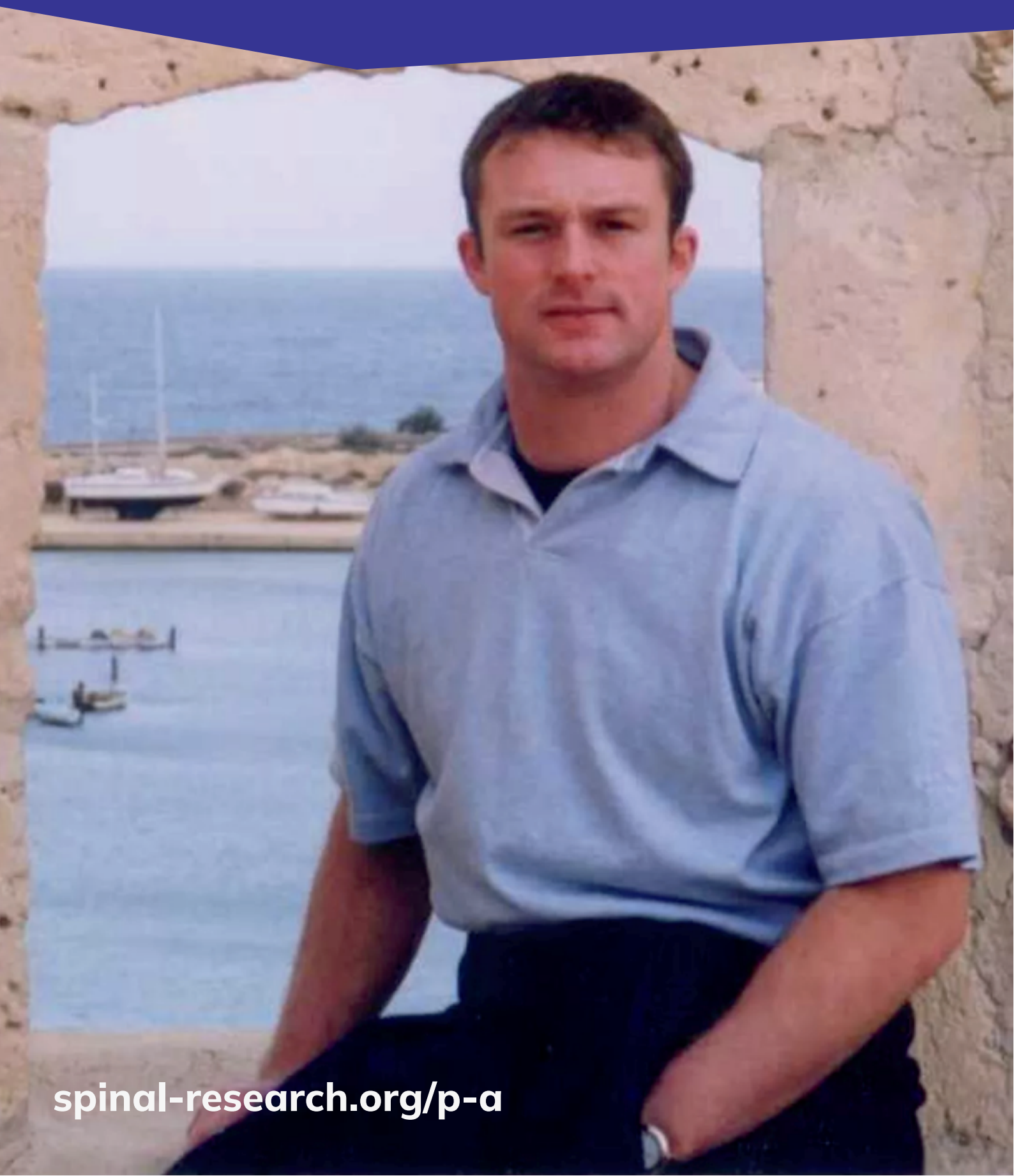
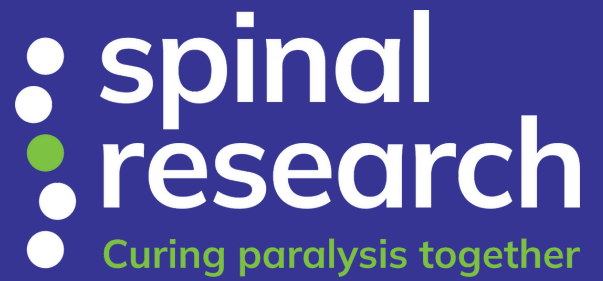


