

Edinburgh Branch

February 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:

Date Change: February Carer Support Group

The venue have had to ask us to move dates for February, so as a one off, we meet this month on a Friday. The date/time is now Friday 27th February at 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Venue Change: YP Meetings



From February 2026, the Younger Parkinson's monthly meeting will take place at a new venue, due to renovations at the Steading. The alternative is only about a mile away at Hunters Tryst 97 Oxfangs Road.

For more details please see the [YP webpage](#).

Activity Name Change

Edinburgh Parkinson's Reminiscing Group has replaced the previous Sporting Memories. The aim is to expand the remit and to encourage more people and make the sessions more geared towards men and women. The sessions will be an opportunity to socialise and reminisce and stimulate interesting and happy memories. "Do you remember when?" See [webpage](#) for details.

Available Places in Two Activities

We have two places in Thursday Nordic Walking Group. They meet at Noon at Jawbone Walk, The Meadows. For more details see [Nordic Walking webpage](#).

There are two places in the Thursday 3-4pm online Pilates class with Sasha. This is via Zoom and is seated/standing only. For more details see [Pilates webpage](#).

Art Group Resumption...

Branch Chair Stephen is still trying hard to get the Art Group back up and running. As always, we will keep you posted on details. Watch This Space 🔍

New 10 Week Neurodynamics Course

We are pleased to announce a new course starting Wednesday 25th March 2026. The venue will be Fisherrow Community Centre, South Street, Musselburgh

Instructor Sasha Baggaley delivers the course. Sasha is a Neuro Physiotherapist trained in [PD Warrior](#) and [LSVT BIG](#)).

Research has shown that certain types of exercise help to re-wire the brain (neuroplasticity) and may also provide neuroprotection. This means that the right kind of exercise can improve overall physical function and may also have an effect on slowing disease progression.

This is an advanced exercise programme that incorporates both physical and cognitive activity for people in the earlier stages of Parkinson's (mild to moderate symptoms).

Pre-Assessment

It is mandatory that participants attend an initial assessment. This is a 90-minute one-to-one consultation, and involves things such as:

- Discuss your Parkinson's symptoms, medication, current exercise/activity levels.
- Establishing your short- and long-term goals.
- Physical tests which will include a walking test, hand function test, balance test.
- You will complete a quality-of-life questionnaire and subjective visual scale.
- Partners or friends are welcome to attend the assessment, and the classes.

Attending Classes

There are weekly classes which take place Wednesday from 1-2pm.

There are between 6-10 PwP's in each group.

The class involves a warm-up, a circuit, and a cool-down. The circuit will involve high effort exercises, which can be adapted to suit any musculoskeletal issues you may have, and which are all specific to combatting the symptoms of Parkinson's.

Exercise Daily

For the duration of the course, you will be expected to do a range of the exercises every day. Historically teaming up with a partner or buddy to do this helps keep you motivated and ensure you do the exercises well. (Your partner is welcome to attend the assessments and exercise classes with you.)

Attend a Reassessment

This assessment will take about 45-60 mins, at the end of the course.

The aim is to review progress and re-test the original outcome measures. This information can be useful to share with your Consultant or Parkinson's Nurse.

Cost

The cost to take part in this programme will be:

- Equipment for use at home: £25
(4 floor discs, 2 scarves, 1 soft ball, 1 resistance band)
- Block of 10 classes and assessments: £80
(contribution to Branch, who subsidise the classes)

Total: £105

Shop



Neurodynamics 10
Week Course
(Assessment +
Equipment)

£105.00

To Apply or Receive Additional Information

In the first instance please contact Sasha:

sasha@edinburghparkinsons.org

Payment should be made after initial assessment via the [Shop](#) function on website.

After the 10-Week Course

There are some weekly classes running:

Wednesday 3pm at The Fisherrow Centre, with Sasha

Mondays 1-2pm at St Matthew Hall, Morningside Parish Church with David

And online classes with Sasha on Wednesdays 9.30-10.30am, Thursday 4-5pm and Friday 8-9am.

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 take the classes/sessions.

Dance for Parkinson's

Katherine Rothman the Health, Wellbeing, and Engagement Manager at Dance Base provided us with an insight. "Dance for Parkinson's classes have been running at Dance Base for over 13 years. We're centrally located in Grassmarket and are in an accessible building with lifts at every level. Our class meets once a week on Wednesdays from 11:30-13:30. This gives us plenty of time to catch up and get settled in, dance together (both seated and standing), have a small sing-a-long with our live pianist, and wind things down with a hot drink and biscuits.

