

Teamspirit

For branch volunteers and national support group committee members



Trevor Diack and Louise Roberts, carers for family members with MS, joined Sue Allison, Programme Lead – Carers and Alfie Van Den Bos, Public Affairs Officer, at Westminster

Carers Week 2015

We were very proud to support Carers Week (8-14 June) once again this year, raising awareness of the challenges carers face and the valuable contribution they make across the UK.

Many branches held local information events or

celebrations for the carers in their community, while staff, volunteers and people affected by MS attended Parliamentary events in all four nations.

Trevor and Louise (above) were joined by 132 MPs at a Carers Week event in Westminster and both felt that the MPs they spoke to took away some important insights into life with MS.



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!

Local Networks Review: feedback from Volunteer Forums

As you'll be aware, we're currently working with you to review our local networks (branches and volunteer groups) to ensure that we can offer the best support for people affected by MS, wherever they live. We're committed to finding new ways of working together, reducing the pressure you face as volunteers and strengthening our dedicated MS community.

We began this process with Volunteer Forums earlier this spring – a big thank you to everyone who took part and gave us your thoughts about the future of our local networks. Some clear themes are already emerging in the feedback.

The majority of you think that the main purpose of our networks should be to provide a community with peer-to-peer and emotional support. You also think being able to respond to individual need with financial grants is important, but there are different ideas about how this should be administered – whether locally or centrally – to ensure consistency in decisions.

You think offering information and social opportunities should be in the remit of volunteers, but that you should be signposting to external trained staff for advice and advocacy on issues such as benefits, not doing this yourself. You'd also like

more opportunities to work closely with key local professionals and organisations.

There were lots of useful suggestions for how we could better support volunteers, such as increasing the number and range of people recruited, and offering more roles with flexible and short-term opportunities. Many of you think we should reach out to a wider membership audience, including younger people. You also want us to improve the relationship and communication between our national office and local networks. Finally, you told us that you want to be freed from burdensome administration requirements and receive more help with fundraising.

This feedback will be invaluable as we begin planning how to improve the support we provide to people affected by MS locally. We'll be running Volunteer Forums again in the autumn and hope to see as many of you there as possible for further consultation. We'll also be in touch via email and through your Local Networks Officer, keeping you involved at every stage of this review to make sure that we get it right for you and for people affected by MS.



Audience: All



Action: Share



Contact: Rebecca Pearce,
Programme Improvement Manager
rebecca.pearce@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0854



News and events

Campaigns update

General Election 2015 – what now?

More than 1,700 of you took part in our **MS: Voice for Change** campaign, asking your candidates to support people affected by MS if elected. You sent almost 7,000 emails to candidates, each one explaining what needs to change for people with MS. Thank you!

Since then, we've been busy getting in touch with successful candidates to discuss our priorities for the next government. These include access to treatments, disability benefits and ensuring everyone who needs it is able to access social care.

We've also been helping to re-establish the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on MS, a group of MPs and Peers with an interest in issues affecting people with MS. Some have personal experience, others don't, but over the course of the new Parliament we hope this group will be a strong voice for people with MS.

Ensuring the new government makes the right decisions for people with MS will remain our priority.

MS: Enough

Building on the success of MS: Voice for Change, we're already preparing our next campaign.

Our welfare system doesn't make sense for people with MS. Living with a complex neurological condition like MS is hard, and shouldn't be made harder by financial insecurity.

But thousands of people with MS are struggling, and we know inappropriate criteria and assessments prevent them from accessing the financial support they need.

This is why, in September, we'll be launching a new campaign to change the welfare system: **MS: Enough – make welfare make sense.**

The campaign will focus on improving the welfare assessment process for people with MS, including ensuring assessments take into account invisible symptoms like pain and chronic fatigue, as well as campaigning for an end to the 20 metre rule for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

As the campaign progresses, we'll be challenging negative stereotypes of benefit claimants, and campaigning to ensure everyone with MS who wants to work and is able to, receives the support they need to do so.

To sign up for updates on the campaign and be the first to hear about its launch, make sure you're part of our online campaigns community:

www.mssociety.org.uk/take-action



Audience: All



Action: Share, act –

sign up to the campaigns community



Contact: Emma Barnes,
Senior Campaigns Officer

campaigns@mssociety.org.uk

020 8438 0870



News and events

New ABN prescribing guidelines for DMTs

The Association of British Neurologists (ABN) have published a new guideline that advises how Disease Modifying Treatments (DMTs) for relapsing forms of MS should be prescribed and monitored in UK practice.

