

PARKINSON'S^{UK} CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.

Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group



Proudly supporting those affected by Parkinson's in the Swindon Area since 1978

Website swindonparkinsons.org.uk

The Swindon Parkin Lot

January/February 2024 Newsletter 1

Editor: Kerry Hartman Email: splnews2024@gmail.com

Editorial Comment

Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the first newsletter of 2024. This edition is my first attempt as the new editor as Ruth handed over the reins of responsibility to me! Ruth has edited this newsletter since 2016 and has taken the decision to stand down, she has done an amazing job keeping us all regularly updated on news and events relevant to our Parkinson's Community. She will be a hard act to follow and everyone at The Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group thanks her for her hard work and wish her well in her 'retirement'. I had great pleasure in presenting her with a lovely bouquet, special bookmark and a certificate of appreciation recognising her dedication. Thank you Ruth. Please bear with me as I try and include everything appropriately, send any feedback to email: splnews2024@gmail.com

Kerry Hartman



MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - PLEASE READ

Membership to the Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group can be paid in two different ways. Firstly by paying directly to the Swindon Group either in cash, cheque or via BACS. Secondly by Direct Debit (DD) to Parkinsons UK, who then pass on the membership money directly into our bank account. For those members that pay by DD to PUK, nothing will change.

The following only applies to members that pay us directly: We are changing the membership year to be January to December, instead of memberships being paid on the anniversary of the first payment. In future all renewals that are paid directly to Swindon Parkinson's Group will be due in January each year.

Parkinson's UK - Swindon & District Activity Group. Contact: jhenderson@parkinsons.org.uk. It is a local Group of Parkinson's UK (PUK), and responsible for raising all funds to support those affected by Parkinson's in the Swindon and District area. The Group carries the same charity number as PUK which is the operating name of the Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom. A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554)

To facilitate the change over: All memberships paid between January 2023 to June 2023, will be due again in January 2024. All memberships paid between July 2023 and December 2023 will not need to be paid until January 2025.

We will be contacting all those members that need to renew in January 2024. If you receive a newsletter by post you will receive a reminder by post, if you receive a newsletter by email you will receive an email reminder.

Please make sure that we have your correct email address and that you have checked it in the first week of January. If you no longer use your email address, please let us know and we will update our records.

For any changes or further details please contact Sue Grice
on scgrice.swindon.parkinsons@gmail.com or tele 0771 200 3271

New Members: If a new person joins during the year between January and September their membership will be due in January the following Year. Any new membership paid in October to December will have the next year's membership free.

Events since last news

November Quizzers

On the 16th November, we went along to Monahans Sports Quiz in the Legends Lounge at the County Road Cricket Ground. This was the first event Monahan's (Chartered Accountants Swindon) have arranged to raise funds to support 'Swindon Parkinsons Activity Group'.

David Roblins, a most experienced quizmaster and a retired employee of Monahan's has run the quiz for 30 years, raising over £40,000 for various charities. This year we will benefit from the money raised.



There were 47 teams including our team. We were 'SPAG United', team members Neil Fallon, and myself and last minute stand-ins Mick Hughes and Graham Whiter (original members Shirley and Ray Tucker were struck down with the dreaded lurgy at the last minute). It was great fun and between us we managed to answer some questions! There was a raffle which will boost the money raised. So, it was a good evening that will help with our funds and also spread awareness of our group and Parkinsons.

Graham Vaughan. Group Volunteer/fundraising

Christmas 2023 Activities:

The Walking Football Class had their Christmas dinner at The Saracen's Head, Highworth, an excellent meal organised by Sarah Rhodes.



We say a massive thank you to Sarah and David Rhodes who have been great supporters and organisers of these classes. This mantle has now been handed on to Neil Fallon, Shirley Tucker and Graham Vaughan.



Steam Railway Christmas Fayre

Hi, I am Sharon Fulcher and this year I took on the fundraising over the weekend of 2nd and 3rd December at Steam. After a very busy weekend running a Tombola for Parkinson's, we **raised a whopping £1,019.50.**

A huge thank you to all the lovely donations and support that kept the stall running. We almost ran out of gifts, and my army of volunteers almost got crushed in the rush (I'm not kidding) of kids running to our stall for sweets and wanting a teddy.



Thank you Daphne and Dave Logan, Nancy Barnacle and daughter and granddaughter Anne and Xenya, Heather and Ian Davey, Angel Dix and daughter Hayley, Denise Mercury, Ros and John Bishop, Dee Vaughan, Janet, Katrina, Carol and Paul, and of course my side kick Les Fulcher who had to live with all the boxes for the months.

