

Teamspirit

For branch volunteers and national support group committee members



Trishna and her dance partner Aljaz. Follow Trishna's progress on Twitter: @TrishnaBharadia

Strictly Trishna!

Have you seen 2013 MS Society Volunteer of the Year Trishna Bharadia waltzing, fox-trotting and cha-cha-ing her way around the ballroom on TV this month?

Trishna has MS and was picked from thousands of people to take part in

The People's Strictly for Comic Relief, thanks to her volunteer work raising awareness of the condition among the Asian community and beyond.

Keep your eyes peeled for the programme and live final, which will air as part of Red Nose Day on the BBC on Friday 13 March. The winner will be chosen through a public vote so make sure you show your support and vote Trishna!



News and events

Want to share your branch's good news?

Send your story ideas to us at teamspirit@mssociety.org.uk and we'll be in touch!

MS: Voice for change

The UK will be heading to the polls on 7 May for one of the closest general elections in recent memory. Every vote counts. It's an important opportunity for people affected by MS to get their voices heard by politicians and candidates who will be making decisions that affect their lives.

That is why this year's **MS Week, 27 April - 3 May**, is focusing on our **MS: Voice for Change** campaign.

You told us your priorities for this election and we've created a campaign with information, advice and a toolkit to help you quiz your local candidates and party canvassers:

www.mssociety.org.uk/GE2015

So when they knock on your door, we'd like you to find out what candidates would do, if elected, to improve access to treatment, care and support for people with MS. After you talk to them, candidates and canvassers take your questions back to their party HQ, where they'll be working on identifying emerging voter concerns. So it's important that our messages come through loud and clear.

Here are your key asks:

Give MS a voice

Candidates should commit to establishing a relationship with their local MS community and make sure MS is recognised and understood by health, social care, and welfare decision makers in the area. If successful, we want them to be a powerful voice for MS in Parliament.

Ensure people with MS can access the right treatment at the right time

Candidates should commit to calling on health and care decision makers in the local area to invest in MS specialists, and make sure every person with MS has a dedicated care co-ordinator and access to a review at least once a year. They should work to ensure all licensed MS treatments should be accessible and available on the NHS to all eligible people with MS.

Make benefits work for people with MS

Candidates should fight to ensure that assessments recognise the hidden symptoms of MS and how the condition can fluctuate over time, so people with MS are not unnecessarily reassessed.

Fight for people with MS to access the care they need when they need it

Candidates should work with local authorities in their constituency to ensure the social care needs of people affected by MS are fully met and that national government (in England) allocates sufficient investment in social care.



Audience: All



Action: Share, act – quiz your candidates and canvassers



Contact: Policy and External Relations team

020 8438 0700

election@mssociety.org.uk



News and events

Stop MS: our National Appeal

Back in November's Teamspirit we told you about the incredibly influential and successful business leaders and philanthropists who have signed up to lead on our National Appeal – the most ambitious fundraising appeal in our 60 year history. The science is right, the environment is right and the team is right to drive forward and achieve real progress in the treatment and management of MS. This Appeal will help us raise over £100m to fund research which will revolutionise treatment and transform quality of life for people with MS.

Over the last few months, we've made significant strides in developing the Appeal and we're now able to announce its official name:

Stop MS.

Stop MS got off to a flying start with an event on 3 February at The Royal Society in London. This was an opportunity to engage new and current supporters in our work. We were joined by around 80 people on the night, including leading scientists who've endorsed our research plans. This was the first of many high-profile events which will take place across the lifetime of the Appeal.

We're also delighted to announce the addition of two new members to our esteemed Appeal Board – Sir Geoffrey Owen and Donald Cameron of Lochiel. Sir Geoffrey spent most of his career at the Financial Times, including nine years as editor, before joining the London School of Economics as Senior Fellow in the Department of Management. Donald Cameron of Lochiel served as 2nd Lieutenant in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders (TA), has served as President of the Highland Society of London, Justice of the Peace of the Highland Region and is currently Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness.

With such strong additions to the Appeal Board we are confident that the Stop MS Appeal will truly achieve what we have set out to do.



