

No. 187 February 2013



Teamspirit

For branch officers and national support group committee members

Welcome to the February edition of Teamspirit.

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Don't forget – the information in the first six sections is for **everyone**, wherever you are in the UK.

Get in touch

We're always keen to hear your feedback, so if you have any comments, suggestions or ideas email teamspirit@mssociety.org.uk, phone 020 8438 0825 or write to Teamspirit, MS Society, 372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND.

If you're a newsletter editor, email teamspirit@mssociety.org.uk to receive a version of Teamspirit that you can copy and paste into your branch or regional newsletter.

Branch donations

Branch or group	Description	Earmarked	Research	Welfare	General
Andover					£500.00
Borders (The)			£4,000.00		
Boston & South Holland	Cambridge Myelin Repair 2011-2015	£500.00			
Chesterfield & District	Amiloride Clinical Trial in Optic Neuritis (grant 952)	£33.00			
Chesterfield & District	Phenytoin clinical trial (grant 948)	£33.00			
Ealing & District				£2,500.00	
East Berkshire					£10,000.00
Glasgow North & East	MS Nurses	£2,000.00	£2,000.00		
Gosport & Fareham	Cambridge Myelin Repair 2011-2015	£12,000.00			
Gravesend & District	Fairer Financial Assistance	£1,000.00			
Louth & District	Stem Cell Research	£1,000.00			
Louth & District	MS Nurses	£1,000.00			
Mendip			£284.50		
Sunderland & District	Cambridge Myelin Repair 2011-2015	£1,000.00			
Sutton (London Borough of)	Cambridge Myelin Repair 2011-2015	£5,000.00			
Sutton (London Borough of)	MS Helpline	£2,500.00			£551.77
Sutton Coldfield & District	MS Nurses	£2,500.00	£2,500.00		
Uckfield Heathfield & Lewes			£2,500.00		
Yeovil & Sherborne District	MS Nurses	£2,000.00	£2,000.00		
Total		£30,566.00	£13,284.50	£2,500.00	£11,051.77

These are donations recorded 15 November 2012 to 14 January 2013.

News and events

60th anniversary update

2013 marks 60 years of the MS Society, and the memories, emotions and hopes of people affected by MS will be at the heart of our anniversary. For this reason this year we'll be gathering the stories of volunteers, supporters, members and staff, and sharing them through the anniversary celebrations to help raise awareness of MS.

Take five minutes to share your experiences, and make sure your branch is represented in the story of MS in the UK. By telling your branch's stories you can celebrate the work of your committees and volunteers, recognise the achievements of your members and help to spread awareness about MS.

The types of stories we're collecting include:

- How everyday life has changed since 1953
- Memories of the MS Society
- Memorable events at your branch
- Your hopes for the future for MS and the MS Society

Tell us your stories by filling in the form at <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/news/2012/10/ms-society-turns-60> or by emailing Jo McGillivray at 60years@mssociety.org.uk.

We'd also love you to include any photos you have that relate to your story.

Remember:

- Use the special 60th logo on materials and in places where you know it won't last past the end of 2013. You can download the 60th logo from <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/news/2012/11/special-logo-our-60th-year>
- Make use of your birthday packs to help you fundraise and increase awareness

There's more information about the 60th anniversary on the volunteer microsite at <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk>. You can also email 60years@mssociety.org.uk

MS Week 2013

This year's MS Week takes place from 29 April to 5 May 2013. MS Week is the time each year we dedicate to raising awareness of MS and the issues that people living with the condition can face.

In the last edition of Teamspirit (January 2013, page 10) we explained how this year's MS Week would focus on the outcomes of the My MS, My Needs survey, which over 10,000 members with MS have responded to.

The results will tell us where in the UK people are accessing the services and support they need, and where they are not. With the results we'll produce detailed reports that will be used to influence decision makers and improve local services.

Our press officers, based in the national offices, will be sending out tailored press releases to national, regional and local newspapers and radio stations across the country.

News and events

They have developed a number of tools which are now available on the volunteer microsite, which you can use to supplement potential media coverage and support the campaign. Here you will find:

- A template 'letter to newspaper editors'
- A template 'invitation to your local politician' to attend your branch Cake Break or social event to talk about the data from the My MS My Needs survey, and the support you provide

Shortly before MS Week, branch chairs will be copied into emails from the press officers, informing you of any press releases about the My MS, My Needs report being sent to the media relevant to your branch. Due to the volume of press releases being distributed, there won't be the opportunity for branch chairs to make amendments, but you will be able to read the content for information. Press releases will be written using data available, so we can't guarantee we'll target every local newspaper or radio station in the UK.

For questions about MS Week, see the volunteer microsite at <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk>, email msweek@mssociety.org.uk or speak to your LSDO or ADO.

Let's get baking to beat MS!

In MS Week, we'll also be holding our annual Cake Break and this year we're hoping to make it even bigger and better, and raise an amazing £350,000.

We've now launched an exciting new Cake Break microsite, www.cakebreak.org.uk, packed full of top tips, recipes and resources, so make sure you take a look.