Dave Logan had his book 'My Masirah' with him to sell and all the proceeds also go to Parkinson's; over £400 has been donated since release. The books are available on Amazon for £10.99.

Start Saving for 2024:

Please, if anyone gets unwanted gifts for Christmas or throughout the year, put in a box and hide under your bed. Start saving now, to make next year's Tombola even better.

Sharon Fulcher Fundraising Volunteer



Christmas 2023 Lunch:



On Sunday 10th December we held our Annual Christmas Lunch at the Hilton Double Tree. Over 100 members and partners attended and were treated to an afternoon of fun, laughter, good food and conversation. Graham Vaughan did an excellent job as compere guiding us through the activities with clarity and humour. The afternoon was a lovely introduction to Christmas with jokes, poetry and generous raffle prizes.

Vince Mobey made a short speech reminding us of how important volunteers are as they are the main driver of the group.

The afternoon was topped off with a fabulous performance from the 'Parky Singers' choir, lead by Kathy Hobson and accompanied by Sheila Harrod at very short notice due the illness of Chris, our usual accompanist. The raffle raised over £400 for our group and PUK.



The Parky Singers sang for the North Swindon Rotary Club at Blunsdon House Hotel on 18th December. Their talent was awarded with a generous £500 donation, which paid for a new keyboard. Thanks to Kathy Hobson who has been an absolute star and Sheila Harrod who kindly stepped in and played keyboard.

Graham Vaughan/Kerry Hartman

Parky's Singers – Kathy Hobson

It's been nearly a year since the first meeting of Parky's Singers when everybody walked in saying "I can't sing". Well, they have been proved wrong!!!! Although the singing group was formed just to get together and sing, we have now performed at the Parkinson's Christmas Lunch and at the Christmas meeting of the Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown. Sadly our accompanist Chris Willams is poorly so big thanks to Corinne Welch who plays for our sessions and to Sheila Harrod for playing for our performances. We hope to see Chris back very soon as she started this "venture" with me and is missed by us all.

I am so glad I started the group as I now have the privilege of meeting amazing people twice a month on first and third Mondays every month (unless it's a Bank Holiday). 14:00 at the Des Moffett Western Community Centre, Somerset Road, Swindon. SN2 1NF If anyone would like to join us please let me know - hobsonkathy3@gmail.com – 07923 473 261

Cricklade Café - 2024 and beyond

Well that was a great year for The Cricklade Café. Record numbers of visitors dropped in for their coffee, cake and friendship.

In 2023, we celebrated our Fifth Birthday of The Cricklade Café. Sharon Fulcher very kindly made us some celebration cakes to mark the anniversary and a good time was had by all.

We have had a number of guest speakers and visitors who have helped us all to understand Parkinson's a little more and to share feelings about our personal situations. Occasionally, we intend to host further guest speakers with a PD subject that needs to be well aired. ***If you have any ideas or suggestions about this, please let us know?***

Rachel Gardner Lead PDNS – GWH, has been visiting us every other month and we hope to see her again in February.

On 19th October, we hosted the inaugural Parkinson's Volunteers Dinner at Swindon College Catering School. Volunteers for SPAG, Parkies Pals and The Cricklade Café were invited to attend and were given thanks for their magnificent efforts towards improving the life of so many with PD and their carer /spouse. A lovely meal was prepared and served to us during which, speeches were made from each group. Those present were reminded that in March / April 2024 "THE TED WILSON AWARD" will be made again, to the volunteer who has made the most impact locally towards Parkinson's in the Swindon Area.

We are looking to recruit another to help us at each Cricklade Café going forward. If you would like to join us, please let us know?

For the third year running, at the December café, all visitors were again treated to a free coffee and cake. Previous sponsors have been Cricklade Sportsmen's Association and SPAG. This year, our kind sponsor was Mr Clive Wilce and ex resident of Cricklade and a generous friend of Vincent and Maggie. ***Do you know of any generous benefactors who might be able to fund the coffee and cake for Christmas 2024? Please let us know?***

During 2023, we have also actively joined in with activities and membership of both Malmesbury and Cirencester & Stroud PUK Branches. Recently, this has led to the Walking Football organisers from SPAG and Cirencester & Stroud branch, meeting up and sharing information about how they organise their events etc. Over time, this might well result in matches being played against each other and invitations to each other's facilities. Malmesbury Branch is already planning for more outings and holidays and so watch this space for more information.



The Cricklade Club, where we hold our PUK - The Cricklade Café, has submitted a Planning Application to Wiltshire Council for redevelopment of the Café / Restaurant /building / site. We await further information from the owners of The Cricklade Club as to how this will impact us and when. In the meantime, please make the most of what we have now and come and see us each month.

