



motor neurone disease
association

South Yorkshire Branch

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Newsletter

Winter 2025



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Welcome to the Winter Edition of the South Yorkshire Branch Newsletter

As we approach the end of 2025 it gives the Branch Committee an opportunity to thank all those generous people whose efforts holding fundraising events, large or small and in whatever capacity over the past year have enabled us to meet all the varied requests we have had for support. Despite the current financial situation so many are facing, people have dug deep. Thank you to all of you who have supported us.

Thanks also go to all members of the fund-raising committee, and particularly to Trevor Peacock, his lovely wife Doreen and their family who so generously give of their time to organise as many enjoyable events to help raise much-needed funds. The Branch are here to help in any way we can, so please do speak with your Association Visitor or contact Brian Jackson if you need help.

If you feel you have some time to spare, and would like to volunteer for the Branch, we are always looking for additional help. Please contact volunteering@mndassociation.org

mndassociation.org or speak to any committee member to register your interest.

We are happy to include items of interest from our readers, photos of any fundraising events you do on behalf of the MNDA so do send them to me, along with photos if possible. Please ensure that any photos submitted for inclusion have permission from those in the photograph.

We are pleased to report that Bare Legs Brian finished his 2025 challenge in September after cycling over a thousand miles in total during April, June, July and September and is now giving his legs a well-earned rest. Well done Brian! There will be a full report on his travels in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Finally, a huge thank you once again to everyone who has supported the Branch, to Sutton McGrath Hartley Group for their ongoing funding of this newsletter, including its postage, and of course, the professional

production of the newsletter. Last, but not least, thanks to the Health Care professionals who work tirelessly not just to support people living with MND but in their work towards finding a cure for this disease.

On behalf of the Branch Committee, have a very Merry Christmas and every good wish for 2026.

Christine



Chairman's Report

Dear All

This time of year tends to tempt us to look back over the past months and reflect.

During that time I have been delighted to be a part of the South Yorkshire Branch and to witness the commitment and hard work undertaken by the Committee into raising funds and supporting people living with MND, their carers and extended families. As you will see from the Treasurer's Report, fundraising in 2025 has seen the second-best year of fundraising since the Branch's inception. At the same time, the people we have been able to help has also increased. None of this could have been possible without the support of the MND community in attending our fund-raising events. Thank you to all who have supported us.

Looking forward, I am pleased to announce that the Branch plans to reinstate what were previously known as Open Meetings, now to be known as "The South Yorkshire MNDA Friendship Group". There will be two meetings a year, one in the Spring and one in the Autumn. Our first meeting will be on Thursday 7th May,

from 6 00 pm – 8 00 pm at the Salvation Army Citadel, Psalter Lane, S11 8YN. The meetings are intended to bring together not just people living with MND but anyone with an interest in MND, medical practitioners such as the multi-disciplinary teams, nurses, researchers, stakeholders, Association Visitors and Branch Committee members. The meeting is intended to be an occasion to mix informally with each other. Refreshments will be provided. Dame Professor Pamela Shaw will speak at the first meeting. I hope that if you are able, we will see you there. Watch the Spring newsletter for further information.

Other news to share with you is that we have been joined by some new colleagues.

The MND Association have appointed Sean White as MND Care Centre Co-ordinator. Sean will be looking into ways to help improve the care available for people living with MND.

The Branch now has a new Association Relationship Fundraiser, Stacey Kirkpatrick, who will be working closely with the fund-raising team.

Andy Dixon has joined the Branch as Communications Lead which covers our social media and website administration.

Finally, we have recruited Hannah Elden to help with editing the Branch Newsletter.

A warm welcome to Sean, Stacey, Andy and Hannah – we are looking forward to you joining us.

As I write this report, the Branch are preparing to give a real Yorkshire welcome to Kevin Sinfield who will be undertaking another marathon, pounding

the streets of Sheffield on 4th December. The BBC will be covering the event, and we hope to have our own report in the Spring edition.

Finally, I would like to thank once again all the local volunteers and committee members for their tireless efforts, without which, the branch simply would not function. With all best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and may 2026 bring us all good health and happiness.

Andrew

Treasurer's Report

The 3-month period to 31st October has been very successful, both for income at £27,498, and the amount distributed in supporting our local MND community at £18,125. Indeed, in terms of overall monies raised, 2025 has been the second-best year recorded since the Branch was established. Thank you to everyone who has supported us in any way and helped us, in turn, to continue to meet all requests for grants.

