Every MS story.
Our strategy.

The MS Society Strategy
2020-2024

Our vision

A world free from the effects of MS.

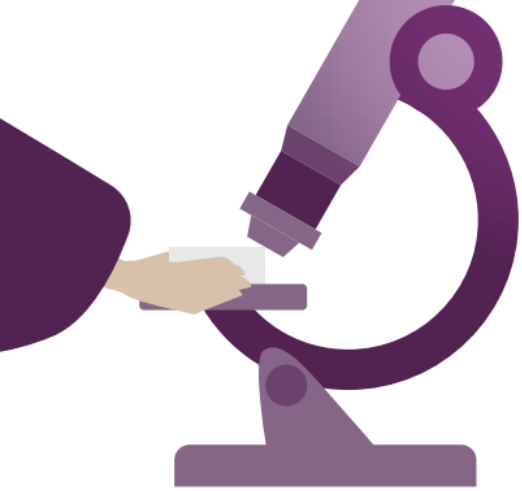
Our mission

Transforming lives,
stopping MS.

We're...

- Helping people
live well with MS

- Connecting people and making sure their voices are heard



- Working to find effective treatment and prevent MS

Over 130,000

people in the UK have

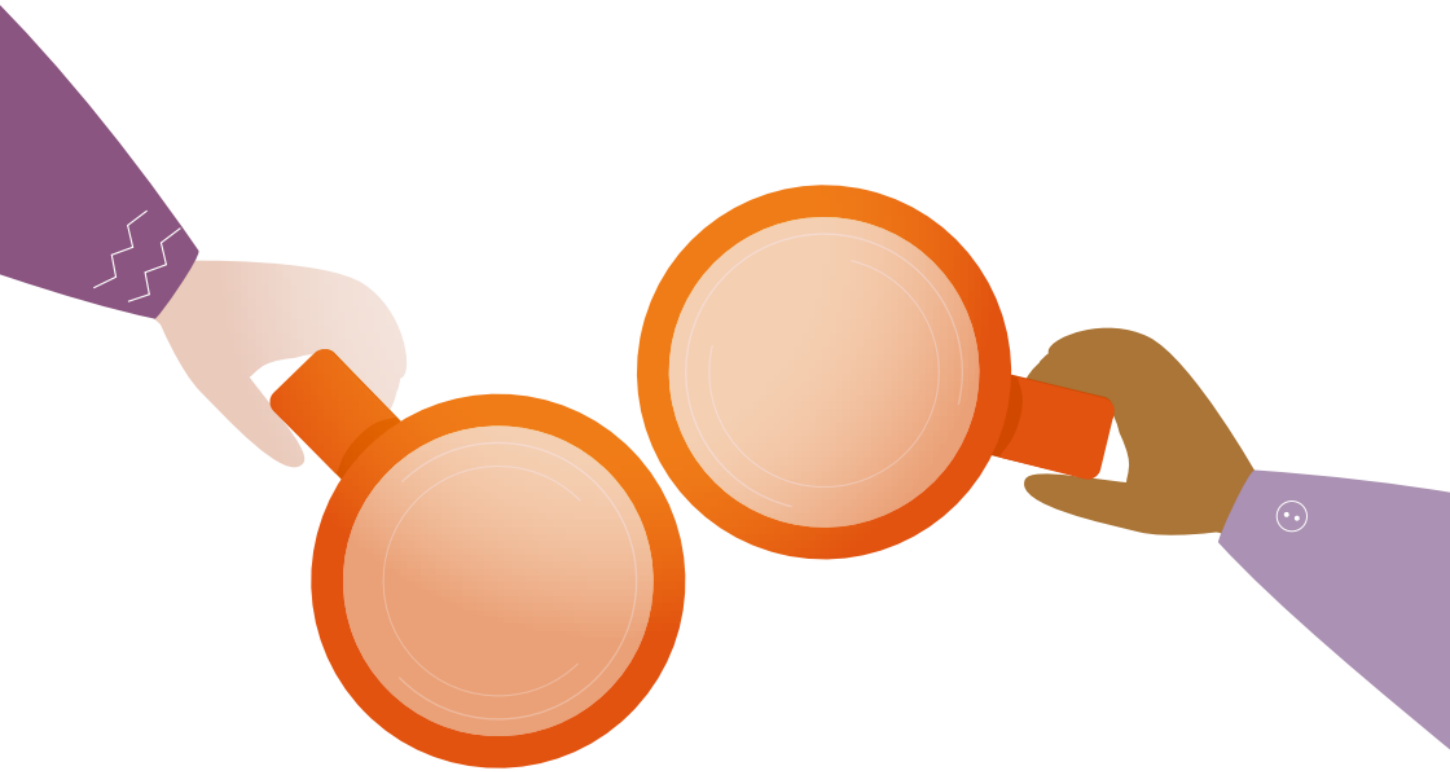
multiple sclerosis. But living with MS is never the same for any two people.

