

As a local support group, our purpose is to offer friendship and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's in the Reading area. No one should face Parkinson's alone and so we aim to be as accessible as possible offering a wide range of social and therapeutic activities.

CONTENTS

2024 Committee	1
Branch Membership	1
From the Chair	2
Walk for Parkinson's	2
Dates for your Diaries	3
Regular Activity Classes	4
Neuro Physio Classes Dancing & Boxing	5
Help with Exercise Introducing PEAPs	6
Theatre Outing Blithe Spirit	7
And Finally...	8

Edition 15

Please note that the views expressed in the newsletter are those of the editor and contributors and do not necessarily represent those of Parkinson's UK.

Welcome to the latest edition of the PUK Reading Branch Newsletter. I hope you find it informative. If you have recently joined the group, then a very warm welcome to you. If you are not yet a member then you are invited to join – see **Branch Membership Information** below. For the very latest news and information don't forget to visit our website at:

www.parkinsonsreading.org.uk

The 2024 committee members are:

Andrew Last: Chair	andrwlast@compuserve.com	07813 193038
Geoff Gee: Vice Chair	geoff@game26.plus.com	07713 590636
Alison Gee: Treasurer	alison@game26.plus.net	07421 739575
Nigel Crabb: Secretary	npcrabb@gmail.com	07810 554650
Penny Inglis: Social Events	penny.inglis@btinternet.com	07757 662925
Krys Lewis: Fundraising	k.lewis4@binternet.com	07787 511447
David Aaby: Therapies	david.aaby@outlook.com	07806 456480
Zoe Crabb: Minutes Sec.	zjcrabb@gmail.com	07709 087854
Ricky Duveen:	ricky@duveen.net	0118 961 4027
Colette Wood	colette_wood@hotmail.com	07766 224669

Branch Membership Information

The suggested donation for 2024 is £10 per person. The easiest way to pay annually is by setting up a Direct Debit to **Parkinson's Disease Society of the UK, Sort Code 20-00-00, Account Number: 43353958** using the reference **"Reading Membership"**. Alternatively, you can pay by cash or cheque, made payable to **'PDS Reading Branch**, at any of the Reading group meetings. Thank you.

Not yet registered to receive regular updates? Download the registration form from the "Contact Us" page of our website and follow the instructions.

From the Chair

I write this at the beginning of a busy week for the Committee, which hopefully will lead to some valuable improvements in what the Branch can offer the local Parkinson's community.

On Monday some of us are attending a meeting with colleagues from neighbouring branches to discuss better ways of working together. Branches vary widely in how they operate, what services are provided etc. and there is much to be gained from sharing ideas and experience. We also appreciate that some Reading branch members may find it more convenient to attend activities run in neighbouring areas, and vice versa. We want to do more to help identify these opportunities, so that you can make use of the exercise classes, therapies or other activities that are best for you.

This is also one of the themes of Wednesday's Branch meeting on 1st May. It will be led by **Beccy Oliver**, one of our favourite neuro-physiotherapists, and is primarily about exercise and why it is good for people with Parkinson's. However, we are also using the meeting to launch a new initiative called **PEAPs – Personal Exercise and Activity Programme scheme** – which is intended to encourage those who are relatively recently diagnosed with PD to adopt an active exercise regime sooner rather than later. More about this elsewhere in the Newsletter.

On Thursday two senior people from the Parkinson's UK national organisation will be visiting Reading – **Caroline Russell**, who is PUK's Chief Executive, and **Phil Ambler**, who is a newly appointed head of Community for England. After meeting the Committee, they will be taking part in some of our activities, which will give them the opportunity to chat to members. Our visitors recognise that it is important to stay in touch with the "grass roots". And as a Committee, we hope to use their visit to encourage PUK, at a national level, to do more to help Branches like ours provide a better service for everyone.

As always, this newsletter shows a lot that is going on, thanks to the efforts of the Committee, but we know there is more we can do. If you have ideas, comments or would like to help, please get in touch with any of us, and you are welcome to write to me directly at my email address below. In the meantime, let's hope that the weather quickly makes up its mind about whether it really has turned its back on cold and grey, and that you have a splendid spring and early summer!

With best wishes

Andrew Last

Chair

Email: andrwlast@compuserve.com

Walk for Parkinson's (W4Ps)

Sunday July 7th, at 11.00am: Dinton Pastures Country Park, Hurst – [See details here](#) or just go to www.parkinsons.org.uk and follow the links from there.

