

Spring 2022

NEWSLETTER

Keeping you up to date with News and Events



Help for holidays

As we all look forward to travelling again, the idea of negotiating a busy airport can be very stressful. This is especially challenging for people with aphasia.

Planning and taking a flight involves a lot of communication. The noise and rush of an unfamiliar airport adds **more difficulty at the start of your holiday**.

QEF Accessible Aviation has produced a video aimed at making flying and navigating an airport easier for people with a hidden disability. It covers **dementia, autism and stoma, as well as aphasia**.

Dyscover member Claire and her twin sister **Sandy** appear in the video. It was launched at QEF's Open Day to mark their 40th anniversary.



Claire and Sandy said, "We felt very **privileged to be part of this project** and to attend the launch party. They made us feel very special just like film stars! Such a lovely morning to remember."

Bruce Willis boosts awareness

The family of American actor, **Bruce Willis**, announced that he has **aphasia and is retiring**.

90% of people don't know what aphasia is. **Suddenly aphasia was being talked about on TV and radio**, covered in newspapers, and information shared on social media.

Dyscover joined the conversation, along with many other aphasia organisations. Rosemary said "**We are grateful to Bruce Willis and his family for introducing the word 'aphasia' into people's vocabulary**, an important step in growing public awareness and understanding the condition and how to help."

The right thing to be doing

Last term we supported **80 members each week**. **64% are attending our groups in person**, while **37% prefer to meet on Zoom**. This is our **'hybrid' service** and it feels like **the right thing to be doing**.



We are grateful to have a mix of volunteers who we can call on to support online or in person groups and activities.

To find out more about Dyscover

Please go to www.dyscover.org.uk or contact us for details of our online visitor sessions on Zoom, or to receive our regular newsletters.

Follow us on social media



To find our page on Facebook search for Dyscover non-profit organisation.



@dyscoveraphasia



@DyscoverAphasia



Update from the Trustees

Our Easter activities were very successful and much appreciated by the participants. I recently went along to the golf and shooting sessions and was struck by the number of members taking part, and their **skill and enthusiasm.**



We have lots to look forward to this summer term, as we plan to **expand the staff team** and start some new projects. It's exciting to be working in partnership with the **Irish Heart Foundation to extend Dyscover's reach.**

We have selected a website designer who will help us with the **design of a revised website.** We have also successfully moved the current one to a new host and updated the software to enable us to make changes more easily ourselves.

We are **keeping on top of fundraising** and other events, and appreciate your support for these, as always. There are **more to come in the next few months.**

John Woollatt, Chairman



Spotlight on Office Manager

Karen Boulton

Karen, who took on the new role of Office Manager in 2021, introduces herself and explains that she is no stranger to Dyscover.

"My current role involves **keeping our database up to date; invoicing members for their sessions;** distributing this Newsletter; providing IT support to staff as well as updating our HR handbook, leaflets and Health & Safety. I have a degree in Mathematics and was a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development before I retired.

"It has been lovely to **return to Dyscover after 10 years away.** It is great to be part of such a supportive staff team and being able to use some of my skills to help run this amazing service.

"During my time away from Dyscover, I continued to **run my own business KKN Training** – offering IT training, maths coaching and career support.

"I have **two daughters,** who both now **live on the island of Jersey.** I enjoy going over to visit them regularly. My younger daughter, Nicola, got married last year once Covid allowed, and my older daughter, Katrina, is getting married this September.

"In my spare time, I **enjoy mountain biking** (well off-road cycling) and am part of three different ladies cycling groups in the Banstead area. Cycling keeps me fit for my annual ski trips.

"I enjoy weeding and in March 2021, I started **Women-in-Wellies – gardening for the elderly.** We are a team of four who are helping about 17 clients locally."

Around Dyscover

Website revamp

About 50% of the people who join Dyscover are referred by a family member. Others come to us via Speech and Language Therapists or other health professionals. **Almost all look at our website** to see what we do. It is our 'shop window' and after 11 years is in need of a makeover.

We want to create an **attractive, aphasia-friendly site**, where all our visitors can find what they need easily and quickly.

We are now forming a website steering group which will **include some interested members** eager to get involved in these much-needed improvements.

