

# Mid Kent Matters



Summer

2026

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Support Group Meetings

**Heart of Kent Hospice** : 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays in each month  
5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> June; 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July; 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> August; 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> September;  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> October; 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> November; 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> December

**Wisdom Hospice** : Every other Wednesday of each month  
10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> June; 8 & 22 July; 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> August;  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> September; 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> October; 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> November;  
9<sup>th</sup> & (23<sup>rd</sup> December - to be confirmed)

### Carers Meetings

1<sup>st</sup> Monday of alternate months  
2<sup>nd</sup> June; 10<sup>th</sup> August; 5<sup>th</sup> October; 7<sup>th</sup> December  
Contact Sue Copping [s.copping@sky.com](mailto:s.copping@sky.com) for full details and to be included on mailing list.

## FUTURE BRANCH and LOCAL EVENTS

**Woodland Ball, Sutton Valence, 5<sup>th</sup> Sept.** Details from 01622 820719

**Annual Walk to D'Feet, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 10am**

Contact and details from Jen Sanders 07726122268

**Picnic at Leeds Castle, 20<sup>th</sup> June** Details from Annette 01622 820719

**Medway Cruise, 26<sup>th</sup> June,** Details from Annette 01622 820719

**Plant Sale, Borstal Church, 20<sup>th</sup> June** Details from Jean 01634 404378

**Christmas Bazaar: 28<sup>th</sup> November, Princes Hall, Rochester**



## CHAIR'S REPORT



I know I am getting old as the time just seems to fly by – but when I look back, I cannot believe so much has happened, and, that between us all that we have achieved so much. The many articles in this edition of MKM will demonstrate just how much has been going on.

We are always looking to find new or better ways to support everyone and if you have any ideas for things that would help or make a difference to you **please** do let one of us know.

I am sorry that we are still not able to confirm when a new MND co-ordinator for Maidstone will be appointed but I do know there is a lot of work going on behind the scenes to secure this post. You can be assured that this matter is raised regularly as an urgent need by the Branch Committee!

However, I do have some very good news to share with you. A very good friend of the branch left a substantial legacy to Mid Kent to ensure that people and families affected by MND had the support they needed. This will enable us to fully fund all grant requests from Mid Kent residents - so please do let one of the Association Visitors or any one of the Committee know if there is something we can do that will make a difference to you – and if we can we most definitely will!

As always please do not spend any money or purchase anything before checking with one of us to see whether we can help you to obtain it in a different

way. I look forward to seeing you at one of the events later in the year.

**Leeds Castle - Picnic in the Park – Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June – meet at reception between 10.30 and 11.00**

Leeds Castle have very generously invited us back again this year to have a picnic in their grounds. We are given free entry, which includes access to the castle or gardens for the whole day. If you have never visited the castle, I can promise you that you will have a wonderful day out.

This event has proved to be a very happy and sociable occasion, we meet up on the bank, close to where the little train stops, to enjoy a picnic together. (Sorry you have to bring your own picnic and a chair might be useful too!). There are usually some extra goodies courtesy of Bob and Nick but I would hate to presume ha ha!

This is a particularly lovely day for families as there is a lot of space to play and so much to explore. The whole day is yours to do as you please, you can stay for as little or as long as you like – there is so much to explore in both the gardens and the castle. If you want to come along but not join in the picnic that is fine too. We want everyone to feel free to do whatever will make their day special.

You don't need to book a place, but it is helpful to know who is intending to attend so that we can make sure we have enough free passes available and can meet you by the main entrance, between 10.30 and 11.00. I hope you can join us and make this day really special!

Email me if you plan to attend  
[Annette.scott@mndassociation.org](mailto:Annette.scott@mndassociation.org)

*(If we printed MKM in colour, you'd know that the seat of "The Chair" which is from the Wisdom's refurbishment is*

