

Parky Paddlers take on York Dragon Boat challenge

We are delighted to announce that our branch will be entering a team in this year's York Dragon Boat Races on [Sunday 12 July](#). The event will take place on the River Ouse between Scarborough Bridge and Lendal Bridge, promising an exciting day of racing and community spirit.

Our crew of 20, proudly named the Parky Paddlers, is being organised by Geoff Roberts. The team already includes several people living with Parkinson's, alongside friends and colleagues from our local community. Among those joining the crew are branch supporters Professor Sean Sweeney from York University and Parkinson's physiotherapist Maria Liversidge from the hospital.

Volunteers at our North Bank stand last year



The races begin at 10am, with the grand final expected at around 4pm, so there will be plenty of opportunities throughout the day to cheer on the Parky Paddlers. We will also have a stand on the North Bank Charity Gala, which offers a fantastic vantage point to watch the racing while helping us raise awareness about Parkinson's.

The annual Dragon Boat Festival is organised by York Rotary Club, who have generously sponsored our branch's monthly meetings for the past two years. Event teams commit to raising funds for charity. Our target is at least £2,000, with part of the proceeds supporting Rotary charities. The rest will go towards the work of our branch and the Parkinson's UK research programme.

Our donation page is now live at bit.ly/parkypaddlers. Please encourage friends, family and colleagues to sponsor the team and support this fantastic cause.

It promises to be a fun day out for everyone. If you would like to volunteer on the day or help at our stand, please contact info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk.

Come along, enjoy the atmosphere, and cheer the Parky Paddlers across the finish line!

Friendship group

Linda Constable is thinking about setting up an informal coffee shop support group for members who have lost a partner or a loved one they cared for.

If you would like to know more or have any suggestions email info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk or leave a message on 07943 137616 and Linda will be in touch.

A farewell from the chair

Our very able chair for the past three years Lorna Edmondson stepped down at the annual review meeting. Here she sums up a successful year for the branch. She began with a tribute to her predecessor and mainstay of the branch Sue Nunn, who died last November.

The past year has had its ups and downs, particularly in the loss of our dear friend Sue Nunn, who as previous chair and continuing help and guide put so much into the group. Also Peter Marshall among others. They remain in our thoughts.

Your committee has worked tirelessly on your behalf and has achieved so much. New activities include table tennis and walking rugby – big thanks to LNER Stadium for their help. Pilates is now in person and online. We've had inclusive cycling and great help from St Leonard's with our speech and language sessions. I am pleased to add that our first ever class – dancing – is still going strong.

We have taken part in World Parkinson's Day with the Big Sing, had a lovely outing to Cayton Bay glass and Scarborough, been Nordic walking to Breezy Knees gardens, laughed with a panto dame and enjoyed Christmas lunch at the Novotel. A highlight was York Disability Week when we were joined by so many hospital staff and volunteers.

Our association with York Rotary is bearing fruit. Not only are they again meeting the cost of our monthly meetings but we have a dragon boat at this year's gala.

Big thankyou to all our supermarket volunteers, to Mike Sullivan and Andrew Miller for their fundraising walking feats, and to Deborah and Mike Broadhurst for their quiz night. Also to Ray and Elaine for organising the monthly raffle, now taken on by Jean and Colin, and all the wonderful cake bakers.

Our working age group meets monthly at the Windmill pub with upwards of 30 enjoying a drink and get together. Well done to Sam for organising.

And finally – a huge thankyou to our secretary Peter Williams who is stepping down from the committee after a long commitment. His help has been outstanding. Although I am standing down

as your chair I pass you to the capable hands of Tim Bryan. I will remain on the committee and am still here if anyone needs to talk.

Lorna

Annual review kicks off a new year of activities

A packed agenda for our annual review meeting in March included inspiring talks, music, cream teas and the cutest doggie ever.

More than 70 people greeted Parkinson's UK chief executive Caroline Russell. She had very promising news on the research front, with several exciting drug trials underway. She outlined a focus to future research that would try to pinpoint a more specific Parkinson's diagnosis, with treatments to match. To that end it's vital that people with Parkinson's – and those who do not have the condition – volunteer for research. Find out more at www.parkinsons.org.uk/research/get-involved/take-part-hub

Caroline also stressed the importance of specialists such as speech and language therapists and local advisers, to help people living with Parkinson's today. Our regional adviser Sue Martin will be joining our April monthly meeting at the Folk Hall.

Then musician Richard Stirland took to the stage for excellent 1950s hits, eagerly watched by dog Honey.

But Honey wanted her turn in the limelight too, performing a series of tricks for her captivated audience!



Turning to branch news, our able chair of three years Lorna Edmondson stepped down and Tim Bryan took over the role.