There are also a number of items available on our volunteer microsite, <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk> to help you promote your Cake Break:

- Cake Break posters and leaflets
- A template branch 'Cake Break' press release
- Text and images for newsletter and web editors to copy into their newsletters and webpages

Many branches have already signed up to host their own event and help us promote Cake Break in their local area, so thank you. If you'd like to get involved please get in touch with the Cake Break team on cakebreak@mssociety.org.uk or 0845 481 1577.

News and events

MS Society Awards nominations now open

Nominations are now open for the MS Society Awards, which celebrate the achievements of people in the MS community. The Awards will be held in October 2013, and we'd like to hear your nominations.

There are 10 categories of awards available – each one recognising and rewarding the remarkable dedication and hard work of groups and individuals who do so much to improve the lives of people living with MS.

The categories this year include:

- Carer
- Digital Media
- Employer
- Fundraiser
- Media
- Professional
- Researcher
- Volunteer
- Young Person

The MS Society also awards a special prize to the 'MS Inspiration of the Year'.

If you'd like to recognise someone who has done something remarkable for the MS community, we'd like to hear from you.

You can make your nomination online at www.mssociety.org.uk/awards or call Amanda Rayner on 01494 671 332 to be sent a nomination form by post. Nominations are open until 19 April 2013.

All new *What is MS?* coming soon

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our survey in January on our new design ideas for *What is MS?*. As one of our key introductory booklets – both to MS, and the MS Society – it's important we get both the look and the content of this booklet right. We've consulted widely on both and had really useful feedback, which we're currently working to incorporate.

We should have the new edition of the booklet in our hands in early March so look out for your new copy then. If possible, we'd recommend holding orders of this title until the new edition is available.

What we've learned from this survey and review will help inform an update to our information resources more generally. We know that good design can make a real difference to people's understanding of information, and we want to make sure that ours is as good as it can be. If you have questions about this work, contact us at infoteam@mssociety.org.uk or call 020 8438 0799.

News and events

CRB name change to DBS

In previous editions of Teamspirit we explained that the Government has announced a series of changes to disclosure checks. We now have an update on these changes.

The following information applies to England and Wales only. Different processes and organisations are in place in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

CRB name changes to DBS

On 1 December the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) – the organisation which processes disclosure checks in England and Wales – changed its name to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).

New disclosure forms

The DBS has updated the disclosure application form to include the new name and logo. From February 2013 they are no longer accepting disclosure forms with the old CRB name and logo. If you hold any copies of the forms with the old CRB name and logo please recycle them and request copies of the new form from the volunteering team (contact details below).

Updated guidance

You should have received an updated guide to disclosure checks for committees in the October edition of Teamspirit.

We've also now updated our guidance around disclosure checks for individuals providing a service for a branch or group (e.g. exercise instructors, yoga teachers, physiotherapists).

For the most recent information about disclosure checks, please contact the volunteering team or see the 'staying safe' section of the volunteer news and resources website: <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/branch-and-group-basics/staying-safe/disclosure-checks>

For further information contact Liz Wigelsworth on 020 8438 0944 or email volunteering@mssociety.org.uk

Research

MS Society launches a pioneering new research strategy

The MS Society has just launched a new research strategy, taking effect from 2013 to the end of 2017. The aim of the strategy is to make sure the best, most relevant research is funded which will bring new treatments through to people with MS as quickly as possible.

The strategy will lead to a much more targeted approach to funding research. We hope this will ensure that our research programme continues to bring life-changing benefits to people affected by MS.

Priority areas

The strategy sets out what we've done in the past and where we hope to go with MS research, specifically focusing on the following priority areas:

- Identifying and testing treatments that can slow or stop progression in people with MS (including neuroprotective and immune-based therapies)
- Developing ways to predict the course of MS and preventative and risk reduction strategies for MS
- Increasing our understanding of myelin repair with an emphasis on translating our current knowledge into treatments

Setting priorities

The MS Society has also established a 'Priority Setting Partnership' with an organisation called the James Lind Alliance.

This project will tell us what the MS research priorities are for health professionals and people affected by MS. We intend to produce a list of the top 10 priorities that emerge from the exercise, in order to help shape our care and services research programme, as well as further clarifying specific priorities for biomedical research. You can find out more on our website at www.mssociety.org.uk/jla

Focus on progressive MS

The MS Society research strategy recognises the need to develop treatments that can slow, stop and reverse the damage caused by MS. It sets out bold new plans to develop treatments that tackle progression in MS. This is the first time the MS Society has had such a focused approach to research on progressive MS and reflects the fact that MS research has developed at a fast pace in recent years. Having made important progress in some areas of science, we're now pushing ahead either to make the most of that progress or to explore new areas.

Maximising our impact

The strategy also sets out plans to continue establishing collaborations with other organisations to support the vital research that will benefit people affected by MS. It also emphasises the importance of continuing to ensure that people affected by MS are at the heart of the MS Society's research programme.

To find out more or to download the MS Society research strategy please visit www.mssociety.org.uk/research or contact the research team on 020 8438 0822 or email research@mssociety.org.uk

Support

Introduction to programme lead for MS Support

We're pleased to introduce Deborah Redman who has joined the MS Society in the role of programme lead for MS Support. This is a new role to the MS Society, which will involve working with branch support teams to develop and further strengthen the MS Support programme, and to ensure the programme has the resources it needs to continue to provide direct local support to people affected by MS.

