Newsletter

Supporting ostomists with Colostomy, Ileostomy, Urostomy & Mitrofanoff

Issue 63 - Autumn 2026

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WSSG Welcomes New Chairman

At our AGM in June, we said a heartfelt farewell to our Chairman of 17 years, Ken Edwards.

Under his stewardship, Ken has guided the group from its humble beginnings, with fewer than a handful of members, to the thriving organisation it is today, with a membership of more than 100.

His contribution, however, goes far beyond growing our membership. Ken has helped shape our group into a nationally recognised example of what a support group can achieve when it is managed with dedication, compassion and commitment.

This is an extraordinary legacy and an achievement that will be incredibly difficult to surpass. We are immensely grateful to Ken for everything he has given to the group over the past 17 years, and we wish him all the very best for the future.

We now welcome our new Chairman, Brian Jeffries, who we look forward to working with over the coming years.

Contact

For further information about the Group – or anything featured in your newsletter - please contact the Secretary, Sally, on the details below.

Tel No.: 01980 611978 or 07584 574311
Email: info@wessex-stoma.co.uk
Website: www.wessex-stoma.co.uk

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook & X (formerly Twitter)

Editor's note: Please remember, everything contained in this newsletter is suggestions/opinions only - always consult your GP or stoma nurse before changing your routines or if you need any medical advice.

Chairman's Report

At the AGM this June we said goodbye to Ken. Over the past 17 years under his stewardship he has taken our group from its humble beginnings of less than a handful of members to where it is today with a membership of over 100 members. But more importantly, has made our group into the nationally recognised model of how a support group should be managed. This is an achievement that will almost certainly never be surpassed.

So, somehow I need to get close to filling those shoes. Thankfully, I will be ably supported by the team of officers and committee members who all have agreed to serve another year. The group would be in dire straits without their support.



Officers

Arthur Smith	Treasurer
Karen Berryman	Minutes Secretary
Pam Edwards	Membership & Welfare
Sally Jeffries	Secretary

Committee

Bridget Head	Raffle & Welfare Support
Caroline Fanner	Envelopes for Newsletter
Jo Bestoni	Catering
Lorraine Helmn	Media
Pat Munro	Supplier Contact & Welfare Support
Roger Pomeroy	Furniture, Posters & Banners
Richard Helmn	Web, Pantomime

Plus, of course Ken will still be around to give us support and guidance and to provide updates on the National picture from Colostomy UK and items of interest from local and Wiltshire councils.

To conclude for those of you that do not know me and are slightly interested I will give you an understanding of my background.

I was born in 1953 in Plaistow, so yes I am a true cockney. However at 8 weeks old the extended family moved to Southend on Sea, Essex. On leaving school I worked for Customs & Excise for a few months before taking up an IT position with Yardley of London Ltd the perfume company where I stayed for 30 years until the collapse of the company. After a period of unemployment I gained a role with IBM working on the Millennium Projects. I stayed with IBM until I retired in 2008. I joined the Wessex Stoma Support Group in 2012 after having an ileostomy due to severe ulcerative colitis. I have been a member of the WSSG committee for the past 5 years.

I am now looking forward to serving you all as your Chairman for the next few years unless you decide to vote me off at a future AGM. One thing for certain I will not get close to Ken's record of 20 years, I will be 93 by then. I will hopefully get to know you all over the next meetings If you have any thoughts on how you would like the group to progress, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Brian

E-Mail: Jeffrib1953@hotmail.com or chair@wessex-stoma.co.uk

Phone: 07443 653466

ONE BIG THANK YOU

BY KEN EDWARDS



I would like to say one big thank you to you all for the very kind messages and gifts of whisky (very much appreciated) and the gift voucher I received on my standing down as Chairman at the 2026 AGM.

As I have said I, am not gong away. I will still be working to improve the lives of ostomates and those with a Mitrofanoff with my work with Colostomy UK and Mitrofanoff Support and the authorities be at a local or national level.

Also I am still available if anyone has a problem and wants a chat. Thank you.

