Neath Port Talbot Stroke Group (NPTSG)

Quarterly Newsletter – Winter 2019

A warm welcome to our quarterly newsletter

What the stroke group means to me. I had my stroke on the 17th of October 2016, I was taken to Morriston hospital A&E I was then air lifted by air ambulance to the university of Wales Heath hospital. I had no warning and at 42 years old quite unexpected I'd suffered a serious bleed on the brain. I was under sedation for a lot for my time in the Heath so the hospital could control my blood pressure visiting a number of high dependency wards but my wife kept a journal which I later read when I was transferred to singleton hospital. Whilst in the Heath I had sepsis and a blood clot in my left arm, my affected side which initially hindered my rehabilitation of the arm, I was being fed by a tube and was in a bad way. I had three operations on my brain to release the pressure which was consistently coming back, I can't remember a lot due to being sedated which in a way I'm thankful of. I consider myself to be one of the lucky ones and am grateful for a second chance which I don't intend to waste. I was transferred back to Singleton hospital via picking another patient up from Abergavenny and dropping one off at Barry hospital in November 2017, I was glad to be back home in Swansea, the Heath were amazing but the travelling was a nightmare for my family and friends. Once back in Singleton Hospital I started my rehabilitation in earnest keen to get back to the best I could be and to get home as soon as possible. I set myself a target of being home for Christmas day which I achieved only the day mind, it wiped me out, but was worth it. In hospital my future was very uncertain and if truth be told I was a little scared and nervous of what it held. My wife and I were visited on ward 7 by a gentleman from the stroke association by the name of Jason Haynes and he informed me and my wife about this amazing group where stroke survivors met every Wednesday at 10 and we should come along, I'm so glad we did. You are all an inspiration to me and I can only thank you all for all the help and guidance you have given me and still give to this day. I think that I would have got to where I am today anyway because I am a very determined man but the Neath Port Talbot Stroke Group has helped me massively, I like that everyone that attends the group understands what you're going through and you don't have to explain how your feeling. There are no ego's at group just large characters and lots of laughs. I wouldn't miss my Wednesday visit to group I love going. Jon Evans.

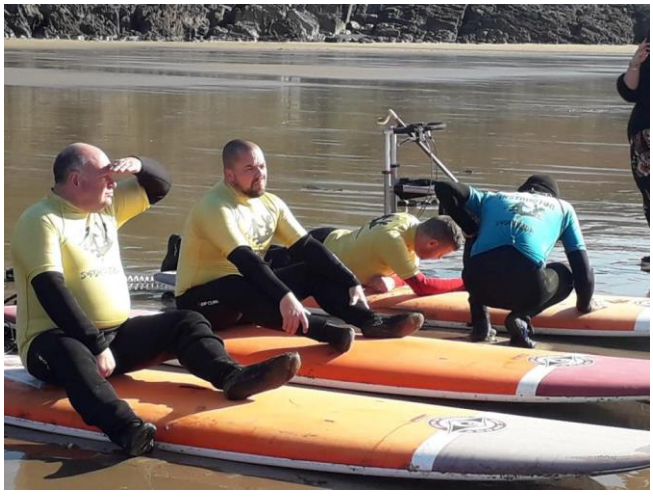
WHY FUNDRAISE?

Why do we Fundraise?

When NPTSG started in 2014, we were a tiny group of 6-12 members. Our only overheads were the cost of the hall, teas, coffees and the occasional speaker or activity. We set subs at £2.50 and just managed to afford the few things we did. We held our first ever curry night and raised an amazing £488. The money we raised was incredible but more importantly we had a brilliant night out, we socialised, we made new friends and we had a delicious Indian meal for just £13.50. Many of us have lost our old lives and friends after having a stroke, so this was a whole new world opening up for us. From this point on we regularly held evenings out, whether they were fundraisers or just fun evenings, our social lives grew and we found we had more meaningful lives after stroke. As we raised more money, we were able to afford better speakers and activities at our Wednesday group. Within 6 months our fundraising enabled us to have lunches after group, a River Tawe boat trip, visit to Perriswood Archery & Falconry centre, a car treasure hunt and a day at Fos Las Race Track to name a few.

