

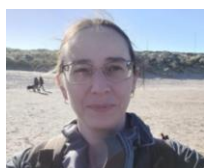
Autism Friendly Surrey



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Our team

We want to make sure we cover the whole of Guildford and Waverley, and are keen to hear about what's already going on, and ideas for people's local town/village.



Gill, Jo, Laura and Mike will be the team members from Autism by Experience working across Guildford and Waverley.

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Our plan for 2025 to 2026

Our aims for this project are:

- Map out the quiet hours and inclusive activities for autistic and neurodivergent children and adults across Surrey and make this information more accessible
- Encourage new activities / groups to be set up, and further develop networks for autistic adults, and for families supporting autistic children
- Support venues to develop visual stories and offer training for their staff on autism and neurodivergence



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Facebook Group

Jo has been working hard setting up a facebook group for the Autism Friendly Communities Project



We plan to launch this group in June 2025.

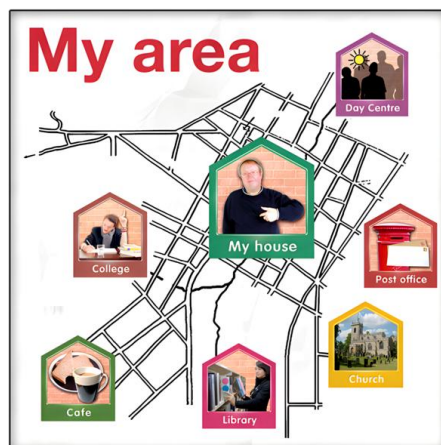
This will be for anyone interested in helping to make communities more autism friendly.

They will be moderated groups and we are currently finalising the rules and our approach to moderation.

We will also set up an Instagram account in June 2025.

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Mapping Guildford and Waverley



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The HIVE

The Hive is along Park Barn Drive, just by Kings College School. The centre is an accessible space and open to everyone of all ages.



During the quieter time on Tuesdays from 9am to 11am the café:

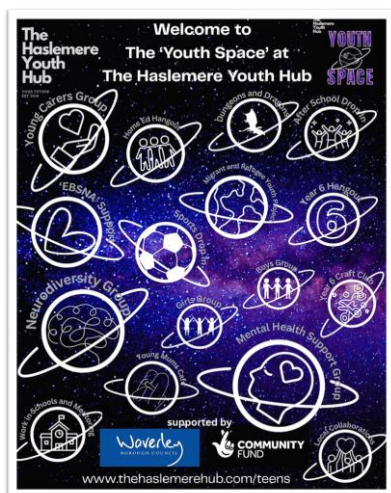
- Turns the radio off
- Dims the lighting
- Has cards on tables reminding people it's quieter time

There are ear defenders to borrow at all times

[The HIVE Community Centre and café](#)

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Haslemere Youth Hub



The Haslemere Youth Hub have a range of activities and support including a Neurodiversity Group and a cafe.

The Haslemere youth hub was founded in 2019. We are a charity youth provision that is not funded. The Hub helps support parents and carers with preschoolers, children, teens and young adults.

[Haslemere Youth Hub](http://www.thehaslemerehub.com/teens)

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Wayfarer's League - Godalming

The Wayfarer's League offer a range of events such as Board Games evenings and Dungeon and Dragons events.



In June they will be opening a shop/café called Wayfarers Rest in Godalming High Street and members of our team will visit to talk to them when they are open.

They also run online events through a Discord server

[Wayfarer's League](https://www.wayfarersleague.co.uk/)

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Farncombe Community Garden

Farncombe Community Garden is a not-for-profit charity that aims to bring the local community together in a working garden.



Our vision is to grow community wellbeing by gardening together. The garden is located on a previously unused piece of land opposite Broadwater School.

There are three open sessions every week, Saturdays 10 - 12noon, Wednesdays 1 - 3pm and Fridays 10 - 12noon

[Farncombe Community Garden](#)

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Surrey Hills Wellfest – Sunday 27th July



Surrey Hills Wellfest is Neurodivergent friendly

Every Wellfest element can be adapted to accommodate any one with additional needs.

They have also brought together a panel of experts to curate a program of experiences, talks and activities specifically for the neurodiverse and their families.

We will also have a sensory sanctuary for any of our guests who find themselves overwhelmed.

[Surrey Hills Wellfest](#)

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Guilfest 2025 – 5/6 July 2025



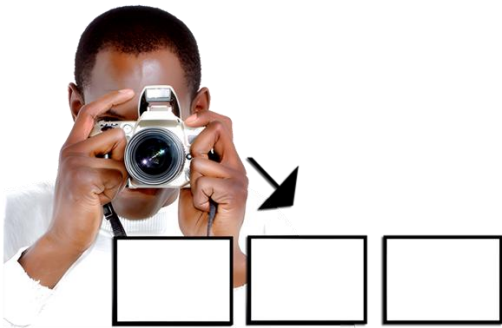
Guilfest offers supported stewarding opportunities, that we try to tailor to individuals needs.

Supported stewards often bring a supporter (staff or family) and work together for up to 4 hours during the afternoon – litter picking and staffing entrances and exits. People get a crew meal and free access to the festival after their shift.

Email Mike Leat at stewards@guilfest.co.uk for information about Supported Stewarding

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Visual Stories



Visual Stories help people to plan their visit to a venue or activity

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Watts Gallery Visual Story

Watts Gallery in Compton have developed a visual story to help people to plan their visit

The visitor centre may be busy, so we might need to wait our turn. The visitor centre also contains the shop, it smells like soap in here because of what is being sold.