We will be the host branch for this event which means we will have a major role in managing "the village" which is an opportunity to raise money for the Reading branch and meet people who are new to Parkinson's. Help will be needed on the day in the village and, possibly to provide Marshalls along the walking route.

WANTED – NEW PRIZES FOR THE TOMBOLA
Please bring prizes to any branch meeting or café
or contact Zoe Crabb to arrange collection.

Dates for your Diary

Find further information on our [website](#)

MAY 2024

Wednesday May 1st 2:15pm to 4.00 pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: “Why exercise is important and how to get into it”, Beccy Oliver, Thorpes Neuro Rehab
PLUS Launch of new PEAPs initiative. **See details below.**

Friday May 10th 10.30am to 12.00pm

Wokingham Café at the Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

Friday May 24th 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

JUNE 2024

Wednesday June 5th 2:15pm to 4.00 pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: “The new Parkinson’s UK regional structure and what it means for the Reading branch”, Abi White, PUK Southeast Regional Lead
PLUS “An introduction to Boxing exercise for people with Parkinson’s”, Molly Hale, Places Leisure.

Friday May 10th 10.30am to 12.00pm

Wokingham Café at the Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, Wokingham

Friday June 28th 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

JULY 2024

Wednesday July 3rd 2:15pm to 4.00 pm

Branch meeting at OLoP, Earley: “Summer Social” – No speaker today but entertainments. chat and refreshments.

Sunday July 7th

Walk for Parkinson’s, Dinton Pastures Country Park, Hurst. **See details above.**

Wednesday July 17th 7.45pm - Reading branch fundraiser

Wokingham Theatre presents Blithe Spirit, the classic farce by Noel Coward. **See details below.**

Friday July 26th 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tilehurst Café in the Youth Hall at the Tilehurst Methodist Church

Friday/Saturday July 26th/27th

Bucket collection at Waitrose, Wokingham

FURTHER OUT IN 2024

Wednesday Sep 4th. 12.00pm to 2.00pm

Thames river cruise and tea (replacing September branch meeting). **See details below.**

Regular Activity Classes

We regret that we are currently unable to offer the Singing Café voice exercise class. As soon as we have more information, we will update you.

Activity	Location	Details
Hydrotherapy	Under Review	Currently unavailable Please contact david.adby@outlook.com
Nordic Walking	Thameside Promenade Car Park, RG1 8BD	Every Thursday 3.00pm to 4.00pm Please contact Derek Holloway on 07843 584 900 or derekholloway1@gmail.com No experience needed. Poles available for loan.
Dead Sea Saltwater Flotation Pool	Nirvana Spa, Mole Road, Wokingham	Times to suit your individual needs. Please contact David Adby if interested. £10.00 per session, carer goes free. Nirvana Spa contact is Jane Whiston, mobile 07760 423652. Email: Jane.whiston@nirvanaspa.co.uk .
Pilates	Our Lady of Peace, Earley	Every Wednesday 12.45pm to 1.45pm; £5.00 per session
Ballroom Dancing	Our Lady of Peace, Earley	Every Wednesday 11.40am to 12.40pm; £5.00 per session.
“BEAT Parkinson’s!” group drumming sessions	Stoneham Court, 100 Cockney Hill, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4EZ	Hosted by the Berkshire Music Trust every other Thursday from 11.00am to 12.15pm. Next sessions are on May 2 nd , and May 16 th . £5.00 per session.
Walking Football	Bracknell Leisure Centre	Every Tuesday, 2pm to 4pm, Bracknell Leisure Centre, Bagshot Road, Bracknell, RG12 9SE, no charge, organised by Callum Salhotra of Berks and Bucks FA, 07399 249038, or email callum.salhotra@berks-bucksfa.com .

Please contact the appropriate coordinator with any questions or if you wish to try a session.:

Hydro, Flotation Pool, Pilates, and Dance: **David Adby (david.adby@outlook.com)**
 Group Drumming: **Andrew Last (andrwl@compuserve.com)**
 Nordic Walking: **Derek Holloway (derekholloway1@gmail.com)**
 Walking Football: **Callum Salhotra (callum.salhotra@berks-bucksfa.com)**

Neuro Physiotherapy Exercise Classes

Here is a summary of all the neuro-physio sessions available which should allow you to select the class most suitable for your individual needs.

