Board of Trustees – January 2011

The Association’s Board of Trustees met on 22 January 2011 in Kettering. Tribute was paid to former Vice Chair of Trustees, Alan Horwell, who had recently passed away. Board members personally acknowledged his contribution to the Board’s work, to National Office and to the wider Association.

The Board:

- Approved four grants for care centres, as recommended by the Care Development Advisory Panel, for a new centre in Bristol and continued funding for Manchester, the National Hospital in London and Cardiff/South Wales.
- Agreed to support the establishment of a Personal Chair in Motor Neurone Biology at the University of Oxford.
- Agreed to proposals for a one-day AGM. Trustees heard that some members had sought a longer programme but accepted the rationale behind retaining a one-day event.
- Enjoyed a detailed presentation on information, communication and technology development and provision, including the Association’s new online forum.
- Received and discussed a report on the 2010 staff survey.
- Received a report on the International Alliance Board meeting and the International Symposium.
- Discussed a budget which balanced the following priorities:
  - The need to continue to develop the Association’s services and activities for people affected by MND, to ensure the Association remains on course to deliver our vision of a world free of MND, and our mission of undertaking and promoting research, while ensuring highest possible quality of life and death with dignity for people with the disease.
  - The need to ensure we remain above our threshold of keeping cash in reserves equivalent to six-months’ running of the Association.
  - The need to sustain funding for all of our activities despite the recent flattening off of overall income, as a result of a drop in money coming from legacies.
  - The Board then approved a budget with the following main features:
    - An expenditure of £15.5 million, including an 11% increase on national care spend compared to last year’s budget, and a 6% increase in regional care. We are also continuing our investment in cutting-edge research that will help us towards a world free of MND.
    - Four new staff posts, where evidence shows that investing in new staff will result in an increased ability to deliver for people affected by MND.
    - No pay award for staff for 2011/12.
Board of Trustees – April 2011

The Association’s Board of Trustees met on 16 April 2011 in Kettering.

The Board:

- Agreed to work with the Chief Executive to pull together an induction pack and programme for new trustees.
- Heard that Alan Newton had confirmed his intention to stand down and Barbara Howe had agreed to continue as a co-opted trustee. Trustees approved a process to appoint to the two co-opted trustee vacancies.
- Agreed to adopt a revised Investment Policy in order to maximize the return on the Association’s reserves within a strategy of minimal risk.
- Agreed to award research grants to the applications recommended by the Biomedical Research Advisory Panel (BRAP). The trustees were impressed at the high quality of the funded projects and noted the strong relationships with the research centres.
- Agreed that honorary membership be conferred to David Glynne Jones, John Smith and Thomas Warner for a period of three years or the period of their patronage if that is less than three years.
- Was advised of the results of a Health and Social Care Monitoring Survey carried out in December. There had been an impressive response to the survey. Local concern would be addressed through regional strategy groups and national concerns addressed nationally.
- Discussed an Internal Audit Fraud paper and agreed that the branch Toolkit would be revisited to include updated guidance.
- Received the National Care Strategy provisional report and agreed the Board and Association’s executive would draw up an implementation plan to address the recommendations.
The Association’s Board of Trustees met on 15/16 July 2011 in Kettering, where they:

- Supported grant applications for care centres in Nottingham and South Wales, specifically welcoming the South Wales application to expand the current Cardiff centre to cover a huge geographical area including south, west and central Wales.
- Approved the appointment of Dr Martin Turner to the Biomedical Research Advisory Panel.
- Ratified applications for Honorary Membership for Dr C J K Ellis, Patron of East Dorset and New Forest Branch and also for Prof Colin Blakemore, President of the MND Association and our Oxfordshire Branch.
- Re-appointed co-opted trustee Barbara Howe to the Board for a second two-year term.
- Approved the Research Knowledge Strategy after Director of Research, Brian Dickie presented on the need for researchers worldwide to have the capacity to share knowledge and thus avoid duplication of work.
- Approved the Volunteering Strategy with the provisos that there is ongoing trustee engagement and that additional focus be given to the retention of ‘good quality’ volunteers.
- Agreed in principle to adopt the Carers’ Strategy, which is in its early stages, and addresses the recognition for the need for support for carers of people with MND.
- Agreed to support the Information and Knowledge Strategy, to build an infrastructure to create and maintain an efficient and accessible knowledge and understanding to address the needs of people with MND. This is subject to committed trustee engagement and a firmer picture of cost implications.
Board of Trustees – October 2011

The Association’s Board of Trustees met on 21/22 October 2011 in Northampton, where they:

- Were presented with the draft budget for 2012/13 by Alasdair McLeish, Director of Finance. While the Association remains a strong and financially viable organisation, he explained the current year’s deficit was largely owing to a drop in income from major donors and legacies as well as a large overspend in national care. Chair, Mark Todd, said there would be engagement between members, trustees and key directors to draw up a budget that would be acceptable to the Board in January. Chief Executive, Kirstine Knox, pointed out that there had been a five-fold increase in requests for financial support in the past three years and this pressure was likely to increase.
- Were updated on the Picker Institute Study commissioned by the Association, to invite people living with MND to give their views on end-of-life decision making. The research will help the Association develop appropriate services and support for people with MND.
- Agreed to support a £50,000 research project to screen DNA Bank samples. The costs are being underwritten by a major donor.
- Approved four ‘A-rated’ biomedical research grants, recommended for funding by the Biomedical Research Advisory Panel (BRAP).
- Co-opted Sandra Osborne and Michael Ranson on to the Board of Trustees.
- Agreed to invite Chris Broad be invited to become a Patron of the Association.
- Granted applications submitted for branch Presidents and Patrons, and requested the Governance Committee redesign the application form so that more details could be submitted.
- Discussed the very positive comments received about the venue for the 2011 AGM/Annual conference. The same hotel had already been booked for 2012. Jean Waters proposed the programme of the day be changed so the main speaker presents in the morning, with the AGM later in the day.