The 2026 AGM by Ken Edwards

At my last AGM as Chairman, the group saw Brian Jeffries take over the reins from me and the other officers elected were Treasurer: Arthur Smith; Secretary: Sally Jeffries: Secretary. The Committee was Roger Pomeroy, Lorraine Helmn, Richard Helmn, Caroline Fanner and Bridget Head.



Life members are Michael Slater, Ken Edwards, Isobel Stone.



Secretary's spot

Hope all is well with you all and that the weather we had during the summer was enjoyed by taking holidays, daytrips, gardening, sunbathing and just relaxing and enjoying the "warmth".

The last meeting we held in Wilton was well attended and the speaker was Jim Reid whose second talk was "When the railways came to Salisbury", which was really interesting. We hope to entice him back next year to give a talk about the Victoria Cross called "For valour".

The next meeting in September will have a talk and photo display of either African or British Wildlife.

In November, we have the Pewsey Players coming to entertain us. The Pewsey Players entertain all over Wiltshire with a mixture of songs and tunes from the British folk tradition, music hall, classics, films and shows of the 1950's, 60's and 70's along with popular songs from that era. They add a sense of humour with fun monologues and songs by Flanders and Swann.

Everyone enjoyed the Salisbury Pluckers who entertained us at our New Year's Party. We have invited them back to kick off the New Year in 2027. Our friend has joined the group, so we look forward to seeing him perform.

Best wishes

Sally

Primrose Group

We have not been meeting for a while as I have been recovering from two operations. We intend to meet up again in December. I will let everyone know when date and venue have been arranged.



Welfare

Well I am getting there! Please keep Michael Slater and Roger Pomeroy in our thoughts as they are unwell. However, a few of our members are now getting stronger, so please think of all the family of Wessex Stoma Support Group.

I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather but please drink plenty when it is really hot.

Pam

Membership

Thank you to all who have paid their £5 membership for this year. This is all it costs if you wish to receive newsletters, cards, and subsidised Christmas meal, summer social meals etc. If you have not paid your subscription for this year please let Pam have it by post or on the door or at our meetings on 12th September at Wilton or October 10th at Tesco. It would be good to get the accounts up to date.

You can contact Pam on 01722 335351 or nana.pam.edwards@gmail.com
Thank you to you all.

Pam

STOMA FRIENDLY SOCIETY

SUBMITTED BY KEN EDWARDS

Colostomy UK

Colostomy UK are absolutely GSK and the Kings fund to have been selected as one of the winners of the GSK IMPACT awards 2026.

A partnership between the pharmaceutical company GSK and the Kings Fund. This prestigious award is gifted to just ten small charities each year for their outstanding contribution to improving the UK's health and wellbeing.

The award is a huge honour, not least because of the intensely vigorous assessment it entails. IMPACT is an acronym standing for Innovation, Management, Partnership, Achievement, Community Focus, and Targeting need. Applicants must evidence how they are excelling in each of these needs.

That is why winning this award is so much more than the prize money and development opportunities it offers, it is a validation of all the hard work, care and dedication that the volunteers and staff put into their roles 365 days a year.

www. ColostomyUK.org

Bowel and Bladder Community

The Bowel and Cladder Community has made contact with and want to work with us as a group and at some stage come a give us a talk or do a few webinars with us. I have written an article for their Journell, and we are down on their list of stoma groups. They could be useful to us.

www.bowelandbladder.org

Secret behind the smile

This is a stoma support based in Weymouth, and recently one of our members Rob Tinkler had a problem while on holiday in Weymouth and just happened to contact this group who were very helpful and sorted his problem, they do have people on holiday in their area and can sort them out , they would like to come a talk to us a some stage , but a big thank you helping our member. They meet at Morrisons in Weymouth on the last Friday of the month at the Heights Hotal Portland on the second Wednesday of the month if you are in Weymouth.

