

Warrington

MIScellany

April 2011

Join the Hardest Hit Campaign

Join us in The ['Hardest Hit'](#) Campaign, launched to fight the cuts to benefits. This follows publication of a report 'Benefitting Disabled People' which shows how welfare reform changes may harm disabled people.

The MS Society joins disabled people, their families and charities across the country in our major campaign to make sure disabled people are not 'the hardest hit' by government cuts.

On 11 May thousands of disabled people and their families will protest outside Parliament and lobby their MPs to help them realise the impact of changes to vital benefits like Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Come and join us and

make sure our voices are heard.

Laura Weir, MS Society Head of Policy and Campaigns, said:

"Despite the clear problems with the ESA assessment system, the Government is pressing ahead with plans to reassess over one million people currently receiving Incapacity Benefit. And despite the evidence on disabled people's rising costs of living, the Government plans to cut over £2 billion from DLA expenditure. We need change now to ensure that

PTO

Sam King, 45 Denbury Avenue, Stockton Heath. WA4 2BW Tel 860630

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disabled people are not the hardest hit by Government cuts.”

What can you do?

Visit www.hardesthit.org.uk to find out more and support the campaign. Just enter hardesthit into Google several sites organised by Citizens Advice Bureau and numerous charities.

Download the report, [Benefiting disabled people.pdf \(88 kb\)](#) .

Write to your MP about the campaign

Join our online protest by sending in your stories, photos and videos to info@hardesthit.org.uk or sharing your story at

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/msstories>

This editorial is going to be more of a plea for help than just an editorial, where I'd just talk about anything I could think of. This summer, probably from the very end of August to the beginning of September, I'm planning to cycle from Land's End to John O'Groats in 7 days.

This is a total distance of about 850 miles, depending on the exact route I take. That's over 120 miles a day, for a week. The reason I'm undertaking the challenge of this ridiculously long and painful journey is to raise money for charity. Normally, as in the past, I would be raising money for the Warrington MS Society, but this time will be for Teenage Cancer Trust, and for a very good reason.

One of my close friends managed to get a place at a very

prestigious ballet school last September, to begin her training to become a professional dancer. Obviously the training is very intense; a lot more so than she was used to, and so she wasn't surprised when she began to get a pain in her back. However, this pain didn't get any better, even when she stopped dancing for a while, to try to give it a chance to recover. It also began to spread to her legs, and despite seeing the GP several times, and taking anti-inflamma-

tories, it continued. It wasn't until February this year that the hospital discovered that it was cancer that was causing this problem, and it had spread to the rest of her body.

She's now started a treatment plan at the excellent Christie's hospital in Manchester, where they're very hopeful that she will make a full recovery, and will be able to get back to her dancing next year. While she's in hospital, she will be staying on a specialist ward which was built by the Teenage Cancer Trust, which is specifically for teenagers and young people. In many other hospitals, however, this isn't possible, and the person is either on a ward for small children, or for adults.

Obviously, neither of these is ideal, and has been proven to reduce the recovery rate of the patient. The charity currently has ten wards across the country, and hopes to build 12 more by 2012. They also raise awareness, so that cancer in young people is picked up more quickly, and not mistaken for growing pains or injuries; and pay for specialist staff to man the wards. I've decided to raise money for this charity, as it's

become so relevant to me, by doing something that I know will really challenge me.

I know this doesn't really have anything to do with the MS society, but I was hoping that some of you would be able to help me out. Once I've sorted out my Just Giving site, I'll put it into my next editorial, and it would be great if some of you would sponsor me. Also, if any of you know anyone who lives near Tiverton, Gloucester, between Glasgow and Edinburgh, or in the centre of northern Scotland, who'd be willing to put me up for the night, that would be great. I'm doing it out of my own pocket so that the charity gets as much money as possible, so I'm trying to keep costs to a minimum! And if anyone knows of a company who'd be willing to sponsor me, then that would be great; please put them in contact with me. If you think you can help me in any way whatsoever to raise money for this very valid cause; please please let me know.

Sam King

samking91@live.co.uk

100+Club



There are 107 members if you're not one of them please consider joining contact Chris Janovitz on 723564. Remember the more people join the higher the prizes go don't delay.

