

Music hits the right notes!



What a fantastic time we had in December with music and fundraising combined!

York musician Paul Duckitt decided he wanted to honour singer and national treasure Ozzy Osbourne in the best possible way – by organising a tribute gig. The Black Sabbath frontman lived with Parkinson's so Paul wanted to raise funds for the cause too.



No fewer than nine bands gave their time for free, as did venue The Fulfordgate Club. With food and a raffle into the bargain, the brilliant gig raised a whopping £563 for our branch and national research. Huge thanks to everyone involved.

Riccall Village Voices choir formed during lockdown to enjoy singing outdoors in the school car park, led by Caz Bradley. It was so popular that, when allowed to sing indoors, they continued meeting every Tuesday evening. About 50 people attend regularly.

The annual Carol Concert held in St Mary's church in Riccall always raises funds for deserving charities. In 2025 Parkinson's UK York branch was chosen. Tom Metcalfe is a choir member and made a short presentation of the impact of Parkinson's on those like himself who have the condition and how Parkinson's UK York branch has been able to support him.



The generosity of the audience and choir resulted in £620 being raised. Thank you Riccall and the Village Voices.

And to round off the festivities, the wonderful ladies from the Track 29 acapella choir entertained Christmas diners at The Fox and Roman. They dedicated their performance to friends and loved ones affected by Parkinson's and also raised funds to support the York Branch programme.

From the chair – Lorna Edmondson

What a roller coaster of a few months it's been.

Our branch goes from strength to strength and I am amazed at how many of the professionals who lead our many and varied activities are willing to go on courses to learn more about Parkinson's and how best they can help and support us. In addition so many of the health care team came and supported us at the Spurriergate Centre. We are so grateful to each of them.

Sadly we have lost some of our much loved members. We are privileged to have known them. Inevitably as we turn the page into a new year they will come to mind. But 2026 is a new beginning and we must try to live with a positive attitude, however difficult that may be at times.

The branch Christmas lunch at the Novotel was the first one I had organised by myself and I was grateful to Mike Sullivan for helping with the final arrangements. Sorry we had to close bookings early due to high demand. The food was excellent. The staff were efficient and courteous. Elaine did a marvellous job with the raffle and we were able to finish in ample time for those who had pre-booked taxis home. Thanks to all who helped in any way. It is certainly somewhere we will return to.

On a personal note I will be stepping down as lead volunteer at the March AGM. BUT I will remain on the committee and help in as many ways as time allows. As always I am just a phone call away.

Best wishes for 2026

Lorna



Lorna shares a joke with panto dame Robin Simpson at our meeting.

Jingling all the way

No fewer than 21 volunteers turned out for our festive Blue Santa event at Tesco. They raised a magnificent £850 for branch funds. And elsewhere, Lorna and Maurice Edmondson brought cheer and crafts to the annual gift event at the Half Moon.



Meanwhile, the Parkinson's dance class will be keeping warm and cosy this winter. Chris Whitmore crocheted blankets as gifts for class members, and as a thank you the recipients made a donation to the branch. A generous £140 was raised.



A tribute to Sue



'Oh boy, what a hat!'

Read Sue's story of her Palace trip:

www.yorkparkinsons.co.uk/sue-at-the-palace

Doing the ton round the Manx TT circuit on the back of a Yamaha was Sue Nunn's idea of a good holiday. It was just one of many motorbike adventures she and husband Dave took during their 25-year marriage.

Sue's zest for life came through in everything she did. When the couple met she was holding down three different jobs. The main one was as a solicitor's clerk – giving her invaluable legal knowledge that she kept up.

On moving to Strensall, Sue got involved with village life, first as a parish councillor and then as the parish clerk. When the news came of her diagnosis with Parkinson's she got involved with the York Branch.

Over time Sue took on most of the committee roles with our branch, and chaired it for many years. As well as throwing herself into fundraising and campaigning for better services, she organised memorable outings to interesting places, the Christmas lunch and even an annual holiday. Her quizzes were the stuff of legend. Most of all though, members will recall her dedication to being there for them when needed. She was the reassuring voice on the phone for so many newly diagnosed people.

Along the way Sue enjoyed theatre, playing tennis and going to the races. Dave fondly remembers her being 'unbelievably lucky' with her bets on the day.

Sue's energy and commitment were recognised in 2024 when she was invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace, which she attended with her daughter Ruth. That year she also won a Parkinson's UK community award and was delighted to celebrate the branch's 45th anniversary.

