



PARKSIDE NEWSLETTER

January— August 2025
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Hello everyone!

Welcome to the Spring/Summer Parkside newsletter. It has been another exciting year (so far) at Parkside.

There has also been some change, with Parkside saying a fond farewell at the AGM in April to Chris Harris: our long-standing Chair and Trustee.

I am honoured to now take on the role of Chair, and I'm looking forward to working closely with our dedicated staff, volunteers, trustees, and of course, the people who use our services.

I live and work locally, and I have seen first-hand the positive impact this organisation has on people with disabilities and their families.

I have worked in public service roles for over 25 years, and my ambition as Chair is to use my experience to support the whole Parkside team deliver the best possible experience for our community.

Together, I believe we can build on the charity's strong foundations, explore new opportunities, and ensure that our services continue to be a welcoming, supportive, and inspiring place for all.

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter. It is a wonderful showcase of the joy of Parkside in action!

Joe Finlay

Thank You, Investec

We are delighted to share just how impactful Investec's generous grant of **£4,425**, has already been here at Parkside. Their support has enabled us to deliver a wide range of enriching and empowering experiences for our young service users.

During spring, we ran bespoke First Aid and accredited Food Hygiene training sessions. Special thanks to Louise from St Johns who led well adapted sessions. Stacey who attends Life Project said "it was all very good and the hand washing was interesting I won with the cleanest hands"

These were incredibly well received, with learners engaging enthusiastically and leaving with valuable skills that build confidence and independence in daily life.

Each of our groups has also taken part in Travel Training, making supported journeys by train to destinations such as London Waterloo, Guildford, and Alton. For many, these were their very first independent trips. The pride and excitement they felt is hard to put into words. These experiences have opened up their world, helping them gain confidence in using public transport and supporting their independence goals.

Perhaps the best part is that there are still funds remaining to continue travel training into the summer months. This means even more opportunities for our service users to build life skills, confidence, and a sense of freedom, all made possible thanks to Investec's support. On behalf of everyone at Parkside, thank you for making such a meaningful difference.



Rotary Club Christmas Collection

In February, our then Chair, Chris Harris, was delighted to attend a Rotary Club presentation where Parkside received a cheque for £330. This generous donation was the result of our efforts in the annual door-to-door Christmas collection, a much-loved local tradition bringing the community together each festive season.



JET Group Bowling Trip

In March, the JET Group enjoyed a fantastic offsite trip to Aldershot Bowling Alley, and what a brilliant time they had! It was a welcome change of scenery and a chance to do something different together. The atmosphere was full of laughter, encouragement, and a healthy bit of friendly competition.

What made the day even more special was that the group themselves had fundraised to make the outing possible. Their hard work and commitment paid off, giving



everyone the opportunity to take part and create some wonderful memories.

The trip was such a success that the group are already talking about when they can go again and judging by the smiles on the day, it will definitely become a regular highlight!



Our thanks to our amazing community, grant givers, and businesses for their incredible support. Special thanks to our dedicated volunteers whose contributions

Blackwater Valley Runners
C.Mckenzie
E Finch Funeral Directors
E Griffin
Farnborough Airport
Forrest Dragon Lodge
Hart Lottery Donors
HCC
Investec Rathbourne
J. Allen
J.Knight
Jimmy, Nicola, Frankie & Cameron
Jim Goodman
Ken Fuller
Morrisons Aldershot
Mr & Mrs Webber
Pinewood Quilters
Rushmoor Lottery Supporters
Rushmoor Rotary
S.Mellor
Sodexo
Sport England
T.Hassell
The Alexander Hotel Pub Aldershot
The Jamaican Garden
Tyler
Volunteers all of you!

Thank You Chris – Nine Years of Dedication to Parkside

Our Annual General Meeting in April was a particularly special occasion as we said goodbye to **Chris Harris**, who has stepped down as Chair of Parkside after nine years on the board. During his time in post, Chris has provided outstanding leadership, guiding us through periods of growth and change and ensuring that so many important initiatives became a reality.

Thanks to his dedication, Parkside has been transformed into a beautiful, welcoming space. From securing vital improvements such as a new roof to championing countless projects that directly benefit our service users, Chris's commitment has made a lasting difference.



Beyond these achievements, Chris has been a tireless advocate for Parkside, and a great supportive presence. His kindness, responsiveness, and enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

We are deeply grateful for everything he has done. Thank you, Chris! And thank you also to the service users who entertained us on the night and everyone who joined us for a fun and memorable event.



Easter Joy Shared at Parkside

We had a wonderful Easter at Parkside, filled with generosity, fun, and community spirit.

A big thank you to Steph from the **Alexandra Hotel and Pub in Aldershot**, who, along with her family, visited us and kindly donated Easter eggs for our service users. Our thanks also go to the pubs customers for their kindness.

Our **annual Easter Bonnet Parade** was a huge success. Thanks to **Sodexo colleagues**, who collected and donated over 100 eggs! **Sarah, Kelly, and Lee** from Sodexo joined us as judges, they had the tough job of picking five winners, but every bonnet was fantastic. Kelly said how delighted they were to be part of it, and how much fun they had judging.