@secretbehindthesmile

Salisbury City Toilets

In the new year Salisbury City Council will be updating the toilets in the Market Place and taking over the Central Carpark toilets. I have been in contact with them and will be making sure that they all are stoma friendly.

Wiltshire Council

Next spring Wiltshire Council intend to change the general refuse collection from two weeks to three weeks I have been in touch with them to explain that could be difficult for those with a stoma and other medical problems. They have been very responsive and will keep you up to date as this progresses.



In the Garden with Jane

So here we are again in yet another heat wave (July as I write). Having I think been a penguin in a previous life, I really do struggle with this excessive heat, and so does the garden and everything in it. I am watering tubs and plants still waiting to go out, which is pointless until we get some moisture in the soil. Pots are better grouped together in this heat, easier to water and they help keep each other's moisture in. Pots around the patio, etc help disguise the sadness of the flower beds. The garden has gone into shutdown mode, nothing is happening. They had a lovely warm wet start and bloomed beautifully, then the drought arrived and the plants went into "we need to seed now before we die" mode. There they have stayed. I am desperate to get out, cut back and tidy, then hope for a second flush. If the roots are OK, the plant will survive, but in reality it's foolish to attempt much work in this weather. Everything is best left to sleep (including us!). We have been advised that the worst heat of the day is 11 to 3 but I've found it's still too hot at 5 some days. Please be sensible as nothing is so important to get ill over it. With a bit of luck and TLC most things will recover, if not this season, then hopefully next when it all starts again!

The roses this year have been a sensation, but again they flourished and went too quickly. I do dead-head a few that I have in pots, but the rest I leave to form rosehips for the birds. If you do feel you must water the garden, then a good soak every few days beats a quick daily sprinkle. A drench encourages roots to go downwards and find moisture, plus anchors the plant.

My veg is hit and miss, the perpetual chard was amazing, then bolted in just a few days. I've cut it right down but I think it may have to come out. The onions are good and carrots have come up but are "resting." I'm picking courgettes and the tomatoes are starting to form. I haven't had the nerve to dig a spud yet!

Last year I had a tray of foxglove seedlings and no time to prick them out. I shovelled them by a slightly shady hedge and this year was rewarded with a stunning array. They are biannual so this year's seedlings will flower next year. With luck I'll have another display and a continuing bank of loveliness.

So all in all, there's not a lot that can be done this summer. Even the crispy brown lawn only needs the tufts of weeds clipped off if you feel so inclined. My lavender last year was pathetic. It was one of the few things growing when I moved in. I don't think much had ever been done with it, so last year it had a severe haircut and an even more severe talking to - along the lines of "this is the last chance saloon pal – it's up to you. Get on with it or become compost". My goodness, this year it's so lush I can hardly get up the front path! The bees love it. My garden has become a bit of a wildlife haven too. I've got glow worms (amazing!) slow worms, hedgehogs and squirrels. They like to drink out of the pond, but aren't so helpful when they search for buried nuts in my lawn!

I recently rescued a young jackdaw from the middle of the main road (much to the rage of the man behind me). My friend "the bird man" said it might imprint on me, which shouldn't happen with cats around. I managed to feed him up, he was just bones, and then release him back to freedom. Likewise before that a tortoise walked up another friend's front path and panicked her. So I kept him a couple of weeks before I could arrange a scanner to read a microchip and returned to his family.

It's been mentioned that hopefully an orphaned elephant doesn't turn up in the garden or I'll have that in too (I somehow don't think it would fit in the old Guinea pig hutch!)

So to sum up, we need rain. By the time this is read we may well be flooded, who knows? But this weekend I'm manning a stall at a local fete for the Catwatch independent rescue I volunteer for. It's almost sure to break then isn't it!?!

In the meantime, stay safe and keep cool.

