



# IA UPDATE



December 2025

## Welcome

Happy new year! Despite the December date on this newsletter, we're excited to officially be in IA's 70th year. In the next few weeks, keep an eye out for further communications about our Information Day on 25 April.

Our December round-up covers events from around the network, volunteering news and more. Don't forget, we love hearing from you too so please get in touch, whether it's to share your story, give us feedback or let us know about your events: [marketing@iasupport.org](mailto:marketing@iasupport.org)

## Member organisation annual reports

If you have already sent in your annual reports, thank you! However, if you have yet to submit yours, we would appreciate their return as soon as possible please.

The requested annual reports are:

- Membership report (affiliate groups only)
- One2One Support
- Data collection
- Annual written report – your opportunity to provide an update of your group's initiatives and achievements from 1 October 2024 – 30 September 2025.



If you require any further information or support, please let us know, otherwise, please email your reports to: [info@iasupport.org](mailto:info@iasupport.org)

## IA commemorative booklet: celebrating 70 years



To mark IA's platinum anniversary, we have created a commemorative A4 booklet which will be delivered with the spring Journal.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the publication, from sending your experiences of life with an ostomy and memories of IA's early years, to the stories of how the charity developed, guided by the wisdom and dedication of generations of volunteers. The content is invaluable in showing how far ostomy life has come since IA was formed in 1956.

*Special thanks to Carolyn Stammers and Anne Demick for proofreading the booklet.*

# IA's 70th anniversary celebrations, 25 April 2026



IA's platinum year has begun, and we're excited to celebrate this 70-year milestone in style at our Information Day on Saturday 25 April 2026 in Warwickshire.

The event will comprise presentations from medical professionals and health and wellbeing specialists, alongside special guest speakers, including TV personality and disability campaigner **Mollie Pearce** and world champion fitness model **Zoey Wright**.

Catch up with friends, take part in workshops, hear about the latest developments in stoma and internal pouch management and care, and meet a host of product exhibitors. After a day of information gathering, we hope you'll stay on to let us entertain you into the evening with live music after a black-tie gala dinner.

We invite you to be part of this memorable occasion and to **book your place at Information Day 2026**.

## Information Day 2026, Chesford Grange Hotel, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2LD

**Date:** IA's AGM (*for company law members and board members only*): Friday 24 April.

Information Day: Saturday 25 April, from 9am to 5pm; where booked, gala dinner from 7pm.

**Booking:** <https://iasupport.org/infoday26>





## IA's UK airport survey still open: your opinion counts

Just a little reminder that IA's airport survey is still open, if you wish to share your personal experiences of UK airports.

For those with a complaint about an airport, this should be taken up with the airport in the first instance, but further action is available through the CAA if you are dissatisfied with the response.

In order to ascertain the extent of the issues ostomates are encountering at UK airports, **please complete IA's survey**.

## Cheer on IA runners at London Landmarks Half Marathon

Fancy a day out in London to cheer on IA's dedicated half-marathon runners?

Sunday 12 April will see an assembly of runners race past the capital's most iconic sights for the popular London Landmarks half marathon. The event offers a demanding challenge coupled with the thrill of racing around the city as part of a prestigious event.

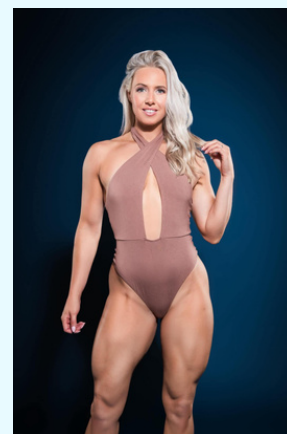


To help our brilliant runners on their way, IA is seeking individuals who would like to cheer them on and congratulate them at the finish line. For more information, please email: [caroline.bramwell@iasupport.org](mailto:caroline.bramwell@iasupport.org)

## World champion fitness model Zoey Wright in women's lifestyle magazine

Information Day 2026's special guest Zoey Wright will be featured in a forthcoming issue of either Take a Break or That's Life magazine, discussing her experiences as an ostomate and fitness champion.

We are thrilled about the publicity for Zoey and other ostomates, but have been asked by the magazine publishers to note their restrictions around sharing the article. The only publicity IA is permitted to do is a social media post of Zoey holding a copy of the article, and we respectfully ask you to please refrain from copying the article and sharing it more widely, to help us keep to the terms and conditions. Thank you for your cooperation.



## Surrey IA welcomes special guest speaker to coffee morning



At their recent autumnal coffee morning, Surrey IA welcomed a very special guest speaker, Shelagh Bickerton (pictured with the group's Andrew Watkin).

Shelagh is Lead Acute Kidney Injury Nurse Specialist at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust and National Chair of Association of Nephrology Nurses.

Shelagh joined the meeting via a video link and gave a very informative presentation on 'Maintaining kidney health in people with ileostomies'.

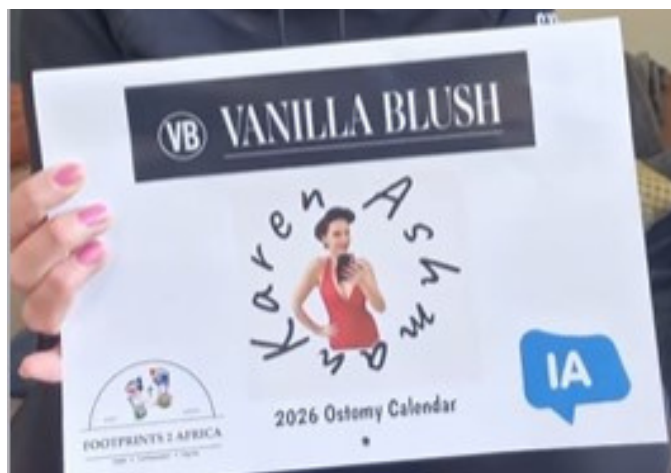
Surrey IA's committee are also continuing to advance their 'Feedback Survey' initiative where surveys were distributed to their members. This is to fully understand members' needs and requirements and to help shape the future of Surrey IA.

