



# Buzz Bulletin



**November 2023**  
**Edition 11 Vol. 8**

Newsletter of the  
North Hampshire Prostate  
Cancer Support Group

## Chairman's Chat



*Keith Jones*

**W**elcome to the final issue of Buzz for 2023. It has been quite a year and I thought it was worth reminding everyone of the highlights. We have held 10 monthly meetings; it would have been 11 if you count our locked-out meeting in June. We have had speakers on subjects ranging from building spitfires and post boxes through changes to phone systems from analogue to digital to wellness and prostate cancer research projects. On average we have had 40 attendees and welcomed a number of new members. We have continued to host our very valuable Pint and Chat sessions where we have been able to speak to newly diagnosed men.

We have also taken part in three awareness events at the Basingstoke Festival of Transport, the Tadley Treacle Fair and most recently at the Malls in Basingstoke town centre. We have also had a presence at some locally organised PSA testing events. I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone who took part in these events, without your support we could not get the message across. Finally, we received the balance of the funds raised by the Loddon Lilies part of which was already used to provide us with our presentation equipment. The balance will be used to support our awareness activities and to support our membership.

### Prostate Cancer Research

2023 has also been a year of significant research breakthroughs into prostate cancer. It has also seen requests for involvement in a large number of new research projects. Personally, I have participated three such projects, the latest being a study into how a genetic test might be used in future clinical practice to manage both men with prostate cancer and those at risk of developing prostate cancer. This study is still looking for volunteers between

### DIARY DATES

**Thursday 7th December**  
**NHPCSG Xmas Lunch**  
**BCoT 12.00 to 3.00pm**

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**Thursday 7th December**  
**Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke**  
**Pub Pint and Chat**

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**Please note there will be**  
**no December**  
**Group meeting**

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**Thursday 4th January**  
**Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke**  
**Pub Pint and Chat**

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**Thursday 25th January**  
**Group meeting**  
**Speaker Martin Budd**  
**on the subject of**  
**The Health Benefits of Sleep**

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**Thursday 1st February**  
**Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke**  
**Pub Pint and Chat**

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**Thursday 25th January**  
**Group meeting**  
**Speaker TBA**  
**on the subject of**  
**A life in Removals**

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**Thursday 7th March**  
**Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke**  
**Pub Pint and Chat**

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**Thursday 28th March**  
**NHPCSG AGM**

the ages of 40 and 69 and details can be found at the following website where you can also find contact details.

[PMPRC - The Institute of Cancer Research, London \(icr.ac.uk\)](http://www.icr.ac.uk)

The research is being performed by the Genetics and Epidemiology department of the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust. Like all such research projects, this is a long-term project over the next 5-6 years and participation may not have personal benefits but hopefully the results will help with the early identification of potential prostate diagnosis in men and hence targeted treatment in the early stages.

## Social Events

On a lighter note, the committee have been discussing the potential of organising a small number of social events in 2024. We have one event already planned and subscribed being a guided visit to the Willis Museum in Basingstoke. At the November meeting I circulated a small survey of other potential activities and I would like to thank everyone who completed the survey which I am now collating the results and will provide an update in the next meeting and Buzz. The activities in the survey were as follows:

- Afternoon skittles
- Evening skittles
- Barge trip from Aldermaston
- Visit to Bombay Sapphire Gin Distillery
- Mini Plant Oxford tour (the car that is)
- Walks



In addition, the survey gave the option for members to add their own suggestions which will be added for consideration.

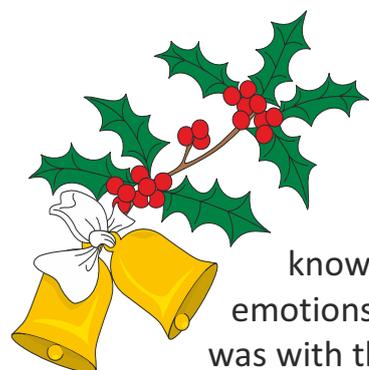
For anyone who was unable to attend the meeting and would like to complete the survey, please E-mail me with your response to the above activities including any additional suggestions. My E-mail address is [k.w.jones@btinternet.com](mailto:k.w.jones@btinternet.com)