Maggie, Sean, Ray and Vincent are all looking forward to seeing you again in 2024.

Vincent Mobey

Parkies Pals



Parkies Pals is growing offering friendship and support for people with or without Parkinson's . Now meeting first **Tuesday** in the month at Shrivenham Park Golf Club, Pennyhooks Lane, Shrivenham SN6 8EX, 10:00-12:00.

We had a lovely Christmas party and were helped by the local Swindon At Home elves and a lot of fun was had by all. **Come along and join us in 2024**

www.parkiespals.co.uk email: ParkiesPals@outlook.com

Kerry Hartman 07875 416 236

Tai Chi



Hi my name is Darren and I am an experienced Tai Chi Instructor

I am a registered teacher with the Chinese Internal Arts Association and teach **Chen style Tai Chi Chuan**(taijiquan) and **Chi Kung** (Qigong) in Swindon and the surrounding areas.

Treat your body and mind this year and come to my class on a Thursday at 14:00 at The Swindon MS and Neuro therapy Centre .

Contact Neil Scott Fallon on 07504 851 672

What is Tai Chi

Tai chi is a gentle, low-impact exercise that has been shown to have a wide range of health benefits. It is a mind-body practice that combines slow, flowing movements with deep breathing and meditation. Tai chi can be practiced by people of all ages and fitness levels, and it is especially beneficial for older adults.

The benefits of Tai Chi:

- Improves balance and coordination, which can reduce your risk of falls. This is especially important for older adults, who are at an increased risk of falls and fall-related injuries.
- Increases muscle strength and flexibility. This can help to reduce pain, improve your range of motion, and make it easier to perform everyday activities.
- Reduces stress and anxiety as Tai chi is a relaxing and meditative practice. This can lead to a number of health benefits, including improved sleep, reduced blood pressure, and a stronger immune system.
- Improves cardiovascular health by lowering your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. It can also help to increase your heart rate variability, which is a marker of cardiovascular health.
- Reduces pain from a variety of conditions, including arthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic back pain.
- Improves mental health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. It can also help to improve your mood, sleep quality, and cognitive function.

Regular Activities

Current activities available with Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group

When/where	Activity	Contact
Monday 11:00-12:00 weekly Webbswood Stadium, Supermarine SN3 4BZ	Walking Football	Neil Scott Fallon 07504 851 672 Taff.hammer@yahoo.co.uk Graham Vaughan graham.vaughan1@gmail.com 07764 219 916
Mondays 14:00 1 st & 3 rd monthly Des Moffat Western Community Centre Somerset Rd SN2 1NF	Singing For Fun	Kathy Hobson 07923 473 261 Hobsonkathy3@gmail.com
Tuesdays 14:00 weekly The Grange Leisure and Community Centre, Grange Drive SN3 4JY	Seated Exercise Classes	Linda Barrett 07876 068500 Lindaj19@hotmail.co.uk
Wednesday weekly 13:00-13:45, 14:15-15:00, 15:30-16:15 The Grange	Balance & Exercise Classes	Linda Barrett 07876 068 500 Lindaj19@hotmail.co.uk
Thursdays 14:00 weekly The Swindon MS & Neuro Therapy Centre Westmead Drive SN5 7ER	Tai Chi	Neil Scott Fallon 07504 851 672 Taff.hammer@yahoo.co.uk Graham Vaughan graham.vaughan1@gmail.com 07764 219 916
Fridays 13:30 weekly The Swindon MS & Neuro Therapy Centre	Movement to Music	Linda Barrett 07876 068 500 Lindaj19@hotmail.co.uk

These activities are free to members of the Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group.
For more information go to our website: swindonparkinsons.org.uk
or email: scgrice.parkinsons.swindon@gmail.com or jhenderson@parkinsons.org.uk

Parkies Pals Coffee mornings – Shrivenham Park Golf Club

We meet every 1st Tuesday of the month 10:00–12:00

EXCEPT January when we will meet Tuesday 9th January

We are a friendship and support group for people with or without Parkinson's
All welcome. £3 to cover coffee and cake

Parkinson's UK – The Cricklade Café.

We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month between 10:30-12:00.

Forthcoming dates are: 17th January and 21st February 2024

It is a Drop-In Café so arrive when you like and leave when you like!

The address is: The Cricklade Club, 38 High Street, Cricklade SN6 6AY.