8 February 2011
Members 107

Prize	Num	Name
1st	096	Carol Hill
2nd	066	W M Dooley
3rd	038	Kath McQuillan
4th	019	Liz Spensley
	005	Margaret Wilmot
	061	Doris Burgess
	107	Esther Thomas
	087	John Curley

The amounts were £112.00, £61.00, £35.00 and 5 at £10 respectively

8 March 2011
Members 107

Prize	Num	Name
1st	039	C R Berry
2nd	044	J Wolowicz
3rd	012	Rita Daly
4th	005	Margret Wilmot
	011	Carol Hill
	071	E Martin
	016	B Daniels
	027	Chris Askew

The amounts were £112.00, £61.00, £35.00 and 5 at £10 respectively

Dave Hinde Travel Services

D.H.T.S.
Disabled Travel Service
14 Seater Mini buses
Tel. 01744 615851
Mobile 07887 615040
Parcel delivery service. Accounts

WANTED

Spare Spectacles
Contact Susan Atkinson
Tel 727612

Used Postage Stamps
Odd Balls of Wool
Contact Susan Atkinson
Tel. 727612



Listening Ear - Margret Hughes - 01925 723917

Summer Fayre

St Joseph's,
Meeting Lane, Penketh

Crafts, cakes, books, plants,
nearly new, raffle, tombola.

Name the Teddy

Saturday August 6th

12 noon - 4 PM

Please come along and
support your branch

To book a table contact Julia 726798

Cost £10



Our congratulations to:

Stephen J BERRY	03.Apr
Margaret PRICE	18.Apr
Patricia DAWBARN	19.Apr
John PAICE	26.Apr
Maureen MORGAN	20.May
James WILMOT	27.May
Francis V HARRIS	05.Jun
Sue BURNS	12.Jun
Pat ORDISH	13.Jun

Open Meetings - 2011

Calling all members! Open meetings are your opportunity, as an MS Society member, to meet trustees and senior staff and discuss the issues that affect people living with MS and the MS Society.

See below for dates and locations for the 2011 open meetings. We hope to see you there!

Set the agenda: Open meetings will be the main place where members' resolutions for the AGM in September 2011 will be discussed and formed. This gives us all time to share our views, right across the UK.

North – Saturday 21 May at Leyland Hotel Preston. (Hotel is visible and accessible from junction 28 on the M6. Please contact Dorothy Lewis for more information. Transport may be provided if required.

<http://warringtonms.org.uk>

Employment Support Allowance

Welfare reform expert Professor Paul Gregg says a rushed roll out of the work capability assessment will cause more anguish

One of the architects of the new sickness benefit system has warned it would be a mistake to start introducing it nationwide from the end of this month because of serious ongoing problems with the medical test designed to assess whether claimants are genuinely sick or disabled.

"The test is badly malfunctioning. The current assessment is a complete mess," Professor Paul Gregg, an economist and welfare reform expert, said.

During the preliminary roll-out of the test, people with terminal cancer, multiple sclerosis and serious mental illnesses have been found fit to work.


Since early 2009, more than 240,000 cases contesting the result of the health tests have been accepted for tribunal hearings and, of the cases they hear, judges overturn about 40% of test findings.

Over the next three years, 1.5 million people claiming incapacity benefit will undergo a work capability assessment (WCA) to determine whether they are eligible for a replacement benefit, employment support allowance (ESA).

The new test is much tougher than the previous one and in pilots 30% fewer people have been found unfit for work and 70% fewer people have been found eligible for the full-rate, unconditional support benefit; in both cases claimants have been shifted to a lower benefit. The reform is expected to save the government £1bn over five years.

The system has been in place for new claimants since 2008, but will be expanded to retest existing claimants from the end of this month.

An independent review of the test in November last year found serious flaws in the way it was functioning and called for major improvements.




MS Nurse Clinic
From Walton Centre
Helen Leggett
0781 331 6314
Woolston Clinic
2nd Monday of the month
2 PM

Gregg, who helped design the new ESA, recommends a further trial before it is introduced nationally.

