



Summer 2023



Photo Source: Serendipity Members at Basingstoke Group

Issue Number: 2

Welcome to your **Serendipity Social Newsletter!**

Here to share news and what's going on at Autism Hampshire and your Serendipity Groups.



Photo Source: DJ at Southampton City Farm

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Photo Source: Rachael at the Southampton City Farm Group

Check out our [new groups!](#)





Team 2023

(see more
pages
4 & 5)



Cheryl



Katie



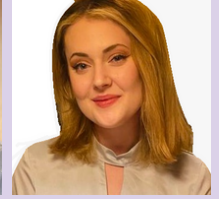
Rachael



Sophie



Jane



Abigail

Our message to you!



Will

Goodbye and good luck!

Will was our administrator for Serendipity, he left in March 2023. We know many of you knew Will and were very fond of him. We miss him too! We wish him all the best and good luck in his future endeavors.



Carolyn

Goodbye and good luck!

Carolyn was our Serendipity Coordinator for groups across Southampton. She left in June 2023. We wish her well and good luck.



Lindsey

Goodbye and good luck!

Lindsey was one of our Serendipity Coordinators, she mainly coordinated the Fareham Group. She left the team at the start of the year. We wish her all the best!



Say
hello
to the
2023
Team



Cheryl



Katie



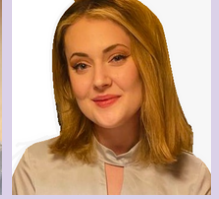
Rachael



Sophie



Jane



Abigail

Our message to you!



Cheryl

Associate Director Community Services

I have recently had a promotion from Community and Fundraising Manager to the Associate Director of Community Services. This means I am the senior manager who oversees all our services that support and work with autistic people in the community. Serendipity, Training, Mentoring, IAG and Fundraising are the services I oversee. You may have seen me at one of your groups before, as prior to this I was the Serendipity Manager.



Katie

Serendipity Service Manager

I am the new Serendipity Service Manager. You may see me at some of the groups as my role is to support the team and the wonderful volunteers in making the groups an enjoyable and safe space for all. I have worked for Autism Hampshire more many years so may know me from my role in Information, Advice and Guidance.



Rachael

Serendipity Project Lead

I have been the Serendipity Project Lead since August 2022. My role is to help grow Serendipity and provide more groups and opportunities for autistic adults across the county of Hampshire.

Some of you already know me because I coordinated or set up your group. You still may see me at your group now and again, but I no longer solely coordinate any of the groups.



Welcome to Sophie, Jane & Abigail



Sophie
(Joined in February)

Serendipity Coordinator

My name is Sophie. I joined the serendipity team in February this year. I am very enthusiastic when it comes to coordinating my groups. I currently have five groups as well as helping with other groups or workshops. I enjoy meeting new and existing members and getting to know you all.

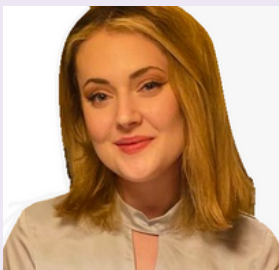


Jane
(Joined in April)

Serendipity Coordinator

My name is Jane and I am very happy to have joined the Serendipity Team at Autism Hampshire. I will be helping to set up new skills groups and also coordinating some of our existing community groups.

I look forward to meeting you at some of our groups; do come and say hello!



Abigail
(Joined in July)

Serendipity Administrator

My name is Abigail and I am the new Serendipity Administrator. My role is to support the running of Autism Hampshire's Serendipity groups. I look forward to getting to know you all!



Serendipity Groups Update

What has happened so far in 2023?

New Forest Serendipity Group

The group opened on 11th January at the Forest Arts Centre in New Milton. Please spread the word and ask us for your first taster session if this is a group you would like to attend. We meet once a month on a Wednesday from 1pm until 3pm.

Southampton City Farm

We started a group at Southampton City Farm on 9th March. We meet once a month on a Thursday from 10am to 12pm. The farm offers a range of activities from animal enrichment to gardening, wood craft and cooking. The group was set up by Rachael and has recently been supported by Jane. These are led sessions and have limited numbers.