You could experience different symptoms. Your condition could be more or less visible.

You might have access to a treatment. But too many don't.

You, your family and friends could have all the support you need from the health care system, government or your employer. More often, you don't.

You could feel heard and be connected to a community of people who understand. You might feel alone.



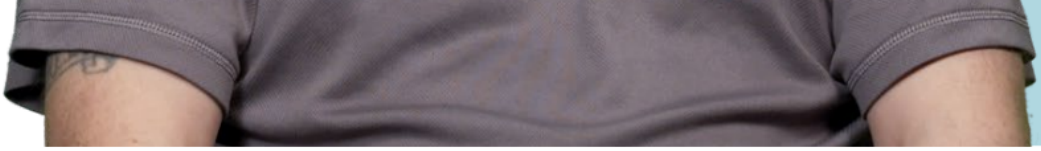
Everyone living with MS, their family and friends has a unique MS story.

We listened to these stories. We asked what was most important to people. We looked back at our 2015-2019 strategy to see where we'd tackled those things. And where we still have work to do.

We want a world free from the effects of MS. And we have a bold, ambitious plan to help get us there.

At its core are the MS stories of the 130,000 people living with MS, and their carers, family and friends. These stories will drive our work from 2020 to 2024 and beyond.

Every MS story. Our strategy.



Keith's story

“No one tells you what to expect when your partner gets diagnosed with MS.

It was a shock for me when Shona was diagnosed – I didn't really know what MS was.

I don't think of myself as a carer, I just get on with everyday life.

On my days off I'm helping Shona and taking her here and there. Sometimes I just want to sit down, but I'm up again. I'm not actually getting a day's rest.

Shona will forget things, then she'll repeat things and I wonder to myself: is this part of MS? That can cause arguments and disagreements. So it has an effect on us. I feel like carers are put back on the burner and left to get on with it themselves.

I don't know what will happen in the future.

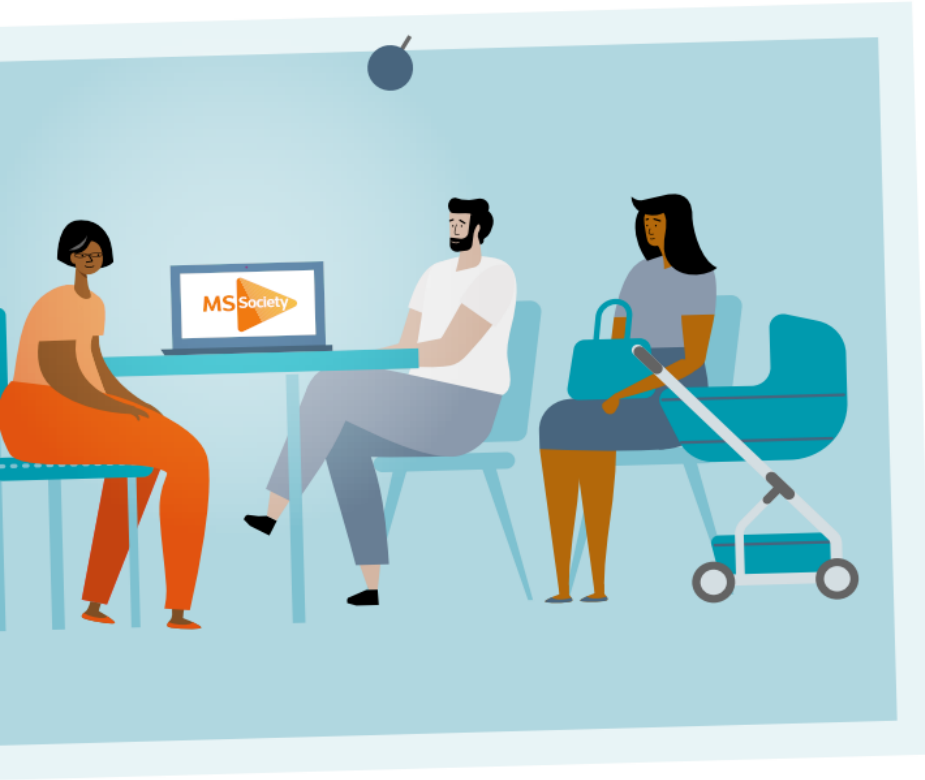
If we'll need to get the car adapted, if she'll maybe be OK for three, four, five years... I just don't know what the future holds for us.

