mnda
motor neurone disease
association

The magazine of the Southampton & Winchester
Motor Neurone Disease Association Group

Southampton & Winchester Group

December 2025 Issue

All the latest MNDA news from the Local Area

Scoping out the Stars with MND!

see page 7

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If you have any comments or feedback about the magazine and its content, please do not hesitate to get in touch

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KICKING OFF CHRISTMAS

We are so looking forward to our annual Christmas Party at Calmore Community Centre on Saturday 6th December - we hope you will all be able to make it!

The gathering promises to get you in the Christmas spirit - and might see you leaving with a few spirits of your own if our Grand Raffle is anything like the parties of the past!

If you're attending please feel free to bring something along to add to our food or raffle table, as we all pitch in to make this MNDA Christmas Party even bigger and better than last years!

The festivities kick off at 2:00pm so join us in all your finery and don't forget those loose pennies to join in all the games and end the year fundraising even more for local people living with Motor Neurone Disease.

Southampton & Winchester MNDA Group
Christmas Party
Saturday 6th December 2025
2:00pm-4:30pm
Calmore Community Centre
Calmore Drive, Southampton
SO40 2ZU

SUPPORTING MNDA AT CHRISTMAS

There are many ways that you can continue to support the Association and those people living with Motor Neurone Disease in our region, over Christmastime.

Did you know that the MND Association has been named as one of four charities chosen for this year's 'Telegraph Christmas Charity Appeal'?

Between the start of November and the end of January, around 20 stories on the work of the Association will be published in the newspaper and together with creating awareness, we hope that the partnership will raise over £100,000 alone for MNDA.

We also still have Christmas cards, wrapping paper and small gifts available on the MNDA website if you would like money you are already due to spend to go to a good cause instead.

Prices are reasonable and in line with items available in other shops so you'll feel good knowing you're shopping with a conscience.

But supporting doesn't always have to mean contributing financially. Attending local fundraising events, Supporting MNDA's Winter Appeal, volunteering as well as sharing and reposting stories online and with friends and family can also create awareness and bring much needed attention to our fight to find a cure for MNDA.

Together we have the ability to make a difference!

CONTINUING UP TO CHRISTMAS ...

MND doesn't take a break for Christmas so we'll be running our usual events and Support Groups right up to the big day too - with our monthly Coffee Morning taking place on **Monday 15th December**.

We have had a fantastic turn out the last couple of months and would love to end the year on a high with seeing everyone come together again at AFC Totton for the last cuppa and a catch up of the year.

People living with MND, their family, friends and carers are all welcome to attend - along with volunteers, supporters and local professionals who are able to answer any in depth questions our Group may have.

Join us for the last time in 2025 at AFC Totton, Snows Stadium, Salisbury Road, SO40 2RW or for our first meeting in **2026** on **Monday 19th January**.

For more details please see our 'Noticeboard'

NOW ONLINE

Just a little reminder that our Monthly Group Meetings are now online. We welcome everyone to log on and participate with the Group every second Tuesday of the month.

Our next Meeting will be taking place online on Tuesday 13th January from 7:00pm-9:00pm with our guest speaker to be announced shortly.

Please get in touch if you would like to be sent the link!

INCREDIBLE INAUGURAL MEETING

© Otterbourne Village Hall | Facebook

A big hello and welcome to everyone who attended our first Group Meeting at Otterbourne Village Hall! It was wonderful to see some familiar faces and get to know new friends as we branch out in our ‘patch’ and begin a new Group for people closer to that area, to attend.

The Group looks like it will be a great success so please do come along on the fourth Tuesday of every month and join in with the activities.

For more information please contact Pauline Rachman at pauline.rachman@mndassociation.org for more details.

DOG WALK OCTOBER

We know a few local people living with MND and our volunteers took part in the Association's 'Dog Walk October' and we are immensely proud of their achievement and the money they were able to raise on behalf of the charity - and it is fantastic to now hear that over 2,500 supporters from across the country walked and wagged their tails the extra mile to raise over £250,000 all together!

A big well done to everyone who took part and contributed to such a staggering amount!

Are you currently taking part in a challenge or are thinking of taking one up in 2026 (we may have some ideas further on in the magazine!)?

Please get in touch and tell us all about it!

Working with MND Peer Support Group

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Do you continue to work after your MND diagnosis?