We rounded off the week with a thoughtful visit from **E. Finch Funeral Directors in Aldershot**, who generously donated delicious Hot Cross Buns for everyone to enjoy.

The Garden group made some lovely creations with volunteers and PIP enjoyed some egg and spoon fun!

A heartfelt thank you to all who made Easter at Parkside so special.



Life Project Explores World Cultures

The Life Project group have been busy broadening their horizons by exploring different cultures from around the globe.

They began in **Australia**, where the sunshine made it the perfect day for a classic barbie! The group also enjoyed a fascinating programme about the **Great Barrier Reef**, sparking lots of interest and conversation.



Next stop was **Cape Verde**, where everyone got hands-on making model volcanoes. Inspired by **Pico do Fogo** the highest mountain in the islands at 2,829m and the only active volcano in the archipelago — they had great fun watching their replicas erupt.

Finally, the group turned their attention closer to home with a taste of **Scotland**. Haddock soup was on the menu, with mixed reviews, but plenty of adventurous spirits gave it a try!



Showcasing the LIFE Project

In June, we were delighted to be invited to **Henry Tyndale School** to share our brilliant LIFE Project programme. A huge thank you to Ebony and Archie, who joined Sarah and Angie to talk about their experiences. They both spoke with enthusiasm, giving a real feel into what the LIFE Project means.



Ebony said she really enjoyed the event and even thought carefully about what she wanted to wear, as she felt proud to represent the project.

It was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the impact of the programme, and the group thoroughly enjoyed taking part. We hope there will be many more chances to celebrate and promote the LIFE Project in the future.

Thank You to Farnborough Airport

We are delighted to share that Parkside received a generous grant from **Farnborough Airport**, which has enabled us to purchase and install two brand new **hot composters** in the garden.

This exciting project is being led by our garden groups, with support from staff and volunteers.



The group have already begun training on how to use and manage the composters, and they are enthusiastic about taking the lead in turning garden waste into rich compost we can reuse on-site.

The project is already making a difference. The group use a lot of compost and by producing our own will be not only cost-effective but environmentally friendly too.

The composters are a great learning tool for sustainability, gardening, & waste reduction.

We are extremely grateful to Farnborough Airport for supporting this project,

which not only saves money but also gives our members the chance to develop new skills and play an active role in caring for the environment.

History Comes Alive for Parkside at Butser

In August, a group from Parkside enjoyed a fantastic trip to **Butser Ancient Farm** in Chalton. The farm is an open-air experimental archaeology museum and active research centre, where history is brought to life by recreating the past.

Our group had the opportunity not only to observe but also to try out different activities, giving them a real hands-on experience of how people once lived. It was a fascinating and enjoyable day, full of learning, discovery, and fun!

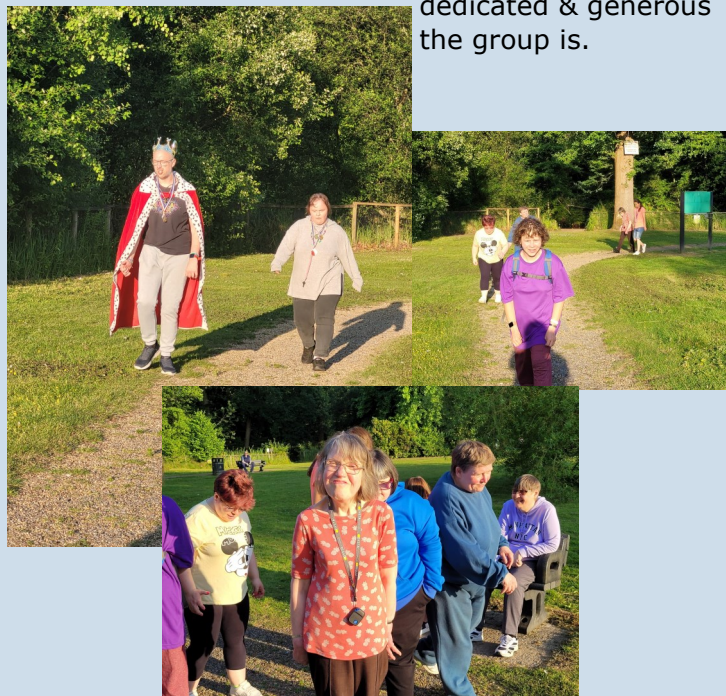


Stepping Out for the Love of Theatre

The Gateway Group once again proudly completed their sponsored walk, blessed with fine weather and led by their very own King.

A huge well done to everyone who took part in this fantastic effort! All funds raised will support their much-loved theatre trips.

At the last count they had raised an incredible £938, an amazing achievement that shows just how dedicated & generous the group is.





80!

Comic Relief FUNraising!

**Just a few Birthdays
some more significant
than others!**

**Thank you Nicola, Jimmy
Frankie & Cameron for a great
sponsored walk!**

PIP Presents Parkside Does Oz

Miscellaneous Fun

AGM 25!

Kitchen Creations