The 'Access guide: planning your visit' page on their website has both a visual story aimed at adults on the pages, as well as a visual story that you can download with children in mind.

[Watts Gallery Access Guide](#)

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Guildford Spectrum – term time activities



[SEND Leisure Pool Sessions](#) are held every Wednesday, term time only from 4:00pm to 6:00pm, offering a supportive and enjoyable environment for all.

[SEND bowling sessions](#) are held every Tuesday from 4pm to 5pm and cost £5 per person

[SEND Leisure Pool Sessions](#)

[SEND Bowling](#)

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Guildford Spectrum – term time activities



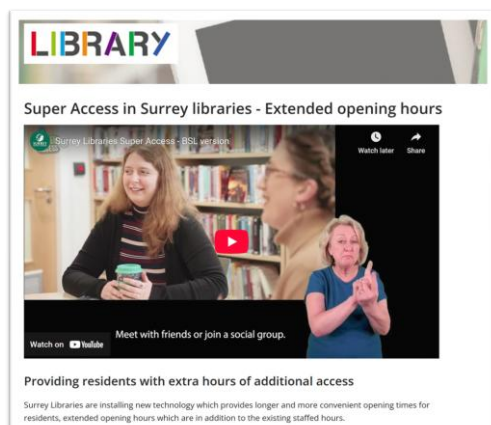
We visited the Spectrum in May to discuss creating visual stories for their SEND Bowling and also Swimming.

When ready, the visual stories will describe the journey from arrival to departure using photos and easy words.

The Spectrum are keen to offer more activities tailored for autistic and neurodivergent people.

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Surrey Libraries – Super Access



Surrey Libraries are installing new technology which provides longer and more convenient opening times for residents, extended opening hours which are in addition to the existing staffed hours.

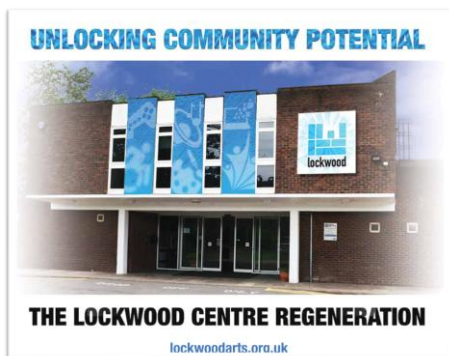
Libraries offering this include Godalming and Farnham. We could perhaps create a visual stories to guide people through signing up for Super Access and using it.

[Surrey Libraries – Extended opening hours](#)

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Lockwood Studios

The plan is to enhance the current use of the Lockwood Centre located in Slyfield Estate, Guildford, and to create an exciting new community facility for the local area.



Studio space is available for hire at Lockwood.

In addition to individual artists and craftspeople, we are particularly keen to hear from those developing a new social enterprise; any entrepreneurs engaging with excluded young people.

[Lockwood Studios](http://lockwoodarts.org.uk)

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Developing Peer Networks



This is all about connecting autistic and neurodivergent people across Surrey

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Networks for families

The [National Autistic Society Surrey Branch](#) offer support groups for families, a bi-monthly newsletter and moderated email forum.

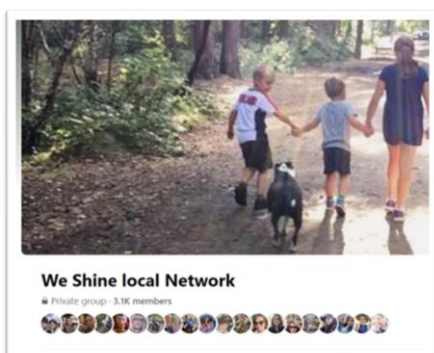
The Surrey Branch is run by families and also has a helpline.



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Networks for families

We Shine Local Network is a private Facebook group (content can only be viewed by members).



- The group has over 3000 members and is run by parent carers.
- It is an online network of parents and carers who have children with SEND (diagnosed or not).
- It provides a safe space to seek support as well as to network and find local groups and resources.

[We Shine Facebook group](#)

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Adult support and social groups

The National Autistic Society (separate to The Surrey Branch) run funded support groups for adults



- Godalming Women's Group (adults - once a month every third Saturday afternoon)
- Guildford Aspire (adults – once a month on a Thursday evening)
- All Surrey virtual social group (adults - Last Friday evening of each month)

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Unfunded adult groups

There are also some unfunded support and social groups that meet across Guildford and Waverley, including:



- A group of young adults meet fortnightly in a pub in Guildford (members previously attended a National Autistic Society group that is no longer supported)
- [The Guildford Autism and ADHD Friendly Meetup Group](#) meet monthly in a pub in Guildford

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Autistic Peer Network

We are planning some evening meetings for autistic adults on our mailing list to discuss how we could help further develop an autistic adult peer network.



Facilitating meet ups at inclusive activities we're mapping?



Helping people to connect online and in-person through shared interests

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Autistic Peer Network

We will be advertising the following online meetings for autistic adults in early June 2025. We will also have an online survey for people not able to join the meetings.

Autistic Adults Peer Network Consultation evenings:

- Tuesday 24th June 2025 – 7pm to 8.30pm
- Thursday 10th July 2025 – 7pm to 8.30pm

Autistic Parents Peer Network Consultation evening:

- Tuesday 1st July 2025 – 7pm to 8.30pm



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Staying safe in the community

We are working with young people to design an easy-to-read guide to staying safe in the community.

Staying safe when:

- Using buses and trains
- Using social media
- Meeting new people