"In the first trial, the system did not work. We need to trial the new, proposed, reformed system to check and prove that it works and avoids the serious stress and misclassification of people that we have already seen, before we start implementing it on a large and vulnerable population," he said. "The test so far has caused a huge amount of anguish to the people who have gone through it. We need to have something that is working accurately before we apply it nationally.

"We shouldn't roll this out until we have something that is working."

Stephen Timms, the shadow employment secretary, is also anxious about the speed with which it is being implemented. "In principle, this is the right thing to do," he said. "My worry is that this exercise is being rushed. We know that there are some changes that need to be made to the WCA. There are risks with the roll-out. I think that the government is in a rush with the welfare reform."

Outings & Events
Support Your
Branch
Monthly Socials 

Chris Grayling, the employment minister, acknowledged that there had been problems with the test, but said reforms were being introduced and would be in place in time. "I see this as a constant process of refinement and improvement," he said.

Source: guardian.co.uk © Guardian News and Media Limited 2011

**Unwanted Clothes and Shoes
Curtains Blankets Bags and Belts**

As a branch we are now recycling and can turn your unwanted items into branch funds

Must be clean and dry

Contact Peter Travers tel. 492970

Forthcoming Activities

Date	Event	Contact
Aug 10th	Candle works/ice cream factory	Helen 723564
Sept 6th	Boat Trip Stockport to Adlington	Mandy 726758
22nd	Steam train trip Bury to Rawtenstall	Mandy 726758

MS Support Group

The first two meetings went very well, but we need more people! The group is very informal and provides an ideal opportunity to talk about things that you may not find the chance to do elsewhere. If you would like to join us for the next meetings on Tuesday 25th April and 24th May, please call Mandy on 07734 952392 or contact her at anwilton@hotmail.com.

Thingy (humorous)

Scientists are not sure when the word thingy came into use in the world of MS but have been able to discern by study that thingy also knows as, thingamabob, or simply as thing, is any item for which the person with MS cannot remember the proper English name. Doctors have often reported that variations on the thingy dialect can occur when lesions are located in different spots of the brain. This causes some patients to not say “thingy” but “thingamajig” or “whatsit”. Regardless of the studies there has been no cure found for thingy-talking and the progression of the dialect seems to follow the path of the MS.

In the beginning thingy is only used randomly when the patient is tired or stressed. At this point, like a computer low on memory, the brain seems to save energy and space by only allowing access to certain files. The rest of the system is temporarily shut down. Therefore when the patient is looking for the word “Kitchen counter”, they can only come up with a picture of a kitchen counter in their mind, with no corresponding word. This leaves the patient searching frantically for a way to communicate their needs without the ability to use the words: kitchen counter.

So in the instance of the kitchen counter, the patient can only rely on color words and random arm movements with which to describe what

they need. In this example the MSer would like their partner to retrieve the soda they left on the kitchen counter. (I applaud them for even remembering where the soda was in the first place. That’s a great feat.) Since the proper words have been blocked off and the synonym file is inaccessible the patient is left saying “Dear could you get me the drink I left on the thingy?” This sadly prompts the spouse to say “What!?” as they are in utter confusion over what the MSer wants.

Realizing that their words have not aptly described what they wish, the MSer attempts to restate their request adding in a directional phrase while pointing: “ It’s on the thingy in the room out there where we put all the stuff.” Now that the spouse is roaming about the house, the MSer becomes more frantic in their attempt to get the point across using an irritated tone because the spouse is unaffiliated by MS and is obviously making this more difficult that it should be. “The soda is on the flat thing out there!” (Remember the MSer is pointing in the general direction of the kitchen.) At this point the spouse locates the soda is always unable to resist educating the MSer. “Oh you meant the counter in the kitchen.” This attempt to remind the MSer of the words they forgot is usually met with the clipped statement “I know!” (Or face making when the spouses back is turned.)

Oftentimes this battle of finding the word or finding the soda, leads the MSer to shout the phrase "I'll get it myself!" which when the MSer is fatigued is quite a difficult feat and raises the level of stress even higher.

As more synonyms become unavailable, directional terms get used more often. Looking back at the kitchen discussion, a fluent speaker will often not be able to use the word "flat" or to even know that it is a "soda" they are requesting. This makes the request even more vague: "Get the thing I left on the thingy in there." This requires close watch by the spouse of the MSer so that they are able to know at a moment's notice which "thing" the MSer has misplaced.

