PARKINSON'S^UK
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The Park

Magazine of the

Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK

January 2025

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

* Cover is of Geraldine Earlam who won the 2nd prize in the Summer Raffle—an hours drive in the Surrey Hills in Ian Robinson's vintage MG . All copyrights are acknowledged

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. 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
28 January, 2025	Drumhead
25 February, 2025	AGM-like meeting with Parkinson-UK attendee
25 March, 2025	TBC
29 April, 2025	TBC
27 May, 2025	'A is for Arsenic -The poisons of Agatha Christie', Dr Kathryn Harkup
24 June, 2025	
29 July, 2025	
26 August, 2025	
30 September, 2025	
28 October, 2025	
25 November, 2025	
30 December, 2025	No Meeting

Watch this space in future editions of *The Park*!

We have a number of excellent speakers identified for 2025. We simply need confirm their availability for specific months before publishing a definitive list!

Foreward from the Chair

Welcome to the latest edition of *The Park*, the magazine for the members of the Guildford and South Surrey Branch of Parkinson's UK. I believe this represents another great edition, with contributions from many on a variety of topics.

To set the scene for this edition, I thought I'd start with a piece about one of our most resilient members—yep, that's right, me!

In January 2025, I'll hit the 14-year mark since being diagnosed with Young Onset Parkinson's. I have to say, when reflecting on the last year… life's not so bad. In fact, I've learned that there's a lot to be grateful for, and yes, even a few reasons to laugh along the way. In particular, I'm grateful for the camaraderie I feel from my exercise chums on a Monday morning and the Newly Diagnosed who accept me gatecrashing their monthly meetings.

Now, if you're wondering how that diagnosis fits into the grand scheme of things, here's something that has dawned on me: while most of you, whether diagnosed or able-bodied, will eventually be called 'old man' or 'old woman', I'll forever be labelled as 'young'—even when I become decrepit.

Why, you might ask, am I singled out? It's not because I'm secretly Peter Pan, but because, as Cliff Richard said, I'm one of 'The Young Ones.' So, even when everyone else is in their golden years, I will forever retain my diagnosis definition of Young Onset.

That got me thinking about what 'Young Onset' really means. If I started managing my condition younger than average, what other differences might there be? Presumably, it means I'll be on medication for a longer duration than most. By my rough count (which is fairly accurate, as being a data nerd I worked it out in a spreadsheet when I visited the consultant and tracked when each of my medication changes occurred and the resultant pill count), I've probably taken close to 20,000 Parkinson's pills since my diagnosis. To put that in perspective, if you stood them all up one on top of the other, they would stretch for more than 200 metres (220 yards for those who prefer Imperial measurements). That's considerably taller than the Post Office (BT) Tower or The Gherkin!

You might be thinking: why does the above analysis matter, and does it reflect a positive or negative outlook? The answer is that it doesn't matter one jot—all it does is make me smile to think of some poor Person with Parkinson's attempting to build a 'pill tower' and, frankly, the futility of the venture.

So, what's the takeaway from all this? Life's been full of ups and downs (as life tends to be), but I'm still here, still rolling with the punches, and still keeping a positive outlook. That's the key—maintaining a sense of humour, staying young at heart (thanks, Parkinson's!), and counting the small wins along the way.

Here's to 14 years and counting! The journey's far from over, but with a bit of optimism, a lot of love, and maybe a few more pills, the road ahead is looking brighter than ever.

Cheers to all of you, and thanks for sharing in this wild, wonderful ride with me!

David Lowther

Fraudsters steal over £4m a day as scam crime surges. To fight this an emergency hotline has been launched for people to report and check financial scams as they happen. A potential victim who dials 159 will be automatically connected to their bank's fraud protection service

Anyone who receives a call or message from somebody claiming to be from a trusted organisation and who suggests money should be transferred is being urged to hang up and call 159.

The most important point is as this is supported by the major banks, technology companies, the Police etc. no one will ever think badly of you if you hang up the phone and call 159!