To close, as this is the final Buzz for 2023, I want to take the opportunity to wish you and your families a very festive Christmas and a happy New Year

**Keith**



## November Group Meeting Report



**O**n being diagnosed with prostate cancer, the shock often brings fear, grief and even anger, however it is well known that men are notorious for not sharing these emotions finding it particularly difficult to talk about such issues. It was with this introduction that Sarah Gray the National Support and Development Manager of Tackle, the Federation for Prostate Cancer Support Groups, opened her talk this month. She highlighted that '*No man is an island, entire of itself*', with human beings designed for relationships, she empathised this point with one of her slides showing the loneliness of those disconnected.

Sarah explained that although Tackle as a charity is very small, its aim is to be the 'Go To' place for those in need of support. It is recognised that the NHS is the 'GO TO' for medical treatment, however it is not well equipped to provide psychological and emotional support so often needed. She added that Tackle's mission is to enable those affected to find a local group support, and also to the charity being the voice expressing publicly the needs of those affected by this disease. In practice that means providing regular forums for local support group leaders; the running of campaigns in conjunction with larger charities such as PCUK, for example its campaign 'Boys need Bins', relating to the growing awareness of male incontinence, which is known to affect 1 in 3 men over 65; as well as awareness campaigns – she showed how the impact of early diagnosis, which varies significantly across the country is affecting outcomes.

Sarah then went on to outline Tackle's structure, and how until recently she had been the only full time employee, with others part time undertaking admin, communications, and fund raising. The charity set up in 2008 now has 10 trustees – currently one being vacant, as well as a clinical advisory board half of whom hold professorships.

The work of Tackle is bringing significant growth in the number of groups across the country – currently 94, with 15 new groups formed just in the last 12 months and even a virtual group called 'Living Well', which holds Zoom meetings the last Monday of the month from 6pm till 7:30 – for more details contact [aidan.atkins@tackleprostate.org](mailto:aidan.atkins@tackleprostate.org) . However, she added it would be a real help if members were willing to submit (in the first instance to this group's committee) a personal testimony of how the group has helped you cope, these are aimed at the 50% of people who initially are not interested in a support group, despite it being proven that those who are members achieve a better outcome.

In recent weeks, there has been much press comment on the prospect of a new hospital in Basingstoke, so after the break, Keith Bunker, who has been on the 'patient participation group'



## November Group Meeting Report (continued)

for the new hospital planning, was asked to update the group. He explained that under Government Treasury rules, major infrastructure investments such as this have to go to public consultation, and that the necessary signing off for this process was likely to happen in the next few days, with it running through to the end of the first quarter of next year. As part of the consultation, groups such as ours, can request a speaker to visit and detail the options – a request from this group has already been lodged. Already major changes have started, in that all elective surgery has been moved to Winchester – for obvious reasons running this at two hospitals not only diluted expertise, but meant operating theatres being shared between emergency and routine operations, making planning particularly difficult. However, this change is already highlighting the major issue of access for patients and those visiting, especially for those dependent on public transport, as well as exacerbating the parking issues at Winchester. For more detail of the new hospital options much can be gained from the local BBC website, however once consultation officially starts Keith is happy to provide more detail.

**Keith B**



### Complimentary Therapies

**I**f our members would like a free head/shoulders massage or reflexology (feet) from the Pink Place/Blue Space please contact them for an appointment.

Donation would be appreciated.

PH: 08899 970 841 Mon-Fri 9am to 3 pm  
or email [info@thepinkplace.org.uk](mailto:info@thepinkplace.org.uk).

They also have a trained councillor.

Their office is at The Orchard, White Heart Lane Basingstoke  
(near the council offices)



## Group Meetings

Brighton Hill Community  
Association Hall  
Gershwin Court  
Basingstoke.  
RG22 4NN

Meetings are held on the last Thursday  
of every month except December



**Together we are Stronger**

## Contact

For more information

call or text: 07377 430242

email : [info@nhpcsg.org.uk](mailto:info@nhpcsg.org.uk)

website: [www.nhpcsg.org.uk](http://www.nhpcsg.org.uk)



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