While thingy dialect starts off as a random and brief occurrence in the language of a person with MS, after only a matter of months, it may have progressed to adding in other catch-all phrases and an absence of any proper terms at all. In what has puzzled many doctors and scientists it appears the patient would rather give out longer requests than to take a deep breath and quietly wait for the word to come. However in a day and age where everything is approached in a fast and frantic manner, the person with MS would rather shout out over 20 words and five sentences with full arm waving and finger pointing to get the point across. The latest hypothesis for this strange behav-

ior is that the MSer has entered into a battle with their brain. It is believed that the person thinks if they just keep talking long enough while waving their arms, the word might eventually be forced out.

There is no medication as of yet which can help with the thingy-dialect. It seems unfortunate that despite all the recent progress in the study of Multiple Sclerosis that this unfortunate cognitive difficulty has not been given more attention. It seems that although many MSers are affected daily by this disorder it is not a significant enough symptom. Most doctors tend to focus on symptoms that interfere with the patient's life and at this time calling the refrigerator "the cold thingy with food" is not sufficient interference. I would be interested in how the numerous spouses and children, who have been run about the house trying to complete the vague "thingy" quests, feel. I am quite sure that this disastrous form of MS dialect has indeed affected many who are simply waiting for help.

This article has been copied from msmoms.com originally written by Lorna Morehead and as you can probably tell is of American origin. Unfortunately it has been truncated slightly just a bit short of space.

MS Helpline Freephone 0808 800 8000
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Membership News

Since the last newsletter there has been one death Norma Broe died in December but we have only just been made aware of this.

A letter has been received from Ms Jane Beaton offering her services as a counsellor on a voluntary basis, so if any of you feel the need please get in touch with Dorothy and she will get it arranged.

The AM has been held and I'm afraid it wasn't very well attended, but the committee was re-elected as per the list on page 12. Paul Harrison (Chairman) also reminded the meeting that he would have to stand down at next years AM to comply with Society guidelines. The guest speaker was Samantha Loudon from the Citizens Advice Bureau who gave a very informative talk on the future of incapacity benefit and disability living allowance and its likely effect on you our members. There was also a brief talk from Julie McWilliam from region giving an outline of where we're going as a society in 2011. We have talked about moving the AM until later in the year in 2012 hoping that lighter nights and perhaps a little warmer weather would help get a better attendance.

We would really like some more involvement from you as members to keep the branch alive, Well enough of the moans let's try a little harder this coming year.

Chris Janovitz

Forthcoming Events	
9th May	Pub lunch contact Peter Travers 492970
10th May	Social St Josephs Club Penketh 7:30 pm
22nd May	Sponsored walk contact Chris Janovitz 723564
6th June	Pub lunch contact Peter Travers 492970
14th June	Thank you party, St Joseph's Meeting Lane
Requests for transport - Jeff Richards 07738609018	

Executive Committee April 2011

Branch Officers

Chair	Mr Paul Harrison.....01606 892151
Secretary	Mrs Elaine Magill.....637120
Treasurer	Mr John Burke824041
Support Officer	Mrs Dorothy Lewis..... 268820

Committee Members

Fundraising	Mrs Julie Richards.....573980
Joint Equipment/ Transport	Mr Jim O'Connor..... 451472
Web/DTP	Mr Jeff Richards.....07738609018
Social	Mr Chris Janovitz.....723564
Everybody's Help Activities	Mrs Rita Harrison.....01606 892151
Editor	Mrs Suzan Rainford.....602719
Subscriptions	Mrs Margaret Wilmot.....755017
Everybody's Help Activities	Mr Sam King.....860630
	Mr Peter Travers.....492970
	Mrs Mary Burke.....824041
	Charles Dooley.....860112
	Amanda Wilton.....726758

This newsletter is published by The Warrington and District branch of the Multiple Sclerosis Society. We give regular updates about MS and what is happening locally in the MS community.

Editor: Sam King
Layout Chris Janovitz

All views expressed in the publication are individual and not necessarily the view or policy of the charity and its supporters.

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