Our goal.

People living well with MS.

Supporting people living with MS

We want people with MS to live well with their condition. We'll continue to expand our range of services to help people understand their rights, manage their condition and do the things in life that are important to them.



Supporting carers, families and friends

We know that MS is tough on carers, families and friends.

We'll provide the best quality information to help people understand MS and their rights as carers. And we'll keep developing the support we offer, to help everyone's health and wellbeing.

Access to responsive treatments, care

and support

We'll be fighting to make sure everyone can access the treatments, care and support they need, wherever they live in the UK.

We want the policies made by governments, and the health care people get, to reflect what people with MS, their family and friends go through day to day.

Suki's story

“When my fatigue levels are really high it's easier to say I'm tired

as people just don't get it. Because it's invisible it's very hard to explain.

I had the opportunity to speak about MS to 100 ladies at my local temple. They listened in disbelief but then I explained the invisibility of it. I got a lot of sympathy, which is not what I wanted. I wanted people to understand that these are real things not allowing me to live my full life. You don't know how you're going to be one day to the next. You can't be told to have a paracetamol or go and lie down for two hours.

Gradually over time I've become more isolated.

I don't know whether that's what other people have done to me, or whether I decide not to be included because I need to preserve what energy I've got left.

When I got diagnosed with MS I thought: I'm going to fight this like a lioness. And it's your fight on your own because even the closest people to you don't always understand.

Our goal. Connected communities, powerful voices.

