



SOUTH WEST CANN COMMUNICATION
February 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to the latest South West CANN Update.

South West Children's Additional Needs Network shares information and helps to increase the reach of your services for children and young people in the region.

Regarding updates and information, if you have material or information that you would like forwarded to the members of the Network, or any updates, please ensure that you email it to Miriam on southwest@cann-network.org, before the end of the month.

Thanks to everyone who shared the information below for our latest update, which contains information and sessions for children and young people with additional needs and their parent carers.

You can find these Communications on the SWCANN Website at:
<https://www.cann-network.org/blog/>

SOUTH WEST CANN MEETING DATES

Please let us know if you need any support accessing the meetings

Future dates:

South West CANN Relaunch Networking Event

Tuesday 10th March, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Irwin Mitchell Offices, 2nd Floor, One Castlepark, Tower Hill, Bristol BS2 0JA

Closest parking is NCP or Cabot Circus

National CANN Conference

April 30th

10am - 12.30pm

CHAIR COMMENTS

As we step into February, it's a fantastic time to reflect on our South West network and the incredible dedication shown by everyone supporting children and young people with additional needs across the region. Your commitment, collaboration, and compassion continue to make a meaningful difference.

If you know of any regional or national charities that support children with additional needs, please signpost them to our website. We would love to welcome more organisations into the network and strengthen the collective voice and support available to families.

Here in the South West, we've been quietly working behind the scenes as we prepare to relaunch the South West CANN. We're really looking forward to reconnecting with you all soon.

 **Date for Your Diary: South West CANN Relaunch Networking Event**

Tuesday 10th March, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

 Irwin Mitchell Offices, Bristol

Please join us for an in-person networking event where we'll share updates, rebuild connections, and set out our plans for 2026 and beyond. We hope to see you there!

 **Save the Date: National CANN Online Conference**

Thursday 30th April, 10:00am – 12:30pm

We're excited to be hosting our first National CANN online conference. This will be an informative and collaborative morning bringing together charities and statutory services from across the UK. The focus will be on shared learning and strengthening how we work together to support children with additional needs.

Looking Ahead to 2026:

- **Building Connections:** Our focus this year remains on strengthening partnerships across the health, education, and voluntary sectors to ensure a more joined-up approach for the families we serve.
- **National Collaboration:** We are also keeping a close eye on national developments, including the upcoming National CANN conference, which we hope to share more news on very soon.
- **Network Expansion:** It is an exciting time for CANN nationally, as we are currently supporting the setup of new networks in the West Midlands. If you have contacts or active links in that region, please do let us know.

We are currently finalising our meeting dates for 2026 and will share these with you as soon as they are confirmed. We are always keen to hear your ideas on how to make our South West network even more impactful, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your continued passion and commitment. Here's to a year of positive change and strong partnership across the South West!

Co-Chairs: Sarah Okoro and Chereka Carty
South West CANN

NEW MEMBERS



Astor Bannerman

With over 30 years' experience, Astor Bannerman are experts in the design and manufacture of specialist bathing and care equipment. We provide solutions to cater to the complex care needs of your family, and clients both within the home, schools, care homes or hospices etc. We offer in-depth knowledge and technical expertise is used to design and manufacture innovative products that can be customised to suit your individual requirements.

karen.hoe@astorbannerman.co.uk
<https://www.astorbannerman.co.uk>

If you know of any groups that may be interested, please get them in touch!

Please only use contact details that are for public use

RESEARCH

No new research projects this month

EVENTS AND INFORMATION - NATIONAL/ONLINE

H.I.E. Conference - Thursday 14th May 2026

Tickets are on sale for our first H.I.E. Conference, taking place on Thursday 14th May 2026 at The Lowry, Manchester.



H.I.E. CONFERENCE

14th May 2026

The Lowry, Salford Quays

Kindly supported by:



BoltBurdonKemp



The theme is "Hear, Inform, Empower."

Our first announced speakers are Nicholas Hamilton & Paula Abramson.

"Nicolas is a disability ambassador and hugely inspiring speaker. Born with Cerebral Palsy, following an H.I.E. event at birth, Nicolas and his parents were told that he would never walk, or talk, but this did not stop him for achieving his dream of becoming a successful racing driver."

Paula Abramson will be joining us on the 14th May 2026, and we hope you will too. Paula is a psychotherapist and training facilitator, specialising in providing bereavement support to families and training for professionals, following the death of a baby or child.

Conference tickets here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hie-conference-tickets-1434277846649>

South West CANN
www.cann-network.org
southwest@cann-network.org

EVENTS AND INFORMATION - REGIONAL

'Walk and Talk' for LGBTQI+ carers

to celebrate LGBT+ history month
Are you an LGBTQI+ carer? You're not alone.

Being an unpaid carer means looking after someone who couldn't manage without your support - this could be a partner, friend, parent, child with additional needs, or neighbour. Many LGBTQI+ people take on caring responsibilities, often while juggling other pressures and navigating services that don't always reflect or understand their lives.

That's why we're inviting you to join our new Walk & Talk group just for LGBTQI+ carers.

Starting Tuesday 3rd February, we'll meet weekly for six accessible walks, from 11am to 12:30pm. These walks are a chance to take a break, connect with others who understand, and simply enjoy being outside in a safe, welcoming space where you can be yourself—free of judgement.

Why join?

-  Boost your wellbeing through time in nature
-  Connect and share experiences in a relaxed and inclusive setting
-  Feel supported – our friendly team member will be there to listen and offer guidance

Location: BS5 area

Register your interest by clicking below below and we will be in touch with the details:

'Walk and Talk' for LGBTQI+ carers

Book on here: walk@carersbsg.org.uk

Nordic Walking Taster Session

Carers are invited to try Nordic walking in partnership with Let's Walk Bristol. Led by Vicky, the organisation's founder, who will provide all equipment and guidance. Nordic walking offers physical and mental health benefits and suits all fitness levels.

- Where: Eastville Park
- When: Thursday 23 April
- Time: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm

Book on here: walk@carersbsg.org.uk

SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS:

Website: <https://www.cann-network.org>
Email: southwest@cann-network.org
Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/cannsouthwest.bsky.social>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/south-west-cann>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/southwestcann>

Please share South West CANN links with your followers and encourage them to follow too.
Please add **southwest@cann-network.org** to your Contact list to stop it going into junk.

To ensure our digital presence remains a safe and inclusive space that reflects our core values, the CANN Network has made the decision to step away from X (formerly Twitter) and will now be focusing our community engagement on our other social media platforms.