



A4: Our legal identity, policies and rules

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1. Our identity in the eyes of the law

We are registered with the name **Multiple Sclerosis Society**:

- With the Charity Commission in England and Wales – registered charity number 1139257
- With the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator – register number SC041990
- As a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales – 07451571

The registration of charities in Northern Ireland has not yet been extended to us.

Your official documents must display this as follows:

Multiple Sclerosis Society. Registered charity numbers 1139257/ SC041990. Registered as a limited company in England and Wales 07451571.

Being a 'charitable company' is in line with other charitable organisations and reduces some risks compared to being an unincorporated charity.

You must refer to us as the Multiple Sclerosis Society or more usually, the MS Society, or MS Society plus nation suffix (for example, MS Society Scotland).

We are registered as a data controller and processor under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and we have a [Register of Processing Activities](#) which documents the breadth of processing we do. We have one GDPR registration to cover the whole organisation, including all local processing activities.



See [A6: Handling data](#) for more on our data responsibilities.

2. Our charitable objects

Our 'charitable objects' (long term aims) are:

- To support and relieve people affected by MS
- To encourage people affected by MS to attain their full potential by improving their conditions of life
- To promote research into MS and allied conditions and publish the results

Under charity law, all of our activities must reflect these objects, which is why we can't provide services to people who aren't affected by MS. Our organisational goals capture what we are currently working towards.



See [A1: Introduction and overview](#) for our seven long term organisational goals.

3. Representing us

We are one organisation with one brand, one company number and one charitable status through the regulators in Scotland, England and Wales.

3.1. Delegation of authority

The [Board of Trustees](#) delegates authority via the [Chief Executive](#) to our volunteer-led MS Society groups.



See [Governance of MS Society Volunteer-Led Groups](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) for help.

'Delegation of authority' gives your group the right to use the following assets:

- The name Multiple Sclerosis Society, more commonly known as the MS Society
- Our charity registration numbers and company limited by guarantee number

- Our official branding
- Our fundraising merchandise and printed materials

You must include our name, brand and charity numbers in all official correspondence and publications. You must not misuse these assets, nor permit their misuse by unauthorised groups or people.



Download a [Letterhead Template](#) with our registration details and your national logo from the volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) for help.

4. Following our policies and rules

Policies are official documents that support the way we work. Our policies are set by our [Executive Group](#) and/or by the [Board of Trustees](#) and form the basis of the systems and procedures we follow.



See [Appendix 2: Sources of support](#) for staff and governance contact details.

As an MS Society group, you must follow all of our policies that apply to volunteers and to groups; the authority which is delegated to you is on the basis that you do. We provide clear rules, written guidance and staff support to enable you to do this.



Download [Policies and Documents](#) on our volunteer website, or ask the [Supporter Care Team](#) to send you a printed copy of the policy you need.

You'll find links to the policies that support our group requirements throughout the [Group Handbook](#).

4.1. Group rules

Where we use the word 'must' or 'we expect you to' in this handbook, it means a specific rule that you must comply with. Where we use the words 'we want you to' or 'we recommend', these indicate our suggested best approach.

We've summarised many of these must do's at the end of this handbook.



See [Appendix 3: MS Society rules for groups](#) for a list of must do's, or ask your [Local Networks Officer](#) for help.

4.2. Financial rules

If your group handles money, you must follow our financial rules. These rules are to ensure your group meets the legal requirements that apply to us as a charity, and that we all maintain appropriate controls to safeguard the use of the MS Society's charitable assets.



See [Appendix 4: MS Society financial rules for groups](#) or ask our Finance Support Team for help.

4.3. Fundraising standards

The Fundraising Regulator sets and maintains the standards for charitable fundraising, and regulates fundraising, in England, Northern Ireland and Wales – and also in relation to many charities, including us, in Scotland.

The Fundraising Regulator holds the Code of Fundraising Practice for the UK. All of our fundraising activities must comply with this code, including how we deal with complaints about fundraising.



See [Appendix 5: Code of Fundraising Practice in summary](#) or ask your Area Fundraiser or national Fundraising Manager for help.

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