



Your guide to World Parkinson's Day 2022

Thank you for downloading this guide and choosing to get involved for World Parkinson's Day 2022. Our group of 13 volunteers have chosen 2 activities to help spread awareness and encourage people to talk about Parkinson's on 11 April: Poems for Parkinson's and Light Up Blue for Parkinson's.

This guide contains all the information you need to get involved, but if you have any questions or would like any help, please contact the volunteer group by emailing worldparkinsonsday@parkinsons.org.uk.

An introduction from Paul Jackson-Clark, Director of Fundraising and Engagement at Parkinson's UK

"Not enough people understand what it's like to live with Parkinson's, which is why World Parkinson's Day is so important. It's an opportunity for the Parkinson's community to raise awareness of the condition and to come together to share their experiences and talk about Parkinson's.

"Parkinson's UK is honoured to support the community with their chosen activities this year: Light Up Blue for Parkinson's and Poems for Parkinson's. I've personally been working with the group of volunteers who chose and organised these activities. I'm blown away by how passionate they are and how hard everyone has worked to do what they can to raise awareness of the condition.

"We can't wait to see what our amazing community achieves this year. And, as always, we're here to support and champion everything they do."

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Copying and downloading templates

You are welcome to make changes to any of the templates we've given you in this guide.

When you open a document, you can either click “File > Make a copy” which will give you your own Google version to amend. Or you can click “File > download > Microsoft Word” (or a file type that works for you) and this will download it for you to edit.

Introduction

This year's chosen activities started with Karen McConnell, who has been lighting up Scotland since 2019, and Linda Jones, who discovered poetry could take on a life of its own in the North East during the pandemic.

Karen, Campaigns and Events Volunteer:



"I've been a volunteer with Parkinson's UK in Scotland for almost 4 years following a whirlwind 2018 with my little girl [Abby and her Billy Connolly inspired fundraising](#). In early 2019, I decided to see if I could 'Light Up Scotland for Parkinson's' and by World Parkinson's Day we had a fantastic 90+ buildings shining in blue on the evening of 11 April.

"Light Up has gone from strength to strength and each year I get more excited about the possibilities and this year with the rest of the UK joining it, it's going to be a fantastic event."

Linda, Local Development Volunteer:

"I've been a PWP (person with promise) for 17 years and have a background in teaching, lecturing and management. Early retirement in 2005 gave me an opportunity to be creative for myself, not other people. (You see - the sun shines everywhere!).

"As a volunteer running a cafe, during the pandemic I wanted to find something interesting for our zoom meetings - so we had a go at art and poetry.



"I'm asked what inspired me, and well, you did - and I'm fortunate to meet heroes every day. If the 6 people with Parkinson's in my village (population: 500) put up an exhibition in the windows of our village hall and each villager reads 1 limerick then 494 people may have a little more awareness about Parkinson's. That has to be a

pretty good outcome and we hope that people will be active and participate and feel part of the Team that is this massive message group.”

Light Up Blue for Parkinson's

We are a bright and bold community. Shine a light on Parkinson's this World Parkinson's Day.

Whether it's your front room, village hall or an iconic building, light it up blue for Parkinson's. A simple hue of blue can start a conversation about Parkinson's.

Following on from the success in Scotland, volunteer John Hinson in Kingston upon Hull set upon doing the same thing in his hometown. This is his top tip:

“If you don't ask, you won't get.”

There are 3 ways to get involved:

1. Light up your home

Decorating your windows is a really simple way to make Parkinson's visible in your local community on World Parkinson's Day. Karen McConnell spoke to the lovely folks over at Window Wanderland to get their top tips for creating an eye-catching window display:

- [Visit the Window Wanderland website for inspiration.](#)
- Consider how your window will look from outside. Think back to front!
- Lighting is a key part of the displays, so get a blue light to really highlight your window design in the evening.
- Use black paper to create silhouettes.
- Tissue paper is fabulous for a background block of colour with light shining through. You can layer up different colours to make interesting images.
- Use sellotape to stick your display to your windows, as it won't leave a mark.
- You can use anything you have at home to decorate your window. You could do a display of toys, use fairy lights, do drawings. It's your choice!

- Don't forget to test your display to be sure. When making your shapes and colour, put them against the window and test it at night. You will be amazed at how much it changes when you put a light behind it!

[Download and print out World Parkinson's Day logos here.](#)

2. Ask local businesses to light up

Think of businesses in your area that you could ask to support the initiative - perhaps they have lights they could change to blue. Businesses that have a strong community focus, such as supermarkets, or local, independent businesses such as salons or small boutiques, are good people to ask.

