no more successful vibrating against the breast bone and twice the price. The Beech band is £50 and the speech improvement it can induce is spectacular but regretfully I shall have to wait for something else, preferably a gadget without a permanent buzz!

Valerie Box

Stronger Together

Roadmap to Effective Fundraising

Are you the missing person?



Fundraising

Raise vital funds
for bigger impact



Build the Team

Grow skills,
share the load



Be Actively Involved

Step in, step up,
join in



Plan Events

Shape the year with
great activities.



Modernise - Social Media

Connect online and
grow our reach



Communicate Well

Share clearly,
listen openly.

Be part of the change – join today

We need a Volunteer to lead on Fundraising

The Branch supports all members with a wide range of activities, and this costs money.

We get no financial support from Parkinson's UK. The Branch Committee are all volunteers themselves and they urgently need more help to seek out sources of fundraising. For 2026 we anticipate there will be a funding shortfall compared to our annual expenditure.

We would like someone to join us to actively plan and follow up fundraising opportunities. The role probably requires 3-4 days commitment per month, albeit more initially to get this new role established. Beyond that it is up to the individual to do what they feel comfortable in doing.

Role:

- Create an annual plan of potential fundraising opportunities
- Identify what resources are needed to support such fundraising
- Identify how to find more volunteers from both the Branch and the General Public to support such fundraising
- Coordinate and lead volunteers for each of the fundraising activities

Anyone interested does not need previous fund raising experience. However ideally they are:

- Proactive and organised
- Good at working as part of a team and able to delegate
- Good communicator ensuring those who need to know are kept informed of progress
- Comfortable using social media, email, and the internet
- Confident to contact local organisations, companies and local authorities to identify potential volunteers and/or fundraising opportunities
- Willing to work on fundraising during weekdays and where necessary weekends and evenings.

If you, or any of your family or friends, know of someone who may be interested please get them to contact David Lowther, our Chair for more details, email

chair@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

A holiday in the Yorkshire Dales?

It's more Accessible than you might imagine!

In June my eldest daughter and I walked the Nidderdale Way, a long-distance path in Yorkshire. En route we took a short diversion to the site of the **Brimham Rocks** which are cared for by the National Trust. The spectacular giant rock formations were created by an immense river 100 million years before the first dinosaurs walked the earth. The rocks, sculpted by 320 million years of movement of entire continents as well as hundreds of thousands of years of ice, rain and wind, have taken on weird and wonderful shapes. Most of the route around the rock formations is on well-made paths with views of Nidderdale and beyond.

Location Brimham Rocks Road, Summerbridge, Harrogate HG3 4DW **Facilities** include Blue Badge Parking Bays, Accessible Toilet (RADAR Key), Changing Places Toilet. There is a Trampler (a sturdy mobility scooter which is simple to use) or an e-trike power assisted wheelchair to hire for free. It is best to pre-book to avoid disappointment.

Tel:01423 780688. nationaltrust.org.uk/brimham

To explore this part of Yorkshire further **Open Country**, a small charity based in Harrogate, has produced 'Breakfree' packs entitled Countryside for All. To obtain a free pack call 01423 507227. There are 14 suggested destinations in the Nidderdale pack apart from Brimham Rocks.

Fountains Abbey (a World Heritage site) is the most notable one and has the best facilities. It was founded in 1132 and is set in 650 acres of formal garden and deer park. There is an admission charge to access the grounds, but it is free to National Trust members and carers.

Blue Badge Parking West Gate Car Park, Fountains Lane, HG4 3EA **Facilities** include ample Blue Badge Parking, Accessible Toilets, and Changing Places Toilet. Wheelchair and mobility scooters are available for free hire, but booking is essential.

Tel: 01765 608888 website: nationaltrust.org.uk/fountainsabbey

The Oldest Sweet Shop in the World

Finally, perhaps go to Pateley Bridge to visit the sweet shop! It has been trading since 1827 and is a World Guinness record holder. It still sells retro sweets of a bygone age.

