

Summer 2022

NMC NEWS

*We're all
Enjoying*

some much-needed 'normality'
and return to in-person fundraising events
and community activities!

Our quiz night at the Grange Junior School saw over 100 people compete for glory (and a case of Champagne!) and raised a fantastic £1000, and we now look forward to a jam-packed summer that includes an outdoor sing-along cinema event in May and our annual tribute show at Arley Hall in July. There's a lot happening at the Centre over the coming months too, with the return of our popular Saturday Club, our gardening gang, bushcraft activities, the NMC Marquee and much more. We also began 2022 with the incredible

news that our CEO of 16 years, Matthew Lanham, has been awarded an OBE for services to people affected by neuromuscular conditions. More on this in the coming pages!



From all at NMC, a heartfelt thank you to everyone that continues to support us through our way out of the pandemic.

Thanks to you, we are thriving and look forward to many more years of providing our unique, life-enhancing combination of services and support to people with neuromuscular conditions, their families and carers.



OTHER BUGGERS EFFORTS

Some reflections on my 16 years (and counting) at NMC

By Matthew Lanham, Chief Executive

IN November 2021 Richard (he's been our NMC postman for over 20 years) delivered a letter to me at NMC. It was an envelope endorsed OHMS – On Her Majesty's Service. I naturally assumed it was a tax demand!

Turns out it was a letter from The Cabinet Office informing me I'd been awarded an OBE for service to those affected by neuromuscular conditions and asking me if I'd accept it.

I couldn't quite believe it. I was to keep all this a secret until formal announcement in the New Year's Honours.

I could hear my dad's voice in my head telling a young Matthew that OBE stood for Other Buggers' Efforts!

He was a very wise man. Sadly, dad is

no longer alive, but he would have been beyond proud, as is my 93-year-old mum. She is a great family history researcher and has traced our family tree back for centuries. When the OBE was finally made public, mum was quick to confirm that not one of my ancestors had ever been honoured despite their prowess as tailors, smugglers, shipwrights, oystermen, farmers, and brewers. She ordered a copy of The Times from her village newsagent so that she could see it in print and believe it!

It was May 2005 when I was having a browse through job vacancies to see if anything floated my boat. An advert in the Manchester Evening News caught my eye. I made a call to Sarah Kelly (NMC's founder) and suggested that I couldn't possibly be what the NMC was looking for in a new leader, but apparently, I was.

The NMC has changed a lot in the last 16 years but the key elements, our ethos and culture, and our focus what people can do, remain steadfastly the same.

It's always immensely rewarding, and great fun, steering NMC towards some major new development. It's not always joyous at NMC though. Along the way we've had our sad times too. We've lost some pivotal people over the years, and I shan't ever forget them and the contribution each of them made to our culture and our work. The thing about NMC is how a collective enthusiasm keeps the place driving forward whatever is thrown

at us. If I've been able to do anything, it's been to harness the power and potential of that enthusiasm to make some good things happen. We've been blessed with some world class fundraisers, incredibly loyal and active supporters, and a squad of talented volunteers always keen to pitch up and help.



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I look back and conclude that the overarching achievement during my time is the growth of the Centre. More people affected by md are getting to become a part of NMC. There's been growth in our profile too – the GSK IMPACT Award in 2015 was a highlight for many of us and put renewed confidence and energy into the team. Our amicable divorce from MDUK in 2012 was one of the best things we've ever done. It enabled us to emerge from the shadow of a campaigning and research charity very different to NMC.



In 2011 the local council had closed the neighbouring Woodford Lodge School and offered us an acre of land – the meadow. We enthusiastically accepted. We fenced our newly enlarged site and created the driveway off the lane that we have today. I love how we've developed our outdoor space. I remember the time when we had no outdoor space except a small and inadequate car park.

- Better governance
- Building a great team. Some amazing staff have joined NMC, and we've seen many in our wider community flourish and grow.