Funding update from Alice

Director of Business, Alice Owen, reports on some good news



IT UPGRADE Much of the hard work of our IT renewal took place over the Christmas break. **Dyscover's shared files are now securely held in the cloud** alleviating the risk of losing everything should our old server have decided to breakdown. Remote working is very much improved.

EXPANDING OUR SERVICES We are edging closer to our fundraising target for the development phase of our **plans to expand online services**. This six-month project will investigate what is already available throughout the country and engage with potential partners.

Following a chance encounter in a fish and chip shop (long story) we have received some **generous repeat funding from a trust** who have kept in touch throughout the pandemic.

Three students at Epsom's University of the Creative Arts will be undertaking a project to investigate **updating our promotional materials**.

Aphasia ambassadors

Our ambassadors had their **first face-to-face meeting in a long time**, with a great turn out. They discussed recent training feedback, where they have played important roles in training in house, with students and non-therapists.



Feedback highlighted that **talking with ambassadors was the most helpful part of our training** and all participants reported a greater understanding of aphasia at the end.

We may need some early bird ambassadors in the near future, following Caroline's Zoom **meeting with business networking group Kingston BNI** at 6.44am!



Farewell

GAYLE CHANDLER has ridden the wave of the pandemic with us and has now moved on to a **management and clinical role** in an independent SLT practice. She has been a particular asset in leading and **developing our Foundation groups** for people with severe aphasia.



Welcome

BARBARA GREENWOOD has worked with Suzanne in leading the **Tuesday morning Zoom group**. Her experience of online group support is really valuable.



Groups in action

Getting to know you

SLT Rhona says: “Since the middle of February, I have enjoyed getting to know the Wednesday afternoon group.

“Our focus is on Total Communication. This means making the most of everything available to us to **join in and share thoughts and opinions.**

“Members have found **selecting photos and pictures** a good way of showing clearly what interests them.

“Expert knowledge within the group ranges from cooking to jazz; football to City trading. Needless to say, world events demand our attention, and we make **full use of maps, drawing, facial expression and gestures.**

“We have recently welcomed both **new members and volunteers**, so getting to know each other has been important this term. We look forward to building the effectiveness of our conversations together after Easter. This group is **full of positivity and there is never a dull moment!**”



Sustaining progress

Dyscover has always offered long-term support to people with aphasia. Experience has taught us that people need and want different types of support as time passes after a stroke.

The National Stroke Strategy says ‘support should continue for as long as it is required’.

Dyscover has evolved our ‘Sustain’ groups **for long-term support.** Members can use and maintain their communication skills in an aphasia-friendly setting, **meet old friends and make new ones.** When questions or new challenges arise, Dyscover’s **experienced team is on hand to offer advice.**



John’s adventure.

Aged 27, John took a spur of the moment **flight to the Isle of Wight** in a friend’s plane. They landed on a beach, where they **spotted two girls on a raft.** Larking about, they tipped one of the girls off the raft, then shared their picnic before returning to the plane. Trying to impress with some aerobatics, **they nearly crashed.**



After they left, Barbara found John’s cigarettes and lighter. She **tracked him down in London,** and they arranged to meet. Barbara’s first words were ‘Well, **you scrub up well!**’ – the long haired, bearded guy on the beach was in fact a good-looking man, who she **married seven years later, in Las Vegas!**

Dexterity board

Gary showed the Wednesday group a board he had designed himself, with **locks, handles and switches.** A challenge for upper limb **dexterity and problem solving.**



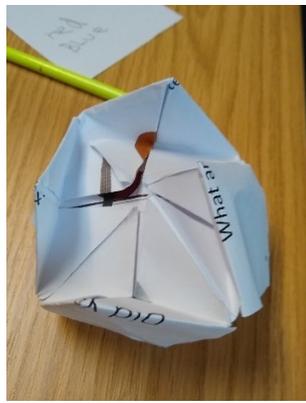
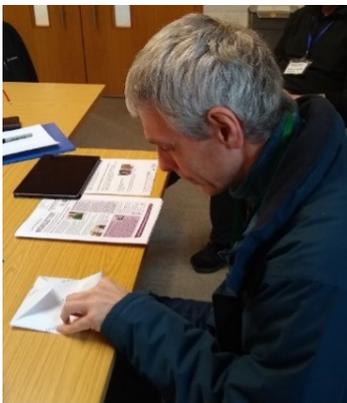
Groups in action