Although the development of this programme links to the roll out and training programme, this will still be overseen by the volunteering team. Deborah's role will concentrate on developing support as a service offered by the MS Society through our volunteers. It will focus on what people affected by MS want, how we assist you as volunteers to deliver this, and how we monitor the real difference and outcomes that are achieved through this programme.

Deborah will also be working with local staff and volunteers to start looking at how we currently share information among support teams across the Society, and to ensure we communicate effectively with all support volunteers.

Deborah is keen to hear your ideas about how she can support you – she can be contacted on 020 8438 0769 or MSSupport@mssociety.org.uk

MS Society and carers services working together

In early December, MS Society branches and carers services in South Wales came together with MS professionals and representatives from social services for the MS Society's first ever carers services partnership event. The event was a success and we plan to learn from it, so we can run similar events elsewhere in the UK.

Presentations came from the MS Society and MS nurse Gaynor Williams. A panel discussion also gave participants a revealing insight into living with MS and caring for someone with the condition. In the round table discussions that followed, we got people talking about how we can build relationships and work better together to support the families and carers of people with MS.

Terry Moseley chaired the event on behalf of the Society and said: "As Chair of the Bridgend branch, and carer for my wife, Elaine, I had a personal interest in the event and its networking opportunities and outcomes. It was very pleasing to see all the information and discussion translated into practical actions."

In the long-term, we hope events like this will improve branches' knowledge of what other support is available for families and carers in their area, and lead to better communication about information, events and training for carers. Watch this space for news about similar partnership events planned in your area.

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In the meantime, **Carers Week 2013 (10-16 June)** is a great opportunity to take the first step in forging new relationships with carers centres and other services. Local organisations all over the country will be teaming up to put on events and information sessions for carers.

Registration for Carers Week events opens in February. If you can't put on an event, why not get in touch with your local carers centre to find out what else is happening near you? Visit www.carers.org/carers-services/find-your-local-service to find them, or www.carersweek.org to read more about the national campaign. For more information about our Carers Week plans, contact Natalie Pink on 020 8438 0805 or email npink@mssociety.org.uk.

Calvert Trust taster activity weekend

The Calvert Trust team in Kielder, Northumberland, are organising another taster activity weekend for people with MS, their friends and families in May.

The taster weekend is a great chance to try out activities such as sailing, abseiling, archery and the zip wire. All activities are fully accessible, as is the centre itself and the accommodation. For those who prefer to relax, there is also a hydrotherapy pool, sensory and games rooms and a fully licensed bar.

The MS taster weekend will take place from Friday 24 to Monday 27 May 2013.

Three nights costs £317 per person, which includes accommodation, activities and meals. A respite care package for over 18s is also available at £488 for the weekend, including all of the above plus care.

To book your place, call 01434 250 232 or email enquiries@calvert-kielder.com. Visit www.calvert-trust.org.uk to find out more.

Our Short Breaks and Activities Fund might be able to contribute towards the cost of your break at the Calvert Trust. Contact the grants team on 020 8438 0700 to apply.

Grants updates for 2013

Going into 2013 there are a number of grants opportunities we would like to make people aware of. Please promote the following opportunities to anyone in your area who you feel might benefit. For more information on all of these opportunities, contact the grants team on the details below.

National Grant Fund (England, Wales, Northern Ireland) & Individual Support Grant Fund (Scotland)

The upper limits and list of items we can help with from these funds will remain the same as they were in 2012. A full list of upper limits can be found in the March 2012 issue of Teamspirit or by contacting the grants team.

Support

Short Breaks and Activities (SBA) Fund

In 2012, 1,049 people were able to take a short break, holiday, have respite care or take part in other activities as a result of receiving a SBA Fund grant. We awarded 452 grants in total at a cost of £375,152.

Amy Winehouse Foundation funding

In 2012 we received £5,000 from the Amy Winehouse Foundation to be spent on short breaks for people with MS aged 25 and under. Please promote this opportunity to anyone in your area you think might benefit. They can apply for this funding through the Short Breaks and Activities Fund.

Vitalise partnership

Our partnership with Vitalise, a major provider of short breaks and respite care for people with MS and their carers, is continuing into 2013. Vitalise will match grants from the SBA Fund towards stays at Vitalise centres with grants from its own grant fund. Vitalise has centres in Southampton, Southport and Essex.

Support for carers

We'll continue our support for carers in 2013 with our two carers grant funds; the Young Carers Fund and the Carers Opportunities Fund.

New team member and telephone hours

We're very pleased to welcome Kerrie Trim who joined the grants team as a Grants Officer in November. As a result of our increased capacity we're able to announce our increased telephone hours: 9.30am-1pm and 2-5pm.

We have noticed that some branches are using old application forms (pre-2010). To ensure we are assessing all applications consistently it is important that all branches are using the most recent version of the form. If you need a new stock of forms please contact the grants team.

For further information about any of the grant funds listed above, or if you require an application form, please contact the grants team on 020 8438 0700 or grants@mssociety.org.uk. In Scotland please contact 0131 335 4050 or grantsscotland@mssociety.org.uk

Fundraising

New fundraising drive

As you may know, work is currently underway to look at how we can significantly increase our fundraising income to accelerate our promising research programme.

The scientists we fund are prepared to embark on a new phase of MS research to find ground-breaking MS discoveries, but with our current resources, we're unable to fund all the high quality research applications we'd want to.

