

Edinburgh Branch

April 2026 Newsletter



Contributions to the newsletter or the website are welcome. Please send anything to:

communications@edinburghparkinsons.org

News in Brief

Some snippets of news we feel important are outlined below:

Morningside Pilates/Neurodynamic Exercise

We have had confirmation that the church halls are going to be closed for some upcoming Monday public holidays:

- 20th April (*Spring Holiday*); 4th May (*May Day*); 18th May (*Victoria Day*)
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Café Niddrie – Time Change

The new time for the café will be 3pm, still on the fourth Monday of each month (next café is on 27th April). At this session volunteer Gina Allen will talk about our [Complementary Therapy](#) initiative.

The venue stays the same, Hays Business Centre, 4 Hay Avenue, EH16 4AQ. We hope that those who regularly attend will find this time equally suitable, and that more people might attend. Feel free to drop in and partake of a refreshment, meet some like minded people and enjoy some socialisation. Of course, there is always opportunity to get advice or information as well.

Thursday Pilates by Zoom: Spaces Available

There are spaces for the online sessions at 3pm with Sasha.

This session involves seated and standing work only (no need for a mat or other equipment and no getting on and off the floor). It focuses on good movement strategies, range of movement, breathing, fluidity and building muscle stamina.

The session is ideal for those who can't get to an in-person class. Sasha is happy to extend the session outside Edinburgh, so the class is open to people anywhere in Scotland. Contact Sasha: sasha@edinburghparkinsons.org

May Get-Together

The next Get-Together is Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 2pm at our usual venue of Lifecare Centre, Stockbridge

Our speaker is Jeanne-Marie Lee, Carer Training Officer at [VOCAL](#) Edinburgh. She will talk about support for carers and the individual support, information, training and access to services that VOCAL can help carers access.

Side by Side Course

The course is intended to help those who know/live/work with someone with Parkinson's and who want to learn more about the professional help, drugs, benefits, and support available.

The next course starts on Monday 19th October from 2-4pm and runs for six weeks. The venue is the small hall at Liberton Kirk Halls. If you are interested please do check the webpage, which we will update when we have confirmed dates for the speakers. And if you want to register interest, please contact Anne Hood, whose details are on the [Side by Side](#) webpage.

Thank You to Volunteers

We want to say a huge thanks to all of those who volunteer their time to help out with all the activities, groups and fundraising.

The most recent can-shoogie took place on Friday 10th and Saturday 11th April, at Craigleith Retail Park. Thanks to the amazing effort of those who volunteered, we have raised just over £1200.



Art Group

Too late for this newsletter – we will email out the details of the upcoming introductory session – we are just finalising dates.

Summer Lunch

The date is confirmed as Wednesday 10th June – once again we return to the Leonardo Murrayfield. And as usual it's a 12.30 for 1pm start.

The cost is £20 per person for a two-course lunch. The menu choices are:

Main course:

- Chicken stuffed with haggis and whisky coulis (gf)
- Oven baked west coast salmon fillet on roasted courgette and saffron risotto with a red pepper coulis
- Grilled vegetable tartlet, basil pesto, seasonal garden salad (v)

Dessert:

- Lemon tart with berry compote and coulis
- Scottish cranachan (gf)
- White chocolate brownie with crème anglaise

Coffee/tea & chocolate mints will be served.

Menu choices can be added to your order – instructions are on the [Summer Lunch](#) webpage. Alternatively, email to Olivia, with a deadline of 2nd June.

Ready to book – then head to the [Shop](#)

Leonardo Murrayfield is at 187 Clermiston Road, EH12 6UG Edinburgh. There is ample parking at the venue, and buses 21, 26 and 200 go nearby.



Fife Branch: Let's Talk About Parkinson's #2

After the huge success in 2024 of #LTAP, our friends from Fife are back with the much awaited sequel on Wednesday, Apr 22 from 6 pm to 8:30 pm at Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy.

Whether you've been diagnosed with the condition or supporting someone who has been, come and connect with others who are in a similar situation. Listen to the experts talk about living with Parkinson's. Tactics that slow its progression down and what research is hoping to achieve in the future. There will be a chance to ask questions on the night, so don't miss out on this great opportunity to connect and support each other!

[Tickets are still available](#), though going fast. The event is free, though as with our annual lecture, donations will be gratefully received.

