

# TALK



# NEWS

## TALK BULLETIN SPRING 2021 – THE LOCKDOWN SPECIAL EDITION

www.talksurrey.org.uk Charity no: 1176014

## Welcome

HELLO EVERYONE AND WELCOME TO THE FIRST TALK NEWSLETTER IN OVER A YEAR. WE HOPE YOU ARE ALL LOOKING AFTER YOURSELVES AND KEEPING SAFE. DESPITE THE GROUPS NOT BEING ABLE TO MEET, THERE IS STILL QUITE A BIT TO SAY.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Well, what a year it's been! When I stepped in as Chair of TALK in early 2019, we had never heard of Covid. Who knew what lay ahead? The past year has certainly been challenging and I hope you and your families are all coping well. Things are beginning to look up - the vaccine roll-out, being able to meet friends and family outside again. The spring weather and the lovely blossoms and daffodils all help too. I love watching the blue tits that have set up home in our nesting box.



Charles at the Surrey County Show

**I would first like to thank our three staff, Jo, Sharon and Alison.** All three have worked hard to ensure that the work of TALK continues. As you will see below, they have made sure that recoverers and their families feel supported while the groups have been closed. **I would**

**also like to thank Charles Stokes, who stepped down from the Board of Trustees at the end of December 2020.** Charles has worked tirelessly over many years to support TALK as both a Trustee and a volunteer. I'm pleased that Charles hopes to continue as a volunteer at the Guildford afternoon group once we can re-open.

The management committee and Board of Trustees have met up regularly over Zoom. We have been planning ahead for when we can re-open. **We've also used this time to think about how we can develop the work of TALK in the future. One of the first things we will be doing is to update our website.** Martyn Batten, a website developer (and Charles Stokes' son-in-law) has

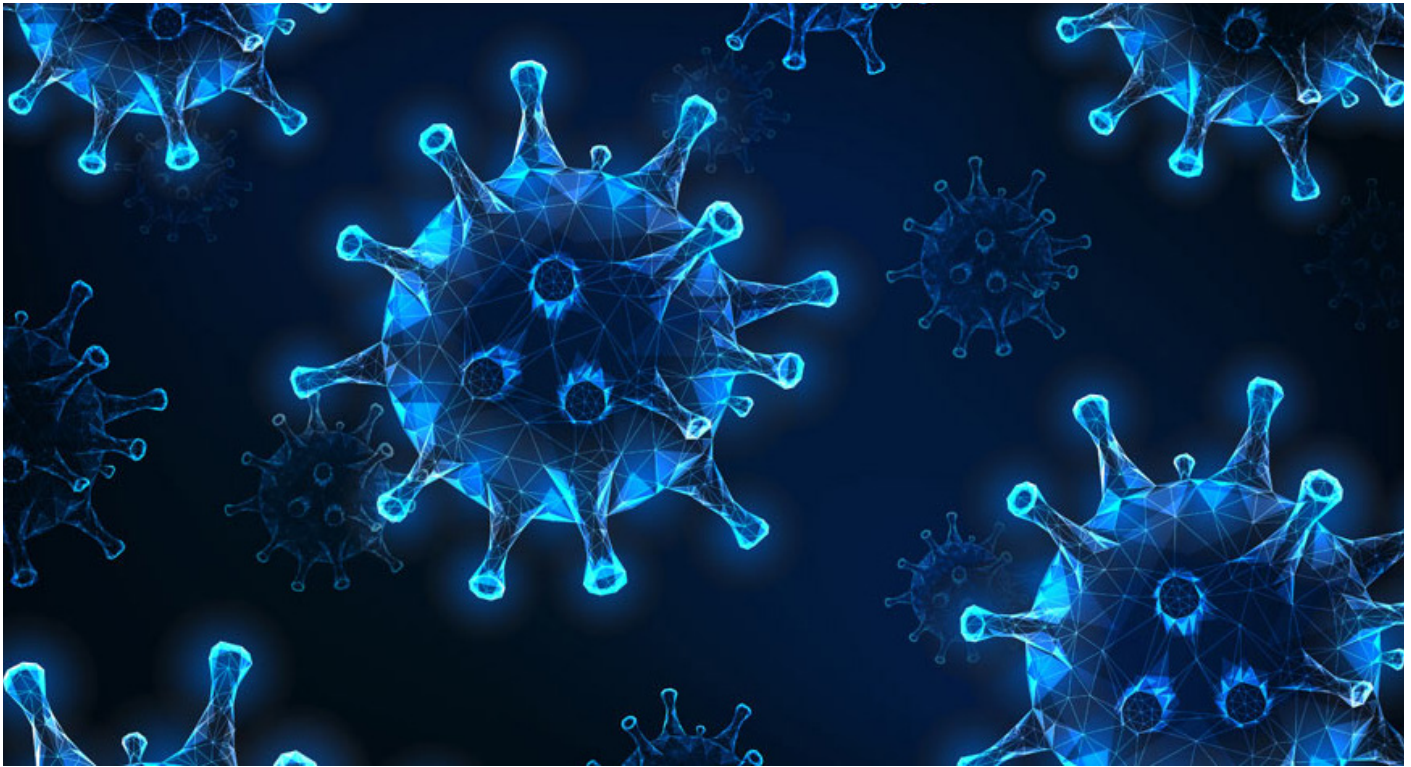
kindly offered to design and host a new website. We have a small working group to help with this. We want to make sure that the website works for the people who use it, so we will be asking you for your views soon.