Meet the Parkinson's UK Team

Hi, I'm Jill Beaumont Local Adviser from Parkinson's UK.

My grandmother, Angela had Parkinson's. Here she is pictured with my grandfather Tom on Trevone Beach, Cornwall in the 70's. She was the most wonderful, supportive and vital person. Her incredibly positive impact on me and my life has inspired me to work for the past 20 years in roles supporting others to ensure they get everything available to them for success in theirs.

I have worked as the Surrey Local Advisor for six months. There was plenty of training to get through during the induction period to gain as much knowledge as possible about Parkinson's. Since then I have been very busy with questions and queries from the Parkinson's Community, whilst also trying to get out and about to visit branches, cafes and groups to see what is happening throughout the area.

As a Parkinson's Local Adviser (PLA) we offer free confidential 1:1 service to anyone affected and their family and carers including offering help with:

- Benefit applications and reviews
- Housing and grant applications
- Letters of support
- Contact Parkinson's nurses and consultants
- Finding activities and looking at transport options
- Emotional support
- Referrals to professional agencies
- Signposting and referrals to local offers of support

We usually start our support on the phone, but I can do home visits if this is better for you - please be patient because sometimes the M25 and roadworks on the A3 are quite a challenge to getting to appointments at the right time!

If you feel there is something I can help with just call into the helpline on 0808 800 0303 and they will make sure you get the support you need. Alternatively call me directly on 020 7963 3833.

Jill Beaumont

CHRISTMAS LUNCH - 3 DECEMBER 2024

The festive season got off to a good start in the Pavilion of Guildford Rugby Club on a bright, if chilly, day. Over 70 members and friends of the Branch assembled for our annual Christmas lunch and were easily persuaded by Sharyn and Darren to buy raffle tickets. The donations from members and supporters included some expensive bottles - and a leg of lamb (not *in situ - to be collected later).*

Steve put on his thinking-cap and devised a *Christmas Quiz* which superficially appeared to be "easy" but included a few googlies - like naming all eight of Santa's reindeer (no, NOT Rudolph!). A dip into the world of Harry Potter drew only puzzled frowns. Surprises ? KFC is the most common "Christmas dinner" in Japan! (No prizes - just good fun!)

This warm and friendly event was only made possible by hard work behind the scenes of members and supporters - which David acknowledged in a gracious speech of thanks. He paid special tribute to Valerie Box who has initiated many great fund-raising events for Parkinson's and she continues to fizz with ideas. She was presented with a floral bouquet.

All in all, we enjoyed a splendid afternoon - and the Raffle proceeds contributed some £300 to Branch funds. Many thanks and good wishes to everyone who took part …….*HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

Margaret Westwood

A GREAT WAY TO GET AROUND SURREY

The Community Transport Team

After my recent ‘bionic’ hip replacement, I was unable to drive for four weeks. To facilitate a speedy recovery, I wanted to utilize the Oxygen Therapy at the Samson Centre (more on that in another article). However, taking a taxi for three people, especially with my temporary use of a wheelchair, would be quite costly. So, how was I going to get around?

Fortunately, I discovered the wonderful Community Transport Team from The Hive, operated by Guildford Borough Council. They offer fully accessible vehicles equipped with lifts, making it easy for wheelchair users or people with mobility issues to enter the van. The team picked Robin and I up and transported us to various destinations, providing invaluable assistance.

The cost structure is quite reasonable: an annual membership fee, followed by a mileage charge for each trip, which turned out to be significantly cheaper than taxi fares. Every driver was exceptionally friendly, and they provided a true ‘door-to-door’ service—ensuring I was safely inside the Samson Centre rather than just being dropped off at the curb.

As long as you reside within the Guildford Borough, you can benefit from this service. Here’s some more information:

Service Goals: The aim of the Community Transport service is to promote independence and reduce social exclusion for residents who struggle to access public transport.

