



A U T S C A P E

2025
H a n d b o o k

Evolving Autistic Space

If you need help

Please talk to an Autscope organiser, **not** to the venue staff.

- People wearing **blue** hi-vis vests can be approached for help.
- People wearing **red** hi-vis vests have specific roles and **should not** be approached.
- People wearing **purple** hi-vis vests are **event managers** and can be approached at **any** time.
- **General** help is available in the **Information Area** in Butterley Hall 1 from 09:00 — 20:00, except during meal times.
- Help with **rooms** and **transport** is available at the **Autscope registration desk**.
- There is **always** someone on call at night. Their name and room location will be posted outside the Information Area.
- You can **phone** or **text** us on **07999 822 410**.
- You can **email** us on **info@autscope.org** but please be aware that it **may** take some time for you to receive a response.

Urgent Issues

The **Management team** can be contacted for urgent issues and can be identified by a **purple** hi-vis vest.

The team are:

- Elaine Binhammer
- Kacey Clark
- Martha Haggas

Emergencies

If you see an immediate threat to life, including your own, please ring **999**.

In all other cases, please ring the Autscope phone on **07999 822 410**.

If in doubt, ring the Autscope phone and an **organiser** will attempt to help you understand what course(s) of action may be available to you.

Asking for Help

We will:

- Be identifiable (wear **purple/blue**)
- Be available (e.g. in the Information Area).
- Provide ways to reach us without talking.

You can:

- Hand a note to an organiser or place it in the **action needed** box.
- Ring, text or send an email.
- Take a breather. Rest, relax, and prepare yourself for your next activity.

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Picture courtesy of Chiara Brandstätter

Introduction

Welcome to the Autscope 20th anniversary event!

This booklet contains what you **need** to know about the physical environment, social interaction, and the programme of activities at Autscope. **Even if you've been before**, it is worth a quick read in order to find out about any changes to the event this year.

We try to take autistic people's **needs** and **preferences** into consideration in every aspect of planning and running Autscope, but that doesn't mean it will always be a perfect fit for you.

We **cannot** always accommodate the needs of every autistic person, as one person's needs might clash with another person's. In such cases, we will do our best to work out a **compromise**, but a little goodwill on your part may also be needed.

The inset boxes (such as the one on this page) provide information about how to deal with common challenges.

Autscope is run on a **completely voluntary basis**. We strive to do our best within the limits of our knowledge, energy and resources.

Everything at Autscope is completely optional. You are **not** obliged to attend anything, speak to anyone (unless you are a parent or carer), or participate in any way.

If you are interested in **participating**, there is plenty going on throughout the day – serious, fun, structured and unstructured. You are free to enjoy Autscope in whatever way works for **you**, whether that is by attending presentations, ignoring the Main Programme to have more chances to **socialise**, or spending your entire time enjoying the **Sensory Room**.

Challenges

We will:

- Identify common challenges in boxes like this.
- Explain what we will do to try to make it easier.

You can:

- Try some of the tips to make it easier for yourself.
- Be considerate of other people.

Environment

Rules and Procedures

For the comfort, safety and health of everyone, Autscape has a few rules. All of these have reasons behind them, and organisers will explain them to you if you ask them. The venue also has rules of its own which we need to follow in order to keep the goodwill of venue staff.

House Rules

- **Smoke or vape only in designated areas**, well away from all windows and doors. Smoke can make some people feel ill.
- Please **return all equipment** to the room in which you found it (this includes Autscape's sensory equipment, toys and games).
- **No food or drink in the meeting rooms** (other than water). Even if you are careful and coordinated enough to avoid spilling your drink, someone else may not be!
- **No hot or wet food**. The venue's rules are that only pre-packaged food such as crisps and sweets may be brought on site. This includes takeaway food etc.
- The venue does not allow you to reheat your own food.
- Please **do not** take your meals to your room. If you need to avoid the main dining hall, you **may** take meals to the designated quiet dining area, the Vinery, or outside spaces.
- Please **return your dishes** to the dining rooms when you have finished with them.
- If you **do not** want venue staff to enter your room please leave the Do Not Disturb hanger on the outside of your door. If you leave your bin outside your room in the morning, it will be emptied for you by the venue staff.



Picture courtesy of Carl Fisher

Departure / going off-site

Please let the Autscape registration team know if you are leaving or going off-site by **signing out** at the Autscape registration desk in the reception area (**not** the venue front desk). This is important for fire safety. Please also remember to **sign in** again when you return.

If you are leaving at a time when the registration desk is not manned, please either **leave a message** on the desk or **call / text** the Autscape phone on **07999 822 410**.

Residential participants must vacate their rooms by **09:30** on the last day of Autscape. Your room will **automatically** lock at this time, and your key card will no longer work.

You **do not** have to strip your bed.

If you **don't** have a car you may leave your luggage in the **Luggage Room**, which is near the Main Reception desk.