Communications volunteer Janis Bright becomes deputy chair. Our longstanding secretary Peter Williams also stepped down and Sandra Blaza took on this role. The full list of committee members is on the back page. Caroline Russell presented well deserved community awards to Lorna, Peter and Linda Constable.

Contributions honoured

Three branch members who have contributed greatly to our branch received Parkinson's UK Community Awards. The awards were presented by chief executive Caroline Russell.



Linda Constable – As our membership secretary Linda ensured that every newcomer to our meetings received the warmest of welcomes and the encouragement needed to benefit from the all that the branch offers.

As well as supporting our exercise, dance and Nordic Walking sessions Linda was the driving force behind the establishment of our popular music therapy group.

Whatever we planned, Linda and her late husband Eric's support could always be relied on. She never seeks the limelight and is always ready to support the work of others.

Most significant has been Linda's ability to spot when somebody needs a helping hand. It is often the little things that make the greatest difference – and that's where Linda shines.

Lorna Edmondson – Lorna has been an inspiring chair for York Branch over the past three years. Under her guidance, meeting attendance has grown, activity programmes have expanded, and awareness and fundraising events have reached more people.

Lorna ensures that all contributions are voluntary, so no one is excluded due to cost, and always emphasises support for partners and carers. Her tireless fundraising, including organising supermarket collections and selling her own craft work at fairs, has been instrumental in making activities accessible to all.

Lorna's dedication and compassion have truly transformed the branch community.

Peter Williams – Peter has been the backbone of our branch, working tirelessly as secretary to help create opportunities for people with Parkinson's to keep active and engaged.

His infectious enthusiasm and sense of humour help to make volunteering fun. And his wisdom, experience and 'can do' attitude have been key to creating our varied and ever-expanding activity programme.

Peter is a great communicator. In his role as Secretary Peter took on the vital though often unglamorous task of ensuring the committee ran smoothly and stayed on top of branch business.

Peter is also active in his local community and the willingness of friends and neighbours to help raise funds for Parkinson's is clearly a reflection of the respect and affection in which he is held.

Money matters

Treasurer Stuart Rawlings told our annual review meeting that broadly speaking the branch finances are in a healthy state. But we must keep up our fundraising efforts for the coming year.

Last year's accounts showed our increased activity with in-person pilates, cycling and regular speech and language sessions. We are becoming more ambitious with awareness raising events like Disability Week at Spurriergate and the North Bank Gala.

An increasing number of members are now making monthly donations by Standing Order rather than making cash contributions at each session. This has brought in over £2,000 in Gift Aid receipts. Special thanks to those who contribute more than our suggested donation rates and those who still contribute even when their health no longer enables them to participate.

That means we still have a healthy balance of just over £26,000, equivalent to six months expenditure in our current programme. However, last year expenditure just slightly exceeded income – so our fundraising activities remain vital. So a big thank you to our intrepid fundraisers. As well as our regular volunteers at supermarket collections we benefitted from friends and family members who organised their own activities – contributing to both our local branch programme and Parkinson's UK nationally.

Huge thanks to funders

We're so grateful to anyone who raises funds to keep our branch activities happening.

This month we must pay tribute to Pamela Hulmes, Ladies Captain at Pike Hills Golf Course, who raised over £900 at a coffee morning to 'tee off' a year of fundraising for Parkinson's York Branch and PUK research.

We are also grateful for the proceeds of funeral collections for Pete Marshall and Pete Ella. Our deepest condolences go to their families.

More ways to contribute to our branch

Monthly raffle - We don't make a charge for our meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at New Earswick Folk Hall. But we do encourage everybody to take part in the raffle to help meet some of the costs so please make sure you're always in it and you might just win it! Thanks to Colin and Jeane Brown who work so hard to track down fun and worthwhile prizes. You can always donate a prize yourself of course.

Helping out - Members are also invited to support our awareness and fundraising events. Let us know at info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk if you would like to be added to our 'Helping Out at York Parkinsons' WhatsApp group so you can keep up to date with volunteering opportunities.

Collection boxes - If you'd like to ask your local shop, post office or take-away to put one of our collecting tins on their counter please email info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk and we'll help to get that arranged.

Fundraising partners - As well as generous private donations we are also supported by local groups like Rotary, Pike Hills Golf Course and friends and family who are taking part in sponsored challenges. Hopefully we will all find sponsors for our Parky Paddlers dragon boat team. If you know of any group or individual interested in raising funds for Parkinson's then let us know and we'll be happy to help.

Big turnout for World Parkinson's Day

We'll be at York Station all day on Saturday 11 April for this special day. Join us to raise awareness of Parkinson's and enjoy live music. We have no fewer than four live acts booked to bring cheer and entertainment on the station concourse:

10:00am – Tim and Barbara Kent

12:00 noon – Dunnington Singers

2:00pm – Riccall Village Voices

3:00pm – Barberellas

More than 40 volunteers have already booked their one hour slot to help out. Like to join us? Email info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk or call 07943 137616.

