

Hertfordshire Branch Newsletter

Branch Patron Dr. Viv Lucas

July 2025

Printed by the University of Hertfordshire



Hertfordshire Branch Fourth Annual Walk to d'feet **MND on
Saturday 5th July 2025**

The MND association website is: www.mndassociation.org

The National Office Helpline No: 0808 8026262

Motor Neurone Disease Association Registered Charity No. 294354



***FIGHTING* MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE**



This photo shows my **Rob Burrow MND Rose**. I bought the rose bush when they first became available and have now managed to nurture it through two summers. When someone you know is diagnosed with **MND**, you want to find ways of supporting them, either practically or through raising funds. As well as all the amazing fundraising events people organise for us here in Hertfordshire, I also love these small gestures we can make from our homes, **to Support MNDA and spread the word**.

The **Rosebush** sits by my front door and has been commented on by those that call in. When I purchased the rose plant, I also loved the local connections. **Harkness Roses** who developed **the Rose** are a local Hertfordshire firm and for years worked out of a nursery situated between Letchworth Garden City and Hitchin. **Peter Harkness and his wife** were involved with **Garden House Hospice** which provides support for people with **MND**.

Lindsey

We have continued to receive a steady flow of donation to the branch. We have received further donations of **£310.00 from Grant & Toms Hadrian's Wall Walk**, **£558.20 from Lauren Petchell's London Marathon** and **£1,560.50 from Molly Sykes Brighton Marathon**. We have also received **£1,615.00 from JJK Fitness** and **£492.69 from Herts Baseball Club**. These generous donations have also generated a further **£920.73 in Gift Aid**.

Over the last 2 months we have been able to continue to fund various different grants requests, Stair Lifts, Riser Recliner Chair, Massage and Therapies, Holidays, Specialised Equipment, Taxis, Carer's Grants and Young Peoples Grants.

Heather

Thank You

--- Branch News ---

Hertfordshire Branch Fourth Annual Walk to d'feet MND on Saturday 5th July 2025

The weather was far more kind to us in 2025 after giving us a good drenching in 2024. A total of 31 supporters attended **the Walk at Stanborough Lakes in Welwyn** and had the pleasure of a gentle one-mile stroll around the North Lake. Some familiar faces as well as new ones joined us along with several of our four-legged friends. The local wildlife were out in numbers; Swans, Ducks, Moor Hens, Coots and Geese including a number of Goslings being held in firm control by their mum.

There was a **Raffle** held where, not surprisingly, the prosecco and cake prizes were the first to go and overall the day raised in excess of **£500** for the Branch. Special mention to the family of our **Committee Member, Hetty**, who turned out in numbers to support the walk and as ever many thanks to all those who came along for a coffee, a chat and a walk to support the Hertfordshire Branch.

Grant

Thank You





* Folk At the Tree *



Once Again **Baldock Folk Club** have chosen the **Hertfordshire Branch of the MND Association** as their Charity at their **Annual Folk at the Tree Festival**.

Please come along and join us for an Afternoon of Live Music from Local Musicians
Including Our Own **Viv Lucas**.



**The Event Takes Place on Sunday 24th August from 2 - 7.30pm At
The Orange Tree Pub, Norton Road, Baldock SG7 5AW**



* Fundraising *

Herts Pitches in for MND and Lou Gehrig Day



Herts baseball club pitched in to organise a successful charity fundraiser at Grovehill bringing to the UK an initiative run by Major League Baseball (MLB) to fight Motor Neurone Disease. The club welcomed up to 200 baseball fans and curious locals to the ballpark to enjoy a hotdog while watching competitive league games featuring many of the club's international players, and take part in its charity raffle and family-friendly batting and throwing competitions.

Lou Gehrig Day is held annually across MLB to raise awareness and funding to fight the devastating degenerative condition and honour Lou Gehrig, the legendary New York Yankees star whose career and life it cut short. It's known as '**Lou Gehrig Disease**', or **ALS**, in the **United States**.

MLB kindly backed Herts' efforts by donating official merchandise for its charity raffle, including several New York Yankees, Chicago Cubs, and Los Angeles Angels jerseys. Other prizes were generously donated by UK baseball businesses [Baseball Outlet](#), [Home Plate Cards](#), and [The 108](#), as well as club members and supporters.



This created great excitement and helped to raise over **£1,300**. The funds will be shared between **MNDA's national office** to fund medical research, and the **Hertfordshire branch** which supports locals living with the condition.

Also in attendance was **Lindsey Lucas, Branch Chair at MNDA Hertfordshire**, who delivered the ceremonial first pitch – a pre-game tradition where a guest of honor throws a baseball to officially start the game.

She commented: **“The Hertfordshire Branch** are immensely grateful to **Pete Hogg and Herts Baseball Club** for their efforts in organising their **Lou Gehrig Day event**. Events like this are a very important way of increasing awareness of **MND** and without the funds raised, we would not be able to fund equipment for people living with this challenging disease in Hertfordshire. **MND** is a progressive disease that affects the nerves found in the brain and spinal cord known as motor neurones. It is life-shortening and there is no cure.”