The line up for the evening includes:



Dr James Woods

Consultant Geriatrics with a special interest in Parkinson's Disease



Professor Miratul Muqit

Miratul is a distinguished Professor in the search for a cure for Parkinson's



James Jopling

Parkinson's UK Scotland Director



Gillian Aldrich

Lead Parkinson's Nurse Specialist for NHS Fife

Cold Water Therapy Sessions

There is the potential for the introduction of cold water therapy sessions in West Lothian. This appears to be immersing the body in water typically below 15°C to boost physical and mental health.

The Cold Therapy Collective have been in discussion with Amanda McKay who is Physical Activity Delivery Manager for P-UK (Scotland), offering to give introductory sessions for people with Parkinson's, and they are keen to collect data to establish the need, and indeed interest from people in the community.

And so, we have been asked to provide the link to their survey, which will help in their effort to achieve funding for the initiative. As we are always hugely keen to support new forms of therapy, exercise, or mental or physical wellbeing, we would urge you to please complete the survey:



(photo attribution: from survey)

<https://www.thecoldwatertherapist.co.uk/parkinsonssurvey>

Research Opportunity

We mentioned in the last newsletter that Scotland Director James Jopling at our AGM had talked about the Top Hat study. We thought we should now provide link so you can more easily find out details.

They are looking for people with Parkinson's or Lewy body dementia who:

- experience visual hallucinations, seeing things that aren't there, at least once a week
- are on a stable dose of Parkinson's or Lewy body dementia medication

Over 12 weeks, you would be mailed either ondansetron or dummy tablets to take alongside your usual medication. The team will stay in close contact via phone, video and 3 visits to a local hospital (we believe this is the Western General).

For more information please follow this link: [Top Hat Study](#)

Parkinson's Mental Health Support

After being diagnosed with Parkinson's many people experience a range of mental health issues alongside physical symptoms. Anxiety and depression are the two most common mental health symptoms that affect people with Parkinson's.

Parkinson's UK have been working with Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH) and SilverCloud to offer support for PwPs. SilverCloud programmes are designed to help you improve and maintain your wellbeing by changing the way you think and feel about things.

We expect to be sent postcards we can share, but in the meantime show images of the postcard. If you magnify this document and use the QR code it should allow you to access the link and enrol on the programme or get more insight.

Parkinson's UK
Scotland

Parkinson's mental health support

Nearly HALF of people with Parkinson's experience anxiety or depression - it is common

This digital therapy programme provides you with tools and techniques to help you learn how to manage symptoms of anxiety, apathy, low mood or depression

Congratulations. You have taken the first step to looking after your mental health & wellbeing

Parkinson's UK Scotland have teamed up with Silvercloud by Amwell providing you with a digital therapy programme that you can access whenever and wherever you wish - at home, at work or on the move.

Work through the programme at your own pace, selecting the topics and tools that suit you best. Sign up for free or scan the QR code below:
<https://parkinsonsukmentalhealth.silvercloudhealth.com/signup>

This is a self-help resource, if you feel you need further support consult your healthcare team. Also available to family, friends & carers.



parkinsons.org.uk/information-and-support/parkinsons-and-mental-health
Parkinson's UK Helpline 0808 800 0303

Parkinson's UK is the operating name of the Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom. A registered charity in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554).



Hints and Tips from P-UK Scotland

Mark Coxe (Chair Fife Branch) and Scott Wilson (Chair Edinburgh Young Parkinson's Support Group) have pulled together a wide range of hints, tips, and practical resources to help manage symptoms and improve daily life for those living with Parkinson's, their families, and carers.

Topics covered are: Around the home; Bathroom and meds; Getting Dressed; Going Out and About, Going On Holiday; Stay Positive

We have added the five files into a [Hints and Tips](#) news item on the website.



Your Move: Postcards

Your Move is the Parkinson's manifesto for the 2026 election. It sets out how the next Scottish government can improve health and care, maintain financial support, increase access to physical activity, and boost clinical research opportunities.

Some of the Committee are taking part in a photo opportunity with Lib Dem candidate Alex Cole-Hamilton on Thursday 16 April. It is hoped other parties will agree to photo opportunities, which will create more awareness.

If you have read the Scotland Newsletter you will also see that Your Move will be back in Edinburgh on Wednesday 29th April at 12noon in central Edinburgh.