To address this need, we are currently in discussion with some highly influential, networked and high net worth individuals who can help us find new ways to dramatically increase our fundraising for MS research.

This work is at an early stage and we welcome any insight you may have on how we can invite more influential people to join the discussion. If you can suggest individuals who you think can contribute, please contact Hannah Thomas on 020 8438 0896 or at hthomas@mssociety.org.uk

Further updates on this work will be provided in Teamspirit later this year.

Challenge60 – what will you do?

This spring, we're launching a new fundraising campaign called Challenge60, in which we hope to raise £250,000 in 60 days to help fund MS research.

We hope you'll get involved and encourage your fundraisers to help us reach our ambitious target. You can do any sponsored activity for Challenge60 and the 60 days start from 31 May, so there's plenty of time to plan your challenge. The fundraising team are already gearing up to make it the biggest and best fundraiser of the year.

We'd love you to join us while we dye our hair, give up chocolate, start walking to work, jump out of planes, take on the three peaks challenge, take part in a fun run, organise a scrabble tournament, take on a sponsored silence and so much more.

If you would like to sign up to Challenge60 or receive more information, email fundraising@mssociety.org.uk or give us a call on 0845 481 1577 and we'll provide you with all the information you need to get started. We look forward to hearing from you.

60th anniversary fundraising

Our 60th anniversary provides an opportunity to recruit participants to take part in runs, swims and cycles to raise funds for your branch.

Most villages, towns and cities host running events and the people taking part in these events are keen to raise funds for a local charity. Why not put something in your branch newsletter? Send a press release to your local paper? Spread the word at branch meetings and events?

To support your fundraisers, it's worth considering getting together a group of

Fundraising

members to go along and set up a small cheering point, and thank those taking part. It's a fun way to raise awareness and meet new people.

For ideas and resources, please do not hesitate to contact your area fundraiser.

We value your fundraising feedback

Many branches have kindly returned their 2012 'Fundraising Feedback Forms' which assist the MS Society in better understanding what fundraising activities are, and crucially, aren't, working for MS Society branches. The information gathered from these forms allows us to gauge branch funding needs, as well as providing a platform to request support from the area fundraisers.

The data, ideas and anecdotal information can then be shared between branches for wider benefit, helping to share 'best practice' and raise even more money to fund local support for people affected by MS.

The information provided via the Fundraising Feedback Forms is vital in shaping the Society's fundraising plans for the year so if you haven't already, please do complete and return yours as soon as possible, alongside any outstanding financial returns. Forms are available from your area fundraiser or online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/FundraisingFeedback2012

2012 fundraising campaigns

Fundraising campaigns

Thank you for the support you've given to our fundraising campaigns in 2012. The response to our letters, emails, press inserts and telephone calls promoting projects such as the latest MS research and MS support services, has been overwhelming. Funds raised from these letters over the 2012 period have exceeded £700,000 – a wonderful achievement.

The latest letter which was in relation to the research on MS drugs amiloride and phenytoin has raised over £300,000. Our sincere thanks go to our branches, members and supporters for all the generous donations. With your help, we can continue to build on these groundbreaking discoveries in 2013.

If you have any questions or feedback about any of our fundraising campaigns we would love to hear from you. Please contact the marketing team on marketing@mssociety.org.uk or 020 8438 0904.

Christmas catalogue sales

Thank you also to everyone who bought from the Christmas catalogue and to those who quoted the branch code when ordering to raise funds for their local branch. Commission will be transferred directly into your branch bank account in March. We will be able to confirm the amount raised in the next edition of Teamspirit.

If you have any queries please contact the Christmas fundraising team on 020 8438 0770 or christmas@mssociety.org.uk

Fundraising

Upcoming fundraising campaigns

Spring mailing

Our new mail campaign in the spring will be publicising some more research projects we've committed to funding. It will reach over 30,000 of our supporters by post and email in early spring. More details of the appeal will follow but we hope it will generate £100,000 to help beat MS.

Telephone campaign in April

Last year, our telephone campaigns were very successful, bringing in almost £100,000 in much needed extra funds. We are hoping to build on this success in the coming year, and this April we will be conducting a new telephone fundraising campaign to some of our previous supporters and members who have not chosen to renew. We'll ask them to consider supporting the MS Society again with a small donation on a regular basis. Regular donations are extremely important as they allow us to accurately plan our finances and future investments in research and support.

For more information on either of these upcoming campaigns, contact the marketing team on marketing@mssociety.org.uk or 020 8438 0904.

Introduction to the trusts team

The MS Society trusts team forms part of the partnership fundraising team, and are responsible for raising money from charitable trusts and foundations.

Trust manager Jo Goldberg says, "In 2013 we're hoping to work more closely with our branches to ensure we're all making the most of the trust fundraising opportunities available. We're aware that not all of our branches have the resources in place to make bids, and we may be able to help with this in the future. For the moment, we would like to hear from any branches that are intending to make bids to trusts this year to ensure trusts don't receive multiple applications. We believe that by working together with you, we can all be more successful both locally and nationally."

