



The National  
Autistic Society  
Lancaster and  
Morecambe Branch

# Newsletter

## Welcome

Hi and welcome to the March edition of our Newsletter.

I'm sorry there is no feature article this month but we've all been very busy gearing up for World Autism Awareness week and the NAS campaign ahead of the general election in May.

There won't be an information meeting at Firbank in April as it falls in the school holiday but please keep checking our website/e mails for some adhoc coffee mornings in Morecambe and Lancaster.

It's nice to see some new faces at our monthly Carnorth drop ins and we will start these up again in May. We will also be starting up a lego club at Carnforth Children's centre after the Easter holidays and will be in touch soon with some more details.

For those who are unable to attend our meetings we have a facebook group which is very supportive and parents are always happy to listen to or share stories and give advice. This group is open to members only so if you are a member please send a request to  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NASLancasterandMorecambe/>  
Or register with us on line to become a member  
<https://www.naslandm.co.uk/join-our-branch.php>

Thank you for reading and see you soon

## Circus Starr tickets

Circus Starr have very kindly awarded us free tickets for Saturday 9th May in Carlisle

"Circus Starr is a charitable organisation that supports disabled, underprivileged and vulnerable children through its world class show. The circus is a magical place and a wonderful arena for inclusion and equality; we see time and again how a trip to the circus can change a child's life." Neville Wilson (Director, Circus Starr)

We are looking into hiring a coach for those who are unable to make their own way there. If you are interested then please contact Debbie on 075 175 19905 or [fundraising@naslandm.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@naslandm.co.uk).

For more information about Circus Starr visit their website [www.circus-starr.org.uk](http://www.circus-starr.org.uk)

## World Autism Awareness Week

For those of you who haven't heard already, World Autism Awareness Week this year is from Fri 27th March - Thursday 2nd April

This is a great opportunity for us to raise awareness of autism in the community and to raise some funds for our branch.

We will be visiting Morecambe and Lancaster with our information stall but our main event will be a sponsored walk on Saturday 28th March from Morecambe to Lancaster Castle.

We will need to know who is joining us to ensure we have enough marshalls etc so please get in touch and we'll send you a map and more details of the walk. If you are a first responder/have first aid skills then please tell us this when you register.

### Schools

We have invited schools to take part in some fun activities for the last week of term including dressing up, baking some of Jane Asher's cakes/bisuits and a colouring competition with the winners having their design printed on a canvas, mug and T shirt.

### Businesses

We are also inviting Businesses to take part by dressing up on "onesie Wednesday" (1st April), selling home baked cakes to colleagues or having an "emotions" sweepstake.

If you know of any businesses/your employer who would like to take part then please get in touch with us or visit the resources page on our website [www.naslandm.co.uk/waaw](http://www.naslandm.co.uk/waaw)

## What Now Course

As anticipated, places for the What Now course, which has just started, were taken up extremely quickly. Many apologies to those who didn't manage to get on this session. If your names were on the list then you will be first to be offered a place for the next one.

We hope to meet with the Clinical Commissioning group very soon and will be asking if they could fund the next What Now Course. Details will be posted on our website and e mailed to members as soon as we have a date for you.

Accept difference. Not indifference.



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## Aspergers youth group



The first session of our Aspergers youth group at Morecambe Library was a great success. Thank you to all who came along and to the psychology students from Lancaster University who are helping us to run this club.

The sessions will be held in the YPS room at Morecambe library on Wednesday evenings (term time only) from 6-8pm. It's open to teenagers (13-19 years) with a diagnosis of Aspergers/high functioning autism.

It will be necessary to book into these sessions to ensure we have enough volunteers and supplies. We will also need to know about any food allergies/intolerances as there will be the opportunity to make a snack upon arrival.

Next week we will be making wraps and designing mugs for mother's day/Easter !

We do appreciate that there is a need for a similar club for our younger children and those who are not "high functioning". When we have the resources and funds to set this up we would be very happy to do so.

There is also a need for a similar group for our young adults - up to 25 years. If you would like to get involved in setting up and running a group then please get in touch.

## I'm One - General Election Campaign 2015

Many thanks to Cat Smith, Labour parliamentary candidate for Lancaster and Fleetwood, for coming to talk to our members at our recent Firkbank Information morning.

We discussed a variety of issues which affect our families, from education and health to employment and benefits and also the general lack of "autism awareness" in certain sectors.

Cat took all our comments on board, especially the lack of suitable further education facilities for our children and difficulties gaining employment.

She will be writing a blog about our meeting on her website.

Invites have been sent out to all candidates for Morecambe and Lunesdale and we hope to have a more formal "question time" session if we get enough interest from them. Details on if, when and where this meeting will take place will be in our next newsletter.