Audience: All



Action: Note



Contact: Jessica Mirzai,
Prospect Researcher
020 8438 0917

jessica.mirzai@mssociety.org.uk



News and events

Elections of Trustees and National Councils

Trustees and members of National Councils are elected each year at the AGM in September, with applications closing early in May.

The Board is currently finalising the areas of expertise which would be particularly valuable this year. Applications for Trustees are likely to be particularly welcomed from individuals who are both able to fulfil the significant strategic, legal and governance responsibilities that come with being a Trustee, and who have one or more of:

- A strong understanding of the MS Society, especially its membership and branches
- Significant financial expertise
- Professional fundraising expertise
- Strategic level volunteering expertise

For the National Councils, this year there will be a substantial number of vacancies for the Northern Ireland, Wales and England National Councils, and a smaller number for the Scotland National Council.

The full application process has not yet started but if you would like us to contact you when it does then please get in touch, stating whether you are interested in being a Trustee or a member of a National Council.



Audience: All



Action: Share



Contact: Governance team
020 8438 0739

governance@mssociety.org.uk

Strategy posters

Our new strategy for 2015-19 'Together to beat MS' sets out the seven goals that guide everything we do to work towards a world free of MS. We've developed some great posters (A2 or A3 size) that illustrate our goals and feature striking photos of people affected by MS, including many of our volunteers.

If your branch has premises with lots of wall space, why not order the complete set of seven posters – one for each goal? If you've only got room for one, there's a poster that summarises all seven.

Order printed copies of the posters from our online shop, <http://shop.mssociety.org.uk> (search for 'strategy') or download and print your own from the Resource Library on the volunteer website:

<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/resources>



Audience: All



Action: Act – order your strategy posters



Contact: Strategy and Impact team
020 8438 0850

strategy@mssociety.org.uk



Info and resources

Data Protection at the MS Society

We're currently undertaking an audit on how we handle and process personal data, with a view to launching a new set of guidelines for staff and volunteers later this year. Training for both current and new volunteers will also accompany the guidelines. This will ensure we continue to work within the current data protection law set by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Until the new guidelines and training are available, here are some simple **Dos and Don'ts** to ensure you and your branch remain compliant with the law.

The Dos

Do make sure you always have consent to process and use an individual's personal data. When gathering this information, you need to ensure that a statement is present explaining what the information will be used for and who it may be disclosed to.

Do ensure you have explicit consent from individuals when collecting sensitive personal data (e.g. relating to race, political opinion, physical or mental health, religious belief, trade union membership, sexuality, criminal offences) and you have notified them how the information will be used.

Do only use up-to-date personal information, shred any paper records containing personal details when no longer needed, and ensure any unnecessary or out-of-date electronic files containing personal data are deleted on a regular basis.

Do keep all personal data secure. Ensure that paper records are kept in a locked room or filing cabinet, and password-protect electronic data. You should also ensure that only a limited number of people have access to the data.

Do let us know if you receive a '*Subject access request*' from an individual who has questioned your use of their personal data. Please don't try to deal with the request yourself.

The Don'ts

Don't use any personal data if you have any doubt about its accuracy or relevance.

Don't hold data just in case you may use it in the future. Dispose of unnecessary data and request new data when needed so it is accurate and up-to-date.

Don't reveal anyone's personal data to a third party unless you have permission from the individuals concerned. This includes family members, friends, marketing companies and companies who want the data to sell their products or services.

Don't put someone's personal details on the internet without their consent, including social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have a question about handling personal data.



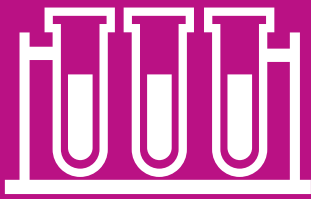
Audience: All



Action: Share, act – follow the guidelines and get in touch with any queries



Contact: Gary Day,
Head of Supporter Engagement
020 8438 0935
gary.day@mssociety.org.uk



Research

Can cognitive rehabilitation help people with MS?

