



# IA UPDATE



May 2023

## Welcome

In a month that's been packed with three bank holidays and a stretch of much-needed sunshine, there's been lots going on at IA as our charity continues to evolve in keeping up with the needs of our members, their families and carers.

Please don't forget to keep us up to date with your news, too. We're always keen to hear from you and help publicise your news and events.

## Great to meet you!

We saw April out in style, with more than 100 people joining us in Kenilworth for IA's Information Day, the culmination of Ileostomy Awareness Month. Our annual event was buzzing with attendees gathering to hear from our guest speakers, participate in workshops and mingle with each other.

As well as hearing from experts about the latest developments for ileostomies and internal pouches, new friendships and connections were made, which was really heart-warming to see. The whole day represented what IA is all about – we are here to listen, inform and support you, wherever you are on your journey. There was even a delicious cake cleverly created in IA's colours and following our Stronger Together



Together theme. Almost too good to slice, it was made as part of IA's first-ever Big Bake, raising funds to help keep our charity's services running.

The event had a wonderful line up of workshops too which were all extremely well attended.

In the evening, the UK's leading Michael Buble act, Mark Daniels, kept us all entertained with a note-perfect performance, while magician Paul Newton mesmerised us with his tricks, keeping us guessing about how he pulled them off, despite the fact that we watched him closely throughout!

With fantastic feedback from those who attended this year's event, we're



Stronger Together

already planning our Information Day for 2024, and considering our options for where to host it.

**If you'd like IA to consider a venue in your region, please let us know. Wherever we host it, we will do all we can to involve local groups.**

**Email: [info@iasupport.org](mailto:info@iasupport.org)**



## ***Go the extra mile for IA***

Since ileostomate and Radio 1 DJ Adele Roberts put her best foot forward at this year's London Marathon, we've been hearing from more and more members who are interested in taking on a sporting challenge in aid of IA.

We're delighted that so many of you want to pull on your trainers to support the vital services we provide, so we're busy securing charity places at some of the best-known events.

We can now confirm that we've got **10 places** at next year's London Landmarks Half



Marathon on 7th April, and we will keep you posted regarding the London Marathon and Tough Mudder challenges.

Everyone who takes part in supporting IA will be provided with one of our running tops.

If you, or one of your members, is interested in running for us, please email [paola.simoneschi@iasupport.org](mailto:paola.simoneschi@iasupport.org).

Let us know if you would like to be kept up-to-date with other events too.

# Fearless females

Congratulations to our very own PR and Communications Manager Caroline Bramwell, whose triathlon endeavours caught the attention of former TV presenter and journalist Louise Minchin. So much so, in fact, that Louise joined Caroline – who has an ileostomy - to race a Half Ironman distance triathlon, an experience she's included in her new book, 'Fearless: Adventures with Extraordinary Women'.

Louise went from presenting BBC Breakfast to competing for the GB Team in triathlon in World and European Championships. In 'Fearless' she sets out to push herself even further. Over 17 chapters, Louise embarks on terrifying, exhilarating adventures across the UK and the world to tell extraordinary women's stories and to test herself.

As well as racing alongside Caroline, she free dives under the ice in the dark in Finland with the first female to swim a mile in the Antarctic Circle; cycles across Argentina with one of the world's most famous female endurance runners, and swims the shark- infested water of Alcatraz with two teenage sisters - all in the name of exploring what drives these incredible women, their motivation, resilience and determination.



'Fearless' not only celebrates these women, it busts the myth that only certain people can do incredible things and have their own adventures. The book includes women from all backgrounds, religions, ages, body shapes and sizes; older women, younger women, women with disabilities and more – all doing remarkable things that Louise wants to tell the world about.

Well done to Caroline and everyone else who's defying stereotypes and smashing stigma, however they choose to do it!



## *Growing an effective Member Organisation*

At the IA Information Day we were delighted to invite Mike Jameson and Kalpana Manotta of Birmingham IA to give a presentation on growing an effective member organisation.

Their presentation covered all aspects from socials to support and everything in between.

This group are fortunate to have a good size committee, and it's definitely something that is encouraged for all MOs to share the load. With more hands, you can achieve more.

Birmingham IA hold regular coffee mornings in six areas, with a total of 16 events in the year plus two christmas lunches and their own information day.

Said Kalpana: "We held monthly Zoom meetings for first three years (due to Covid), but now host these bi-monthly, giving members who are not able to get to in person meetings opportunity to attend."

She added that national support for local groups is invaluable and they have 15 trained volunteers who have been on the One2One support training. "We encourage other member organisations to promote the One2One Support training," she adds.

Mike talked about Hospital support. He says that contacting local hospitals to meet relevant individuals there is key, as is

persistence and presence. Through their connections with the hospitals they have been able to provide models for some of the hospitals (as seen in the last issue of IA Update).

What was clear is that the most important thing is to 'Keep In Touch' through whatever access you have; Zoom meetings, face-to-face events, social media and email. Birmingham IA also send out birthday cards for landmark birthdays.

It's the little things that matter.



**If there is anything we can do to assist you with your local MO, do let us know.**

## *And Finally...*

If your group has events coming up, we can shout about them on your behalf. Please send brief details to Paola, who contributes to IA's communications. You can reach her at [paola.simoneschi@ia.org](mailto:paola.simoneschi@ia.org).