Please leave the venue **promptly** by **14:00** on the day of your departure.



Picture courtesy of Chiara Brandstätter

Spaces and Facilities

Information Area

The **Information Area** is in Butterley Hall 1.

You can:

- **Find an organiser** from 09:00 – 20:00.
- Get more badge supplies.
- Buy Autscope merchandise, sensory toys or snacks.
- **Sign up** for activities, (e.g. the Entertainment Evening, Lightning Talks and Home Groups).
- Add a **participant-led** activity to the schedule.

Participant Displays

Participant tables and displays are in Butterley Hall 2.

You can:

- **Find information** about various initiatives, projects and research.
- **Buy** and **sell** things.
- **Display** your art or other work.

Display space in the participants' area should be booked in advance. If you have **not** pre-booked a space and would like to, you **may** still be able to do so by asking an organiser in the Information Area.

Finding Your Way

We will:

- Provide you with a map.
- Put up signs to help you find your way.
- Offer to show you to your room and give a tour of the site.

You can:

- Leave plenty of time to get to activities.
- Find essential facilities (e.g. loos, fire escapes, and dining hall).
- Keep your map with you.
- Ask for help or directions, with gestures if necessary.

Social Spaces

You can find out more about socialising at Autscope in the Autistic Community section on pages 12-19 of this handbook. Social spaces include extensive **lounge areas** on the ground floor of the Main House. This area also has a **bar** which will be open each evening. There are **additional seating areas** throughout the venue.

Leisure Facilities

Sensory Room

The Sensory Room is in the venue's Writing Room, which is located off the Garden Lounge. This is set up for participants to **explore** and **enjoy** the sensory equipment at their leisure. The Sensory Room is open throughout the day. It is usually a quiet space.

Please **treat all equipment with respect**. There are instructions for the projectors in the Information Area.

If in doubt, **ask an organiser for help**. Please make sure all equipment is **switched off** before you leave the room.

Games and Toys

- The Orchard Clubhouse will be available for informal **crafting**.
- Games and jigsaws can be found in the Lounge, although they do tend to spread around during the course of the event. You may play games in **any** social area, but please consider what is happening around you and try not to lose the pieces.
- There is a **games room** equipped with a pool table located off the Lounge.
- There are **outdoor games** in the Quad area.

Sports and Fitness

- There are a variety of areas for sports and fitness, both indoors and outdoors.
- A gym for over 18's is located off the reception area, with running, cycling, rowing and a cable weight training machine.
- There is a football pitch near the lakes.
- Other activities are available, please **ask an organiser** for more details.

Outdoor Spaces

- There are 100 acres of gardens and grounds including a **wooded area** and **lakes**.
- There is a **playground** for young children near Orchard Hall.

Sensory Issues

Sensory issues are common among autistic people. Other people's sensitivities **may differ from your own**. Please be considerate if someone tells you something is bothering them, **even if it doesn't make sense to you**.

A Sensory Room which is available and **may** be helpful if you find yourself becoming overwhelmed (see page 8).

Minimising Distress

Smell

- Try to remove **strong odours** (e.g. tobacco, alcohol, coffee) as much as possible.
- Avoid highly scented products such as **perfumes** and **aftershaves** (lightly scented products are fine).

Light

- Other people in the room **may** be **distracted** or **distressed** by toys with lights. Please sit towards the back of the room if you use these.
- **Don't** use a **camera flash** without the consent of everyone in the room.

Touch

- **Ask** before making physical contact with **anyone**, including children.

Sound

- Be **quiet** in **corridors** and **outside bedrooms**.
- Make sure sound doesn't 'leak' from headphones.
- If you would like to **play an instrument**, please do so away from **bedroom windows** and with consideration for other people and the time of day.

Sensory Overload

We will:

- Do our best to keep things orderly and calm.
- Have quiet spaces inside and out.
- Ask people to flap rather than clap, after events.
- Use natural lighting whenever practical.

You can:

- Use equipment to reduce sensory input. No one will think it odd if you wear tinted glasses, earplugs, headphones, etc.
- Take time out as needed. You might go to the Sensory Room (Writing Room), your bedroom, or outdoors.
- Use the quiet dining room or take your food outside.

Catering

If you are a residential participant, **all** of your meals and refreshment breaks are included. Non-residential bookings **only** include **lunch** and **refreshments**. Meals are served 'buffet style' in both dining rooms (with staff serving some items). You will have to queue up and take your meal away on a tray.

Organisers wearing hi-vis vests may jump the queue as they need to eat before performing their duties.

There is no need for everyone to join the queue at the beginning of meal service. You may wish to sit at a table for a few minutes, or get something from the cold buffet before joining the main queue.

Remember to leave enough time to eat before your next activity.

The Dining Halls will stay open for 30 minutes after serving ends.

During break time, cakes will be available in the Garden Lounge.

