



**Mar/Apr 2011**

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# AYLESBURY & DISTRICT VOLUNTARY GROUP NEWSLETTER

Following our recent AGM your committee was once again re-elected. Ron Syrratt has decided to stand down and we thank him for his input during the past year. Maria Parker has taken on the job of Fundraising Coordinator and we will hear more of what she is doing in future newsletters. The rest of the committee remains unchanged.

## **AGM 2011**

The AGM was held on Thursday 3rd Feb at the Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville. 22 people attended. Firstly, Mr Ken Parker, Chairman, thanked Dr Gardner and Sister Mary Harding for their support and hoped that we could look forward to this continuing for the next year. He went on to thank the committee for their support during the year. He stated that the group had had a reasonable year considering that the numbers were falling and hoped that we would continue to do as well in the coming year.

The Treasurer, Mr John Housego presented a detailed sheet on the screen for the members. This year we had a total income of £13,305.74 a considerable increase on last year's figure of £10,781.28. As a result of this we had donated £11,000 to 2 research projects and Careline. The group should be proud of this. Our expenses are slightly increased this year; this is mostly as a result of now having to pay to have our newsletter printed. (This was previously done free for us.) Our income comprised of subscriptions and donations from members to the group as well as outside donations. This year we sold our two old marquees and have continued to raise income from hiring out the gazebos. We have also received a rebate from HM Customs and Excise for Gift Aid. We are not sure whether we will be able to continue to do this but John stated that he is in close communication with the Finance Department of Diabetes UK about this matter. The accounts had been audited by Mrs Hazel Crake and John expressed his thanks to her as she had done this without charge.

In the absence of the Secretary his report was read by Pat Housego. David's report reminded us of the important work the group does and of the thanks from Diabetes UK to us for the £61,500 we had donated to them since 2005. Following the election of the committee Dr Gardner reported that they had taken part in the "think glucose" campaign for in patients in acute care hospitals. This is a countrywide campaign and they had been very successful in their audit and had been asked to present at the NHS Diabetes Conference. He felt that in-patient services had improved considerably although they recognised that they still had some way to go. It was hoped that this campaign would be operating in Community hospitals later this year. One interesting statistic that came out of the audit was that at any given time about 20% of patients being treated at acute hospital trusts have diabetes. (It was previously estimated to be about 10%). He stated that there had been a general increase in the use of insulin pumps and that they were now an insulin pump centre. The meeting continued with a talk by Richard Lane (see over) and concluded with cheese and wine.

### **Talk by Richard Lane OBE**

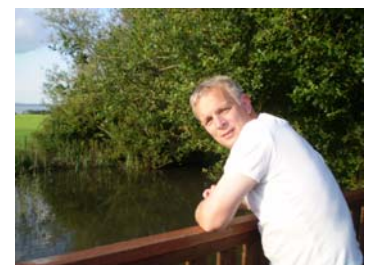
Mr Richard Lane opened his talk by saying how pleased he was to have finally come to visit the Aylesbury Group, having heard at Diabetes UK what a popular group we were. He also reminded us that like us he is also a volunteer with Diabetes UK. He has been involved with them for the past 6 years. He then gave us some facts and figures about diabetes which is now the fastest growing chronic illness. The two countries where the incidence of diabetes are growing fastest are Finland and Qatar. He believes that it is important to spread the word that making changes to your lifestyle is one of the most important things that people can do to avoid diabetes. He believes that one day, in the not too distant future a cure will be found and the way to achieve this is through research.

