



down's syndrome oxford

Newsletter | October 2018

From the Chair

Welcome back to the DSO newsletter. It's a bumper issue with lots and lots of information about and photos of our **very successful**



Walkathon in June. I won't reveal here how much money we all raised for DSO, but if you can't wait, the grand total is on page 4!

And yes, it's me again. As you may remember from the previous issue, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary were hoping to stand down at the AGM and as it happened, none of us did. However, there are a few changes: have a look on page 2 for all the details.

Another change, and a very important one, is the introduction of our **DLA/PIP support service**. We have managed to convince Rowena Pearce to join us again from Cornwall to help DSO members in their application for these government grants. More and more people seem to have trouble getting the money they are entitled to and Rowena has lots of experience in applying for them. So turn to page 3 to see how it all works if you'd like to make use of this service.

Before the summer holidays we trialled our first **Saturday groups**, speech and language groups run by Laila Tyrrell from the Owl Centre, and organised by Seb's mum Sam Morrissey. They were very well received and

we'd love to continue these. So please go to page 18 to see what the Saturday groups entail and how you can sign your child up.

This issue also sees the first-ever instalment of a new feature: **Kelly's Top Tips**. Kelly Stacey is the fond of all knowledge when it comes to support, services and freebies available for families with children with special needs. On page 21 you'll find her top tips for this issue.

That's it from me. I hope you'll enjoy the great articles and lovely photos in this amazing issue.

Marion Simon, Chair

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AGM and the recruitment of new officers

The DSO AGM took place in June and we were very lucky to be offered a function room, free of charge, at the Randolph hotel. The meeting was very well attended by members old and new, and it was great to have so many families represented. We reflected on the huge success of the Walkathon and spent time hearing suggestions of how to spend our money. We had lots of great new ideas put forward including celebrating World Down's Syndrome Day 2019 and a Down's syndrome conference for professionals and parents.

You may remember in the last edition of the newsletter we put out a call for volunteers to take on the role of Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary as the current officers in these roles were standing down. At the AGM we confirmed that:

Chair

- **Marion Simon** will stay on in the role of Chair but **Jos Smith** has volunteered to support Marion over the next year to learn more about the role with a view to taking it on in the near future.

Treasurer

- **Sarah Fonge** will stay on as Treasurer, but will have support from her mum, **Bridget Herbert**, and will only carry out the treasurer activities on a Wednesday.

Secretary

- **Emma Smith** will remain as Secretary but **Roberta Celeste** volunteered to shadow Emma with a view to taking on the role next year.

A big thank-you to Jos and Roberta for joining the committee and offering to learn more about the roles, and to our existing officers for agreeing to carry on in their roles for another year.

New Trustees

We also pleased to welcome two new trustees:

Jim McMahon

Jim has been a member of DSO since his daughter Rosie was a baby. Rosie is now 14 years old and regularly participates in DSO activities and events. Jim is also Chair of Trustees of Oxford-based charity KEEN.

Becky Clark

Becky is mum to 23-year-old Jess who has Down's syndrome and is a SENCO at an Oxfordshire primary school.

We now have 10 DSO Trustees. They meet three times a year to oversee the strategic direction of the charity, to make decisions on key areas of spend, and to agree annual priorities.

Next Committee Meeting

Monday 19th November 2018

At the Turnpike Inn, Yarnton

From 7.45pm

New committee members are always welcome. It's a valuable opportunity to meet other parents, find out what's going on, put forward new ideas, and have a say in how the charity is run.



New DLA/PIP Support Service

We are pleased to announce that a new service is being trialled for DSO families - a DLA and PIP Application Support Service.

This subject is very close to all of our hearts and causes much anxiety and heartache for far too many of us, all too frequently!

We are thrilled to announce that our former Down's Syndrome Nurse Specialist **Rowena Pearce will be joining the DSO team as a hands-on advisor**, helping families through the DLA/PIP application (and, if necessary, appeal) process. She will have helped many of you in the past.

Rowena will work 1:1 with families to help: complete and submit their DLA/PIP forms; identify what evidence is needed to support an application; with requesting and obtaining any evidence needed from specialists.

The aim is to increase the number of successful DLA/PIP applications for DSO families and to take some of the stress out of the process.

How will it work?

There are two ways to access the service, by booking either:

- 1) a one-on-one session with Rowena Pearce in person - perfect for new families, those making their first application, complicated renewals or those who haven't previously met Rowena Pearce.
- 2) a phone-based consultation with Rowena Pearce - ideal for those families who already know Rowena, are looking for assistance with renewals etc. and are comfortable to collaborate more remotely initially.

How do I contact Rowena Pearce?

You can contact Rowena via email:

SeniorMedicalAdvisor@dsoxford.org.uk

Or phone or text message on 07512 210851.

Where and when can I meet Rowena in person?

Rowena will be visiting us from her base in Cornwall once a month. Visit dates will be published on the DSO Facebook Page and website and we will send out reminder emails.

Dates for the remainder of 2018 are:

⇒ **Wednesday 31st October**

⇒ **Wednesday 21st November**

When in Oxfordshire, Rowena will schedule 1:1's with families and be based at the Abingdon Carousel Family Centre alongside Wednesday EDG sessions. This will enable parents to speak to Rowena whilst there are other DSO members around to provide child-care if needed.