As a way of reducing crowds, most Home Groups (see page 19) are scheduled during meal times.

If your Home Group starts at 12:30 or 18:00, don't forget to go to the Dining Hall immediately afterwards, or you may not have enough time to get and eat your meal.

Serving Times

Breakfast	08:00 — 09:00
Break	10:30 — 11:00
Lunch	12:30 — 13:30
Break	15:30 — 16:00
Evening meal	18:00 — 19:00

Food Options

The venue will prepare a plain alternative to the main dishes. You may **request plain food** at all mealtimes without worrying that this will cause any inconvenience.

The venue also provides a salad bar and jacket potatoes, and will cater for any dietary needs we have been made aware of in advance.

Hot Drinks

There are tea and coffee making facilities in your room as well as in the Lounge between 08:00 and 20:00.

Quiet Dining Room

One of the two dining rooms will be designated as an area for quiet dining. This does not mean that you are not allowed to talk, but unnecessary or sudden noises should be avoided. If you are eating with a group and likely to be talking loudly or laughing, please use the main dining room.

Initiation Badges

You may sit at any table wearing any badge colour and that should be respected by others. Please bear in mind that badges sometimes flip over, or can fall below the height of the table, so that other people cannot see them.

Special Tables

Special tables are provided to make meal times easier, and are clearly labelled.

Topic Tables

There are tables at each meal time where popular conversation topics (e.g. cats or science fiction) are encouraged.

If you sit at a topic table you are not required to talk only about that subject, but do try to talk about something everyone at the table is happy to talk about.

Green Interaction Tables

If you want to interact, but don't know who to sit with, or none of the topic tables interest you, you may choose to sit at a green interaction table.

Green interaction tables should attract other people who are in the same position as you. Of course, someone will still have to start a conversation!

No Interaction Tables

There will be a few tables with **red** signs on for those who would like to eat without interacting with anyone. You **must not** initiate an interaction with someone on a no interaction table, regardless of their badge colour.

Queuing

We will:

- Arrange events so that everyone can attend meals.
- Provide a quiet dining room.

You can:

- Ask people to give you room or stand back from the person in front of you.
- Wait five or ten minutes before queuing for your meal.
- Be ready to communicate your meal choices when you get to the front of the queue.

Autistic Community

Being Autistic

Autscape is an autistic space, where being autistic is the norm.

Autistic traits such as stimming (repetitive movements), echolalia, distractibility, different ways of communicating, avoidance of eye contact, obsessiveness etc. are all expected and accepted. Not all autistic people show these behaviours. Appearing completely neurotypical (i.e. masking) is also perfectly acceptable.

Accommodation for autistic needs is built into the way Autscape is designed, however a downside of this is that other people may not be able to go to extraordinary lengths to accommodate your individual needs. This is one of the great things about Autscape, but it can

“At Autscape, being autistic is ordinary, not special”

also be one of the more difficult aspects of the conference if you are accustomed to other people making adjustments for you (e.g. if you are especially sensitive to noise, it is **not** reasonable to enter a noisy space and demand that other people be quiet).

While being autistic can have a positive side, it can also mean that certain difficulties are more common. **Social mistakes** can and do happen. Autistic people may forget to look for Initiation Badges, interrupt, talk too much, talk too little or ask too many questions, **without any intention to offend**.

We try to make Autscape a place where autistic people can feel free to be themselves, without fear of being judged or excluded. **Please try to be tolerant.**

If anyone makes you feel **unsafe** or **unwelcome**, do not hesitate to talk to an organiser.

Organisers and Presenters

It is important to remember that almost everyone at Autscape is autistic. Organisers and presenters are as much a part of the community as you, and may have many of the same needs and difficulties you do.

Please remember to extend respect for these guidelines to everyone.

Diversity

Autscape welcomes participants from across the spectrum, as well as sympathetic non-autistic people. We are primarily oriented to autistic people's needs and interests, however much can be learned and enjoyed by an open-minded non-autistic person.

The Whole Spectrum

Autscape is for all types of autistics.

We welcome people with high care needs, little or no speech, and behaviours that neurotypical society often finds strange or problematic.

There are some parts of the event where sitting still and being quiet for long periods are required. If you can't manage this, there are other activities available to you at these times.

If you very much want to go to an activity and **need help to manage**, please **let us know**. Diversity enriches the experience for everyone, and organisers will try to find a way to make Autscape **more accessible** to you.

**“Diversity enriches
the experience for
everyone”**

No matter where on the spectrum you find yourself, there is no need to be afraid that you won't fit in at Autscape.

Different Beliefs

Autscape is an autistic space, but it is **not** an activist space. Some autistic people may have different political or religious beliefs or ideas about autism. While most people who attend Autscape are positive about autism, some find it more negative and may even wish they could have a treatment or a cure for their difficulties. It is important that they find themselves respected and included at Autscape. Disagreement is fine, but please keep it civil, and respect that other people may have **different life experiences from your own**.