We're also looking at different ways we can keep in touch. **We sent out an online questionnaire to recoverers and volunteers recently to find out what works for you.** We will send out paper copies of the questionnaire also, as we know that online is not for everyone.

Some of you may know that, in my other job, I train speech and language therapy students at UCL. During the summer, a few of our final year students volunteered to be **"Zoom buddies"** to recoverers. Alison contacted recoverers and about four people came forward. Each student was paired up with one recoverer and they met up once a week on Zoom for a chat. The recoverers reported that they enjoyed the conversations. The students also gained a lot from the experience, learning how to adapt their communication to support people with aphasia. Although Zoom is not everyone's cup of tea, it can be a good way of keeping in touch. **If any recoverers or volunteers are interested in taking part in Zoom or WhatsApp calls over the coming months, let Alison know.**

We're also keen to hear from you with any other ideas about how we can best support you while the groups remain closed. We hope that we will be able to start meeting in small groups in Autumn, but we'll have to see what the government guidelines are. In the meantime, keep well, **enjoy the spring and summer and keep in touch!**





## SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS DURING THE PANDEMIC

I think it is fair to say that the impact of COVID-19 has been quite a shock to us all. None of us knew what 2020 was going to turn out like and staying at home without regular interaction hasn't been easy. We closed our groups in March and quickly moved to delivering support remotely. **Alison (Groups Coordinator) has done an amazing job creating the weekly activity packs, literally packed full of things to do, all printed out and presented in an aphasia friendly format.**

In addition to the weekly activity packs we have also been busy on zoom calls, catching up over the phone, working with students from University College London and processing new referrals.

## SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEERS

**Volunteers have supported each other** over the phone and meeting up in small groups when the rules have allowed. They have also been integral in **supporting our most vulnerable recoverers, either chatting over the phone or via Zoom.**

A number of **volunteers took part in our mandatory safeguarding training in November and December.** Thank you to everyone who took part. We look forward to completing the rest of the training as soon as we can.





## WEEKLY ACTIVITY PACKS

To date TALK has distributed over 2,500 activity packs, that's 30 different activities.



Some of the wonderful feedback received so far...

