

# SWINDON MS & NEURO THERAPY CENTRE

Supporting those with Neurological Conditions



LOTTERY FUNDED



## Winter 2018 Newsletter

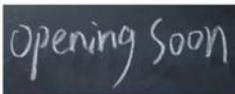
## Happy New Year 2018

Welcome to our winter newsletter. I hope that you had a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year?

Since our last newsletter, Rose organised and hosted another excellent Christmas meal for volunteers and members at Swindon College. I doubt that we shall see turkey wellington on that scale again for a good few years! We held a successful AGM, the Christmas Craft Fair inspired again, turnout for the Christmas party was excellent (although there were some very dodgy jumpers on show). And another very successful year for our Centre came to a chilly close.



Those of you who came to the AGM may remember this picture, which I used to briefly talk about the things we're going to do during 2018. Starting at top left and working along each row, here is a quick summary of just some of the things that you'll see happening this year.



You'll find more in this newsletter about 'GDPR' – look out for Amanda's article.

We'll be recruiting shortly – for a new staff member to focus on **grant fund raising**. We'll tell you more about that in the coming weeks.

One of the first things that the Grant Fundraiser will be targeted to find funding for is a **greatly improved car park**. Maybe not quite on the scale of the one in the picture – but much bigger than our current one.

We will be using a different method for conducting **surveys** – amongst all those who use or contribute to our Centre. We continue to build relationships with GWH, with Oxford Brookes University, with other Centres and with local businesses. In doing so, we continue to **raise awareness** of our Centre and what we can offer.

# CHAIRMAN'S BIT

We've already overhauled our **financial recording and reporting systems** and processes and work on that will continue through this year. We need to keep careful track of all our finances so that we can be sure that our charity is secure and sustainable.

The bottom row in the picture is really all about thinking through what else we can offer to ensure that our Centre continues to meet **your needs and expectations**. Expect to hear more from Louise, Sian and Julie about that one in the months to come.

And if you'd like to **volunteer** to help develop things, please do let us know (you'll see an item asking for volunteers as you read on and we really do appreciate the increasing numbers of people who are offering us their energy, skills and passion.

So, lots going on. And lots to read about in this newsletter.

I hope that the rest of your winter goes well. I saw my first snowdrops today (it's the second Sunday in January as I type this) and that brings a little hope that the grey and cold days might soon begin to give way to a brighter and slightly warmer Spring.

Take care – and I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Best wishes

**Tim Culling, Chair of Trustees**

**Do you receive our emails? If not please see the office and we can update your records. Thank you**

## **Swindon Therapy Centre Membership renewals NOW DUE**

**Membership Renewals** are now due, (previously paid in November but this year postponed until January)

The Annual membership is £20. Anyone who has paid membership subscription after 1 Oct 2017 need not pay until next year. **If you are a UK taxpayer, please ask for a gift aid form, if you have not already signed one.**

# CENTRE NEWS

Operations Manager update:

Happy New Year! Firstly as I mark the end of my first year at the Centre, I would just like to say thank you very much to everyone for the warm welcome you have given me and for your support during the year.

As some of you may be aware the government have introduced new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), for all business and charities, which must be in place by the end of May this year. There are no exceptions or exemptions and the same rules must be implemented regardless of if you are a small charity or a large company. The fines for not complying with the rules are also the same for all, and are so harsh they could put smaller concerns out of business!

We have a plan in place to make sure we don't find ourselves in this situation and over the next few weeks we will be contacting you with more details. Please can you help by reading and returning, when asked, any information that you receive from us regarding this. That will be a huge help!

Thank you so much for your help with this and I am happy to talk to anyone who wants to know more, just give me a call or catch me in the Centre.

**Amanda**

Happy New Year too!

We try and offer a variety of services to Members and particularly those that have been requested. One therapy asked for was massage and Tay Adams began offering Massage therapy in the autumn and currently comes once a month. Also following our previous counsellor leaving in September, Neil Summers has joined us and is currently able to offer counselling early evenings. From next summer he is also hoping to be able to offer some daytime sessions too. If you are interested in either of these or have other therapies you would like us to consider, we can't guarantee we can offer them but please come and have a chat as we do appreciate Member feedback.

Thank you

**Louise**

# SAFEGUARDING



The following information is taken from the national campaign Take Five which is aimed at helping Financial Services providers safeguard their customers. If you have a particular concern (e.g. how to shop on line safely, how to deal with cold callers at your door) please email Louise in the office and Amanda Saunders can cover it in the next entry.