Eligibility Criteria: The service is available to any borough resident who meets one of the following criteria:

- Individuals of any age with a physical disability or mobility issue
- Individuals of any age experiencing short-term or long-term ill health

Operating Times: The Guildford Community Transport team operates Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM and on Fridays from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

For registration or enquiries, please contact us at 01483 458055 or email info.communityservices@guildford.gov.uk.

Rona Lester

Latest News from Parkinson’s-UK

Parkinson’s UK has advised the Volunteer Chairs and Lead Volunteers that they will be changing their branding on 15th January 2025. Until this time it’s ‘Top Secret’ and all discussions are speculation.

Parkinson’s-UK held a survey of its volunteers and one of the findings was that there was a widescale feeling that there was too much administration. As a result of a review of local practice, Parkinson’s-UK identified that there was no legal requirement for Branches to hold AGM. Accordingly, Branches can hold an AGM with a structure and Agenda of their pleasing or nothing at all. NOTE WE ARE HAVING OUR AGM AS PLANNED ON 25th FEB AT SHALFORD VILLAGE HALL."

Carers' Opportunities for Respite Care - 2025

The Branch Committee continue to be very much aware of the ongoing burden placed on those who care for a loved one with Parkinson's. Their role as a 'Carer', whilst often a labour of love, can be very difficult. Often you can be alone and not know where to find sources of appropriate help or guidance, or even just where to find a sympathetic ear. Hopefully the below summary of what is available from the Branch will be helpful to you.

Branch Organised Monthly Carers meetings

Myra Newnes-Smith hosts Monthly Carers meetings. These are usually held on second Monday of the month in the afternoon at a convenient venue. As well as having a cup of tea or coffee, they are a great way of chatting with those in a similar situation and picking up helpful tips. Please call or email Myra for more information.

Branch funded Respite Care – 10 x £1,000 Grants available

We are again offering the opportunity for 10 Carers to apply for a Respite Care Grant of £1,000 for 2025. These will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Each £1,000 Grant amount will be held in the Branch accounts and can then be used for the Carer to contract/arrange their own Respite Care provision to provide either:

1. A few hours Respite Care each month, e.g., £83.33 care cost per month over 12 months *equals* £1,000.
2. Alternatively, the Carer can use the whole £1,000 to provide a shorter 'block' period of Respite Care of their choice.
3. Carers can even mix the type of Respite Care up to the total of £1,000.
4. Any Grant monies not used by a Carer will not be carried forward into future years.

It will be the Carers responsibility to find a suitable 'Respite Care' provider. The Branch Treasurer will refund the Carer for the cost of Respite Care on production of suitable receipts, either monthly or at the end of any block period, up to the maximum of the £1,000 Grant.

Applications Forms *(no more than one per Carer!)* for these Grants are available from Myra.

If you wish to discuss further, with no commitment, then please contact Myra Newnes-Smith on 01483 422440 or email mnsmith@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk.

Our Branch Finances as we go into 2025

Happy New Year to all.

I am happy to confirm we continue to remain financially viable as a Branch!

We started 2024 with £93,000 in our bank account (our Financial Reserves) and I expect we will end the year with approximately £84,500 assuming all our 2024 suppliers have been paid.

By the end 2024 I anticipate we will have spent almost £79,500 on our various subsidised activities, and other expenses which is higher than our budget of £69,200. However it should be noted that some costs budgeted for in 2023 (e.g. the 2023 Christmas Lunch) was not invoiced and paid by us until January 2024. Also our exercise classes have had increased participation during 2024, we introduced a new Oxygen Therapy activity and we have recently started printing and posting our monthly newsletter (now named the Park Bench) to those members who prefer a paper version. Cumulatively, these broadly account for the potential overspend of £10,000.

Balanced against our expenditure I anticipate our end year income will total approximately £71,000.