*Our Group want you to know how grateful we are that you have been providing weekly activities for our Recoverers, which I know they have appreciated. It's been a great way for them to feel connected.*

*I wanted to say how much I have enjoyed your quiz's. I had only one session at Walton before the lockdown and it has helped me to keep in touch. Well done. Mind you 'wordsearch' drives me nuts!*

*Many thanks for forwarding the exercises - they have certainly been useful during the summer period.*

*With regard to Alison's efforts on the worksheets, these are really appreciated. It takes some effort to get these together and it's reflective of the hard work and dedication shown by all of the Talk team. XX misses the sessions and is looking forward to returning when you're up and running again.*

# Welcome to our new trustees

**At the beginning of 2020 TALK welcomed a number of new trustees.** Only a couple managed to experience the 'live' TALK groups prior to lockdown, but they have already brought new skills and experience to the TALK management committee. We thought that introducing them here would be a good opportunity for you to understand a bit about each of them.

## Valerie Blake



I'm Valerie, an **independent HR Consultant** and a non-legal member of the Employment Tribunal Service. My corporate career has all been within HR, having fallen into that on the Marks and Spencer's graduate training scheme many years ago. I just loved the people aspect and carried on into HR roles across many different industries. I studied languages at University so maybe that was why I was drawn to working in roles that spanned Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Russia.

I enjoy helping companies really engage with and understand their people. TALK Surrey has a great focus on providing support to recoverers through the work of its network of volunteers, employees and Trustee Board. I hope that I can use my HR expertise and experience to support all of these teams.

I am a **volunteer for the Guildford Talking Newspaper**, and have two particular passions outside of work and family, neither of which I claim to be an expert in but spend hours doing nonetheless, gardening and embroidery (love to learn new techniques like gold and ribbon work).

## Gudrun Evans



I'm Gudrun and I'm delighted to have joined the Board of Trustees for TALK Surrey. I'm **passionate about supporting people and organisations** to realise their full potential and I hope that my skills and experience will be of value to you. **I spent the early part of my career as a nurse**, training in Reading and serving with Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps for 8 years.

I then completed a degree at Keele University before moving into the world of Human Resources, which is where I've been for 23 years. During that time, I've had the privilege of working with FTSE 100 companies, in a variety of roles, and I've enjoyed extensive travel. I said 'goodbye' to full-time corporate life 18 months ago and set up on my own as a consultant. I love it, mainly because I've got more time to do those things that are really important to me, like volunteering. I'm married to Andy; we live in Tilford and enjoy cycling, walking, music, travelling and spending time with family and friends.



## Philippa Mitchell



I'm Philippa and during my career, **I have worked in both the private and public sectors, but most recently in Education.**

For the last 16 years, I was head of two different primary schools and retired in August 2019. After a short period travelling, I wanted to find ways in which I could contribute to the wider community and signed on with a Surrey volunteer register, through which I heard about TALK. I applied to become a trustee, because **I like the idea of a local charity, which works in a really practical way to support members of the community**, and because I have had some experience of the impact that strokes can have on people known to me. I have a range of skills and hope to find the ways in which these may best be applied within the context of TALK.

I have three children, two married, one still at University and have two gorgeous grandchildren.

## Pallu Modi



I'm Pallu. I was born in India but have lived in the UK since I was a year old. I live in Normandy, Surrey with my husband (our 18 year old daughter is at University). I studied Economics at London University and then Development Studies at the University of Bath. For the last 30 years, **I have worked within international development in more than 40 countries** and for the UK government, academics, INGOs, social enterprises and management consulting firms, implementing public sector reform projects in a number of diverse sectors.

My hobbies include travelling, walking, playing tennis, reading, cooking and painting. I am learning Spanish and the guitar. Having spent my career working overseas, **I would now like to support people closer to home as well. Being the daughter of two doctors, I have always wanted to help within the medical profession and I am delighted to be able to work with TALK Surrey, hopefully on its strategy, raising its profile and telling everyone about its great work.**

## Clive Moon



I'm Clive and have **extensive business experience in market research and strategic planning**, gained from working at Unilever, various ad agencies and from running my own business. I have also held Trustee and Governor roles in the past and I'm currently a member of the Woking DoE Forum, a Committee member of a musical theatre company in Woking and Chair of Sport Woking. I'm used to presenting and public speaking.