## Guernsey ostomate features in charity calendar

In case you're yet to buy a calendar, you may be interested in raising funds for IA through purchasing one with an ostomy theme. The project, supported by stoma underwear company Vanilla Blush, was devised by Dorset-based Karen Ashman, an ambassador for the charity Footprints 2 Africa, and aims to challenge the stigma, promote confidence, and normalise life with a stoma.

Karen, who lives with a colostomy and runs a local stoma support group, described the calendar project as a "dream" and has sold several through a local supermarket and her Facebook page.

Among the calendar stars is Andrea Bewey, from Guernsey, who features as Miss June 2026 alongside 11 other individuals, each of whom lives with an ostomy. When Andrea saw the advert for the calendar shoot, she decided to apply, never expecting to be selected. "It has taken me completely out of my comfort zone," she said. "But if I can help just one person to deal with this condition it will all have been worthwhile."



Andrea, who became critically ill with ulcerative colitis aged 16, underwent a total proctocolectomy, resulting in a permanent ileostomy. Now in her 60s, she said: "Accepting my stoma was very hard at the time, I didn't even know stomas existed. I woke up with a bag, which I named Fred. Today the stoma nurses provide fantastic support, but at that time there was no one in Guernsey who could support me, so I had to go it alone."

All proceeds from the calendar sales will be donated to IA and to surplus ostomy supply charity Footprints 2 Africa. **The calendar is £10 and can be purchased by contacting Karen Ashman directly through her Facebook page.**



### IA Group News from Roy Bustin, Group Relationship Lead

#### Group surveys

The new year can be a good time to check in with members in your area, and surveys are a useful tool in keeping your finger on the pulse of what members want from their group.



We have a survey template available on the group shared resources portal, which can be used and adapted according to your needs. We can work with you to develop a survey, so do get in touch if this is something that you would like to use: [roy.bustin@iasupport.org](mailto:roy.bustin@iasupport.org)

#### Group telephones

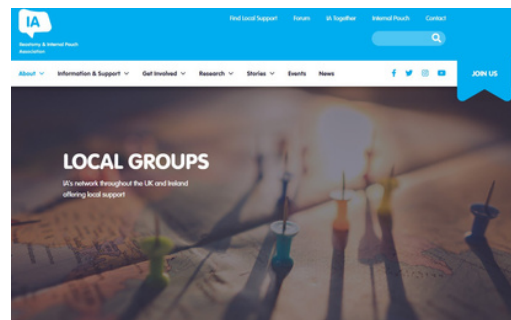
We know just how important it is for members to quickly reach the right person within their local group. With this in mind, we are highlighting some good practice for groups when dealing with these communications. Wherever possible, we want to publish a dedicated telephone number for the group on the IA website and in the Journal directory. To support this, we recommend that groups use a dedicated mobile phone that can be transferred as volunteers join or leave the group. This helps to ensure consistency in the support that we offer and means that personal details of individual volunteers are not shared publicly.

Groups can use their funds to purchase a 'pay as you go' mobile, or a 'SIM only' deal if a spare mobile phone is available. We will be happy to provide further guidance about the use of mobile phones, so please get in touch should you need more information.



## Group webpages

Did you know that all groups have their own dedicated webpage? These are great ways to keep members up to date with the latest news across the group network. You can find details of your local group at <https://iasupport.org/about/local-groups/>. If you are involved with a group and would like some support in developing or updating your webpage, please let us know and we will be happy to help.



## Student Volunteering Week

Student Volunteering Week takes place every February and is a chance to promote volunteering opportunities amongst the student community across the UK. We are keen to hear from any groups that would like to be involved in helping us to reach students in your area. Many colleges and universities will be hosting volunteer fairs, which is an ideal opportunity to promote the work of the group, network with other charities and hopefully recruit some new volunteers along the way. If you would like to be involved, let us know and we can work with you to develop a local plan.

We would also be interested in hearing from any students who currently volunteer with us, to promote the value of volunteering and showcase the impact that students can have on our work.

# Nominations for IA Lifetime Achievement Award

To celebrate our platinum year in 2026, and in recognition of the extraordinary work IA's volunteers have contributed to the charity, we will be awarding a number of Lifetime Achievement Awards at our Information Day on 25 April, and we invite you to nominate those who you consider to be the most deserving of recognition.

Nominations could be due to a culmination of efforts and/or achievements or due to a single act that has had a lasting, positive affect at a local or national level.

This is your opportunity to recommend a fellow volunteer to be honoured for their outstanding contribution to IA. Every entry will be given the utmost consideration, and those selected will be announced during the celebrations at IA's Information Day 2026.

## Nomination deadline

Please send your nominations by:  
**Friday 20 March.**



## How to submit a nomination

Please email [info@iasupport.org](mailto:info@iasupport.org) providing the name of the nominee, the group to which they belong, the reasons for their nomination and the person(s) proposing the nomination.