He then talked about his own experiences with diabetes from his diagnosis in 1976 until today. He was diagnosed as Type 1 and went straight on to insulin. He was labelled as a "brittle" diabetic, whose blood sugar levels vary tremendously throughout the day. He found it very difficult to keep good control Richard was being looked after by the diabetes unit at Bromley Hospital and was later referred to Kings College Hospital. In Sept 1996, whilst driving to the hospital for an appointment he went into a coma and crashed the car. No one else was involved but his own car ended up in a cemetery! Richard's back was broken in the accident and he spent a lot of time in and out of hospitals, ending up at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore where he underwent an eight and a half hour operation on his back. Fortunately the operation was successful and so began the long road to recovery. His diabetes was now being controlled by an insulin pump and although this was making a big difference, by 2004 Richard was very ill again, having as many as six major hypos every week. The professor at Kings College Hospital, Professor Stephanie Amiel, asked Richard to once again consider islet cell transplants. (He had been asked to consider this previously but his health had not been good enough.) Eventually he agreed and was put on the waiting list. A suitable donor became available and the first of three transplants was done. After the first operation Richard was able to reduce his insulin dose by about a third. Two more operations took place over the next four months. After the second one, his insulin was again reduced and after the third he was able to take off his insulin pump completely. He was the first person in the UK to come completely off insulin. He was able to do without it for about a year, but has now had to go back on to it following a viral infection

Following this transformation of his life, Richard was often asked to speak about his experiences. He became a vice president of Diabetes UK and was invited to become President in 2008. He stressed that without the work being done in groups like ours, the research that led to his transplants would not have been possible. Money put into research really does work! There are now six hospitals in the UK that are carrying out islet cell transplants, not as research but as treatment. He once again thanked us for our continued funding of research projects and hoped that one day it might lead to a vaccine or a cure.

### **Meet the Committee**

This is the first in a series of articles where we give you a closer look at the members of the committee. I'm starting with John Housego, Membership Secretary & Treasurer (after all I do know quite a bit about him!) John has been involved with the group for the last two years mainly as a result of me being diabetic. He is 56 and took early retirement from his former employment as European Service Manager with Hitachi, Europe. In his spare time he enjoys amateur radio, electronic construction and restoring his beloved Model T Ford! He has recently refurbished the information stands and looks after the group's gazebos. He is also a voluntary driver for the Wendover Community Bus. He is currently in close communication with Diabetes Head Office on ways to maximise fundraising contributions. Although not diabetic himself, since his involvement with the group, he has learnt a lot about the condition. He can often be found manning our information stall and would like to see insulin pumps made more freely available for all insulin dependent diabetics.



## Annual Barbeque

We have had to change the date of the annual barbeque as the Guide Centre have told us that they have got a conference there on the date we booked. We will let you know the new date as soon as it is fixed.

## Information Stall

We will once again be taking the information stall to Aylesbury town on **Saturday 12th March**. We will also be holding a tombola and Lucky dip. Please come along and see us and try your luck. We will be there from 8.30am till about 3pm. Please contact us if you have any unwanted gifts which could be used by us as prizes for our raffles, tombola or small children's gifts for the Lucky Dip.

## Collection at Wyevale Garden Centre

Thank you to everyone who helped with our collection at Wyevale Garden Centre, World's End, Wendover on Saturday 12th February. Trade at the garden centre was brisk and we managed to collect £226.79.

## Donations to our Group

In January my husband and I went to the dinner organised by the Aylesbury Rotary Club. We had been asked to collect a cheque for our group from them. We were presented with a cheque for £475 which had been collected by the Rotary Club on their Christmas Carol float and from shoppers in the High Street before Christmas. The Rotary President Roger Simmons said that he wanted to thank the people of Aylesbury who had generously donated as well as thanking the organisations who received the cheques for the excellent work they each do within the community.



We also received a donation from family and friends of the late Mr Peter Thomas Eaglestone, of Mitcham Walk, Aylesbury, which amounted to £85.

We thank them for their donation and send them our condolences on the loss of their loved one. Another donation of £20 was also received from Mr Keith Bland.