Being honoured with an OBE has been wonderful. The joy it's brought to the wider NMC community has been immense. I aim to channel the awareness that the OBE will give to NMC, and those living with these conditions, for greater good.



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Dad was right. I do indeed receive this honour because of the efforts of very many other people. Thank you all.

Now, that's enough about me and the OBE, what shall we do next to develop NMC? There's plenty I want to get my teeth into yet!

Perhaps I could summarise my contribution as four-fold –

- Annual Social Accounts to show the world the impact of what we do
- Better, more spacious, buildings – particularly co-ordinating the 2017 scheme



Therapies

NEWS

We're delighted that hydrotherapy has resumed as a service we offer, following a 2-year break during the pandemic.

There are multiple benefits for pain management, weakness and reduced movement, and this has always been an extremely popular treatment within our community.

Express your Interest

Spaces are extremely limited for now, but please contact the team to express your interest: nmc.physio@nmcentre.com.

Reduced Backlog

The team has been working hard to reduce the backlog of referrals that had built up over the course of the pandemic and at the time of writing, we had spoken with 190 new families to arrange access to our fantastic services at NMC.

New Physiotherapists

We've welcomed two new Physiotherapists to our team. Keele Masters graduate Barry Wagner joined us as maternity cover for Emily. Emily welcomed a baby boy, Harry, in March. Victoria

Dakin joined in April, following a successful placement with us last year. Both come with a wealth of enthusiasm and knowledge, and have settled in very well at NMC.



THANK You!

We are once again in awe of how our incredible community has responded to the challenges of lockdown and beyond and are, as always, extremely grateful to all our supporters and volunteers.

Here are some highlights from 2022 so far...

- James and Anne Keating for their incredible donation of £200 towards our Fishing Club

- The Angling Trust for their generous grant towards the cost of equipment needed for our Fishing Days.

- Everyone that contributed to our Big Give Christmas Challenge! Our goal was to 'pay for a week' of NMC and we're delighted to announce we smashed that target and raised over £15,000
- Active Cheshire for supporting a series of active exercise classes for NMC's community
- Peter Isaac for his very generous £100 donation.
- Our wonderful Great Manchester Run team – Pat McWilliams, Pete McWilliams, and Liam Plumbley – for taking on the 10k run for us.

- Everyone that volunteered and supported our Quiz Night at the Grange Junior School. It was wonderful to be back for the first time in 2 years. We raised £1002!
- Faffers on Tour, a walking group who have chosen to fundraise for NMC.
- The Wych-Malbank Rotary Club for their amazing £600 donation towards our Fishing Club.
- All our wonderful crafters for knitting Christmas Puddings and Easter chicks to raise funds for us.
- Our fantastic shed club, who continue to produce handmade, bespoke items from donated and recycled wood including planters, birdhouses and flowerpot men. During the run up to Christmas, they made stunning wooden Christmas trees which sold out and raised £240.
- Everyone that supported Virtual Spirit of Christmas 2021. We raised a fabulous £8,847!
- St James Place Foundation (Northern committee) for making a grant towards our Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- The Menorah Synagogue for their incredibly generous donation of £1415.
- All that bought our very first NMC Calendar! Work is in progress for NMC Calendar 2023.

- Geoff and Caroline Wood, who in lieu of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary requested donations to NMC. Congratulations on your 40th Anniversary from all at NMC! They have raised over £620 so far.
- Everyone that supported our Christmas Grotto at the Hive, Winsford. We raised £421.36.
- Kevin Ethell, who donated an incredible £200 in lieu of Christmas cards.
- Oaklands Primary School, who held a non-uniform day in aid of us and raised a wonderful £148.30!
- Everyone that supported us in the Asda Green token scheme – we were awarded £500!
- Shaun Buckley for his fantastic Christmas Light Display, which he puts on every year in support of NMC and Hebden Green School.



News from Connect Up

We have started 2022 as we mean to go on with activities both in real life and over zoom most days of the week. Our feedback survey at the end of last year has inspired a range of new opportunities for 2022, alongside our now well-established groups.