Many people with MS experience problems with cognitive processes, such as memory, decision making and concentration. Unfortunately there are few effective treatments available for these often distressing symptoms.

www.mssociety.org.uk/memory-and-thinking

The University of Nottingham was recently awarded a generous £1.16 million by the NHS Health Technology Assessment Programme to investigate whether group cognitive rehabilitation therapy can improve quality of life for people with MS. The trial, known as CRAMMS (Cognitive Rehabilitation for Attention and Memory in people with MS) will be the largest symptom management clinical trial in MS conducted to date and is a really significant step forward for MS research.

We're funding a project linked to the study titled 'Delivering cognitive rehabilitation to people with MS', which will involve interviewing participants in order to learn more about their perceptions and experiences of cognitive rehabilitation therapy. You can read about the project at

www.mssociety.org.uk/research/symptom-relief

We hope this work will directly contribute towards the development of a therapy that could help people with MS manage cognitive problems better.

 **Audience:** All
 **Action:** Share
 **Contact:** Research team
020 8438 0822
research@mssociety.org.uk

Check out our Research Blog

If you need your fix of research news before the next edition of Teamspirit, you can check out what we've been writing about on the Research Blog.

We regularly write about the latest research breakthroughs and one of our recent posts summarises the MS research highlights of 2014. These include the results of a seven year study showing that Lemtrada (alemtuzumab) stabilised or improved disability in the majority of participants with relapsing remitting MS, and a study which showed that short periods of exercise could help beat MS fatigue. We also saw the first positive clinical trial results for progressive MS in the shape of simvastatin.

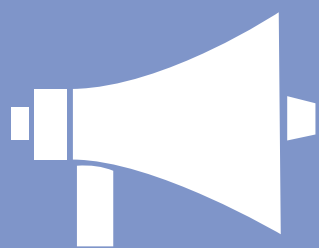
It was an exciting year for funding new MS research. Not only did we fund £1.45 million of new projects, the Progressive MS Alliance (of which we're a managing member) announced an investment of £17.5 million over the next five years into progressive MS research.

Our most recent blog post summarises a number of papers investigating childhood MS, with important findings into MS development and how families and children cope with an MS diagnosis.

Check out these posts and many more:

www.mssociety.org.uk/research/blog

 **Audience:** All
 **Action:** Note
 **Contact:** Research team
020 8438 0822
research@mssociety.org.uk



Fundraising

Get ready for Cake Break!

There's not long to go until our mouth-watering annual fundraising event, Cake Break, takes place. We're aiming to raise over £300,000 and we're encouraging as many branches to take part as possible. The official date for Cake Break is **Friday 15 May**, but you can hold your event whenever you like.

Cake Break is a great opportunity to invite your branch members, their friends, family and the local community to enjoy a cake or two in exchange for a donation. To save cost and paper wastage, we're no longer automatically sending fundraising packs to all branches, just those who request them. If you or your branch would like to receive free fundraising materials, please get in touch on the details below.

We've also put together a template press release which you can fill out and send to your local paper to encourage people to host a Cake Break in aid of your branch. You can find further details, the press release template, and other templates to help you promote your branch Cake Break, on the volunteer website from **9 March**:

<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/cake-break>

Our new Cake Break website – www.cakebreak.org.uk – will also go live on 9 March with lots of ideas, tips and resources for making your event special. If you have any questions, or would like more information, please get in touch.



Audience: All



Action: Share, act – order your Cake Break materials



Contact: Jemima Woolgar, Community and Events Fundraising Officer
0845 481 1577
cakebreak@mssociety.org.uk

Getting support from community groups

Did you know that many community groups, including Rotary, Lions, Inner Wheel and Round Table, change their President or Chair in July?

Now is the ideal time to approach these community groups in your local area to seek support for your branch during 2015 / 2016. Support could be financial, or take the form of volunteering or involvement in local campaigns.

MS Week is 27 April - 3 May so why not use this as a reason to contact your local community groups and ask to attend a meeting to give a presentation seeking their support.

Maybe someone in your branch knows a member of a community group? It's always helpful to have a foot in the door, but if not, you can easily find contact details online.

You could tell them about our recent progress with research, or the inequalities highlighted by the Treat Me Right campaign, www.treatmerightms.org.uk. Matching this information with the local activities and support offered by your branch could provide a very powerful, informative message to challenge perceptions about MS and get them involved.

