

BERKSHIRE MS THERAPY CENTRE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026

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Welcome to the latest edition of the BMSTC Newsletter.

We've had some changes to our Trustee team lately. Please see our Chair's Report overleaf to find out more.

You can find out about lots of other interesting updates on Pippa's Pages on pages 4-7 and news from our BMSTC Family on pages 8-9.

We also have our AGM coming up on 7 October - details are on page 3 - we really hope to see you there. This is your chance to have your voice heard and we have a fascinating speaker, member Kate Lang, coming to talk about her experiences of taking part in the CAR-T trial, an exciting potential new treatment for MS, as featured in our May edition.

Our Senior Fundraising Manager Freia has written about how the Centre is funded and how you can help support us on pages 15-17. You can also read about all our fundraising events and activities - thank you to our amazing fundraisers for all they do.

Please keep your news coming, we love to hear from you.

With best wishes

Gill Claire

Gill Braid, Newsletter Editor, gill@bmstc.org
Claire Frew, Newsletter Editor, claire@bmstc.org

Deadline for contributions for next issue: 19 October 2026



Welcome to the August edition of our newsletter. It's hard to believe that we are already over half way through the year, with 2026 presenting its own challenges to navigate. We are incredibly sorry that Neil Dawkins, our Chair, recently stepped down as Trustee of Berkshire MS Therapy Centre after seven years. Neil made an incredible contribution to the Centre. We are so grateful for all his hard work, dedication and commitment leading the Trustee team through a challenging time including Covid and the cost of living crisis. It really is a testament to his dedication to the Centre that he has given so much of his time and energy to ensuring our work here continues. Thank you for everything Neil.

I have taken over from Neil as Chair of Trustees. We also thank Paul Shambrook and Abigail Simmons who recently stepped down as Trustees and welcome Dave Dyer as our new Treasurer. You can read all about him on page 10.

In this edition of the newsletter, you will find lots of information about our AGM on 7 October. I would really encourage you to come along, hear our financial report for last year and listen to our plans going forward. As members, this really is your Centre and we want to hear your voice and this is an ideal time to have your say. The AGM will also welcome guest speaker and Centre member, Kate Lang giving what I'm sure will be a fascinating and inspiring talk about her experiences taking part in the CART-T trial of an exciting potential new MS treatment. There will of course be time to catch up with trustees, staff and members over a cuppa and nibbles! So please do book your space now.

2025 was certainly a difficult year for BMSTC and we continue to face fundraising challenges in 2026, along with many other charities. We may have to make increasingly difficult decisions in order to be able to continue offering our level of services and support. We were on the brink of having to stop offering footcare on a donation basis due to cost. However, our supporter Lady Anna Thomson generously donated to ensure that we can continue to offer footcare as a core therapy going forward. We are incredibly grateful to Lady Anna for her support which will enable our members to continue to benefit from this therapy, regardless of their financial situation. This was an amazing donation, but we know that we need to do more to ensure the continued success of the Centre.

Please take time to read through our fundraising pages and find out all the ways that you can support our work at BMSTC. There may be things you hadn't thought of, such as Payroll Giving, donating unwanted shares or entering our lottery. Why not bring a team to our quiz night on 9 September? Or could you organize your own fundraising event or challenge?

Above all, please keep your donations coming to ensure that we can continue to provide support for people with MS for many more years to come. If you can increase the amount of your donations or sign up to make a regular gift, it would be greatly appreciated.

We know we are facing challenging times ahead, and we may need to make further difficult decisions in the best interest of the Centre. We will continue to update our members and hope that by working together and supporting this BMSTC community, so vital to us all, we will find our way through. We look forward to seeing you at the AGM.
Rachel George, Chair of Trustees

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR AGM!



Our AGM will take place in person at the Centre on Wednesday 7 October at 2pm - and we really hope you can join us.

This is your chance to hear a review of last year, take a look at a summary of our annual report and accounts and find out about our future plans. It's your opportunity to ask questions about your Centre and meet trustees and staff.

All are welcome to attend. To be able to vote at the AGM for the appointment of our trustees and really make your voice heard, you need to be signed up as a member paying £2 a month or £24 a year. If you are not sure if that's you, please email ms@bmstc.org and we can check our records! Don't miss the opportunity to have your voice heard.

Listen to our speaker



Speaker Kate Lang

We're thrilled to welcome BMSTC member Kate Lang to be our speaker at this year's AGM. Kate recently took part in the CAR-T trial for a potential new treatment for MS and she will be sharing her experiences and what it could mean for the future.