Your committee sends condolences to Dave, Ruth, son in law Ian and Sue's two grandchildren on behalf of the whole branch. Sue will be much missed.

Remembering 'Pete the Beat'

Longtime branch member Peter Marshall was a musician, sportsman and businessman.

He and his wife of 58 years Chris were both born and bred in York. Peter, who died in December, was always interested in art and began his working life creating posters and display for a furniture shop. Eventually he founded his own artwork supplies business, which is still thriving under the leadership of one of their two sons.

Peter enjoyed cycling and skiing and in recent years nurtured a collection of Bonsai plants. But he is best known for his drumming and percussion talents. A school mate of well known York musician Steve Cassidy, Peter went on to play in a variety of regional bands. His favourite music was rock'n'roll.

He became 'Pete the Beat' in our branch music therapy sessions, which he much enjoyed. Unable to play the drums, with his usual determination he took up a percussion machine that helped him do



the job just as well.

Your committee sends its condolences to Chris, their sons and four grandchildren.

York Branch reaches out

Thank you to everyone who helped make our contribution to York Disability Week at Spurriergate Centre on 5 December such a success. At Living with Parkinson's we welcomed more than 70 visitors, including many new faces who we hope to see again at future activities.



Special thanks to Maria Liversidge and colleagues from York Hospital Elderly Services, who provided advice on medication, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and home care. It is good to see the extra support now available from these posts funded by Parkinson's UK. We were also encouraged by support from Sarah Finch (physiotherapist) and Tracy Ward (Parkinson's nurse) from the neurology team.

A highlight of the day was the impromptu group speech and language therapy session led by Esther Capes. Please consider joining our monthly sessions if you found it helpful.

Keith Wilson from the Darlington Branch kindly travelled down to demonstrate VR headsets and other tech devices – see next story.

Thanks to all our volunteers, including Hilary and Theresa who ensured every guest was offered tea and coffee. And, of course, all the members in York branch T-shirts who welcomed newcomers.

We look forward to getting involved again in York Disability Week and meanwhile we welcome feedback about this year's event and ideas about how we can reach out to more people who are affected by Parkinson's.

Technology for therapy

Keith Wilson – lead volunteer from Darlington branch – writes:

Have you ever considered using virtual reality (VR) for therapy? It doesn't appeal to everyone but it works for me and many who try it.

The excellent Living with Parkinson's event gave me the opportunity to demonstrate a range of technologies. These included everything from beechbands, metronome watches and Cue1+ devices, through KOKU and We Are Undeatable exercise apps to VR headsets including Recreo and Meta Quest. There were some exciting moves from those who tried them.

It was gratifying to learn that three of the final year physiotherapy students present are specialising in Parkinson's. One is writing a dissertation on the use of Tai Chi for Parkinson's which will now include a section on virtual Tai Chi.

Our free headset loan with tutorial support is described in the Autumn edition of the PUK Progress magazine. If you would like to try it please get in touch quickly before the funds run out.

You can also find out more about tech support for Parkinson's in the Tech Guide at <https://techguide.parkinsons.org.uk/>



Branch member Sean Murphy, under the watchful eye of Keith Wilson, tries out VR technology with PUK local adviser Sue Martin looking on.

Speaking up for Parkinson's...and Caring too

If you think the volume has been turned up on the chatter at our monthly meetings then it might be coming from those who've been enjoying our speech and language support sessions led by Esther Capes.

We've been meeting in the peaceful surroundings of The Sunflower Centre and are so grateful to Charlotte and Lucy in the Outreach and Wellbeing team at St Leonard's, not only for making the facilities available without charge but also for arranging for their wellbeing volunteers to be on hand to serve refreshments and support the session.

Knowing that those we care for are in good hands, partners and carers have also been meeting informally in an adjoining space to swap experiences and ideas about caring for people with Parkinson's. The discussions have been wide ranging including, for example; navigating health and care services, accessing financial support, who to turn to in difficult times, mobility aids but most importantly it's been about mutual support, friendship and encouragement.

If you'd like to be involved in either the Speech and Language support sessions or the Carer's Conversation we will be meeting on the last Friday of each month at 1pm so our next meeting will be 30 January. Just turn up at The Sunflower Centre, St Leonard's Hospice, YO24 1GL or if you want to know more, get in touch at info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk

Working age group

Meets monthly to share stories, advice, have fun and support each other.