Your local staff member can help with ideas and materials. You can also find helpful resources on the volunteer website:

<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/fundraising-campaigning>



Audience: All, especially fundraisers



Action: Act – contact your local community group



Contact: Your Area Fundraiser or Local Networks Officer



Fundraising

Appeals update

March appeal

At the end of March, many of you will be receiving the first direct mail appeal for 2015, focusing on our Short Breaks Grants. Since the programme launched in 2011, take-up of these grants has doubled, demonstrating their vital importance for people affected by MS and their families. We want to be able to offer a grant to everyone that needs one, and this appeal will help us raise the funds to ensure we can.

Christmas update

Thank you to everyone who bought cards and gifts from the Christmas shop last year. You should receive your branch commission this month. If you haven't received it by April, please do get in touch using the details below.

If you have any questions about the upcoming appeal or Christmas catalogue, please contact the Direct Marketing team.



Audience: All



Action: Note



Contact: Direct Marketing team
020 8438 0700
marketing@mssociety.org.uk



Finance

Branch finance visits

In 2014, the Finance team started a programme of visiting branches to assist them with improving financial controls and provide support with specific concerns. One year into the programme, we'd like to share some of our key findings and the common problems that branches face.

Shared responsibility

We were very impressed by the commitment of branch committee members, but often it was felt that finance was the responsibility of the branch treasurer alone and not something that the rest of the committee need to get involved with. We'd like to emphasise that branch finances are the responsibility of the whole committee. You can support your treasurer by ensuring that finance is discussed at each committee meeting, and the controls in operation are discussed at least annually. When a whole committee considers the branch income and expenditure together, you may be surprised by the new ideas that arise.

Most of the branches we visited had committees that worked well together and trusted each other. Most understood the importance of financial controls, but a few felt that the controls were unnecessary as they trusted the branch committee members and volunteers implicitly. Sadly MS Society branches are sometimes the victims of fraud and when this happens, the branch committee is taken by surprise. It is right that committee members trust each other, but financial controls are a vital safety net to ensure that you

never have to experience the terrible feeling of discovering fraud has occurred at your branch.

One of the branches we visited had excellent financial controls and the Chair explained that everyone on the committee knew what controls were required and therefore expected double checks. No one felt upset or offended when asked about a branch financial matter as they know how important these checks are and that being asked did not imply that they were not trusted.

It would be great to see this open approach shared by all branches. If you'd like any advice on improving financial controls or have any queries, please contact the Finance team on the details below.

A reminder about blank cheques

On a small number of visits we found that some committee members had signed blank cheques. We would also like to remind all branch committee members not to sign blank cheques under any circumstances, as this leaves your branch vulnerable to fraud. You should sign completed cheques with a supporting invoice or expense form.

 **Audience:** All branch committee members

 **Action:** Share

 **Contact:** Finance team
020 8438 0765 or 0785
financesupport@mssociety.org.uk



Bank mandates

All branches have Barclays bank accounts. Barclays have recently made us aware that a number of branch bank mandates are being submitted directly to the bank, before being processed by the MS Society Finance team.

Bank mandate forms must be completed to update the authorised signatories on your branch bank accounts. They should be reviewed by the committee on a quarterly basis.

If your branch needs to complete a mandate form, you can find this, along with a guide on how to complete it, on the volunteer website: <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/finances>

Once the mandate is completed please post the signed copy to MSNC at the address below. The Finance team will review the document and pass it to our dedicated team at Barclays. Please do not post the form directly to any Barclays branch, as doing so will result in a delay with processing your mandate.

Please contact the Finance team if you have any questions.



Audience: All, especially Treasurer



Action: Act – review your mandates



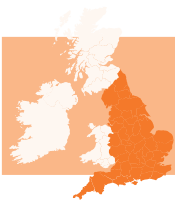
Contact: Finance team

020 8438 0875

treasurysupport@mssociety.org.uk

MS National Centre,

372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND



For England

Share your views with the England Council

Our National Councils work on behalf of people affected by MS in all four nations of the UK. The England Council consists of 15 members who meet four to five times a year and act as ambassadors, supporting the development of volunteers and ensuring their voices are heard.