New Events

New Swindon Café - watch this space as Sharon is looking at venues to host a new Coffee and Cake Afternoon Social in Swindon. Details will be sent out ASAP. Anything that involves Sharon and cakes is worth waiting for.



Future events to book



The Swindon Parkinson's Activity Group presents

SWINDON CONNECTIONS

An illustrated talk by GRAHAM CARTER, former editor of Swindon Heritage, featuring 101 facts about our local history

Monday, February 12, 2024 (2pm-4pm)
Des Moffat Western Community Centre, Somerset Road, SN2 1NF

Admission £5 (non-members £8), including afternoon tea
To reserve your tickets, email graham.vaughan1@gmail.com

Admission £5 (non-members £8) includes afternoon tea.
Bookings via email: graham.vaughan1@gmail.com or by phone 07764 219 916

Monday 11th March – Pub Lunch At The Sun Inn, Coate



Marlborough Road, Coate, Swindon SN3 6AA
Come and join us at The Sun Inn for Lunch
on Monday 11th March 2024 12:30

The cost of the 2-course meal is £18 each but there is a subsidy of £10 for members so the **actual meal cost for members is £8 and for non-members £18**. Drinks not included in the price.

Members and non-members: To book, please pay £8 deposit, either:

- a) Pay online to Parkinsons Disease Society of the United Kingdom.
Sort Code: 20 00 00, Account no: 936 164 52 and **importantly, use ref: pub**

or,

- b) By cheque payable to Swindon Parkinsons Activity Group and send to:
Mrs S Rhodes, 1 Charlbury Rd, Shrivenham, Swindon SN6 8EQ
or give to one of the volunteers.

At the same time,

Send your menu choice to sarahrhodes5153@yahoo.co.uk (if you paid online), or on a note with the cheque **and confirm** you are a member **and** include your phone number (in case of weather difficulties or etc).

Choose one main and one pudding:

- *Homemade Beef Lasagne served with winter salad & lightly toasted garlic bread.*
- *Spicy Penang Curry (Vg) with pilau rice & a warm garlic and coriander naan.*
- *Breaded Whitby Bay Scampi with chunky chips, garden peas and homemade tartare sauce.*
- *Three Cumberland Sausages & Mash, with sweet garden peas, creamed potato, rich onion gravy and crispy onion garnish.*

And:

- *Cheesecake of the Day with raspberry coulis.*
- *Autumn Berry Pavlova.*
- *Banana & Blueberry Cake (Vg) served with vegan glaze.*

Non-members will pay balance of £10 after their meal and there will be no further cost for members except drinks.

Numbers are limited. **Deadline for reservation is Monday 26 February**. There is disabled access and grab rails in the loo. There is ample parking.

Any queries, please email or phone 07910 964 859 or speak to one of the volunteers.
Sarah Rhodes Volunteer



300+ Club Monthly Draw



Winners for November and December

November 2023	
1 st £86.80 Jackie Cowley	2 nd £37.20 Dave Logan
Bonus: £10 Voucher Ann Hughes	
December 2023	
1 st £89.60 Julie Hemsworth	2 nd £38.40 GD Falkingham
Bonus £10 voucher G Larcombe	

Help our fundraising efforts by joining the £300+ club at a monthly cost of £1 Per number. If anybody would like to join to support the group and have a chance of winning a prize in the monthly draw please email or text Jackie Cowley j.cowley27@btinternet.com and 07554 006 501

Jackie can then send you the documents that are required to set you up as a new member. All the funds raised by the club go towards supporting our activity classes and social events

Rules on our website: <http://www.swindonparkinsons.org.uk/fundraising.htm>

Website & FaceBook

For any further information and details check out our website: swindonparkinsons.org.uk or join our Facebook 'Swindon Parkinsons Activity Group'

It's a quick, easy way to share group photos and friendship

You will need to answer the questions that appear, then our admin team can approve you. This is done because we are a private group, which means we do not allow advertising. If you have any problems please send an email to dearymee66@gmail.com and we can send you an invite.