If you have any questions about trusts, you can contact Jo Goldberg on jgoldberg@mssociety.org.uk or 020 8438 0851. Alternatively you can contact trusts fundraiser Jenni Hancock on jhancock@mssociety.org.uk or 020 8438 0735 or trusts fundraiser Sandy Thomson on SThompson@mssociety.org.uk or 020 8438 0906. You can also contact the team through your area fundraiser.

Finance

Online Branch accounting system update

The online branch accounting system is now live and ready to use. Online branch accounting is the simple and easy way to keep your accounting records instead of using a cash book or an accounting package.

For more information, contact the finance team on 020 8438 0757 or 020 8438 0709 or on financesupport@mssociety.org.uk.

For England

Regional Events

To cover period from 26 February to 26 April 2013

North

Tuesday 5 March	Sector meeting – Lancashire, Greater Manchester and South Cumbria (Carnforth)
Thursday 7 March	MS Support training day 2 (North West, Cheshire and Merseyside)
Thursday 14 March	Network meeting and fundraising workshop – North Cumbria
Friday 15 March	MS Support training day 2 (Yorkshire & Humber)
Saturday 16 March	Sector meeting – Lancashire, Greater Manchester and South Cumbria (Manchester)
Saturday 16 March	MS Support training day 2 (Yorkshire & Humber)
Tuesday 19 March	Health and safety training (North Cumbria)
Wednesday 20 March	Sector meeting – Lancashire, Greater Manchester and South Cumbria Sector meeting (Leyland)
Wednesday 20 March	Network meeting and fundraising workshop (Northumberland/Tyne and Wear)
Thursday 21 March	Network meeting and fundraising workshop (Durham and Tees)
Saturday 23 March	MS Support training day 1 (Lancashire, Greater Manchester & South Cumbria)
Thursday 4 April	MS Support training day 1 (Lancashire, Greater Manchester & South Cumbria)
Friday 5 April	MS Support training day 1 (Lancashire, Greater Manchester & South Cumbria)
Saturday 6 April	MS Support training day 1 (Lancashire, Greater Manchester & South Cumbria)
Tuesday 9 April	MS Support training day 3 (Yorkshire & Humber)
Wednesday 10 April	MS Support training day 3 (Yorkshire & Humber)
Thursday 18 April	MS Support training day 3 (North West, Cheshire and Merseyside)

East

Wednesday 13 March	MS Support training day 1 (Herts, Essex & Beds)
Thursday 14 March	MS Support training day 1 (East Anglia)
Wednesday 10 April	MS Support training day 2 (Herts, Essex & Beds)
Wednesday 10 April	Volunteer Forum (East Anglia)

For England

Tuesday 16 April	MS Support training day 2 (East Anglia)
Saturday 20 April	MS Support training day 1 (Thames Valley)
Sunday 21 April	Branch information day (Colchester)
Monday 22 April	Volunteer Forum (Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire)
Friday 26 April	Volunteer Forum (Essex)

London & South East

Saturday 2 March	Information day – Gravesend & District branch
Tuesday 5 March	MS Support training day 2 (North London)
Saturday 9 March	MS Support training day 1 (South London)
Wednesday 20 March	Chairs Forum (Kent)
Thursday 11 April	MS Support training day 2 (North London)
Saturday 13 April	MS Support training day 1 (Kent)
Friday 19 April	MS Support training day 2 (South London)
Saturday 20 April	Newsletter and website editors' forum (Kent)

West

Wednesday 6 March	MS Support training day 3 (Wessex & West)
Saturday 9 March	Volunteer Forum (Hants and Islands)
Tuesday 12 March	Zone meeting (West Midlands – North)
Tuesday 19 March	Zone meeting (West Midlands – South)
Saturday 23 March	MS Support training day 1 (Hants & Islands)
Saturday 20 April	Branch development day (West Midlands)
Tuesday 23 April	MS Support training day 2 (South west: Devon, Cornwall & Somerset)
Wednesday 24 April	MS Support training day 4 (Wessex & West)
Thursday 25 April	MS Support training day 2 (Hants & Islands)
Saturday 27 April	Fundraising development day (Hants & Islands)

If you're interested in the support volunteer role, please contact your local staff member. If you're a support volunteer and you've not yet attended the training session(s) you're interested in attending, please email volunteertraining@mssociety.org.uk to request a booking form.

For all other events, please contact your local staff member for more information and to book a place.

For England

Get involved with your local Healthwatch

From April this year a new patient champion body, Healthwatch, will be launched in every local authority across England. Your local Healthwatch will be responsible for gathering views and experiences of health and social care services from patients, carers and all members of the public. They'll be responsible for making sure your views are listened to.

We know there are lots of gaps in MS services across the country. So if you're concerned about MS health and care services in your area, get involved with your local Healthwatch and make sure your voice is heard. This is a real opportunity to put MS on the map and your chance to address local issues.

If you're already active in your local Healthwatch we'd like to hear from you so we can share your story to help inspire other people. Contact Samantha Kennedy at campaigns@mssociety.org.uk or on 020 8438 0700.

For more information on Healthwatch visit www.healthwatch.co.uk.

Risk Management Review update

As we previously mentioned in the October edition of Teamspirit we're currently in the process of completing a risk management

review focusing on property, events and fitness.

The next stage of the review has now been completed by the Risk Management Review Group, who met at the end of November.

The group were pleased with the level of feedback. These responses were collated and analysed from the property, events and fitness questionnaires returned by volunteers who had implemented the process already and area staff working with them.

