



WRSG Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

Issue Number 1978

October 2026

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Coffee Mornings

At The Connaught Hotel,

44 -50 Tettenhall Road

Wolverhampton

WV1 4SW

Doors open 09.50.

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Monday 05 October 2026

We will welcome

Dr Hirushi Jayasekera

She will be about arthritis

Monday 02 November 2026

We shall have a short session of

Arm chair Keep Fit with

Harjinder

together with the sale of

Christmas Cards and Indian
food.

As you are aware
membership renewals are
due. Renewal Slips are still
available, if you require one
please let me know and I
can include it in the
December Newsletter, they
are also available at each
coffee morning..

Please send your renewal to

Kath Sankey
78 Dilloways Lane
Willenhall
WV13 3HJ

A safe and easy way to pay
is to make a bank transfer

Wolverhampton Rheumatology
Support Group

Account No – 03687890

Sort Code – 30-99-83

**Please note if you joined
our group after January
2026 you do not need to
renew until next
September 2027**

I have 12 places left for our
Christmas meal at
The Downs, Bridgnorth
**Monday 07 December
2026**

Members £25 per person

Non - Members £35 pp

£10 non- refundable

deposit required as soon as
possible. This price include
the meal, entertainment and
the coach fare.

I am still taking names for
the Pantomime

WEDNESDAY

20TH JANUARY 2027

£25 MEMBERS

NON-MEMBERS £35

£10 NON- REFUNDABLE

DEPOSIT.

This includes the
pantomime ticket
and a free coach
to everyone.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WOLVERHAMPTON
RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT
GROUP 2025/2026**

Good afternoon everyone, so
lovely to

see so you all here today. Before
I start can I ask you to either put
your phones on silent or switch
them off, thank you.

1) Apologies – No apologies

**3) Matters arising from AGM
Minutes 2025; No matters arising.**

**4) The committee members listed
below are willing to stand for re-
election.**

Jan Simpson-Chairperson /
Newsletter Editor/ Secretary

Tony Sankey - Vice Chair

Kath Sankey - Treasurer

Dereck Allen - Social

Representative

Mary Allen - Outings
idea's

Bhagwant Sachdeva – Member
Recruitment Offer

Iqbal Lally Member Recruitment
Officer / Stats.

Harjinder Kaur - Member
Recruitment Officer
Shirley Walton - Assistant
Secretary

**Committee approved by –
Pat Cordingley and seconded by
Peter Boneham.**

You will note that two new names have been added to our committee, so welcome to Harjinder and Shirley. As you know Harjinder has already supported Bhagwant and added support to our group in many ways, Shirley has supported me through-out her time with us, even today she is taking the minutes of this AGM.

**5) Chairperson's report – 31
August 2025 – 01 September
2026**

As always, it is a pleasure to deliver my chairperson's annual report, this one covers the period 31 August 2025 to 01 September 2026 for the Wolverhampton Rheumatology Support Group. (WRSO).

During the past year, in addition to our coffee mornings, we have been able to enjoy a chance to meet up for other activities, not as much as I would have liked, however I have had health issues to deal with as have other committee members. Throughout this we are all committed to the group and members.

The primary objective of our group is to support members, and I hope you all feel we have continued to do so.

As of September 2025, our current membership stands at 126. membership, our average attendance to our monthly meetings is 29%. I think you will agree this figure is incredible for a group that has been going for over 30 years. We have always enjoyed a healthy membership, for that I must thank you all. The fact our group continues to survive as a self-funded charity run by volunteers without assistance from local or central government is commendable, something we should all be proud of. Everyone is welcome. All ages and any type of Arthritis. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and loyalty. It goes without saying, without you, we would not be a successful group.

Being chairperson of the WRSO is an honour it continues to provide me with new challenges. I am always, along with your committee, looking for speakers to invite to our monthly coffee. mornings in the hope to keep you both interested and entertained. This is not always easy, believe me, I think it is my biggest challenge of the year.

I keep everyone updated via the bi-monthly Newsletter and I am always on the lookout for interesting things to write about. If you have a subject, you think would be of interest or useful to our members please come to me., so I can research it. I would like to thank the committee for their support and to all of you that have contacted me with supportive comments, so thank you everyone, your support is always appreciated.

Engagement with our members

We have several forms of engagement with and on behalf of our members.

- Coffee Mornings
- Outings
- Bi-monthly Newsletter
- Website: www.wrsg.org.uk
- Buddy Scheme/help line
- Wolverhampton Information Network (Wolverhampton City Council)

Coffee Mornings.

October 2025

We welcomed Gary Prescott, Acorn Hospice and toys 4 us. Gary was overwhelmed with the number of cuddly toys we had to donate to his cause, he said it was the largest number of toys he has collected at one time. He was thrilled and had fun driving around with the full-sized panda in his passenger seat.

