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**THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR**

In 1981 the National Theatre staged an amazing 8 ½ hour production of Nicholas Nickleby. This fast moving, quite innovative theatre experience was staged over two nights. It was so good you couldn't wait to get back in the theatre!

A moment I especially remember was when Nicholas rescued Smike from the terror of Wackford Squeers and the dreadful boarding school Dotheboys Hall. Nicholas says to him "Won't you miss your home?" to which Smike replies "You are my home!"

The best thing, thus far, about the easing of the lockdown has been that our gardens are once again being filled with the noise of grandchildren playing, the laughter of our picnics in the rain the sounds of us simply being with each other and enjoying wonderful catch ups.

Our homes are on the way to being complete again and it won't be long now until we can carefully meet up again inside.

Smike got it so right. The essence of a home is not bricks and mortar, it's us, for better or for worse. Any place where we can be together with our nearest and dearest. How we have missed just being together!

I remember reading that during the rare times when Jewish families got a warning to flee from Nazi round ups and were given a moment to throw things in a bag ,young couples urgently packed as much of the family silver they could carry. The elderly packed photographs!

I love the following line which I heard on Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* at the start of the month .It invites us to meditate on the deepest meaning of the word *Home*.

***Life is a journey where we are all just walking each other home***

It is unbearably sad that Covid 19 deprived so many family members of sharing and supporting their loved ones on the final leg of their journey Home.

Without doubt, one of the most important lessons gleaned from this experience of long separation, is to use whatever time remains to us to trade in kindness, appreciation and care.

Most of all, as we walk each other Home, we must not to lose any opportunity to tell all those we hold dear that we love them.

## A GENEROUS LEGACY

Recently our branch committee was given wonderful news - Cheltenham and District Branch has received a legacy in excess of £100,000!

It will, therefore, be our responsibility to suggest ways in which this money could be best spent for the benefit of those who have Parkinson's and those who care for them.

Parkinson's UK will naturally take a keen interest in our progress and will make sure the projects we have thought about meet the charity's criteria and are carefully planned and costed.

We will be granted three years in which to spend the legacy funds, after our Legacy Spending Plan has been approved.

At this early stage we are anxious to receive from our branch members a wide variety of suggestions as to how the legacy might be spent.

Clearly this is a rare opportunity for us to be imaginative in how we might spend this legacy to support the funding of local, county-wide, regional or national projects. At our recent committee meetings we made a start by identifying five areas which have the potential to create projects which could attract funding from the legacy:

- Contribute to Parkinson's Research Projects, preferably based near enough to forge links with e.g. at Oxford, Bristol, Birmingham or Cardiff
- Make substantial contributions towards County or Regional Parkinson's Parkinson's Conferences in 2022 and 2024.
- Support the restarting and development of exercise activities both locally and further afield
- Explore ways of supporting those newly diagnosed with Parkinson's in Gloucestershire
- Donate funds to the Parkinson's UK Grants Scheme, to which People with Parkinson's or other forms of progressive parkinsonism, and unpaid carers, can apply for a Parkinson's UK Grant up to £1,500 for certain, specified categories of expenditure including respite care and specialist equipment.

These are initial ideas, they are by no means set in stone and we would welcome more suggestions from members. **What do think about this wonderful out-of-the blue opportunity?**

Do not hesitate to email me [parkinsonshjm@gmail.com](mailto:parkinsonshjm@gmail.com) or ring me, Harry Matthews, on 07515 857110, with your comments and suggestions about how we might best spend this legacy.

## RESEARCH NEWS

Despite the full on diversion of research resources last year to deliver a vaccine against COVID-19 in record time, all was not lost for Parkinson's research. The Director of Research at Parkinson's UK reports in the latest edition of Progress Magazine that the Parkinson's research budget was protected.

In the past year, 8 million pounds was spent on Parkinson's research projects, including two new clinical trials. One is testing a new treatment for Parkinson's patients who suffer from visual hallucinations. The second, working with the Michael J Fox Foundation, is testing a promising new drug for dyskinesia.

## PARKINSON'S AND CORONAVIRUS - OBTAINING HELP OR ADVICE:

There is support on offer for anyone affected by Parkinson's from the **Parkinson's UK helpline, Website and Parkinson's Local Advisors** (See **Useful Contacts** below).