It is **not acceptable** to tell someone that they do not belong at Autscape on account of their beliefs, their line of work, or their experience of autism.

Children

Children are an important part of the autistic community and are welcome at Autscape.

Autistic children benefit from being at Autscape because they get to see **adults like themselves** — an uncommon experience in the outside world. We also welcome neurotypical children of autistic parents.

Registration of a child under 16 includes participation in our **childcare programme**. Children aged 12 or older may have some freedom to attend suitable activities at their parents' discretion. Younger children **must** be in childcare or under close supervision of their parents or carers.



Picture courtesy of Chiara Brandstätter

Children remain the responsibility of their parents at all times outside of childcare.

The venue has a playground in the garden, and a games room off the Garden Lounge that children may find of interest.

Gender Identity and Expression

You are likely to notice that there is a wide variety of gender expression at Autscape.

Please respect each individual's choice for how they wish to be identified, and as much as possible refer to them using the pronouns they prefer (e.g. he/him, she/her, they/them). Some people have put pronouns on their badges to help you interact appropriately with them.

Please be tolerant of other people making mistakes with pronouns. Some autistic people have considerable difficulty being flexible in the way they use language or in the rules which they use to classify people.

Some people have problems with memory and may struggle to keep track of a large or unfamiliar group.

Taking Care of Yourself

Expectations

There is no formal or professional support structure in place at Autscope. All participants are considered competent and autonomous.

We believe you should have the freedom to make your own decisions and manage your needs in the way that best suits you. This may mean bringing **someone who can support you**.

It is expected that you will do your best to:

- Follow the rules.
- Respect other people's personal space and property.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Take time to familiarise yourself with your surroundings.
- Take care of your health, stress levels and hygiene.
- Organise your time and manage your activity level.
- Speak up when other people violate your boundaries (i.e. say "No")

**"All participants are
considered competent
and autonomous"**

See the inside of the front cover for details of how to get help.

Routines

We will:

- Structure the days to help with routines such as getting up, eating and taking breaks.
- Ensure meals are cooked for you and served at specific times, so you can get enough nutritious food.

You can:

- Use a medication box with compartments for each day which you can fill ahead of time.
- Put reminders on your phone for meals and activities.
- Leave extra time for dealing with an unfamiliar environment when planning how much time you will need to get ready.
- Arrange with another participant to help each other with small tasks, as long as you recognise that you are still responsible for yourself.

Interacting

While it may be difficult or unpleasant for many autistic people in the outside world, most of our participants enjoy socialising in the **autistic space** that Autscope provides.

You may find someone who already shares interests or experiences with you, or people who would like to discover new interests.

Avoiding Interaction

Many people are quite concerned about the heavy social demands of being in a large group for several days. There is **no** requirement for you to socialise at all, and it is completely acceptable to choose not to interact with other people.

Bedrooms are a haven. You can go to your room whenever you wish.

Never enter someone else's bedroom unless you have been explicitly invited to at that time, and **never** ask for people's room numbers.

Researchers, Journalists and Projects

If you would like to recruit participants, you **must** obtain prior permission from the Autscope Board before advertising or recruiting in any way.

Participants can wear a book symbol (described on page 18) if they are willing to be asked about participating in research or be quoted. This **does not** mean they will agree to do so. You **must not** approach participants who are not displaying this symbol.

Difficult Behaviour

We will:

- Make rules and boundaries as clear as possible.
- Provide Initiation Badges.
- Help or intervene if you have a problem you can't solve.
- Be forgiving when social mistakes happen.

You can:

- Be tolerant when other people make social mistakes.
- Try to be forgiving, but also don't let other people make Autscope unpleasant for you.
- Ask an organiser for help if you can't handle a situation or someone is bothering you.
- Be direct. Autistic people may not get hints or signals. You don't have to be unpleasant, just clear.

Initiation Badges

Autscape has a coloured badge system to help you regulate your social interactions.

It is **very important** that you respect the Initiation Badges chosen by **everyone** at Autscape, including children, presenters and organisers.

It should be remembered that in an autistic space it is quite normal for people to be **clear and direct** about whether they wish to interact.

Red Badges

A **red** badge means that you **do not** want anyone to initiate **any** interaction with you.

Yellow Badges

A **yellow** badge means that you **do not** want anyone to initiate **any** interaction with you, **unless** you have given prior permission for them to do so.

Permission given at previous Autscape events **does not** 'carry over' and should be renewed each year. You can withdraw permission, with immediate effect, at any time.

Green Badges

A **green** badge means that you want to interact but struggle to initiate contact with other people.

Try to wear a **green** badge **only** if you want someone to interact with you **right now** (e.g. if you are sitting in a presentation, you should consider not wearing a **green** badge).