We're sure this will be a really interesting talk so please do attend. We are also proud that the Centre will be presented with the Safe and Sound Award by Reading Voluntary Action. This is a quality award which shows that our charity has met a fundamental level of good governance. Afterwards, there will be drinks and nibbles and the chance to chat and mingle.

AGM documents available on our website

All the documents for the AGM including the agenda, previous minutes and annual accounts are available on our website at www.bmstc.org/agm2026. If you would like hard copies, please ask at reception or give us a call.

Let us know if you can come

Please let us know by 2 October if you can attend the AGM as there are limited spaces available. You can do this online at www.bmstc.org/agm2026 or at Centre reception.

We look forward to seeing you on 7 October!

PIPPA'S PAGES

BANK HOLIDAYS



The Centre will be closed for the following Bank Holiday;

- Monday 31 August

LATEST ON THE PIP REVIEW



An interim review of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in England and Wales has found it to be “not fit for purpose”. The report suggests a sweeping overhaul of the assessment system is needed.

It also highlights the steep increase in the number of PIP recipients in recent years and the forecast rise in spending on the benefit.

PIP is a benefit people with long-term illnesses and disabilities can claim if they need help with extra costs associated with living, work and care. Eligibility is determined through an assessment.

Under the current system, claimants are scored on a zero to 12 scale by a health professional on everyday tasks such as washing, getting dressed and preparing food.

People applying for the benefit said the process was “dehumanising” and a barrier to work.

The disability minister Sir Stephen Timms, who is leading the review, said his final report due out later this year was not expected to make “crude proposals” on payment changes. But with the cost of PIP expected to rise to more than £41bn by 2030, the sustainability of this would “be a concern as we reach these decisions”, he said.

You can read the full article here. (BBC website)

You can also read the full interim report here. (gov.uk website)

All links available at; https://bmstc.org/news/latest-on-the-pip-review/

PIPPA'S PAGES CONT'D.



HIGHER ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD INTAKE MAY INCREASE MS RISK

Higher consumption of ultra-processed foods, such as soft drinks, packaged snacks, and ready-to-eat meals, may be associated with an increased risk of developing MS.

That's according to a large study involving nearly 186,000 middle-aged adults in the UK, which found that each 10% increase in ultra-processed food intake – measured as a share of total food intake – was linked to about a 9% higher risk of MS.

Ultra-processed foods have become a major part of modern diets worldwide. Designed to be convenient, affordable, and highly palatable, these industrially made products now account for a substantial portion of daily food intake in many countries. In the UK, they make up about 57% of total calorie intake in adults.

Beyond being linked to more than 30 health conditions, including type 2 diabetes and diseases of the heart and blood vessels, growing evidence suggests ultra-processed foods may also play a role in neurodegenerative diseases, such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Although evidence remains limited for MS, diets high in ultra-processed foods have been shown to promote inflammation and oxidative stress – two processes known to play a role in MS development and progression. As they replace healthier foods, they may also reduce the intake of beneficial nutrients that help protect against inflammation.

You can read full details of the study on the at; https://ms-uk.org/news/higher-ultra-processed-food-intake-tied-to-increased-ms-risk-says-study/ .

CARERS' MANUAL HANDLING TRAINING COMING SOON!

We hope to run our popular Carers' Manual Handling training session soon. The session will explore moving and handling techniques and efficient postures to look after yourself and prevent injuries associated with caring duties.

Look out for details on our blog and social media, speak to Nikki or Anwen or email nikki@bmstc.org to find out more.

PIPPA'S PAGES CONT'D.

STUDY INTO OXYGEN THERAPY BENEFITS REPORTS INITIAL FINDINGS

Last year, we reported on a study being carried out into the benefits of oxygen therapy for people with MS.

The researchers from Glasgow Caledonian University have contacted us to report back on their initial findings.

The key messages were;

- 125 people with MS across the UK completed the survey, 99 of whom were currently receiving oxygen therapy
- 76% were female and the majority were aged 45-64 years.
- Almost 90% received their oxygen therapy at an MS Centre
- Over 60% of respondents had had over 100 oxygen sessions, more than 11% over 1000 sessions
- In terms of symptom management – 83% felt that oxygen therapy improved fatigue, 55% depression, 51% pins and needles/tingling and 5% bladder symptoms
- There were few adverse effects
- Most people read, listened to music or did breathing exercises in the chamber
- Respondents were also positive about the social aspects of attending oxygen therapy

You can read their research summary here (PDF document) or visit https://bmstc.org/news/study-into-oxygen-therapy-benefits-reports-initial-findings/

The researchers have said they will share the full final research paper with us in due course.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DATA SECURITY

On Monday 3 August we were informed by the provider of our customer relationship manager system (database) – Beacon CRM – of a data breach to their system. This breach is believed to relate to the contact information of our members and supporters, along with the members and supporters of over 1,000 other charities that use this system. We do not hold any identifiable personal or organisation financial information or details on Beacon CRM – such as card or bank details.