Our income comes from several sources. We had general donations of £5,300 from members, other volunteer groups, and even the humble collection tins in shops. We had a significant donation of £30,000 from the Vernon Ely Charitable trust. We raised £6,100 from various fundraising activities, £2,180 from our 100 Club, and £2,015 from the Summer Picnic *(albeit we had £460 worth of expenses for the Picnic, included in the expenditure above).* We also had approx. £5,500 'income' from members contributions to their Parkinsong Voices and Loud and Clear Speech Classes, and members payments towards the Christmas Lunch. We received an amazing £4,300 in bank interest because of our participation in Parkinson's UK's joint banking arrangements (cash pooling) allowing is to earn interest at money markets rates. Gift Aid on various donations generated £950. The final major item of significant income (£13,000) came sadly from In Memoriam Donations from members who had died. At least 2 deceased members families set up 'In Loving Memory' online pages to allow friends far and near to donate sums in memory of the members.

The difference between our potential 2024 expenditure of £79,500 and our income of £71,000 is £8,500 and this accounts for the reduction in our Financial Reserves from £93,000 to £84,500.

Budgets are now being developed for 2025, and contracts with our current suppliers are being updated. I anticipate we will again have a significant donation from the Vernon Ely Charitable Trust however they have already advised that whatever we receive in 2025 will be our last as they are winding up the Trust. With that in mind, I have made some simple forward calculations to model how long our Reserves will last without such a large annual donation. These calculations indicate we will effectively exhaust the Reserves by the end of 2027 unless we either significantly increase our fundraising activities or revise our class subsidy arrangements, or a bit of both.

Full details of our 2024 Finances and 2025 Budgets will be ready for the AGM at the end of February.

Steve Heron

Post Script:

As we head into 2025, it occurred to me we will be marking the 'first quarter' of the 21st Century. This realisation caused me to reflect on how the Branch's Finances have evolved over this quarter of a century. I was fortunate to inherit reasonably good Branch Financial records from my various Treasurer predecessors, going back as far as 2006.

In 2006 the Branch appears to have held a Financial Reserve (cash at the Bank) of approximately £46,000 and was spending approx. £23,000 each year on various activities and had income of just under £23,000. So things were in broad equilibrium. It is worth remembering that at that time the Branch also covered the Reigate area, so was geographically much larger.

By 2011, the annual expenditure had grown to £32,000, but income was still around £23,000, so the Branch was running at a loss and the Financial Reserves had fallen to £43,000. It should be noted however that some of this increased expenditure was the Branch 'gifting' money to various Parkinson's UK research projects, so the actual expenditure was not totally what was being spent locally.

By 2014, the Financial Reserves had dropped to approx. £22,000, with expenditure at £21,000 and income at £19,000.

By 2016, the Florence Pite Legacy had been made. The Legacy was held by Parkinson's UK, with the bulk of it to be used by Parkinson's UK. The remaining Legacy funds, although still held by Parkinson's UK, were available to the Branch to draw down as an annual allowance for a period of 5 years to spend against budgeted items. The Reigate area members were separated from the Branch and given their own Support Group, and they also had 5 year annual allowance from the Legacy.

The then Committee started to increase Branch range of activities and annual expenditure rose to around £36,000 in 2016 and £45,000 in 2017. The Branch's own Financial Reserves in our bank account had reduced to £3,500 by the end of 2017, but this was OK as the Branch could call on up to £60,000 from the Legacy Funds held by Parkinson's UK each year. Over subsequent years the annual expenditure progressively grew to around the £60,000 range, effectively doubling the annual spend from the pre Legacy period.

In 2020 the Branch was able to negotiate with Parkinson's UK that any unspent monies from the 5 year annual allowance should be transferred to our Branch bank account, allowing us to bring our Financial Reserves up to £80,000-£90,000 levels we have enjoyed over the last 3-4 years. Although there were no more Legacy annual funds after 2021, we have been able to maintain that level of Reserves due to the generous annual Vernon Ely Trust donation.

What now for the next quarter of a century?