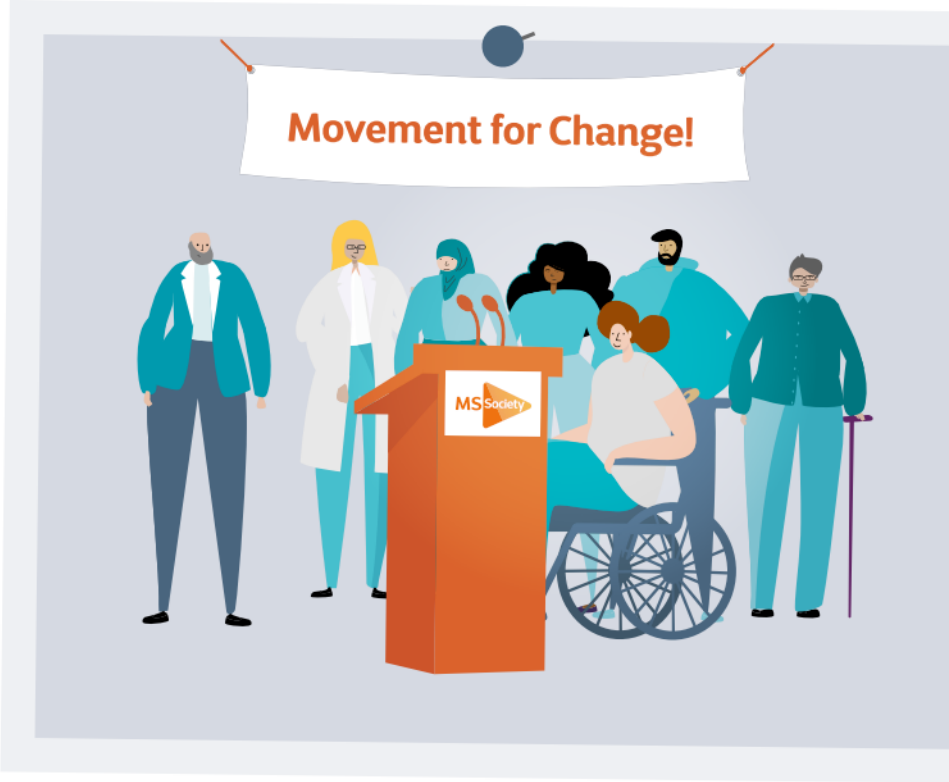
Improving society's understanding of MS

MS is different for everyone and many symptoms are invisible. People living with MS often face barriers and challenges in everyday life. We'll raise awareness and increase public and political understanding of the realities of MS.

Connecting MS communities

We don’t want anyone to feel alone, overwhelmed or misunderstood.

We’ll increase the ways people can share experiences, tackle common issues, foster friendships, build confidence and reduce isolation.



People affected by MS leading change

We want to support MS communities to become movements for change on issues that affect them.

We'll help people living with MS to develop the skills and confidence to speak up on issues they care about.

And we'll provide the tools people need to run campaigns that bring about real change.

Amelia's story

“ I never know if I'm going to wake up tomorrow and not be able to use my legs or my arms.

I get fatigue, pain, numbness, spasticity in my legs – I get so many things it's hard to put into words. I'm on medication, but that's not helping with progression.

I was diagnosed with MS when I was 19. I felt really upset about it at the time. I knew something was wrong with me but I didn't expect it to be a lifelong condition like MS. It made me feel quite strange.

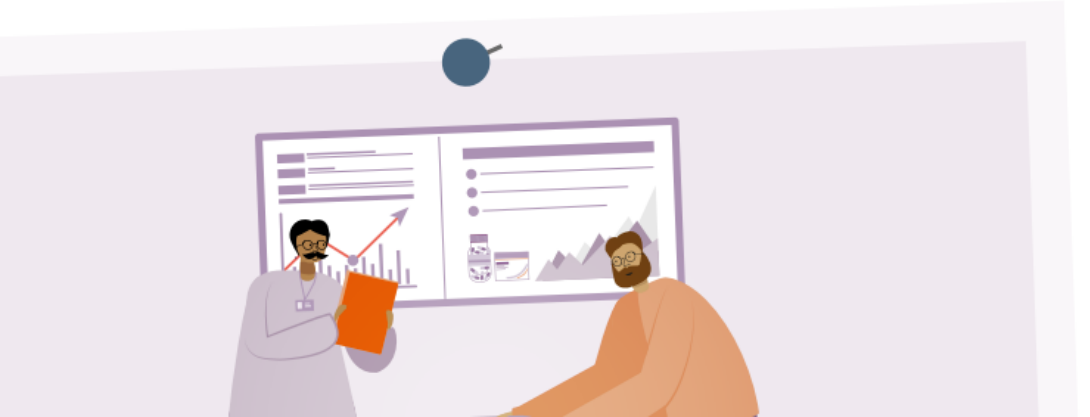
It can be upsetting seeing my friends living life as they should be at my age. I used to work full time, go out all the time with my friends but everything has changed. I've unfortunately had to stop working.

MS is unpredictable, so you have to get on with your life as much as you can. You never know what MS has for you in the future. ”

Our goal. Effective treatments and preventing MS.

Deepening our understanding of progression

For people with MS, not knowing how their MS will change over time is a huge challenge. We'll be prioritising our work with UK and international partners to improve our understanding of how and why MS gets worse.



Accelerating clinical trials

We believe we can slow, stop or reverse the effects of MS, for everyone.

And to get there we're funding a first of its kind clinical trials platform to develop treatments up to three times faster than we do now.

Improve our understanding of risk factors

We're still not sure what causes MS. But we want to understand the possible risk factors better, so we can develop ways to prevent people developing MS.

Making our strategy a story of success

It’s not just about what we say we’ll do. We know it’s also important that we work in the right ways. Our BEAT values are at the heart of how we work.