We emailed out to our members regarding this data breach on 5 August but if you missed the email or if you have any queries or concerns, visit www.bmstc.org/data-security, speak to Pip or Freia or email ms@bmstc.org

PIPPA'S PAGES CONT'D.



COULD VITAMIN D HELP REDUCE MS RELAPSES?

Taking high-dose vitamin D supplements for more than a year can significantly cut relapse risks and ease disability for people with MS according to a review of more than 30 clinical trials.

These benefits were observed in people who added the vitamin to their standard disease-modifying therapies, though the supplements had to be taken long term to be effective.

Long-term supplementation with a mid-dose also led to fewer relapses, the data showed. In contrast, add-on high-dose vitamin D taken for less than one year showed no significant differences. In terms of safety, vitamin D supplementation did not increase the risk of serious adverse events. Further large-scale trials are needed to explore this further.

Read the full story at; https://ms-uk.org/news/taking-high-dose-vitamin-d-daily-helps-reduce-ms-relapses/

IMPORTANT OXYGEN UPDATE

We are currently awaiting the delivery of a replacement part for our oxygen chamber. As a result, we have had to temporarily reduce the number of people we can accommodate in each oxygen session to a maximum of six participants (five inside the chamber and one outside).

To help us manage this reduced capacity, we have also temporarily closed oxygen sessions to new non-MS clients.

We kindly ask that if you have an oxygen session booked and know that you will be unable to attend, you let us know as soon as possible, ideally at least 24 hours in advance. Advance notice is extremely important as it allows us to offer your place to another MS member who may be waiting for oxygen therapy.

You can cancel by calling 0118 901 6000 (answerphone available after hours) or email ms@bmstc.org.

Thank you for your understanding, cooperation, and continued support while we work to resolve this issue.

BMSTC FAMILY

WITH DEEPEST REGRET

Paul Gordon sadly passed away on 21 May. He had been coming to the Centre since 2012 and attended physiotherapy and oxygen therapy, most recently on Mondays, where he could often be seen with his wife and their little dog. We send our deepest sympathies to Paul's wife and the rest of his family and friends.

Janice Snarey sadly passed away on 12 June. Janice had been attending physiotherapy at the Centre since 2012, most recently on Wednesdays. We send our deepest condolences to Janice's family and friends.

Trish Wright sadly passed away on 25 June. Trish had been a member and supporter of the Centre for many years since its early days. She regularly attended physiotherapy and oxygen therapy and was still taking part in our bucket collections. We send our heartfelt condolences to Trish's family and friends and we thank them for asking for donations to the Centre at Trish's funeral.



Trish Wright

Centre Manager Pippa Vincent-Cooke has written this tribute to former Chairman and member, Pete Bowsher, who passed away on 25 June.

The late Pete Bowsher MBE



Pete Bowsher

Pete was diagnosed with MS in 2001 and retired from the Royal Air Force Regiment in 2005. In recognition of his distinguished military service, he was proudly awarded an MBE.

He joined the BMSTC Board of Trustees in 2007 and later served as Chairman from 2016 to 2023, providing dedicated leadership and unwavering support to the Centre.

Pete also spent five years on the committee of a military support group for serving and former members of the Armed Forces affected by MS, working alongside the National MS Society.

Until 2020, Pete regularly attended the Centre for therapy sessions, which played an important role in helping him maintain his independence and quality of life.
A familiar and much-loved face at the Centre, Pete was part of our regular Thursday morning group. He could often be found in the social area with fellow members, sharing stories, laughter and, on occasion, a little harmless mischief.

Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with Pete's family and friends at this sad time. We are deeply grateful for his many years of service as a Trustee and Chairman, and for the lasting contribution he made to the Centre and its community.

BMSTC FAMILY

WITH DEEPEST REGRET

Centre Manager Pippa Vincent-Cooke has written this tribute to former member Penny Russell, who passed away in August.

Penny Russell was a founder member of BMSTC and a dedicated supporter for many years. As a trustee, fundraiser and friend of the charity, she gave her time, energy and enthusiasm to help us grow.



Penny Russell

Many will remember Penny from fundraising stalls, plant sales and, of course, her legendary jams and marmalade. She will be greatly missed and remembered with affection and gratitude for all she did for BMSTC.

We are very grateful to Penny's family for asking for donations to the Centre in memory of Penny. They have asked us to share the details in case you would like to contribute;

https://caroline-russell.muchloved.com/

HAPPY CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to our member Laura Pearse who recently gave birth to her beautiful baby boy Luther.



