



# Building a stronger community

▶ Let's stop MS together

## Why do we want to change our offer?

Currently the MS Society has 26,000 members but we estimate that MS in the UK affects more than a million people when you take account of the 130,000 people who have the condition and their friends and family.

Our membership numbers have been in decline so to **maximise our impact** we need to reach and build relationships with many more people in the MS community.

We will achieve this by....

- 1. Improving our engagement offer**
- 2. Being more flexible and inclusive**
- 3. Giving members a louder voice**
- 4. Helping local groups to attract new members**

To help us get here we've received lots of excellent feedback from both existing members and potential new ones.

## Improving our engagement offer

We'll be revamping MS Matters, and launching a new digital platform which individual members can tailor to their needs – allowing them to easily access the content, services and support that's most relevant to them, and make the connections they want with other members of our community online.

Following feedback from over 500 members, MS Matters will focus upon:

- ▶ The latest research & treatment information
- ▶ Practical tips about day to day living with MS
- ▶ Creating an online community space where members can become more involved in the Society

## Being more flexible and inclusive

Current approach of charging a fixed fee for membership is not for everyone, some people aren't willing to sign up whilst others would be happy to contribute more.

By moving to a new free membership model, allows people to contribute what they can as a donation, we believe we'll make membership attractive to many more people in our community.

Members will still get MS Matters magazine, either by post or online, three times a year and pay a subscription fee of £5 for the printed copy.

## Giving members a louder voice

We'll continue to be a democratic organisation, with members able to elect a majority of Trustees on the Board by being part of the Electorate.

Instead of a limited once-yearly engagement through the AGM, we'll be looking to engage interested members much more substantially, sharing information and seeking their views on a variety of different strategic topics throughout the year.

By doing this in a more flexible way, it will mean members have control over how much they get involved with our governance and also helps us to manage our costs by only contacting those people that are interested.

## Helping local groups attract new members and secure income

Our local groups are vitally important to us. We believe these changes will assist local groups in attracting new members by making membership much more attractive.

And to provide local groups with assurance and certainty about their income, we will protect their current income and ensure that they don't lose out in the longer term.

## Proposed changes to our governance model

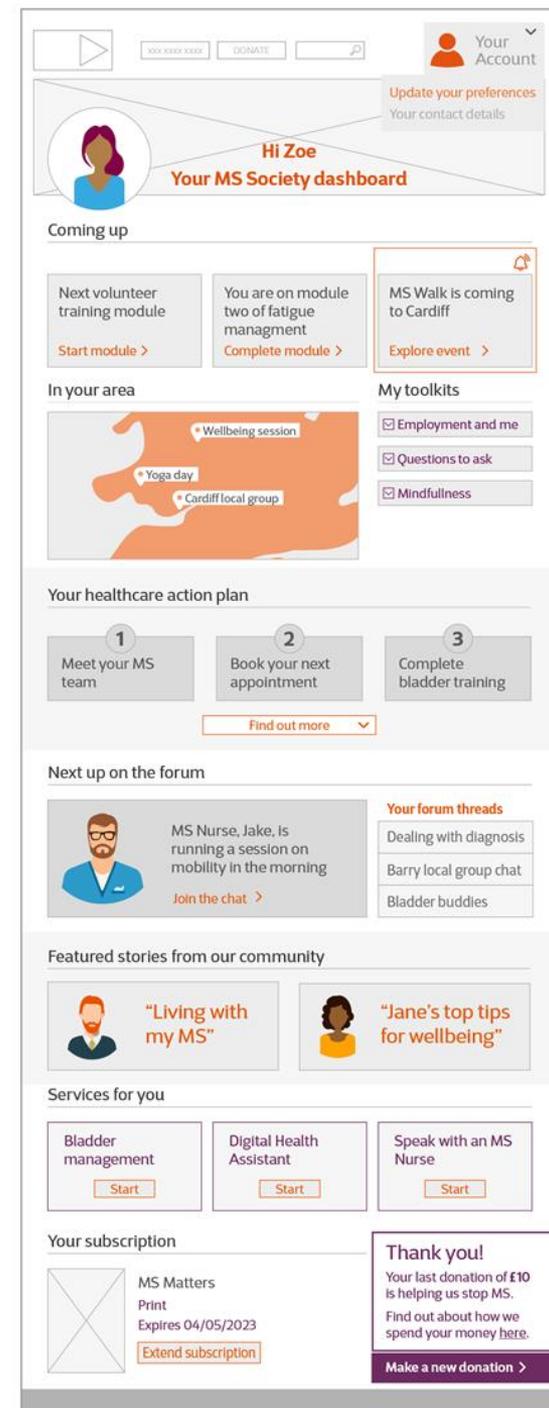
1. Legal responsibilities of membership would be transferred to the Board of Trustees and Council Chairs, who will collectively form the members of the charitable company.
2. All existing members and supporters would retain the right to vote by being part of an electorate who will be invited to provide their views on key issues, as well as being able to elect new trustees to the Board. New supporters can also opt-in to being part of the Electorate
3. The Board and Council Chairs (as the new members) would reappoint all trustees for their second terms based on performance in role.
4. Changing the balance between elected and appointed/co-opted trustees to being 8 elected, 2 appointed (being the Chair and Treasurer roles) and 3 co-opted

# Our digital platform

Our digital platform will reflect the experience of people with MS, tailoring, based on your interests, what we know about you and engagement drivers.

We'll create a tailored offer in the form of a personal experience for all visitors, encouraging them to convert into service users / participants in a way that is relevant to them.

This will include a local area where local events and services can be promoted.



## What do I get when I join online?

**Bookmarks** (our users told us they wanted to control what content they could save in their area)

**A pick and mix of elements** of the offer (our users told us that they wanted to choose what was right for them e.g. email, MS Matters)

**A local area** (our users told us that local events and services are interesting to them)

**A new forum** (our users told us a modern and sleek forum would be a useful part of the offer)

**Suggested content** based on topics of interest chosen by the users (our users told us they wanted to choose what topics their tailored area would include)

## The timeline

Task	Date
Resolution put forward to members	16th October 2020
Online (proxy) voting closes	3rd December 2020
2020 AGM takes place and results will be announced	5th December 2020
If adopted, the new Articles of Association would come into effect from 01 January 2021	1st January 2021
New engagement offer launches	Spring 2021
Annual payment to groups	May 2021



## Your questions

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