Steve Heron

November Shalford Afternoon Meeting—Plan B

We were expecting a talk by a former close protection officer but there was some confusion over dates so it was a 'no show'! Not to worry however. Our effervescent chairman, David, had come prepared! Out of his black holdall he produced a type of 'hula hoop'. David explained how he was having back problems but a physiotherapist diagnosed the cause of discomfort was due to his pelvis being out of alignment and recommended an exercise based on 'hula hooping'! Without further ado this was ably demonstrated by David. A rigid plastic belt with a weight spinning round the belt as David's gyrating hips kept up the momentum of the weight. It was necessary to have plenty of space! I was tempted to say 'don't try this at home'! Whilst there is a serious objective to this exercise it was an opportunity for a bit of lightheartedness! Sharyn and myself all had a turn but David definitely scored a ten!

Clare Price

A Trip to Uzbekistan

In February 2023 my wife Jane came home from visiting friends and said they were planning a trip to Uzbekistan and the ancient silk roads in the autumn of 2024, almost 18 months ahead, and should we join them. Even after looking at the cost which often puts me off these things, the tour with 12 other people looked interesting and so it was booked.

Over the next 10 months preceding the trip I noticed changes that many of you are all too familiar with and eventually my consultant concluded I had Parkinson's disease. Once over the macho feeling of, so what, that's no problem, I began to think about practicalities of the trip to Uzbekistan. Long flights, long days standing up, what toilets would there be, what about insurance and how would Uzbek food react with my already challenged digestive system? Calling my insurance company, I explained that I now needed to add Parkinson's to my pre-existing conditions which included prostate cancer in remission, and I was pleased to find them totally unfazed even when I suggested we might add in sailing and possibly winter sports. My premium went up by a £100.

The Uzbek Air flight left Heathrow for Tashkent at 4:30pm and was in the air for about 7 hours, landing at 3:00am in the morning. We booked premium economy to get extra leg room and it was just fine, especially if you can get an aisle seat. I went against advice and didn't wear surgical stockings to prevent clots. A few months earlier I had worn them on a long flight and felt very hot and claustrophobic, which was no fun. So, if you do wear them, I suggest only with loose, light clothing and shoes that you can get on and off easily.

Anyhow back to the trip. To try and make sure we were not totally worn out we were transferred to a hotel for a couple of hours of rest before heading out into the old city to look at mosques, markets, madrassas and minarets, and thankfully no McDonalds. Tashkent is certainly an interesting place. The city has been invaded, destroyed and rebuilt multiple times by Islamists, the Chinese, the Russians, Uzbek tribes and to cap it all, devastating earthquakes that have hit the region many times over the years. Fortunately, after the last major quake in 1966 the Russians rebuilt the city in grand Soviet style and many of the buildings, boulevards and train stations remain. The underground stations are particularly creative, with one celebrating Russian achievement in space and the cosmonauts who made it possible.

Food in Uzbekistan proved to be a mixed bag. Everything looked good but something you were sure was going to be savoury nearly always turned out to be sweet and vice versa. Top of the "almost impossible foods to eat list" were goat meat kebabs which refused to come off the skewer and then fought off your teeth in a rear guard action. But to be fair they tasted great and under the right circumstances a skewer of goat meat chunks could keep you going for a couple of hours. Salads and fruit however were exceptionally good. Mindful of my digestive problems, I took with me a packet of milled flax seeds and muesli for breakfast along with Laxido. Things worked out fine and most places had western style loos, but not all, so a small bag of paper and wet wipes prove helpful. The flax seeds went in my hand luggage ready to explain that I wasn't trafficking drugs or seeds and despite the beagles doing their best to implicate us in some crime, the human Custom guards just waved it through much as they had in Australia.

Unlike our earlier trip to Australia which was something of a DIY excursion for three months, staying in hotels and a 2 week stint in a camper van, in part booked as we travelled, this trip with a group of 15 people was guided and minibus driven. Having a local guide for 2 weeks proved invaluable. Few people spoke English and the guide helped us understand local culture, such as which items in the markets were fake without offending. Throughout the tour cash or vouchers were quietly produced by our guide to walk into sites or restaurants. Could you tour Uzbekistan (with Parkinson's) without a guide, yes you certainly could but it would reduce the places you might go to and I think it would be a bit stressful at times. Certainly, driving between sites, across desert roads would be nerve wracking.