November 2025

Once again, we had a successful Christmas Gifts morning with a small variety of stalls. I am struggling every year stalls for this event; I think it may be because we meet on a Monday. Therefore, this year we are going to have a change, as advertised on the August Newsletter, so let's see how this goes to enable us to decide about next year.

December 2025

We enjoyed our Christmas Meal at The Downs at Bridgnorth, I we all enjoyed the meal and afternoon and so have booked again for this year, I am looking for a change for next year, so don't say you haven't been warned,

January 2026

Quiz morning, we had a laugh with a couple of short quiz I had prepared. I must thank Shirley for bringing quizzes from other groups she attends, they are a great help. Unfortunately, our annual trip to the panto was cancelled due to the awful weather conditions. I managed to secure a full refund for members so that took the full sting out of the disappointment. Fingers crossed for next year.

February 2026

Again, another challenge and disappointment when the speaker

was unable to join us. And again, we adapted and had another quiz.

March 2026 Janet Haley came along to give Energy advice; she came to tell us about the team she works with to help people use their energy services to its full advantage.

April 2026

Today we all enjoyed a tasting session from Wilshire Farm Foods. I have to say I was pleasantly surprised at the variety offered and the fact that the pricing was quite affordable. I am sure that for anyone house bound for whatever reason and living alone this is well worth trying out. You do not need to commit; the number of times you use them is up to you.

May 2026,

Today we welcomed Dt Tochi Adizie, he came along and talked about Dr / Patient approach. Things to say or not say to patients when meeting face to face. We also talked about telephone consultations and what patients thought about them. Overall, I think we all learned from this session and enjoyed the interaction with Dr Adizie.

June 2026

Today David Poulton came along from Wolverhampton Council, to discuss the new housing policy,

with the aim to keep people in their own homes for as long as possible.

July 2026

We enjoyed a fun presentation from Anthony Poulton, (not sure if they are related it only hit me the surnames were the same when I was preparing this report) about the origin of Animal Myths, some of them were new to me or different to how I have heard over the years, especially as a child, for example I had always believed you had to say 'white rabbit' 3 times on the 1st of each month, before you spoke to anyone? I never knew why or heard it should be a 'hare'.

August 2026

We always have a summer break, except me that is (no peace for the wicked, so they say) - I still produce the Newsletter, renewal slips and AGM information and prepare for the rest of the year's coffee mornings and of course this report for today.

September 2026

Today was a busy morning, it always is, what with membership renewals. This year were also busy taking named for our Christmas meal and our trip to the panto. Therefore, we had a fun quiz to fill the morning.

Outings

As already mentioned, we enjoyed a meal at the Downs in Bridgnorth.

Our Panto was cancelled. However, we enjoyed a day out at Monkland Cheese Farm, It wasn't as big as I had expected, but enjoyable none the less. I love cheese, so was pleased to be able to go on this trip after all, it took the sting out of having my hip operation cancelled. Unfortunately, I had to cancel the 'Black and White Trail' trip due to lack of interest. I'll look for more outing ready for next year.

Newsletter.

The Newsletter is an important way of communicating with our members, especially to members who are unable to attend our coffee mornings. I produce them bi-monthly. I relay the information about who are speakers and what they had to say. Also, what is going over the next 3 months, whenever possible. Unfortunately, it doesn't always work out, some speakers don't turn up, however, we have become adept at coping with these things.

WRSG Website.

www.wrsq.org.uk as usual I would like to mention Martin Peake; he manages our web site and keeps our web page up to date with each newsletter. Martin also continues to make sure our licences are up to date; he is also a volunteer, so a big thank you goes to Martin. New members are generated from our web site. It gives them all the

information they need to enquire about the group and tells them there is an online membership form. I am so grateful to Martin for his continued support. He never complains.

Wolverhampton Information Network known as WIN. The same can be said of our friend Kuldip Khela from the City Council (WCC) he also continues to support our group and updates our page on the corporate website. The WIN site is an enormous help to not only members but to the communities everywhere even outside the City Boundaries. It always surprises me when I have people from outside of Wolverhampton contact me about our group.

Buddy Scheme/Help Line

Our buddy scheme is for all new members. A committee member is appointed to new members for the first 4 weeks, it can be someone you have known awhile or someone you have connected with in the group. After the 4 weeks are up, you are still more than welcome to contact your buddy or anyone else on the committee, we are all here to help and advise you if we can. Having someone to communicate with initially is reassuring. You are also welcome to email or text if you prefer.

Engagement with the Rheumatology Centre.

The WRSG has always been supported by the Rheumatology Unit, as obviously you are aware Dr Sabrina Raizada is our President and Dr Adizie our Vice-president. We continue to communicate with staff at both New Cross and Cannock Hospital. I send a copy of our Newsletter to many Dr's on both sites I would like to thank them all for being so approachable for matters appertaining to our group.