[Use this template to write a letter to the manager or business owner.](#) Take this directly into the store and ask to speak to the person in charge so you can have a conversation with them to back up the ask.

3. Ask iconic buildings and landmarks to light up

Think of buildings you could ask to light up blue. If you're not sure which buildings to ask and involve, take a drive in the evening to see who already lights up. You could also make a list of buildings or structures in your area that will make an impact, such as theatres, city halls, museums, monuments or bridges.



Once you've identified who to approach, have a look on their websites for contact email addresses. [Use this template to send the ask to them.](#) You might find it easier once you have one building on board, so try and amend your email once you have this to encourage others to join in. One of our volunteers, John, says that he thought his local council would be a difficult 'nut to crack', but by writing to the Lord Mayor and the Leader of the Council, he got a great response very quickly. He was even told that all civic buildings and monuments were lit centrally, making the task much easier.

While many buildings and landmarks will happily light up blue for free, others may charge a fee. Some Parkinson's UK local groups have decided to use their budgets to cover this charge, as the awareness it raises and media attention it could generate are worth the cost.

The charity has also made a small discretionary budget available to pay for buildings or monuments which might generate significant public awareness. The decision about which projects are to be supported by this budget will be made by a group of people with Parkinson's, their friends and families. If you want to apply to be considered for your project to be covered by this budget, please email worldparkinsonsday@parkinsons.org.uk.

Tell the local press

Once you have all your responses from businesses and iconic buildings, and you know who is going to light up for you, [you can use this press release template to share what you're doing and why](#). Then, when people see all the buildings lit up blue on 11 April, they'll know to think of people with Parkinson's.



Karen says: "Doing all of this means that on 11 April the Parkinson's community and the general public will see well known landmarks, and their own areas shining in glorious blue as a beacon of recognition, hope and solidarity with the Parkinson's community and this means the world to me, especially as we continue to live through strange and uncertain times. Parkinson's doesn't stop for a pandemic, and neither will we. So join us, join in, dig out those blue lights, utilise your local contacts and let's turn the UK Parkinson's blue this World Parkinson's Day."

Poems for Parkinson's

We all have a Parkinson's story to tell. This project is about giving you a voice. You can write and submit a limerick or poem even if you don't think you're good at it. They don't need to take long, you can do it on your own or with others and you can be direct with your message. We can't all be experts with metaphors and fancy wording! People have full lives and aren't necessarily thinking of people affected by Parkinson's. But we can help them by sharing our words and stories about Parkinson's in a limerick or five-line poem!

And what better way to tell you what to do than using Linda's own limerick:

Put 5 lines together and have your say
For April 11 for World Parkinson's Day
Then make it a rhyme
(it won't take much time)
A global story of Parky today

The team in the North East have put together some really useful [tips and guidance to help you get your poem off the ground](#).

What next?

Send us your poems so that we can share them online, in printed materials and press releases. [You can submit your poems here](#). There's also information about posting them. **The deadline is 3 April for online submissions and 27 March for postal submissions.**

Branding up

Having the right branding on everything we share will help to make sure that people can identify our message across all the different channels and places we share it. [Download the World Parkinson's Day logos, and a guide on how to use the logos, here.](#)

Promoting and sharing the message

World Parkinson's Day is a fantastic opportunity for us to raise awareness of Parkinson's and for you to share your experiences.

We've already talked about how contacting the media can really help boost the profile of Parkinson's. As well as the press release template, [there's more information about working with the local press here.](#)

Social media is another great way of reaching more people. [Our social media guide](#) will help you with making social media posts. Don't forget to use #WorldParkinsonsDay and #LetsTalkAboutParkinsons.

You can use social media to share photos of landmarks taking part in Light Up Blue for Parkinson's. Check if the landmark has its own hashtag that you can use to reach more people.

If you decide to write your own poem, perhaps you'd like to share this on social media too? We know it can be quite personal and you may not wish to have your name connected with it. But if you don't mind this, it can be a great way of sharing your experiences if you're not sure how to tell people about them directly.

Share with us

Whatever you're doing, whether you're lighting up your area blue, sharing your poems or doing something completely different this World Parkinson's Day, let us know so that we can share it with everyone else.

Send the information about your activity to worldparkinsonsday@parkinson.org.uk and if it is an event that people can join either virtually or in person, we can also share details on our [postcode lookup](#) tool on the website so others in your area can find out about it.

If you have questions about anything in this guide, please contact worldparkinsonsday@parkinsons.org.uk.