Building on a very successful harvest from the first year of the NMC allotment, we are encouraging people, families and groups of friends to adopt their very own part of the NMC garden. Our Shed Club has been busy building some beautiful planters. Each will be decorated and planted up with a different theme with veg, herbs, flowers and even a Japanese themed garden to adorn the NMC grounds.

February saw the return of 'Saturday Club' with a 'Pizza and Puzzle Afternoon' followed by a gardening themed session in March where we made a start on our 'Adopt a Box' project. The NMC opens

its doors once a month on a Saturday to welcome members of our community, their family and friends to share in activities. See our diary dates for what's coming up!

Wheel and Wander days take the NMC into the wider community. Following our pilot project at the end of 2021, we've extended the geographical areas covered to enable people living at a distance from the Centre in Winsford to meet up for a stroll or wheel near where they live, with the obligatory NMC coffee and cake included of course. We had a beautiful day for our visit to Blist's Hill Museum near Telford in March and are looking forward to 'connecting up' in other locations throughout the year.

Comments from the Connect Up Survey:

“
2021 was
pretty gloomy
on lockdown.
People I met
were a ray of
sunshine

“
Lovely to get
out and meet
friendly people
in a very safe
environment





D of E

Update

Award Scheme




Team NMC DofE Silver cohort presented their Qualifying Expedition to over 30 people, which included colleagues, family and the volunteers who made the expedition happen.

Also in attendance was Lady Alexis Redmond MBE, the new Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, and her husband Phil Redmond; creator of Grange Hill, Brookside and Hollyoaks. Our young team gave a wonderful account of what their expedition at Bendrigg Trust entailed.



Bendrigg provided a challenging, 4-day gruelling itinerary which included rock climbing, canoeing, camping, outdoor cooking and a walk and roll trek in very wet and windy conditions. Each participant played a vital role in the team, and we're extremely proud of what they've achieved.

The presentation was delivered with great confidence and provided a real insight into what the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is all about. Congratulations to Amy, Dillon, Luke, Xander, Josh and Jake! We're looking for people aged 14-25 to do Bronze or Gold awards - if you want to be challenged and work as a team, please contact Lorraine: lorraine.woolley@nmcentre.com



PedalPower

We're back at Bendrigg this September, offering a group of young people a fantastic opportunity to take on new challenges and to experience independent living. To raise funds to do this, we're taking on a huge challenge and cycling the distance between Bendrigg Trust and NMC on our accessible pedals at NMC's Neuromuscular Gym! If you'd like to get involved in this challenge, please contact Lorraine for info.

3D Printing

Our 3D Printing club has been working on a collaboration project with the Shed club to make a cover for the 3D printer -

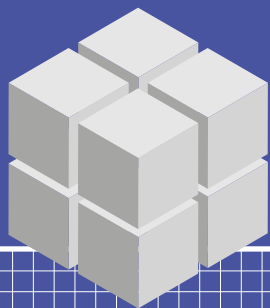
it's been exciting to see their online creations coming to life at the Centre. It has also certainly shown how challenging it is to plan something like this online!

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our 3D printing group has moved to monthly online meetings under the expert guidance of Kay Briggs, Graphic

Design Tutor. Kay's passion for creating unique designs and the commitment and talent of the team has seen 3D printing at NMC go from strength to strength.

The team has ambitions to sell more items at the Centre, and to have a display area to showcase what they've been working on. We believe it's important to try and educate as many people as possible in the NMC community and staff team about what can be created with a 3D printer, as well as the health benefits. We currently have 6 members in our team, but we're always looking for more! If you'd like to join us, or find out more, please contact Kay:

kay.briggs@nmcentre.com



Having taken place virtually for 2 years, we're delighted to announce that our Spirit of Christmas carol concert will once again take place this year at Chester Cathedral!