Taking a DMT has a significant impact on the course of MS, preventing relapses and slowing the worsening of disability. They enable people with MS to take greater control of their condition and their lives.

Our involvement in the guideline's development helped secure a number of important recommendations to support people to get timely access to the best treatment for them.

This includes the recommendations that:

- treatment should begin as close to diagnosis as possible
- MRI scanning should be used routinely to support diagnosis and inform treatment decisions
- decisions on treatment options should be made jointly between the person with MS and neurologist

However, there's still more work to be done. There are ten DMTs available on the NHS in the UK (11 in Scotland), but our evidence shows six in ten people with relapsing forms of MS are not taking a DMT.

Support our Treat Me Right campaign to help ensure people with MS get the right treatment at the right time, no matter where they live –

www.treatmerightms.org.uk



Audience: All



Action: Share, act – support Treat Me Right



Contact: Andrew Boaden, Senior Policy Officer (Health and Social Care)
andrew.boaden@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0998

Stop MS Challenge Fund

In February, as we launched our Stop MS Appeal, we received our first leadership gifts, including £500,000 from a Charitable Trust. The same Trust also set us a challenge by committing to give us a further £1 million if we could match that amount from other donors by the end of May.

This was a daunting but exciting opportunity for the fundraising team. The time-restricted nature of the challenge, and the opportunity to maximise the impact of giving – effectively doubling your donation – was very motivating to our supporters, and we were extremely fortunate to raise around £940,000 within the first seven weeks.

The rest of the funds were secured through a couple of very generous donors in the middle of May, so we're delighted to share that, with lots of hard work, the £1 million target has been met. This means that we've also exceeded our Stop MS new income targets for 2015 already!

Some of the money raised will go towards the MS Register, Tissue Bank and the training of young PhD science students. The rest will be allocated to a range of projects across our Stop MS research programme.

We hope that this is the first challenge of many, so watch this space.



Audience: All



Action: Share



Contact: Sabrina Borgatti,
Stop MS Programme Officer
sabrina.borgatti@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0874



Info and resources

Risk management updates

New insurance certificates

Our new public liability and employers' liability insurance certificates came into effect on 1 June 2015. You can download them and a summary of the cover provided from the volunteer website: <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/insurance>

Events and activities at NHS venues

As part of our risk management process, volunteers are required to ask venues for a copy of their insurance certificates. However, our insurers have agreed that when branches are subsidising or paying for people with MS to receive physiotherapy treatment or attend fitness activities in NHS hospitals and trust venues, you no longer have to request a copy of the public liability insurance.

We're not going to change the risk assessments, as you'll still need to request a copy of the public liability insurance for events and activities at other venues.

HSP: 2031V – Non-implementation of the volunteer risk management system

This explains what action the MS Society will take where a branch is unwilling or unable to put the volunteer risk management system into practise. You can download it from the webpage of any of our risk management systems – events, fitness activities, property and transport: <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/risk-management>. Your LNO is here to support you with completing risk assessments, so please get in touch.

-  **Audience:** All
-  **Action:** Note
-  **Contact:** Your Local Networks Officer

New Support Grants Handbook

Our new support grants handbook has been reviewed by support volunteers and is now available on the **Offering Support** section of the volunteer website. A quick link has also been added to the home page under **Most Popular Resources**, or you can use this link: <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/grants-handbook>

This practical handbook covers branch grantmaking and our national funds. It includes a range of resources to support you to develop your grantmaking, templates for the most commonly used email and letter correspondence for you to adapt, and guidance to help you promote MS Society financial support widely.

The support grants handbook on the volunteer website will always be the current version and we'll tell you in Teamspirit when we've made changes. We'll no longer provide paper copies in binders, but will send a printable version to each branch by email.

We're always looking for ways to improve the resources we provide, so if you have any comments or suggestions about this handbook, please do get in touch.

-  **Audience:** Any volunteers involved in grantmaking
-  **Action:** Note, act – use the updated handbook
-  **Contact:** Grants team
grants@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0700



Research

Encouraging clinical trial results announced

Two drugs, phenytoin and anti-LINGO-1, were recently shown to have a positive effect in optic neuritis, a condition that around half of people with MS experience. The findings were announced at the American Academy of Neurology's conference and will now need to be published in a scientific journal.