**I was immediately struck by the work TALK does with communication as the aim, something I hope I can help with.**

I was born and brought up in Somerset, went to the University of Birmingham and now live in Worplesdon with my wife. We've got two grown-up children and four grandchildren. My main interests include music (classical guitar and musical theatre), and sport. I used to play hockey, cricket and badminton; more recently though, I've taken up spinning which I really enjoy. I also love walking, reading and travel.

# FUNDRAISING

The last year hasn't allowed us to do very much with regards to fundraising activity with all sponsorship opportunities cancelled. We are very much hoping that they will restart in 2021... but it's fingers crossed.

## Thank you to...

The following **Waitrose** stores in Surrey who with the help of the green coin scheme have raised over £2000.

- Egham
- West Byfleet
- Godalming
- Weybridge
- Addlestone
- Bagshot
- Goldsworth Park

**Guildford Inner Wheel** supporting us in 2020 and 2021 as their charity of the year. In March 2021 Jo Matthews gave an online talk about TALK to all their members.

Everyone who has donated to TALK over the past year including donations to the **TALK Covid-19 appeal** which has raised £839.75 to date.

**To donate click on this link:**

[www.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/talkcovid](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/talkcovid)

Everyone who purchased **Christmas Cards**. We sold over £600 worth of cards.

**Please keep nominating  
TALK in your local  
Waitrose branch**

**Join as a Co-op member and  
support the Staines & Ashford  
stores with your purchases**

## Thank you to...

### COMMUNITY MATTERS

We support good causes and our customers decide who gets what

Funded by



**Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# GRANTS

**Thank you for the continuing support from the following:**

- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Co-op Local Community Funds  
Ashford and Knaphill, Woking
- Civil Service Insurance Society
- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Community Foundation for Surrey
- Walsingham Care
- Woking Borough Council
- Ashford & St.Peter's NHS Foundation Trust
- TESCO Bags of Help Community Fund
- David Williamson Trust
- Guildford Poyle Charities
- Aviva Community Fund
- Bramley Nursing Association
- St.Peter's Relief in Sickness Fund

# IN MEMORIAM

**Thank you to the friends and family of the following people who kindly made in memoriam donations to support TALK.**

- Stephen M – from the Knaphill Group
- Sylvia C – from the Walton Group
- Rory W
- Christina R - from Walton Group

An in memoriam donation is a wonderful way to honour our loved ones and we are grateful to all the friends and families who think about TALK at a difficult and busy time of their lives.

# VOLUNTEERS

We recently learnt about the passing of **Jenny Jordan** who had been a regular volunteer at the Guildford afternoon group for many years.

She had served as a Guildford Councillor for 24 years and had been Mayor twice during that time.

**“She was kind and passionate and really cared for her ward and borough residents, always wanting the best for them.”**







## LOOKING AHEAD

Fingers crossed that the Vitality 10k run will still take place on 31st May 2021. TALK has five places carried forward from 2020 and we would love for our runners to take part either safely in person or as part of the virtual races that many organisations are putting together.

We still need a couple of runners, so if you know anyone who might be interested, then please let Jo know on [fundraising@talksurrey.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@talksurrey.org.uk) or 07718 425952. Thank you.



### SUPPORT

#### Can you help?

As ever, we rely on the kind support and donations from its patrons, volunteers and surrounding network. If you have an idea of how you can help, please let us know - we would be extremely grateful!

## THANK YOU.

**SUPPORTING STROKE RECOVERERS  
WITH APHASIA**



**Contact Jo Matthews  
with any suggestions  
or contributions**

07718 425952

[fundraising@talksurrey.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@talksurrey.org.uk)