Winter is always a period of lower income, but the support required by those with MND does not diminish. We currently have £21,148 in available funds, which will be sufficient to see us through the next few months, after which our 2026 fundraising season will commence. It has been a very good year so far, but with the demands on our resources ever increasing, our fundraising efforts will need to be maintained, if not increased.

Paul

Introducing our new...

Relationship Fundraiser for South Yorkshire MND branch

My name is Stacey Kirkpatrick and I am the Relationship Fundraiser for the fabulous South Yorkshire Branch and surrounding areas. Whilst relatively new to this role, I am not new to The MND Association; sadly I'm not new to MND and I'm certainly not new to fundraising! Having lost my mum to MND, I decided to give back and support other families and individuals living with and affected by MND and began my journey with the Association as a volunteer fundraiser in 2015.

It is my role to support YOU as much as possible if you would like to fundraise for the South Yorkshire Branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association and ensure that your fundraising is safe, enjoyable and makes an impact on those living with and affected by MND locally.

I have over 10 years' experience in both volunteering and fundraising and whilst I have lots of ideas, I would LOVE to hear yours so please get in touch by e-mailing me at Stacey.kirkpatrick@mndassociation.org or by calling 07484491557. I can support individual events or activities,

companies and organisations looking to make a difference and community groups looking for ways to get involved.

I look forward to supporting you with your fundraising and creating a world free from MND together.



Newsletter editor for South Yorkshire MND

Hi all, my name is Hannah and I'm going to be helping with the newsletter. The MND Association has a special place in my heart as my mum suffered with this illness, and I've always wanted to give back as the charity helped us so much. In 2023 I did a skydive for MND and raised over £1,000!

I enjoy reading, spending time with my friends and travelling (so far India is my favourite country that I've been to!). I'm super excited to help with the newsletter and look forward to sharing inspiring stories and information about MND.



MND Co-ordinator for the Sheffield MND Care Centre

My name is Sean, and I joined the Sheffield MND Care Centre as MND Co-ordinator at the beginning of November. This is a brand-new role in the Care Centre, funded by the MND Association. Sheffield MND Care Centre care for people with MND across our region

predominantly from Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham, Chesterfield, North Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. We are a centre that is world renowned for groundbreaking research and intervention development. I feel lucky to now join the clinical MND team and

am determined to support the delivery of high-quality services that match the centres academic excellence.

A bit of history about me. I have worked for Sheffield Teaching Hospitals for 25 years, mostly as a Home Enteral Feed Dietitian where I have supported many people with MND in their own homes, making decisions about or living with a gastrostomy feeding tube. More recently, I have taken a more academic path, including completing a doctoral fellowship (PhD) that focused on how MND teams support people with MND to make decisions about gastrostomy. I hope to take my academic and clinical experience through to my role as MND Coordinator.

I have spent the first few weeks meeting with local services to understand the care currently available to people with MND and their families who attend our MND centre. A key aspect of the role will be enabling effective communication between services and improving the access people with MND have to timely information and care. I will work with my health professional colleagues to identify opportunities to make improvements that could improve the lives of people with MND and

their experience of the care they receive. I feel strongly that people with MND have a say in how their care is delivered and organised. Therefore, I will be collaborating with people with MND, their families and the MND Association branches or groups to understand the needs of the people our services are there to serve and what their priorities are.

I am really excited to take on this important and challenging role. In time, I hope to meet many of you either at a branch meeting or when attending our clinic. Even if we are unable to meet in person please be reassured that we will be working hard in the background to provide the best possible care and services that you and your families deserve.



Hiking up the Fundraising with a River Derwent Challenge

In 2021 the John Port School, Derby basketball team from the early 1970's reformed and walked (with friends and family) to raise a substantial amount of money for the MND Association. This was because their old team captain, Martin Kelly from Sheffield was diagnosed with MND in 2017. Four years on they decided to dust off the hiking boots and do it again. This time being joined by some more old school friends from the class of 76/77.

From 24th -28th September 2025 they walked the length of the River Derwent, from near its source in the upper Peak District to its end, where it flows into the River Trent, south of Derby. The 5-day hike was a reasonable challenge for their 67-year-old bones and various

dodgy hearts and ageing joints. They self-funded the overnight stays and other costs, to ensure that every pound of the £22,000 donated went to the MNDA.