Sparing you the details, we then flew to Urgench on Pakistan Airlines to pick up a minibus for the long drive to Khiva via several ruined fortresses. Interestingly as I walked around the walls of one of the forts I suddenly found myself with intense vertigo and needed a hand from a couple of people to get down. Know your limits I suppose is the lesson.

Khiva is an incredible and ancient city with a monumental history. Both original and highly restored buildings and fortresses are, as in Tashkent, set amongst mosques, madrassas, minarets and market-places with plenty of restaurants and cafes serving amongst the meat dishes, tasty rice and vegetables with stone

baked bread.

Our tour moved on to Bukhara where we would stay for a few days, driving 500km across the desert for 8 hours dodging huge potholes rather than finding a lane, eventually to reveal the most complete example of a mediaeval city in Central Asia. For many centuries this was an important economic and cultural centre and the fortress in the city was occupied until the 1920s. We stayed in a central hotel by the city walls and were able to explore without the whole group, making life a little more relaxed. But if you're like me with no sense of direction, take a mobile phone, downloaded maps and a paper map to be sure of your return, eventually.

One of the few complaints about the trip was that it was pretty hectic if you chose to do everything. So again, know your limits and pick a few things to miss in exchange for some down time.

What about clothing? My advice is to pack your bag. Open it and take out a third of the items because you won't need them all. Better to travel light!

Tips

Check passport and insurance are up to date

Try to avoid economy seats on long plane rides

Use a pre-booked local guide

Don't pack too many clothes

Take any supplements you need

Chose times to chill out

Andrew Carr

Is Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) Effective? A Quick Update

After six months of weekly visits to the Samson Centre for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT), I wanted to share an update on how Robin is progressing.

Disclaimer: This is not a scientific study, but rather a collection of my personal observations. The improvements I mention may or may not be directly attributable to HBOT.

Movement, Mood, and Healing

One of Robin's challenges with Parkinson's is freezing, which can make movement difficult. However, I've noticed that after his HBOT sessions, he moves more easily. For example, he finds it a bit easier to manoeuvre in and out of the chamber, a process that requires lowering his head and shuffling. While these improvements may not last the entire week between sessions, they do provide him with better short-term mobility.

Robin also struggles with low mood, a common symptom of Parkinson's. This often means he's less interested in activities like reading, doing puzzles, or engaging with the family. However, I've observed that after his sessions, he seems 'lighter' and more engaged. During these times, he's more willing to communicate, and I'm able to have more meaningful conversations with him.

While not related to Parkinson's, Robin's Type 2 diabetes has also seen improvement. The HBOT has helped heal long-standing skin lesions on his legs that in the past have led to serious infections like sepsis. His skin has fully healed, which surprised even our GP.

On a personal note, I recently underwent hip replacement surgery and attended seven HBOT sessions in the two weeks following. At my post-op check-up, the physiotherapist was amazed at how quickly I was able to perform more complex exercises. Even the nurse who inspected my incision was surprised at how fast it had healed.

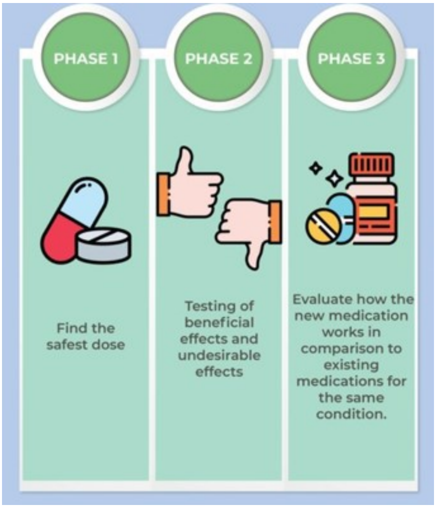
We're both committed to continuing HBOT, as we both feel the benefits are worth the effort.