The Council needs to hear your views in order to represent you at their meetings. You're always welcome to get in touch with your local Council member to share your views, feedback, comments and questions on any topic.

You can find the contact details of your local Council member on the volunteer website:

<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/england-council>

Web-to-print

At the most recent meeting, the England Council were consulted by John Palmer, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications, on a proposal for the development of a new MS Society web-to-print service. This has arisen partly in response to feedback from branches regarding the numerous issues they face printing communications materials.

Our new web-to-print service would enable branches to access an online resource centre of templates and images to produce newsletters, posters and other materials. The new service will also incorporate the current shop products in a more user-friendly system.

Branches would be able to edit the templates to add their own local information. The finished materials could then be sent directly to print through a centralised service, saving costs and local resources.

Using the web-to-print service would be optional, but would provide a simple, cost effective and streamlined service to produce professional communications materials for your branch.

Council members provided some initial feedback at the meeting, but would like to know what you think about web-to-print. Which top five templates would be most useful for you to have access to when the service launches later this year? Examples might include single or multiple page newsletters, flyers, stationery or banners.

Please contact your local council member with your comments.

The feedback received from branches will be discussed at the next council meetings in March and June, and contribute to the development of web-to-print.



Audience: England



Action: Act – share your thoughts on web-to-print



Contact: Your local England Council member



For England

A strong community, independent lives

Our strategy, Together to beat MS, includes a commitment to review our work across the UK and ensure that it enables all people affected by MS to connect – with each other and with us – in a way that suits their needs. We've reaffirmed our commitment to a vibrant local network of branches and volunteers but we've heard your feedback about the pressures you're under and the support you need.

We also know that we need to better understand the reach and impact of our local services and support to ensure that all people affected by MS can access quality, safe and value for money services and support. Following the recent changes to staffing structures we will soon be moving on to planning for how we strengthen our local networks.

You may have been involved in contributing your views on what you think people affected by MS need as part of the Working Locally review. We will be building on this feedback going forward and will share more information about this, and how you can be involved, in the coming months.



Audience: England



Action: Note



Contact: Rosemary Watt-Wyness,
Executive Director of Services and
Support

020 8438 0989

[rosemary.watt-wyness@](mailto:rosemary.watt-wyness@mssociety.org.uk)

mssociety.org.uk



For Northern Ireland

Save the date

MS Week: 27 April - 3 May

Our annual MS Week Parliamentary reception will take place on Tuesday 28 April, 2pm - 4pm, at Stormont. This is an opportunity to meet your local MLAs and help us get loud about the challenges faced by people living with MS throughout Northern Ireland.

Living with MS 2015

**Saturday 12 September, 10.30am - 4pm
Ramada Shaw's Bridge, Belfast**

Living with MS is Northern Ireland's biggest MS information event and people affected by MS from across the country are invited to come along and enjoy the day with us.

We'll be joined by Professor Richard Reynolds who runs the MS Tissue Bank at Imperial College London. The Tissue Bank provides a facility for people who want to donate their organs to research and acts as an essential resource for scientists investigating the cause and treatment of MS.

There will also be talks by journalist and MS Society member Catherine Doran, and Conor Devine, author of *'My Multiple Sclerosis story: attitude is everything'*. A long lunch break will allow time for attendees to browse the information stands and network with others.

Both of these events are free and anyone with an interest in MS is welcome to attend. For more information, please get in touch.

 **Audience:** Northern Ireland
 **Action:** Share, act – register your place
 **Contact:** Mark Hatte
028 90 802 802
nireception@mssociety.org.uk

Fundraising news

Run, Jog or Walk to Beat MS Belfast City Marathon, 4 May 2015

This is an opportunity to run, jog or walk to beat MS in different events at the Belfast City Marathon.

Why not get a branch team together and take part in the team relay? The Omagh branch is just one that has done so in the past and with great success.

Sign up today at www.belfastcitymarathon.com Please do let the fundraising team know if you are taking part as we're always keen to help and support you wherever we can.