Optic neuritis is caused by inflammation and damage to the optic nerve that carries messages between the eye and brain, resulting in problems with vision. In a phase 2 trial part-funded by the MS Society, people taking phenytoin had less damage to the optic nerve compared to people taking a dummy drug, suggesting that phenytoin may be able to protect nerves. These promising results now need to be confirmed in larger studies.

In a separate phase 2 trial, anti-LINGO-1 was shown to improve the transmission of messages along the optic nerve, suggesting that it may have the ability to repair myelin. This is a very positive step towards the development of myelin repair therapies for people with MS.

You can read more about this in the news section of the MS Society website:

www.mssociety.org.uk/ms-news

If you'd like to find out more about treatments in the pipeline, you can visit our dedicated webpage: www.mssociety.org.uk/ms-research/treatments-in-the-pipeline



Audience: All



Action: Share



Contact: Research team

research@mssociety.org.uk

020 8438 0822

MS Frontiers conference

On June 29, experts from around the globe came together in London for our MS Frontiers conference. MS Frontiers is an opportunity for researchers, neurologists, clinicians and health professionals to present their latest work, share ideas and discuss key challenges.

There was a huge array of topics being discussed, from the progression of disability and finding new ways to measure it, to personalised treatments and new rehabilitation technologies. Scientists were on hand for a lively debate about stem cells and their potential involvement in the future of MS treatments.

The conference is also an opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of researchers. The Ian McDonald Memorial Lecture Award was presented, an award open to researchers around the world whose work has had a major impact on MS research. This year, we were thrilled that Professor David Miller, Director of the MS Society MRI Unit at the Institute of Neurology in London, was presented with the award – congratulations to Professor Miller!

If you'd like to find out more about what happened over the two days, you can read our blog post: www.mssociety.org.uk/research/blog



Audience: All



Action: Share



Contact: Research team

research@mssociety.org.uk

020 8438 0822



New research trial in Scotland

We're funding a number of studies looking at ways to manage different symptoms of MS. One symptom that can affect people's mobility and quality of life is foot drop. This occurs when the muscles around a person's ankle and foot are weak, causing their leg to drag. This can cause difficulty with walking and increase the risk of falls and trips.

MS specialist physiotherapist Linda Renfrew and the team at the Douglas Grant Rehabilitation Centre in Irvine are investigating different ways to manage foot drop in MS.

The team are looking at a technique called Functional Electrical Stimulation (a device which stimulates the muscles and nerve fibres of the ankle and foot), which they will compare with another walking aid known as Ankle Foot Orthoses (a plastic splint which goes down the back of the leg and under the foot to help reduce tripping). They'll measure the benefits by seeing how they affect walking speed, fatigue, number of falls and a range of other measures.

The aim of the study is to find out which is the best treatment for MS so that clinicians can help choose the most suitable therapy, and ultimately help people with MS maintain their mobility and improve their quality of life.

To find out more, please visit our website:

www.mssociety.org.uk/research/be-in-a-study



Audience: All



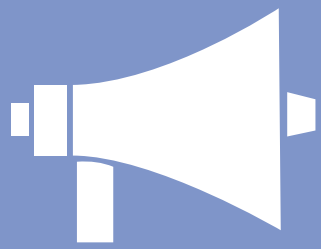
Action: Note



Contact: Research team

research@mssociety.org.uk

020 8438 0822



Fundraising

Cake Break: thank you!

A huge thank you to all branches, supporters and volunteers who took part in Cake Break 2015. We hope you enjoyed raising money by baking, sharing and eating cake as much as we did at our Cake Breaks in the MS Society offices!

It was great to hear about the different events going on up and down the UK, and the creative baking ideas you came up with. You can read about some special Cake Break events in the England and Northern Ireland sections, and visit the Cake Break Facebook event for photos and more Cake Break stories: www.facebook.com/MSSociety/events

Please don't forget to let us know how much money your branch and supporters raised through the Cake Break website – www.cakebreak.org.uk – or by contacting Jemima in the Fundraising team on the details below. This information is important to help us evaluate the success of Cake Break and work out how much was raised overall.

We look forward to hearing about how the money raised can help people affected by MS in your local area.



