



SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION

PRESS PACK





WE ARE DEDICATED TO HELPING EVERYONE TOUCHED BY SPINAL CORD INJURY, REBUILD THEIR LIVES.

An Introduction

Damaging your spinal cord is life changing.

It affects every aspect of your life, as well as the lives of those closest to you. The repercussions are not purely physical. Initially many people feel isolated, unmotivated towards their rehabilitation, and are pessimistic about living with a disability. The future can seem a very bleak place and even the most modest of life's milestones, such as getting a job, learning to drive, or going on holiday, can seem unachievable.

The **Spinal Injuries Association** is a national charity dedicated to helping everyone touched by spinal cord injury, rebuild their lives. We achieve this by supporting a person's physical and emotional needs with life-long services that are available in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and in individual's homes. Our services include:

- Helping spinal cord injured people and family members understand their care and adjust to the changes in their life with **Peer Support** and **SIA Nurse Advocacy**.
- Helping to build future opportunities via awareness and advice about **funding care needs** and returning to **work, education** or **volunteering**.
- An **Advice Line** and **Telephone Counselling** Service, giving easy access to emotional support for new or long term issues.
- Ensuring spinal cord injured people receive the best level of care by providing **information** and **training** for professionals.
- **Campaigning** for positive change in healthcare and policy, so that the needs of spinal cord injured people are recognised and addressed by society.

As an authority in the spinal cord injured community, we are often the first point of contact for, and deliver services to:

- Newly spinal cord injured people
- Spinal cord injured people from a military background
- Long term spinal cord injured people
- Family members and friends
- Healthcare Professionals
- Law Professionals



“SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION HELPED MY FAMILY WHEN MY BROTHER BECAME INJURED, SO I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE THEY MAKE FIRST-HAND.” DANIELLE LINEKER

Background

Founded in 1974 by Baroness Masham of Ilton, the Spinal Injuries Association has been rebuilding lives for over 40 years.

After becoming spinal cord injured in a riding accident, Baroness Masham was shocked by the lack of support for the for **40,000 spinal cord injured people**, living in the UK. With some friends, Baroness Masham launched the Spinal Injuries Association, a **membership charity** by spinal cord injured people, for spinal cord injured people.

Every eight hours someone becomes spinal cord injured and to ensure they receive support they need during this life-changing time, we launched our **first services** in 1974/75. These services provided information to spinal cord injured people, family members and professionals in bulletins, newsletters and books. We also started a Link Scheme, which invited spinal cord injured people and family members to link with others in their area, to share experiences and ideas.

The breadth and number of services we provide has grown ever since. Last year we gave face to face support to **over 550** spinal cord people, **170** family members and **2200** healthcare professionals.

“It seems hardly possible that from such a small beginning we have grown to be the enthusiastic and leading charity that we are today. We have addressed, head on, many of the crucial issues which face spinal cord injured people and have been at the forefront of many campaigns that have had a significant and lasting effect on the lives of spinal cord injured people.” Baroness Masham



“SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION WAS THE SINGLE BIGGEST IMPACT ON MY REHABILITATION” PAUL

Case studies

Paul Dixon

After 19 years' service in the RAF, Paul's military career ended abruptly when he became partially paralysed after damaging his spinal cord in a fall.

Paul's rehabilitation produced massive highs and lows but thankfully, it is also where his journey with the Spinal Injuries Association began. With the Spinal Injuries Association's support Paul reached a turning point. He regained control of his life and became resolved to find new ways of doing the things that matter to him and his family.

Using lessons learnt during his military career and whilst rebuilding his life, Paul not only developed a new career and got back to being a hands-on father but he also finds time to volunteer for the charity that helped him get to where he is now.

Louise Tempest

In her last year at university, Louise became spinal cord injured after tripping on her high heels.

Whilst rehabilitating at Pinderfields, the Spinal Injuries Association gave Louise valuable support and showed her that she could achieve what she wanted from life. Louise has done just that, having gone on to complete her degree, move in with friends and travel the world.

Wanting to give something back to SIA for the support received, Louise now uses her experience to support others as a SIA Peer Support Volunteer

“SPINAL CORD INJURY IS LIFE CHANGING AND SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION SHOWS THAT LIFE GOES ON, JUST IN A DIFFERENT WAY.” LUCY ALEXANDER?

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**“THE WORK OF SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION IS SO IMPORTANT AND WILLIAMS WILL HELP IN ANY WAY WE CAN.”
CLAIRE WILLIAMS**

Raising funds and awareness

Fundraising

We work with companies, statutory funders and public fundraisers to raise vital funds to continue our work. In 2015 we formalised our growing relationship with [Williams’](#), when they made us their official charity partner. We have also been working with Saracens, Network Rail and UPS.

We do a lot of work with our members and supporters in their communities. A new event for September 2015 is [Going the Distance](#), an eight or four mile course around London’s bridges. But our long standing fundraiser is the [Great British Fish and Chip Supper](#), which runs alongside Spinal Cord Injuries Awareness Day.

Awareness Raising

Spinal Cord Injuries Awareness Day takes place on the second Friday in May and is a platform for our main awareness raising activities.

In 2015 we ran our successful [#mymilestone](#) campaign, which raised awareness of spinal cord injury by highlighting the achievements of our members and supporters, since their injury. Further information about [#mymilestone](#) is available on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.

Campaigning

We campaign for positive change in healthcare and policy, so that the needs of spinal cord injured people are recognised and addressed by society.

In 2014/15 we led an [inquiry on behalf of the All Party Parliamentary Group](#) for Spinal Cord Injury. The outcomes and the full report can be downloaded from our [website](#)



“SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION AWARDS; I HOSTED IT LAST YEAR, GREAT NIGHT, AMAZING PEOPLE.” STEPHEN MANGAN

Notes to editors

The Spinal Injuries Association is a UK registered charity.

Visit www.spinal.co.uk for up to date news and information.

Or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [YouTube](#)

Contact Details

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