If you feel able to **reach out to another person**, please make an effort to talk to someone wearing a **green** badge.

White / No Badge

A **white** badge (or no badge) means that you are able to manage your own interactions.

When you are able to manage your own interactions, please do not wear a **green** badge.

Blue Badges

When on duty, organisers will wear **blue** badges

Purple Badges

When on duty, managers will wear **purple** badges.

Mistakes

Even if you are wearing a **red** or **yellow** badge people may accidentally interact with you. Please **try to be forgiving** of such mistakes. You may choose to draw attention to your badge in order to **help them** recognise what they have done.

Likewise, you may accidentally interact with someone who is wearing a **red** or **yellow** badge. Please **try not be offended** if they react in a similar manner.

People wearing a **red** or **yellow** badge may be taking some time out from social interactions, so please **try not to take it personally**.

Special symbols

As well as coloured badges, we provide stickers and badges to indicate your personal preferences to other people for three specific interactions:

- **Teddy bear** — You may ask me for a hug.
- **Book** — You may ask me to be quoted or participate in research or interviews.
- **Camera** — You may ask me to be in a photo or video.



Even if a person is wearing a symbol, they may still say “no” and this **must** be respected. If you think you might find it difficult to say “no,” don’t wear a symbol.

If someone asks you for one of these interactions when you are not wearing a symbol, try to **politely** remind them that they are not meant to ask you and that no, you **don’t give consent**.

Social Activities

There is social space throughout the ground floor of the Main House, and various sitting areas throughout the venue. For more details about social spaces, see page 7.

Home Groups

Are you looking for help with **meeting new people**?

Home Groups have been created to enable people to feel comfortable at Autscape and to help them get the best out of their experience, by providing a small group of people that they can get to know better.

This year, Home Groups will meet in break out rooms off the main conference hall, or in the Dove Room.

Most people will have signed up for a Home Group when they booked, but you may still be able to sign up in the Information Area if any places are left.

Home Groups will meet for half an hour each day throughout the course of Autscape.

Joining in

We will:

- Have topic tables at each meal time.
- Provide groups so everyone who wants to can participate.
- Provide everyone with a set of Initiation Badges (see page 17).

You can:

- Choose an area that already has one or more people in it.
- Use your **green** badge — but try to remember to take it off when you are not actively seeking interaction.
- Look for people wearing **green** badges and help them interact.
- Ask people if it is OK to join their group in the dining room or other social spaces.

Tears and Fears

If you are not having a good time, or you're struggling to find people to talk to, then Elaine is hosting this group at 09:00 and 19:30 on both Tuesday and Wednesday for people who are finding themselves in a similar situation.

Participant-led Activities

Some Autscape participants host a variety of activities including discussion groups and games. To find out more see page 30.

Activities are added during Autscape, so check regularly to ensure you don't miss out.

Programme

This section gives an overview of some of the programme items that are available at Autscope.

You can stay up to date on the programme, including participant-led activities and any changes at <https://autscope.org/schedule>.

Main Programme

The Main Programme includes lectures, workshops, and performances that were selected by Autscope from a large number of proposals. These are mostly held between 09:30 and 18:00 each day. The full up to date timetable can be found in the Information Area and online.

There may be more than one thing on at a time so you will have to make some choices about what to attend. Many autistic people find it hard to choose, but you can ask about sessions you didn't attend as a possible conversation starter in social situations.

Choices

We will:

- Try to give as much information as possible in advance so you can consider your options.

You can:

- Consider your options well ahead of time and decide which activities you would like to do. This limits the stress of having too many choices to make when you have a lot of other things to cope with.

Guidelines

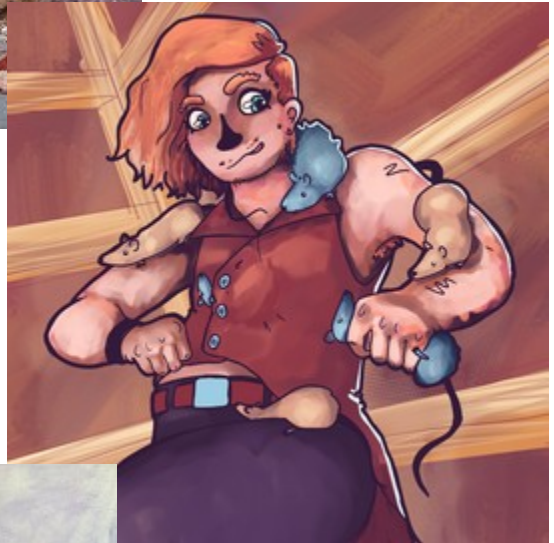
- Please **try to be quiet** during presentations. If you find it hard to control yourself, please step outside the room for a moment and come back when you're ready.
- It is **always** OK to leave an activity whenever you wish, but please try to do so quietly.
- Please keep questions and comments **brief**.
- Please **try to arrive on time**.
- Presenters who can't cope with interruptions will be asked to wear a **red** badge. If you see a presenter wearing a **red** badge, please **do not** interrupt them. If you do have a question, you can write it down for later.
- During Q&A you may hand a written question to the volunteer with the microphone, who will read it for you.