If you would like to go along for that photoshoot, please [email Tanith and Mairi](#) who will provide more details and arrangements.



Your Voice Matters.

Access Opera Performance: The Marriage of Figaro

Scottish Operas Access Opera performance is at the Festival Theatre Edinburgh on Friday 5th June at 3pm. Tickets are £12.50, with carers given free access. Dementia Friendly | Sung in English with English supertitles | Audio description available

With Dementia Friendly values at their core, these shortened performances of The Marriage of Figaro are open to all. Fully staged and performed by cast and orchestra, they also feature a presenter to introduce the story, characters, and music from the opera.

There are wheelchair spaces and extra staff on hand to help. There is also a smaller capacity to allow everyone space, and brighter lighting levels in the auditorium, giving you the flexibility and freedom to move about as required.



The Marriage of Figaro

It's the Season's most scandalous wedding...and you are invited!

All wedding days are complicated, but nothing compared to Figaro's. After discovering that his boss is plotting to seduce his fiancée, he must use his wit (and a little help from his friends...) to outsmart his employer and ensure that he and Susanna still make it down the aisle on time.

With sumptuous period sets and costumes, this exquisite production is full of bubbling energy and wit.

Find out more at: scottishopera.org.uk/access/access-opera

(Note: The production is also on at Theatre Royal Glasgow on Fri 22nd May 3pm)

Activities: Monthly Spotlight

Each month we are going to spotlight one or two of the many activities the Branch offer, or external sources who focus on Parkinson's. It may be useful to have a bit more insight into what is entailed and who takes the classes/sessions.

Sasha Baggaley and Neurodynamic Exercise

Sasha Baggaley has been a key service provider to the Branch for almost a decade. Many will know her as an instructor in Pilates, and also Neurodynamic Exercise. But let's take a deeper dive into Sasha, and recognise her credentials, her expertise, and her incredible commitment to people with Parkinson's.

Sasha holds a BSc in Psychology from Northumbria University and later completed a BSc in Physiotherapy at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. She spent two decades working within the NHS, focusing on neurology and rehabilitation for older adults, where she developed a strong professional interest in Parkinson's Disease. In 2015, Sasha left the NHS to establish her own practice in Scotland, dedicating her work primarily to supporting people living with Parkinson's Disease.



In 2016, the Branch organised a "Parkinson's: Let's get Moving" event to promote the benefits of group exercise for PwPs. And from there, Branch Chair (at that point) David Adams linked in with Sasha, and Pilates for Parkinson's was introduced, and proved very popular.

In January 2019, Sasha introduced her Neurodynamic Exercise programme based on her training and experience in Neurophysiology, Pilates and the philosophy, principles, and research of:

- o **PD Warrior:** an advanced exercise programme that incorporates both physical and cognitive activity for people in the early stages of Parkinson's
- o **LSVT BIG:** Lee Silverman Voice Treatment BIG is a physical and occupational based therapy for Parkinson's Disease
- o **PWR MOVES:** Parkinson's Wellness Recovery MOVES are Parkinson's specific functional exercise and physical therapy programmes

What is Neurodynamic Exercise?

Neurodynamics is the study of how nerves move and function as the body moves. In Parkinson's, where bradykinesia, rigidity and reduced automatic movement are common, improving the nervous system's responsiveness can support better motor control.



It is a style of exercise that blends:

- o Large-amplitude, high-effort movement (similar to PD Warrior, LSVT BIG, PWR! Moves)
- o Cognitive challenge (dual-tasking, sequencing, attention)
- o Pilates-style control and posture work
- o Breath, voice, visual and facial expressiveness exercises

Who is it suitable for?

It is generally more suited to people in the earlier stages of Parkinson's (mild to moderate symptoms). But Sasha confirms the exercises can be adapted to suit individuals, based on their Parkinson's symptoms and any other pathologies.

What does the course involve?

The 10-week programme involves pre- and post-assessments, and there is the opportunity to join an ongoing continuation class at the end of the programme. These are taken either by Sasha, or by David Muir, who Sasha trained and has been taking these, and Pilates classes for us since 2023. The class takes place at Fisherrow, in Musselburgh.

When is the next course?

There is likely to be a new course in late summer. Sasha keeps a wait list, so while currently a course is ongoing, if you are interested, please feel free to contact her: sasha@edinburghparkinsons.org

And for more information see the [Neurodynamic Exercise](#) webpage.