**The P-A Blundell  
Legacy Fund  
for Spinal Research**



[spinal-research.org/p-a](https://spinal-research.org/p-a)

# Welcome

The P-A Blundell Legacy Fund for Spinal Research was created to continue the remarkable legacy of Paul-André Blundell (P-A). The fund will uphold the tireless work of Rob and Gerri Blundell, P-A's devoted parents and the founders of Trust P-A Charity.

## About Spinal Research

Spinal Research are the UK's leading charity funding medical research into developing effective treatments for paralysis caused by a spinal cord injury.

Historically, the only treatment for a spinal cord injury is rehabilitation, management of pain, and adapting to life with reduced mobility and a vast number of secondary health conditions. After an injury, many individuals are told that there is no hope of a cure, which is where Spinal Research comes in.

Until recently, it was felt that any regeneration and repair of the spinal cord was not possible. However, over the last 40 years, we have played a leading role in developing the research needed to advance our understanding of spinal cord biology. With new treatments in human trials, we are now witnessing the first generation of therapeutics which will deliver life-changing improvements to those living with paralysis today.

In addition to this, through our PhD studentships, we are creating a network of specialists in the field and funding the experts of the future. This means that the 105,000 people living with a spinal cord injury in the UK and the millions worldwide have the hope that a cure will be found in their lifetime, thanks to supporters like you.



## Our Vision

We believe in a future where paralysis is no longer a life sentence.

# Curing paralysis together

spinal  
research

every  
**2**

hours someone is  
**paralysed** by a spinal  
cord injury in the UK

**15.4  
million**

people estimated  
to live with a SCI  
globally (WHO)



**4,400**

new injuries  
occur every  
year in the UK



**105,000**

people currently  
living with a SCI  
in the UK



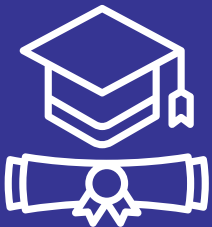
**12**

SCI injuries  
occur every  
day in the UK

**£0.00**

spent on spinal  
treatment  
research by UK  
government/NHS

We fund groundbreaking research that will **cure** paralysis



**50+**

phD studentships  
funded. Many of  
these specialists  
are now running  
world-class  
research labs



**3-5**

years until some  
of our projects  
become real life  
treatments



**2.2**

million pounds  
invested in  
research over  
the last few  
years

**1981**

Spinal Research  
established

**150+**

top researchers in  
the field of spinal  
cord injury attend  
our annual  
conference to  
share learnings



# About Paul-André Blundell

## (P-A)

Paul-André Blundell, affectionately known as P-A was born and raised in Whitchurch, Cardiff. P-A demonstrated a remarkable talent for sports from an early age. He attended Ysgol Melin Gruffydd along with lifelong friends Matthew Rhys and Ioan Gruffudd and Llandaff Cathedral School, where he captained the Colts Rugby Team. P-A later attended Old Swinford Hospital in Stourbridge, excelling in athletics, rugby, running, and golf, and winning Victor Ludorum multiple times. He represented his school in rugby and cricket internationally and was a member of the Welsh Youth U19's squad.

At the University of Wales College Cardiff (UWIC), P-A was recognized for his boxing talent, winning The Most Promising Newcomer Trophy. After a shoulder injury, he switched to touch rugby and played on the winning British Champions Touch Rugby side. Post-graduation, P-A moved to Bath, becoming a successful Community Specialist with Pharmacia (now Pfizer). He joined Keynsham RFC and contributed significantly as a player and coach. P-A also ventured into motorsport, racing with the Bristol Car Club and 750 Motor Club.