Four years ago, when Martin, his friends and family completed their charity walk in Sheffield, they raised over £34,000 for MNDA.

£56000 is a pretty good total, however, if you add the walk that Rachel, one of Martin's carers did last year and a quiz at Derby County FC, again arranged by his old school friends, it all adds up to £67000 raised for the MNDA.

That is fantastic fundraising. Thanks to Martin, the class of 76/77 and all friends and contributors.



The First Rob Burrow Professorship

Dr Johnathan Cooper-Knock has been awarded the first Rob Burrow Professorship in Translational Neurobiology, named after the late rugby league legend Rob Burrow CBE. Dr Cooper-Knock is based at Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience (SITraN), and with this award he will be able to advance his search for genes involved in MND, opening up new possibilities for treatment.

Dr Cooper-Knock will be able to commit more time and research into causes and solutions due to

the investment of £1.5m made by the MND Association towards the professorship.

Dr Cooper-Knock is hoping to fill the gaps around MND and the reasons for the disease starting. He said: "We have some promising leads from our work already and I really feel we are on the cusp of something exciting."

Full article: www.mndassociation.org/media/latest-news/appointing-our-first-rob-burrow-professor





MND Coffee Club at Clifford House

First Monday of the Month, 1.30pm
until 3pm

Do you have MND? Are you affected by or care for someone with MND?

Join us at our tea & coffee club, this is a safe space to meet others from the MND community for peer support

Clifford House (part of St Lukes Hospice), Ecclesall Road South,
Sheffield S11 9PX

Free parking & complimentary tea & coffee

Contact Jayne Thompson at
jayne.thompson@mndassociation.org
or call 07811 280893

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Music Music Music!

Oh What A Night!

Huge thanks to Steve Knight and all at Brighton Miners' Welfare Club who recently organised and hosted a brilliant Frankie Valli evening which had everybody on their feet dancing and singing along. The event raised over £1,000 for our branch and will help us continue the vital work we do with those living with and affected by MND in the South Yorkshire area. Everybody enjoyed it despite the awful weather and we are incredibly grateful to those who supported. Special thanks to our volunteers who helped on the evening!

On 5th October another very enjoyable brass band concert was performed by Stannington Brass Band. As always, the repertoire

chosen suited all tastes and was expertly performed by the band members. The band never cease to excel at whatever genre they perform and their range is extensive. Stannington Band are always willing to support the MNDA South Yorkshire Branch and on this occasion £1,300 was raised on the night. Thanks to everyone who took part on the night.

Another brass band concert, this time our very first Christmas Band Concert, was held on 23rd November. This time, music was performed by Woodhouse Prize Band to an almost full capacity audience. You could not help but begin to feel the Christmas spirit inspired by some traditional Christmas Music and especially if you made a visit to





our famous cake stall where mince pies, stollen, Christmas cake, cookies and cupcakes were on sale. There were also several raffles held, including a Christmas Hamper full of goodies, all generously donated. The evening raised £1,900+, the highest amount raised at a musical event. Trevor & Doreen Peacock were surprised with a gift from the band in recognition of their support of the brass band scene over many years.

Massive thanks have to be made to Trevor, Doreen and their family on behalf of the Branch; the family work incredibly hard in organising these brass band concerts, obtaining raffle prizes, advertising the events amongst a myriad of other behind-the-scenes jobs which enable the evenings to go ahead so well.

Thanks to the Niagara Centre, who provide the venue free of

charge, to the manager and staff who pitch in willingly to set up the room, especially for the Christmas Concert which was bedecked in Christmas trees, balloons, and Christmassy décor. Thanks also to Jack Battersby for providing support for the band.

If you have never attended any of these events, particularly even if not a brass band lover, please give it a whirl; you will not be disappointed and will help to raise funds for the charity.



Tapton Hall Quiz 2025



Jill and John Hill ran another very successful quiz on Friday 10th October, when over 110 people came to support us. Tapton Hall provided pie and peas. If you haven't attended this event before, I can thoroughly recommend it, even if you don't think you are good at quizzes. There really is something for everyone. The 2026 event will take place on Friday 9th October, again at Tapton Hall, so

why not put that in your diary? Let me know if you are interested and I'll put you on the contact list.