Salisbury Hospital Stoma Nurses' Piece

Staying Active After Stoma Surgery: New EXPASS Recommendations

A new expert guidance document, **EXPASS (Exercise and Physical Activity After Stoma Surgery)**, has been developed by the Association of Stoma Care Nurses UK (ASCN UK) to help people with a stoma stay active, recover well, and enjoy the activities that matter to them. The key message is simple: **having a stoma should not stop you from being physically active.**

Why Being Active Matters

Research shows that many people with a stoma do not achieve recommended levels of physical activity, often because they have been given inconsistent or overly cautious advice. The EXPASS panel highlights that regular physical activity is important for overall health, recovery from surgery, mental wellbeing, strength, confidence, and quality of life. Inactivity is often a greater risk to health than appropriate exercise.

The Main Recommendations

1. Exercise and Activity for Everyone

Everyone preparing for, recovering from, or living long-term with a stoma should be encouraged to be physically active. Exercise should be viewed as a normal and beneficial part of life rather than something to avoid.

2. Individualised Recovery

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach. Recovery and return to activity depend on factors such as age, fitness, health condition, type of surgery, and previous activity levels. Some people progress quickly, while others may need a longer rehabilitation period.

3. Prepare Before Surgery Where Possible

If surgery is planned, improving physical fitness, strength, activity levels, nutrition, and wellbeing before the operation can support recovery afterwards. This is known as **prehabilitation**.

4. Move Early After Surgery

Gentle movement and walking should begin as soon as medically appropriate. Early mobilisation supports recovery and helps rebuild confidence.

5. Look After Your Core

The guidance recommends learning and progressing appropriate **core-strengthening exercises**. Strong core muscles help support the abdominal wall, improve function, and may help reduce problems associated with weakness after surgery.

Returning to Everyday Life

The EXPASS panel believes that most people with a stoma can return to the activities, hobbies, work, and lifestyles they enjoyed before surgery, provided they rebuild strength and confidence gradually. Some activities may need temporary modification, but the overall aim should be to help people return to a full and active life.

Can I Still Play Sport?

Yes. One of the strongest messages in the guidance is that **most sports and fitness activities remain possible with a stoma**, including demanding activities, competitive sport, and even contact sports. There is no fixed timeline for returning to exercise, and progression should be based on your recovery, fitness, and how your body responds.

The recommendations emphasise:

- Build up gradually.
- Focus on good technique and conditioning.
- Listen to your body.

Seek support from stoma care nurses, physiotherapists, or exercise professionals when needed.

The Bottom Line

The EXPASS recommendations encourage a positive message: **a stoma should not define or limit your physical potential.** Whether your goal is walking the dog, gardening, returning to work, going to the gym, running a marathon, or playing competitive sport, staying active can be a safe and important part of life with a stoma. With appropriate rehabilitation, support, and gradual progression, most people can return to the activities they enjoy and live full, active lives.

More information and accompanying exercise videos can be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/@ASCNUK

Source: Russell S, Archer K. *EXPASS – Exercise and Physical Activity After Stoma Surgery: Best Practice Recommendations*, ASCN UK, Version 1.1 (March 2026).

Michelle Boucher, Suzie Dukes, Tracy Richards

Stoma Care Clinical Nurse Specialists, Salisbury NHS Trust

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Wessex Stoma Support Group Trip to the Panto



2nd January 2027
1:45 meet (for 2:15 performance)

Salisbury Playhouse, Malthouse Lane, Salisbury, SP2 7RA

£20 per member (£3.50 for ice cream)
The Pantomime cost has been subsidised by the WSSG. Richard Helmn will be collecting the names of members who would like to attend at the next meeting.

Summer Social at The Earl of Normanton



All ready for the food





A good afternoon by all who attended, good food and good company



Looking forward to next year

Keeping hydrated in hot weather

Karen Berryman

I came across this home-made electrolyte drink recipe during our recent incredibly hot weather. When we are very hot we lose salts and minerals through sweating and we need to replenish them. The recipe is very easy to put together and both Dave and I have made it and have adjusted the ingredients to what we had available in the fruit bowl. We then put it in a jug and keep it in the fridge. It is very refreshing but needs a stir before you pour it out. We all keep reading and being reminded to drink plenty but apparently it is better if we take smaller sips more often. The body can absorb the fluid more easily than drinking it quickly in one long chug!