Myra Newnes-Smith

New Blue Badge Parking at Royal Surrey County Hospital

From Thursday, 8 May 2025, our main Guildford hospital, Royal Surrey County Hospital, is introducing a new Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) parking system to improve your experience on site.



This barrier-free system captures your vehicle's registration as you enter and exit. For visitors who need to pay for parking, charges are calculated based on the length of stay, and payment can be made at on-site machines before you leave.

All visitors can drop off and pick up passengers for free for up to 20 minutes.

Blue Badge holders are entitled to free parking at the Royal Surrey County Hospital. To benefit from this concession, individuals must register their Blue Badge details with our parking team at <https://nexusplatform.co.uk/register> using the invite code P74R73K. Once registered, their vehicle will be recognised by our system and no charges will apply when parking on-site.

Further good news is that the number of dedicated Blue Badge spaces has increased to 73.

Should your members require any assistance with the registration process, or if they would prefer support in person, our staff at the main reception will be happy to help.

David Lowther



We need your support

Join our Branch 100 Club

All the funding for running the Branch comes from our own fundraising activities.

Our 100 Club is one small fundraising activity, so why not join it to support the Branch whilst having a bit of a flutter!

In a nutshell ...

1. To participate you must become a member of the 100 Club.
2. Each 100 Club member can subscribe for as many numbers as they wish for £1.00 per number, per month.
3. Payment for each number must be made in advance, with most members paying annually.
4. Once a month there is a draw for 3 numbers, each winning a cash prize as follows:
 - First number = £60
 - Second number = £20
 - Third number = £10

For more details email treasurer@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

Recent winners are:

2025	1st Prize £60		2nd Prize £20		3rd Prize £10	
	Name	Number	Name	Number	Name	Number
April	Richard Abbott	141	Rodney Brown	26	Lin Ballington	117
May	Lucy Austin	16	Anne O'Connor	81	Jo Folkes	205
June	Liz MacCallum	92	Di Keir	82	Valerie Box	14
July	Jane Mayers	207	Lin Ballington	115	Alex Sim	172

Branch Activities

Activity	Where	When	Comments	Contact
Carer's Group	Inn on the Lake	1st Monday of Month	Share with others Carers	Carers@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Committee Meeting	Church House	2nd Monday of Month 2pm to 4pm	volunteers always welcome	Chair@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Friendship Group Meeting	Squirel, Hurtmore	3rd Wednesday of Month @19:00	All welcome Option to eat or not	Membership@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Loud and Clear Speech Therapy	Online	1st Monday and Wednesday	Improve your speech in fun format	Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Newly Diagnosed Social Meeting	Grantley Arms Womersh	2nd Tuesday of Month @ 19:00	All welcome Option to eat or not	Secretary@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Tuesday Social Meeting	Shalford Village Hall	Last Tuesday of Month @14:00	Guest Speaker, Refreshments and Camaraderie	Secretary@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Dance for Parkinsons	Godalmin United Church, Godalming	Weekly on Wednesday		Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Parkinsons Voice Classes	Busbridge Village Hall (and Online)	Tuesdays 11.45 - 12.45	Work on breathing	Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
PD Warrior type Exercise Class	Witley	Weekly	Multiple sessions on different days	Foundations Physio
PD Warrior type Exercise Class	West Clandon	Weekly	Multiple sessions on different days	Foundations Physio
PD Warrior type Exercise Class	Cranleigh Youth Centre, Snoxall	Weekly	Multiple sessions on different days	Surrey Hills Rehab
Pilates	West Clandon	Weekly on Wednesday		Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk

Key Email Addresses for Branch

Chair	David Lowther Chair@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Treasurer	Steve Heron Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Communications Manager	Deborah Gaskell Comms@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Keith Black Membership@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Carers Support	Myra Newnes-Smith Carers@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Support Groups	Sharyn Grenville SupportGroups@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk

National Website www.parkinsons.org.uk

Local website www.guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

Parkinson's Nurse Specialists (NHS)

Amanda Dodson	Rose McKinley
Milford Hospital	Farnham Hospital
01483 362020	01483 908183
rsch.gw.ms.parks@nhs.net	vcl.parkinsonnurses@nhs.net