## Autism Partnership Board

As mentioned in previous newsletters, several of our members sit on the Lancashire Autism Partnership board (APB). This board was set up as a result of the Autism act/strategy and aims to develop and improve local services to ensure the needs of our adults with autism are being met.

The main board consists of between 15 – 20 named individuals and includes adults with autism, parent-carers and professionals representing services.

There are several subcommittees including Communications and Engagement; Learning and Development; Diagnosis, Assessment and Support Planning; Young People; Education, Training & Employment; Criminal Justice; and Parent/Carers.

One of our members, Kizzy Felstead, has offered to write regular updates after these meetings which will be posted on our website <http://www.naslandm.co.uk/autism-partnership-board.php>

If you would like further information on the Autism Partnership board or you would like to share your experiences as an adult with autism then Kizzy would be very happy to hear from you.

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# Library

Our library is now on-line so it's possible to browse our books/DVDs and also to reserve them  
<https://naslandm.co.uk/library.php>

If you can't attend one of our meetings then we are happy to meet you in Morecambe or Lancaster town centre.

Sadly we've lost many books in recent years so they can now only be loaned by branch members and there are fines for any lost or damaged books. You can loan 2 books for 3 months and you can renew if no-one has reserved them.

Please ensure that you sign the book or DVD in and out otherwise you may be liable if it goes missing!

If you have any autism related books that you no longer need then we are always grateful to accept donations for our library.

If you have read a good book and would like to submit a review for the next newsletter then please do e mail it to us.

## Review of "Constipation, withholding and Your child" by Anthony Cohn

Book rating 3 out of 5 stars - by Tracy Duffy

I had high expectations about this book and I was really looking forward to reading it as my son suffers with chronic constipation as well as ASD, pica and sensory sensitivities.

The book begins with a children's story about constipation and withholding. This story, in my opinion, is really good and I think even my son could relate to it and find it funny. Further on in the book it discusses medication. I personally found this chapter very reassuring in that it is good to use laxatives for as long is necessary, especially if you want to help your child overcome constipation (stool withholding). It even gives a list of laxatives that are available and it describes them and lists their advantages/disadvantages which I found really useful.

I thought the book would offer alternative advice (different approaches to what I have already tried and still do) on how to manage and eventually overcome constipation, particularly for children who have additional needs. However this didn't happen and I was left feeling a little disappointed with some of the book's content. The book was generalised to all children who had constipation and wetting difficulties, although the book did have a chapter on (quote) "children with other issues".

Much of what was written I had already been told by the professional and learned through trial and error but if you have a child, or know of a child, who has toileting difficulties then please don't let this put you off reading this book.

## Books for girls with ASD

One of our members, Ju Richmond, has very kindly donated lots of books to our library for girls and young women on the autistic spectrum. We will be adding them to our website very soon and they will be available to reserve.

I am Aspien girl. The Unique Characteristics , Traits and Gifts of Females on the Autism Spectrum,  
Tania A. Marshall.

The adolescent and Adult Neuro-diversity Hand book Asperger Syndrome, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and related Conditions,  
Sarah Hendrix.

The girl with curly hair, Asperger's and Me,  
Alis Rowe.

Pretending to be Normal Living with Asperger's Syndrome,  
Liane Holliday Willey.

Asperkids An Insider's Guide to Loving, Understanding and Teaching Children with Asperger Syndrome,  
Jennifer Cook O'Toole.

Asperger's and Girls,  
Tony Attwood.

Asperger Syndrome in the Family Redefining Normal,  
Liane Holliday Willey.

Women From Another Planet?  
Jean Kearns Miller.

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# Contacts

## Lancaster & Morecambe Branch Contacts

### Branch Officer

Gillian Mann  
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### Librarian, Education

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### Fundraising

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Debs Brookes

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### Campaigns, Education

Kizzy Felstead  
kizzy.f@naslandm.co.uk

### Branch Treasurer / IT

Tracy McCarthy-Allen  
tracy.m@naslandm.co.uk



NASLandM



@NASLandM

[www.naslandm.co.uk](http://www.naslandm.co.uk)

## Other useful contacts

*Unless stated, organisations not endorsed by the NAS  
Lancaster & Morecambe Branch or the NAS*

### General

#### NAS Helpline:

Tel: 0808 800 4104 (10am – 4pm), or email [autismhelpline@nas.org.uk](mailto:autismhelpline@nas.org.uk) (replies within  
14 working days)  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

### Education

#### Barnados Independent supporters

E mail [IndependentSupporters@barnados.org.uk](mailto:IndependentSupporters@barnados.org.uk) 01772 629470

#### IPSEA - Independent Parental Special Education Advice

[www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)