To support Herts Baseball Club's fundraising efforts please visit: <https://givestar.io/gs/lou-gehrig-day-2025-at-herts-baseball-club>

Playing a key role in organising the event - now in its second year at Herts - was **Pete Hogg** from St Albans, who plays for Herts Hawks in the British Baseball Federation AA league: **“The MND Association** is a charity that has been close to my heart for several years and as a lifelong baseball fan, I felt inspired to bring **Lou Gehrig Day** to the UK. I wanted to give back and create an opportunity for everyone to take part and do something fun. **“I'm really grateful to everyone who volunteered their time and effort, and donated prizes, food, and equipment to make it happen,” said Hogg.**

“We had a fantastic mix of attendees, from family and friends of the club, to members of the public curious about baseball, and people specifically there to support the charity, which was amazing to see. . Everybody made the day feel very special and I'm extra thankful too for all the donations that came from people who couldn't make it down to the event.”



Three of the **Hertfordshire Branch Association Visitors** recently attended the **East of England Volunteer Development Day** where we were joined by other **MNDA volunteers from Essex, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Norfolk**. It was good to see some familiar faces from previous years and meet and chat with New Volunteers.

The event was organised by **Charlotte Stanford-Gibbs** (Community Support Manager) and **Alli Anthony** (Service Development Manager). Many thanks to them for a varied and interesting day. The morning session was presented by **Laura Willis** (Children and Young Peoples Service Development Manager). She gave us an overview and updates on the Children and Young Peoples Services offered to people living with **MND** and their families. After lunch we were given a presentation by **Tracey Harmer** (Safeguarding Manager).
Maria, Jane and Nicola

- Impact Poster from presentation -



- MND-SMART -

Trial Announces a New Drug being added and a new site opening 20 June 2025

The **MND-SMART clinical trial**, based at the Euan MacDonald Centre for MND Research at the University of Edinburgh, have announced the addition of a new drug and a new site to the trial. York & Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are the newest centres to join the trial. The opening of these new sites mean that more people with **MND** will have the opportunity to participate in the **MND-SMART** trial. Recruitment at these sites is already underway. The **MND-SMART** team have also announced that a new drug has been added to the trial for testing. The new drug, **Tacrolimus**, is already used to treat some immune system disorders and prevent the body from rejecting organ transplants. Laboratory studies into Tacrolimus in **MND** have suggested that it may be able to stop faulty proteins from forming clumps in cells and reduce inflammation in the central nervous system. **MND-SMART** is the UK's first platform trial, meaning that more than one treatment will be tested at the same time. Find out more on the **MNDA website**.

Future Meetings & Events for Your Diary

Branch Meeting - Monday 28th July - Held at the Three Horseshoes, Hooks Cross, Watton at Stone. SG14 3RY - 11am



NO BRANCH MEETING IN AUGUST.

FOLK AT THE TREE - Sunday 24th August 2 - 7.30pm

Branch Meeting - Monday 29th September - Held at the Three Horseshoes, Hooks Cross, Watton at Stone. SG14 3RY - 11am

Branch Meeting - Monday 27th October - Held at the Three Horseshoes, Hooks Cross, Watton at Stone. SG14 3RY - 11am

For more information contact - Chris Carter - christine.carter@mndassociation.org

Get Togethers - Box Moor Trust Centre, London Road, Hemel Hempstead HP1 2RE

For those living with MND their family and carers - **First Wednesday of each month - 2pm** - 6th August - 3rd September - 1st October - 5th November - 3rd December

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

*** * ZOOM's * ***

Daytime Group - Zoom - 3rd Tuesday of every month - 11am to 12.30pm

- 19th August - 16th September - 21st October - 18th November - 16th December

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

South East Carers Coffee & Chat - Zoom - Carers only - First Tuesday of each month - 11am - 5th August - 2nd September - 7th October - 4th November - 2nd December



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

Evening Carers Group - Zoom - Carers only - Last Wednesday of each month - 6.30pm - 30th July - 27th August - 24th September - 29th October - 26th November

For more information contact - charlotte.stanford-gibbs@mndassociation.org
or abigall.igbokwe@mndassociation.org



Contact Details

~ BRANCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ~ 2025 OFFICERS ~

CHAIR: Lindsey Lucas lindsey.lucas@mndassociation.org Tel: 07905157764

TREASURER: Heather Hurley heather.hurley@mndassociation.org Tel: 07867757268

SECRETARY: - New secretary to be appointed soon -

-- BRANCH CONTACTS --

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-- RELATIONSHIP FUNDRAISER --



ROGER WIDDECOMBE



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--- COMMUNITY SUPPORT COORDINATOR (CSC) ---



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WEBSITE

MNDA Hertfordshire Branch

FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/mndahertfordshire/

2025

*** * THE MND HELPLINE – Tel 0808 8026262** **mndconnect** *** ***
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

