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# Volunteer update

Welcome to your monthly newsletter — keeping you updated with news relevant to all volunteers, as well as key group-specific news.



## General updates



### Assemble launch and data freeze reminder


Take a look at our sneak peek video




### September's Volunteer Voice

Join us on **Monday 30 September**

about Assemble, our new volunteer management system (VMS). And make any changes or additions to services on the Portal, or vacancies on REACH, before the data freeze from **Monday 16 September**.

[Find out more](#) 

**at 1.30pm** for organisational updates and a Q&A opportunity. Colleagues from our Volunteering Team will join us to tell you more about our new volunteer management system (VMS), Assemble.

[Sign up here](#) 



## Creating welcoming spaces for all


We have two new learning modules available with lots of useful ideas and resources to help you build on what you're already doing to create inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

[Find out more](#) 



## Our 2025 to 2029 strategy needs you!

What should we focus on in the next five years to achieve maximum impact for the MS community? Share your thoughts to help define our ambitions.

[Find out more](#) 

## Help us develop our ideas for Project Mead

Project Mead's our project to improve our services and support for people impacted by MS. We've spent the last few months listening to the MS community, including volunteers. They've told us what's working well and made suggestions where things could be better.

Thanks to everyone who's contributed to the research so far. Our next steps are to develop these ideas more. We'd love to work with you to do this and ensure that any changes we suggest reflect what our volunteers think.

If you're interested in taking part in some online discussion sessions or workshops between mid-September and mid-November, please email

[projectmead@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:projectmead@mssociety.org.uk) .



## Nominate for a Volunteer Impact Award

Do you know another volunteer who's gone above and beyond to contribute to the lives of those affected by MS? Don't forget to nominate them for a Volunteer Impact Award!

[Find out more](#) 



## Share our survey on hospital visits for people with MS

We want to better understand how and why people with MS attend hospital. Could unnecessary visits be reduced? So we've launched an anonymous survey asking about both planned and unplanned (emergency) hospital visits.

[Find the survey here](#) 



## Early bird tickets available for Carols by Candlelight

Booking's now open for our annual evening of festive music and celebrity readings in aid of our Stop MS Appeal. Join us at Westminster Chapel on **Thursday 12 December at 7pm.**

[Book tickets here](#)



## Membership discounts at The Gym Group

If you're thinking about getting more active, or know someone else in the MS community who is, we have a special offer to share. Become a member of The Gym Group with no joining fee and a reduced monthly fee.

[Find out more](#)

## Other news...

**'your Advances' magazine:** With news, stories and achievements from the community, The Autumn 2024 issue will be [available to download here from 16 September.](#)

**What is MS?:** Our ['What is MS?'](#) booklet's been revised and updated with our new branding. Download it to print or order free copies from our online shop.

## Support's always on hand

We know that volunteering can have its ups and downs. If you'd like a confidential chat about anything that's worrying you in your role, please contact Barbara on [supportwellbeing@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:supportwellbeing@mssociety.org.uk)



## Volunteering in action



### It's been lovely to have such a positive impact on others

Nin talks about volunteering both for our local Heart of the Midlands Group and with one of our national groups, Asian MS.

[Read Nin's blog here](#) □



### Feeling part of a community is empowering

Thomas is a Cymru Council member, and Group Coordinator for the Cardiff and Vale Group. He tells us why he feels passionate about representing the MS community.

[Read Thomas's blog here](#) □

**\*\*\* If you'd like to share your own experiences of volunteering, please let us know by completing the [online form here](#) \*\*\***



# Updates for groups



## Corporate funding — making local links

Corporate or business funding is a great way to boost your group's income. Local businesses can offer general, unrestricted funding or sponsor specific events.

[Find out more](#) ▢



## Preparing for Finance Year End

As we wave goodbye to summer, our thoughts are turning to the Finance Year-End process. And there are some key steps you can start taking to ensure your group's prepared.

[Find out more](#) ▢

## Coffee & Chats are back

Next week (**17, 18 and 19 September**) sees a new set of online Coffee & Chat sessions hosted by the Volunteer Support Team. They'll be covering topics including contactless devices for group fundraising (to replace GoodBox) and the launch of Assemble. These sessions are a great chance to ask questions and share ideas with fellow group volunteers, so we hope to see you there!

[Sign up here](#) ▢





## Roaming the royal residences

Would your group be interested in a free visit to one of the King's official residences in London or Windsor? Or in monthly Zoom talks for people who find it difficult to visit galleries and heritage sites?

[Find out more](#) ▢



## Sharing data with third parties — a data protection reminder

In the course of running your group, you may need to share personal data with a third-party provider. So we've put together a reminder of the documents you need to use to ensure they keep this data safe, in line with the UK GDPR requirements.

[Find out more](#) ▢

## This month's Top Tips!

Welcome to our 'Top Tips' section. Every month we'll share useful ideas and/or 'how to' hints to help you carry out your volunteering role.

### An important reminder...

If you're inviting external speakers to a group event, it's important to undertake some basic checks to ensure they are who they say they are. And it's a good idea to verify speakers with the organisations they're associated with, particularly before acting on their information or advice.

You should never feel pressured into allowing someone to come and share information about their service at your group meeting or to those at your group. If you aren't comfortable, it's OK to say no. And make it clear that people aren't expected to use that person, activity or service. They have the right to choose whether to use that provider or not.

## Local group donations

A continuing thank you to all our groups that have generously donated to support our research projects and UK-wide services

[Find out more](#) 



## Events

### Events for all volunteers

**Volunteer Voice:** Monday 30 September at 1.30pm

**Virtual support events:** Information and skills sessions for different stages of the MS journey (including Staying Active with MS)

**2024 fundraising events calendar**

### Events for group volunteers

**Coffee & Chat** - Tuesday 17 September at 6pm, Wednesday 18 September at 2pm and Thursday 19 September at 11am

**Weekly drop-in with Volunteer Support Team:** Every Tuesday at 2pm

**Monthly Health and Safety drop-in:** First Tuesday of every month at 3pm



**Enthuse onboarding training:** Various dates available

**Monthly fundraising drop-in:** First Wednesday of every month at 2pm

Let's stop MS together



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