



# Parkinson's UK

For every Parkinson's journey

## Barnsley & District Branch NEWS

April 2026



We dedicate our April newsletter to a wonderful lady who sadly passed away on 18th January.

Rona Thompson, one of our founder members, was our dear friend and a dedicated supporter of Barnsley Parkinson's Group for many years.

She will be greatly missed for her warmth, humour and generosity of spirit.



Congratulations to George Spencer on his well-deserved retirement after 23 remarkable years of service.

Alongside his wife Grace, George founded the branch in 2002, laying the foundation for its continued growth and success. His dedication and leadership have left an indelible mark, and he will be greatly missed by all.

## Chair's Chatter

This year's Annual General Meeting was a particularly memorable occasion for our branch. It marked significant moments in our history, with the passing of Rona Thompson and the retirement of both George Spencer and Kathie Sharman.

Rona Thompson had played an integral role in the branch since its inception. She attended the inaugural meeting back in 2002 and, together with Philip, agreed to join the committee. Over the past 23 years, Rona took on numerous responsibilities including treasurer, minute taker, newsletter editor, events organiser, and meeter and greeter. Her extensive experience made her an invaluable source of knowledge and support. Rona's contributions will be remembered fondly.

George Spencer has also been a cornerstone of the branch since its formation. His work and commitment over the last 23 years have been remarkable. George served as the first Chairman for 13 years before becoming assistant treasurer. During his tenure, he raised substantial funds for the branch. One of his most notable achievements was the funding of a dedicated Parkinson's nurse for two years. This initiative made Barnsley one of the few branches nationwide with its own nurse. Afterwards, the local health authority agreed to permanently fund the position. The model established by George continues to influence Parkinson's UK who now fund a nurse in local branches for two years, provided the local health authority agrees to take over funding thereafter.

George also recognised the importance of exercise for people living with Parkinson's and was instrumental in setting up an exercise class - a service that remains available today.

## Best Wishes, Terry

Ten Pin Bowling



AGM

Ten Pin Bowling



## Coming Up...

- 9th April Awareness stand in Barnsley town centre for World Parkinson's Day
- 21st April Branch meeting - Speaker: Ian McMillan, our President
- 23rd April Aly's Amble - RSPB Old Moor Wetlands (10:30am start)  
(Free entry for RSPB members)
- 19th May Branch meeting - Speaker: Oliver Hill (Co-op Legal)
- 28th May Aly's Amble - Wentworth Garden Centre to church (10:30am start)
- 30th May Fundraising coffee morning at Staincross Methodist Church
- 14th June Fundraising plant sale at Locke Park Classic Car Event
- 16th June Annual outing - Bakewell\*
- 25th June Aly's Amble - Cannon Hall park, Cawthorne (10:30am start)
- \* Please note: there will be no branch meeting in June

## Green Fingers At The Ready!

Once again we are calling upon all you keen gardeners to provide plants for us to sell at Locke Park Classic Car Event on Sunday 14th June. Our stall is very popular with visitors to the event and we raise a fair amount of money for our Parkinson's group. Also, if any of you would be able to give up a couple of hours of your time to help run the stall, it would be very much appreciated.

### Recent Donations

Eric Evans Funeral Collection £500.00  
Morrisons Supermarket Collection £249.36  
Christine Howard £100.00  
Cawthorne Brass Band £70.00  
Pilley Hub £70.00  
Rona Thompson Funeral Collection £174.00

Please allow me the indulgence of paying tribute to my lovely, kind, gentle Mum who recently lost her battle against an aggressive form of Parkinson's. She showed great strength and bravery over the years that she lived with this relentlessly cruel and destructive condition. I miss her more than words can say. Maxine.

### Obituaries

Rona Thompson sadly passed away on 18th January 2026. Our thoughts are with her husband Philip, family and friends.

Josephine Mellor passed away peacefully at home on 23rd February 2026. Our thoughts are with her daughter Maxine, family and friends.

Maureen Rowe recently passed away. Sincere condolences to her family and friends.

## Barnsley Parkinson's WhatsApp Group

As some of you may already be aware, we have set up a WhatsApp group to share information between members. If anyone would like to be part of the group, please pass your mobile number to Maxine

## Roll Up, Roll Up ... Your Sleeves!

This is a plea to all the enthusiastic bakers among you. We are in need of dozens of cakes for our community fundraising event at Staincross Methodist Church on Saturday 30th May. We also require donations of gifts for our tombola and books to sell on our book stall. Many thanks!

## What Happens When?

<b>Branch Meetings</b>	3rd Tuesday of the month, 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Emmanuel Church.
<b>Exercise Classes</b>	Weekly on Wednesdays, 1:00pm to 2:00pm and 2:30pm to 3:30pm. 2:00pm to 2:30pm is time for a drink and a chat. Emmanuel Church.
<b>Boxing Classes</b>	Weekly on Fridays, 11:00am to 11:45am. Afterwards time for a drink and a chat. Wentworth Community Hall.
<b>Golf Driving</b>	1st Tuesday of the month, 11am. Sandhill Golf Club (April to September)
<b>Natter Café</b>	2nd Thursday of the month, 10:30am to midday. Falco Lounge.
<b>Aly's Amble</b>	4th Thursday of the month (April to September)

## BARNSELY AND DISTRICT BRANCH

### Branch President

Ian McMillan

### Branch Chair

Terry Kendall 07515 051075

### Branch Secretary

Doris Wragg 01226 744670

### Nurse Specialist for Parkinson's

Carolyn Arnott 01226 644575

### Parkinson's Local Adviser

Shani Iqbal 0344 2253721

### Membership Secretary

Ann Marie Sephton 01226 384936

### Events Organiser

Alyson Francis 07805 521770

Many thanks to the contributors to this issue.  
Future items should be sent to:-  
[maxinemellor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:maxinemellor@yahoo.co.uk)

## Parkinson's UK

**We're the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.**

Free confidential helpline:  
0808 800 0303

Interpreting available:  
0800 111 4204

Visit us online at [parkinsons.org.uk](http://parkinsons.org.uk)

A charity registered in England and Wales (258197) and in Scotland (SC037554).

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