Many congratulations to our member and newsletter editor Gill Braid and her husband Alan who recently celebrated their Emerald Wedding Anniversary.

Gill says, "Alan and I were married on 26 June in 1971 in The Good Shepherd Church, West Derby in Liverpool on what was a lovely sunny day with a small breeze - for which we were grateful. We were lucky enough to celebrate the occasion with over 100 family and friends which added to the excitement of the day. This all happened 55 years ago and makes this our Emerald Anniversary."



Gill and Alan on their wedding day

STAFF AND VOLUNTEER UPDATE



CHANGES TO OUR TRUSTEE TEAM- WELCOME DAVE!

Paul Shambrook and Abigail Simmons have both stood down as trustees. We'd like to thank them both for all their hard work and support.

Rachel George has stepped down as our Treasurer but has taken on the role of Chair from Neil Dawkins - read more about this in the Chairman's Report. A huge thank you to Rachel for everything she has done as Treasurer these past couple of years and all she continues to do.

We are delighted to welcome Dave Dyer as our new Treasurer.



Dave has over 40 years experience with a variety of largely retail finance organisations including Citibank, Royal Bank of Scotland and Virgin Money. He has generally held Finance and/or Strategy roles with some periods of management consultancy. Dave has also chaired the finance committee for fellow charity Thrive. He lives in Henley-on-Thames with his wife and their primary interests are travel and (in Anne's case at least!) gardening.

We're really pleased to welcome you to the BMSTC team Dave, thank you for joining us!

WELCOME TO MICHELLE

Michelle Lane has recently joined our Fundraising and Communications team as Trusts and Grants Fundraiser. She's written a few words to introduce herself;



"Hello everyone, I'm Michelle Lane and I'm delighted to have joined the team as Trusts and Grants Fundraiser. The welcome has been incredibly warm. I've joined the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre from a mental health charity, the Charlie Waller Trust. I worked in the fundraising team at the Trust for over three years, firstly as fundraising assistant and more recently as prospect researcher. This has given me a broad range of fundraising experience, across grants, events, community fundraising, individual giving, trading and more. I am very much looking forward to bringing that experience to my work at the Centre. Outside work, I enjoy walking with my smooth fox terrier Aggie, gardening and cooking (occasionally with veg from the garden), and I love live music and the theatre."

Welcome to the team Michelle, we're thrilled to have you working with us and we know our members are enjoying meeting you!

YOUR IDEAS FOR ACCESSIBLE ACTIVITIES

We've had a great new suggestion below for an accessible apartment in Paris. If you have any more ideas for accessible venues or activities to share, please keep them coming to claire@bmstc.org

Our member Ros has this recommendation for an accessible apartment in Paris;

"If you are looking for an adapted apartment in Paris I can recommend where I stayed earlier this year. The owner Vladimir rents it out when he's not there. The requirement is that one of the group is in a wheelchair.

It is a ground floor apartment consisting of a master bedroom with a double bed. There is a ceiling hoist to get in and out of bed. The bathroom is a wet room with shower chair, if required, which also slides over the toilet.

There is a small fully equipped kitchen, washer/dryer and small court yard. A narrow open staircase leads to a messanine floor with a double bed and the sofa opens into a bed. It sleeps 4 people in total.

The apartment is located in the 14th arrondisement close to many bus and tram routes. There are a lot of bars and restaurants in walking distance. Buses and trams are good for wheelchair travellers but the metro would need to be researched to see which stations are accessible."

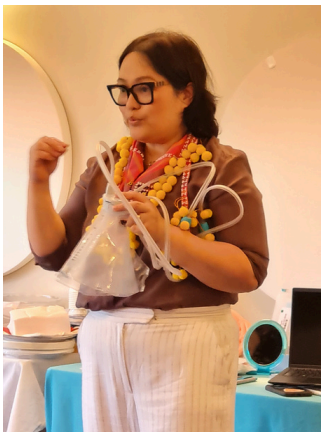
There is also private underground parking suitable for wheelchair-accessible vehicles and nurses and personal care assistants can be arranged if needed.

You can find out more and book by emailing logementpmr@gmail.com



There is some useful information about holidays with MS on the MS Trust website at; https://mstrust.org.uk/information-support/home-and-travel/holidays

FREE BLADDER AND BOWEL INFORMATION EVENT



Coloplast will be coming to the Centre on Wednesday 14 October to provide information on bladder and bowel issues.

They will be available for members to drop in and receive information between 11.30am and 2.30pm, with a talk from a Coloplast Nurse at 12.30pm.

The talk will include information about bladder and bowel anatomy and common symptoms and issues which people with MS sometimes experience. It will also cover what to do if you are experiencing these problems and what tests you might have if you are referred to a clinic.