Audience: All



Action: Act – let us know when you bank donations



Contact: Jemima Woolgar,
Community and Events Officer
cakebreak@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0811

Funding more Support Grants

Local charitable trusts and foundations are potentially a great source of funding for branch events and activities.

We're preparing a series of tools and template letters to support branch fundraising and help you make more successful applications to local trusts and foundations.

The first of these are now on the volunteer website – <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/applying-local-trust> – and will help with applications to fund your branch's Support Grants programme. Guidance is also available to assist you in identifying suitable local trusts to apply to.

This can also be a good way to recruit new volunteers – perhaps there's someone in your branch who has experience with financial applications and would be willing to help? Applications are a great way to get involved with fundraising without having to take part in public events or collections.

Help and information about applying for grants from specific trusts, such as benevolent funds for certain individuals, is also on the website and in the new Support Grants Handbook – *Section B2: Applying to local charitable sources of support*.

Please contact your Area Fundraiser or Local Network Officer if you need support.



Audience: Fundraisers, Chairs, Support Volunteers, Treasurers



Action: Share, act – use the guidance to help with applications



Contact: Your Area Fundraiser or Local Networks Officer



Fundraising

ChallengeMS is coming!

ChallengeMS is back this September and with your valued support, we can fund even more MS research. We need your help to get friends and family involved with ChallengeMS – visit www.challengems.org.uk from 17 July to find out more about the following range of exciting challenges people can take part in:

Wear it – get sponsored to wear our orange wig with pride! [#WigoutforMS](https://twitter.com/WigoutforMS)

Walk it – a family day out at MS Walk on **Sunday 27 September**. Join the 20k or accessible 10k route along London's iconic Thames pathway, finishing with a fairground extravaganza at Battersea Park bandstand.

Kick it – can you go without one of life's little luxuries during September in the name of challenging MS?

Host it – inspire your nearest and dearest to organise an event of their choosing. Pub quizzes, coffee mornings, or classy dinner parties – the possibilities are endless.

Create it – one for self-starting types and competitive spirits who want to devise their very own individual fundraising challenge.

We also want to hear about what challenging MS means to you. Sign up online and share your story with us today [#ChallengeMS](https://twitter.com/ChallengeMS)



Audience: All



Action: Share, act – sign up



Contact: Gemma Crabb, Community and Events Fundraising Officer
challengems@mssociety.org.uk
0845 481 0927

Appeals update

Did you receive our June appeal about fatigue? It was sent to 75,000 people and we hope to raise over £200,000 to fund research into fatigue, one of our top three research priorities. We were delighted that Trishna Bharadia, star of *The People's Strictly*, featured in the pack explaining how she tries to deal with fatigue.

Thank you to everyone who has donated or bought tickets for our recent raffle mailing. At the time of going to press, we've already beaten our £90,000 target with responses still coming in.

We've also been running telephone fundraising campaigns and the response has been incredible, with over 1,350 supporters generously setting up direct debits or increasing their current regular gift. This will raise an extra £71,000 per year to support people with MS.

This month, you'll receive the next edition of your supporter newsletter, *advances*, including updates on the general election, research and fundraising. We're also enclosing a survey asking supporters for their thoughts on how we can improve *advances* – please encourage your members to complete it.

Finally, even though it's only July, we're already making plans for Christmas! Our Christmas catalogue, including cards, wrapping paper and diaries, will be sent out in August. We hope you'll like this year's card selection.



Audience: All



Action: Note



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



Finance

Branch Accounting Online

Thank you to branches for their assistance with completing the year end 2014 accounts. We're delighted that almost half of branches are now using Branch Accounting Online to maintain their accounts.

Branch Accounting Online is our internet based accounting system and is available to all branches.

Key features of the system are:

- **Flexibility** – access via the internet anywhere and at any time, viewing and editing transactions on the go.
- **Simplicity** – you don't need to be an IT expert, you only need to record transactions as they appear on the bank statement; we'll do the rest.
- **Professional reports** – the system has custom made-reports which can be exported to Excel and meet the needs of most branch committees.
- **Multiple users** – several committee members may access the system, so if your treasurer is unavailable, someone else can edit transactions or produce reports.

- **Calendar year** – branches no longer have to calculate estimate figures for November and December as the system runs from January to December.
- **Dedicated support** – the Finance team are on hand via phone and email to support you. We can see exactly what you can see on your computer so we're able to assist you quickly.