Beat MS Abseil Belfast, 9 May 2015

We're hosting the Beat MS abseil down the Obel Tower in Belfast in May. This is a new venue for our annual abseil and provides a chance to abseil down Northern Ireland's tallest building!

To register your interest in this event, please contact the fundraising team.

Zip it for MS Lagan Weir, Belfast, 19 and 20 September 2015

Our Lagan Zip Line challenge is back! This is another great opportunity to raise funds for your branch. People can reach speeds of up to 40 miles per hour from a vantage point of 140ft. as they zip across the River Lagan.

We ask that all participants pledge to raise minimum sponsorship of £85.

 **Audience:** Northern Ireland
 **Action:** Share, act – get involved in fundraising
 **Contact:** Fundraising team
028 90 802 802
samantha.creighton@mssociety.org.uk
tom.mallon@mssociety.org.uk



For Northern Ireland

Share Village

Thinking of taking a short break or holiday? Why not consider the MS Society chalets at the Share Village, Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh? Share is the largest activity centre in Ireland and works for the inclusion of disabled and non-disabled people by providing opportunities for all to participate in a wide range of leisure and creative arts programmes. The MS Society has two fully accessible self-catering 'hostel style' chalets which can accommodate up to eight people.

You might be eligible for financial support towards the cost of your short break, holiday or respite care. Visit our website for more information on our Short Breaks and Activities Fund: www.mssociety.org.uk/shortbreaks

For more information, please get in touch.



Audience: Northern Ireland



Action: Share



Contact: Mark Hatte

028 90 802 802

nireception@mssociety.org.uk



For Scotland

Policy and campaigning in Scotland

In the wake of the Scottish Referendum, the forthcoming General Election will be watched even more closely in Scotland. We're going to be using our Voices for Change workshops, as well as social media, to find out what matters to people with MS in this election year.

MS Week

MS Week this year comes at an exciting time, one week ahead of the General Election on 7 May. The Policy and Communications team have begun a series of meetings with political representatives from all the main political parties in Scotland, to highlight our campaigning activities and our key General Election asks (see page 2). We're also planning a number of campaigning events during MS Week, from 27 April - 3 May. This will include a Parliamentary Reception at Holyrood and a debate in the Scottish Parliament.

How will further devolution affect people living with MS?

After the referendum on Scottish independence, attention has turned to the commitment of more powers for the Scottish Parliament. On 19 September 2014, David Cameron announced that Lord Smith of Kelvin would oversee the process of taking this work forward. Following cross-party talks and agreement, the Smith Commission Report was published on 27 November, outlining further devolution of powers.

The UK Government subsequently published draft legislation on 22 January 2015. This is wide ranging and affects a number of areas, including disability and carers' benefits. We're currently working to establish what this will mean for people living with MS in Scotland, and what opportunities there are to create positive change.

We want to hear your views

You can access both the Smith Commission Report and the UK Government Draft Legislation at

<https://www.smith-commission.scot/>

We're keen to hear your views on how this might impact on people affected by MS. To share your feedback, please contact Gillian Clifford on the details below.



Audience: Scotland



Action: Share, act – share your views



Contact: Gillian Clifford,
Press, Policy & Campaigns Manager
0131 335 4050

gillian.clifford@mssociety.org.uk



For Scotland

Living with MS Information Day – Glasgow

Date: 25 April 2015

Location: Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow

Living with MS is an information day for people with MS and their carers, family and friends. The day is attended by a range of people, from those who are newly diagnosed to those who have been living with MS for some time.

What are the benefits of attending?

The event provides a chance to learn more about MS. It's also an opportunity to share information and experiences with other people affected by MS.

How much does it cost to attend?

The information day is free to attend and includes lunch and refreshments. Booking is essential to guarantee your place.

How can I book my place?

You can book online at:

<http://www.mssociety.org.uk/events>

or contact the Conferences team.



Audience: Scotland



Action: Share



Contact: Conferences team

020 8438 0941

conferenceadmin@mssociety.org.uk



For Wales

Making Strides for MS Week

MS Week (27 April - 3 May) is our opportunity to get together and get loud about our fantastic work in leading the MS agenda across the UK.