Coloplast will be providing a light lunch and refreshments.

To give us an idea of numbers, please RSVP at www.bmstc.org/coloplast-event if you are planning on attending the event. If you have any queries, please speak to Nikki or email nikki@bmstc.org

DIGESTING SCIENCE - COMING AGAIN IN OCTOBER

Back in February, five families came to the Centre to join our interactive Digesting Science event, hosted in partnership with the MS Society and MS nurses. The idea was to bring families together to learn about different aspects and themes around MS in a fun and engaging way. We had some great feedback from attendees and are pleased to announce that we will be running a new Digesting Science session on Saturday 3 October at the Centre from 2pm to 4.30pm, aimed at families with children aged 6-14. Free snacks and drinks provided!
If you are interested, please email nikki@bmstc.org.

> “Our children will be able to understand more as they grow up and understand their parent with the condition.”

Feedback from past attendee



NEW PHYSIOTHERAPY CLASSES

We have two new classes coming up in the autumn:

- **Hand and Upper Limb Class**

New six-week course suitable for anyone who has noticed some weakness, loss of function or reduced coordination in their hand.



Class details

- Six week class starting Wednesday 21 October, 1pm-2pm
- In person at the Centre with Simone
- Small group of maximum eight participants

How to sign up
Please speak to your physiotherapist, email simone@bmstc.org or call 0118 901 6000 for more details or to sign up.

- **Seated Dance class**

If you have always enjoyed dancing or would like to try something new, why not join our 8-week in person Seated Dance class with our physiotherapy assistant Petra.

The classes are suitable for wheelchair users with upper body mobility who can attend the class in person. The dance routine will focus on upper body strength, balance and coordination.

When dancing regularly you will notice your breath gets deeper and the heart grows stronger too. Dancing to uplifting music will boost your energy and brighten your day!

Class details

- Eight week class starting Wednesday 28 October to 16 December, 1pm-1.45pm
- In person with Petra in the gym

How to sign up

Spaces are limited so sign up now by speaking to Petra or email petra@bmstc.org

> “I love moving to music, but can’t do it standing, so this was perfect. The class made me stop worrying about anything else and it was wonderful to switch off and lose myself in the movement and music.”

Quote from previous seated dance class participant

NIKKI'S PAGE



It has been a busy and exciting summer so far!

On 8 May, Neil Dawkins and Malcolm Cook attended a Summer Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to represent the charity in recognition of receiving the King's Award for Voluntary Service. The event was also attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, making it a truly memorable occasion. Malcolm said it was interesting to get a glimpse behind the scenes at Buckingham Palace.

On 5 June, we hosted our own Summer Garden Party at the Centre to celebrate the incredible dedication and commitment of our volunteers, while also giving everyone the opportunity to mark our achievement of receiving the King's Award for Voluntary Service together. The afternoon was a tremendous success, with many volunteers sharing how much they appreciated the event. We were delighted to welcome several special guests, including our Patrons, Sir John Madejski and Martin Salter, Sue Roberts Deputy Lieutenant of Berkshire and Paul Gittings the new Mayor of Reading.
Volunteers enjoyed a traditional afternoon tea and were looked after by members of staff throughout the afternoon.



Neil and Malcolm outside the Palace

A heartfelt thank you goes to Sue Roberts and Anna Harris (Trustee) for their wonderful speeches, and to all our staff whose hard work made the event such a success. Most importantly, thank you to every one of our volunteers. Their dedication, kindness and commitment are what makes the Centre such a special place. The King's Award trophy and certificate now have pride of place on a purpose-built shelf behind Reception.







Enjoying the Summer Garden Party

From January to May this year, I received more enquiries and conducted more Centre tours than during the same period last year, which is very encouraging. Activity slowed slightly during June and July, perhaps as a result of the recent heatwaves, but we continue to welcome new enquiries and look forward to what the rest of the year will bring.

If you know of anyone who would like to come for a tour, become a member, or to volunteer at the Centre, please give them my contact details: email: Nikki@bmstc.org tel: 0118 901 6000 and I will be happy to get in touch with them.

NIKKI

FUNDING THE CENTRE
by Freia Pagdin, Senior Fundraising Manager



As we've mentioned throughout the newsletter, we're holding our AGM on 7 October. Here we'll have the opportunity to review our accounts for 2025 and hear more about the highlights and challenges we have faced throughout the year.

2025 proved to be an incredibly difficult year for us as charity – with a challenging economic climate resulting in fewer fundraising opportunities as donors, trusts and organisations felt the impact. We also saw a growing need for our services, with higher numbers needing the support we offer.