Weekly Movement and Balance Exercise Session (via Zoom)

Every Thursday from 12.45pm to 1.30pm

Exercise from the comfort of your home or anywhere that has an internet connection. Session led by Sarah Papworth. Feel free to contact Sarah directly to find out more: 07775 647054. **Zoom meeting ID: 859 771 2511 / Password: nD42pD.**

Bradbury Centre, Wokingham

Every Tuesday 10.30am to 11.15am

Every Thursday 1.00pm to 1.45pm

Medium intensity classes

£7.00 per session

To find out more about the Wokingham sessions and which class is best for you, please email david.adby@outlook.com.

Caversham classes at Mapledurham Pavilion, signposted off the Woodcote Road, Caversham RG4 7EZ

Every Monday 2.30pm to 3.30pm

PD-specific exercises at a medium/high intensity including PD-Warrior style exercises.

To find out more about the Caversham sessions and to get advice on which class is best for you, please email PDExercise@hotmail.com.

Every Wednesday 3.00pm to 4.00pm

PD-specific exercises at a medium/high intensity including circuits and PD-Warrior style exercises.

First session is free; £30 per month for one class per week. For anyone who doesn't want to commit to the monthly payment there is a £10 drop-in fee.

Dance and Boxing Class

We are always looking at finding new therapies and exercise classes that may be of benefit to people with Parkinson's. We have been informed about:

A New Dance Class for people with Parkinson's with expert guidance and training from Dance for PD. The class is held in Tadley and the cost is £7 per class, payable half termly. Carers and partners go free of charge. No prior dance experience is necessary. Anyone interested is welcome to a try-out class before enrolling. Classes must be booked in advance by contacting Penny Byrett. **Email – bryettdanceschool@gmail.com / Phone 01962 863061**

Boxercise - Did you know that Boxercise is one of the recommended exercise classes for people with Parkinson's? It can help to address symptoms such as tremor, balance, posture and strength as well as improving fitness levels. We are looking to set up a Boxercise class for our members and will be offering some taster sessions to try it out. If you would like to join one of the taster sessions or have any questions, please speak to one of the committee or **email**

PDExercise@Hotmail.com

Wednesday June 5th meeting will include a Boxercise taster session.

Help for everyone new to Exercise

There is lots of information about how important exercise is for all of us, especially people with Parkinson's. Did you know that there are several gyms and health programmes in the local area that are **free** to people to people with Parkinson's?

Everyone Active

Everyone Active offer free membership to its leisure centres for people with Parkinson's and their carers. Nearby centres include: the Cotswold Sports Centre and the Bracknell Leisure Centre. To join follow this link -

<https://joinonline.everyoneactive.com/memberships> and select the centre you would like to our chosen membership will give you unlimited access to gym, swimming and exercise classes at your selected centre. Note that Proof of eligibility is required on your first visit.

Pure Gym

As recently negotiated by Parkinson's podcast "Movers and Shakers", Gillian Lacey Solomar, Pure Gym are now offering people with Parkinson's free membership. Email purehelp@puregym.com with the following details, and they will set up your free membership: Full name, DOB, Email Address, Mobile Number, Home Address, Your preferred Pure Gym location.

Introducing PEAPs

If you have been relatively recently diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, you are probably aware that exercise is supposed to be good for you. But amongst all the messages and advice, you may be a bit unsure of what that really means for you, or how you should start. **PEAPs** is a Branch-led initiative designed to assist and encourage by finding an exercise regime that is right for you:



P is for Personal – everyone is different.

E is for Exercise – we all know it is good for you, especially if you have Parkinson's.

A is for Activities – any form of movement-based activity helps keep you fit.

P is for Programme – a plan to help you find the exercise and activities that are right for you and your circumstances.

s is for scheme – we have put this together to help members do more exercise in the longer term.

The programme, which has been developed in partnership with Thorpes Neuro Rehab, is spread over two or three months, and includes:

- two group sessions, including partners/carers if desired.
- two one-to-one assessment and planning sessions with a specialist neuro-physiotherapist
- attendance at taster or regular exercise classes, therapies or activities
- development of an exercise plan and guidance for further development of your exercise regime

The Branch will subsidise about half the cost of the programme – participants are expected to pay for the rest. The scheme is currently in its early days, and we are looking for up to five volunteers to take part in an initial pilot run of the programme starting in June. If you would like to register your interest please get in touch with Geoff Gee or Andrew Last or email PEAPS@parkinsonsreading.org.uk.