All welcome at The Windmill, Blossom Street, Tuesday 20 January, 6-8pm

See our website for more dates.

Rugby strides forward

The walking rugby sessions started as a taster in the autumn have received a huge boost thanks to Parkinson's UK. York Rugby League Foundation won a PUK physical activity grant worth £2,500 to run more sessions in the coming year.



The adapted sessions proved to be very popular and an immediate success, demonstrating their benefit and the need for them to continue.

The funding means that sessions will return to the LNER Community Stadium shortly. Sessions are open to both men and women, and although traditionally aimed at anyone over 50 years old, everyone is welcome. Get in touch if you are interested in giving it a try (sorry, couldn't resist the pun!).

Dining in Style!

Some 80 branch members enjoyed an excellent Christmas lunch at the Novotel in York. It was lovely to see so many friends enjoying the atmosphere and good food. The raffle, very ably organised by Elaine, raised an amazing £700.



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.

Tuesday 6 January – Inclusive Table Tennis Launch
2pm – 4pm York Stadium Leisure Centre



Wednesday 14 January – Our meeting at the Folk Hall, New Earswick. Parkinson's Research at University of York. Professor Stephen Smith – Physics, Engineering and Technology, Professor Sean Sweeney – Neurology

Friday 30 January – Speech and Language Therapy – plus carers' group. Sunflower Centre, St Leonard's, 1pm

Wednesday 11 February – Bibi Heal – Sounds that Move



INCLUSIVE TABLE TENNIS

From 6 January 2026

Tuesdays 2pm – 4pm

York Stadium Leisure Centre YO32 9AF

Arranged with Parkinson's in mind but open to any adult, including beginners or wheelchair users, looking for a fun and friendly place to play.

Just drop in, or to find out more go to:
yorkparkinsons.co.uk



**Keeping Active
Staying Connected**

Saturday 21 February – COLLECTION Tesco Clifton Moor. Volunteers needed

Friday 27 February – Speech and Language Therapy – plus carers' group. Sunflower Centre, St Leonard's, 1pm

Sunday 8 March – National Day of Dance

Wednesday 11 March – Annual Review Meeting, Folk Hall. RICHARD STIRLAND, Singer and Guitarist with his dog HONEY. Caroline Russell CEO – Parkinson's UK

Wednesday 8 April – Peter Lau – Wildlife Photographer Access the Dales

Look out on our website for dates and times of Speech and Language Therapy, Walking Rugby and Nordic Walking.

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.

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

Rebecca and Linda lead our walks on the fourth Wednesday each month. Join the WhatsApp group to keep in touch with future plans: email info@yorkparkinsons.co.uk or message 07943 137616. Contact Rebecca at rebeccagospo@hotmail.com for a small group induction session

Walking Football In partnership with York City Foundation

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

Financial contributions for classes

We've suggested here a level of contribution for each class but leave it up to members, based on their personal circumstances, whether to pay more, less or nothing at all. We are determined that cost should never be a barrier to people with Parkinson's benefitting from our events and activities.

Anyone wishing to donate or pay for classes OR make a general voluntary donation via an online transfer or paying a cheque into the York Parkinson's Branch account, please use the following details:

Sort Code: 20-00-00 Account Number : 23732452

Name: Parkinsons Disease Society of the United Kingdom (as much of name as can be entered)

Reference: Name of the donor or the reason for the deposit

Regular attendees may be able to gift aid their contributions, which helps our branch even more. Contact our Treasurer Stuart Rawlings for details: stuart.rawlings@yorksurvey.co.uk



Your branch committee

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www.facebook.com/groups/YorkParkinsons

www.yorkparkinsons.co.uk

Yorks and Humber Younger Persons Support Group

For people aged up to 66, meets monthly in York

Email: parkinsonsyhyspg@gmail.com

Parkinson's UK Volunteer Support Officer

Becki Craft

Email: rcraft@parkinsons.org.uk

Parkinsons Nurse Specialist

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

Useful Contacts

Need someone to talk to? Call us on 07943 137616 and leave a message. We'll call you back. Or ring the Parkinson's UK national helpline free on 0808 800 0303.

Please help support our committee by taking on a task. We need help with volunteering for an hour at events, updating our website, greeting members at our monthly meeting, and shadowing our accounting function. Or maybe you could contribute in another way? No big commitment needed, just a willingness to get involved when you can. Contact any committee member to see how you can help.