As you know, we offer MS members our core services on a donation only basis, with complementary therapies charged at a highly subsidised rate. Whilst we offer these free of charge or at a reduced rate, there remains a cost to the Centre for each treatment we offer.

In 2025 we provided 15,552 treatments to 471 people and the Centre cost £725,475 to run.

We are proud to help more people with MS, but that does impact on our costs. Last year, our income was £523,489, which was below our running costs.

As you can see from these figures, our costs were higher than ever before, with our income for the year ending at a deficit.

It was only thanks to some incredible one-off donations that we were able to end the year in a better position, and we continue to feel the impact of this difficult financial climate.

As we reported earlier in the year, we continue to face struggles, and may need to make some further difficult decisions this year.

We receive no financial support from the NHS or other MS organisations – with all our funding coming from fundraising and the wonderful people who donate to the Centre.

FUNDING THE CENTRE CONT'D.

Where our money comes from

In 2025, for every £1 raised;

- **34p** from donations and gift aid
- **9p** from fundraising events
- **4p** from collections
- **37p** Trusts and grants
- **1p** from in memory and gifts in wills
- **7p** from business partnerships
- **3p** from people without MS having oxygen
- **5p** from other sources

As you can see from our review of 2025 – we had a very difficult year, with our income suffering from a range of factors. This is something that has been experienced across the charity sector with the wider global economic crisis having an impact.
We know that in order for us to continue providing our treatments and services at the Centre and supporting the growing number of people in need, we need to raise our income to meet the increased demand.

This year saw a change to our fundraising team, with the addition of Freia as Senior Fundraising and Communications Manager and Michelle taking on a Trust and Grants Fundraiser role. Jackie and Claire have also expanded their remit, with the team working together to explore new avenues and potential areas of support and income. The Centre team have been overwhelmed by the support shown by our members and Centre supporters already, with an increase seen in individual donations this year, but we need to do more.

What can you do?

Help us by supporting our fundraising, asking your friends and contacts to support the Centre, sharing any contacts with business or organisations who might want to fund us, and making sure you donate when you can. For more ideas on how you can help, please read through the list on the next page.

You've already done so much, but we need to keep working together to make sure we keep our doors open and provide the needed services for those living with MS.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT THE CENTRE...

Here are some you might not have thought of before....

Take part in our lottery

What would you do with £25,000? Play our Unity lottery and every week you have the chance to win up to £25,000 whilst supporting our local MS community.

The Centre lottery is part of the Unity Lottery, an umbrella lottery platform which charities of all sizes can use to run their fundraising lotteries at reduced costs. Entry costs just £1 per week, per number and you can buy as many numbers as you like. For every £1 ticket, 50p is donated to the Centre. The remaining 50p covers prizes and administration so the lottery does not cost us anything to run. Why not give it a go and you could win big while supporting Berkshire MS Therapy Centre at the same time!



Find out more at www.bmstc.org/lottery

Donate through Payroll Giving

If you are in work, donating to charity through Payroll Giving is the most tax effective way to give. Money is donated to charity before you have paid tax, meaning that if you choose to donate £10 a month, you only actually pay £8, the rest is the tax you would normally pay. We benefit from the full amount. Why not ask your employer about the scheme today? Your regular donation will support our services year-round, providing predictable income that secures the future success of the charity.

Donate your unwanted shares

ShareGift is a registered charity that works by collecting together lots of small shares until there are enough to sell; they then donate the resulting proceeds to a wide range of charities.

If you or a family member have unwanted shares, or shares that are too small to sell, you can transfer them to ShareGift and suggest us as a chosen charity. There is no cost to you, simply contact them through their website: www.sharegift.org
Or, if you or your family are in work, ask your employer if they partner with ShareGift. If they do, you too could nominate us to receive a donation.

Get you donation doubled

We are hoping to be offering match funding in September through the Good Exchange and fingers crossed we are accepted again for the Big Give Christmas Challenge in December - both these schemes will result in your donations being doubled. Look out on our blog and social media for more details.

To find out more about payroll giving, match funding or ShareGift, please email freia@bmstc.org

FUNDRAISING

THANK YOU....

Huge thanks to Elsa for raising £640 running the Green Park 10K for the Centre on 31 May!



Thank you to our supporter Simon for organising the brilliant Music for MS gig at the Purple Turtle on 30 May and raising a wonderful £1,265!



Thank you to our friends at Pangbourne Rotary for donating £489!

Thank you to Double Barrelled brewery for choosing the Centre to benefit from their charity quiz in July.



Well done to our wonderful Go Challenge team who raised an incredible £7,816 and cycled 2271 km!

Thank you to our member and supporter Deniz who ran the Binfield 10K and raised £520!