We also obtained feedback from other charitable organisations on their existing systems so a direct comparison could be made.

The review confirmed a risk management review system is needed and also identified a number of areas where effective improvements could be made. A series of short and long term recommendations were agreed and presented to the Executive Group for consideration at the end of January. We'll be looking to make a further update once this process has been completed.

Once again we'd like to thank all of you who took time to contribute to the review process – real changes will be made to these systems due to your efforts. Please be aware the review is a work in progress and it will take time for these recommendations to be assessed, agreed and implemented.

If you would like any further information about this review then please contact Jo Duffy at jduffy@mssociety.org.uk or phone 020 8438 0882.

For Northern Ireland

Interim Head of MS Society in Northern Ireland

We're pleased to announce that Tom Mallon, Fundraising Manager for Northern Ireland, has been appointed Interim Head of the MS Society in Northern Ireland.

Tom will take up this post in February when Patricia Gordon, current Director for Northern Ireland, takes up the post of Acting Chief Executive.

Tom will continue to manage the fundraising activities in Northern Ireland.

Tom said: "I'm delighted to have this opportunity to continue to work with staff, members and volunteers in Northern Ireland to improve the lives of people affected by MS. I look forward to this exciting opportunity during this important year as we celebrate our 60th anniversary".

Northern Ireland Council – dates for your diary

The Northern Ireland Council meets five teams during the year at MS Society, The Resource Centre, 34 Annadale Avenue, Belfast, BT7 3JJ. The 2013 dates are:

- 15 February
- 10 April (subject to change)
- 5 June
- 28 August
- 30 October

Please contact Ann Wilson on 028 9080 2802 if you would like more details.

Working with branches on fundraising

2013 is a very important year for the MS Society – a year in which we celebrate our 60th anniversary with a host of special events and activities. We've added a number of new events to our 'Events Programme' and we hope that our branches will view the programme as an opportunity to raise funds, gain new supporters and also to raise awareness about MS in their area. As always we want to work with our branches to ensure that we're successful in our fundraising efforts.

One of our new events for 2013 is an 'It's a Knockout' event taking place at the Civil Service Pavilion at Stormont on Sunday 21 April. This is a great event for teams of 10 people and is a great opportunity for your branch to encourage local businesses, organisations and supporters to enter a team and support the MS Society.

Maybe you already know of a local company or sports club that would be interested in getting involved?

In the next few weeks you'll receive a leaflet listing all our 2013 fundraising events, but meanwhile please consider supporting our Lagan Zip Line which takes place on Saturday 16 March 2013. This is yet another opportunity to get some of your supporters involved in a fun event – and branches

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receive the fundraising income (after the minimum sponsorship has been raised) for every participant they register. To register visit our website www.mssociety.org.uk or call 028 9080 2802.

On page 4, there is also information about our Cake Break event. If you're planning a Cake Break event this year, let us know, and we can help publicise your event on our Facebook page.

If you require any information or materials to organise your fundraising events please contact Tom Mallon on TMallon@mssociety.org.uk or 028 9080 2802 or Samantha Creighton on SCreighton@mssociety.org.uk.

Research Update

Would you like to learn more about our exciting research programme?

We're hosting two research updates to give you the opportunity to hear more about the research we fund, the latest groundbreaking achievements that could mean real changes for people with MS and how you influence our research priorities.

Dates and venues:

Saturday 2 March 2013 from 11am-1.30pm
Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim

Saturday 9 March 2013 from 11am-1.30pm
Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh

For information or to register please contact Mark Hatte on 028 9080 2802 or nireception@mssociety.org.uk

MS Support in NI

Eighteen volunteers have completed all four days of the first round of training and a further 13 have attended part of the training. Following a support area forum a number of volunteers have now been assigned to their local branch to provide support as part of the team.

The volunteers are in the process of meeting with the local branch committees in the areas in which they are to provide support. Local branches will further induct these volunteers with regards to local services and support.

The second round of recruitment has taken place and a total of 11 new volunteers attended the first day of training on 23 October. Additional training to incorporate the remaining three training days will be held on 19-20 March, and 23-24 April for these new volunteers and existing volunteers who may have been unable to attend one of the four days.

If you require further information regarding the Support Volunteer Programme please contact the Development Team on 028 9080 2802 or email nidevelopmentteam@mssociety.org.uk

For Scotland

Scotland Council – dates for your diary

The Scotland Council Annual meeting is taking place on Friday 14 June 2013 at Perth Concert Hall. Information on how to book will follow shortly.

The Scotland Council meet quarterly, and members are always welcome to attend meetings. The 2013 dates are:

- 25 February
- 29 May
- 28 August
- 27 November

Please contact Rosemary Hastie on 0131 335 4050 if you would like more details.

Welcome to new operations staff

Area Development Officer (ADO) North, Highlands and Islands

We're very pleased to welcome Ken Munro to this post. Ken previously worked for Childline as a supervisor in Aberdeen, providing direct line management to counsellors and support to numerous volunteers. He is a qualified social worker and has many years experience of working in the voluntary sector.

As an ADO, Ken will be supporting, developing and enabling local volunteers at branch level to meet minimum requirements and standards. He will also work with volunteers to develop and influence local volunteer-led service provision through peer groups and external partnerships.

