Robert Cecil the 1st Earl of Salisbury built Hatfield House in 1611 adjoining the site of the Old Palace of Hatfield. On November 17th 1558 Lady Elizabeth Tudor was sitting beneath an Oak Tree on the Hatfield estate when she received the News that she was Queen of England. Today the house is the home of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury.

The MND association website is: www.mndassociation.org

The National Office New Helpline No: 0808 8026262

Motor Neurone Disease Association Registered Charity No. 294354
Hi everyone,

Welcome to “my” new year! Spring is finally here. I never feel that January 1 is the true start to another cycle – for me it happens when all the signs of New Beginnings happen in nature. My energy surges, the sunlit days last longer and flowers break out of their winter blankets.

Terry Guillemets said, “my favourite weather is bird chirping weather”. I totally agree. And Gustav Mahler felt “spring won’t let me stay in this house any longer! I must get out and breathe the air deeply again”.

Being in nature during the spring is so stimulating and relaxing at the same time. I look forward to every small adventure we take. Just meandering down a local pathway, sitting in the garden watching the birds, bees and blooms or having a coffee and cake in the town square is energizing.

I know we all have struggles to deal with. That won’t change, however it costs us nothing extra to see and absorb the beauty and wonders of life that also surround us. As Henri Matisse said, “there are always flowers for those who want to see them”.

On May 23, we are all looking forward to our special ‘get together’ with Tanya Curry, CEO of the MNDA. Why not join us and celebrate this spring occasion? This interactive event is a great opportunity to meet others in our community, have a friendly chat and make new friends.

I’m definitely going - and I’d love to meet up with you. Tell me some of your favourite quotes. My last one for today is "Don't wait for someone to bring you flowers. Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul." by Luther Burbank.

- Kent -

* Finance Report – January and February 2024 *

The start of another year and already we have received several generous donations. We have received donations from across the County - Stevenage Grange Rotary Club, Amwell Rotary Club, Letchworth Rugby Union Football Club, Stevenage CUI Club, JJK Fitness, Variety Express, Buntingford Community Choir and Belvoir Estate Agents. We have also received In Memoriam donations and other small donations.

Thank You

Stevenage CIU
I have been asked to confirm how donations can be made to the branch. If you are holding a fundraising event, **we would recommend that you set up a Just Giving page**, it is fairly straight forward but please make it clear that you are fundraising for the **Hertfordshire Branch**. For personal donations etc we will happily accept **cash and cheques**, if you prefer to make a direct payment please contact me for bank details (my contact details are on the final page of this Newsletter). We also have **Text to Donate facilities**, although it is rather slow and unfortunately anonymous. **Text MND4NEHERTS to 70085 to donate £5, MND4NEHERTS 10 to 70085 to donate £10 or MND4NEHERTS 15 to 70085 to donate £15**. Over the last 2 months your generosity has meant we have been able to fund Holidays, Massages, Reflexology, Acupuncture, Personal Alarms, Transportation to appointments and meetings and Riser Recliner Chairs. A brilliant start to 2024.  

- Heather -

**Hertfordshire Branch Special Get Together**

Enclosed with this Newsletter you will find your invite to our **Special Get Together in May**. This will be our first Countywide event and we are very fortunate that **Tanya Curry, the Chief Executive of the MND Association** has agreed to join us. This is a great opportunity for us all to meet with her in person, hear her views and ask questions. We are sure this will be a popular event, and therefore it is important that you book your place as soon as possible, as there are a finite number of places. Securing your place will also help us organise both the seating and the catering arrangements.

**There is a response slip on the letter or you can email Lindsey (Branch Secretary) lindsey.lucas@mndassociation.org**

The Get Together is being held at **The Red Lion Pub, 88 Great North Road, Hatfield AL9 5EU from 2pm to 5pm**. This is a new venue, chosen for its good road links and central location in the County. The afternoon will also be an opportunity to meet your **Committee Members** and catch up with other members of our community over light refreshments. If you have any questions for Tanya, it would be helpful if you could submit these to Lindsey in advance of the afternoon to ensure the smooth running of the event. We really hope you will be able to join us.

**Tanya Curry**  
**MNDA Chief Executive**
Mark O’Brien achieves GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title after challenging 11,000 metre swim and raises £25,000 for the MND Association. Mark is supporting the Hertfordshire Branch and the Bedfordshire Group, as well as the Association’s research programme. Should Mark exceed his fundraising target, he will be considering supporting other MND Association Branches or groups and charities.

You can still support Mark’s fundraising by visiting his JustGiving page. Justgiving.com/page/mark-obrien-mndworldrecordswim

Well done to Mark an amazing achievement.

Kent Allen - Chair, Justine Cox - Area Support Coordinator and I were delighted to attend JJK Fitness in Kings Langley on their 3rd fundraiser in memory of one of their past members David Davies who lived with MND and sadly passed away two years ago. This year, the event was a gym challenge involving 16 teams plus a raffle raising £1000 and other donations, with a final total of £6,075.00. The first two fundraisers raised over £20,000 and we are hugely thankful to Joe Kelly, owner of the gym for his long continued and fantastic support.