When we enthusiastically embarked on 'Virtual Spirit' in August 2020, we had no expectation that it would be a success, we just wanted to bring some Christmas cheer to our incredible supporters (and ourselves!) at the end of what had been an extraordinarily difficult year for many. Little did we know that we'd end up raising £18,000 and selling tickets to old friends in Australia and New Zealand that had attended some of the very first concerts we held at the Cathedral and were delighted to have the opportunity to watch an NMC concert once again.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our President Matthew Kelly and his wife Sarah, co-founder of NMC, for being the driving forces behind these virtual events. We are so grateful for their monumental efforts and vast amount of time spent creating what truly felt like Spirit of Christmas came to each of our living rooms! We welcomed such stars as Sir Stephen Fry, Julian Clary, Carey Mulligan, Jim Broadbent and Alison

Steadman to name just a few of the performers.

Enormous thanks to everyone that supported us by purchasing tickets and to our sponsors and advertisers. Huge thanks to Lorraine and Mark Woolley for producing Virtual Spirit; the hours that were spent editing and re-editing videos, whilst ensuring none of the magic that is synonymous with NMC's Spirit of Christmas was lost, was no mean feat. We're incredibly fortunate to have such talented and dedicated colleagues.

Join us for a spectacular evening of festive readings and songs on Saturday 26th November. Tickets will go on sale in August at www.nmcentre.com or by calling 01606 861733.



Legacy Giving

Leaving a Gift in your Will

We know how important writing a will is, so we have partnered with Kwil to give you the opportunity to write your will online for free and in as little as 30 minutes.

If you would like to leave a gift in your will to NMC,

you can do this within the gift section to leave a monetary amount, or within the estate section.

A gift in your will could help us to support thousands more people with neuromuscular conditions and their families. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.kwil.co.uk/affiliate?partner=neuromuscular-centre>



2023

Jan	Feb	Mar	April
May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

NMC Calendar 2023!

Enormous thanks to everyone that purchased our very first NMC calendar for 2022, and to all our advertisers. We will soon be launching this year's photography competition to feature in next year's calendar, and the theme will be 'Colours'. More information will be coming soon on our website.

Every
Tuesday
10am

Shed Club
mark.woolley
@nmcentre.com for
further information

Diary Dates

Saturday
14th
May

Saturday Club
Arts & Crafts
connectup@nmcentre.com

Friday
27th
May

Bushcraft Activity
for young people at NMC
lorraine.woolley@nmcentre.com

Saturday
11th
June

Saturday Club
Jubilee Afternoon Tea
connectup@nmcentre.com

Saturday
21st
May

Grease
Sing-along

at Marbury Country Park.
Tickets £10, call 01606 861733
or book online at
www.nmcentre.com

Cycling
4th-18th
June

Gordon Styles cycles
from Lands' End to
John O' Groats

If you'd like to sponsor him,
please call 01606 861733 or
see our Facebook page
for JustGiving info.

First
Friday
Monthly

NMC Book Club
connectup
@nmcentre.com for
further information

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Take a look at our Website...
www.nmcentre.com

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Saturday
9th
July

Live in the Park

Adult tickets £25.50
children under 16 £20.50.
Family of 4 ticket £80
(2 adults 2 under 16s),
under 5s go free.
Call 01606 861733 or visit
www.nmcentre.com
for full line up and tickets.

Saturday
16th
July

Saturday Club

Pamper Day
connectup
@nmcentre.com

Weekend
10th-11th
Sept

**Tough Mudder
at Cholmondeley
Castle**
NMC has a team!

**3D
Printing**

Open House event at
NMC, date TBC. Please
contact Kay for details:
[kay.briggs@
nmcentre.com](mailto:kay.briggs@nmcentre.com)

**Fishing
Days**

6th June on Goose
28th June on Lower Benbo
26th July on Lucky Dip
23rd August on Boulders
12th September
on Prospect

Everyone
welcome, contact
Paul for more
information:
[paul.baddeley@
nmcentre.com](mailto:paul.baddeley@nmcentre.com)