We hope that following the pilot, a second cohort will be able to go through the programme later in 2024. Watch this space!

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday 17th July 2024 at 7.45pm Wokingham Theatre presents *Blithe Spirit*, the classic farce by Noel Coward.



Blithe Spirit is Noël Coward's "improbable farce" in which novelist Charles Condomine invites the eccentric medium Madame Arcati to his house to conduct a séance, hoping to gather material for his next book. He is then haunted by the ghost of his first wife Ewira who attempts to disrupt Charles's marriage to his second wife, Ruth, who cannot see or hear the ghost.

This is a charity night performance with all proceeds going to the PUK Reading branch.

We hope to see as many of you as possible for, what promises to be, a very enjoyable evening. Please help by encouraging family, friends, neighbours etc. to come along.

Cantley Park, Twyford Road, RG40 5TU
<https://www.wokinghamtheatre.org.uk/>

There is easy access from the car park but please let Geoff or Alison know if you will need a wheelchair seat, or a seat in the front two rows.

Theatre has a bar and terrace for pre-show drinks and the auditorium is air-conditioned.

Book your tickets now by emailing membership@parkinsonsreading.org.uk and paying £16.00 per ticket to:

Parkinsons Disease Society of the UK
Sort code: 20000
Account No. 43353958

Tickets are also on sale at all branch meetings.

RAFFLE!

Any queries to Geoff and Alison Gee:
membership@parkinsonsreading.org.uk

Thames River Cruise

We are planning a Thames River Cruise and light lunch Leaving from near Caversham Bridge, on Wednesday Sept 4th, 12pm to 2pm, in place of the monthly branch meeting.

The cost of this trip will depend on the number of people who would like to attend. Please register your interest by paying a £10 deposit per person. If we don't go ahead with the cruise or if you decide not to go the deposit will be refunded.

Make your deposit by bank transfer: Parkinson's Disease Society of the UK, Sort Code 20-00-00, Account Number: 43353958 using the reference "River Cruise". Alternatively, you can pay by cash or cheque, made payable to 'PDS Reading Branch, at any of the Reading group meetings. Thank you.

Carers Corner

We had another very good Carers and Supporters meeting on Thursday 25th April. 16 people attended including Tina Kislingbury who was there from Parkinson's UK to advise individuals on a 1:1 basis. She was really pleased to see the level of knowledge and support offered from everyone at the meeting and will hopefully attend some future events.

Thanks to Mark who set up a WhatsApp survey to determine best days and times for our gatherings - guess what there's no one consensus! So for the time being we will continue to offer every two to three months on different days of the week, in the hope that if you couldn't make the last one, you can make the next.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday 30th July. Details to follow.

Anyone who has a partner wishing to join the WhatsApp group please email penny.inglis@btinternet.com with their phone numbers.

Penny and Alison

Thames Valley Regional Meeting Update

On Monday 29th April Reading branch committee hosted a meeting of colleagues from our neighbouring branches in the Thames Valley: Oxford, Newbury, Henley, Bracknell and Slough/Windsor/Maidenhead.

Our aim was to learn from one another, as we all do things slightly differently, but also to meet two of the new team at Parkinson's UK who will be working with us now. We were encouraged to hear that recent changes at PUK will put more focus on supporting the work of the branches.

We have already seen this starting to work: Tina Kislingbury, our new local advisor, met some of us when she came along to the last coffee morning in Wokingham and the carers meeting in Earley.

Geoff Gee

Whitchurch Art Café

On Saturday 20th April the Reading branch hosted the Whitchurch Art Café which is a community café held in Whitchurch Hill where the host charity sell tea, coffee and delicious homemade cakes with some local artwork and crafts on display with all proceeds going to their chosen charity. The event was very well attended and a great success raising £500 for the Reading branch. Thank you to all those that took part.



A Marathon Effort!

The son and daughter of one of our committee members are running the Edinburgh Half marathon at the end of May. Their target is to raise £2,000. The first £500 raised will go to PUK but anything over £500 will go to the Reading Branch. This is their Just Giving page if you would like to sponsor them - [Just Giving Alex and Millie Wood](#)