

# Chatter

## April 2026

## Meet David our new Chairman



“Late last year I received a surprising email asking me if I was interested in joining the Yorkshire Dales Branch as their Chair to start in the New Year. I was both surprised and flattered to be approached, and I was very pleased to accept.

My connection with the Branch began during my time as President of the Rotary Club of Ripon, when the MND Association was chosen as the clubs charity of the year. My decision to support MND Association is also deeply personal, as I lost my father to the disease in 2015. Having experienced how MND affects both the individual and their family, I truly appreciate the vital support the organisation offers.

I am a Yorkshireman through and through—born in Keighley and later living in Harrogate before my career took me to Worcestershire, where I spent nearly 35 years. Following the loss of my first wife, I returned to Yorkshire and settled in Ripon to be closer to my family. I have since remarried and now enjoy being part of a much larger extended family. Now 68 and happily retired, I often wonder how I ever found time to work, as my days are now full and active.

I sincerely believe as an organisation we can make a difference for people and their families touched by MND. I shall give my all to ensure our Branch succeeds in its aims to offer meaningful advice and support.”

## New look, same vision

The MND Association has a new look, new values and a bolder approach to help drive us faster towards our vision of a world free motor neurone disease (MND). This includes a redesigned logo, a fresh brand colour and unique fingerprint imagery, reflecting the individuality of every person’s experience of MND. We hope you like our new look Chatter which incorporates the new brand and visual identity.

You can read more about why there was a rebrand [here](#).



# Project - A helping hand for the diagnosis and prognosis of Motor Neurone Disease

In December 2024, the North Yorkshire Branch contributed £12,000 towards world-class scientific research. This important project looks at how MND diagnosis and monitoring can be improved.

Dr James Alix and his team at the Sheffield Institute for Translational Neuroscience, University of Sheffield are leading the research working towards our vision of creating a world free from MND.

MND can be difficult to diagnose because its symptoms are similar to other conditions. This study is investigating two nerve tests – the split hand index and the neurophysiological index – to see whether they can help doctors diagnose MND earlier and predict how quickly the disease may progress.

The research will also assess how reliable these tests are, how they relate to overall disease severity, and whether they could replace or support some of the more complex tests currently used.

So far, 215 patients have joined the international study, with a target of 400 participants. Although there have been some delays at a few centres, recruitment is continuing, and the project has been extended until October 2026 to allow more time for centres to gain approvals and enrol patients.

If successful, these tests could become part of routine clinical practice worldwide, helping people with MND receive treatment, specialist care, and access to clinical trials at an earlier stage.

## Coffee and a Catch up

The first Tuesday of every month we host an informal meet up for all those affected by MND.

It's a place where you can share your stories, ideas and meet others affected by MND.

The catch ups run 2pm until 4pm in the café at Weetons (was Crimble) just outside Pannal on the road into Harrogate. All are welcome, just show up, or if you want more information then do please get in touch: Libby Wade on 07803 208139

We hope you can join us.

Upcoming dates:

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July



### Yorkshire Dales Branch

For anyone affected by MND, join us at our monthly 'cuppa and chat'

A welcoming and informal 'cuppa and chat'. Held the 1st Tuesday of every month 2 - 4pm. Weetons Garden Centre café, Leeds Road, Pannal, Harrogate HG3 1EW



Libby Wade 07803 208139



Alun Owen 01604 800619

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Association

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# Visit to Rob Burrow Centre

In January some volunteers from local MND Association branches visited the Rob Burrow Centre in Leeds.

The centre provides a calm and peaceful environment for patients and has been designed in partnership with the hospital's clinical staff, patients, their families and the wider MND community.

It is the newest of 22 care centres supported by the MND Association across England and Wales providing bespoke, specialist care for people affected by motor neurone disease.

The MND Association funds a number of health and social care professionals at the centre, including our MND Association Research Nurse.

Some of the comments from people who visited included:

"I was very interested to see the centre, it has lots of potential."  
(Veronica Ace)

"I enjoyed seeing round the Rob Burrows centre as its very impressive."(Elizabeth Wade)

"It is a very impressive bespoke building. It is clear that it will take time before it is used fully and utilised to the greatest extent. It was great to hear that children are welcomed, and encouraged to give feedback on their experience. Some have already done that with regard to the facilities for them." (John Pike)

"This will provide an excellent support for people who have MND and their families. My family were asked our opinions on the initial designs and it was fantastic to see some of the suggestions we made had been incorporated into the building." (Sam George)



## Raffle and tombola prizes needed

If you can help with raffle and tombola prizes for events please contact Alan Robinson via:

Email: [alan.robinson@mndassociation.org](mailto:alan.robinson@mndassociation.org)

Call: 07377383926

Thank you!

# Harri takes on the Manchester Marathon for a cause close to his heart

This April, Harri will be taking on the incredible challenge of running the Manchester Marathon to raise funds for the MND Association Yorkshire Dales Branch. As race day approaches, we caught up with him to hear how his training is going and what's helping him along the way.



## What made you want to run the marathon?

"I've always wanted to challenge myself and push my athletic ability. Running a marathon for charity gave me the extra motivation I needed to finally sign up and commit."

## Have you ever done long-distance running before?

"No—this is completely new to me. I've played sports all my life, but nothing has come close to the level of endurance needed for a marathon."

## How are you preparing?

"I'm currently building up my aerobic endurance alongside strength training. I never realised how important the work outside of running would be. At the moment, I'm aiming for around 40km per week."

