**Teamspirit 226 – September Finance Issue**

**Preparing for 2019 Year End**

We’ll be sending the Finance 2019 Year End pack to you via your group e-mail on 17 September. It will contain information about the Year End process and also some useful tips on how to plan ahead.

**How can you prepare?**

2019 year-end documents must be submitted by 31 January 2020, which is a requirement of our Financial Rules. Here are some useful preparation tips to ensure we receive your paperwork on time:-

• Make sure all coordinating team members are aware of the 31 January 2020 deadline, and what’s required of them.

• Arrange a team meeting in January 2020 (before the deadline) where the year-end documents can be completed, signed, and submitted to our London office by the 31 January.

• If your group can’t meet in January, then a copy of the Receipts & Payments Report, and Internal Financial Controls Checklist must be emailed to all coordinating team members for review and approval.

• The Finance Team are here to help! If you have any queries or need help please contact us as soon as possible, ideally before 20 December, to ensure your group is able to meet the deadline.

**We’re here to help –new support sessions available**

This year we’re delighted to offer a range of interactive support sessions via Zoom video conferencing app to help your group complete their Year End paperwork.

These sessions will be held on a number of different days and times and will last 45 minutes. You’ll receive details on dates and how to join one of these sessions in the Year End email that your group will be sent in September.

These sessions will be run by our friendly Finance Support team. We’ll be discussing what’s required from your group and how to plan ahead so you don’t miss the deadline. There’ll also be time for Q&A’s, and an opportunity for you to share your own top tips with other groups.

The Year End process is a collaborative process so these sessions are open to all coordinating team members in your group.

**Important**: Failure to comply with the 31 January deadline will cause delays in completion of our statutory accounts, which may result in an increased audit fee, and a finance visit to your group.

If you don’t receive the Year End email to your group address or have any queries, please notify the Finance Team as early as possible.

**Contact**: Finance Support team

financesupport@mssociety.org.uk

0131 335 4078

**Signatory Responsibilities**

As you’ll know, all Coordinating Team members (including non-signatories) are responsible for the funds held in your local group bank account. Our Financial Rules are in place to safeguard our assets and prevent any allegations being made against individuals.

Failure to comply with these rules can result in all Coordinating Team members being asked to stand down, and the group being temporarily closed with bank accounts being frozen.

Some key responsibilities of group account signatories are:-

• Never sign a blank cheque – under no circumstances should a blank cheque be signed, or should you be asked to do so! If you are, or have concerns this may be happening, it must be raised with Finance Support immediately.

• No blank spaces – making sure that cheques are written without blank spaces ensures alterations cannot be made after signing.

• Document to support payment – it’s not acceptable to sign a cheque, or authorise a BACS transfer without agreeing the payment supporting documentation (e.g. invoice, expense claim form).

• BACS payments – before authorising a BACS transfer via Barclay.net online banking, check all of the details match the supporting documentation (e.g. bank account number, sort code, payee name).

• Fraudulent invoice – scammers may send you fraudulent invoices, pretending to be one of your regular suppliers (i.e. village hall, physio etc.). If in any doubt, do not arrange payment, and instead send a copy straightaway to the email address below.

**Contact**: Finance Support team

financesupport@mssociety.org.uk

0208 438 0700

**Online payments with Barclays.net**

With more and more companies refusing payments by cheque, Barclays.Net could be the answer.

Barclays.Net is a secure, internet based corporate online banking system which comes with a number of benefits for groups. With full access, groups can view up to date balances and transactional information as well as setup and authorise same or 3 day BACS payments via dual authorisation.

We currently have 115 active users over 54 groups who regularly make payments online using Barclays.Net.

For existing users there’s a handy help tool on Barclays.Net, with some interactive guides on how to use the system. We recommend downloading the guide for Viewing, Submitting, Authorising, Releasing and Repairing Payments. This is a detailed guide on how payments pass through Barclays.Net from start to finish.

If you’re a current user, remember that smartcards and PIN’s mustn’t be shared.

If your group would like to sign up to Barclays. Net or have any further questions, please get in touch and we’ll arrange for an information pack including Frequently Asked Questions and software/hardware requirements to be sent out to you.

**Contact:** Treasury Support

treasury.support@mssociety.org.uk

020 8438 0784