*in bright orange – as if made for an MND Chair person.)*

## TREASURERS REPORT



Welcome to the first report of our finances for 2026. We would like to thank everyone for all they do to help raise much needed funds for MND. Mid Kent, the challenges people set themselves are amazing. In January Gary and Christine Ludwin took on the ultimate challenge to run consecutive races, 5k, 10k, Half marathon then the full marathon in the Run Disney Dopey Challenge 2026, at Walt Disney World, Florida! They raised over £2000! And what a fabulous quiz we had in April, hosted again by Shaun Wallace, the Dark Destroyer and would like to say a thank you to everyone who supported the event and helped raise over £1800! We have received some generous donations already in 2026 and our branch and friends' fundraising events have all been well supported and have helped us to raise over £11800 and awareness of MND too! Thank you to the committee members for their hard work and to everyone who helps organise, run and support fundraising events for Mid Kent. Maidstone Borough council have given us £1800 in grants, which we have used to help people with increases in the cost of living. The Durobrivae Lodge & The Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons have been doing some amazing fundraising for us and have raised £5720 and the remainder of the Tesco Stronger Starts funds was awarded £375. In total our income, so far, this year is £15638!

Our thanks go to:- Waller Associates, Gary and Christine Ludwin, Leybourne Cubs, Rotary Club Maidstone, General

Gordon Masonic Lodge, Medway Caledonians, The Cavendish Café, The Durobrivae Lodge & The Cornwallis East Kent Freemasons, Leybourne Convenience Store, Maidstone BC, Medway Lottery, Kings Hill Rotary Club and Tesco Stronger Starts. We also thank the fabulous committee members for the Quiz night, 100+ Club, Book sales and Quiz sheets and of course to everyone for your support and general donations. Special thanks to those who donate regularly via standing order and thanks also go to everyone who uses Easyfundraising and who gift aid their donations. (£640 of our income is from gift aid)

Over the last few months, we have spent £28148 to support people affected by MND. Our care costs have included quality of life grants, carers grants (now wellbeing support grants) and therapies for people living with MND and their carers. We have made contributions towards the installations and rental of stairlifts and of Bio Bidets, ramp installations, and covered the costs of deliveries and collections. From the Maidstone Borough Council grant we have supported people with grants to help with some of the increases in household bills. In addition, we continue to cover the costs of the MND support days at both the Heart of Kent Hospice and Wisdom Hospice.

Thank you to everyone who has continued to support us. Please get in touch if you wish to gift aid any donations that are made directly to our account, we receive an extra 25p for every £1 donated via gift aid which really does make a difference to our funds. As always we commit to using every penny raised or donated, to support others diagnosed with MND so no one feels alone. Your donations will help us to continue to provide support to people with MND.

Apology

Lynne

My apologies for a missing 0 in the last issue. The cheque from Ray and

Ashford Market was of course for £5,000 and not for £500.00. Jean

## OLD COINS AND FOREIGN CURRENCY DONATIONS

Over the past few years, we have been collecting old British coins and leftover foreign currency to raise funds for Motor Neurone Disease Association Mid Kent. Thanks to the generosity of supporters donating pre-decimal coins, out-of-circulation British currency, old European currencies such as pesetas and French francs, and spare holiday money from around the world, we have raised more than **£1,100** over the last four years.

### Examples of Coins and Currency We Collect

#### Old British Coins



#### Old European Currencies



#### Foreign coins from around the world



Recently, the Cubs from Leybourne Cub Group completed their World Challenge Badge. As part of the challenge, they collected coins and notes from countries around the world, identified the countries on a world map, and then kindly donated the currency to MNDA Mid Kent.

The exchange value of their donation totalled £168.85, with the possibility of additional funds being raised from some older or more valuable coins due to their age or metal content.

If you have any unwanted foreign currency, old British coins, or out-of-circulation notes tucked away at home, please consider donating them to us. Every coin helps support

our work. Donations can be given to any of our volunteers, who will arrange for them to be passed on for exchange.

Lynne

### **SOME EXTRA WORDS FROM THE CHAIR**

#### **100 CLUB**

The branch runs a 100 club which gives you a chance to win a prize every month. If you want to join us, please see the flier that is included with this edition of MKM.

If you already take part and have a direct debit set up for this you will not need to do anything as you will automatically be allocated your number for next year.

#### **WHEELCHAIRS**

Some helpful advice! If you will be needing a wheelchair in the future please do discuss with your OT or other HSCPs as to when is the right time to apply for an assessment at the Wheelchair clinic. As there is often a wait between applying and issuing a chair an early application is a good idea.

At your assessment you will usually be asked if you want any additional adaptations such as leg raisers or tilting back - whilst you may not need them at the time of assessment, many people find them essential to maintain their comfort later on.

As most adaptations cannot be done retrospectively the time to ask for these extras is at that first assessment.

