

South Bucks Branch

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Informal 'drop-in' afternoon Tuesday 13 March

Informal 'drop-in' afternoon

Please join us for an informal 'drop-in' afternoon on Tuesday 13 March, from 2:15pm. As the name suggests, there will be nothing formal arranged, and it is aimed purely to give you an opportunity to come along and enjoy tea and cakes and a chat – and feel free to bring family members or carers with you.

And if you are an ex-carer and you would like to join us as well and to catch up with others, please do so – we would be delighted to see you!

It will be held at Cedar Barn, Cedar Avenue, Hazlemere. If you use satnav, the postcode is HP15 7DW, and it is located behind St Edmund Campion Church, which is just off Cedar Avenue. We look forward to seeing you!

Thank you to customers of Waitrose in Windsor!

If you shop in any of the local Waitrose stores, you will be familiar with their 'Community Matters' scheme, whereby three local charities share £1,000 each month based on customers' choices as expressed by the number of green tokens accumulated by each charity over the month.

Yet again the Branch has benefited from this scheme, and we recently received a very welcome cheque for £610 from the Windsor store!

Triathlon success

Liz Carpenter, on the right in the photograph below, one of our regular supporters, decided, along with a friend, to enter a Triathlon to raise funds for the Branch – this involved her doing a 400m swim, a 10km bike and a 2.5km run. Thanks to all those of you who sponsored her – and to the generosity of her employers – they raised a very welcome total of £1,270 for the Branch!



3 Peaks Challenge

Richard Dawson, who lives in High Wycombe, and who lost his father to MND, is tackling the 3 Peaks Challenge in June together with his brothers and a group of friends to raise funds for the Association.

This involves climbing the three tallest peaks in the UK - Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon - in 24 hours! If you would like to sponsor them, you can find their fundraising web page at www.justgiving.com/beerviewmirrors



'Cello by candlelight'

You might recall that in the December Newsletter we mentioned that there was to be a fundraising cello recital in the Church of St John the Baptist, Little Missenden. The cellist - Clare Graham - is a family friend of one of the people living with MND in this Branch area and she had offered to play locally to raise funds for the Association. It was a superb evening, and thanks to everyone involved an excellent total of just over £2,000 was raised. At the organisers' request £1,000 has gone towards research, with the balance being retained for use within the Branch.

Alistair the Optimist

You will probably remember Alistair Banks, a former teacher, who has MND and who is fronting the Association's Incurable Optimism campaign. You can now download his latest album from iTunes or Amazon, and a CD version is due for release soon.



Advance notice of Branch Annual General Meeting

Please make a note in your diary to join us at this year's Branch Annual General Meeting, which is to be held on Tuesday 17 April at the Aylesbury Holiday Inn. Our speaker will be Karen Pearce, the Association's Director of Care for the south of the country. There will be further details in the March Newsletter.

Changes to Blue Badge Scheme

Changes to the Blue Badge scheme in England have been introduced. Responsibility for funding the scheme and assessing eligibility has

shifted from the NHS to Local Authorities, and the maximum fee that can be charged for issuing a badge rose to £10 from 1 January this year (it has been set at £2 for over 20 years).

From April eligibility will have to be confirmed by an independent assessment, unless it is 'self-evident'. It is unclear whether this will mean things are any different in practice for people living with MND, and this may vary between different areas. If any of you experience difficulties please raise these with MND Connect on 08457 626262.

The Association will monitor the effects of the changes and raise the issue with the Department for Transport if necessary. Badges issued from this month onwards will also have a new design to help prevent counterfeiting.

Spring Conferences

You might like to make a note of the dates of this year's Spring Conferences. They focus on current news in both care and research and provide a wonderful opportunity to chat informally with other people living with MND, their carers and family members as well as people interested in MND.

The theme for this year's Spring Conferences is 'Together we can make a difference'. There are five being held around the country, and the dates and locations that are the more convenient for us in South Bucks are:

- Stansted, Saturday 19 May
- Basingstoke, Sunday 27 May

You can see the Conference programme and register now on the Association's national web site, or you can register by phone with the Conference Team on 01604 611837 or by email at conference@mndassociation.org.

Branch and National Office contacts

If you wish to contact the Branch, please call either the Chairman, Richard Coleman on 01494 713861 or Roger Curry, Branch Contact on 01494 715732, or visit the Branch web site at www.mndasouthbucks.org. The National Office number is 01604 250505, and MND Connect is 08457 626262.