## Diabetes Week 2011

Diabetes Week is Diabetes UK's annual UK-wide awareness and fundraising week. This year Diabetes Week is 12–18 June 2011. In Diabetes Week 2011, Diabetes UK is encouraging people to talk about diabetes. Learning to live with the condition can be challenging. Diabetes UK provides ways for anyone affected by diabetes to access vital healthcare information, benefit from emotional support and talk to people with diabetes. The Diabetes UK Careline is one of the ways the charity talks with people about diabetes. The service currently receives over 30,000 calls, letters and emails each year. Diabetes UK is aiming to raise £200,000 during Diabetes Week to expand this service and provide even more support: this could include extending the opening hours, reducing the cost of a call to the Careline, introducing in-depth counselling sessions and employing more staff to answer enquiries. Last year our group donated £3000 to Diabetes UK for the specific use of Careline. This year we will be making further donations—but do you have any thoughts on where you would like it to go? Maybe you would like it to go to Careline again—we know that people in this area use this service; or perhaps, following Richard Lane's talk you feel that it should go towards research. Please let the committee know your thoughts, ring or e-mail any of us.

## Facebook

Just to remind those of you with access to the Internet that we have had a page on Facebook for some time. This has not been as successful as we had hoped, so please encourage friends and family to join. All welcome, diabetic or not.

This newsletter may also be downloaded from our website [www.dukad.org.uk](http://www.dukad.org.uk) where you will find other information about the group and about diabetes, along with links to other relevant websites.

## **Future Events**

### **Quiz Evening.**

Tickets for our Quiz evening with supper have sold very well indeed. We now only have four tickets remaining, so if you didn't buy tickets because there weren't enough of you to make up a team, now is your last chance! These tickets (£10 each) are available from Maria Parker (01296 486269) and will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Please remember to bring your own drink with you, although tea and coffee will be provided. Maria has also organised a fabulous raffle for the evening with some wonderful prizes. We would like to thank the following businesses for donating prizes to the raffle— House of Fraser, WH Smith, Boots, Budgens (Bedgrove) , B & Q; as well as individual friends and members who have also donated prizes. We look forward to seeing you on Friday 8th April at William Harding Junior School, Aylesbury at 7.30pm.

### **Annual Sponsored Walk**

Don't forget our sponsored walk from The Kimble Stewart Hall, Station Road, Little Kimble, Bucks, HP17 0XN on Saturday 7th May. Sponsorship forms are now available from Ken Parker or can be downloaded from the website at [www.dukad.org.uk](http://www.dukad.org.uk) where you can also download a map of the routes. The walks will be led by competent walk leaders but will be suitable for most people so start your training now! Details and descriptions of the walks are as follows:-

5 mile walk (starting at 10.30am) A mainly flat walk over lovely open countryside at the foot of the Chilterns with panoramic views of beech woods rising in the distance. Fascinating glimpses of the old cottages and alleyways of the pretty hamlets of Great Kimble, Askett and Meadle which we pass through along the way.

10 mile walk (starting at 10.00am) A challenging hilly route for the more experienced walker. Fairly flat at the start out towards Butlers Cross, but then some undulating paths through lovely combs and beech woods taking in the hamlets of Dunsmore, Little Hampden and Cadsden before returning to base via some interesting "passageway" paths near Smokey Row.

## **Calendar of Events 2011**

12th March	Charity Stall - featuring Tombola and Children's Lucky Dip
8th April	Quiz evening at William Harding Junior School.
7th May	Sponsored Walk at Kimble
11th June	Charity Stall, Aylesbury. Diabetes Week.
July	BBQ—Ellesborough Guide Centre (Date to be confirmed)
9th July	Bedgrove Summer Fete—Information Stall
29th August	Winslow Show –Information Stall (subject to confirmation)
1st September	Talk by Cyril Blunden on "The Cockatoos" - a local music group.
October	Charity Stall in Market Square (date to be confirmed)
3rd November	Talk by Dr Chaterjee from SM Hospital "An overview of Diabetes".
1st December	Christmas Social.

## **Thank you.**

Once again we would like to thank the people at Cartridge World, Parton Road, Aylesbury not only for once again partially sponsoring our newsletter, but for their consistent good service in getting the newsletter out quickly.