## **Be aware, be warned, don't become a victim!**

Every day, people are deceived into giving a helping hand to fraudsters. It's because we're instinctively trusting. This makes us easy targets for sophisticated scammers who know how to make us hand over control of conversations. When that control is gone, we hand over information we shouldn't. But we all have the power in our hands to stop fraud happening to us, right now. We need to do just one thing: when something doesn't seem right, take time to stop and think. Scammers may contact you via post, phone, text, email, on-line or in person at your front door so always be vigilant.

## **Advice**

If you receive a request to make a payment or provide personal or financial information, you need to take a moment to reflect and step back from the situation. Even if they say they're the bank, police or other trusted organisation, you still need to take the time to stop and think about what's really going on. You probably already know these basic rules on how to beat financial fraud – you just need to take a breath and stay calm enough to remember them.

## **Remember**

- Never disclose security details, such as your PIN or full banking password
- Don't assume an email, phone call or caller at the door is authentic
- Don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision
- Listen to your instincts and stay on your guard
- Stay in control; no matter how insistent or 'official' someone is, you are entitled to say no so do not feel intimidated into doing anything

If you've taken all these steps and still feel uncomfortable or unsure about what you're being asked, never hesitate to contact your bank or financial service provider on a number you trust, such as the one listed on their website or on the back of your payment card.

Lots more information and advice is available on line:

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

## Are you getting everything you're entitled to?

Citizens Advice Swindon visits the Swindon Therapy Centre each week to advise members about welfare benefits issues. Since the beginning of this project Citizens Advice have helped members gain over £63,000 in benefits. Why not book an appointment to check whether you could be claiming additional income.

There are a wide range of benefits available including Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Carers Allowance, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction, as well as 'new style' Employment and Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance for those who have sufficient National Insurance contributions.

In each newsletter we'll focus on a different benefit or some financial support that may be available – and this month we'll look at **Disability Living Allowance for children**.

While **Personal Independence Payment** (PIP) has replaced Disability Living Allowance for those aged 16 or over, Disability Living Allowance is still in place for under 16s. It is awarded to help to meet some of the extra costs associated with illness and disability. The benefit isn't affected by income or savings, and can lead to additional benefits – such as Carers Allowance for the person who looks after the child or young person.

There are two components – a care and mobility component. The mobility component has two rates, and the care component has three rates – depending on the extent and nature of the disability or illness.

The child's needs must be "substantially in excess" of what is normally required by a child of the same age, or needs that non-disabled children of the same age would not have. The assessment process includes an initial application on a claim form and sometimes a medical assessment. If successful, the amounts of the award are:

Care component: highest rate £83.10 middle rate £55.65 lower rate £22.00, enhanced rate £83.10

Mobility component: lower £22.00, higher rate £58.00

For more information for this or other benefits, please contact the Swindon Therapy Centre to book an appointment with the Citizens Advice Welfare Benefits Caseworker.

# MS COUNSELLING

## MS-UK COUNSELLING SERVICE

A new counselling service is available and focuses on helping you understand yourself in light of your MS and exploring its emotional impact on your life. It is available to anyone living with Multiple Sclerosis aged 18 and over, and is completely confidential.

Counselling is a process that invites you to talk about your thoughts and feelings with a qualified professional. Counsellors do not give advice but help you to explore your own experiences so that you can find your own way forward.

Sessions are weekly, last 50 minutes and be delivered over the phone.

Visit MS UK at [www.ms-uk.org](http://www.ms-uk.org)

You can call them on 01206 226500

## FUNDRAISING ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE END OF 2018

We had a busy last few months of the year and thanks to the help of many Volunteers we raised lots of money.

Here's some of our totals

Swishing Party & Blue Bag Collection—£541.40

Nationwide Fundraising - £61.48

Christmas Card Sales— £437.10

Morrisons Eldene Collection—£264.88

Christmas Craft Fair— £484.62

ASDA Orbital Collection— £237.52

Christmas Raffle—£2670

Waitrose Bag Pack—£546

Ice Cream Sales—£178

Debbie Reid's Christmas Plants and Wreaths—£105

# FUNDRAISING

## BLUE BAG CLOTHING COLLECTION

Our next collection will be on Monday 26th March. We will need bags into the centre by Friday 23rd March as they will be collected early on the Monday morning. We will also be holding a Swishing party in advance of this date as it helped us raise more money from Sales of quality clothing. Please bring your Swishing donations to the Centre from Monday 12th March to be included in the Sale.

## BOOK SALE

Our Book Sale area at the centre is regularly receiving new donations of books so please take a look. We have lots of children's books as well as puzzles and games. Suggested donations of 50p each for books and reasonable donations for the games and puzzles.

## STORE COLLECTIONS

We have regular store collections around Swindon and surrounding areas. Please contact the office if you are available to help at any of these. Our next one is West Swindon Shopping Centre on Saturday 17th February.