Additionally, I know that other members of the Parkinson's group, like David (pictured here inside the single chamber), continue to receive therapy at the Samson Centre. I hope they're seeing some benefits as well.

Rona Lester

Exenatide—It’s not what anyone wanted to hear

Life often feels like a game of snakes and ladders, and I think that's particularly true in the world of research.



As background, before any medicines can be prescribed, they must first pass detailed tests to confirm their safety and effectiveness. Clinical trials testing new treatments are divided into different stages, called phases. The earliest-phase trials may focus on whether a drug is safe or the side effects it causes. Later-phase trials aim to test whether a new treatment is better than existing treatments.

Phase 3 trials usually involve many more patients than Phase 1 or 2 trials. This is because differences in success rates may be small, so the trial needs many patients to be able to demonstrate any difference.

As you know, Parkinson’s is a progressive disease, and so far, there has been no therapy available that can conclusively slow progression, although some drugs may help with symptoms or delay the onset of disability.

Back in 2015, there was considerable excitement when a Phase 2 trial reported the first positive results of a disease-modifying drug trial – the medication in question was Exenatide, a diabetes drug. The trial team reported in *The Lancet* that "Exenatide had positive effects on practically defined off-medication motor scores in Parkinson’s disease, which were sustained beyond the period of exposure." In other words “walking/balance ability was positively improved by

Patients taking Exenatide and this improvement continued even after use of the medication finished”

It’s no surprise that nearly a decade after the Phase 2 results were published, the whole research community awaited the early findings from the Phase 3 trial with bated breath.

In mid-October 2024, a webinar was held, attended by the trial participants, explaining: "The results indicate that people in the study who received Exenatide did not benefit compared to those who received placebo – suggesting that the drug does not slow the progression of Parkinson’s." In other words “when more people were tested, with more rigorous random/blind testing procedure, the result was that Exenatide did NOT make any difference to those tested—it did NOT work”

As recorded on the Parkinson’s-UK website: "This is really disappointing news for everyone in the Parkinson’s community, and especially for the participants in this trial who have contributed so much."

It’s too soon to say what this means for wider research into the potential of diabetes drugs for Parkinson’s.

Once the paper is published, we will be better able to fully discuss, reflect upon, and learn from the findings together.

While the results from this trial are disappointing, overall there is a huge amount of exciting research happening in Parkinson’s, with many other interesting and hopeful new treatment approaches being developed and tested.

So it seems we have slid down a large snake but as those who play the game know you can soon land of an even longer ladder and accelerate to being a winner. Let’s hope this happens to the committed researchers who put their hearts and souls into looking for a cure.

David Lowther

The Park attempts to cover a broad range of topics some of which have nothing to do with Parkinson's. To cover the Arts and Culture, I call on the services of our resident poet Peter Taylor. Peter has indicated that he would be amenable to write new poetry, on member selected topics, should it be requested.

Peter's Poem—Finding Out

She slow-motioned crumpled
towards the late train floor, perfect faint:
pale as a winter moon, legs neatly folded,
eyes rolling just a little to
signal the game had changed, strange
feelings about where, why, whether to cry

I say towards; she did not fall
all the way. A knight-time drama –
yes, a shining armour story; young man
catches her before the crack of bone
on deck, so quick one might easily
forget he was no chaperone

no minder of some fair princess
owing his fealty or his life;
but there, just then, no time to think again
a reaction reaching back to somewhere else,
another self, by stealth slowly stolen
one moment of a million in a day

And all the more precious for its
simple short-storiness, a parable of sorts,
a finding-out: that love was all around her
watching, that he was so much more than he'd
thought before, while we had remembered
what lights at night the dark road home.

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A Night of Musical Magic and Meaningful Moments

When West End meets brass band meets community spirit, something truly magical happened at GLive in Guildford on a recent November evening that was about so much more than just music.