We're launching our inaugural Severn Bridge walk on 26 April to bring people affected by MS together with their friends and families to celebrate our amazing achievements and our commitment to ending the effects of MS.

This family-friendly sponsored walk will be a fun day out and a memorable challenge for everyone, regardless of age or ability. The route begins with wonderful views over the Severn Estuary and will take you over the original Severn Bridge and back, or as far as you feel that you can manage on the day.

Register today via our website and you'll be part of a team helping to beat MS, aiming to raise £20,000 to help deliver the MS Society's ambitious goals.

www.mssociety.org.uk/wales

Event information

- **When:** 26 April 2015
10:00am for 10:15am start
- **Starting point:** Brightside Park, Severn Bridge, BS35 4BL
- **Price:** £10 registration fee for adults (children free) – then raise as much as you can!
- **Distance:** 6 miles – otherwise choose your own distance. The 6 mile route could take between 2-3 hours, depending on your speed and mobility

Please do come along and join our MS Week celebrations as a participant or a volunteer. If you have any questions, please contact lestyn.



Audience: Wales



Action: Share, act – make strides for MS Week



Contact: lestyn Evans,
Fundraising Manager for Wales
029 2167 8923

iestyn.evans@mssociety.org.uk



For Wales

Cymru Annual Meeting

The date of the Cymru Annual Meeting has changed and will now be held as part of a wider reception at the National Assembly for Wales in June, rather than in MS Week.

The reception will be an opportunity for the MS community to come together, reflect on and review 2014, and explore what the new strategy means for our work in Wales. It will be a great opportunity for you to meet the Cymru Council, to share your experiences and let us know what matters to you.

We'll be continuing our ongoing Treat Me Right campaign, to ensure that Assembly Members champion access to disease modifying drugs, specialist nurses and neurologists through the Neurological Conditions Delivery Plan.

Further information about the date and timings of the event will be available soon.



Audience: Wales



Action: Note



Contact: Matthew Witty,
Executive Assistant
029 2167 8921

matthew.witty@mssociety.org.uk

Help shape South Wales services

Could you help improve experiences of local statutory services for people affected by MS? Would you like your views and opinions to bring about change and shape provision?

People in South West and North Wales do, and by forming Service User Forums, they've made a real difference. They've needed grit, determination and patience, because progress has often taken time, but they've eventually got their voices heard and had real successes.

In partnership with the health boards, they've helped to develop a pathway for vulnerable people with MS, wheelchair services, and a commissioning policy for Functional Electrical Stimulation. They've represented inpatient experiences to improve the care at local hospitals and raised concerns over case management systems in social services. They developed a checklist with MS nurses to make sure people have access to the disease modifying drugs they need. All of this helps local people with MS to get the support they need.

In March we want to start a Service User Forum for people in the Cardiff and Vale and Cwm Taf Health Board area. So if you think you can lend your time, your voice, and represent others affected by MS to change things locally, please contact Rebecca.



Audience: Wales



Action: Share, act –
join a Service User Forum



Contact: Rebecca Pearce, External
Relations Officer (Wales)
020 8438 0854

rebecca.pearce@mssociety.org.uk



For Wales

Changing for the better – experts in MS wanted

Could you share your experience of MS to help those more recently diagnosed?

We've been awarded funding through the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg (ABMU) Health Board Changing for the Better grant scheme to pilot a 'Getting to Grips' course and we're looking for 'expert' volunteers to help with the course delivery.

We need two volunteers, one with personal experience of living with MS, and one with experience of supporting someone with MS. Both volunteers need to have developed ways to manage and cope which they are able to share with a group. We're also looking for people with direct experience of MS to help us design the course.

The course will run over six weekly sessions in the ABMU Health Board area and enable people affected by MS to develop a greater understanding of the condition, how it affects them, and to explore the positive practical and emotional measures they can take to minimise its impact on their lives.

While the course will involve professional input, and be led by MS Society staff alongside the 'expert' volunteer, the opportunity for participants to share individual experiences, skills, and coping strategies will be central.