Where a family isn't able to meet Rowena in Abingdon (we are aware that this location isn't ideal for all), she will make meeting arrangements directly with the family, visiting them at home or another mutually convenient location.

People are also welcome to meet with Rowena in Abingdon on a "drop-in" basis. Just call in advance to let Rowena know you're coming, so she can manage her diary.

What do you need to do?

If you would like to book time with Rowena to discuss your DLA or PIP, simply contact her on the phone number or email above.

We hope that this will prove to be a valuable new service for our families that will have a real and positive impact.

21-Walkathon

Our biggest fundraising event ... ever!

This edition of the newsletter provides full coverage of the 21-Walkathon, our large-scale fundraising event that took place in June; an event that proved to be a success beyond our wildest dreams, both in terms of the atmosphere and enjoyment of the day/night and the phenomenal amount of money raised.

The total raised to date is £36,000 — this is by far the largest amount of money raised for DSO during a single event and we are truly grateful to everyone involved.



The Organisers

The biggest thank-you must go to the fantastic event team who worked tirelessly for months to ensure the event was meticulously planned and set up.

During the event they were the first ones to arrive and the last ones to leave and were constantly on hand throughout to make sure the event ran without a hitch.

Thank you — you were all amazing!

Event Team Members:

Sarah Fonge

Elsa Gill

Clare McKenzie

Andrew Fearnside

Jos Smith



The Teams

We were delighted to have nineteen teams taking part in the Walkathon, which equated to over 200 walkers. The aim of the event was for each team to walk continuously for 21-hours, which meant that at least one member of each team had to be walking at any one time. Teams started at 12.00pm on the Saturday and crossed the finish line at 9.00am on the Sunday morning.

Introducing the teams ...

Dream Kareem Team

A special mention must go to the **Dream Kareem Team**. In addition to walkers taking part in Oxford, there were also team members joining in in various locations across the UK as well as walkers in Italy, New Jersey, Arizona, and Boston! A truly international effort — well done Dream Team Kareem!

Teams were also asked to run a stall on the Saturday afternoon to provide entertainment for event visitors and as an additional form of fundraising. Stalls ranged from traditional fete stalls such as hook-a-duck and play your cards right to face painting and guinea pig racing! Other teams ran refreshment stalls including a BBQ, bar, and cream teas.



The A Team



The X Team



Introducing the teams...

Amber's Ramblers



Archie's Army



DSO Marvels



Red Hot Chilli Steppers



Samuel's Strollers



Team Amos



Team Cheeky Monkeys



Team Chloe



Team Dreamers



Team Jack and Andrew



Team Jojo



Team Lion



Team Seb and Celeste



Team Thame



Trisomy Trotters



Walkie Talkies



Making it happen

**21-Walkathon was the brainchild of Sarah Fonge, DSO Treasurer.
Sarah explains how she turned her idea into reality.**

Back in 2017 it was becoming a reality that DSO needed a money injection to continue. We didn't want to start having discussions about where to cut support to our members. So my brain started ticking. We needed a fundraiser that would involve as many people as possible, would be accessible for all of our members, and something that would draw in a lot of sponsorship.

The idea

After running the Oxford Half Marathon a few years ago I learnt very quickly that I wasn't made for running (seems to be the in-thing at the moment) and I also wanted the event to be inclusive for all. Then I thought, how can we capitalise on the reason we need the money. A 3-mile walk to represent the triple copy of the 21st chromosome first came to mind., then a 3-hour walkathon but I didn't think this would be gruelling enough to raise the funds DSO desperately needed, and then the lightbulb moment—a 21-hour team walkathon!

Starting the ball rolling

I contacted Wheatley Rugby Club, a local venue and was directed to The Wheatley Playing Field Trust. I had no connection with them and they had no reason to help with my plea but they were amazing and after a few meetings with them (mainly to ensure them I wasn't completely bonkers) they said we could use the venue.

In my mind I could see a track around a field with team bases around the track, music and entertainment to keep morale boosted and everyone having fun!

Pulling together a team of helpers

I quickly realised that this wasn't something I could pull off on my own and, after a call out to DSO members, the Event Team was established. Elsa Gill, Andrew Fearnside, Jos Smith and Clare McKenzie all came forward.

The next mission was to explain to them what was in my head....they all deserve a medal for receiving that part! A WhatsApp group was created and there started our four-month journey. At times the majority of us could've thrown in the towel but we didn't.

Callout for teams

We had the venue confirmed so our next task was to get teams involved and that's where DSO members came into their own. An email was sent out and within a few days families and even school staff very quickly signed up to the event. Nineteen teams were had registered within a month, making a total of 190 team members. This was way above my hopes.

Each team was given the idea that if every walker could raise £50 in sponsorship we could be looking at the event raising around £10,000. This became our target.



Fundraising stalls

We came up with ideas to make the day more enjoyable and to give the teams a way of entertaining the visitors to the event. Each team would have a stall at their base camp. Again the teams embraced this idea and a fete-type atmosphere was beginning to unfold on paper.

Amber Wing of Team Jojo kindly arranged the loan of a number of fete games to many of the teams. Plus cake stalls, nail bar, silent disco, bouncy castle, face painting, book sale, tombolas, guinea pig racing...you name it, it was all on the line-up!

The stalls gave team members an activity to do whilst it wasn't their turn to walk and of course maximise the fundraising.