### Support

#### NAS Parent-to-Parent line 0808 800 4106

UK-wide confidential service providing emotional support to parents and carers of  
children or adults with autism

#### NAS community discussion forum

for people to talk about autism and share their thoughts, questions and experiences.  
To register go to their home page  
<http://community.autism.org.uk/discussions>

#### NAS E-Befriending service

open to anyone age 12+ Care is taken to ensure people are appropriately matched  
based on age and interest. For more information and an application pack please  
contact [E-befriending@nas.org.uk](mailto:E-befriending@nas.org.uk) or call 02920 629314 Mobile: 07920 295911

### Local Information

#### North Lancs Directions Group

[www.northlancsdirectionsgroup.com](http://www.northlancsdirectionsgroup.com)

#### FIND newsletter and service

<http://tinyurl.com/kcfnmuc>

#### Local Offer

<http://tinyurl.com/mv2e47m>

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# Diary Dates

*Sat 7th Mar, 11:00-15:00*

SEN Family fun and Information day  
Salt Ayre sports centre, Lancaster  
For children & young people with additional needs and their families/carers. Lots of information, stall holders and free activities/entry. To register/for more info go to [www.nldg2015.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.nldg2015.eventbrite.co.uk)

*Sun 22nd Mar, 14:00-16:00*

Mencap Karaoke  
Mencap, Charles St, Morecambe  
Karaoke at Mencap organised by Alternative Futures, everyone of all ages is welcome to go along. The cost of this event will be £2 and this includes a drink.

**Sat 28th Mar, 13:00**

**WAAW Sponsored Walk  
Morecambe Next to Lancaster Castle  
sponsorship form and poster at  
[www.naslandm.co.uk/waaw/](http://www.naslandm.co.uk/waaw/)**

*Sun 29th Mar, 10:00*

Autism Friendly Screening 'Paddington'  
Vue cinema, Lancaster  
£1.75. Any additional need

*Tue 31st Mar, 19:00*

Autism Friendly Screening 'NTLive Treasure Island'  
Vue Cinema, Lancaster  
£15.00 / £12.50

**Wed 1st Apr**

**Onesie Wednesday  
anywhere  
Wear your onesie (or dress in pink and purple)  
and raise funds for the National Autistic  
Society**

**Wed 1st Apr, 10:00-12:00**

**NAS information morning  
Firbank Childrens Centre  
NO INFORMATION MORNING THIS MONTH  
DUE TO SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

*Thu 2nd Apr, 16:00*

Autism Friendly Screening 'Sponge Bob Movie'  
Vue cinema, Lancaster  
£4.50. Any additional need, no proof needed

More information on all groups available  
at <http://naslandm.co.uk/regular-events.php>

*Monday, 13:00 - 15:00, Bright Sparks, Poulton CC*

Contact: Ruth Threlfall – 01524 833644

*Monday, 17:00 - 19:00, Kids United, Mencap, Charles St, Morecambe*

Contact: Leona 07432274195

*Tuesday, 13:00 - 15:00, AOK, Lune Park CC*

Contact: Trisha/Claire 01524 382818. Parent supporter is Lucy Ellis

*Tuesday, 15:45 - 17:15, Disability Multi Sports club, Salt Ayre sports centre*

Contact: Salt ayre on 01524 847540

*Wednesday, 10:30 - 12:00, Unique Kidz Coffee and Cake, Woodhill Lane,  
Morecambe. LA44NW.*

Contact: Jane Halpin 07544570384

**Wednesday, 18:00 - 20:00, Aspergers Youth Group, Morecambe Library  
open to children aged 13-19 with a diagnosis of Aspergers/high  
functioning autism.**

**Contact: [landm@nas.org.uk](mailto:landm@nas.org.uk) / 07500 881 831  
booking essential**

*Saturday, 09:00 - 12:00, Bright Sparks, Heysham CC*

Contact: Victoria Hutton on 01524 409569  
booking essential

*Saturday, 10:30 - 11:30, Multi-ball skills sessions, Globe Arena astroturf  
pitch*

Contact: Morecambe community sports at the Globe on 01524 411797  
booking essential

*Saturday, 13:00 - 16:00, Saturday Superstars, Heysham CC*

Contact: Victoria Hutton on 01524 409569  
booking essential

*Saturday, 15:30 - 16:30, Disabilities Trampolining, University of Cumbria*

Contact: Sports complex on 01524 526526  
booking essential

*Sunday, 14:00 - 16:00, Sunday disability sports, Lancaster University*

Contact: [frances.jones2@barnados.org.uk](mailto:frances.jones2@barnados.org.uk) 01772 629470/0792 0153460  
booking essential

If you have a group or event that may be of interest to our members, please  
email [landm@nas.org.uk](mailto:landm@nas.org.uk)

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