With the MS community:

- we're Bold
- we're Expert
- we're Ambitious
- we're Together

And we commit to making sure we:

- listen, learn, and are led by MS communities

- find new ways to reach, engage, and involve MS communities
- are inclusive, valuing diversity, and actively reaching out to different groups
- make the most of digital, data and technology across everything we do to help us accelerate our impact

- partner more with other organisations to make the best difference for people living with MS

- innovate, try new things, and be effective and efficient in all that we do

- support, inspire and value our staff and volunteers so together we make the biggest difference

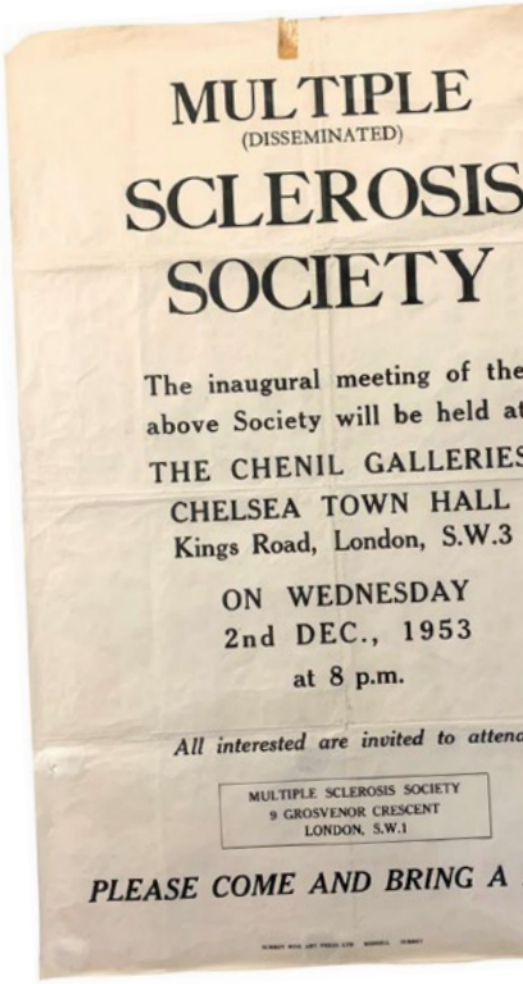
Together we

can stop MS

From Nick Winser (Chair) and Nick Moberly (Chief Executive)

“Our strategy is ambitious. And it must be.

Our roots go back to 1953, when Richard and Mary Cave grew frustrated with the lack of services and support for Mary’s MS, and founded the first MS volunteer-led local group.


MULTIPLE
(DISSEMINATED)
SCLEROSIS
SOCIETY

The inaugural meeting of the above Society will be held at
THE CHENIL GALLERIES
CHELSEA TOWN HALL
Kings Road, London, S.W.3

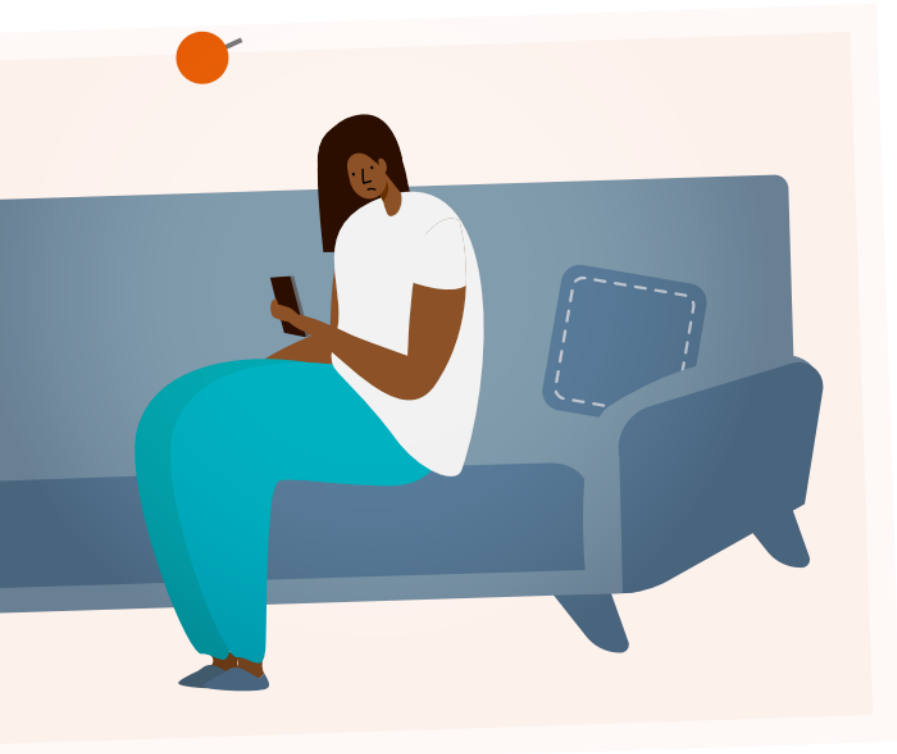
ON WEDNESDAY
2nd DEC., 1953
at 8 p.m.