Basingstoke Serendipity Group

We also launched a group in Basingstoke at The Orchard on 27th March. It happens one Monday each month from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Please spread the word and ask us for your first taster session if this is a group you would like to attend.

Life Skills Through Drama

We started a new Skills Based Group in July. This group is held once a month on a Monday from 1pm - 3pm at the MAST. The group explores a range of life skills using performing art techniques. Please spread the word and ask us for your first taster session if this is a group you would like to attend.

Neurodivergent Yoga Sessions

We also launched a series of 5 yoga sessions in Fareham. The sessions focused on self love and comfortable body movement. They were facilitated by our volunteer Victoria Orsini. The group found them to be very accessible and beneficial for allowing them a time to wind down and recharge.

Do you have an idea for a new group or workshop? Please email us via serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk



Members' Corner

Southampton City Farm Group

Teaming up with Southampton City Farm to provide a skills based group has been a pleasure to facilitate this year. The photos and quotes from members below show why it has been so worthwhile getting this group started.



"The farm group is a friendly, fun, non-judgmental group of people; the animals are fun to be around and make me smile. It's a welcome relief and a calm quiet environment."

Caroline



"The farm is probably my favourite group run by Serendipity. As well as the Serendipity Team being helpful and super welcoming the farm staff and volunteers are also really welcoming and understanding of Autism and other learning disabilities. They're great at providing support; the sessions are always calming and

fun."

Kelly



"I highly recommend visiting the farm... it is a stimulating and pleasant experience each time!"

Matt

If you want to know more about the farm group or how to join, please contact: serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk



Group Photos

All photos are subject to written consent from the participant(s)



Fareham Group (top left)



Portsmouth Group (top right)



Winchester Group (left)



Basingstoke Group (right)



New Milton Group (bottom left)



Southampton Art Group (bottom right)

Want your group featured in the next Newsletter? Please email us via serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk

Volunteers' Corner

Interview with Chris:

How does it make you feel to be involved with our Serendipity Groups?

"I'm overjoyed that the Serendipity Group that I had a part in setting up is going from strength to strength.

Every session is amazing due to the fantastic people in the group. I have teary eyes when I consider how far this group has come in such a short time."



Photo Source: Southampton Art Group Volunteers (Chris on the left)

Would you recommend volunteering with Autism Hampshire to others? If so, why?

"Yes, I would definitely recommend volunteering with Autism Hampshire because all the staff are extremely knowledgeable and supportive. They genuinely understand the issues that I face on a daily basis."

Chris's Verdict

What do you enjoy most about volunteering for our group?

"The group's members and staff make this group enjoyable, bringing me the 'joie de vivre'."

Thank you to our volunteers!

A big thank you to all of our volunteers for the time and effort they put into running the Serendipity groups.

If you are a volunteer and would like to share something about you or your group in the newsletter, please email: serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk

We are looking for Volunteers!



Winchester,
Basingstoke, New
Milton, Havant and
Swanmore





A round-up of recent events



Understanding Autism Webinar

In March we ran this webinar hosted by our Senior Autistic Practice and Training Specialist, Dave Serpell-Stevens. There were two sessions aimed at helping autistic people understand what autism is and what it isn't. We were joined by dozens of people for the two live sessions and the video has been viewed by more than 250 people since on YouTube. Type the link below into your web browser search bar if you would like to view it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBRmLHDEqQY&t=198s>

Golf Day Success

At the end of April, we were able to bring back Autism Hampshire's biggest fundraising event, which had to be called off in 2022 due to Covid. The event featured sports stars and local business people, who joined us at Bramshaw Golf Club and helped to raise more than £5,000.



And some upcoming fundraisers



Battersea Park Bungee Jump

29th July 2023, Chelsea Gate Car Park, Carriage Drive North, London SW11 4NJ

Goodwood Motor Circuit 10k

17th September 2023, Goodwood Motor Circuit, Chichester PO18 0PX

To take part in any events, please visit the Autism Hampshire website under events. You can also create your own event to help raise money for Autism Hampshire.