The class is open to anyone - you don't have to have any previous dance experience or even know if you like dance to come along and try it out. The movements in our class are designed to support flexibility, gait, and balance while encouraging fluid movement, while also hopefully having some fun too. Everyone works at their own pace, and there's never any pressure to do something you don't want to.

Your first class is free (£5.50 each session after that) - so why not come along to have a look around. Please email us at dance@dancebase.co.uk to let us know if you're thinking about coming, or to have any questions answered."



(Photo Attribution: Brian Hartley)

Potential New Music/Singing Project

We were contacted by Emma Stewart-Jones who is Head of Development with Edinburgh Community Performing Arts (ECPA). We have promoted their Re-Connect Dance Project.



Now, ECPA are looking at the potential of introducing a free music and singing group, based at DN Studios, 9b South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9EB. Potentially they think Friday might be the day that the sessions would take place, led by a professional music teacher and supported by volunteers.

They asked if we could help them with a wee bit research to see if people might be interested in this. If you would be interested, could you please drop Olivia an email (secretary@edinburghparkinsons.org). The focus of the planned sessions, and input into suitability of the day would be good for us to establish.

Online Younger Parkinson's Introductory Session

Online Younger Parkinson's introductory information and support sessions are for people with Parkinson's and family members of working age (aged 66 or under).

Over the years, YP attendees have told Parkinson's-UK that they value a programme that provides both information and support. They want to hear from the charity (i.e. what P-UK do and how they can help). But also importantly, from peers who understand first-hand what it is like to be living with Parkinson's.

During the online YP introductory session, attendees will:

- hear from others living with Parkinson's about what has helped them to manage their Parkinson's moving forward;
- hear about the Parkinson's Local Adviser role and how they can help; and
- after a comfort break, attendees will be able to ask questions and access peer support informally.

The next session is on **Tuesday 24th February 2026** from 7pm – 8.30pm.

For more details and to request to get joining details please contact Chloe on 0300 123 3679 or at cmacmillan@parkinsons.org.uk

Want My Vote?

The next Scottish Parliament election will be held on Thursday 7 May 2026. Now is a crucial time for people with Parkinson's and their support networks to get Parkinson's on the election agenda.

Your voice is powerful because parties want your vote. They want to hear your concerns and will often commit to acting on issues that matter to you if they are elected.

Edinburgh Branch supports Parkinson's Scotland's campaign to help members of the Parkinson's community send postcards to the party leaders. Find out how on the [Parkinson's UK election webpage](#).

Your voice is powerful and together the Parkinson's community in Scotland can deliver change. They've developed some easy ways that you can take to make your voice heard. Your Move is the Parkinson's Scotland manifesto for the Scottish Parliament elections. It outlines what the next Scottish government can do to improve Parkinson's support.

It's easy for you to make your move during the election campaign. Here are 2 quick ways to get started:

Move 1: Send a postcard to party leaders asking what their party will do about Parkinson's issues. [Send digital postcards](#) with Parkinson's UK Postbug tool. We will also have postcards at some of our cafes and meetings/activities.



Scotland election postcard

Move 2: Display the P-UK Scotland election poster (image below) at home and ask a question about Parkinson's when campaigners call. Request a hard copy by emailing influence.scot@parkinsons.org.uk.



Contact your [local Electoral Registration Office](#) for guidance on registration, postal votes, or proxy votes.

[Find more information on registering and voting on the mygov.scot website.](#)

Memberships: Branch Vs Main Charity

If you are not a member of Parkinson's UK, we would urge to join. In an ideal situation you will have joined Edinburgh Branch and the main charity.

Branch Membership (which is completely free) gives opportunities for you to experience a warm and friendly local community, lots of weekly classes and events, meaningful support and advice, and a positive focus on wellbeing. If you haven't already joined, please do so from this link: [Join Edinburgh Branch](#)

P-UK Membership provides ways for you to have your say in how they run the charity and hold them to account. Make sure their plans and priorities reflect your lived experience of Parkinson's and what matters most to you. Membership offers you opportunities to campaign (as outlined on the last page), take part in clinical trials, access to specialised information and research updates. Being a member of the Branch doesn't automatically mean you are a member of P-UK, so if you haven't joined already please do so: [Join Parkinson's UK](#)

StAnza Poetry Festival

StAnza is Scotland's International Poetry Festival. It is an award-winning festival dedicated to bringing poetry in all its forms and many languages to audiences around the world.

This year, the theme is: You Are Not Alone and takes place in St Andrews and Online from 13-15 March 2026. The hybrid format combines live events with a rich digital programme for those who are unable to attend in person.