All interested are invited to attend

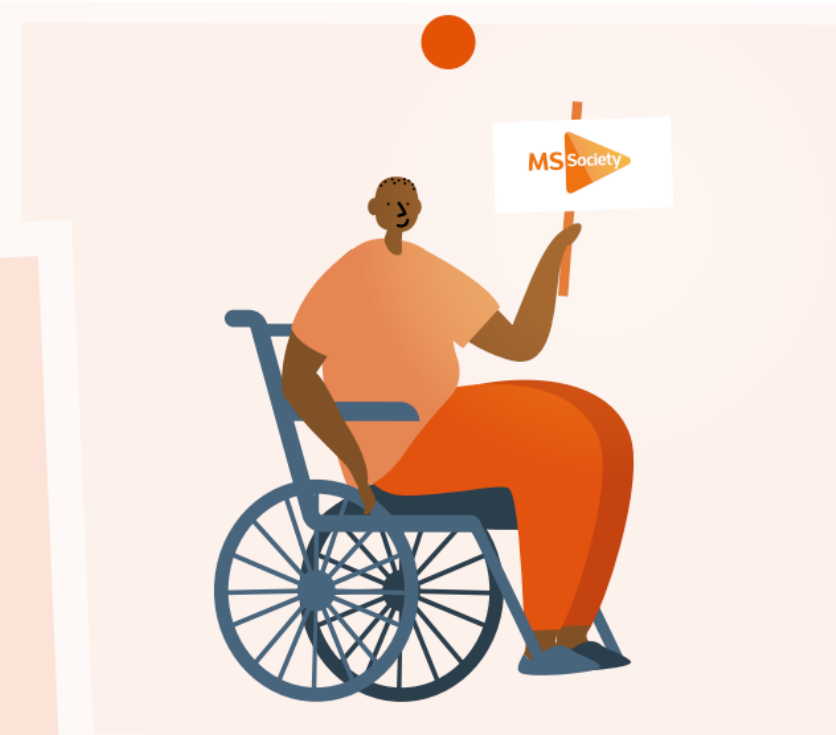
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY
9 GROSVENOR CRESCENT
LONDON, S.W.1

PLEASE COME AND BRING A

Since then we've made incredible progress. But there are still too many people living with MS who feel alone and don't have the care and support they need. We have bold plans to tackle this over the next five years. We'll expand our support and make it more inclusive, accessible and tailored.



We'll work with the MS community in new ways, reaching and connecting more people to foster friendships, share experiences, and campaign on what matters most to them.



MS research has made incredible advances. We can see a future where everyone with MS gets the treatments they need. We've launched our most ambitious fundraising appeal, Stop MS, to get to that future.

None of our work would be possible without our wonderful supporters, volunteers and staff. To support everybody, we're committed to making sure we work in the right way, are a strong well-run organisation, and clearly communicate the impact we're making. We'll adapt as the world around us changes.

We'll continue to listen and learn from our community and honour the trust our community invests in us with their time, support and donations.

It's amazing to see what can happen when our community works together, and we're incredibly excited to put this strategy into action.

Be part of our story to stop MS

- **Donate, fundraise, or leave a gift in your will.** You'll be funding life changing services and research.

- **Volunteer with our amazing team.** Lend us your skills and interests to make a difference to the lives of people living with MS.

- **Campaign** with our campaigns community. Speak up and create change on issues that matter to people living with MS.

- **Work with us.** Could you help put this strategy into action? We want your talents to help us be the best we can be.

mssociety.org.uk/get-involved

Let's stop MS together

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