Thank you to our amazing collectors who have raised these wonderful amounts this summer;

- Meadows Camberley 23 May £709.89
- Windsor Races 15 June £1201.35
- Reading Station 19 June £1837.92
- Reading Station 10 July £1228.30
- Tesco Windsor 18 July £568.74

Our World Cup Sweepstake raised £92 - thanks to all who took part!

Got a fundraising idea? Come and see the fundraising team in the office, email freia@bmstc.org or call us on 0118 901 6000.

THANKYOU

FUNDRAISING

JOIN OUR READING HALF MARATHON TEAM!



Every year, thousands of people take part in the Reading Half Marathon and next year, we'd love you to run for Berkshire MS Therapy Centre! The race takes place on Sunday 21 March 2027. It's always really well supported on the course and you even have the fun of a stadium finish at the Reading FC Select Car Leasing Stadium. If you join our team, you'll get a free running top and plenty of support to help you fundraise as much as possible. There's plenty of time to train so please spread the word to anyone you think might be interested. More information can be found at www.bmstc.org/readinghalf

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE



We will be running our ever successful Christmas Raffle again leading up to Christmas! Look out for tickets on sale in a few months. In the meantime, we are looking for items to be donated so we can make up more wonderful prize hampers and other prizes. Suggested items include;

- Christmas food and drink (please check best before dates)
- Gift items
- Toiletries (unopened please)

Please bring any donations into reception from September onwards. Many thanks for your support. Let's make this another fantastic festive fundraiser for BMSTC!

JOIN THE TWILIGHT RUNWAY CHALLENGE

There's still time to sign up for the fully accessible Twilight Runway Challenge on Saturday 12 September. This fun, family-friendly event takes place along the airstrip of Blackbushe Airport.
There are 3 distances to choose from; 3km, 5km or 10km. You can run, walk, cycle, use a wheelchair or scoot the route and it is pram friendly. Why not get a group together and raise sponsorship for the Centre? We're even planning on having some fun glow accessories for sale in our shop so you can really bling yourself up for the occasion!

Find out more at www.bmstc.org/twilightrunway

FUNDRAISING

COME ALONG TO OUR QUIZ NIGHT



Tickets are on sale now for our Charity Quiz Night on Wednesday 9 September at the Jazz Cafe, Select Car Leasing Stadium, Reading. Why not get a team of friends, family or colleagues together, give those brain cells a workout, have fun and support people with MS.

Tickets cost £10 per person. There will also be a raffle on the night with some fabulous prizes including a Double Barrelled Brewery tour and tasting voucher, a game of golf, a bottle of champagne plus more.

We will also be auctioning a signed Reading FC shirt and we are hoping to welcome a special guest from Reading FC too!

Food will be available before the quiz starts for an additional cost – details will be sent after you book your tickets - so no need to rush around getting dinner before you come.

Don't miss out on this great event, book your tickets now!

Visit; www.bmstc.org/quiz2026

GOT A LONDON MARATHON PLACE? - JOIN OUR LONDON MARATHON TEAM!

We're really excited to have selected 6 fab fundraisers to run the unique Double TCS London Marathon for us in April 2027!

Although our guaranteed spaces have been snapped up, we'd be thrilled to have you on our team if you or anyone else you know was lucky enough to get a place through the ballot or a good for age place.



Two of last year's Marathon runners with their medals

If you have your own place, there's no fundraising target but we'll give you all the support you need to help you raise as much as possible. Please email claire@bmstc.org to find out more.

FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING FUN AT PHYLLIS COURT

During June, staff and volunteers from the Centre were at the Henley Regatta events at Phyllis Court Club helping to sell raffle tickets as we are one of their Charities of the Year!

Thank you to everyone for buying tickets and to all our volunteers - and a massive thank you to Phyllis Court Club for their continued support. They will be fundraising for us at various events throughout the year and we will have a grand total in early 2027.



Volunteers Joy and Sharon



FUNDRAISING

CHRISTMAS CARDS

It may only be coming up to the end of the summer holidays but Christmas will be here before we know it! Get organised and buy your cards now. We have a beautiful selection of designs and every pack you buy will support local people with MS.

Cards cost just £4 for a pack of ten and, in September, we have a special offer of three packs for £10. Last year, the most popular designs sold out quickly so don't miss out on your favourite!

To order, fill out the attached order form if you have a paper copy newsletter, visit **www.bmstc.org/christmascards** to order online or buy in person at the Centre from 1 September.

The greeting inside each card reads 'With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year'.













You can also send Christmas cards via email or WhatsApp and donate to the Centre - find out more at;

www.bmstc.org/christmascards

MEETING DIARY FOR MS GROUPS

These activities are not organised by BMSTC.
Please contact the organisation directly for more information.



