Autonomy Newsletter

Issue 123

July 2025

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Autonomy 4 Women

Our next meetings this year will be:

Wednesday, July 16th (15th birthday!)

Wednesday, August 20th

from 6.30pm - about 10:00pm

at:
The Severn Gorge
Southwater Way
SATNAV: TF3 4FU
(01952) 290404

See you there!

Our next Autonomy newsletter (Issue 124) will be the September 2025 edition.

Autonomy for Women (A4W) is 15 years old!!

We feel that Autonomy for Women is probably the longest running women's autism support group in the UK! To celebrate 15 years of our group, the members have chosen to go to the British Ironwork Centre, Whitehall Aston, Oswestry, SY11 4JH, www.britishironworkcentre.co.uk (01691) 610952 on Thursday July 17th from 12 noon-4pm. The outing is free and is only for current and previous women members of the group and you must book a place beforehand. It is free to park there and Autonomy will pay for your entry.

Please bring blue badges as carers, Senior Citizens and Blue Badge holders are half price.

Members will be able to view the many exhibits, walk in the grounds, visit the shop, meet the blacksmith and have tea and a cake on Autonomy in the café.

Contact Sara via phone, email, text or Facebook messaging

Autonomy trip to Chester Zoo!

On June 21st, 16 members and new members enjoyed a day out at Chester Zoo, with some driving there and others travelling by bus and train. We all had a great time.



Autonomy Social Events *open to all members*

Telford Socials:

The Severn Gorge, Southwater Way, SATNAV: TF3 4FU (01952) 290404
Monday, July 7th
and Monday, August 4th
from 6:30pm - about 9:30pm.

The Bridgebuilder, Wrekin Retail Park, Wellington, TF1 2DE
Monday, July 21st
Monday, August 18th
from 7:00pm - about 10:00pm.

Shrewsbury Socials:

Ten Pin Bowling at: **Hollywood Bowl, SY1 3AZ** on **Tuesday, July 8th** **from 6:30-8pm. Cost is free in memory of Mr Leonard Parry.** Meet in the bar area, one bowling game. ***Some members will be then be going to The Featherbed, Battlefield Road, Shrewsbury SY1 4AB at 7.45.***

The Hole in the Wall
1, Shoplatch, SY1 1HF
(01743) 271847
on **Tuesday, July 22nd**
from 7:00pm - about 10:00pm.

The Red Barn*, 108 Longden Road, Shrewsbury SY3 7HS (01743) 236788, Wednesday, August 13th from 7:00pm - 10:00pm.** ****We moved pubs due to the Abbey's major change of menu & prices. The Red Barn is less busy and offers a simple and cheaper pub menu on a Wednesday*.

The Beacon Pub, Copthorne Road, SY3 8LP
(01743) 344286
Tuesday, August 26th
from **7:00pm - about 10:00pm.**

A History of Autonomy for Women (A4W)

Sara secured a year's Equality and Diversity funding from Shropshire Council for a monthly social and discussion group for autistic women in 2010. The first meeting of A4W was on Wednesday, July 21st 2010 at the Roy Fletcher Centre in Shrewsbury. The group was first run by Louisa Gilpin, with help from Sara and then with Anneka, a volunteer.

In September 2010 we ran our first conference entitled 'Positive Futures' with Eric and Danny Beath as speakers and Louisa doing a talk about Autonomy for Women.



The first sessions were well supported but gradually the numbers went down and only our founder member, Hannah, attended. In January 2011, Louisa started the Autonomy for Women Mentoring Project but this lead to A4W nearly closing.

Sara met the members who wished to meet in a pub. They chose the Peach Tree Restaurant for our first meeting on March 16th 2011. The group then thrived, with members from Shropshire and Telford enjoying our meetings. After their refurbishment, the Peach Tree became too busy for us to return to so we moved to the Alb, in Shrewsbury town centre in November 2014.



Krissie, Naomi, Hannah, Anna and Sam at the Alb.



Krissie, Sara, Wendy and Naomi



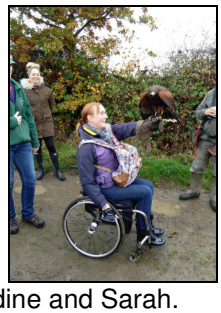
Wendy, Naomi and Catherine.

We celebrated A4W's 5th birthday in August 2015 with a butterfly themed and lemony - gluten free - cake made and decorated by Wendy and Naomi.



In November we had a special Hawk Walk and Owl experience at Battlefield Falconry Centre in Shrewsbury.





The hawk met Nadine and Sarah.





Wendy and Anna met the hawk too!





Anna, Naomi and Kate met the hawk and then had the Owl Experience.

As more Telford women were attending, the decision was made that A4W should move from Shrewsbury, which it did in September 2018.

We held our first 2 sessions at the Novello Lounge in Telford's Southwater Square but we soon ended up trying another pub.

We then met at the Coal Bar and Grill for four sessions but the acoustics were not too good there either. We moved to the Euston Way, Beefeater stayed there until the 2020/2021 lockdowns, returning there in September 2021.

The Beefeater, being a busy pub next to a popular hotel and the train station, meant that we were sometimes turned away and had to meet at other venues.

We moved to the well known and trusted, Severn Gorge, in March 2022 and still meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month except for December.

We remain a smallish group, but are still much appreciated. New members are welcome from Shropshire, Telford and the Borderlands.