To contact Ken email kmunro@mssociety.org.uk or call 07985 989 605.

Service Development Officer (SDO) West

We're also very pleased to welcome Margaret "Mags" Mackenzie to the post of SDO West. Mags joins us from the British Red Cross where her role was Services Manager in Community Resilience. Previous to this, Mags has held roles as Employability Development Officer with Glasgow West Regeneration Agency and Financial Inclusion Education Officer with West Dunbartonshire Partnership.

As an SDO, Mags will represent the MS Society in local forums and groups aimed at improving services, such as influencing service delivery intentions of statutory authorities. She will also work with branches and other volunteers to ensure that people with MS are involved in setting local priorities.

To contact Mags email mmackenzie@mssociety.org.uk or call 07768 015 012.

For Scotland

Support volunteer training dates

During 2013 we'll be continuing to recruit and train support volunteers. Contacting a local branch for support and information is often the first port of call for people diagnosed with MS, so it's important that the support offered is of a consistent standard.

All support volunteers must complete our four day learning and development programme. Training dates are as follows:

Day 1: Introduction to MS Support

Friday 17 and Saturday 18 May, and an additional day on 4 July in the Borders

Day 2: Introduction to skills for providing support

Friday 31 May and Saturday 1 June

Day 3: Introduction to providing information

Friday 21 and Saturday 22 June

Day 4: Introduction to financial support

Friday 5 July and Saturday 6 July

We'll confirm venues when we have a clearer idea of demand and need.

Support in the Highlands and Islands

Following our engagement event in Inverness during October 2012, we've been talking to branches in the area about how support might be delivered. These discussions are continuing and we'll be speaking to other branches involved in the months ahead.

For more information about support volunteering please contact Lynda Boyce on 0131 335 4050 or email lboyce@mssociety.org.uk

Influencing policy: update on the Clinical Standards for Neurological Health Services

You may remember that back in May 2012, the government health body Health Improvement Scotland published a review of health boards' performance against the Clinical Standards for Neurological Health Services. While the review showed that many health boards had made improvements to their neurological services it also showed that there is still much to be done.

So, what's happened since then? The review marked the end of HIS' involvement in the implementation of the standards. To ensure that improving neurological health services remain a priority, the Scottish Government has provided funding to the Neurological Alliance of Scotland (an umbrella body representing neurological charities) to establish a Neurological Advisory Group (NNAG).

NNAG comprises a range of key stakeholders from the Scottish Government,

For Scotland

the NHS, local authorities, the voluntary sector and Healthcare Improvement Scotland as well as two people with neurological conditions who are providing a patient perspective.

The MS Society is a member of the Neurological Alliance of Scotland and we are part of NNAG's operational group.

Going forward, NNAG will be working with health boards to look at how they can be supported to implement the standards. Work is still at an early stage, but we'll keep you updated on developments.

For more information, check out the website of the Neurological Alliance of Scotland www.scottishneurological.org.uk

Self management courses: book now

If you have MS, and would like to learn new skills to put you back in charge of your life, our self-management course might be just the thing for you. Our course leaders, who all have a long-term condition themselves, will help you explore a variety of topics, from pain and fatigue management, exercise, relaxation and thinking techniques, communication skills and problem solving.

This course is free of charge, and consists of six weekly sessions, each lasting two and a half hours.

Courses are currently available in the following areas:

Lerwick

Islesburgh Centre, King Harald Street, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0EQ

Wednesdays: 6 March - 10 April 2013, 2-4.30pm

Grangemouth

Bowhouse Community Centre, Sky Court, Grangemouth, FK3 0EU

Fridays: 5 April - 10 May 2013, 6.30-9pm

Please check the events section of our web-site for information about the latest courses, or contact Ailsa Blair on ablair@mssociety.org.uk or 0131 335 4050.

Thank you for your newsletters

At the end of last year our information development officer Jenny Harris emailed all branches in Scotland to ask you to send us a copy of your branch's newsletter.

Jenny says: "Thank you to the branches who sent us their branch newsletter – they were very interesting to read, and the information team learned some things which will help them when they are responding to enquiries at the Office for Scotland."

Please put us on your mailing list for future copies, so that we can keep up-to-date with your news. Please send them to information-scotland@mssociety.org.uk

For Scotland

Christmas gift wrapping

Thanks to the huge support we received from our many amazing volunteers and members of the Lothian Wide branch, our christmas wrapping fundraiser at the Centre in Livingston raised a whopping £2,000, with a further £900 being donated from the collection under the tree at the Centre.

To mark our 60th anniversary, and thanks to our amazing partnership with Land Securities going into a second year, we're planning on hosting another christmas wrapping event at the Centre in Livingston during December 2013.

We'd also like to thank everyone who came along and supported our event, and to everyone who kindly gave us donations of wrapping paper and tags.

If you'd like to get involved in our event this year, or to make a donation of paper and tags, please get in touch with the fundraising team on 0131 335 4050.

Baker Hughes 10k

Entries have now opened for the Baker Hughes 10k in Aberdeen, and we're hoping to build on the success of last year's event. Around 25 people ran for the MS Society, and they raised an amazing £7,000 to help support our work.

The Baker Hughes 10k will be held on Sunday 19 May and starts and finishes at the Queen's Links in Aberdeen.