In September 2001, P-A suffered a severe neck injury during a rugby match, resulting in complete paralysis from the chin down. Tragically, after making good progress in the spinal rehab unit, five and a half months later he died suddenly and unexpectedly from a blood clot, (pulmonary embolism) aged just 26 years old.

P-A's courage and optimism post-injury were inspirational. He had accepted the challenge to progress positively and make the best of his life and new paralysed circumstances. Learning about the current scientific progress inspired him to want to be involved in future Clinical Trials to repair paralysis. His motivation was to tour the UK and lecture on spinal cord injury its implications and to share the latest scientific progress and clinical developments.

Rob and Gerri, P-A's devoted parents, continued his legacy by founding Trust PA, a charity dedicated to funding research to end paralysis and over the years have raised over £500,000 to support Spinal Research.



# How will the P-A Blundell Legacy Fund make a difference?

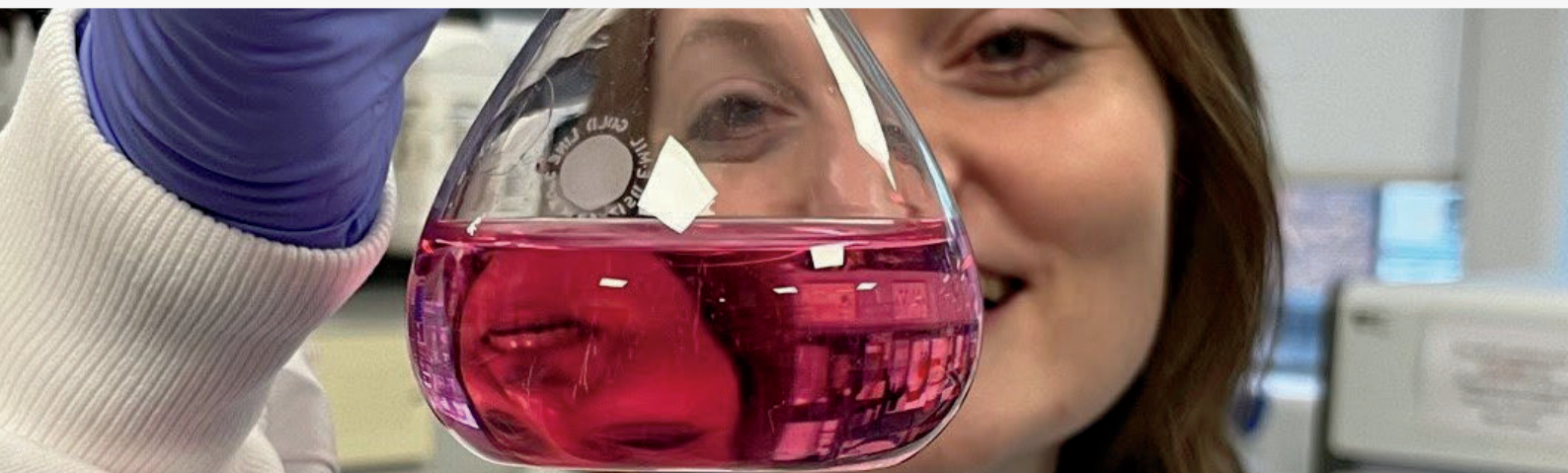
Donations to P-A's fund will benefit a PhD studentship such as the one being mentored by Dr Philippa Warren at King's College London. Dr Warren leads a team working to restore respiratory function in SCI patients.

Spinal Research is proud to fund two studentships every year creating the experts of the future. These three-year awards encourage the development of talented and highly motivated young scientists in the field of spinal cord repair, in both clinical and basic science research environments. Many of our former PhD students are now running their own world-class labs.

Dr Philippa Warren is herself a graduate of a Spinal Research Studentship Award and is dedicated to the specialism of respiratory function after spinal cord injury. Pip tells us about the research that the studentship will be focussed on.