Feedback from branches using the system is very positive so if you're interested, please get in touch.

-  **Audience:** All, especially Treasurers
-  **Action:** Act – get in touch if you'd like to sign-up for Branch Accounting online
-  **Contact:** Finance team
financesupport@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0785 or 0765



Reminder: updated Bank Mandate Form

Branch treasurers are reminded that the forms for mandates and correspondence addresses amendments have been updated by Barclays Bank.

The new forms are available on the volunteer website – <http://volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/finances> – as are these other forms and practical guidance:

- How to update the branch signatories
- Signatory responsibilities
- Signatory declaration form
- Mandate form
- Statement address form

Please could all branches make sure they're using the updated form and remember that all forms should be sent to our finance team and not directly to Barclays Bank.




If you have any queries, please get in touch.

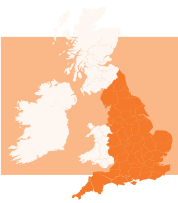
 **Audience:** All, especially Treasurers
 **Action:** Note, act – use the new forms
 **Contact:** Finance team
treasurysupport@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0875

Remittance advice by email

Branch treasurers will be used to receiving remittance advice for monies transferred from MS National Centre in the post. From now onwards, these remittance advices will be emailed to the branch email address instead. This change is to reduce postage costs and administration time.

If you are unable to receive remittance advice by email or have any queries please get in touch.

 **Audience:** All, especially Treasurers
 **Action:** Note
 **Contact:** Finance team
financesupport@mssociety.org.uk
020 8438 0785 or 0765



For England

Tamworth & Lichfield branch turn school orange!

The Tamworth & Lichfield branch, in partnership with Greysbrooke Primary School, brought colour and cakes to Shenstone one Friday in May.

Diane Lucas, branch chair and mother of a daughter with MS, was determined to raise awareness of MS in Shenstone and arranged a special Cake Break event for children and staff, including paying a 'forfeit' for wearing something orange. Diane said, "The school was wall-to-wall orange and looked so bright and cheerful!"

To continue the orange theme, William Wheats Garden Centre kindly donated trays of beautiful marigolds so that the children could plant a corner of their school orange, with the theme 'Marigolds for MS'.

Not only did the school look great, Diane said that it smelt even better. "Children, parents and the school cook had been hard at work making cakes for the Cake Break – large cakes, small cakes, decorated cakes and a vast selection of orange-themed cakes. The children (and parents!) showed such imagination in the design and presentation of the cakes that it was really difficult to select winners because everyone deserved to be a winner."

The cakes were sold to children and parents after assembly and at the end of the school day, raising a brilliant £510.88 for MS research.

Margaret White, Lead Support Volunteer, also took the opportunity to visit classrooms and talk about MS with the children. She said, "I couldn't believe how wonderful the children were. They were really interested and I think that a child in every class we visited asked a question. I felt privileged to spend time with such wonderful young people."

Diane wishes to thank the committee and school staff for their hard work – "but the biggest thanks must be reserved for the children and parents of Greysbrooke who gave us such tremendous support."



Audience: England



Action: Note



For England

Dudley Information Day

The Dudley and District branch held a very successful information day in the grand surrounds of Himley Hall this April. The theme was 'Keep Calm it's Only MS' and the event attracted over 250 people. The organising committee did a great promotional job by creating a buzz about the day on Twitter and Facebook .

The welcoming and vibrant event included opportunities to drop in and find out information about MS, meet other local organisations providing relevant services, and of course, enjoy the refreshments. The branch and committee members were there in force, talking informally with lots of people on the day.

Attendees enjoyed presentations from Consultant Neurologist Dr Steven Sturman, young people's champion Jasmine Morris, MS nurse Tracy Dean and MS Society Local Networks Officer Mary Lowthian.

As well as Laughing Yoga and Pilates taster classes, over 15 stalls provided local information on a range of topics from accessible sport to carers groups. The event was also used to promote 'Don't MS with me', a new group for people with MS who either work or are in full time education.

Congratulations to all those involved. If you're interested in hosting your own information day, visit the volunteer website or ask your Local Networks Officer for support.



Audience: England



Action: Note



Contact: Your Local Networks Officer

60 years: 60 events: £60,000

That was the ambitious target the Hull, Beverley Borough & Holderness branch set to celebrate their 60th anniversary, which falls in November this year. They began the challenge in April 2014 and just over a year later, have already smashed their original target!