MS NURSE

If you see an MS Nurse from the Royal Berkshire NHS Trust you can have your appointment at the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre. Please book your appointment directly with the nurses on 0118 322 5474 or email rbb-tr.msnurses@nhs.net.

They are at the Centre on the third Monday of each month.

Please note, it is not possible for the MS Nurse to see members who are not eligible to be seen by consultants within the Royal Berkshire NHS Trust.

If you are unable to keep your appointment with the Nurse at the Centre please call her on the number above or contact the Centre on 0118 901 6000 on the day.

THE MS CARERS SUPPORT GROUP



The MS Carers Group meets for lunch at various pubs and restaurants at 12.30pm on the second Thursday of each month. It is funded by Reading, Wokingham and Districts MS Society Branch.

New members are always welcome. If you would like to join please email Khalid at khalidkathy@btinternet.com or Marianne at mcross@ntlworld.com

MEETING DIARY FOR MS GROUPS CONT'D.

READING WOKINGHAM AND DISTRICT MSQUARED

MSquared is part of the MS Society and is a social group for people diagnosed with MS, their family members and friends.

The meetings are arranged at the request of the attendees and there are regular social events. For more information email: msquaredrwd@gmail.com

READING, WOKINGHAM AND DISTRICTS MS SOCIETY DROP-IN

Earley Crescent Resource Centre, Warbler Drive, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4HB on Wednesdays 10am-1.30pm.

Call Vanessa on 07492 786695 or Judy on 07812 676762 or visit www.msreading.org.uk for more information.

EAST BERKSHIRE MS SOCIETY

Activities include Pilates on the first Friday of the month in Crowthorne, Thursday coffee club in Maidenhead and coffee morning on the third Friday of the month in Windsor.

For full details of all events, see https://www.mssociety.org.uk/support-and-community/local-support/local-groups/east-berkshire-group

Email eastberkshire@mssociety.org.uk or call 07395 465993

THE HENLEY MS SUPPORT GROUP

The Henley MS Support Group meets socially for lunch on the third Wednesday of every month. If you would like to go along, please contact organiser, Maddie, directly by email: madeline@starames.co.uk

THERAPIES AT THE BERKSHIRE MS THERAPY CENTRE



Physiotherapy sessions and exercise classes
We run a variety of 1:1 sessions and classes as well as APS, FES, re-assessments and new assessments. Yoga is available online.

Please contact the physiotherapy team on 0118 901 6000 to find out more.

Oxygen therapy (unfortunately, we are unable to accept any new non-MS patients for oxygen at this time)
Monday-Saturday
To arrange a session or seek more information, please contact the Centre on 0118 901 6000

Counselling
Counselling is available online, by telephone and face-to-face. Call the Centre on 0118 901 6000.



Footcare
Available every Thursday.
Call the Centre on 0118 901 6000 for more information.

Complementary therapies
The following therapies are available at the Centre:

Acupuncture/acupressure (£18)
Reiki (£18)
Massage (From £30)



Appointments can be made by telephoning the BMSTC reception on 0118 901 6000. With your permission, your contact details will then be given to the therapist you request who will then make appointments directly with you. Please note that you will pay your therapist directly for these treatments. The fees for complementary therapies go directly to the therapist and BMSTC do not financially benefit from this.





EVENTS COMING SOON AND USEFUL DATES

- **31 August 2026**

Bank Holiday Monday
Centre closed

- **9 September 2026**

Quiz Night
www.bmstc.org/quiz26

- **12 September 2026**

Twilight Runway Challenge
www.bmstc.org/twilightrunway

- **3 October 2026**

Digesting Science
www.bmstc.org/digesting-science

- **7 October 2026**

AGM
www.bmstc.org/agm2026

- **14 October 2026**

Coloplast Bladder and Bowel Information event
www.bmstc.org/coloplast-event

NEXT TIME...

Our next newsletter is due in November and we want to hear from you! Have you got any advice to share? Got a celebration you want us to join in or anything else you want us to tell our members?

Please email claire@bmstc.org or gill@bmstc.org or call Claire on 0118 901 6000 (usual working days Mondays to Wednesdays).

Deadline is 19 October 2026 and we look forward to hearing from you!

For details of all our forthcoming events, please go to www.bmstc.org/events, email ms@bmstc.org or call 0118 901 6000.

Berkshire MS Therapy Centre
Bradbury House, 23a August End, Brock Gardens,
Reading RG30 2JP
Email: ms@bmstc.org Website: www.bmstc.org
0118 901 6000 (please leave a message if we are not there)

Charity no: 800419