And it doesn't stop there. The Parkinson's Creatives are staging an exhibition of their arts and crafts work at Hartrigg Oaks in New Earswick from 9-11 April, with a coffee morning. Plus – physio Maria Liversidge is also planning a display in reception at York Hospital on Monday 13 April. Call in at either and you'll get a warm welcome.



Volunteers at our last railway station event in 2024 Maria (third from left) and colleagues at the hospital last year.



Getting you there with transport help

We are delighted to announce a partnership that will help more people affected by Parkinson's to attend our meetings and activity programme.

If you don't have access to a car, find public transport difficult, or feel that private taxis are too expensive or unreliable, this new service could be the answer.

About York Wheels

York Wheels is a voluntary community transport service supporting older people and those with disabilities. It helps people in York make essential journeys and attend social and community activities.

Journeys are provided by volunteer drivers who use their own cars. Charges are based on the miles travelled, plus a small admin fee.

Travel to York Parkinson's activities

York Wheels has agreed to support travel to any York Parkinson's meetings and activities listed in our quarterly newsletter. Two things to note:

- Journeys must be booked at least one day in advance
- To avoid disappointment, please book as soon as you know your travel plans.

How to book

Call 01904 630080 to book a car

- Payment is made in advance by card
- Once your details are registered, future bookings can also be made online at yorkwheels.org.uk

Help with costs

We are committed to making sure no one is excluded from our activities because of cost. We have set aside funds to help subsidise the York Wheels service for those who need support.

If cost is a concern, please contact a committee member or email us at info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk. Or you can phone and leave a message on 07943 137616. We will advise you, in confidence, about

how to book transport with York Wheels for travel to and from our group activities without charge.

Keeping you informed

This is a new initiative, which we will keep under review. Any updates will be shared through our newsletter, monthly meetings, and email bulletins

Coming soon...

We've a bumper set of special events coming up. Keep checking our website for more info or email us at info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk.

Our monthly meeting on Wednesday 8 April features the fabulous work of wildlife photographer Peter Lau. Our relaxing and fun Nordic walking group returns on Wednesday 22 April.

Then the following week, Wednesday 29 April, we have a special visit to York University. Professors Sean Sweeney and Steve Smith, who spoke at our February meeting, will take members on a guided tour of their labs to see their Parkinson's research in action. Places are limited so book now to secure your place. Email Rex Godby at rex.godby@gmail.com.

Looking further ahead, our next collection day is Friday 15 May at Morrisons Foss Island. Volunteers are also needed at the Track 29 gig on Saturday 6 June. And cricket fans can sign up to help on our stand at York Sports Club for the visit of Yorkshire Cricket on 29 and 31 July.



Members of our dance class held at Wigginton Recreation Hall feature in a new video made by class leader Angela Kirkham.

See them in action via our website at www.yorkparkinsons.co.uk/our-classes. Want to join in? The classes are on Fridays at 10.30am.

Events Calendar

Our regular meetings are held at the Folk Hall, Hawthorn Terrace, New Earswick YO32 4AQ. They are on the second Wednesday of each month, starting at 2pm, and all members, family and friends are welcome. Our regular classes are listed separately. Keep checking our website for updates.

Friday 27 March – Speech and language therapy plus carers' conversation. St Leonards, 1pm

Wednesday 8 April – Peter Lau – Wildlife Photographer: Access the Dales, plus PUK adviser Sue Martin. Our monthly meeting, Folk Hall, New Earswick, 2pm

Thursday 9 to 12 April – Parkinson's Creatives exhibition & coffee morning Sat 11th 10am-12, Hartrigg Oaks, New Earswick

Saturday 11 April – WORLD PARKINSON'S DAY – Volunteers at railway station event

Monday 13 April – Display stand at York Hospital

Tuesday 21 April – Working Age Group, The Windmill, Blossom Street, 6pm

Friday 24 April – Speech and language therapy plus carers' conversation, St Leonards, 1pm

Wednesday 29 April – University of York Lab visit with Profs Sean Sweeney & Steve Smith

Wednesday 13 May – Getting the right Healthcare for Parkinson's, with retired consultant David Heseltine. Plus: Jennie Cox – Local Area Coordinators. Our monthly meeting, Folk Hall, New Earswick, 2pm

Friday 15 May – Collection: Morrisons Foss Island – Volunteers needed

Tuesday 19 May – Working Age Group

Friday 29 May – Speech and language therapy plus carers' conversation

Saturday 6 June – TRACK 29 gig at Wigginton Recreation Hall – Volunteers needed

Wednesday 10 June – ANNUAL OUTING to Sledmere Hall – book now

Tuesday 16 June – Working Age Group

Friday 26 June – Speech and language therapy plus carers' conversation

Wednesday 8 July – 'Food for Thought' Parkinsons and smart nutrition, Dr Lisa Gatenby and Digital Friendly York Misoon El Gomati, our monthly meeting, Folk Hall

Keep an eye on our website

www.yorkparkinsons.co.uk for up to date information about our programmes.