Themed Hours

We thought having dressing up themed hours would add a bit more fun for the walkers and we came up with the following themes: superheroes, pyjamas, and supporting one another. We needed a way to light up the track during the night and this gave way to the final theme "light up the night". This was my personal favourite, and again everyone really embraced the idea with walkers glowing from head to toe and team base camps were decorated amazingly. The field was glowing and the atmosphere was truly phenomenal.

Sponsorship came from Renegade Music to allow us to look into lighting the track with candle bags too.



Entertainment

Next we needed to organize entertainment and refreshments and this is where “it’s *who* you know not *what* you know” came into play.

I contacted a DSO family with DJ connections and Keith Jones, dad of Seb, very kindly offered his own DJ services. Andrew Fearnside got a live band for the evening, along with a PA system for the event, and Marion Simon secured a second live band .

The event team contacted anyone and everyone they thought might be able to help in any way. Through a contact I secured the loan of another PA system and with the amazing help from Helen and Colin Doling, parents of Dan, Oxford Scout groups offered us shelters and marquees. Waterperry Parish council lent us their village marquee.

Refreshments

Amanda Foulds of Team Walkie Talkies amazingly offered to run a bar as their team event fundraising stall and organised it all, ensuring we had an endless supply of drinks throughout the event.

Jos Smith of Samuels Strollers arranged for a hog roast and BBQ as their team fundraising stall. Clare McKenzie of The Red Hot Chilli Steppers ran an afternoon tea stall and good old Andrew Fearnside secured a mobile catering van for the event. A tea hatch for the team members would run from the clubhouse overnight and all facilities were available throughout the event. It was great to have such a range of food and drink on offer for walkers and event visitors.

Raffle

Elsa took on the organising of the event raffle. A mammoth task in itself, the production of the tickets, the mailing to members, collating the prizes and sending thank-yous. A very successful raffle indeed.



Run up to the event

The magnitude of the planning for the event truly can't be described in a few words.

There were team updates to send out, stall ideas to co-ordinate, the logistics of everyone turning up and leaving, parking, advertising, raffle, merchandise, setting up, disposal of waste, insurance, risk assessments, obtaining licences, power, and of course the dismantling of the event the next day.

At this point I want to thank everyone involved in anyway with the set up and take down of the event. I was, and still am, completely blown away by what we achieved.

Setting up

The event team started to arrive at the venue at 4pm the day before. With an empty field in front of us and a clubhouse bursting to the brim with all equipment we needed, the task began. Within a few hours the idea had gone 3D! We had a track, we had marked out base camps, we had marquees up and power cables laid out.

At that moment, reality hit. Logistics came back into play when we realised how little space we had for the teams to arrive. Thankfully Samuels Strollers stepped up and organised a team of car park attendants. By 11:30pm we were almost done and with a few people camping overnight for security all we could do was wait for the alarm to ring the next morning.

And we're off ...

Hoping that the last-minute mishaps were not visible to team members as they all started arriving with a spring in their step, the atmosphere was electric. Over 250 people arrived to take part, 19 teams including an amazing global team. All that was left, was to wait for the clock to strike midday and for the walking to begin! DSO Chair, Marion, opened the event for us.

The event was fantastic, everyone taking part really got onboard and the money raised was truly unbelievable. There were midnight Facebook posts begging for sponsorship, live videos on Facebook showing the amazing atmosphere and quite frankly we were all feeling blooming proud of ourselves.

Fundraising way beyond our target

After the event, money continued to roll in and we have so far totalled a staggering £36,000. Maybe I'm not as bonkers as I first thought!

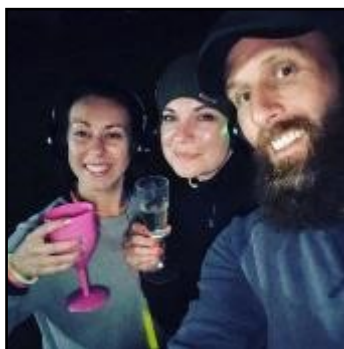
Now a personal thank-you. From me to everyone involved, anyone that took part in anyway. DSO is a lifeline for the Fonge family, another family we didn't ever imagine being a part of. Thank you for believing in the idea, thank you for making it a reality and most of all, thank you all for being you!

Sarah Fonge, Treasurer



Walkathon photo gallery





Ground-breaking Walkathon saw DSO trial new approaches to fundraising

By Jos Smith, *Event Team Member*

The Walkathon was an astounding success – not just raising funds, and bringing our community together, but also in gaining new supporters for DSO's future.

Here's a little behind the scenes insight into how this was achieved.

Bringing in more money with Contactless Payments. Knowing that people carry less cash these days we wanted to trial making payment easier on stalls where higher sums of money were likely to be spent. So for the first time we introduced contactless payment to the bar, the hog roast/BBQ and the DSO merchandise stall. These payment terminals took over £500.

We were able to achieve this, at no extra cost to DSO, through Corporate Sponsorship. Roger Farrell at **Brookwood Accountancy in Kidlington** sponsored the **purchase of three contactless payment terminals for DSO**, with the express goal of helping us to increase our takings and donation levels. It certainly worked.

What's great is that DSO now has these contactless payment terminals to use for all future events. Thank you Brookwood!