From cake stalls, open gardens and raffles, to sponsored swims, a ladies' boxing match, and a tough mudder challenge, the money has been raised by over 100 individual and group supporters. Other highlights have included a static London to Paris bike ride and the Yorkshire Three Peaks challenge, but they're not finished yet – the target has been increased to £70,000 and the branch are determined to raise as much as possible for MS research.

Branch chair Margaret Thompson said:

"We wanted to do something special to commemorate our 60th anniversary and it's been wonderful to see all the contributions add up. I'd like to say a massive thank you to all the members, volunteers and supporters who've helped us reach £60,000 already. There are still many events to come, culminating with the 60th Anniversary Dinner in November.

We're very proud of the supportive MS community, the branch has built since 1955 and I'm sure we'll continue to go from strength to strength."

To find out more about the branch's progress, visit their website at

<http://www.mssociety.org.uk/near-me/hull>



Audience: England



Action: Note



For Northern Ireland

Community news

Omagh branch award success

The Omagh branch was recognised for its outstanding contribution to improving the lives of local people at the recent *Community Heroes Awards*. The branch received the *Charitable Organisation of the Year* award. Longstanding branch chairman and dedicated volunteer Joe Doran was also commended for his outstanding service to the community. The awards were hosted by Omagh District Council Chairman Councillor Sean Begley and the Ulster Herald newspaper.

Patricia Gordon, MS Society NI Director said: "Congratulations to all the wonderful volunteers at MS Society Omagh branch. Their dedication and commitment really makes a difference to the lives of local people affected by MS. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to Branch Chairman Joe Doran who has worked tirelessly to support the branch and its members in recent years."

Larne branch darts competition

Larne and East Antrim branch member John Swann and his son Glenn organised a special Darts Competition at Larne Football Supporters' Club to raise funds for the branch. The Gers Darts Team raised an amazing £1,300.

Cake Break – inspired by mum

Jo-Ann Welby, businesswoman and MS Society supporter, organised a fantastic Cake Break to raise money for MS research.

Inspired by her mum Jacquie, who was diagnosed with MS five years ago, Jo-Ann organised a weekend long Cake Break at Café Crème in Newcastle, County Down.

Jo-Ann said:



"Getting involved in Cake Break was my way of showing support to my mum and other people living with MS in Northern Ireland. MS has had a massive impact on mum and our whole family. Sadly, we've witnessed our mum go from a fiercely independent, active lady to someone who needs full time care. I wish there was a wonder pill – something that could bring our old mum back but unfortunately there isn't one. The money raised from our Cake Break will help the MS Society to fund research which gives us all hope for the future and hopefully an end to MS altogether."



Café Crème sold specially prepared cupcakes, cakes and treats and also held a raffle raising an amazing £235.

Thank you to everyone who held a Cake Break this year. Your support is really appreciated.

Find out how you can get involved in MS Society fundraising by visiting our website www.mssociety.org.uk/fundraising

 **Audience:** All
 **Action:** Note



For Northern Ireland

Fundraising events

Moonlight Walk

Take part in our magical Moonlight Walk on Slieve Donard on **15 August**. This is a fantastic opportunity to walk up Northern Ireland's highest peak with only the stars and a torch to guide you. A reasonable level of fitness and suitable walking shoes/clothing are required. Walkers will enjoy a breakfast BBQ upon their return. All participants should pledge to raise £70 which can be forwarded to us before or after the event

Belfast Half Marathon

Take part in the third annual Belfast Half Marathon on **Sunday 20 September**. There is a new route this year starting and finishing at Ormeau Park. This is a great event for anyone looking to increase their running from 5k or 10k. This event is for over 17s. Register on the event website www.belfastcityhalfmarathon.net then contact us for your MS fundraising pack.

Zip-a-dee-doo-dah!

Get an adrenalin rush as you zip across Belfast's River Lagan at our Lagan Zip Slide on **19 or 20 September**. This is a great event for anyone looking for a bit of challenge. This event is for over 16s only. All participants should pledge to raise £85 which can be forwarded to us before or after the event.