The MNDA are able to offer support up to £1500 towards the costs of these added features which usually enough to cover the full cost. **We strongly recommend that you do request them.**

#### **2026 BRANCH INFORMATION CARD**

You should find your new Branch Information Card enclosed with the magazine.

#### **GDPR PERMISSION TO SEND YOU MID KENT MATTERS.**

Thank you to those people who sent their permission slips back to Annette. If you have not yet done so can could you please email her to confirm whether you would like to continue to receive the magazine or if you would like to be removed from the mailing list. [Annette.scott@mndassociation.org](mailto:Annette.scott@mndassociation.org) Many thanks

#### **COULD YOU BE A VOLUNTEER VISITOR?**

We are always looking to recruit more people who feel they could join our AV team. These are volunteers who can act as a knowledgeable friend to help signpost and support people affected by MND. The time commitment is flexible to suit your needs. If you would like to discuss this further please contact either Sheila or Annette who will be delighted to hear from you. You will find their contact details in the new branch information Card.

Annette

### **WISDOM AT THE WISDOM HOSPICE**



On 2<sup>nd</sup> April about 30 Health and Social Care staff and branch members attended a seminar by Professor Martin Turner, Neurologist at the John Radcliffe Hospital, discussing the challenging discussions and decisions following a diagnosis of MND/ALS.

Unfortunately, many GPs have little knowledge of ALS so often people are referred to the wrong specialism first, eg ENT, TIA, or Orthopaedics, depending on their presenting symptoms. This means it's often a year before they see a Neurologist, when their first question is how long they have to live. Prof. Turner emphasised the importance of being honest in that difficult conversation.

He also emphasised the importance of Nutritional support and said that while NIPV can **prolong** life, a PEG can **improve the quality of life**, and also that it may be useful to have a PEG fitted before it is required, so that the enjoyment of food can be maintained and anxiety about weight loss and choking is reduced.

Close working with the respiratory team is important to improve quality of life, although, it remains a difficult area to manage.

Emotional hypersensitivity requires empathy and possibly antidepressants. Pain is often underestimated and this may be due to poor posture, seating etc, rather than the ALS per se.

Professor Turner feels that carer burden needs greater support as patient apathy for instance can be very distressing for carers.

Family medical history is unavailable in about 90% of cases but genetic testing may be helpful and should help with family planning, although such investigations can be challenging for some, particularly siblings.

Over 100 trials of potential treatments have been carried out with 25,000+ patients but sadly have produced little useful outcomes. Research continues and AI is now being used in designing drug treatments, which he feels has great potential to speed up the process.

Kathy Hales

A TRIUMPHANT END TO ANDY'S L O N G R U N



Linda and her family proudly greeted her nephew Andy after his run in memory of his uncle and her husband Allan. The run was 170 miles and celebrated summer holidays the family had all shared at Burnham on Sea in the 1980s.

WISDOM SUPPORT GROUP - A VISITOR'S VIEW



Once a fortnight people diagnosed with MND make their way to “Molly’s Hub” in the Wisdom Hospice for a very special few hours. It is here that they and their carers can meet others diagnosed with the same condition whilst chatting, catching up, enjoying activities and lunch.

Jonathan, 55 who has been coming to the group for 12 years, said “For me, I get to speak to others with MND who understand, and I also find out useful things, like taking a carer to the cinema for free, support available, equipment, resources and other things that could be helpful. I find out things I wouldn’t find elsewhere.

The group is led by Sheila Thompson, a volunteer from the local MNDA branch who said that its aim is mainly social, encouraging friendship, and sharing of information, but they also offer quizzes, and relaxing therapies. Some weeks they enjoy table-top gardening, music therapy or a visiting speaker such as the Fire Service, and a Fraud Protection Adviser.

Nick, 62 joined around two years ago. Initially he hadn’t wanted to meet others who had MND or go near a hospice but eventually decided to “give it a go”. He said “I like seeing everyone, although when we have lost members, watching them deteriorate makes you face what is coming for you- which is really hard. But I’ve found some good friends here and look forward to chatting with them and I don’t mind coming to the hospice now.”

Sheila said “Although medical matters will naturally often be discussed, the group has a social focus and we also talk about Grants available, holistic therapies and of course catch up with each other’s lives, families, the news, TV etc – just like any group would.