## SHOPPING VISITS

Throughout the year we like to bring some traders into the centre for you to purchase some gifts and cards without heading out to the crowded shops. We usually receive a donation or commission from these sales. This quarter we will have—  
Friday 16th February —Elite Mobility (mobility devices and accessories)

## TAKE ON A CHALLENGE

Would you or a family member or friend like to take on a challenge and raise sponsorship for the Centre. We have places available for Ride London (100 mile cycle) British 10k (10k run) or enter your own race or challenge and set up a sponsorship page on Virgin Money Giving.

We have also got links with large challenge organisers who can arrange all the challenge for you and advise you how much to raise for us. Currently both companies have start of the year promotions or 2 for 1 offers so please take a look at [www.actionchallenge.com](http://www.actionchallenge.com) and [www.Charity Challenge.com](http://www.Charity Challenge.com) and see if there's any challenges you would be interested in doing. From trekking in Peru to walking along part of the Ridgeway there's various levels of adventure and challenges available. Call Sarah on 01793 481700 to talk through your sponsorship and entry options.

# WAYS TO HELP

## ONLINE SHOPPING



For those of who do online Shopping please use the easyfundraising site as all the major retailers are on there and will donate a % of your purchases to the Centre at no extra charge to you! You can also register your credit or debit card so shop purchases can also count.  
<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/msswindon>

## LOGALGIVING



Localgiving is a way to set up a regular or a one off donation.  
[www.localgiving.com/charity/swindontherapycentre](http://www.localgiving.com/charity/swindontherapycentre)

## TEXT GIVING



We are set up on JustTextGiving which means you can now donate by text. So to give £5 directly to the centre please text STCD17 £5 to 70070. Other amounts can be donated by changing the amount after the £ sign. You can still add Gift Aid to your donation. After making a donation, you will be prompted by text to submit your details and add Gift Aid.

## JOIN US FOR THE MONTHLY DRAW

**1st Prize £150**

**2nd Prize £45**

**3rd Prize £20**

Prizes are drawn on the 7th of each month (or nearest working day)  
For only £1 per week paid in 4 instalments of £13 payable on 5th September, 5th December, 5th March and 5th June. Next draw entry point is for the March Draw so application form and payment by standing order or cheque needs to be at the centre by 5th February.

Please contact the Centre for an application form or further information.

# CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

## CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

Thank you to all those who attended and brought Friends and family to our Christmas Craft Fair. We had a great range of products for sale with Dave Harrison's Cider being a firm favourite and selling out within an hour. And the STC knitters had a table loaded with goodies to sell too. The Fair raised £484.62. We are busy planning what to do with next year's Fair and whether to bring it forward to an Autumn Fair if it would enable more people to attend. If you have any feedback on the Fair please speak to Sarah or one of the Fundraising Team.



## CHRISTMAS PARTY AND RAFFLE



The Centre's Christmas Party was a huge success as everyone tucked into the feast of food. We were entertained and kept on our toes with the activities that followed. Thank you to U3A Choir for leading our Carol Singing and Carol for leading our Carol Quiz and Bingo. Our Christmas Raffle was drawn and as usual the generosity of our Friends and Supporters made the prize table heave with goodies. We sold £2670 of tickets and all but a few of the prizes have made their way to the happy winners. A full list of winners is available from the office and if you have had an answer phone message telling you you have won please come and collect.



# THANKS TO



Our Charity Partner



For match funding us to £10,000 through 2017-2018



Our Charity partner



For our regular Volunteer help



Big Lottery

## **Donations have also been received from**

Samuel William Farmers Trust, Vastern Lodge of Freemasons, DNO Consulting Ltd, Zurich Community Trust, Audrey Baines, Robert Collis, Teresa Collis, AMS Accounting, Back to School, First Sight Media, Jules Hawkins, Mr R & Mrs C Ford, Mrs M Tombs.

## **Thank you to the following stores for allowing us a Store Collection**

Morrisons Eldene, Asda Orbital, Waitrose Swindon

# A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL !

## **Disclaimer**

All views expressed in this newsletter are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the charity and its supporters.

**The Fundraising team are  
organising a  
Quiz Night  
on  
Friday 16th March  
at 7:00pm**

**Swindon Supermarine Community  
Room, South Marston**

**£10 per person includes Supper**

**Teams of 4-5 people (we can place  
you in a team)**

**Bar available to purchase drinks**

**Get in touch with the centre, We're here to help**

Please get in touch and  
tell us your ideas and  
feedback. We would  
love to hear from you.



[stcswindon@msswindon.org.uk](mailto:stcswindon@msswindon.org.uk)



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