Hetty
For people facing the challenges of MND, a wide range of support is available. Yet, with many options for therapy and social care, the choices can feel bewildering. How do you begin to make sense of it all?

Conversations with your health and social care team can help you find the right support. The Association booklet Types of care is a good place to begin thinking about the different ways you can find support. This small guide is based on the NICE Guidelines for the management of MND, which gives recommendations to professionals about care and treatment. The information sheets can also help with a range of decisions from therapies and treatments to making benefit claims. You can find a summary of publications and tools to help with choices in the drop-down option for Decision making resources at: www.mndassociation.org/careinfo.

Search for resources by need, using the Care information finder at: www.mndassociation.org/careinfofinder - www.mndassociation.org/publications.
Speech Card - Contact MND Helpline - 0808 8026262
The pocket-sized Speech Card carries a short message to explain that you have difficulty speaking, it now includes the Communication Access Symbol used by organisations and venues with staff members trained to support people with communication difficulties.

The MND Alert Card and MND Alert! Wristband - Contact MND Helpline - 0808 8026262

The MND Alert Card and MND Wristband are designed to provide crucial information to emergency professionals.

When you wear the Wristband, it lets them know that you have MND and may be at risk with Oxygen Therapy. This can be especially important during medical emergencies.

This may be worn at all times in case you need emergency help. The Weblink on the Band guides professionals to more detail. Oxygen support may still be used with MND in certain situations.

Ask you neurologist or respiratory team for advice.
Future Meetings & Events for Your Diary

Branch meeting - Monday March 25th - Face to face meeting
The Three Horseshoes Hooks Cross Watton at Stone - 11am

Branch meeting - Monday April 29th - Face to face meeting
The Three Horseshoes Hooks Cross Watton at Stone - 11am

Branch meeting - Thursday 23rd May -
- MEET TANYA CURRY -
THE NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE
From 2pm - The Red Lion, 88 Great North Road, Hatfield AL9 5EU.

Get Togethers - Box Moor Trust Centre,
London Road, Hemel Hempstead HP1 2RE - For those living with MND their family and carers - on First Wednesday of each month at 2pm -
- 3rd April - 1st May - 5th June - 3rd July - 7th August - 4th September -
2nd October - 6th November - 4th December

For more information contact - Lesley Ralston - leshenhouse@gmail.com

** ** ZOOM's ** **

Daytime Group - Zoom - 3rd Tuesday of every month at 11am to 12.30pm
19th March - 16th April - 21st May - 18th June - 16th July - 20th August -
17th September - 15th October - 19th November - 17th December

For more information contact - Dawn.Pond@mndassociation.org

South East Carers Coffee & Chat - Zoom - Carers only -
On First Tuesday of each month at 11am
2nd April - 7th May - 4th June - 2nd July - 6th August - 3rd September
1st October - 5th November - 3rd December

For more information contact - lisa.burnard@mndassociation.org

Evening Carers Group - Zoom - Carers only -
On Last Wednesday of each month at 6.30pm.
27th March -24th April - 29th May - 26th June - 31st July - 28th August
25th September - 30th October - 7th November

For more information contact - justine.cox@mndassociation.org
Contact Details

~ BRANCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ~ 2024 OFFICERS ~

CHAIRMAN: Kent Allen 51 London Road Hitchin, Herts. SG4 9EW
kent@latimers51.com Tel: 07771876562

TREASURER: Heather Hurley 8 The Dale Letchworth Garden City, Herts. SG6 3SG
heather.hurley@mndassociation.org Tel: 01462 627025

SECRETARY: Lindsey Lucas 4 Woolston Avenue Letchworth Herts. SG6 2ED
lindsey.lucas@mndassociation.org Tel: 07905157764

--- BRANCH CONTACTS ---

Christine Carter North and East Herts Area
christine.carter@mndassociation.org Tel:01462 338450
Hetty Smith South Herts Area
hetty.smith@mndassociation.org Tel:01462 630195

--- REGIONAL FUNDRAISER ---

ROGER WIDDECOMBE
roger.widdecombe@mndassociation.org

--- AREA SUPPORT COORDINATOR (ASC) ---

JUSTINE COX
justine.cox@mndassociation.org
Tel: 01604 800659

MNDA HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH WEBSITE
http://www.mnd.n-herts.freeuk.com

OUR EMAILS
mndaneherts@gmail.com
mndassoc.southherts@gmail.com

* * THE MND HELPLINE – Tel 0808 8026262
mndconnect@mndassociation.org

Our MND Connect Helpline offers advice, practical and Emotional support and directing to other services and agencies.
Monday-Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm

Editors : Derek Dunn & Christine Carter
Newsletter Booklet Coordinated by Alan J Lockett