

COVENTRY AND WARWICKSHIRE SUPPORT GROUP NEWSLETTER

July 2012



Welcome to newsletter #6!

Because the hall where we meet has been refurbished, we haven't been able to meet and the group has been inactive since April. I've missed you all lots!

Back in May I went to Naidex (<http://www.naidex.co.uk>), which is an independent living exhibition at the Birmingham NEC. I'd really recommend it - it's brilliant. If you're looking for something specific, i.e. a wheelchair or a handrail, all the different makes and models are there for you to try, get advice on and compare. I've been going now for about 7 years and every year I learn something new. It's a great way of finding out what's out there. Here are a few of things I found at Naidex this year:

- Napkleen (see www.napkleen.com). These are just like big paper napkins (you wouldn't know they weren't - they don't shout "disabled" or anything) but they have a peel-and-stick strip at the top so they stick to your clothes. I thought they were ingenious – after the show I ordered some from www.amazon.co.uk.
- Wiltshire Farm Foods (<http://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com>) were there – I tasted a few of their meals although I've been a customer of theirs since moving into my flat a few years ago. Wiltshire Farm Foods is a meals delivery service. Meals are prepared, cooked, frozen and stored in containers which even I find easy to open. They are delivered by someone who is always happy to put them my freezer and then I microwave them as and when. They are very tasty to boot!
- Anybody with ataxic fingers and Sky TV may want to check out Sky's Easy Grip Remote (http://www.sky.com/helpcentre/tv/remote-controls/easy-grip-remote-control/index.html?search_omni=search-article-ssl). I ordered mine at Naidex - they're completely free and mine's great! The only con is that I am now unable to throw my remote at the TV when Carol Vorderman comes on...

I'll be going to Naidex next year and asking the group to come along – I really encourage you to come with me.

While I was there I set up an appointment with Midshires Mobility – I wanted to look at basic manual wheelchairs for travelling in when I go on holiday and the representative said he'd bring some out to my flat for me to look at. I arranged for somebody to be there to help me to transfer and the time of the appointment came and went. He didn't turn up, so Midshire Mobility – one to avoid!

Every Wednesday I go to a great little club for disabled people at Coventry's Council of Disabled People (<http://www.cdp.org.uk>). We do different things here but about a week after the Midshire Mobility fiasco, a representative from a local mobility equipment provider called Wenman Mobility (<http://www.wenmanmobility.co.uk>) came to the club. From here I made an appointment with him and I was VERY impressed by his knowledge and genuine friendliness when he came – I'll definitely go to Wenman Mobility again. I ended up buying a Karma Ergo 105 Self Propel wheelchair (<http://www.karmamobility.co.uk>) which I am really pleased with.

Our website

In April I took a course where I learned how to create websites from scratch using Adobe Dreamweaver. Creating a website for our group was my first project – take a look at and share <http://ataxiacoventry.co.uk/>. Here you can keep updated about upcoming events/meetings and download previous newsletters etc.

Our sixth meeting – held on Sunday 15th July 2012 at Exhall Old School Community Centre



come, so I was really relieved to see everyone.

About 15 people came to our meeting – Catherine (CA) and her husband Paul (who by coincidence works with my brother!), Dave (CA), Kate whose dad has CA, Bev (CA) and James, Lorraine (CA) and her daughter Emily, Kieran (FA) and his family, Matthew (FA) and his PA Paul (who gave me a lift to the meeting in Matthew's wheelchair accessible vehicle, via McDonalds of course, my aunty Monica and me (FA)! As we haven't met for so long I was really nervous that no one would



In June one of our members Bev jumped out of a plane for her 50th Birthday and to raise money for Ataxia UK. Bev bought in a video to show us on her swanky iPad – you can also view it online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvuNTW9m7is&feature=youtu.be>.

Bev raised £680 for Ataxia UK – well done!!



One of our members Matthew Law showed us his new tattoo which he got after his beloved Chelsea FC won the Champion's League. It was Matthew's lucky day – one of our members gave him a present; a paving slab with Chelsea FC's club badge cut into it. He said "This is an amazing present. I couldn't believe had done this for me."



It was lovely to catch up with you all and be reminded what a nice group we have!! Can't wait to see you all again...

Money

Money wise the group still has £68 in the pot after receiving a kind donation from Marion Abbott covering the cost of room hire for last month's meeting – thank you very much Marion! After coming to her first meeting in April, Marion was keen to come to more but when I phoned her a couple of weeks ago I was doubly sad to discover that Marion's son has had a stroke and as such she is unable to get to meetings for the time being. I hope your son has a speedy recovery Marion and we hope to see you soon.

Members do keep asking me how the funds are going – we have enough now to keep us going for a while, but I'll let you all know when our funds start to get low.

Our next meeting

**Sunday 9th September 2012 at 2 – 4pm
Exhall Old School Community Centre,
Exhall Green, Exhall CV7 9GL**

Please put this date in your diaries now – it would be great to see you there! The community Centre is off School Lane in Bedworth. Type the post code into Google for a map (see enclosed map if you received this newsletter in the post). Buses 20 and 48 go here – get off at the Baylon Road stop.

Pub lunch

Following the success of the last pub lunch in April, I have booked a table at Mount Pleasant – Hungry Horse, Hinckley Road, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2EU on **Saturday 25th August at 2pm**. There is room for wheelchairs, disabled facilities and I have warned them that there may be a number of wheelchair users in our party. I've booked us a table in one of their little side rooms. I need no money up front but if you're interested please let know as I need to confirm numbers with the pub (my contact details are below).

Ataxia UK national conference

Another date for your diary: Saturday 13th October 2012 is the Ataxia UK annual conference. If you wish to go to the conference, go to www.ataxia.org or telephone the office on 020 7582 1444 to book a place.

The conference costs £32 for those with Ataxia and £38 for those without – this includes lunch, and an extra £30 for the evening dinner and disco afterwards.

I'd welcome any suggestions of anything specific you'd like to see in future newsletters and meetings – please get in touch! I hope to see as many of you as possible at the pub lunch on 25th August and/or our next meeting on 9th September!

Who I am and how to contact me:

I am Katie Henderson (you can find out more about me at <http://ohbother.co.uk>) and I am the named contact for the group. You can contact me by e-mailing katie@ohbother.co.uk or phoning 07565 247 183. I am also on Facebook and so is the group; search for "Ataxia UK Coventry". For news on group events and to download previous newsletters etc visit <http://ataxiacoventry.co.uk/>.