To sign up for a place, or for more information about this event, please contact Sarah Farquhar, area fundraiser on 07920 829 491 or email sfarquhar@mssociety.org.uk

For Wales

Support volunteer training dates

We're pleased to announce the Welsh training dates for the MS Society's exciting new support volunteer programme. The new programme aims to help branches provide a vital front line support service and to improve the range of support available to people affected by MS in your area.

All new support volunteers will complete four days of training, which cover the necessary elements for starting the role. The training is also for those who are more experienced and would like to refresh their knowledge and share their experience.

Day 1: Introduction to MS Support

26 February (Mid Wales) or
27 February (South West Wales)

Day 2: Introduction to skills for providing support

19 March (Mid Wales) or
20 March (South West Wales)

Day 3: Introduction to providing information

29 May (Mid Wales) or
30 May (South West Wales)

Day 4: Introduction to financial support

19 June (Mid Wales) or
20 June (South West Wales)

Venues to be confirmed. To book and for more information, please contact Sue Jones, Local Support Development Officer, on 01633 889 290.

Area Network Meetings

In October MS Society Cymru will be hosting four Area Network Meetings around Wales allowing branches to come together and share ideas and best practice.

It will be a useful opportunity to discuss the 60th anniversary and focus on the support volunteer project.

The meetings will take place on the following dates:

- **Tuesday 16 April** – South East Wales Area Network Meeting, St Mellons Hotel, Castleton, Cardiff, CF3 2XR – 10.30am-4.30pm
- **Thursday 18 April** – Mid and West Wales Area Network Meeting, Coleg Powys, Llanidloes Road, Newtown – 10.30am-4.30pm
- **Friday 19 April** – North Wales Area Network Meeting, Kinmel Manor Hotel, Abergele, Conwy, LL22 9AS – 10.30am-4.30pm
- **Wednesday 24 April** – South West Wales Area Network Meeting, The Ivy Bush Hotel, Spilman Street, Carmarthen, SA31 1LG – 10.30am-4.30pm

For more information in Mid and South Wales please contact Sue Jones, Local Support Development Officer on 01633 889 290 or email sjones@mssociety.org.uk. In North Wales please contact Urtha Felda, Area Development Officer on 020 8827 0212 or email ufelda@mssociety.org.uk.

For Wales

Wales Annual Meeting

Following last year's successful meeting, this summer we would like to invite you to our 2013 Annual Meeting on 6 July at the Wrexham Ramada Plaza Hotel.

Further details will be available nearer the time, but to book your space please visit www.mssociety.org.uk/wales

Classified Adverts

Please share these opportunities in your publications and networks.

Accessible caravan

The North Surrey branch has a two-bed accessible caravan with full veranda and wheelchair ramp access available for holiday hire based at Church Farm in Pagham, West Sussex.

The Rio Willoughby is a comfortable and stylish caravan specifically designed with the needs of wheelchair users in mind. It has a spacious lounge/diner, a kitchen with lowered work surfaces, a bathroom with walk-in shower and two bedrooms. Church Farm is a 5* Haven site with a great entertainment schedule and two swimming pools.

For further information, please contact Caroline Keenan on 020 8393 7750.

Lisnaskea

MS Society Northern Ireland has two fully accessible chalets available for hire at the SHARE village in Lisnaskea. The cost is £200 per week and includes a SHARE fitness leisure pass. Bookings are taken on a first come, first served basis. To book a holiday please contact Mark on 028 9080 2802 or mhatte@mssociety.org.uk.

Amberwood Holiday Lodge

West Herts Branch has a holiday lodge at Shorefield Holiday Village, near Lymington, Hampshire, for people with MS, families and carers. The chalet has a master bedroom with en suite shower room, a twin bedded room, bathroom, and lounge/kitchen area with double fold-out sofa bed. Bookings can be made by calling Richard Smith on 07709 235 729. (Please leave a message if necessary and we will call you back.)

Mention of advertisement by the MS Society of products or services is not an endorsement by the MS Society, its officers or staff.

Teamspirit directory

MS Society

MS National Centre
372 Edgware Road
London
NW2 6ND
020 8438 0700

MS Society Cymru

Temple Court
Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HA
02920 786 676

MS Society

Northern Ireland

The Resource Centre
34 Annadale Avenue
Belfast
BT7 3JJ
02890 802 802

MS Society Scotland

National Office
Ratho Park
88 Glasgow Road
Ratho Station
Newbridge
EH28 8PP
0131 335 4050

Support groups

There are support group for Jewish people, lesbians and gay men, Afro-Caribbean people, Asian people, and former and serving members of the armed forces.
020 8438 0856
susmani@mssociety.org.uk

Find us online

www.mssociety.org.uk

www.facebook.com/mssociety
www.twitter.com/mssocietyuk

www.youngms.org.uk

www.facebook.com/childrenwithMS

Grants

020 8438 0700
grants@mssociety.org.uk
(England, Wales, Northern Ireland)
0131 335 4081
grantsscotland@mssociety.org.uk
(Scotland)

National MS Helpline

0808 800 8000

MS Information Line

020 8438 0799

Membership

020 8438 0759

Volunteering

020 8438 0944

Fundraising

0870 241 3565

Teamspirit

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