This online peer support group enables people living with MND who continue to work to come together to share experiences in a safe and supportive way.
Tom who attends the group says "These meetings provide a safe space where we can share information about how MND affects work (or vice versa); the various challenges faced, solutions and workarounds found.
It's also nice simply to be able to talk with and listen to other people in similar situations to my own. The conversations can be very wide-ranging (today we even talked about trees), the atmosphere is very relaxed and welcoming, and there's no pressure to contribute anything unless you feel like it on the day. More often than not, a genuine mood lifter!! Why not give it a try? "

For more information please contact Jo Cunnah Community Support Coordinator jo.cunnah@mndassociation.org

mndassociation @mndassoc

www.mndassociation.org
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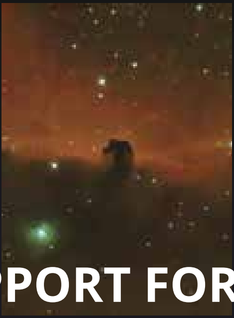

SUPPORT FOR STAR GAZING

We received a lovely note from Jim Davis who was recently awarded a grant from the MNDA to purchase a special ‘smart’ telescope that would enable him to continue his love of star gazing and taking part in the local Astronomy Club.

Jim says, “I was diagnosed with MND in the summer of 2023. One of my hobbies at the time was photography and the night sky.

I also enjoyed playing the keyboard but as my mobility deteriorated - and especially as I lost use of my hands, pursuing these hobbies has become almost impossible.

At the beginning of this year I came across an amazing telescope called the Seestar 50 which enables me to look at and take photos of nebulae, galaxies and clusters deep in space as well as looking at the Moon in amazing detail.

I can almost use the Seestar unaided – I just need a family member or carer to place the Seestar outside for me in the dark and I can do everything else, selecting the location to focus on, taking the images and then processing them using eye gaze on my tablet.

The MND Association supported me with a grant to buy the Seestar and I wanted to share my thanks for that support and also a selection of some of the images I have been able to capture.

Compared to what I was able to do historically just using my phone, the Seestar has revolutionised the images I can take and what I can access and look at in Space.

Despite living with the disabling effects of MND that have taken a number of hobbies away from me, I am delighted I have been able to develop this new interest with the support of the MND Association.

My local Astronomy Club have also been impressed with my pictures - in particular that of Andromeda Galaxy saying they felt it could go in a leading Astronomy publication!”

We are so happy for Jim and can’t wait to hear about and see all the celestial images he will be able to produce in the future! Check out his latest ones here ....

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The MND Association website is full of helpful information and resources that are constantly being updated to reflect progresses in science and feedback given by people living with Motor Neurone Disease.

The latest to be updated is information sheets on 'Benefits and entitlements' (10A), 'About the NICE guideline on MND' (1A) and 'Voice Banking', as well as a new information sheet on 'Saliva Management Pathway' for professionals to use when assessing and managing common saliva issues in MND.

Alongside this, care information can also be found on the 'Care Information Finder' tool on the website or can be ordered through MND Connect.

We hope that you will be able to find everything you need through the main MNDA website but if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact your AV or the Southampton & Winchester Group - we are always here to help you!

JOIN #TeamMND THIS JANUARY

National Office are already planning ahead and have a whole host of fundraising and campaigning ideas to kick off 2026.

Next year they will be inviting supporters to share the reason behind their 'why' and featuring some amazing fundraisers while also celebrating the members of our community whose lives have benefited from the research, care and support that MNDA has been able to provide, because of those who contribute to Association.

MNDA will be encouraging everyone to join #TeamMND by signing up to one of the featured events below;

- **Rob Burrows Leeds Marathon**
- **Royal Parks Half Marathon**
- **North Yorks Ultra Challenge**
- **Jurassic Coast Ultra Challenge**
- **A brand-new Skydive Day!**

Or encouraging people to organise their own fundraiser – whether it's a sports tournament or a quiz night.

If you live in the Southampton & Winchester area, know someone living with MND who does - or you just want to help support the local Group so that we can continue to assist people living with Motor Neurone Disease in our region, please get in touch and let us know if you're able to participate in an event or you want us to advertise one of your own.

We love to share your stories and show just how far the money and the time you dedicate to our cause, goes!

Until then - we wish you all a peaceful end to the year and a hopeful 2026!

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Winchester Support Group

To be held the fourth Tuesday of every month
Between 2pm and 4pm at Otterbourne Village Hall
Our start date is TUESDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2025

Support groups are a great way to meet with others within your local area so please come along with your family and carers to enjoy a friendly chat while enjoying a hot or cold drink and a snack.