Through information giving, discussion and participatory exercises we plan for the course to cover:

- MS, relapse, symptoms management, and treatment options
- Keeping physically well, diet, exercise, managing fatigue and pain, and preserving energy
- Keeping emotionally well – coping with diagnosis, stress, anxiety and decision making, relationship issues, sleep, relaxation and leisure
- Employment issues, benefits and other financial matters
- Identifying support
- Support for carers

If you're interested in helping with the design or delivery of this project please contact Rebecca.



Audience: Wales



Action: Share, act – sign-up to be an expert volunteer



Contact: Rebecca Pearce, External Relations Officer (Wales)
020 8438 0854

rebecca.pearce@mssociety.org.uk



Branch contributions

Thank you to all branches for your contributions. They are all gratefully received.

Branch contributions 27 November to 31 December 2014

Branch Name	Earmarked Description	Earmarked	Research	General
Camden Branch			£2,000.00	
East Berkshire Branch			£15,000.00	
Harrogate & District Branch			£2,000.00	
Isle of Man Branch			£2,000.00	
Ross-Shire Branch	Scotland		£3,000.00	
Ryedale Branch			£20,000.00	
South Devon Branch			£2,500.00	
St Helens & District Branch	Fairer financial assistance	£2,000.00		
Stratford Upon Avon & District Branch	MS Helpline	£400.00	£400.00	
Stratford Upon Avon & District Branch	Welfare	£400.00		
Total		£2,800.00	£46,900.00	£0.00

Correction

Apologies to the Castlederg branch, whose donation of £3000 was incorrectly earmarked as General in issue 197, when it should have been earmarked as Research.



Classifieds

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 email mscaravanpagham@hotmail.co.uk

Holiday Lodge

The North Norfolk Branch has acquired a new Boston Lodge at Burgh Castle, near Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, for people with MS, families and carers. The lodge sleeps six with a bed-settee in the lounge, a twin room with en-suite shower and a double room with overhead hoists running into a wet room.

The cost is from £200 from Saturday to Saturday. For park amenities please visit www.parkdean.com. For availability ring Sue on 07951 928583 or email justbobandsue@yahoo.co.uk

Holiday lodge and bungalow

The Bexley & Dartford branch have a holiday lodge for people with MS and their families at Shorefield Holiday Village, Milford on Sea, near Lymington, Hampshire. The lodge is fully adapted for disabled people and wheelchair users, and has a master bedroom with en-suite shower room and hoist, a twin room, bathroom, and lounge/kitchen area with sofa bed.

The branch also have a detached two bedroom bungalow at Eastbourne, Sussex, on a peaceful private estate close to Sovereign Harbour. Fully equipped (no fixed hoist) for people with MS and their families and furnished for 4/6 people.

For enquiries or bookings for both properties, please contact the Bexley & Dartford branch on 0208 306 7050 or email bexley@mssociety.org.uk

Accessible caravan

Norwich & District Branch has a two bedroom accessible caravan for hire at Haven's Hopton Holiday Village which is 5 miles from both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, Suffolk with a brilliant sea view. For park amenities please visit www.haven.com/hopton

The cost is from £250-£350 per week for 6 people, which includes passes for the leisure facilities. For availability or further information, please ring 01603 488561 or email msscentrenorwich@gmail.com

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



Teamspirit directory

Our offices

MS Society

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

MS Society Cymru

Temple Court
Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9HA
020 8438 0700

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

Feedback on Teamspirit

Teamspirit

MS National Centre
372 Edgware Road
London NW2 6ND
020 8438 0848

teamspirit@mssociety.org.uk

Support groups

Asian MS

A national support group for Asian people with MS, their carers, friends and family
asianms@mssociety.org.uk

GLAMS

A national self-help support group for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people affected by MS
glams.uk@googlemail.com

Mutual Support

For serving and ex-serving members of the Armed Forces and Reserves affected by MS, their dependants and carers.
support-team@mutual-support.org.uk

Find us online

www.mssociety.org.uk

<http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk>

www.facebook.com/mssociety

www.twitter.com/mssocietyuk

Grants

020 8438 0700

grants@mssociety.org.uk

(all nations)

Give us a call

National MS Helpline

0808 800 8000

Membership

020 8438 0759

Volunteering

020 8438 0944

Fundraising

0845 481 1577