We also focused on nurturing and developing long-term third party relationships, inviting representatives of some of our longer-term supporters to become part of the event team. **Coventry Building Society** in Cowley has supported DSO as its Community Partner for over six years. Coventry's Stephanie Sawyer joined us on the day as a member of Team Samuel on the Hog Roast.

Stephanie said "I was honoured to be involved in this event which was a truly fantastic day, the atmosphere was amazing. I was made so welcome by everyone and it was great to meet families who were directly benefitting from our branch fundraising."

Since the Walkathon Stephanie has raised an additional £1,200 for DSO. Simply amazing ongoing support.



One of our newest corporate supporters is **Mr Finn of Horton-cum-Studley**, who brought along the hog roast and BBQ to his first ever DSO event. Mr Finn was so touched by our wonderful community and its overwhelming sense of positivity, that following the walkathon he contacted us to say "It was a privilege to be involved and I would not hesitate in offering whatever we can do in the future. I have taken the decision to make the DSO our No 1. charity to support each year". Mr Finn works tirelessly to support a wide range of community projects and to be his No. 1 charity is a privilege. He's already is exploring ways that he can help raise more funds to support DSO.

If anybody has any food-related event ideas that Mr Finn can support or help us with, do let us know.

The Walkathon was a landmark event for DSO. Other organisations want to learn from our collective success and following the event we have been overwhelmed with offers to help at our next event: Oxford United has offered car park attendants, the Scouts have offered to help with any venue and equipment set-ups, the list goes on.

We set out to run the event on a shoe-string. We begged, borrowed and were a little shameless in approaching some organisations to help us, but that resulted in a great event, run at very little cost and we gained some fabulous long-term supporters along the way. Everybody wins.



A big thank-you from DSO

We would like to thank all the wonderful DSO families who signed up to take part in the event, and all the many friends and family who volunteered to help out on the day - directing cars, running stalls, cleaning toilets, litter picking. Sadly, there are too many to name in person but we want you to all know how much we appreciate your support.

We would also like to thank the following businesses for donating raffle prizes, supplying goods or services free of charge or at a greatly reduced cost...

Wheatley Playing Fields Trust	Miele	Curiosity Science Box
Mr Finn's the Butcher	Owl Centre Oxford	Cotswold Wildlife Park
Brookwood Accountancy	Tesco Cowley	Tesco Didcot
Capri Marquees	Blenheim Palace,	Co-op Marston
Sarah's Adventures in Science	Nicki Bolton	Lotus Beauty
Village Idiots	Taplins Plant Hire	Porsche
Wigwam	Stacy Fink Mages	Grant and Stone
Waterperry Gardens	City Electrical Factors	Optimum Body
Tao Beauty Oxford	Rowse Honey	Slimfit
Birdland UK	Hands Aloud	AW Mobbs
The Garden, Headington	Hands and Flowers Pub	Poundland, Abingdon
Coventry Building Society, Cowley	Robert Gatward Jewellers, Abingdon	Mixture of Scout leaders from 8th, 28th and 43rd Oxford Scout Groups
Hughes Mercedes Benz, Beaconsfield	Toad The Oxford Artisan Distillery	

Rotary Club Barge Trip

In June, we had a fantastic time with the Ling family and the Costello family on a canal barge between Great Bedwyn and Hungerford - hosted and run by the very generous **Abingdon Vesper Rotary Club**.



We relaxed into the slower river life (yes, even with the children!), got to operate ten locks (no one fell in!) and had

a go at steering (totally not my skill). The four volunteers with us were friendly, helpful and loved to chat. And there was free tea, coffee and cakes.

It's the third summer DSO has been invited on one of their barge trips. If we get the opportunity again next year, do look out for my email about it - I would really recommend it!

Andrew Dubock, *Media Officer*



Roar Festival, Oxford

On Friday 31st August and Saturday 1st September, the Ark-t Centre in Cowley Centre hosted this year's Roar Inclusive Arts festival. Hundreds of people from across Oxfordshire came together to make a Roar for disability, diversity, and inclusivity in the arts. The festival consisted of an exciting and packed-out program of inclusive workshops and performances, aimed to inspire Oxfordshire's Disabled Youth in the arts.

Kaylah Ford attended the festival and had a great time taking part in music and dance activities.



Dave Benson-Philips

At the beginning of September, Dave Benson Phillips, from the original Makaton DVD, performed at a Unity Club event held in Drayton Village Hall. We had around 50 people take part including some very excited mums! Dave performed lots of favourite songs including Dingle Dangle Scarecrow, Wheels on the Bus and the Hokey Cokey. Everyone really enjoyed it and it was lovely to have such an range of ages come along to the event.

Kelly Stacey



Saturday Development Groups

During the summer term, DSO trialled running Saturday Development Groups. Sam Morrissey, mum to Seb and SDG Coordinator, tells us more.

Seven children between the ages of 5 and 16 attended the groups at Dean Court Community Centre in Botley. The classes were run by Laila Tyrrell from The Owl Centre whose sparkling personality and positive energy made the sessions a big hit with the children and parents alike.

Laila assessed each child individually during a session with parents and used these targets during the groups so even though the sessions weren't one-to-one each child had their own personalised targets to work on. Everything was made into a game and each session was fast-paced and fun.

The sessions were heavily funded by DSO with families contributing £10 per session.

As parents could sit in on the sessions this gave us all lots of ideas on ways to incorporate our children's targets into games and activities we could do at home. When the sessions ended for the summer each family was given a pack with ideas for activities we could do ourselves and to pass on to our children's schools.

