South and West Somerset Branch

Newsletter - November 2025

Michael Hope

The Motor Neurone Disease Association is saddened by the death of our trustee, Dr Michael Hope last month at the age of 63.

Michael was diagnosed with motor neurone disease (MND) in 2023 – a disease that also took the life of his uncle. Like many others in the MND community, Michael's journey to diagnosis was long and frustrating which motivated him to become a trustee for the Association. He was elected to the Board last year.

As a trustee, Michael was a highly respected and valued member of the team. Michael's personal experience of MND and his career in the NHS meant his contributions were significant, as he was able to use his knowledge and understanding to maximise our impact and make improvements for others living with MND. Michael was generous with his time, becoming an integral part of our Care Services and Research Committee.

As Michael explained when he became a trustee: "I understand the difficulties for people living with MND and their carers. I've seen courage, bravery and perseverance which inspires me to stand to be of service to represent and speak for people affected by MND."

Michael was also regular attendee and a well-liked member of the South and West Somerset Branch.

Our thoughts are with Michael's family and friends.

Next Open Meeting

Thursday 27th November

2pm-4pm

West Monkton Village Hall
Monkton Heathfield, TA2 8NE

This meeting is run by experienced Volunteers for people suspected or living with Motor Neurone Disease and for anybody affected by MND in South and West Somerset. As usual there will be cake and refreshments for people with MND, carers, family, and friends and an opportunity to meet up with old and new friends. Everyone welcome

For more Information visit;

https://www.mndassociation.org/support-and-information/local-support/branches/south-and-west-somerset-branch

Email - jennifer.golding@mndassociation.org

Harris Boys 777 Challenge

Scan here

7 Miles, over 7 Days in 7 different Counties

Inspired by Kev Sinfields Ultra 777, the Harris Boys will undertake their own 7's challenge. From July 28th - August 3rd the boys will cover 7 miles each day in the following counties in the memory of their Grandfather who lost his battle with MND in 2023;
Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Wiltshire & Somerset

To support the boys visit their JustGiving page via the QR code and keep up with progress on Insta - RichMelHar2024.

mndassociation @mndassoc

www.mndassociation.org
Francis Crick House, 6 Summerhouse Road, Northampton, NN3 6BJ
Registered charity no. 294354 | Created in RightMarket - 22/7/2025 - 07:14:49

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

The Harris Boys 777 Challenge

Following last years amazing Fundraiser touring the countries Cricket grounds in memory of their Grandad. The boys were back this summer with the 777 Challenge.

Taking inspiration from Kevin Sinfield they conquered 7 Miles over 7 Days in 7 Counties supported by Mum Mel and Dad Rich during the school holidays and once again have raised an incredible amount of money for MND

Thank you boys for your amazing support it is very much appreciated and your Granda would be incredibly proud of you

Charity Number : 294354

News & Events

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mnda
motor neurone disease
association

The Great Corfe MND Quiz

Oct 24th

First pictue Judith and quiz master
second picture Judith and Husband Tony

The Corfe quiz will have been running for 10 years next year and I have hosted 19 quizzes so far.

After my sister has been diagnosed with MND, I had little knowledge of the disease , so didn't want anyone else to be unsure as to the horrors of the prognosis.

How else to do it than to bring as many people together for this cause.

The first event I hosted in 2016, was a dinner dance with an auction. These events were very popular at the time, and generate a significant amount of funds for the charity. Local business are always very generous with their auction prizes and the success of this first event and the amount I made for the charity spurred me on to continue raising the understanding.

I held a quiz in my village hall which has turned out to be a lasting evening of great fun. The quizmaster makes the quiz a success; he gives of his time for the charity and the locals love it. They always look forward to the next!

Nick provides an eclectic variety of general knowledge themes in a variety of styles including; picture quiz, word quiz , music, history and literature. A nod to Only Connect on one hand and Mastermind on the other !!

As a retired teacher, he has a lovely way of keeping the excited, competitive teams in order! Great fun and 'mild' competition between the regular teams provide a good night out. And there are prizes for both the winning team and the losing team. Folk arrive with their own refreshments and a pencil and much enthusiasm.

To date I have run 19 quizzes and look forward to the 20th in the autumn.

I am hugely grateful to my wonderful quizmaster and to the villagers of Corfe, who never failed to support me and this wonderful charity who help all who suffer this ignominious disease.

Coming in 2026……

ZP4 & mnda

Presenting a……

Black Tie Ball

With Champagne Reception

Saturday 14th February

7pm - Midnight

QUANTOCK LAKES
TA5 1HY

On the evening…..

- *2 Course Meal*
- *Professional Photographer*
- *Auction*
- *Raffle*
- *Casino Tables*

Music by…….

- *The Vixens*
- *Levi & The Bean*

Tables of 10……

- *£60/Person*

Ex England Rugby Union Captain & British & Irish Lion Lewis Moody Diagnosed with MND

https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/rugby-union/articles/cz7rddrrlqno

The 745 Game has been established to raise funds and awareness for Motor Neurone Disease (MND. Each number used reflects the jersey worn by these three inspiring men: Rob Burrow (#7), Ed Slater (#4), and Doddie Weir (#5)

https://www.745game.org/the-game/

Info & Resources

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motor neurone disease association

Motor neurone disease kills a third of people within a year and more than half within two years of diagnosis.

MND is a fatal, rapidly progressing disease that **affects the brain and spinal cord.**

MND attacks the nerves that control movement so muscles no longer work. **It does not usually affect the senses** such as sight, sound, feeling etc.

Over 80% of people with MND will have communication difficulties, including for some, **a complete loss of voice.**

MND can leave people locked in a failing body, **unable to move, talk and eventually breathe.**

Around **50%** of people with MND experience some form of cognitive change while living with the disease. This can affect their thinking or behaviour.

The percentage rises to around **80%** for people who are in the advanced stages of the disease.

MND affects **people from all backgrounds.**

A person's lifetime risk of developing MND is up to 1 in 300. That's one person in an average size cinema screen.

It affects more than **5,000 adults** in the UK at any one time.

x6 every day

Six people are diagnosed every day. More than 5,000 people are fighting MND at various stages of the disease. **Six people die each and every day.**

MND - there is no cure.

The MND Association focuses on improving access to care, research and campaigning for those people living with or affected by MND in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

For further information or support please contact our helpline:

mndconnect
0808 802 6262
mndconnect@mndassociation.org

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6 Summerhouse Road, Moulton Park
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www.mndassociation.org

Registered Charity no. 294354

MND Matters - Podcast

https://www.mndassociation.org/

https://www.facebook.com/groups/SWSMNDA/

https://www.instagram.com/mndassoc/

https://x.com/mndassoc