- “Flap, don’t clap”. Please show your appreciation for presentations and performances **without clapping** (e.g. by flapping or wiggling your fingers).
- An organiser or volunteer may **raise their hand** to call for quiet. When this happens, please stop talking and raise your own hand if you are able to. The mass of raised hands helps silence to spread without anyone having to shout louder than the crowd.



Landscape Collage
by Chiara Brandstätter

Beautiful Rats!
By Rincent Molton



Neurodiversity Pride
by Kabie Brook

Evolution of Autscope

Leneh Buckle Tue 5th 09:30 Main Conference Hall

On the 20th anniversary of the first Autscope, this presentation takes a look at where it all started and key moments in its evolution to the autistic space we enjoy today.

Biography

Leneh was one of the founding members of Autscope in 2004. She wrote a chapter about Autscope for the book "Autistic Community and the Neurodiversity Movement".

She has presented at several Autscopes on various topics, as well as at conferences and other events.

Leneh is a PhD student at the University of Manchester and a mother of 5.



The relationship between double empathy and mentalising

Caroline Hearst Tue 5th 09:30 Derbyshire Hall



This workshop will examine the idea of the double empathy problem and will look at factors affecting communication between different neurotypes.

I believe the differences in the methodology we use to understand others explains some inter-neurotype communication difficulties.

Biography

Caroline is qualified as an art-psychotherapist and has worked as an autism educator specialising in training therapists. She also the founder and a director of AutAngel, a community interest company that supports and is run by and for autistic adults.

Building Autistic Space in and through Trade Unions

Janine Booth Tue 5th 10:00 Main Conference Hall

An illustrated talk covering issues faced by autistic people at work, which will draw on the presenter's extensive experience, and includes accounts from autistic workers and information about workers' rights.

Biography

Janine is the UK's leading neurodiversity organiser and trainer for trade unions. Through Red in the Spectrum, she runs the neurodiversity training programmes for several trade unions.

She is the author of Autism Equality in the Workplace: removing barriers and challenging discrimination (JKP, 2016). For more, see <https://janinebooth.com/>



Multi-Modal communication spaces

Kim Mears Tue 5th 11:00 Main Conference Hall



This talk will discuss the benefits of increased knowledge of different ways of communicating and communication identities, such as part-time AAC user and semi-speaking.

Kim will explore the potential challenges of an exclusionary society that privileges speech and perpetuates stigma, and discuss possible ways to advocate for inclusive, autonomous communication spaces.

Biography

Kim is a late discovered neurodivergent speech and language therapist who is passionate about amplifying lived experience, being an ally and disrupting the status quo.

Kim recently completed a Masters in Education where her dissertation used critical discourse analysis to examine speech therapy practice and attitudes towards the concept of semi-speaking (available at <https://oro.open.ac.uk/102586/>).

A Little Piece of Autistic Space:

An Art Workshop & (Optional) Postcard Swap

Laura Buckland Mason Tue 5th 11:00 Derbyshire Hall

Join Laura in this guided workshop where we will discuss why autistic space is important to us, then create postcards inspired by our thoughts, feelings and experiences of autistic space. Materials are provided.

No art experience is required. All ages welcome.

Biography

Laura has really valued spending time in autistic spaces ever since she first attended Autscope in 2016.

Laura loves exploring new techniques, taking part in communal projects that bring people together, facilitating and attending various art groups and workshops, and exchanging art with people around the world.



Creating space with Qigong

Ruth Yates Tue 5th 14:30 Derbyshire Hall



In this hands-on workshop, Ruth will show you some simple Qigong exercises to connect with yourself and to the ground, ending with some relaxing breathing exercises.

Everyone is welcome, subject to a short medical questionnaire, and you can participate either seated or standing.

Biography

Ruth has practised Tai chi and Qigong since 2012, and has recently completed a course in teaching Tai chi and Qigong for rehabilitation and wellbeing.

Currently studying Shiatsu and hold a certificate in Holistic Acupressure, they are keen to share tools for mindful movement and self-care. Ruth is also a writer.

Inner Autistic Space — Making Room for Feeling

Zuzanna Makowska Wed 6th 09:30 Main Conference Hall



Many autistic individuals struggle with sensing their bodies, states of mind, or emotions.

This lecture will provide insight into why we may have difficulties with feeling, why it may be important and useful, and what we can do to improve it in order to keep ourselves and our families healthy and happier.

Biography

Zuzanna works with autistics and their families, helping them cope with psychological crises and build happier lives. As a trauma-aware mental health specialist and an AuDHD individual, she is deeply committed to improving the well-being and happiness of the autistic community.