*“The group leads what we do – if we can do it, we will!”*

*This report was written by some Hospice Visitors and is printed from the newsletter “Words of Wisdom” where it first appeared.*

For further information on this Mid Kent Support Group, please ring Sheila Thompson 01634 723677. The Great Barrier of Bluebell Hill means that fortnightly Support Group meetings are also held at the Heart of Kent Hospice, Maidstone where the contact is Annette Scott, 01622 820719.

IT ALL HAPPENED AT TEA TIME



Sharon's father died before Mid Kent Branch was founded and she and her mother became our first fund raisers. We held our first bazaar in her garage and were very pleased with the result – but neither of us can remember how much we made! This cheque replaces the one which appeared in a presentation to Sheila and Colin in the previous issue of MKM. However, Durobrivae Lodge carried on fundraising and their original cheque was withdrawn so that Sharon's husband Jeremy Tettmar could present this cheque for £5,720 instead – and meet members.



The buzz of conversation and laughter was strong evidence of the warmth of friendship at our afternoon tea on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Sandra's version of pass the parcel caused lots of fun, the quiz was relatively easy, the food was good and we also raised some money with a raffle and book and puzzle sales!

**LONDON MARATHON 2026 – RESULT!**



Congratulations to Dan Coward who completed the 2026 London Marathon where he was running in memory of his mum and his Aunt Lyn Smart. We are sure they would both have been as proud of you as we are. Well done and thank you. Annette

QUIZ EVENING, April 25<sup>th</sup> 2026

The annual quiz hosted by Shaun Wallace was a great success again during which we raised £1829! We are grateful for Shaun's commitment which he said would keep him coming back to interrogate us as long as he can walk!

Over £100 was raised from the sale of books and puzzles, well worth bringing them along! The result went down to the wire but the winners once again were Elaine's "Dodders" and the runners-up were "All quiet on the Weston front" – not a typo, but a reference to the family name of some of them!



The photos show The Winners, The Runners Up and The Wooden Spoon Winners.

Yes, the same result as last year and I think possibly the year before!! It was very close, we entered the last round 8 points in the lead but sadly it was the Jeopardy round and we ended up losing by 2 points! Ah well - it was fun! Wendy

A CLOWDER OF CATS



Carob was the inspiration for this quiz and it was amazing how many questions I was able to find. I'm usually scratching around for the last 10 or so questions, but this time I had possibilities left over! It proved relatively easy to solve, and nearly 60 sheets were returned.

The answers were:-

1. Marmalade cat
2. Pussy cat
3. Siamese cat
4. Burmese cat
5. Manx cat
6. Alley cat
7. Tortoise cat
8. Persian cat
9. Long haired cat
10. Mog
11. Macavity
12. Tom
13. The owl and the pussy cat
14. Ding dong bell
15. Pussy pussy cat where have you been?
16. Cat Ballou
17. Bagpuss
18. Garfield
19. Bastet
20. Cats
21. The Cheshire Cat
22. The cat who walked alone
23. Pussy Galore
24. C A T scan
25. Catastrophe
26. Catalpa
27. Catechism
28. Cataract
29. Catamaran
30. Catalogue
31. Catacomb
32. Catch
33. Cathedral
34. Cattle
35. Cat's eyes
36. Cat o' nine tails
37. Cat flap

38. Cat litter
39. Cat gut
40. Cat nap
41. Cat's paw
42. Cat's whisker
43. Let the cat out of the bag
44. Cat walk
45. Cat on a hot tin roof
46. Like a cat that's eaten the cream
47. Put the cat among the pigeons
48. Play cat and mouse
49. Rain cats and dogs
50. m to swing the cat around
51. Catherine wheel
52. Cat's cradle
53. Like a cat on hot bricks
54. Larry
55. Catkin

If you attempted this quiz, you will have discovered that my counting ability has not improved – my apologies! Jean

#### 100 CLUB RESULTS



- |         |                     |                 |
|---------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Mar 26  | 1 <sup>st</sup> 29  | Margaret Braund |
|         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> 21  | Dave Sheriden   |
| Apr 26  | 1 <sup>st</sup> 33  | Jean Lear       |
|         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> 107 | Keith Hills     |
| May 26  | 1 <sup>st</sup> 97  | Anne Wright     |
|         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> 41  | Mike Kerrigan   |
| June 26 | 1 <sup>st</sup> 86  | Amy Copping     |
|         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> 19  | Eve Copping     |

The draw for June is the last one covered by your current subscription.