Donations to the Group.

I would like to say thank you to everyone who made donations to the group. In whatever form the donations were made, money, stamps, and gifts for the raffle. Monetary donations amounted to £119.

Conclusion

Thankfully 2025/26 we have been lucky to have enjoyed our monthly meeting. Our coffee mornings has always been exceptionally well attended, so well done and thank you.

I would like to thank Dr Sabrina Raizada for being our President and Dr Tochuwku Adizie our Vice President. I also want to thank the committee, I am sure you appreciate that a lot of work goes on behind the scenes to make everything we do a success, I can

assure you it is not as easy as it looks. However, I am confident that 2026/27 will be even better and once again, I hope I can continue as chairperson and have the honour of presenting the Annual General Report next year.

**Jan Simpson (WRSG
Chairperson / Editor/ Secretary)
September 2026.**

7) Treasures Report - Tony will read the treasurer report prepared by Kath, thank you both, I know you work as a team.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS = 31 AUGUST 2025- 01 SEPTEMBER 2026

Thank you, Kath, and Tony of course, I know they work as a team. It's good to know we still have a healthy balance. We are able to continue to subsidise members for the Christmas meal, the Pantomime and other outings. So taking all of this into account I think we have managed our money well. It is a great help when members opt for receiving the Newsletters by email, it helps control postage significant. So, if any of you can have the Newsletter by email, please let me know. You may note that figures have been changed around since the AGM,

Expenses were queries on the day and after taking another look Kath /Tony noticed that the costs of the coaches, Christmas Meal and Pantomime should have been listed under Funding and Outings, thus reducing expenses, the final figure remains the same. However, next year we will have re-couped some of the costs due to members paying their share of the Christmas meal and pantomime, as at the moment the group have to pay upfront to secure these. A deeper look into the how the accounts are portrayed to members will be ongoing over the next year.

8) Now, please welcome Dr Sabrina Raizada, our President.

The procedures for the Rheumatology Department covers New Cross and Cannock hospital, with consultants and nurses going to Walsall Manor, where previously services were offered by Sandwell /Dudley. This will provide continuity to patients at Walsall but will not be the same service as at New Cross and Cannock. Regarding staffing, there are not many changes. Dr Mulherin from Cannock retired 8 months ago and had not yet been replaced. Also, two nurses are on maternity leave. At New Cross in the dedicated RA outpatient department two more rooms have been opened. There is a new bone

			Opening Balance 01 Sept 2025 £18,742.57
INCOME	AMOUNT	TOTAL	BALANCE
Subs	£569.00		
Donations	£119.00		
Fundraising/outings	£4,201.11		
MYA	£0.00		
Sundries	£0.00		
TOTAL		£4,889.11	
TOTAL INCOME			£23,631.68
EXPENDATURE			
Postage		£200.79	
Stationary		£25.00	
Fund raising/Outings		£5,143.85	
Room Hire		£885.00	
Expenses		£1,805.19	
MYA		£0.00	
TOTAL EXPENDATURE		£8,059.83	
CLOSING BALANCE			£15,571.85
31 AUGUST 2025			

density scanner at New Cross for more clinics. It can scan joints and looks at arteries for conditions such as giant cell arteritis, which are seen as emergencies. Also, can conduct muscle biopsy for inflammatory muscle diseases. The bone health room is for several different treatments, e.g. Osteoporosis, this needs more monitoring, to be delivered by the RS unit rather than you GP Biological drugs are used and there are changes nationally in funding for certain drugs, there will be closely monitored by the

department. Patients will be start with high doses to gain control with the intension to gradually reduced to prevent side effects.

Dr Raizada asked for questions.

Sue Boden – Regarding the vacancies of the consultant and nurses, is recruitment being sorted for more staff?

Dr Raizada – We are making efficient savings and hope the consultant's vacancy will be filled. Staff at Walsall are not covered in these vacancies.

Sue Boden; Will these empty posts be swallowed up?

Dr Raizada; This issue is bought up at the regular monthly meeting, together with difficult options for the helpline. This is changing from October 2026 a new helpline is being set up. At the moment option 5 to be more efficient from 12.30 to 15.00 rather than during the morning when only one person is operating the helpline. During the afternoon at least two people will be manning the helpline. Keep trying, even if you use options 1—4 to get through.

Thank You Sabrina, as per usual, useful information.

I am now going to declare the buffet open, please help yourselves.

At the AGM there was a suggestion that maybe our group could devise a 'Whatsapp Group Chat' this would be for our group news only and of course it's free.

If you are interested to be included in this please forward your name and mobile number to me, either at the next coffee morning or by telephone on the numbers at the top of this Newsletter.

Stay Safe Everyone

Jan Simpson
Chairperson / Editor

The views expressed in this newsletter are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor.

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter / email, please contact our group secretary. You may cancel your consent at any time,