



SOUTH WEST CANN COMMUNICATION
May 2026

INTRODUCTION	2
SOUTH WEST CANN MEETING DATES	2
CHAIR COMMENTS	3
NEW MEMBERS	4
Almond Tree Foundation	4
Action for Children	4
EVENTS AND INFORMATION - REGIONAL	4
FLAMINGO CHICKS - 24 HOUR DANCE FESTIVAL - STARTS FRIDAY 8th MAY 2026 ✨	4
Join Our Walk & Talk for Carer Wellbeing	5
Taster walk and talk to promote well-being and connection	5
Caring Matters 2026 – A day for your health and wellbeing	6
Free first aid training for carers – online session	6
Walk & Talk group for Carers with Dependents - Hanham	7
SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS:	8

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:

9th June 2026

15th Sept 2026

CHAIR COMMENTS

CANN Conference Reflection

What a fantastic morning we had at our CANN Conference! We want to extend a massive thank you to all our fantastic speakers who shared their expertise and passion. It was a brilliant opportunity to connect, and we have taken so much away from the discussions to help us continue to improve our support for children and young people across the region.

✨ Honouring Our Heritage

For this month's issue, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on our journey. While many may see us in our current form, it is important to remember that South West CANN has deep roots. We were originally founded as the Bristol and South West Children with Additional Needs Network. Initially a self-funded venture, we were proud when Irwin Mitchell took the network under their wing in 2017. Though we had a brief absence during the challenges of the pandemic, the network resurrected itself with renewed energy. We don't want that history to be forgotten, as it is the foundation that allows us to support so many families today.

🎉 A Summer of Celebration & Support

We have a packed May and June ahead across the region, with a focus on bringing families together and providing expert guidance where it's needed most.

- Family Fun & Inclusive Events: There are plenty of opportunities for children and young people to build confidence and make new friends through inclusive sports, creative workshops, and sensory performances.
- Information & Advice Drop-ins: We are hosting several informal sessions where you can meet with local service providers and share experiences with other parent-carers.
- Specialised Training & Wellbeing: From practical first aid and communication strategies to wellbeing walks and carer-focused health days, our partners are offering a range of sessions to empower our community.

A warm welcome to our newest members joining the network this month. Thank you to everyone who continues to share information and help increase the reach of services for children and young people in the South West.

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

NEW MEMBERS



Almond Tree Foundation

The Almond Tree Foundation offers wellbeing support for parents of children with disability or long term illness.

We've grown a warm, global community of people with shared experiences and run free online events, including webinars and drop-in sessions, that offer a safe space for reflection, discussion, and support.

<https://www.thealmondtree.org/>



Action for Children

A National children and family charity.

Their four core service areas are family support, children in care, disabled children and mental health and wellbeing.

Driven by love, they take action so children don't miss out on a safe and happy childhood. They have thousands of people on the ground, giving children and young people the protection and practical help they urgently need. And they campaign for lasting change.

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.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

EVENTS AND INFORMATION - REGIONAL

FLAMINGO CHICKS - 24 HOUR DANCE FESTIVAL - STARTS FRIDAY 8th MAY 2026 ✨

Our 24-hour Dance Festival returns for its third year on Friday 8th May!

Featuring a different dance style every single hour, with dancers aged 1 to 100, it's 24 hours of unstoppable joy.

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

We're in a bigger venue this year, Bradbury Hall in Henleaze, Bristol.

👉 See the line up here:

<https://www.canva.com/design/DAHHqbE2XQw/kSGVHOREV5SDUk4RIhuvEg/edit>

👉 Sign up to attend (it's all free!)

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx>

We'd especially love people to come along on Friday evening starting with Irish Dancing at 4pm, Trinidad Carnival at 5pm, Bollywood dancing at 6pm and American cheerleading at 7pm.

We'd also massively appreciate support on the Saturday morning as we come to the end - 6am Italian theatre masks, 7am Bali yoga dance fusion, 8am Australia and our grand global finale at 9am!