Beyond the badges — preventing marginalization in autistic space

Heta Pukki Wed 6th 09:30 Derbyshire Hall

This presentation includes an introduction to experiences of feeling excluded or marginalised in autistic social spaces.

This is followed by a structured activity where participants are guided to create 'manuals' that outline how they could ideally be approached and supported by others to feel fully included and accepted.

Biography

Heta is a late-diagnosed autistic woman with experience in engaging in and building autistic spaces. One of her main interests has been the promotion of autistic voices that do not usually get heard in advocacy, an interest that culminated in drafting and steering a project on this topic.



Lost in Space

Laurentius Rex Wed 6th 11:00 Main Conference Hall



An audio visual presentation of natural spaces where one can escape and refresh, this talk relates to mindfulness, forest bathing and similar concepts, with sounds and pictures of nature, and practical advice how to access them.

Biography

Laurentius is a retired academic whose involvement with autism goes back at least a quarter of a century with local and national advocacy. They have written and contributed to various books and articles as well as served on various advisory groups including the National Autistic Task Force. They enjoy outdoor spaces, camping, hiking, gardening and forestry as a leisure activity.

Building Autistic-First Spaces Through Podcasting

Angela Kingdon Wed 6th 11:00 Derbyshire Hall

In this hands-on workshop, participants will gain practical insights about how podcasts function as autistic-first spaces and have the opportunity to design their own Autistic-first podcast concepts.

Together, we will select one idea, and Angela will work with the creators to produce a pilot episode, bringing an Autistic-first podcast to life beyond Autscape!

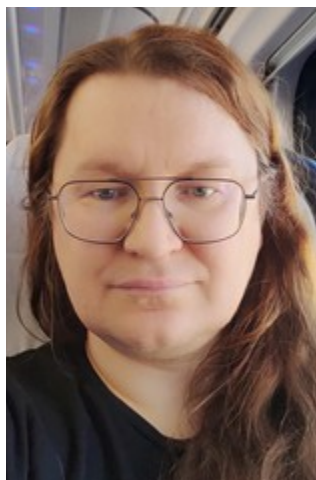
Biography

Dr. Angela Kingdon is an autistic advocate, bestselling author, and the creator and host of award-winning podcast “The Autistic Culture Podcast”. She is the founder of the Neurodivergent Podcaster Collective, supporting autistic creators in building their own media spaces. She also serves on the editorial board of Neurodiversity Journal and studies psychology at the University of Kent.



A World of Senses

Marek Stankiewicz Thu 7th 09:30 Main Conference Hall



This workshop will provide practical, proven strategies to manage sensory challenges. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences and ways of dealing with sensory needs. We will speak about such topic as bright light, noise, and proprioception needs.

Biography

Marek is AuDHD and gender diverse. They are a Special Educator with many years of experience and a Consultant in Transcultural Positive Psychotherapy. For many years they have been working as a support person for AuDHD people and their families, as well as a consultant for specialists and teachers.

How Language and Culture Influence Autistic Spaces in Europe

Silke Rudolph Thu 7th 09:30 Derbyshire Hall

This presentation will explore variations in Autistic communities and spaces across Europe, highlighting the impact of linguistic and cultural differences on the establishment and evolution of Autistic Spaces.

I hope that it will spark a conversation where we can compare and contrast how things are where you live, and perhaps find ways to overcome particular obstacles together.

Biography

Silke is a late-diagnosed autistic. She is a Board Member of the European Council for Autistic People (EUCAP). Her unique experience of living in different countries with distinct and changing political systems has sparked her interest and motivated her to support the development and growth of Autistic Space across Europe.



Leisure Programme

The Leisure Programme consists of **informal activities** which Autscope provides in addition to the Main Programme.

Piano recital

On the first evening Madge Woollard will perform a **piano recital** to welcome people to Autscope.

Sparklies in the Dark

Also on the first evening we enjoy another uniquely Autscope experience, where people enjoy light up and glowing items in a darkened room.

One **free** glow stick is provided **per person**, and there are light up items for sale.

Lightning Talks

Do you have an interest or project you would like to share? Do you like to learn interesting things without having to listen to a long presentation?

If your answer to either of these questions is 'yes', then you may enjoy the Lightning Talks, which are 5 minute slide-free presentations on a wide variety of topics.

If you decide you would like to give a Lightning Talk, we ask that you **sign up in advance** in the Information Area, and please keep it family-friendly.

There will be Lightning Talk sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday.

'Countdown' Game

Elaine's popular Countdown-style game will be on Tuesday evening.

Getting a Break

We will:

- Provide less formal recreational activities.
- Provide games and crafting spaces.
- Provide quiet spaces in public areas.