Some parents mentioned that they had missed being able to sit in on classes with their children after finishing the Early Development Groups so they really enjoyed this opportunity to play a big part in their children's learning.

For many children their morning of learning games finished with a trip to the play park behind Dean Court Community Centre. Equipped with a large sand pit, a zip wire and some great climbing frames this was a perfect reward for their hard work.

DSO is keen to assess whether there is demand to continue with the Saturday Development Groups, so if you would like to find out more, or are interested in registering your child for these groups, then please get in touch with Sam (sdgs@dsoxford.org.uk).

The sessions are aimed at all children aged 5 - 16 regardless of ability.

Please get in touch with Sam if you'd like to find out more about these groups.

sdgs@dsoxford.org.uk



Early Development Groups

At the end of the summer, EDGs said farewell to Netty and Sally as group leaders as both ladies have embarked on new ventures. We'd like to say a big thank-you to them both for doing such a fantastic job running these sessions for years. And we're pleased to welcome Sam and Kelly as new group leaders.

The EDGs started back on the 19th of September after a fabulous group of helpers moved the resources from Drayton Village Hall to the newly opened Abingdon Carousel Centre, formerly the South Abingdon Children's Centre. It's great to be back at the centre. We now have five groups running during the morning; two groups with Colette, two with Sam and the youngest members meet with Kelly. There are currently 12 children accessing the EDGs and enjoying the support of the Stay and Play.

If you have a child of pre-school age and would like to attend the groups, please get in touch with Netty Lings to register.

We'd love to see you!

edgs@dsoxford.org.uk

Stay and Play

Mairi and Kelly continue to run the Stay and Play session every Wednesday during term

time 9.30am -
12.00pm at the
Abingdon Carousal
Centre.



This session is open
to all and siblings are
welcome.

Our Free Spirit Dancers

For several years a group of friends have been attending dancing classes run by Joelle Pappas of Tac-au-Tac. All the children love the dancing – it is a mix of creative movement and storytelling to music, and over the years the children have developed in confidence and ability.

Each year, all the Tac-au-Tac classes give an annual performance, usually at the Pegasus Theatre in Oxford, and the *Free Spirits* group is part of the programme and performs to a packed house full of family and friends. This year's show was called *The Spare Room* and the *Free Spirits*, dressed as chefs, performed a wonderful kitchen-themed dance.

There is space in this class for new members so if your child is around the ages

of 10 -14 years old and you think they would be interested in joining, please feel free to contact me (details below) or you can contact Joelle directly at tacautacdance@gmail.com.

Classes take place on a **Thursday** between **4.15pm - 5.00pm** during term time at the **South Oxford Community Centre** in Lake Street, Oxford.

Katharine Horrocks, parent to Alexander
(katharine.horrocks@mkha.co.uk)





First day at school



In September, **Lucas Hynds** (*left*), now age 5, started in Puffin reception class at Northbourne Primary School in Didcot and is settling in well.



Ezra Fearnside (*right*)

started at Dunsmore Pre-School in April.

Dad, Andrew, says

“Having a child with special needs in the class was new to them but they rose to the challenge. He is very popular with the kids and staff and has come on leaps and bounds since starting”.

In April, **Samuel Smith** (*below*) started at Fringford and Shellswell Pre-School. “They’ve been absolutely great with



him - adapting to handle his day-to-day oxygen and other support needs but in a mainstream setting. His TA, Caroline is great with him - they’ve formed such a bond”, says Samuel’s mum, Jos.



Lucy Robinson

(*right*), age 11, made the big jump from

primary to secondary school this September. She’s settling in well to Alfriston School in Beaconsfield and has made lots of new friends.

Kelly's Top Tips



We're introducing a new regular feature for the DSO Newsletter —

Kelly's Top Tips. Kelly Stacey, mum to Joseph, aged 9, has a wealth of knowledge about support, services, activities, and 'freebies' available to those who have a child with special needs. From applying for grants and accessing services to recommendations for days out and holiday clubs — you name it, Kelly has some advice or suggestions! So we thought it would be a good idea to tap into that knowledge and ask her to share her top tips with us all.

Disabled person and companion's bus pass

A disabled person's bus pass gives free off-peak travel between 9am to midnight every day within Oxfordshire on local buses. Disabled person's bus passes are only available to those who either have a permanent disability or a disability that is expected to last at least 12 months. Make sure you request a companion bus pass if the person cannot travel alone. The companion will also be entitled to free off-peak travel.

There is no age restriction but you will need to provide evidence that you qualify - check your eligibility and the documents you need before starting your application.

Find out how to apply by going to

- <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk> and search "Disabled Person's bus pass"



The Local Offer - Oxfordshire (grants, support, activities)

For more information regarding Oxfordshire County Council's services go to

- <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk> and search "The Local Offer".

Events & activities in Oxfordshire from the County Council

The 'Short Breaks Update' is a monthly electronic update bulletin, aimed at families and professionals, to keep them informed of events and activities for people with disabilities. The name is deceptive as it contains useful information beyond just short breaks.

If you would like to receive your own copy of the Short Breaks Update please email your request to be added to the mailing list

- cdsredesign@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Complimentary carer's cinema tickets

The CEA card enables a disabled cinema guest to receive a complimentary ticket for someone to go with them when they visit a participating cinema.