 **Audience:** Northern Ireland
 **Action:** Share, act – sign up
 **Contact:** Samantha Creighton, Community Fundraiser
samantha.creighton@mssociety.org.uk
028 90 802 802

Living with MS

Our Living with MS information day takes place on **Saturday 12 September**, 10am – 3pm, at Ramada Hotel, Shaw's Bridge, Belfast. This event will bring together an exciting range of speakers and exhibits including leading MS researcher Professor Richard Reynolds and local MS campaigners Catherine Doran and Conor Devine.

Living with MS is Northern Ireland's biggest information day, an ideal opportunity for people with MS, their families and carers to come together to learn more about living with MS.

The event is free and anyone with an interest in MS is welcome to attend. Please get in touch for more information.

 **Audience:** Northern Ireland
 **Action:** Share, act – register for the event
 **Contact:** NI Reception
nireception@mssociety.org.uk
028 90 802 802

MS Exercise classes: summer schedule

Our MS Exercise classes are run in conjunction with Active Communities. The following classes will continue during the summer months:

- **Belfast** – Grove Wellbeing centre, Wednesdays 12.30 – 1.30pm
- **Larne** – Larne leisure centre, Thursdays 11.30am – 1pm
- **North Down and Ards** – Aurora leisure centre, Thursdays 11.15am – 12.15pm
- **Omagh** – Omagh leisure centre, Wednesdays 1.30pm – 2.30pm

For more information, please get in touch.

 **Audience:** Northern Ireland
 **Action:** Share, act – come to a class
 **Contact:** Dawn Harrison, Neuro Physiotherapist
dawn.harrison@mssociety.org.uk
028 90 802 802



For Scotland

Meet our new Director of Scotland

We're delighted to welcome **Morna Simpkins** as the new Director of Scotland at the MS Society.



What inspired you to apply for the role?

I knew about the MS Society through friends and colleagues who have MS. I'm looking forward to bringing my skills to the team to achieve the best possible results we can for people living with MS, as outlined by our new strategy.

Could you tell us a bit about your background?

Most recently I was the Chief Executive of Dundee Voluntary Action, an organisation which supports, develops and represents the voluntary sector in Dundee. For twelve years I was the Chief Executive of the Brittle Bone Society, where I worked to improve services for those with brittle bones and their families. The voluntary sector is my passion! I love working with people to achieve common goals.

How will you work with branches and local groups?

No-one knows better about life with MS than those who are living with it every day. I'm looking forward to working with our branches to understand local needs and identify opportunities to work together to beat MS. I'll be getting out and about to meet branch volunteers to hear about all the good work that's happening locally – in the meantime please feel free to get in touch with me by email or phone.



Audience: Scotland



Action: Share



Contact: Morna Simpkins,
Director of Scotland

morna.simpkins@mssociety.org.uk

0131 335 4052



For Scotland

Thank you MS Superstars!

So far this year our intrepid fundraisers have taken on abseils and a range of running events to help beat MS. Our biggest event of the spring, the Edinburgh Marathon Festival, was a huge success with 120 runners raising more than £40,000.

Amanda Carson and Brian Black (pictured) were inspired by Amanda's mum to take on the 10K at the Edinburgh Marathon Festival and then abseil down the Finnieston Crane in Glasgow the following day!

There are more exciting events coming up:

- **Loch Ness Marathon Festival** – 27 September
- **Great Scottish Run** – 4 October
- **Forth Bridge Abseil** – 18 October

Please help us spread the word in your area; events are a great way to raise money for your branch. We can send you our promotional events calendar – contact the fundraising team in Scotland and we'll pop your free copies in the post.



Audience: Scotland



Action: Share, act – promote the events



Contact: Fundraising team

msfundraising@mssociety.org.uk

0131 335 4050



For Scotland

MS Week at the Scottish Parliament

We put MS on the agenda at the Scottish Parliament during this year's MS Week (27 April - 3 May), with a number of activities sponsored by George Adam MSP, whose wife Stacey has MS.

Our exhibition in the Member's Lobby, 'My MS, My Life', highlighted the importance of getting the right treatment, care and support. Our staff were kept busy talking to cabinet secretaries, ministers and MSPs from all parties who dropped by to show their support. We were delighted that First Minister Nicola Sturgeon visited the exhibition, and wore an MS Society badge during First Minister's Questions.

Members of the Scottish Parliament held a debate on MS at which 11 MSPs spoke, including the Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health, Jamie Hepburn (pictured).