🍪 If you like baking - we'd be most grateful for any cakes or sweet treats to help keep the energy high!

Join Our Walk & Talk for Carer Wellbeing

As part of this year's Bristol Walk Festival, we're hosting a gentle Walk & Talk session especially for carers.

The walk also takes place during Mental Health Awareness Week (11–17 May 2026), making it a great opportunity to focus on your wellbeing.

This easy, relaxed walk is open to all carers and offers a chance to spend time outdoors, connect with others who understand the caring role, and enjoy a friendly, supportive space to chat. Afterwards, you're welcome to join us back at the Vassall Centre for a free tea or coffee.

If you'd like some fresh air, company, and time for yourself, we'd love you to join us.

👉 Find out more and sign up: <https://www.carersbsg.org.uk/our-support-services/walk-and-talk>

Taster walk and talk to promote well-being and connection

We are super excited to offer a one-off walk & talk session in collaboration with Bristol Walk Festival!

This group offers carers the chance to enjoy a gentle stroll in the beautiful green spaces of Oldbury Court, Fishponds (BS16). Led by our experienced walk leader, we will come together to feel the benefits from being in nature.

Date and time:

Wednesday 13th May, 11am to 12:30pm

Parking and toilets available. Flat walking route accessible to mobility aids, if required. This group will be supported by a volunteer and all walking abilities are welcome. Unfortunately we are unable to include dependents on this walk.

To find out more or to book, please click the button below:

'Walk & Talk' Taster for Bristol Walk Festival: walk@carersbsg.org.uk

Caring Matters 2026 – A day for your health and wellbeing

As part of Carers Week, we're hosting Caring Matters 2026 — a free event dedicated entirely to your health and wellbeing.

Caring can take a real toll on your physical and emotional health, often over many years. This supportive day is designed to give carers space to pause, reflect and access practical help.

Taking place on Thursday 11 June 2026 at the Greenway Centre in Southmead, the programme includes sessions on seeing your GP, dementia and wellbeing, creative solutions to make caring easier, and supporting your own energy and resilience. There will also be time to speak with local organisations and connect with other carers. A gentle, optional yoga session will close the day.

Travel information

Parking at the Greenway Centre is very limited, but there is ample parking a five-minute walk away. The venue is also on major bus routes - Bus numbers 36 and 2 stop close to the Greenway Centre and Southmead Adventure Playground.




 Book Your Free Place

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/caring-matters-free-carers-week-2026-event-tickets-1986308383846?aff=oddtcreator>

Free first aid training for carers – online session

We're pleased to be joined by the British Red Cross for a free first aid training session as part of our online carers support group.

This session is a great opportunity for carers to build confidence and learn practical first aid skills in a supportive, carer-friendly setting. The training is tailored for carers and focuses on situations you may encounter in everyday caring life.

 Wednesday 7 May
 1:00–2:30pm
 Online

If there are specific first aid topics you'd like the Red Cross trainers to cover, you can let us know in advance and they'll do their best to include them in the session.

The session is free to attend and open to carers joining our online support group.

<https://www.carersbsg.org.uk/our-support-services/carers-support-groups>

Walk & Talk group for Carers with Dependents - Hanham

Series of six walks for carers with dependents to promote well-being and connection in nature

Tuesdays 11am - 12:30pm from 12th May 2026
Series of 6 sessions

Come and join us for walks in the beautiful green spaces in Hanham (BS15) this Spring into Summer. We will have an opportunity to learn more about the local flowers and fauna we spot during the walk and chat with others who maybe in a similar situation.

One of our friendly support workers will lead the walk, offer a listening ear and provide information to support you in your caring role. Walking routes can be planned to meet the needs of group members. Cafe & toilets available at start & end of walk, free parking & access to local bus routes.

Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to meet other people, do some gentle exercise and enjoy being outdoors with your loved one. Unfortunately we are unable to provide care cover or accommodate carers without the person they care for in this group.

To find out more or to book, email - walk@carersbsg.org.uk

SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS:

Admin: southwest@cann-network.org
Chairs: chair.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>