Would you like to help out at our events?
You could become an events volunteer!
Find out more by emailing:
fundraising@autismhampshire.org.uk



Our current Serendipity Groups

You are welcome to attend multiple groups/workshops - you just need to email us first

Serendipity Group	Date and Time
Basingstoke Group	Once a month on a Monday, 1:30pm - 3:30pm
Eastleigh Group <u>Online</u> & In Person	Friday, 4pm - 6pm (Online) Friday, 3pm - 5pm (In Person)
Fareham Group	1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10:45am - 12:00 midday
Solent Group	Three Sundays per month, 7pm - 9pm
New Milton Group	Once a month on Wednesday 1pm - 3pm
Portsmouth Group	Every other Monday, 5pm - 7pm
Southampton Art Group	Every other Thursday, 3pm - 5pm
Southampton City Farm Group	Once a month on a Thursday, 10am - 12pm
St James' Park Group (Shirley, Southampton)	Every other Tuesday, 11am - 1pm
Women's Online Group	Every other Tuesday, 7:30pm - 9pm
Winchester Craft Group	Every other Sunday, 3pm - 4:30pm
Life Skills Through Drama, MAST (Southampton)	Once a month on Monday 1pm - 3pm

If you would like any information on the upcoming groups or how to join, please contact: serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk



Upcoming Serendipity Groups

You are welcome to attend multiple groups/workshops - you just need to email serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk first

Serendipity Groups	Date and Time
Swanmore Group	TBC
Bordon Group	TBC
Havant Group	TBC

Our Upcoming Workshops:

Serendipity Workshops	Date and Time
Understanding Autism Workshops	Fridays 10am - 12pm November to December 2023 (in person) AND Thursdays 6pm - 8pm January to February 2024 (online)
Sound Bath	TBC
Barclays Eagle Club	TBC
Ready2Shine	TBC
Money Works	TBC
Neurodivergent Yoga	TBC

If you would like any information on the upcoming groups or how to join, please contact: serendipity@autismhampshire.org.uk



Activity Page

Serendipity Word Search

Word search grid containing letters for the Serendipity word search puzzle.

- YOGA
FUNDRAISING
EMPATHETIC
HONEST
RESPECTFUL
SERENDIPITY
GAMES
WORKSHOPS
DRAMA
FRIENDSHIP
TRUSTWORTHY
FARM
CRAFT
COMMUNITY

This is a Serendipity word search based on our groups and our HEART Values at Autism Hampshire

Autism Hampshire Vision, Values & Mission graphic with icons and text describing the organization's goals and principles.

Play this puzzle online at : https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/5749549/

Ice Cream Flavors

Word search grid for Ice Cream Flavors containing letters for the puzzle.

- COCONUT
STRAWBERRY
VANILLA
FUDGE
ROCKY ROAD
COOKIE DOUGH
NEOPOLITAN
COTTON CANDY
HOKEY POKEY
CHOCOLATE
MOOSE TRACKS
GREEN TEA
TIGER TAIL
PECAN
REESES
BANANA

It's summer! Spot your favourite ice cream whilst completing this word search



Play this puzzle online at : https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/416/



Do you need support?

Many people need support and this can be hard to find. If you need support, please speak to a volunteer or staff member at your group as they can help point you in the right direction.

At Autism Hampshire, we have a team of professional staff in our Information, Advice & Guidance Service who may be able to support you.

About Autism Hampshire's Information, Advice & Guidance Service

Our team are able to offer support, guidance, information and advice relating to autism matters or concerns you might have. They have extensive knowledge of Southampton, Portsmouth and Hampshire autism related services and community opportunities.

They will work with you on a one to one basis or with your family/support network to:

- Help you to work out coping and adaptive strategies for anxieties, behaviours and/or social skills
- Signpost to other organisations that can support you further
- Advise on how to request autism diagnostic assessments for adults and children
- Design and provide visual scheduling support packs to aid communication
- Presentations of appropriate equipment to try before you buy
- Suggest reading material to assist your understanding of the autism spectrum

Contact Details

Telephone: 023 8076 6162

Email: information.advice@autismhampshire.org.uk

If you are anxious about contacting, the Serendipity team can also put you in touch. Please speak to a staff member at your group.

Other services

There are other organisations locally that can provide support for mental health and wellbeing. The Information, Advice & Guidance team can signpost you to find support.