Electrolyte Drink



1 Lemon - juiced

1 Lime - juiced

1/8 teaspoon Baking soda - or bicarbonate of soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 large spoons of honey

3 cups of water

You can use juice from oranges, limes or lemons. I have used some Tropicana ready prepared fresh juice from a carton. (Other brands are available!) You can adjust the honey to taste. Mix it up and it will fizz slightly from the bicarbonate of soda. It is lovely if it is served straight from the fridge and a nice change from just water or a cup of tea.

I am writing this in August during the heatwave and I am hoping the weather will be less fierce by the time you read this later in the year.

EDITOR'S NOTE

If you have anything you would like to be included in the next newsletter, please send it to editor@wessex-stoma.co.uk

It can be about your experiences with your stoma or about a hobby or activity that you enjoy doing.

Christmas Meal at White Hart Hotel

Friday 4th December 2026 at the White Hart

We will be having our Group Christmas meal at the White Hart Hotel on Friday 4th December 2026 at 12:00 for 12:30. The 3 course meal is subsidised by the Group funds and will cost only £25 per person. Menu choices will be distributed at our meetings. To whet your appetite here is the menu choice.

Starter

Toasted pumpkin and butternut squash soup with toasted pumpkin seeds

Salmon and dill fishcake, garlic mayo, lemon

Duck and orange pate, cranberry sauce, crostini

Blue Vinny, pear and walnut salad, sherry and maple syrup vinaigrette

Mains

All served with sharing bowls of roast potatoes and winter vegetables

Traditional turkey breast, stuffing, pigs in blankets, gravy

Braised blade of beef, rich tomato and onion sauce

Fillet of hake with beetroot and carrot puree, basil pesto

Vegetable roulade, tomato and pepper sauce

Desserts

Christmas pudding, brandy sauce

Lemon tart, berry compote

Chocolate & marshmallow cheesecake, crushed raspberries

Poached pear, coconut yoghurt, red wine reduction

To finish coffee and mince pies

When you complete your forms please let me know of any allergies, or food preferences and also if you have friends you would like to be seated with.

Parking

There is a small car park at the Hotel, but it does get full quite early. There is no charge if you are eating at the Hotel, but you **must** give your car registration details to the reception area to avoid getting a parking fine. There are also car parks nearby which you have to pay for.

For sheer ease of admin let me have your choices and payment before 14th November so that I can get details to the Hotel and pay them.

Karen Berryman

Email: karenanddaveberryman@gmail.com



CALENDAR FOR 2026 & 2027

Full Meetings

Bob Blandford Scout Hall, Wilton, SP2 0AL

Plenty of free parking. We often have activities or talks at these more formal meetings. There is always a raffle and lots of prizes. There are hot drinks and a buffet at the end of the meeting and time for chatting and looking at the Stoma Suppliers tables.

2026

Saturday 12th September 2026 - Talk on Wildlife Photography

Saturday 14th November 2026 - Pewsey Players

2027

Saturday 9th January 2027

Saturday 6th March 2027

Saturday 10th April 2027

Saturday 12th June 2027 – AGM

Saturday 11th September 2027

Saturday 13th November 2027

Tesco Tea and Chat Afternoons

Tesco Community Space, Southampton Road, Salisbury SP1 2NY

Plenty of free parking but if you intend to stay longer than 3 hours you need to book your car registration number in at the Tesco help desk. Ask a committee member if you need help with this. We have a raffle and free hot drinks and snacks generously supplied by Tesco.

Tesco Community Space, Southampton Road, Salisbury SP1 2NY

2026

Saturday 10th October 2026

2027

Saturday 13th February 2027

Saturday 8th May 2027

Saturday 7th August 2027

Saturday 16th October 2027

Trip to the Pantomime at Salisbury Playhouse
2nd January 2027 1:45pm meet

Christmas Meal at White Hart Hotel

Friday 4th December 2026

12pm for 12:30pm start