You can:

- Take time out to relax in whatever way works best for you. Adequate rest and sleep will help you cope.
- Pace yourself – Don't try to do everything.
- Leave activities early if you're feeling stressed.
- Sit at a 'no interaction' table and eat without interruption.
- Wear an Initiation Badge.
- Go to a quiet place such as your bedroom, the Sensory Room, or the grounds.

Disco

On Tuesday evening we have a disco with a local DJ. This is a uniquely Autscape disco where the **music is quieter** than typical. You are welcome to dance, stim, or just sit and enjoy the music.

Circus Skills Workshop

Learn the tricks of the circus trade on Wednesday afternoon, with an interactive circus workshop hosted by Fancy Entertainment.

Begin your journey to become the best clown in the business and have a go with circus equipment. Hone your skills with juggling balls, hula hoops, mini stilts, spinning plates, and more!

This will be a relaxed and friendly event.

No experience is necessary — all are welcome.

Quiz

There is a general knowledge quiz hosted by Elaine on Wednesday evening.

Entertainment Evening

Later on Wednesday evening we have a variety show put on by Autscape participants. If you wish to perform, please **sign up** in the Information Area.

All skill levels are welcome and appreciated.

To ensure the evening runs to time, the number of acts is limited. Performances should be restricted to 4 minutes.

Sign up early to avoid being disappointed!

Activities we would like you to sign up for

In nearly all cases you can decide whether or not to attend activities spontaneously. However, we would like you to sign up in the Information Area if you would like to do any of the following:

- Home Groups
- Lightning Talks
- Entertainment Evening

Participant-led Programme

We always have a variety of participant-led activities, including discussions, presentations, performances, games and workshops. As this programme is subject to change, with new items being added throughout Autscape, it is not included on the printed schedule.

You can find the full live schedule, which includes the participant-led programme, displayed in the Information Area or online at <https://autscape.org/schedule>.

Reporting Incidents

At Autscape there are occasionally things that happen which upset people. If you feel someone's behaviour is **unacceptable**, you can **report it** to a manager, or a member of the **Information Desk** team.

There is an official **Incident Form** which makes it easier for us to monitor any **persistent** or **serious** rule-breaking at Autscape.

The Autscape Board may use these forms to take action against anyone who causes persistent or serious upset to other participants, volunteers, and venue staff.

If your issue is **less serious**, please use the "Action Needed" box in the **Information Area** instead.

Over-18 Talks and Discussions

These talks and discussions are for over-18s **only**.

A sign will be displayed outside the door of these sessions to indicate this.

Autscape cannot guarantee that the content of any events will be suitable for all participants.



Picture courtesy of Carl Fisher

Acknowledgements

The Event Management Team would like to acknowledge the many hours of hard work put in alongside them before, during, and after Autscape by other volunteers.

Special thanks to:

Lyndsay Barwell	Programme
Rudy Binhammer	Registration Assistant
Laura Buckland Mason	Information Desk
Richard Chandler	Finance, Fundraising
James Deane	Catering Liaison
Martijn Dekker	Information Technology
Carl Fisher	Fundraising, Programme
Chen Gershuni	Publicity
Aaron Harrison	Registration, AV Tech
Eddie Holmes	AV Tech
Trish Jubb	Fundraising
Ian Molton	Design & Print, AV Tech, Fundraising, Transport
Rincent Molton	Information Desk
Heta Pukki	Publicity
Joseph Redford	Transport
James Salisbury	Photography

The Autscape Board

The Autscape Board of Directors consists of:

Elaine Binhammer
Richard Chandler
Kacey Clark
Martijn Dekker
Trish Jubb
James Pelham
Heta Pukki
Sam Willacy



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Autscape Needs Your Help!

Autscape is a volunteer run charity, and does not make a profit. All funds are used to pay for the costs of putting on events. Autscape has always been funded predominantly by ticket sales, along with a small amount of grant funding.

Over the last few years, costs have risen dramatically, and the availability of grants has reduced, in part due to the current political and financial climate.

Please consider **donating** to or **fundraising** for Autscape. A **Fundraising Pack** will be available in the Information Area for anyone interested in helping out!

Your help could include encouraging your (or your friends' and family's) place of work to **nominate Autscape** as their chosen charity, having a local bake sale, or even getting **sponsored** to run the London Marathon.

There are so **many ways to contribute!**

You can find out more either in the **Fundraising Pack**, or via the resources linked below.

We are also reaching out to **autism-friendly** businesses with sponsorship opportunities, so if you or someone you know can help us identify potential sponsors, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at fundraising@autscape.org with your ideas.

Your support will help us continue our work and hopefully lower costs and increase the accessibility of Autscape from 2026 onwards!

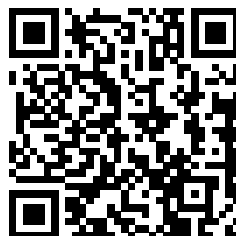
Fundraise



<https://autscape.org/fundraising>



Donate



<https://autscape.org/donations>