Thank you to all our 100 Club members for 2025/26 year - every subscription is appreciated and really can make a difference to local people living with MND. Moreover, you have the added chance every month of maybe becoming a winner in our Prize Draw.

**The annual subscription is due in June for 26/27.** Please consider renewing your membership - all renewals will keep their current number/s. If would like to know your number/s, please e-mail me at [s.copping@sky.com](mailto:s.copping@sky.com) Sue

#### WAYS TO DONATE

**JustGiving** – [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mid-kent-branch-mnd-association](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mid-kent-branch-mnd-association)

**Bank Transfer** - you can donate via a bank transfer. Please contact our Treasurer for details: [lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org](mailto:lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org)

**Standing Order** – Details via our Treasurer (see above). Please add something to the reference if you wish this to be a general donation or in memory of someone. If you wish to gift aid your donation, please complete the form (link below) and email or post to our treasurer ([lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org](mailto:lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org))

**Gift Aid** – if you wish to gift aid any donation please complete the form (see the link below or contact our treasurer for a form) and send to our treasurer ([lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org](mailto:lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org))  
[https://www.mndassociation.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/mnda-gift-aid-form\\_0.pdf](https://www.mndassociation.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/mnda-gift-aid-form_0.pdf)

**Easyfundraising** - this is an excellent way to raise funds for the Branch, every time you shop online, without it costing you a single penny more. Simply **register on the Easyfundraising website** [Motor Neurone Disease - Mid Kent Branch Fundraising | Easyfundraising](#) and remember to shop via the website to earn funds for the Branch.

**Text** - you can donate via text message - you can donate £5 by texting MND4MIDKENT to 70085 (costs £5 plus one standard rate message). £5 is the Default value for the text but if you wish to donate more, simply add that value after MND4MIDKENT (eg MND4MIDKENT 10 to donate £10)

**Old Coins**- we can exchange your old British coins or foreign currencies (notes and coins). Just pass them on to our treasurer or any committee member or you can choose our charity at [leftovercurrency.com](http://leftovercurrency.com) [Leftover Currency - Donations to MNDA Mid Kent Branch](#)

## USEFUL INFORMATION

Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is the name given to a group of related, but widely varying, diseases affecting the motor neurones in the brain and spinal cord. Motor neurones are the nerve cells that control muscles; hence their degeneration causes weakness and muscle wasting.

MND is usually regarded as progressive but the rate of progression varies greatly from person to person and between the three main types of disease. In the UK it is believed that there are about 6,000 people suffering from MND at any one time.

**WE MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU!  
BEFORE YOU SPEND MONEY ON A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, CHECK WITH THE  
APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL. IF IT IS SOMETHING THEY DO NOT PROVIDE, SPEAK  
TO YOUR ASSOCIATION VISITOR or ANNETTE SCOTT.**

**Mid Kent Branch covers the ME postcode area  
except ME13, and includes DA11-13**

Mid Kent MNDA website <https://www.mndassociation.org/support-and-information/local-support/branches/mid-kent-branch>

## **BRANCH OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT: Professor David Oliver

VICE PRESIDENT: Mr Colin Thompson, 01634 723677 [colinwthompson@btopenworld.com](mailto:colinwthompson@btopenworld.com)

CHAIRMAN : Miss Annette Scott, 01622 820719 [annette.scott4@btinternet.com](mailto:annette.scott4@btinternet.com)

SECRETARY : Mrs Joan Simpson, 01634 686685 [joansimpson@ic24.net](mailto:joansimpson@ic24.net)

TREASURER : Mrs Lynne Eldred, [lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org](mailto:lynne.eldred@mndassociation.org)

CAMPAIGNS : Mrs Elaine Coates, 07884355423 [elaine.coates@mndassociation.org](mailto:elaine.coates@mndassociation.org)

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FUND RAISING :

MKM : Miss Jean Lear, 01634 404378 [jeanlear@btinternet.com](mailto:jeanlear@btinternet.com)

MND Specialist Nurse : Kelly Chubb [kelly.chubb1@nhs.net](mailto:kelly.chubb1@nhs.net)

AREA SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR : TBA



**We never lose hope. We strive to find a cure for MND  
and to support everyone affected by this devastating disease**