



We can't believe that the Christmas season is creeping up on us. We have a bracing dip in the **NORTH SEA ON DECEMBER 14TH AT 11AM AT BEACH HUT 116, FRINTON ON SEA. WE HOPE MANY OF YOU WILL COME AND SUPPORT US AND ENJOY A GLASS OF MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES.**

Thank you all once again for a bumper year of fundraising and support.

*We wish you all a Merry Christmas
and a peaceful New Year.*



Winter Dip 2025

At Frinton on Sea

December 14th at 11am

Come and swim in the great North Sea
for **Motor Neurone Disease N E Essex**

Meet up at Hut 116, Golf club end



Enjoy a glass of mulled wine for your bravery

LISTEN TO THE BIRDIE

What an interesting night it was, the night I had the opportunity to meet Hamza Yassin, the wildlife photographer and TV personality in Clacton.

OK I will let on!!! No, I did not bump into him while I was having a roll along the seafront on my chair, and there he was photographing a seagull nicking my chips. He was the speaker at Clacton Arts and Literary Society evening, and you know me, any chance to have a photograph taken.

Hamza started by telling us about his early years in Sudan where he lived until he was eight years old. His parents had worked as gynaecologists and when they arrived in England he only knew four words of English. Two of which were please and thank you and the other two, pizza and chips. His knowledge of English came from watching David Attenborough's series The Life of Birds. His photographic memory helped despite his dyslexia. He was educated at Wellingborough School and achieved a degree at Bangor University in Zoology with Conservation and then a Masters in Biological Photography and imaging from the University of Nottingham. He thought wow, I have made it, I can get a job. No!!!

He refers to himself as the black sheep of the family, as all his siblings are in medical/science and he is a wildlife photographer.

When he was twenty-one, he moved to the Scottish Highlands to study the local wildlife and develop his career. Life wasn't easy, he ended up carrying another photographer's equipment on various expeditions, where his incredible knowledge of wildlife and their behaviour was soon noticed.

After a while and getting to know people, he appeared as Ranger Hamza on the children's channel CBeebies show Lets Go for a Walk and wrote a book based on the series. He went on to appear on The One Show and as a guest presenter on Countryfile. In 2021 he joined the BBC series Animal Park and in the same year he presented Scotland: Escape to the Wilderness, featuring four celebrities.

He also told us about the wonder of being a cameraman. Not!!!

Spending time being shaken about on safari in Kenya, including standing on the roof of a Land Rover, spotting for danger while it was being repaired after a breakdown. Couped up for eighteen hours in a home-built hide made of pallets and disguised as shrubbery, just to get the perfect shot. Time in a metal cage to get close shots of

Hippos, only to find in the morning that it had been destroyed overnight by the Bull Hippo. Filming in Canada in temperatures of – 40 C, where your fingers freeze pressing the shutter.

Understandably he did mention winning the glitter ball in 2022 with his professional partner Jowita Przystal (her first time on the series), despite finishing bottom of the leaderboard in the final. He was Wooooooooow how did that happen. Thank you, public, for your vote.

The evening was so interesting and packed with incredible photographs and video, both as it appears on screen plus the funny bits behind the scenes. I could write on for ages.

He stressed at the end how important it is to encourage young people to appreciate the countryside, not just for their own wellbeing, but for wildlife and the future of the countryside.

Interesting fact. Why is Hamza's hair so long? He has not had it cut for 17 years as an act of rebellion against his mother. She used to give him a number two haircut and one day he said that is it no more!

Next time you are out with your phone taking pictures. Take a moment to think of poor Hamza. Forty-five kilos of camera equipment costing more than £200,000 on his back. He is strong guy, plays rugby and participating in the Highland Games.

Hamza you are amazing in what you do educating us all and so down to earth with it. Thank you, what a night.