Due to the huge growth of members attending each week it was imperative to get all group members feedback, so at our AGM in September everyone completed a survey telling us their likes and dislikes. As a result of this we have planned an incredible 2019 for us all to enjoy. We have brilliant weekly group activities and speakers booked. We have lunches after group, a show to look forward to, Ten Pin Bowling, Cinema, Walks in the Gnoll Park and Aberavon Beach with lunch afterwards, a trip to Longleat Safari Park, Golf and lunch at Riverside Driving Range, Christmas cinema and a Christmas shopping trip. We are holding a 'Free' event every 6 weeks which will be dotted through our regular fundraising and fun events. We appreciate that not every event is to everyone's taste, but we hope we offer a wide enough variety of things that cater for the majority's tastes. Last year all our activities cost a staggering £21,000 so we really, really, really, appreciate the support that all YOU wonderful people show us, whether it's by fundraising for us, attending our fundraisers or just coming along each week and enjoying group. We wouldn't be where we are without you. Thank you so much.

This is what this busy NPTSG bunch has been up to.



Surfing @ Caswell with Surfability

Yes, that's right some of us went surfing!!

Is there anything that our group won't try?

The weather was shining bright for our group to try surfing with the incredible 'Surfability'. To say everyone loved it is an understatement. We will be doing it again when the spring comes around, with hopefully many more group members.

Nataly Churchill Psychic Medium Evening

We held our second Nataly Churchill evening this autumn and it was a resounding success. We hold 2 of these events a year specifically for vital fundraising. Its predominantly for the public as we know this event isn't for everyone. We raised an amazing £700 on the night. Nataly had messages for many of our group members, moving a lot of people to tears. Thank you to all that attended and Thank you Nataly. We will see you again on February 19th @ Aberavon Beach Hotel.

Our **Halloween Quiz night** was held at the Four Winds and we had a fantastic, very atmospheric night!
Everyone made a tremendous effort with their costumes, Alan Sparks winning the best dressed prize. Other awards went to Mark Lewis for the scariest costume; Jason for most obscene (I'm still haunted by the hot pants!) Tony and Sue Jenkins for best couple.
The quiz was won by the Gammond's team with a great performance. Other prizes went to Holly Thompson for a very detailed and creative graveyard scene and Leo won the card modelling. Hope to see you all again next year!

Birmingham Christmas Market

35 of our group went to Birmingham Christmas market. We stayed in the Royal Court Hotel which was nice and comfortable and the food was good. Everyone had a great time. A few of us stayed in Coventry and the men went to the motor museum while the women went shopping. The rest of the group went into Birmingham Christmas market with our FRIENDLY DRIVER NIGEL. For those of us on our trip you will know what I mean about our driver. Everyone has their own story to tell, I think everyone had a really nice time and are looking forward to next year.

Bristol Christmas Market

Our annual Christmas shopping trip took us to the brilliant Bristol City. We were spoilt for choice with the Christmas market through Broadmead, The Galleries and Cabots Circus. So many shops and so little time. Ridgeways coaches and our regular driver Martin were fantastic as usual. We hope you'll join us next year for a Christmas trip to Bath.

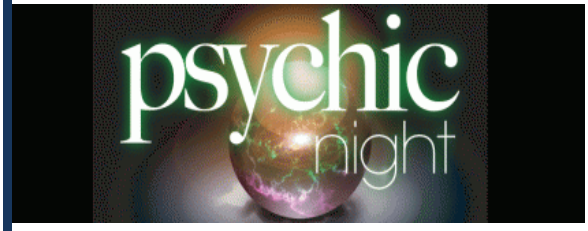
Christmas Cinema - Home Alone Cinema
We had a great time at Forge Fach community centre. We had a good laugh the film was Home Alone. we had tea, coffee mince pies and stolen, which was very nice. The only dark side was there was not enough room for parking. May be next year we will try and find somewhere else with more parking spaces.

Christmas Lunch
101 of us joined together at the Aberavon beach hotel for our annual Christmas lunch. we had a wonderful time mingling before the lunch followed by a nice dinner and great entertainment from Will and Bob. The hampers in the raffle went down well and I think this is something we will do again. it was lovely to see so many people in their festive attire and it was lovely to get so much positive feedback of a good afternoon.