Games and hobbies

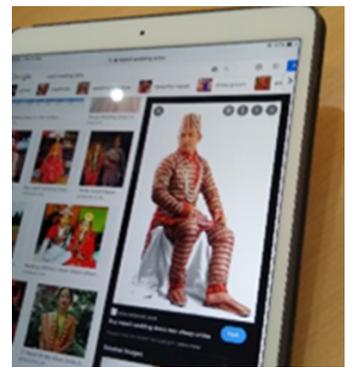
Kingston's session on games and hobbies gave members a great opportunity to share information and **motivate each other**.

A highlight was Kevin's **amazing one-handed ability to make origami**. Members were fascinated when he quickly produced a 'chatterbox' from a piece of paper on a clipboard using only his left hand.

Flower arranging, competitive games of Dobble and watercolouring also featured.



Dressing with style



Members shared photographs and memories of **clothes they'd worn in years gone by** from bell-bottom flares and hot pants to uniforms and wedding dresses!

Kingston member James showed a dashing **photo of himself in naval uniform** in South Africa. Volunteer Pat supported Indra to help describe **the traditional Nepali costume** (Daura Surwal) he wore at his own wedding: a long-sleeved red striped tunic and matching trousers complete with sash.



Spotlight on Heather Elliott

Heather is a regular attender at the Leatherhead Wednesday group, despite **living some distance away in Albury** near Guildford. Her first contact with Dyscover was when we piloted a **new group in Cranleigh**. "It was excellent," recalls Heather, "just six people, all with interesting things to say."

The 12-week group finished in 2020 and, sadly, Covid put a stop to follow-on plans. However, **Heather joined a Zoom group** when Dyscover had to go online. She particularly benefitted from the Pilates sessions.

Heather was delighted when in-person groups started last term and really enjoyed meeting the

people she had only known on Zoom.

Heather's stroke happened in 2019. She **awoke during the night, unable to see or speak** and was rushed to St Peter's Hospital. From there she progressed to rehab **at Woking**, where the Speech and Language Therapist suggested she might like to join the Cranleigh group.

She has been making great progress in many areas of her life. A highlight was when she was **allowed to drive again**, after long sessions at a driving centre. She bought a small car and **relishes the independence** it brings. Heather has also returned to singing and Tai Chi. One thing she does miss is cooking.

Heather and her husband Peter have both been married before and have six sons between them. Now that overseas travel is possible again, Heather plans to **visit her youngest son in Portugal for his 42nd birthday**. Next stop will be Greece in the summer.

Have you Heard

Irish Heart Foundation

Following our successful project with specialist Speech and Language Therapists from Ireland, the Irish Heart Foundation have asked us to help them develop their support to people with **aphasia**. IHF is a Dublin-based charity working with people with heart disease and stroke across Ireland.

Rosemary and eight of our ambassadors are **delivering a training session to IHF staff** and we are excited to be starting a 12-week online **course for a group of people with aphasia**. This will be led by SLT Barbara Greenwood.

PPA network

Rosemary is part of a group of three Speech and Language Therapists who have created the first professional **network for SLTs working with Primary Progressive Aphasia**. This is a rare type of dementia in which communication deteriorates.

Sixty-seven people from across the UK attended the second meeting on Zoom.

Rising to the challenge

Dyscover's Challenge programme offers a range of creative and activity-based sessions, both in term time and during the Easter and Summer breaks.

Last term both **shooting and swimming** were enthusiastically attended.

SHOOTING

Eleven members completed a **10-week air rifle shooting course**, culminating in a thrilling competition. Our thanks to the **team at Bookham Rifle Club** for creating an entertaining and sociable atmosphere



SWIMMING

Coach Helen offers **tailored goals for each person** who comes to the Dorking sessions. For Sarah it was doing her very first dive.



Members have also been **practising life-saving**.