Eamonn



CHRISTMAS MAGIC

Christmas Time will soon be here

Lots of fun and festive cheer

The house decorated with twinkling lights

A cosy log fire burning so bright

Excited children decorating the tree

Wondering what presents underneath there will be

Baubles and tinsel lights all a glow

It would make it more festive if we could have snow

When everything's done a time to relax

With a glass of mulled wine, sausage rolls and some snacks

It's time for the children to go up to bed

So much excitement going round in their head

They desperately wait for morning to come when presents are opened
and they will all have some fun

Then later the family will sit down to a roast and all raise a glass in a
Merry Christmas Toast

By

Joan Webster





14th December 2025 Sunday 11am Dip in the sea



21st January 2026, 10.30am - Hilltop Garden Centre,
Weeley, CO16 9NN

10th February 2026, 10.30am - Fillpots Nursery at 52
Straight Road, Boxted, CO4 5RB

11th March 2026, 10.30am - The Barn Garden Centre,
Stanway, CO3 8ND





Colne Bank school of dancing



Harwich Secret Gardens



"BLOOD SWEAT AND FEARS"

Thank you to all who attended the talk that Mary Newton, forensic scientist (retired) gave at Frinton tennis club on November 27th. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all and we made almost £2000. (£500 on the raffle) A special thank you goes to Gilbert Heathcote who kindly funded all the expenses, so everything we made on the night will go towards helping and supporting those in north east Essex

Sinfield finishes day one of his ultramarathon challenge



Ex-rugby league star Kevin Sinfield said he was "overwhelmed" as hundreds of people cheered for him at the finish of his first of seven ultramarathons in seven days in aid of motor neurone disease (MND) research.

Sinfield, 45, started his run from Bury St Edmunds Rugby Club, Suffolk, at 08:40 GMT and finished at about 15:00 at Portman Road stadium in Ipswich.

He is running in tribute to former Ipswich Town striker Marcus Stewart, who lives with the condition.

"I think everybody in Britain and the world wants people to get better, get healthier," he said.

"MND is something close to my heart with Marcus Stewart.

"It's great to see so many people from Ipswich coming out on this cold wintry day."

What is the 7 in 7 Challenge?

Sinfield was inspired by, and continues to run in memory of, his former Leeds teammate, Rob Burrow, who was diagnosed in 2019 and died, aged 41, in June 2024.

He is pounding the streets on seven routes in the UK and Ireland over seven days, from Monday 1 to Sunday 7 December, to raise money and awareness for those impacted by MND.

The challenge, known as 7 in 7: Together, will see Sinfield running an ultramarathon of at least 45km (27.9 miles) each day, in bursts of 7km (4.3 miles).

Each day is in honour of a local personality who has championed the cause, and, as in previous challenges, includes an extra-mile event when Sinfield joins members of the MND community.



**Colchester were
at Portman Road
to greet him**



James Trott Snowden Challenge



News From Emma

The MND Family coordinator post continues for another year, we are hoping to run a Bereavement group, due to success of the carers group which also continues on the 1st Wednesday of each month with a Guest speaker.



Fundraising Quiz

On Saturday 15th November James Trott held a fundraising quiz at Stanway Community Centre for MND. Anne, Maggie & Linda went but were not expecting the most amazing turnout that they saw. Over 150 people took part & it was obvious how much planning & work James, Dan & their families had put into this event. There was a stall selling beautiful hand made gifts that his niece had made. A cake stall with a selection of home made cakes, Wine & beer and the most amazing raffle. We have been told that our MND group will benefit greatly from the £7000 raised so far. We thank James & all his helpers so much for their hard work and we look forward to the next one!!



Fashion Show

We held our first Fashion Show on Saturday 4th October 2025 at the Constable Hall, East Bergholt. This event was extremely popular & we were sold out a month before the evening. It went extremely well, there was a great atmosphere & the fashion was very popular. The ladies attending on the night were also able to buy when the show had finished & they also enjoyed this part of the evening.

We raised over £2,500 which was a fantastic amount.

We would like to thank David Wilson Homes for sponsoring this event.



**Please support The MND Association, especially
North East Essex**

Cheque

**Payable To : Colchester & North East Essex MND
Group**

Bank Details

MNDA Colchester & North East Essex Group

Sort Code : 30-96-09

Account Number : 02978600

Donations

Text : MND4CNE to 70085 to donate £5

Justgiving



www.justgiving.com/page/mnda2025

Please contact if you need any help

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Email: maggie.cooper@mndassociation.org