What have we got coming up for you to enjoy?

Chinese Buffet Lunch Sunday 13th Jan @ 12pm
Join us for an all you can eat Chinese buffet lunch at the Shanghai Chef in Penlan, Swansea. The cost of the meal will be £10.00 per person payable in advance. We went there last year and everyone said how much they enjoyed, so we hope you will all come and join us and start off the new year as we mean to go on as we have in the past. Booking & payment in advance with Dwynwen

Lunch Margam Deer Wednesday 30th January @1pm
Would you like to enjoy a meal at the Margam Deer with us? Booking and food choices in advance essential. Menu to follow soon - See Emma

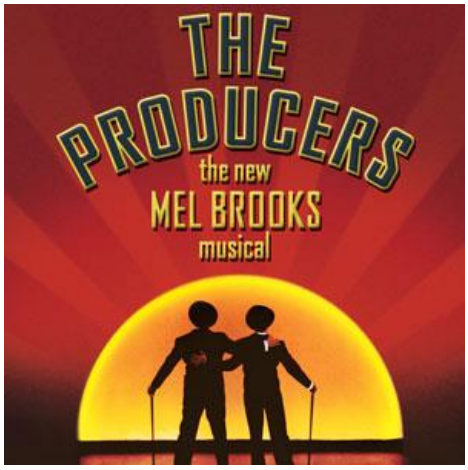


An Evening with a Spiritualist Medium Nataly Churchill Tuesday February 19th 7pm @ Aberavon Beach Hotel
£8 per person See Emma for tickets 07456-451073

Murder Mystery Saturday 23rd February 7pm @Aberavon Beach Hotel

Are you the next Sherlock Gnomes, Hercules Parrot or Miss Maple, if you spotted the deliberate mistakes come along to our 1936 themed Oscar Night Murder, Mystery evening at The Aberavon Beach Hotel on the 23rd February 2019 . For a mere £25 you will get a fabulous evening of mystery and intrigue. Solve the murder over a 3 Course dinner. Dress code “Guys & Gals" is encouraged but not compulsory. For tickets see Lee 07542728056

Ten Pin Bowling & Lunch 13th March @1pm
Join us at Tenpin, Swansea for a couple of games of bowling and some food. There are ramps to deliver the ball for those who may find it difficult to bowl. You need to make your own way to Parc Tawe by 1pm to take part. We need to find a new champion to topple Paul Thompson from his perch! If interested, please see Steve.



The Producers – The new Mel Brooks musical
In April Port Talbot Amateur Operatic Society are doing the producers as their next show. We as a group will be arranging a trip to this on the opening night for those of you that are interested. If you don’t have a Hynt card but would like one, please speak to Paul. The producers is a musical comedy written by Mel Brooks…more information on this will follow shortly.

Details will be announced at group.

We're for life after stroke

Dates for Your Diary:

2nd Jan – Big Fat 2018 Quiz
9th Jan – Life in a Chain Gang – Ioan Richards
Sunday 13th Jan – Shanghai Chef Buffett – See Dwynwen
16th Jan – Akora Design
23rd Jan – Co-Op talk on wills and power of attorney
30th Jan – Information Group & Quiz
30th Jan – Lunch Margam Deer – See Emma
6th Feb – Council for Deaf People – Lucy Payne
13th Feb – Heartfelt 2 Inspire Felting Hearts for Valentines
19th February – Nataly Churchill – See Emma
20th Feb – Step Out for Stroke Alan Drury
23rd February 2019 – Murder Mystery Evening Aberavon Beach Hotel – See Lee
27th Feb – Games
6th Mar - Talk
13th Mar – Samba Drumming
13th March – Ten Pin Bowling & Lunch 1pm – See Steve
20th Mar – Aled Jones our Local Area Community Co-ordinator
27th Mar – Woodburning and carving

Also, Every Friday Morning 10.30 – 11.30am
Boccia & Games
Join us at Melincryddan Community Centre for a real good laugh

Contact details:

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