Email info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk if you are able to volunteer for our fundraising and awareness events.

Taking a trip to historic Sledmere

Join us for our annual York Branch summer outing to Sledmere House and Gardens on Wednesday 10 June. We will travel by coach from York at around 9am (pick-up points to be confirmed).



The day will include:

- 11.30am Guided tour of Sledmere House
- 1.00pm Afternoon tea in memory of our former chair Sue Nunn, who organised our June outings for many years
- 2.30pm Guided tour of the gardens
- 4.00pm Coach departs for York

Cost: £25 per person, £15 for partners and carers, or pay what you can afford.

Booking: Contact Sam Stubbings

Email: samstubbings1974@gmail.com

Phone: 07979 226467

Our exercise and therapeutic classes

Our classes are great fun, are specifically tailored for people with Parkinson's and you'll get a warm welcome at any of them. It doesn't matter if you can't do all of the exercises or activities – you can just do as much as you feel able to. All of our classes are run by experienced professionals.

Our classes sometimes change venue or timings, and sometimes they are fully booked. So before joining a class for the first time, please email us at info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk to book your place. Then we'll be able to contact you if anything changes.

In person activity classes

Music Therapy

Weekly on Mondays at 11am-12.30pm, Acomb Methodist Church – Contribution £5 with refreshments

Non-contact Boxing

Weekly on Mondays at 2-3pm, Legions Gym Dunnington. Contribution £5



General Exercise

Weekly on Tuesdays at 11.45am-12.30pm, Wigginton Recreation Hall – Contribution £4 Also available online

Rise & Shine Pilates

Weekly on Wednesdays at 11.30-12.15pm, Acomb Methodist Church. Also available online

PD Power Circuits

Weekly on Thursdays at 4.30-5.30pm, Wigginton Recreation Hall – Contribution £5

Dance for Parkinson's

Weekly on Fridays at 10.30-11.30am, Wigginton Recreation Hall (access from 10am-12noon). Contribution £4

Parkinson's Creatives

Art and crafts, Thursdays 10.30-12.30 Hartrigg Oaks, New Earswick. Contribution £4

Nordic walking and inclusive cycling

We are in discussion with Rebecca at Nordic Strides and Paula at Get Cycling about our summer programme. Keep an eye on our website and monthly bulletins for further information.

Walking Football

Wednesdays at 10-11am at the LNER Stadium – Contribution £5



Inclusive Table Tennis

Weekly on Tuesdays from 6 January, 2 – 4pm, York Stadium Leisure Centre Contribution £5

Walking Rugby

Fortnightly on Fridays 1-2pm from 1 May, LNER Community Stadium



Your branch committee

Branch Chair and Programme Coordinator:

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www.facebook.com/groups/YorkParkinsons

www.yorkparkinsons.co.uk

Useful Contacts

Parkinson's UK Volunteer Support Officer:

Becki Craft

Email: rcraft@parkinsons.org.uk

Parkinsons Nurse Specialist

Elderly Medicine York Hospital Tel: 01904 725607

Neurology Dept York Hospital Tel: 01904 721061

Parkinson's UK Help Line

Confidential service offering support to anyone affected by Parkinson's.

Call FREE - 0808 800 0303

Opening times: Mon-Fri 9am-8pm Sat: 10am-2pm
(last call taken 7.45pm Monday-Friday)

email: hello@parkinsons.org.uk

Parkinson's UK local adviser: Sue Martin

0344 225 3635 or email:

smartin@parkinsons.org.uk

Sue can give advice and support on all the non-medical issues around living with Parkinson's. So whether it's finance, benefits, travel, accessing care, home adaptations, planning for the future or anything else that's troubling you, get in touch.

York Carers Centre

Independent body that helps unpaid carers in York. They offer a range of free help and support.

Ring on 01904 715490 or

Email: enquiries@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk

Parkinson's memory support adviser with Dementia Forward for North Yorkshire:

Yvonne Sidwell helpline: 03300 578592

**Need someone to talk to?
Call the Parkinson's UK national helpline free on 0808 800 0303.**

Please help support our committee by taking on a task.

Join our WhatsApp group to keep up with opportunities to join in. No big commitment needed, just a willingness to get involved when you can. Contact any committee member to see how you can help.