

Me and My Mug



Hi! My name's Fiona Salamone and I've volunteered as the Group Coordinator for the South and West Cornwall Group for almost five years.

What's the story of your mug?

This is my mum's mug, which has beautiful flowers on and blends in perfectly with my mum's garden.

What's your go-to hot beverage?

You can't beat a nice cup of tea in the sunshine!

What's your favourite treat to have alongside a cuppa?

It's got to be a Cornish cream tea...obviously with jam first!

What are some main tasks you do in your role?

A key part of my role is coordinating the Volunteer Team. I arrange regular meetings and ensure anything we're doing as a group follows MS society guidelines. Importantly, I ensure we have enough volunteers to cover all the roles required. If anyone has too much to do, then we look at further recruitment to support them.

I also coordinate transport. We partner with Age UK and local taxi companies to ensure transport is accessible, so everyone gets the opportunity to attend all that we offer. Transport costs us 10k a year so we need to fundraise enough to balance the books!

I support all the team to carry out their roles. Whether that's supporting the Finance Volunteer on grant applications, helping with fundraising events or attending support visits.

I also get involved with local media, such as radio interviews. And I work with other charities, such as Age UK, to support anyone with MS to complete applications forms, including PIP. I want to ensure everyone gets what they're entitled to.

When things get challenging in your volunteering, what helps to keep you motivated?

Looking at where we started five years ago this month, there was no group in South and West Cornwall. We now have 11 volunteers, plus a satellite group in North Cornwall with two volunteers. We launched with six people in a room and now our monthly meetings can attract more than 60 people.

We have a stretch exercise group every Monday, carpet bowls and boxercise three times a month and another activity once a month. These range from painting, pottery and glass art, to sailing, archery or visits to national trust gardens. All of the activities are accessible for all. Seeing our group members socialising, making new friends, smiling and laughing - that's when you know the hard work put in by all of the volunteer team is paying off. That's what keeps us all motivated.

What advice would you give to someone new to this role?

Take one step at a time! Try not to get overwhelmed, especially if you're setting up a new or small group. Use the resources available to you and other groups around you for support, especially for recruitment. You can't do it all yourself.

When you're not volunteering, what're you most likely to be doing?

Looking after my four dogs or spending time with my family and having quality time with my 10 grandchildren!

Are there any shout outs or thank yous you'd like to share?

My family for all the support they give me in my daily life and in my volunteering. Whether they're hurtling across zip wires, jumping out of planes or simply helping with a raffle or tombola, they're always by my side.

Also, the whole team of volunteers! The group is successful because of every volunteer. Everyone is so dedicated to making our group a success and without each person doing what they do, it just wouldn't work!





Are you happy for other volunteers to contact you?

Yes.

Thanks to Fiona for chatting to us. If you'd like to connect with Fiona or ask her any questions about her volunteering, you can direct message her on Assemble. Once you're on Assemble, click on the message icon in the top right of your screen, select 'new message' and enter her name, Fiona Salamone, into the 'to' field. When you're ready press 'send'.

You can [find out more about the 'Me and My Mug' series on the Volunteer Website here.](#)

If you'd like to share your 'Me and my mug' story, we'd love to hear from you!
Complete this form and we'll be in touch.