Garden volunteers needed

The courtyard garden at Leatherhead Court is unrecognisable from the **overgrown space** that greeted volunteer leader Sue and her group when they began work four years ago.

We need more helpers to **make sure the garden stays beautiful**.

No long-term commitment, just **come when you can**.

Contact Suzanne for more details.



Fundraising

A year of challenges

Dyscover supporter **Theresa Peterson** came in to talk about the fundraising she is doing for us. She is taking on a whole year of challenges and **aims to complete eight events** including seven organised walks and a swim in the Serpentine!



Please do support Theresa:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/theresa-peterson6>

A year of fundraising

Chair of Trustees, John was very pleased to attend the Epsom Golf Club Ladies team lunch, where he was presented a **cheque for a huge £2,700!**



Dyscover has been **the Ladies Captain, Kay Briggs,' Charity of the Year** and they have raised these generous funds in a variety of ways including quizzes, plant sales and raffles.

Quiz night

Quiz master Simon Edmands had some very entertaining and challenging rounds of questions at **L'Ultimo** Italian restaurant in Leatherhead. A lovely evening that raised £558.



Thank you to:

BANSTEAD ROTARY for donating £500 from their Christmas collection.

LOOK FORWARD MASONIC LODGE at Bisley Camp for choosing us as their charity of the year and raising £1,500

SQUIRES GARDEN CENTRE for hosting a Dyscover display and fundraising day. £100 was raised.

LUCIO'S coffee & deli shop in Leatherhead for putting put a Dyscover collection tin and leaflets next to their till.

CHARITY SHOWCASE organised by Epsom Rotary. Dyscover had two brilliant bands playing to support us.

LEGACY We were so grateful to the anonymous donor who left us £15,000. We have a **codicil form and legacy information** on our website and at the office.

Ride London

Chris Moore is cycling the **100-mile Ride London route in Essex** at the end of May. Please do **visit his sponsorship page** to support his fundraising efforts for us.



<https://www.justgiving.com/christopher-moore31>

Diary dates

22nd SEPTEMBER

RACE NIGHT Tyrrell's Wood Golf Club: a two-course meal and a fun evening. We are looking for local businesses to sponsor this.

15th NOVEMBER

BRIDGE MASTERCLASS with Andrew Robson, from 2-6 in Bookham, with afternoon tea.

Nectar Donate

A new initiative from the team at Nectar and Crowdfunder means you can now donate any or all of your Nectar points to us! Visit [Dyscover Limited - a Charities crowdfunding project in Leatherhead by Liz Grace \(crowdfunder.co.uk\)](https://www.dyscover.org.uk) and when you get to the "Payment method" screen, select "Donate with Nectar".

Holiday Activities

During the Easter break we enjoyed six activity sessions, five in person and one on Zoom.

Singing again

We welcomed Sue, our new musical coach, to lead members in making what she calls 'A joyful racket'. After vocal exercises and breathing, it was on to a range of well-known songs.



Pilates

Natalie returned from maternity leave and wasted no time in reminding members about **good posture and core strength**.



Art

Eight members tackled the theme of **Eggs in a nest**. They created the branches with a **blowing technique** then painted the eggs and nest using watercolour.



Companion Cycling

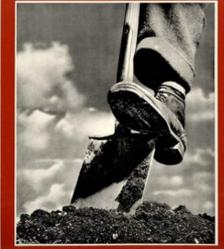
We had two **lovely trips to Bushy Park**. Trustee Achim supported for the first time and Laurel travelled from Oxfordshire to see everyone again.



Zoom Quiz

Online members enjoyed a quiz about **World War II and the 1940s**. All four teams scored highly and **shared memories of their wartime childhoods**.

DIG FOR VICTORY



Top Draw Club

The latest Top Draw took place in our Wednesday afternoon group and there were five lucky winners. **For every winner, an equal amount is given to Dyscover.**



Nick presented Dyscover with a **cheque for £2,000** – an amazing amount which has been raised by the Club in the last year. Huge thanks to Nick for all his hard work running the club and to everyone who has bought a share.

Shares cost just £10 per year and offer the chance to win **cash prizes every quarter** and one Christmas bonus draw. Contact Liz lgrace@dyscover.org.uk for more information about joining our Top Draw club.

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