Easy to park - easy to find:

The Chamberlayne Suite
Otterbourne Village Hall
Cranbourne Drive
Otterbourne
Winchester SO21 2ES

Contact
Pauline Rachman
pauline.rachman@mndassociation.org

f mndassociation @mndassoc

www.mndassociation.org
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MND Association care information

We produce a wide range of care information to help people with motor neurone disease (MND), their carers and families, including children and young people. Our aim is to help everyone involved achieve the best possible quality of life while meeting the daily challenges of the disease.

Our range includes:

- **guides**
  larger publications, offering comprehensive overviews to help throughout the course of the disease
- **information sheets**
  shorter publications, which focus on specific symptoms or subjects such as welfare benefits
- **leaflets and cards**
  to help with specific needs, including a card to make people aware that a person has MND.

Find our publications online at: **www.mndassociation.org/publications** or contact our MND Connect helpline to order printed copies.

Health & care information you can trust
The Information Standard Certified Member

For support and further information:

MND Connect 0808 802 6262 | **www.mndassociation.org**

NOTICE BOARD

NoticeBoard –
Monthly Meetings - Second Tuesday of every month - 7:00pm-9:00pm - **NOW ONLINE!**

Face-2-Face Spring 2026 -
Oasis Academy Lordshill
Redbridge Lane (off Romsey Road)
Southampton
SO16 8FA

Coffee Mornings – Third Monday of every month.
AFC Totton
Snows Stadium
Salisbury Road
Totton
SO40 2RW

Online - Please get in touch for the link.

Volunteering Roles

Group Contact: Dawn Pond	dawn.pond@mndassociation.org
Southampton Care Centre:	southamptonmndcarecentre@uhs.nhs.uk
Wheelchair Enquiries:	please contact MND Connect

YOUR CONTACTS

Magazine Editor
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Fundraising:
All money raised for MND goes to the Association but only funds specified for the Southampton & Winchester Group will directly support local people in our region. We are so appreciative of any contributions but if you would like to direct your fundraising locally please stipulate the Southampton & Winchester Group on all cheques and JustGiving donations.

Group Websites:
W: https://www.mndassociation.org/support-and-information/local-support/branches/southampton-and-winchester-group
W: justgiving.com/mndasouthampton
Facebook: facebook.com/mndsouthampton
Twitter: @MNDASoton
MND Connect **T:** 0808 802 6262
Registered Charity No. 294354

Scan Me

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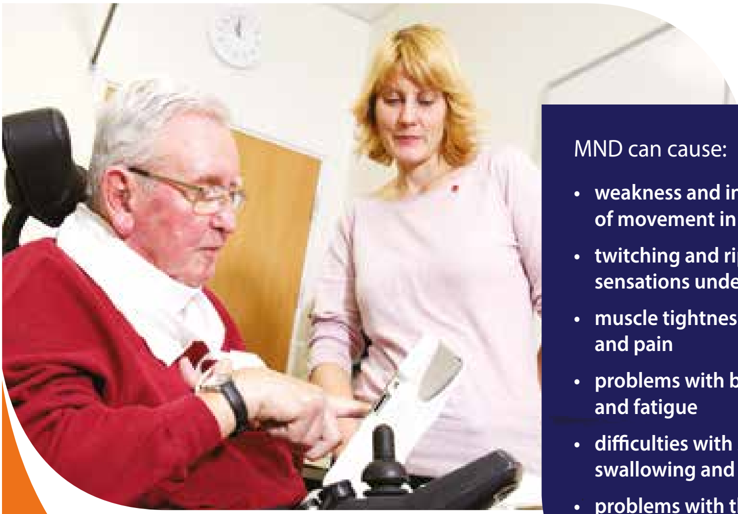
What is motor neurone disease (MND)?

Motor neurone disease (MND) is a progressive, life-shortening condition that affects the motor neurones in the brain and spinal cord.

As motor neurones become damaged, the muscles they control weaken and begin to waste away. This can affect how a person walks, talks, eats, drinks and breathes.

However, not all symptoms necessarily happen to everyone and it is unlikely they will all develop at the same time, or in any specific order.

Although there is currently no cure for MND, symptoms can be managed to help improve quality of life.



MND can cause:

- weakness and increasing loss of movement in limbs
- twitching and rippling sensations under the skin
- muscle tightness, cramping and pain
- problems with breathing and fatigue
- difficulties with speech, swallowing and saliva
- problems with thinking, understanding, learning and emotions.

Registered charity no 294354

For support and further information:

MND Connect 0808 802 6262 | www.mndassociation.org

CP/09/15