To find out more about eligibility for the card and a list of participating cinemas visit:

- <https://www.ceacard.co.uk>





Preschool Club



The Preschool Club were due to go to Camp Mohawk in September but unfortunately it was cancelled as the centre had to close unexpectedly. However, we are excited to have some new events planned over the next couple of months:

- **Snakes and Ladders** indoor playcentre in Abingdon on **Saturday 3rd November**.
- A visit to **Fairytale Farm** where we get to meet Santa on **Saturday 8th December**.

For more information on these trips please do get in touch (preschool@dsoxford.org.uk).

Natalie Rowe, *Preschool Club Co-ordinator*



Primary Club



The Primary club have recently enjoyed trips to **Farmer Gow's** with the Pre-school Club and to **Partyman play centre** with the 10+ Club.

At Farmer Gow's we all had the chance to bottle feed the lambs, play on the hay bales and enjoyed a ride on the tractor to feed the pigs.

At Partyman the children enjoyed having exclusive use of the play frame and joining in with a party dance session. As the children played, parents enjoyed a much-needed coffee and catch-up with friends.

Coming up we are having a trip to the **Halloween circus at Millets Farm** and a **trip to see Santa, also at Millets Farm**. For more information on these trips, please do get in touch (primary@dsoxford.org.uk).

Kelly Stacey, *Primary Club Co-ordinator*





10+ Club



In September, the 10+ Club enjoyed a trip to the New Theatre, Oxford to see **Thriller Live!** We were treated to 2.5 hours of non-stop music and dance, performed by an incredibly energetic cast. By the end we were all up off our seats dancing along to the hits of Michael and the Jackson Five.

Lucy Sanderson, 10+ Club Co-ordinator







Calling all witches, skeletons, zombies, and ghosts!



We're having a **Halloween disco** for 10+ Club and Adult Club members.



Put on your Halloween outfits and join us for music and dancing, ghoulish games, pizza, and make your own fruity mocktails!



Siblings are very welcome.



This event is **free to attend** but please let me know if you'll be coming along so we have an idea of numbers.



Lucy Sanderson
(lucysanderson72@hotmail.co.uk)







Halloween Disco

Friday 2nd November
7.00pm – 9.00pm

Risinghurst Community Centre
Kiln Lane, Risinghurst, Oxford, OX3 8ER

Halloween fancy dress
Make your own mocktail
Ghoulish games!

Pizza
Dancing
Disco
Siblings welcome

Our Kids

Celebrating the wonderful achievements of our children

Kaylah goes on holiday with the Newman Trust

Earlier this year KEEN asked us if Kaylah would like to go on a one-week holiday with the Newman Trust, a voluntary organisation which provides summer holidays for children with special needs. They came to see us at home and we were thrilled when they offered Kaylah a place. They have a huge team of amazing volunteers and all the children have a 1-1 carer. The whole week is full of days out and creative play, swimming, campfires etc. This was Kaylah's first time away from home but she loved every minute.



Caroline Ford, mum to Kaylah

Ezra signs his first words!

From early on we used Makaton with Ezra and although he understood it, he didn't respond with it. Then all of a sudden, at 2 years and 4 months, the signs started to roll in. Nappy, sleep, biscuit, again, eat and food all came within a week. Suddenly, all the voices of countless specialists and parents saying to us "Don't worry, one day he'll just do it" made sense.

Andrew Fearnside, dad to Ezra



Alexander's holiday swimming success

At one point a few years ago, I was worried that Alexander would never be able to swim or have fun in a swimming pool. But now Alexander, aged 13, happily spent hours and hours in the pool on holiday in France diving for sinkers in competition with his brother. His swimming style still might best be described as "unorthodox" but he loves it. Alexander had lessons for a few years at Thame Leisure Centre with a group of other children with special needs, it was taught by a regular teacher as part of the usual set of classes but the teacher had experience of working with children with special needs and was happy to take the class at its own pace.

Katharine Horrocks, mum to Alexander



A VIP visit to the palace

In July, Theo Blackstock and Matty Simmonds were invited to Blenheim Palace to receive their **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award**. They had completed the challenge with a group of Year 11 students from their school, Springfield School in Witney.

Well done Theo and Matty, such an amazing achievement (and you both look very smart too!)



Thomas learns to ride

Thomas Foulds has enjoyed learning to ride with Riding for the Disabled (RDA). Here he is with Josie. Thomas has been attending weekly lessons with his school, John Watson School. He's made great progress since starting last year and looks forward to his lesson every week.

Joseph meets Sprout!

Joseph Stacey had a fantastic holiday at Butlins this summer. He loved watching the Skyline Gang perform their shows each night and was thrilled when he got to meet Sprout, one of the gang members!



Lottery Results



Recent Winners:

April 2018

1st prize - £39.00	Jo Colehan
2nd prize - £23.40	Mary Robinson
3rd prize - £15.60	Jon Gill

May 2018

1st prize - £39.00	Jo Colehan
2nd prize - £23.40	Jon Gill
3rd prize - £15.60	Jenny Dilnot

June 2018

1st prize - £38.00	Diana McMahon
2nd prize - £22.80	Lucy Sanderson
3rd prize - £15.20	Jenny Dilnot

July 2018

1st prize - £38.00	Emily & Matt Robinson
2nd prize - £22.80	Mark Horrocks
3rd prize - £15.20	Netty Lings

August 2018

1st prize - £38.00	Nigel Orman
2nd prize - £22.80	Mark Horrocks
3rd prize - £15.20	Jenny Dilnot

September 2018

1st prize - £38.00	Jo Colehan
2nd prize - £22.80	Andrew Partner
3rd prize - £15.20	Jo & Stuart Crawford

A big thank-you to all those who take part for your continued support.