The event raised over £1,500 for the local branch. Our grateful thanks go to Jill who, yet again, made the night an enjoyable and successful one. We must also thank the numerous shops in Crosspool who generously gave so many raffle prizes.



MND Support Group - Rotherham

First Tuesday of the Month, 10.30am until 12 noon

Do you have MND? Are you affected by or care for someone with MND?

Join us for a cuppa, this is a safe space to meet others from the MND community for peer support

Rotherham Hospice
Broom Road
Rotherham
S60 2SW

Free parking & complimentary tea & coffee
Option to stay for a free lunch, courtesy of Rotherham hospice

Contact Jayne Thompson at jayne.thompson@mndassociation.org or call 07811 280893

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www.mndassociation.org

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36th International MND Symposium

The belief is that the key to defeating MND lies in fostering strong collaboration between leading researchers around the world and sharing new understanding of the disease as rapidly as possible.

Each year, the Symposium, organised by the MND Association, attracts thousands of delegates, representing the energy and dynamism of the global MND research community. It is the largest medical and scientific conference specific to MND/ALS and is the premier event in the MND research calendar.

Last year at Montreal Canada they welcomed 1500 delegates from 48 different countries.

"It's always good to see new ideas and to have your ideas challenged.

It's always good to meet with colleagues. I've identified new potential collaborations, new ways of verifying some of our findings using different cohorts from all around the world. It's absolutely essential we bring the community together somewhere like this to accelerate things forward."

Dr Jonathan Cooper-Knock,
University of Sheffield

The 36th Symposium took place this year in San Diego USA on 5th-7th December.

If you are interested in what is happening in the world of research, you can follow some of the work in this year's symposium as well as watching videos from last year's symposium through the research section on the Association website. <https://symposium.mndassociation.org>



36th international
symposium
on ALS/MND

Support Group Meetings

1. **In Sheffield** – Peer Support Cafe meetings are held on the **first Monday of the month from 1.30 pm – 3.00 pm** at Clifford House, Ecclesall Road South, Sheffield S11 9PX.
2. **In Rotherham** – Peer Support Café meetings are held on the **first Tuesday of the month 10.00 am – 12.00 noon** at Rotherham Hospice, Broom Rd, Rotherham S60 2SW
3. **In Barnsley** – Peer Support Café meetings are held on the **first Friday of the month from 1.30 pm until 3.00 pm** at The Orangery, Barnsley Hospice, Church Street, Barnsley S75 2RL

All people across South Yorkshire who are affected by MND are welcome at any of our support meetings. Please contact Jayne.Thompson@mndassociation.org for further details about Support Group Meetings.



Past Carers' Meeting Dates

Meetings will take place between 10.30 am-12.00 pm on the **first Thursday of alternate months** in the Holiday Inn, West Bawtry Road, Rotherham S60 4NA, (2 mins off M1 Junction 33) on the following dates.

PLEASE NOTE FIRST MEETING OF 2026 is 8th JANUARY 2026

The Motor Neurone Disease Association

www.mndassociation.org

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MNDA Connect Helpline:
0808 802 6262

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MNDA, Francis Crick House, 6 Summerhouse Road, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6BJ

South Yorkshire Branch

Website: www.mndassociation.org/southyorkshire

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Jayne Thompson -
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Regional Relationship Fundraiser:

Stacey Kirkpatrick -
stacey.kirkpatrick@mndassociation.org

Forthcoming events in 2026

Thursday 7th May	First Meeting of Friends of MNDA at Salvation Army Citadel, Psalter Lane, S11 8 Guest Speaker: Dame Professor Pamela Shaw
Sunday 10th May	Simply Swing Band 40's Night Niagara Conference Centre S6 1LU
Family Fun Day	The Branch are hoping to repeat the Fun Day at Gulliver's Valley next year and are still working out the best way to arrange something for the older children. Please see future newsletters for further news.
Friday 9th October	Quiz Night at Tapton Hall

The Branch are busy planning further events for 2026 which will be published at a later date when dates and venues are confirmed.



MND Coffee Club

First Friday of every Month 1:30pm - 3:00pm

Do you have MND? Are you affected by or care for someone with MND?

Come along to our support cafe, this is a safe space to meet others from the MND community

Please contact Julie Ward for more information:
Julie.ward@mndassociation.org

The Orangery
Barnsley Hospice
Church Street
Gawber
Barnsley
S75 2RL



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