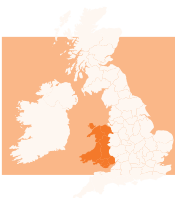
Following the debate, MSPs were joined by people with MS and those working in MS research, health and social care, at our parliamentary reception. We heard inspiring and powerful speeches about living with MS from Paralympics GB swimmer Stephanie Millward, Stacey Adam, and Scotland Council Chair Mary Douglas.



Thank you to everyone who helped make MS Week such a success. We'll be keeping up the momentum by working with Scotland's politicians through our Cross Party Group on MS and by engaging with Scotland's new MPs.

To find out how your branch can help shape this work, please get in touch.

 **Audience:** Scotland
 **Action:** Share, act – get in touch
 **Contact:** Scotland Campaigns team
scotlandcampaigns@mssociety.org.uk
0131 335 4050



For Wales

Introducing Katie Cooke – Local Networks Officer (South Wales)

We recently welcomed Katie Cooke (pictured right, with Urtha Felda, Local Networks Officer for North Wales) to the team as Local Networks Officer for south Wales. Katie has been very impressed by the dedication, compassion and enthusiasm of our volunteers and is here to support you in your roles offering support to people affected by MS.

Katie says: “Many of you have discussed the need for an increase in new volunteers so that you can be confident your branch offers as much as it can to anyone who needs it, no matter where they are in their journey with MS. They should also be confident that this support will be able to continue far into the future.

“I’ll be working with membership, with colleagues and with you to encourage more people to come forward and offer a few hours to run support groups, social gatherings, fundraising activities, and any other activities or events that you and they feel would be beneficial.”

Katie is keen to hear from people across south Wales, of all ages, with varying experiences and relationships with MS to help build on the amazing work that is already taking place.

“My role is to support you, your branch, your activities and your development as part of a flexible, inclusive and responsive network, there for anyone affected by MS.”



Katie has written an article introducing herself and encouraging people to get in touch, which you are welcome to include in your branch newsletters, if you have space. You can find this in the online version or Word version of Teamspirit for newsletter editors.

Please don’t hesitate to contact Katie yourself with your own ideas, suggestions, anxieties or questions. If you’re in North Wales, you’re always welcome to contact Urtha.



Audience: South Wales



Action: Share, act – contact Katie and use the text in your branch newsletter



Contact: Katie Cooke,
Local Networks Officer (South Wales)

katie.cooke@mssociety.org.uk

029 2167 8922



Branch contributions

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

Branch contributions 1 April to 31 May 2015				
Branch Name	Earmarked Description	Earmarked	Research	General
Andover Branch			£1,200.00	
Ballymoney Branch			£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Banbury & District Branch			£1,000.00	
Bath & District Branch	Cambridge Myelin Repair Centre	£3,000.00		
Braintree Branch			£500.00	
Cirencester & South Cotswold Branch			£2,000.00	
Falkirk Branch	Edinburgh Centre for Translational Research	£5,000.00		
Fife Branch	Edinburgh Centre for Translational Research	£5,000.00		
Gosport & Fareham Branch	Progressive MS Alliance	£8,000.00		
Haywards Heath & District Branch			£1,000.00	
High Wycombe & District Branch	Helpline	£300.00		
High Wycombe & District Branch	MS Nurses	£300.00	£300.00	
Llandrindod Wells & District Branch			£2,000.00	
Maldon & East Essex Branch	Cambridge Myelin Repair Centre	£4,000.00		
Merton Branch			£2,550.00	
Milton Keynes & District Branch				£1,000.00
Montgomeryshire Branch	Cambridge Myelin Repair Centre	£1,000.00		
Sefton Area Branch				£500.00
Settle, Bentham & District Branch	Cambridge Myelin Repair Centre	£500.00		
Shrewsbury & District Branch			£8,000.00	
Southampton & District Branch	Progressive MS Alliance	£10,000.00		
Stratford Upon Avon & District Branch	Welfare	£500.00	£500.00	
Wareham & Purbeck Branch	MS Nurses	£2,000.00		
Wareham & Purbeck Branch	MS Smart Project	£1,000.00		
West Hertfordshire Branch			£5,000.00	
Westmorland South Lakes Branch			£5,000.00	
Winchester & District Branch	Fatigue Management Course	£500.00		
Total		£41,100.00	£34,050.00	£6,500.00



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

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