## What does your training week look like?

"I run shorter distances (5–7km) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, take Thursday as a rest day with some strength training at the gym, play football on Fridays, and then complete a longer run (10–14km) at the start of the week."

## What's your goal for race day?

"As it's my first marathon, I'm aiming for a sub-four-hour finish. Anything faster would be amazing."

## Will you have support on the day?

"Yes—I'm incredibly lucky to have such a strong support network. Over 30 friends and family members from across the UK are coming to cheer me on."

## How can people support you?

"Donations can be made via my [JustGiving page](#), with all funds going directly to the MND Association. Any support means more than I can put into words."

In October last year, Harris world changed forever, his Mum, Vivanne, was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND). Vivanne said: "The compassion and consistency of the MND Association has made a profound difference during a very difficult time, reminding us that no one has to face this cruel disease alone."

# Fundraising round up

Thank you again to everyone who has helped to organise, completed events and/or fundraised over the last few months. Here's a snap shot of some of the activities people were involved in to help raise funds for the Branch:

Otley Christmas Tree Festival raised £310.

Morrisons Ripon stall raised £290.

Harlow House of Beauty raised £277.

Dancing competitions raised £270 and £1,343.

Asda stall raised £250.

Otley Garden Centre stall raised £207.

Cake, coffee and tombola morning raised £230.



## Dates for your diary

Here's some of our fundraising events coming up over the next few months:

Saturday 18th April, 17hr Padel Marathon, Harrogate Spa Tennis Club

Sunday 10th May, Leeds Marathon

Saturday 20th June North Yorkshire Ultra Challenge, Scarborough

Sunday 19th July, Weeton Show

We hope to see you there.



## MND Association national news

The latest news from the MND Association can be found on the [website](#). Here are a few of the key headlines over the past few months:-

- Global research community comes together for 37th MND Symposium: Biggest annual conference dedicated to MND research in the world will be held in Amsterdam this December [Read this story](#).
- Tofersen update: new fund supports travel costs: The MND Association has introduced a new support fund to help people who are having to travel out of their area to receive drug tofersen. [Read this story](#).
- Government commits to faster social care access for MND Director of Engagement, Richard Evans, describes ongoing work with the Casey Commission. [Read the blog](#)
- Fast-track 'passports' proposed for people with Motor Neurone Disease. The MND Association helped shape policy recommendations announced on 5 March by Baroness Casey, chair of the Independent Commission for Adult Social Care. [Read this story](#).

# Reader contribution: courage smiled!

I looked into my heart  
Courage smiled  
I said I was looking for you.  
I was waiting,  
Said Courage.  
You have had a tough day,  
Said Courage,  
Sometimes it is like that.  
Yet we somehow make it through.  
I began to feel better  
I could see Hope smiling.  
I felt safe again  
Trusting myself again!  
I looked into my heart again.  
Happiness was smiling.  
I smiled too...  
What else could I do.  
Remember to pass the test  
Just keep on doing your best!



David is one of our readers, and one of his joys is poetry writing. He very recently wrote this piece, Courage Smiled and kindly shared it with us.



## MND Friendship Group - Keighley

Tea, coffee, biscuits and chat!

Every second Saturday of the month - 10am - 12 midday  
Keith Thompson Centre, Coronation Mount, Keighley, BD22 6HE

→ Ziggi O'Connor 07380 192376 or

✉ alun.owen@mndassociation.org

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## 17-HOUR PADEL MARATHON FOR MND

Saturday April 18th 2026 6am - 11pm  
Refreshments and Raffle available

Book hour slots in person at Harrogate Spa Tennis Club. Please make a donation to play (we suggest a minimum of £15). All funds raised will go to the Yorkshire Dales Branch to support local people, their families and carers. Contact Yasmin at the Club or Alan on 07377 383926 for info.

→ [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

✉ [alan.robinson@mndassociation.org](mailto:alan.robinson@mndassociation.org)



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# Local lotto

On average we receive at least £30 every month from the Local Lotto.

If you would like to find out more or join in and boost our monies then please have a look at the website and buy some tickets! The website is: <https://www.thelocalotto.co.uk/support/motor-neurone-disease-association>

## Find us online



Instagram: [mnd\\_yorkshire](#)



X: [@MNDA\\_Dales](#)  
[https://x.com/MNDA\\_Dales](https://x.com/MNDA_Dales)



Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/MNDYorkshireDales>

Website  
[www.mndyorkshiredales.co.uk](http://www.mndyorkshiredales.co.uk)

## Your Yorkshire Dales Branch contacts

- David Stubley, Chairman - [davidistubley@gmail.com](mailto:davidistubley@gmail.com)
- Branch Contact, Veronica Ace – 01423 569754 [veronica.ace@mndassociation.org](mailto:veronica.ace@mndassociation.org)
- John Pike – 07775 586357
- Secretary, Ruth Pridmore – 01423 530764 [secretary@mndyorkshiredales.co.uk](mailto:secretary@mndyorkshiredales.co.uk)
- Treasurer, Geoff Catley - 01423 870143
- Community Support Coordinator, Alun Owen - 01604 800619 [alun.owen@mndassociation.org](mailto:alun.owen@mndassociation.org)
- Local Relationship Fundraiser for North and East Yorkshire, Jenn Scribbins - 01134 830706, [jenn.scribbins@mndassociation.org](mailto:jenn.scribbins@mndassociation.org)

National Contact Information:

[www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

MND Connect – 0808 8026262 or by email to [mndconnect@mndassociation.org](mailto:mndconnect@mndassociation.org)