The Parkinson's UK website advice on **Coronavirus and Parkinson's** is regularly updated as Government and NHS policies and advice change.

<https://www.parkinsons.org.uk/news/understanding-coronavirus-and-parkinsons>

The following guidance from the Parkinson's UK Website was **up-to-date on 20th April**.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO?

#### Follow the guidance where you live

Restrictions and social distancing guidelines remain in place across the UK. Check your relevant government website:

**England.** From 12 April further restrictions, including on non-essential retail and other services, and care home visits, have eased.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

#### ***Business and activities***

*Step 2, which will be no earlier than 12 April, will see the opening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons; and public buildings, including libraries and community centres. Indoor leisure facilities such as gyms will also reopen (but only for use by people on their own or in household groups); as will most outdoor attractions and settings including outdoor hospitality venues, zoos, theme parks, and drive-in cinemas. Self-contained accommodation such as campsites and holiday lets, where indoor facilities are not shared with other households, can also reopen.*

*Hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors at Step 2 and there will be no need for customers to order a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks and no curfew, although customers must order, eat and drink while seated ('table service'). Wider social contact rules will apply in all these settings to prevent indoor mixing between different households.*

#### ***Events***

*While funerals can continue with up to 30 mourners, the number of people able to attend weddings, receptions and commemorative events such as wakes will rise to 15.*

Later changes, including **from 17<sup>th</sup> May** are set out in the [roadmap](#).

#### **Follow distancing and hygiene guidelines**

If you leave your home, the UK government advises people to think 'Hands, face, space and fresh air':

- You should wash your **hands** regularly, for at least 20 seconds.
- You should wear a **face** covering in enclosed spaces.
- You should give people outside of your household **space** of at least 2 metres, or 1 metre where other measures are in place.
- You must stay outside when you're with people who aren't in your household or bubble. The risk of infection is lower outdoors and there's more space to physically distance.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

### BRANCH ON-LINE EVENTS (on Zoom)

**Parkinson's Cafe on Zoom** 11-00am Thursdays – April 29<sup>th</sup>, May 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>

**Table Tennis 'Chat and Quiz' on Zoom** 2.00pm Friday May 7<sup>th</sup>

**NB.** If Table Tennis sessions are able to resume in a Covid secure manner on Friday May 21st (after Step 3 of the Roadmap goes ahead on May 17th) there will be no Zoom Chat and Quiz that day.

An invite and zoom link details will be emailed to the branch mailing list before each session.

### BRANCH MEETINGS & REGULAR EVENTS

**NB:** All face to face meetings/events are cancelled until further notice (but see note above)

The Branch Committee are awaiting further guidance from Parkinson's UK, about how, and when, we can restart face to face meetings/events in a Covid secure manner.

### BRANCH CONTACTS

**Branch Chair:** Harry Matthews 07515 857110 or parkinsonshjm@gmail.com

**Branch and Membership Secretary:** Ian Jones 07903 850597 or ianjones.parkinsons@gmail.com

**Branch Treasurer:** Dot Simpson 01242 583894 or dsimpson.parkinsons@goolemail.com

**Committee Members:** Val & Clive Corke, James Howell, Joy & James Ingram,  
Didi Jepson, Hilary Moody

**Branch Website:** <http://www.cheltenhamparkinsons.org.uk/>

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Parkinson's UK Website:** <http://www.parkinsons.org.uk>

**Parkinson's UK Helpline:** (phone free) 0808 800 0303 or email [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk)

**Parkinson's Local Advisor Service:** contact our helpline on 0808 800 0303 or email [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk) to be put in touch with a local adviser.

**Parkinson's Nurse Specialist Service:** 0300 422 6610 or [ghn-tr.parkinsonsteam@nhs.net](mailto:ghn-tr.parkinsonsteam@nhs.net)

**Age UK Help Team:** Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm 01452 422660

**Age UK Gloucestershire Website:** <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/>

**Mind:** Infoline: 0300 123 3393 or [www.mind.org.uk/information-support](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support)

**Samaritans:** call free any time, from any phone, on 116 123.