

# WORCESTERSHIRE BRANCH

## APRIL 2018



WELCOME TO THE MND WORCESTERSHIRE BRANCH NEWSLETTER. WE INTEND PUBLISHING THIS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR WITH FUTURE EVENTS, FUTURE SUPPORT MEETINGS AND FUNDRAISING STORIES. PLEASE CONTACT US AT THE BRANCH IF THERE IS ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HEARING ABOUT IN THE NEWSLETTERS.

### FUNDRAISING

A weekly thrift shop in a Worcestershire village has raised £500 for the Worcester MND Branch over the last year. **Pensax Thrift Shop** (selling unwanted items, crafts, food and clothes) has been trading for 40 years and is still going strong, raising thousands of pounds for local charities in the process. It is open every Wednesday 9am and 11.30am, located at the Village Hall in Pensax, on the B4202 Great Witley to Clows Top road. Anita Sharma-James, Chair of the Worcs. MND gratefully received the cheque from Thrift Shop Committee member Rosemarie Hart, in memory of former member Gill Fradgely, who was a member of the Thrift Shop for 30 years. Her daughter, Alison Phillips coordinated the collection through the MND Association. A huge thank you to Rosemary, Allison and all the ladies at Pensax Thrift shop for their generosity and community spirit.

Hilary Hughes a pwMND and member of a weekly **Alvechurch 'Knit and Natter' group** has asked us to collect a cheque for the Branch from community run café 'The Lounge', on April 11<sup>th</sup> 2018. Cynthia Lawton who has organised the Knit and Natter group for many years, coordinates collections for chosen charities close to those attending, every year. Thanks to Cynthia and Hilary for their amazing fundraising efforts over the years.

**The Vale Golf Club** Former Captain Derek Lambert, and his wife Diana, chose the Worcestershire Branch of MND as their charity for 2017 and organized a whole year of activities, such as carol concerts, raffles and team events, inspired by Golf club and Branch members, Sandy and Barbara Caruthers. They raised the incredible amount of £4300 for the Branch. A cheque was gratefully received at a snow-delayed Vale Golf Club Christmas meal on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018. This money has already been used providing grants for respite, care and equipment for members, and we are very grateful to everyone at the Golf club for supporting us so magnificently.

A special service was held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at the **New Meeting Church, Kidderminster**. Anita attended to receive a cheque for £1000 which is gratefully received and say a few words about MND.

### FUTURE EVENTS

**Naidex** (Europe's most established trade, professional and public event dedicated to the care, rehabilitation and lifestyle of people with a disability or impairment) is being held at the **NEC, Birmingham** on **25-26 April**. The event has **free entry** for the public with free disabled parking. See [www.naidex.co.uk](http://www.naidex.co.uk) for more information and for free tickets.

### 'Racing Day', Blackpole Pub, Worcester – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Branch member, Joy Walker, is planning a fund raising '**Racing Day**' on evening of Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2018, at **The Black Pole Pub, Worcester**. This promises to be a fantastic evening and is been organized by local members, Jo and Sue Walker, and Amanda Robertshaw, in memory of Joy's late husband, John. For tickets (£5 in advance) please contact Amanda or Sue on [Amanda.jb@talktalk.net](mailto:Amanda.jb@talktalk.net) or call on 07882536532



Anita receiving the cheque from The Vale Golf Club, Pershore, Worcester

Member Joy Walker, with Jason Liversidge at the Parliamentary Reception, Oct. 2017.



## Belly Jewels – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Worcestershire-based dance group 'Belly Jewels' has adopted the Worcestershire Branch as their 'nominated charity' this year and are doing a performance. The dance hafla is taking place at Bridley Moor & Batchley Social Club, Bridley Moor Road, Redditch, B97 6HS. Doors will open 6.30pm, dancing starts 7.30pm.