The Friary Brass Band and Vivace chorus wove a tapestry of sound that ranged from Sondheim to Queen, from My Fair Lady to Harry Potter. Musical whiplash - in the best possible way!

This wasn't just a concert. It was a fundraising extravaganza with a heart of gold, supporting Parkinson's research and awareness. The repertoire was a delightful musical rollercoaster - Les Miserables medleys that could make a statue weep, Guys and Dolls numbers that had toes tapping, and Andrew Lloyd Webber classics that reminded us why we love musical theatre. And all finished up with a glorious selection of Abba tunes from Mamma Mia!

The real showstopper was Valerie Box's interval speech - a moment of powerful authenticity. Standing alone onstage, visibly shaking from Parkinson's, she gripped the audience with her heartfelt story of the challenges of living with Parkinson's, the power of support provided by the Parkinson's UK Guildford and Surrey branch, and the hope for the future through research. Her message was clear: we are not defined by our symptoms, but by our spirit.

And then came the donations. Steve Heron and his merry band of supporters shook their collection buckets with determination. The audience responded with extraordinary generosity, raising an impressive £2,135.26 for the local branch.

Behind the scenes, Mary Clayton was the unsung hero who made this entire evening possible. The Friary Brass Band and Vivace chorus donated their talents. The GLive staff created a space of community and compassion. We thank all of them for making this night so successful.

As the final notes faded and applause rang out, it was clear: this was more than a fundraiser. This was a statement of hope, understanding, and human spirit.

Who knew music could be such good medicine?

Malcolm Box

100 Club

Our Branch 100 Club has been running for over 3 years now and is firmly embedded in our Branch Fundraising programme. The monthly draw is made and announced at our Shalford Village Hall Social Meetings on the last Tuesday of most months. We enrich those participating with the chance to win either £60 first prize, £20 second prize or £10 third prize for a subscription of £1 per month for each number they hold in the 100 Club.

It is easy to join, simply contact either Nick Hetherington or our Treasurer, Steve Heron, and they will send you the application form to complete.

- nhetherington@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk
- sheron@guildfordparkinsons.org.uk

Recent winners are:

2024	**1st Prize £60**		**2nd Prize £20**		**3rd Prize £10**	
	Name	**Number**	**Name**	**Number**	**Name**	**Number**
August	Margaret Turnbull	118	Lorna Clark	64	David Lowther	23
September	Elizabeth Cox	152	Anne Folkes	79	Alex Sim	166
October	Alex Sim	165	Valerie Box	14	David Lowther	13
November	John Oldham	108	Margaret Kiriacou	129	Henry Emden	196
December	Valerie Tanner	103	Tony Chapman	143	John Morris	150

New Years Teaser

A tricky teaser to start 2025!

Where geographically would you see this sign?

A clue, it is not technically in our default Branch footprint but is in a adjacent Branch area and is rather unique!

Branch Activities

Activity	Where	When	Comments	Contact
Carer's Group	Inn on the Lake	2nd Monday of Month	Share with others Carers	Carers@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Committee Meeting	Church House	6 weekly 10:00 - 12:00	volunteers always welcome	Chair@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
Friendship Group Meeting	White Hart, Godalimning	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 Wonersh**	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
Parkinsong Voice Classes	Busbridge Village Hall (and Online)	Tuesdays 11.45 - 12.45	Work on breathing	Treasurer@GuildfordParkinsons.org.uk
PD Warrior type Exercise Class	Whitley	Weekly	Multiple sessions on different days	Foundation Physio
PD Warrior type Exercise Class	West Clandon	Weekly	Multiple sessions on different days	Foundation 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 Dawn Rowson	Rose McKinley Jenny Honey
Milford Hospital	*Farnham Hospital*
01483 362020	*01483 908183*
rsch.gw.ms.parks@nhs.net	**vcl.parkinsonnurses@nhs.net**