Diary of events

JANUARY 2024	Event	Page
Mon 8 th 15 th 22 nd 29 th	Walking Football 10:45 Supermarine	2,7
Mon 15 th	Singing for Fun 14:00 Des Moffat centre	4,7
Tues 2 nd 9 th 16 th 23 rd 30 th	Seated Exercise classes The Grange LC	7
Tues 9 th	Parkies Pals 10:00-12:00 Shrivenham Park Golf Club	5 & 7
Wed 3 rd 10 th 17 th 24 th 31 st	Balance & Exercise classes – The Grange	7
Wed 17 th	Cricklade Café 10:30-12:00, Cricklade	4,5,7
Thurs 11 th 18 th 25 th	Tai Chi 14:00h, Swindon MS & NT centre	6,7
Fri 12 th 19 th 26 th	Movement to Music 13:30-14:30.	7
FEBRUARY 2024		
Mon 5 th 12 th 19 th 26 th	Walking Football 10:45 Supermarine	2,7
Mon 5 th 19 th	Singing for Fun 14:00 Des Moffat centre	4,7
Mon 19th	Swindon Connections – Des Moffat 14:00-16:00	8
Mon 26th	Pub meal order deadline £8 deposit	9
Tues 6 th 13 th 20 th 27 th	Seated Exercise classes The Grange LC	7
Tues 6 th	Parkies Pals 10:00-12:00 Shrivenham Park Golf Club	5,7
Wed 7 th 14 th 21 st 28 th	Balance & Exercise classes – The Grange	7
Wed 21 st	Cricklade Café 10:30-12:00 Cricklade	4,5,7
Thurs 8 th 15 th 22 nd 29 th	Tai Chi 14:00 Swindon MS & NT centre	4,8
Fri 2 nd 9 th 16 th 23 rd	Movement to Music 13:30-14:30	7
MARCH 2024		
Mon 4 th 11 th 18 th 25 th	Walking Football 10:45 Supermarine	2,7
Mon 4 th 11 th	Singing for Fun 14:00 Des Moffat centre	4,7
Mon 11th	Pub lunch Sun Inn Coate Water 12,30	9
Tues 6 th	Parkies Pals 10:00-12:00 Shrivenham Park Golf Club	5,7
Wed 7 th 14 th 21 st 28 th	Balance & Exercise classes – The Grange	7
Wed 20 th	Cricklade Café 10:30-12:00 Cricklade	4,5,7
Thurs 7 th 14 th 21 st 28 th	Tai Chi 14:00 Swindon MS & NT centre	4,8
Fri 1 st 8 th 15 th 22 nd	Movement to Music 13:30-14:30	7

Please note that we try our best to keep events as advertised but sometimes details do have to be changed. Check your emails and website for updates.

*Thank you to all those who have contributed to this newsletter.
This is a bi-monthly publication and the deadline for articles for
The next newsletter is Wed 21st Feb 2024 for distribution 29th Feb 2024*

Parkies Got Talent

A diagnosis of Parkinsons is not good news and we have no choice but to come to terms with it as a life-long condition. The support and friendships developed in our local groups are essential in 'survival' for those of us who have this condition and our dear family and friends who help us cope.

For some it has opened up creative talents that we may not have been aware we had! Personally, I have found I can express myself through poetry, which I believe has helped others. Others are gifted story tellers, artists, musicians ...

I would like to try and encourage people to share these talents and send them in to me for inclusion in future newsletters and potentially to form a 'Portrait of Parkinsons' as seen through the words and pictures of those directly affected.

If interested please email: splnews2024@gmail.com or text/call 07875 416 236

Kerry Hartman

Examples of my poems:

Life Behind the mask

Where does Parkinsons come from
And why did it come for me?
I don't smoke, do drugs, I try to keep fit!
Enjoy a wine or the odd G&T!
Parkinson's does not discriminate
Doesn't care about race, sex or age
It switches off your happy cells
Makes your face freeze like a blank page.
It slows down all your movements
Brain says run but your body says walk
Some have the joy of tremors
Loss of smell and slurred talk.
No cure yet just a gradual decline
Not a killer, so thankful for that.
But a condition you do have to live with
Reliant on meds and Neurologist chat!
I try to be a positive 'Parkie'
Take my meds, keep mobile and fit
A sense of humour is truly essential
And basically I just try to get on with it
Life in the slow lane does takes some adaption
With family and friends helping keep up the pace
There are worse things out there that can get you.
So I try to enjoy life and keep a smile on my face

Written after first diagnosed April 2017

Letter to Parkinsons

Every minute of every day
I am thinking of you
Every action, every word I say,
Whatever you let me do!
You control my responses
You control muscle movement too.
So even in happy moments
Can I smile, that's up to you?
You make me feel frumpy
As I shuffle along the street.
One minute I'm up standing,
The next I'm stuck with frozen feet!
Thanks to you I'm slow, unorganised,
Hourly chores can now take days.
And I know it frustrates others
No matter what everybody says.
You're making more of an appearance
Threatening to reduce my mobile time
All I want is control of my life back
Is that really such a crime!
I'm not going to let you take over,
Although you are raising the stakes every day.
I'm just going to try and work with you
But establish it's still 'My Way'
Written April 2023

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