**"One of the fundamental problems in trying to restore activity after a spinal cord injury is time. Rapidly after the trauma, nerve cells in the spinal cord die, connections to enable muscles to move are lost, and a scar forms in the cord preventing new growth. Many experimental treatments have been shown to have some success at recovering function if they are applied in the immediate days after an injury but fail when applied months-to-years afterwards. This is a problem because the majority of patients with a spinal cord injury acquired it months-to-years previously and need treatments which succeed in this hostile environment.**

**Incredibly, our previous work in experimental models has shown that breathing can be restored months-to[1]years after an injury, but not in the initial days after a trauma, through a treatment that changes the environment of the spinal cord from one that stops growth, to one that promotes it. Interestingly, this recovery of function occurred within 1-2 weeks following treatment application, a rapid time course that suggests that the responsible system controlling activity was already primed for recovery. We are going to determine the factors at the circuit and cellular level that enable rapid recovery to occur in this system at these long time points after injury. We will use this data to determine the means and mechanisms through which we can restore function in the months-to-years after an injury, helping to identify new treatment targets."**



# How to support The P-A Blundell Legacy Fund

## Make a donation

You can donate to P-A's fund in a few easy steps. Simply, scan the QR code or visit the weblink on the right.

If you'd prefer to donate by phone you can call us on 0203 824 7400 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Or you can post a cheque made payable to Spinal Research to: Spinal Research, 201 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1JA



[spinal-research.org/p-a](https://spinal-research.org/p-a)

## Donate your birthday

Make your next birthday count and collect donations in lieu of presents and cards.

The easiest way to do this is to set up a Facebook fundraiser. You can scan this code to get started.

If you prefer you can also collect donations in person and then send them to us.



## Fundraise

If you'd like to fundraise to raise money for P-A's fund then we are here to help and support you throughout your fundraising journey, no matter what you decide to do.

Whether you choose to organise a bake sale, participate in a race, take on a personal challenge or host a card night, every penny you raise will add to P-A's fund and bring us closer to our goal of curing paralysis.

You can download a full [fundraising pack here](#) or email [community@spinal-research.org](mailto:community@spinal-research.org) for more information and ideas.



# Stay in touch

However you support The P-A Blundell Legacy Fund we hope you will stay in touch before, during, and after your fundraising.

Email us: [community@spinal-research.org](mailto:community@spinal-research.org)

Phone us: 0203 824 7400

Our website: [spinal-research.org](http://spinal-research.org)

Write to us: Spinal Research, 201 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1JA



## Follow us on social media

Please follow us on our social platforms to stay up to date with our latest news and developments. Don't forget to tag us into any posts relating to your fundraising.



[Spinal Research](https://www.linkedin.com/company/spinal-research)



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[@SpinalResearch](https://twitter.com/SpinalResearch)



[@spinalresearch](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCspinalresearch)



[/spinalresearch](https://www.facebook.com/spinalresearch)

# A special thank you to Rob and Gerri

We would like to extend our gratitude to Rob and Gerri Blundell who have worked tirelessly to raise vital funds in P-A's memory.



“After more than 21 years raising money in memory of P-A to fund groundbreaking research into finding a cure for paralysis, we are excited to announce a significant milestone in our journey. We have decided to formally join forces with Spinal Research, the UK's leading medical research charity focused on curing spinal cord injury. Established in 1981, at a time when there was no more than a handful of scientists working on what was considered the impossible challenge of repairing the spinal cord, Spinal Research has had a key role in catalysing the global field through scientific funding, capacity building, fostering collaborations and patient advocacy. Spinal Research are setting up a fund in P-A's name that will support our incredible shared mission of bringing a cure to people with a spinal cord injury. We hope you will continue to support this research, and keep P-A's dream of finding a cure alive..”

**Rob and Gerri Blundell**



**spinal-research.org**  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1151015 (ENGLAND & WALES)  
SC050578 (SCOTLAND)