## SUPPORT MEETINGS – COME ALONG FOR TEA, COFFEE AND A CHAT

**Monday 23rd April 2018**

2.30–4.00, Mayfly Café, Cobb House Fisheries, WR6 6YE

**Thursday 19th July 2018**

2.30–4.00, Webbs Garden Centre, West Hagley, DY9 0JB

**Monday 10th September 2018**

2.30–4.00, Mayfly Café, Cobb House Fisheries, WR6 6YE

## ROB'S STORY – TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY

Rob Owen was diagnosed with MND in September 2014 after having symptoms for a year. He was a very active person prior to diagnosis and had 3 young children, then 1, 9 and 11. After diagnosis he began to think proactively about the impacts that MND would have on himself and the family. The local community rehab team did an initial review of the house and suggested a couple of adaptations to avoid trips etc. However, they also advised that Rob's house, due to its age, would be unsuitable for him to live in during the mid to late stages of his illness. He began looking for other suitable houses to move to in the local area, however there were no suitable properties available at that time. In March 2015, a plot of land was put up for sale around the corner from the family's home. Rob, who has experience in construction, made some initial enquiries where he was told that the land was within the west midlands green belt, meaning that it could not be built on unless there were "very special circumstances" (VSC). In July 2015, the family appointed a large professional team with experience of building wheelchair accessible, rural family homes. In early 2016 the family met with the local community, residents, the church and the local parish council to show them the plans. Virtually everyone supported their plans, including the parish council who identified the Owen's need as a specific local need for a local family. The application was submitted in July 2016 with the support of over 100 local people. The family were advised to withdraw their application in September 2016 so it wasn't seen to be refused. Further work was undertaken in October to justify the very special circumstances and the application was resubmitted in November. A planning committee meeting was held in March 2017 and a decision couldn't be made when the case officer put forward his recommendation for refusal. The planning committee visited Rob's house and the site to help them to decide. After much debate the panel voted 6 for and 6 against. The Chair of Wyre Forest Planning had the final decision and voted against. The family then appealed so appointed a town planning consultant who had won many cases before. The appeal process took a further 6 months before it was reviewed in December 2017. Finally, on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 they received the call that the appeal inspector had upheld the appeal and planning consent was granted – after almost 3 years since the process began they had finally won. Work started on site in March 2018 after 3 months of extensive design work. Completion of the fast track wheelchair accessible family home is due in December 2018. Rob's motto has always been not giving up, not giving in and he certainly put his theory into practice to get this done.



**mndconnect**  
**0808 8026262**  
mndconnect@mndassociation.org

**MND connect** is a helpline for people living with MND, their carers and family members and professionals. They provide information and support with all aspects of MND as well as signposting to other helpful organisations. The helpline is available Monday to Friday between 9am to 5pm and 7pm to 10:30pm.

## WHAT HAPPENED AT THE 2018 AGM?

The Worcestershire branch AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March. Over 25 members attended, including Chair Anita Sharma-James, Vice Chair John Weston, Treasurer Lata Taylor, Elizabeth Hill, and Martyn Howell. Tributes were paid to the late Hiliary Rowberry, who had been involved with the Branch for many years as both a volunteer and committee member and to

Graham Rowberry, former Branch Secretary who will be taking a break from his Branch duties to spend time in South Africa with family. The Branch owes an enormous debt of gratitude to both Hiliary and Graham their enormous contribution and inspiration. Anita took over as Chair in 2017, and outlined some key successes of the Branch over the last year, including Wyre Forest District Council voting to adopt the MND charter, attendance at a Parliamentary reception with members Joy Walker and Rob Owen to raise awareness and campaign for changes in how Personal Independence Payments PIP are assessed in MND cases.



Guests enjoy fantastic Indian Cultural evening organised by our Treasurer, Lata Taylor, raising a £1100 for the Branch.



Dick Saunders, President of the Worcestershire Musical Theatre Company, presenting a cheque for £2300, to the Branch at the Swan Theatre - thanks to our Vice Chair John Weston.

Fundraising successes came in the form of parachute jumps (Suzanna Walker; £1300), Indian cultural evening with food at Broadheath (Lata Taylor; £1000), six day run of the Worcestershire Musical Theatre Group musical extravaganza 'Razzle Dazzle' (Hiliary Rowberry and John Weston; £2300), Little Lakes Golf Club, Bewdley (Mr and Mrs Bunce), The Vale Golf Club, Bishampton, Pershore (Captain Derek Lambert and wife Diana inspired by Sandy and Barbara Carruthers; £4311).

The Branch also held a fabulous Christmas meal at Edwards Restaurant, Bromsgrove Golf Club in early December, attended by over 30 members despite the snow.

A Treasurers report was presented by Vice Chair John Weston showing that the Branch's finances are in good order and then Association Visitor Elizabeth Hill talked about the very important work done by AV's supporting pwMND and their carers/families. Elizabeth introduced a new Association Visitor for the Worcestershire region, Nigel Chance who is a very welcomed addition to the volunteer support team.

The meeting was followed by a very interesting presentation by Dr Kirsten Kelly, Research Programmes and Partnerships Manager, about the latest research projects and clinical trials, funded by the MND Association. Members mingled after the meeting over coffee and cakes to end an informative and enjoyable AGM 2018.

Suzanna Walker celebrating after completing a tandem parachute jump raising £1300 for the Branch



### COMING SOON IN THE NEXT EDITION...

New Facebook and Twitter page for the Worcestershire Branch and more use of the already existing website

<https://www.mndassociation.org/getting-support/local-support/branches/west-midlands/worcestershire-branch/> or search 'Worcestershire' in the MNDA website search bar

Exciting news about a sponsored walk in September