We raise **£117** per month for DSO!

Want to join the DSO lottery?

Each ticket is £5 per month

All you need to do is:

- 1 Set up a regular monthly payment to our lottery account
→ **Account number 29786768 / Sort code 30-80-45**
- 2 Send an email to Amanda Foulds at
→ **lottery@dsoxford.org.uk**
- 3 We'll allocate you a number, email you back to tell you your number, and let you know when you win!

Save the Date

DSO Christmas Party

Sunday 9th December

2.00pm—5.00pm

Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB

Disco and party games by Jeff Lloyd - back again by popular demand!

Including our regular visit from Father Christmas!

Please bring:

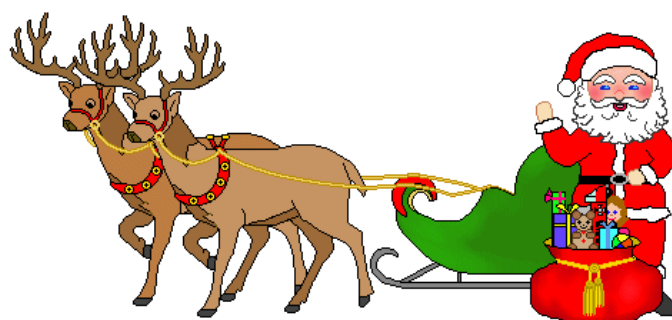
- a plate of savoury / sweet food to share
- a wrapped and LABELLED gift for your child or children

Tea and coffee, soft drinks and mulled wine will be available, but no cash bar.

Volunteers needed to help set up from 1.30pm

(For offers of help, please contact Lucy on lucysanderson72@hotmail.co.uk)

Looking forward to seeing you there!



Fundraising and Donations

In addition to the money raised through the 21-Walkathon, **DSO is extremely grateful** to have been given the following money over the last few months, either through some **amazing fundraising efforts** or through **donations**. Thank you to all of you for your continued generosity.

In Memory of the late

Elizabeth Gregg.....**£50.00**

Part of Beth & Kate's Bowood

House Sprint Triathlon.....**£100.00**

Coventry Building Society**£305.00**

St Hughs' summer fete.....**£649.90**

Alice Morgan Smoothies

(Truck Festival).....**£1400.00**

Barclays Employee

Sponsorship match

Matt Robinson**£1000.00**

Usbourne books donation

via Team Jack & Andrew.....**£500.00**

Rivetnut Company quarterly

Donation.....**£30.00**

The Coventry Community Grant

Application for primary school

boxes.....**£1000.00**

Whilst we have received an amazing injection of money through the Walkathon, that money is need to continue running as we do—to be able to offer the services and support already in place. It has secured the future of DSO for the next year. However, if we want to sustain the expansion of services and support for our members, then we still need your wonderful fundraising to continue.

Sarah Fonge, Treasurer

The Coventry Building Society



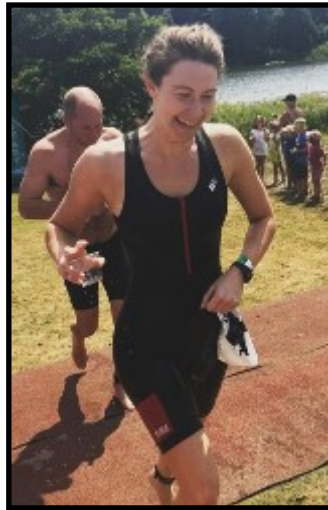
The Cowley branch of the Coventry Building Society, and in particular **Stephanie Sawyer**, have been doing an **amazing job of championing DSO and of identifying opportunities to raise extra funds for us**. Above is a picture of Jos and Samuel Smith collecting a cheque from Steph for the **£1,000** that was awarded to DSO from their **Community Grant Fund**. This will be used to help fund the issue of **DSO Primary School Starter Packs**.

In addition the Coventry Building Society has raised **£113** from their **Easter Branch raffle** and **£192** from their in **Branch Cake Sale**. The Coventry Building Society continue to be a great champion for DSO and we have Stephanie Sawyer to thank for the continued efforts and opportunities. Steph was also able to join us on the hog roast stall at the Walkathon, since that time, her fundraising efforts have continued to grow. Thank you to Steph and the team at the Cowley branch.

The **DSO Lottery** continues to bring in funds of **£117.00** per month. A huge thank-you also to all those who give regularly to the charity via a **monthly standing order**. This currently amounts to **£410.00** per month.

Beth and Kate's Sprint Triathlon

Beth and Kate, colleagues of DSO member Mike Finch, took part the **Bowood House Sprint Triathlon** this year to raise money for DSO. The triathlon had a few hurdles along way, including the highs of 29 degree heat but they still completed it with amazing times and only 2 mins apart from each other.



Their initial target was £500 but managed to **raise a staggering £1015**. Well done ladies for completing the challenge and a huge thank-you for raising so much money for DSO.