Ryan van Winkle is the Artistic Director, and in the Welcome to StAnza 2026 brochure he states: "Last year, I heard Vicki Feaver speak about living with Parkinson's and the changes it has brought to her life and work. Introducing one of her unflinching new poems, she described a support group she attends and said, simply: "It reminds you that you are not alone."

Vicki is a member of Edinburgh Branch as many of you will know. For those who don't you can view Vicki reading one of her poems on the theme of [Choice](#) for the 2021 National Poetry Day. She is doing a reading in StAnza '26. For more details, including the full programme, see our [news item on StAnza](#)

Voice Amplifier Kit and Throat Mic

We have been asked if we can find someone who may benefit from a brand new voice amplification product, and/or throat microphone. The two work independently of each other. Many thanks to Alvin for the donation.

Parkinson's UK confirm that a quieter voice is common in people with Parkinson's. A quieter, softer voice, which may sound breathy, is called hypophonia.

PwP's voice can also change. It may sound:

- breathy, like you are sighing and talking very quietly
- hoarse or harsh, like you have a sore throat
- quieter than before
- flat, like you're talking with the same tone and volume a lot of the time.

You might hear these symptoms referred to as hypokinetic dysarthria

The Unex Personal Voice Amplifier that Alvin donated is designed to help people with voice disorders or acquired communication difficulties, that have resulted from Parkinson's, or other conditions.



You can find more details on their website: VoiceAid.net



The other product is a type of contact microphone (also known as a laryngophone) that absorbs vibrations and sounds directly from the throat (voice box/larynx) by way of a sensor worn against the neck. It is discreet and can help enhance speech and communication. Details of this from same link as above.

If you are interested in either product contact: annec@edinburghparkinsons.org
(While not obligatory, maybe a small donation to the Branch could be given?)

For more information on speech and language therapy see NHS Lothian Living with Parkinson's Disease dedicated webpage for this: [Link](#)

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

Our friends over in Fife extend invitation to join them to listen to the experts talk about Parkinson's and how to live with it. This is a follow on to their 2024 successful 'Let's Talk About Parkinson's'.

When: Wednesday 22nd April from 6 pm to 8:30 pm

Where: Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy

Whether you've been diagnosed with the condition or supporting someone who has been, go along 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.

The Beveridge Suite at the Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy is a relaxed and comfortable space, quite close to train station and car parks.

The line up includes:

- Dr James Woods (*Consultant Geriatrician with a special interest in PD*)
- Prof Miratul Muqit (*distinguished Professor in the search for a cure for PD*)
- James Jopling (*Parkinson's UK Scotland Director*)
- Mark Coxe (*Chair of the local Parkinson's UK Branch in Fife*)
- Gillian Aldrich (*Lead Parkinson's Nurse Specialist for NHS Fife*)



Monthly Activities - What's Available:

Last month we outlined the weekly activities we run. This month, we shall remind you of some that take place monthly. We will feature others next month.

Branch Get-Togethers

Branch Get-Togethers on the second Wednesday of the month at 2pm, at LifeCare Centre, 2 Cheyne St, Edinburgh EH4 1JB. The next meeting will take place on 11th March, and this is our Branch AGM. This is an opportunity to get insight and feedback on the previous year. We encourage you to attend.

Social Cafés

Café Marchmont: second Monday of the month at 10.30am at Butterflies Café, at St Giles (Marchmont), 3 Kilgraston Rd, Edinburgh EH9 2DW. Next café is 9th March.

Café Niddrie: fourth Monday of the month at 2pm at Hays Business Centre, 4 Hay Avenue, EH16 4AQ. Next café is 23rd February.

Café Fairmilehead: third Wednesday of the month at 10.15am (except when the schools have holidays) at Fairmilehead Church, 1a Frogston Rd West, EH10 7AA. Next café is on 25th February.

Young People (Working Age)

Meet on the first Thursday of each month from 6.30pm. Next Meeting: is on 5th March 2026 at The Hunters Tryst 97 Oxfords Road, Edinburgh, EH13 9NG.

Carer Support Group

Normally the last Wednesday of the month at the BB Pollock Pavillion, 227 Ferry Road, EH6 4SP at 10.30am. But for this month as outlined on page 1, we meet on Friday 27th February as a one-off, though at the same time.

Parkinson's Walks

The next walk will be on Monday 23rd February at 10.30am. This will be a gentle circular walk, starting in front of the Canalside Cafe and Energy Gym, Boroughmuir Rugby and Community Arts Club, on Meggetland Wynd.