Oxford Half Marathon

Intrepid runner, **Andrew Sheard**, a friend of Paul and Fran Gander (parents to Reuben) and Graham and Anna Crow (parents to Henry), **pounded the streets of Oxford in October's half marathon**. Thank you Andrew for your incredible fundraising efforts. **The current total stands at £3028**, which includes a very generous cash match

School visit to EDGs leads to fantastic fundraising

Last term, a group of Year 8 pupils from **St Hugh's School in Faringdon** visited the Early Development Groups, a visit that led to two amazing fundraising activities; firstly, they raised just short of £650 at their school summer fete, and secondly, pupil Alice Morgan raised £1400 from a smoothie stall at Truck Festival. Alice's grandparents own the field on which Truck Festival is held and they always run a smoothie stall at the festival. This year Alice asked if the profits could go to DSO after seeing the amazing work at the EDGs. A huge thank-you to Alice and the Year 8 pupils of St Hugh's School. We're glad you enjoyed your visit to the EDGs and are incredibly grateful for your fantastic fundraising efforts.

School Cake Sale

In June the Headington **Quarry Foundation Stage School** held a Summer Cake Sale and **raised a fantastic £220** for DSO! Thank you to all of those involved.



DO YOU SHOP ON AMAZON?

There is now a way that you can shop on Amazon and raise money for DSO at the same time!

smile.amazon.co.uk

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon - same products, same prices, same service. The bonus is that DSO will receive 0.5% of the net purchase price of your shopping (excludes VAT, returns and shipping fees).

It's easy to set up:

1. Simply visit smile.amazon.co.uk – the first time you visit you'll be asked to select your chosen charity.
2. Select "Down'S Syndrome Oxford" as your chosen charity from the list of available charities and confirm.

And simple to use:

1. Start your Amazon shop on smile.amazon.co.uk NOT amazon.co.uk.
2. Shop as normal.

That's it. Simple.

DSO has already started receiving funds from smile.amazon.co.uk. Raising money for DSO couldn't be any easier. Help us do even better by sharing this with friends and family.

What better excuse to go Christmas Shopping!





Gift Aid Declaration

Please tick appropriate response:

- ☐ I would like DSO to reclaim the tax on all donations I've made since April 2000 and all my future donations until further notice. I understand that I must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax DSO reclaims on my donation(s).
- ☐ I am not a UK tax payer

I enclose my gift of £ _____ (Cheque/PO payable to Down's Syndrome Oxford)

Or

A regular gift of £ _____ per month/quarter/year (please delete as appropriate)

Commencing on the _____ (day) _____ (month) _____ (year)

Name of bank: _____

Address of bank: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Account No.: _____ Sort Code: __ - __ - __

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Bank Ref:

(Completed by DSO)

Bank Instructions: please pay the above amount on the same day every month/quarter/year (as indicated) thereafter to Lloyds Bank (30-94-04) for the account of Down's Syndrome Oxford (a/c 01154094).

Please return this form to **Down's Syndrome Oxford**, not your bank, c/o Treasurer, Manor Farm, Waterperry, Oxfordshire, OX33 1LB

We will not share your information with any other organisations:

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

Postcode: _____

Registered Charity No. 1103850

Contacts

Chair

Marion Simon
chair@dsoxford.org.uk

Secretary

Emma Smith
secretary@dsoxford.org.uk

Treasurer

Sarah Fonge
treasurer@dsoxford.org.uk

Assistant Treasurer

Emily Robinson
info@dsoxford.org.uk

New Parent Contact

Jo Crawford
newparent@dsoxford.org.uk

Training Organiser

Elsa Gill
training@dsoxford.org.uk

Newsletter Editor

Lucy Sanderson
newsletter@dsoxford.org.uk

Database & Media Officer

Andrew Dubock
media@dsoxford.org.uk

Website Managers

Matt & Emily Robinson
website@dsoxford.org.uk

DSO Lottery Organiser

Amanda Foulds
lottery@dsoxford.org.uk

Elliot's Shed

Helen Gaffney
elliottshed@dsoxford.org.uk

Preschool Club Co-ordinator

Natalie Rowe
preschool@dsoxford.org.uk

Primary Club Co-ordinator

Kelly Stacey
primary@dsoxford.org.uk

10+ Club Co-ordinator

Lucy Sanderson
10plus@dsoxford.org.uk

Early Development Group Administrator

Netty Lings
edgs@dsoxford.org.uk

Early Development Group Leader

Collette Lloyd (01993 883707)

Primary Development Groups

Marion Simon
pdgs@dsoxford.org.uk

Saturday Development Groups

Samantha Morrissey
sdgs@dsoxford.org.uk

DLA/PIP Application Support

Rowena Pearce (07512 210851)
SeniorMedicalAdvisor@dsoxford.org.uk



General enquiries email address:
info@dsoxford.org.uk



Website:
<http://www.dsoxford.org.uk>



Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/dsoxford>



Twitter:
[@DownsOxford](http://twitter.com/DownsOxford)



Registered charity number: 1103850



With thanks to First Move Direct Marketing in High Wycombe who generously print and distribute our newsletter free of charge.

The deadline for the next edition of the newsletter is **Friday 1st February 2019**. We welcome text or photos about your child enjoying themselves—not necessarily a DSO event. Please send materials to the editor Lucy Sanderson at newsletter@dsoxford.org.uk