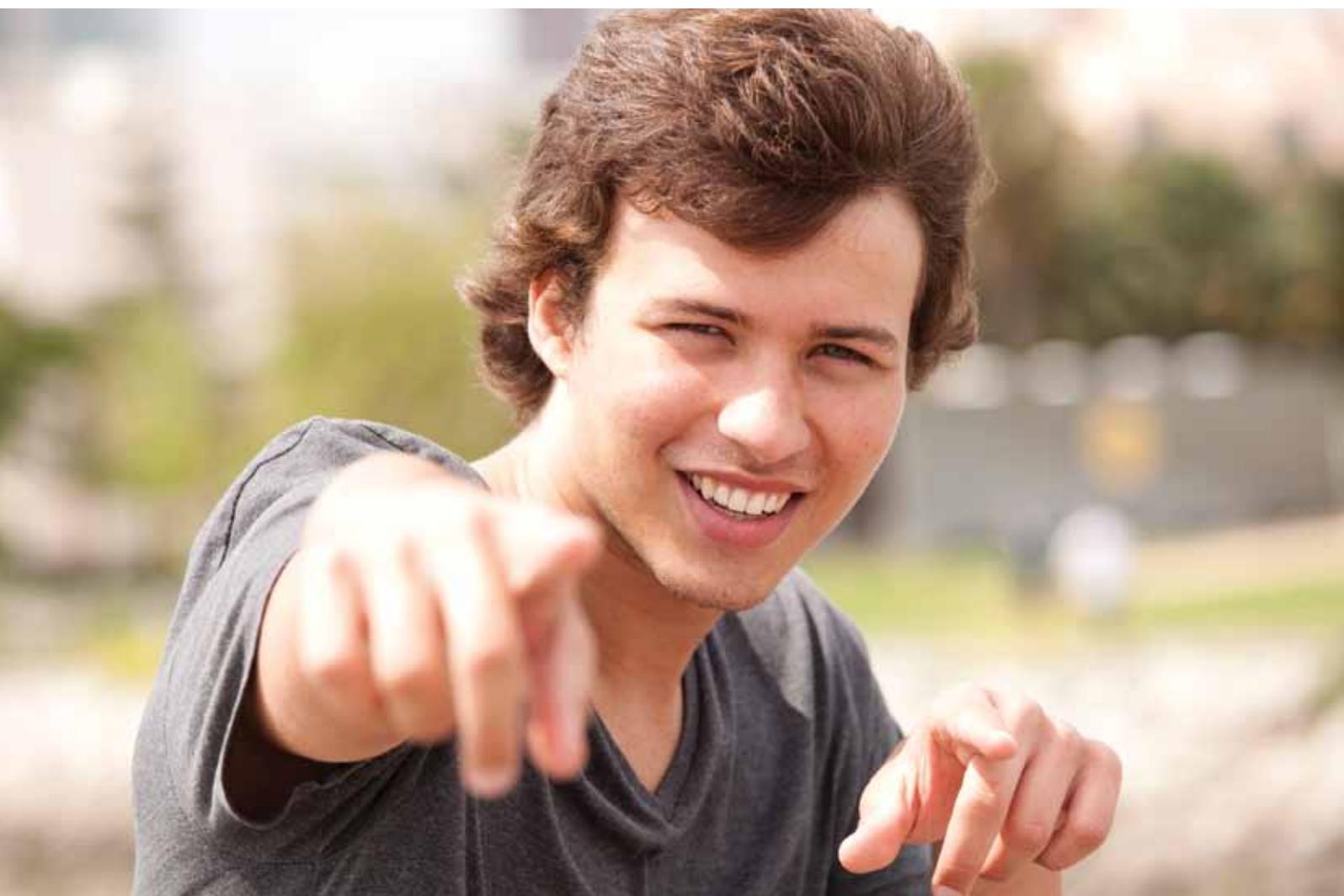




# Action for M.E. fundraising pack



Our vision is a  
world without M.E.



# Thank you

Thank you for choosing to fundraise for Action for M.E. We cannot achieve all that we do without the support of wonderful fundraisers like you.

The money you raise helps us deliver vital information, support and advice to those affected by M.E., including:

- our Welfare Advice and Support Service ([www.actionforme.org.uk/get-help/welfare-rights](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/get-help/welfare-rights))
- our Student Hub ([www.actionforme.org.uk/students](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/students)) for people with M.E. applying to or attending university or college
- our peer-support forum, M.E. Friends Online ([www.actionforme.org.uk/me-friends-online](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/me-friends-online))
- our online directory of local and national support services for M.E. ([www.actionforme.org.uk/services-directory](http://www.actionforme.org.uk/services-directory)).

Your hard work also helps us:

- fight for improved health, social care and welfare services for people with M.E.
- campaign for improved understanding and awareness of M.E.
- inform and educate doctors, decision-makers and other professionals about M.E.
- invest in pilot research projects that could help lead to better treatments and, ultimately, a cure.

This fundraising pack is crammed with essential information, top tips and inspiring ideas to help you get the best out of fundraising for us.

Our fundraising team is here to help every step of the way. Please contact them – their details are on the back page – if you have any questions, or would like to order any of our fundraising materials.

Good luck with your fundraising and thank you for helping us make a difference.



Sonya Chowdhury  
Chief Executive  
Action for M.E.

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“I wanted to raise money for Action for M.E. because the charity has been such a useful means of support. I decided to sell Pimms and mini cupcakes to people visiting my husband’s studio as part of an annual arts festival. This meant guaranteed visitors – and a local business generously donated the cupcakes. My advice for people with M.E. who want to run their own event? Keep it simple and save energy.”

Dionne, who was diagnosed with M.E. in 2008

# Organising your own event

Whatever the event or activity, there are six stages to consider in making it a success.

## Step 1: The idea

Everything has to start somewhere. If you're stuck for inspiration, check out our 'Be inspired' section on p 6.

## Step 2: The plan

When and where will your event be taking place? How many people will be involved? What budget do you have available?

Depending on your event you may need to consider licensing or insurance, for more information see the 'Keep it legal' section of this pack.

## Step 3: Getting the word out

Be sure to let people know what you're doing. Carry a sponsorship form with you, contact the media and let people at work or school know what you're doing. More information is available on the 'Promoting your event' pages of this pack.

## Step 4: The big day

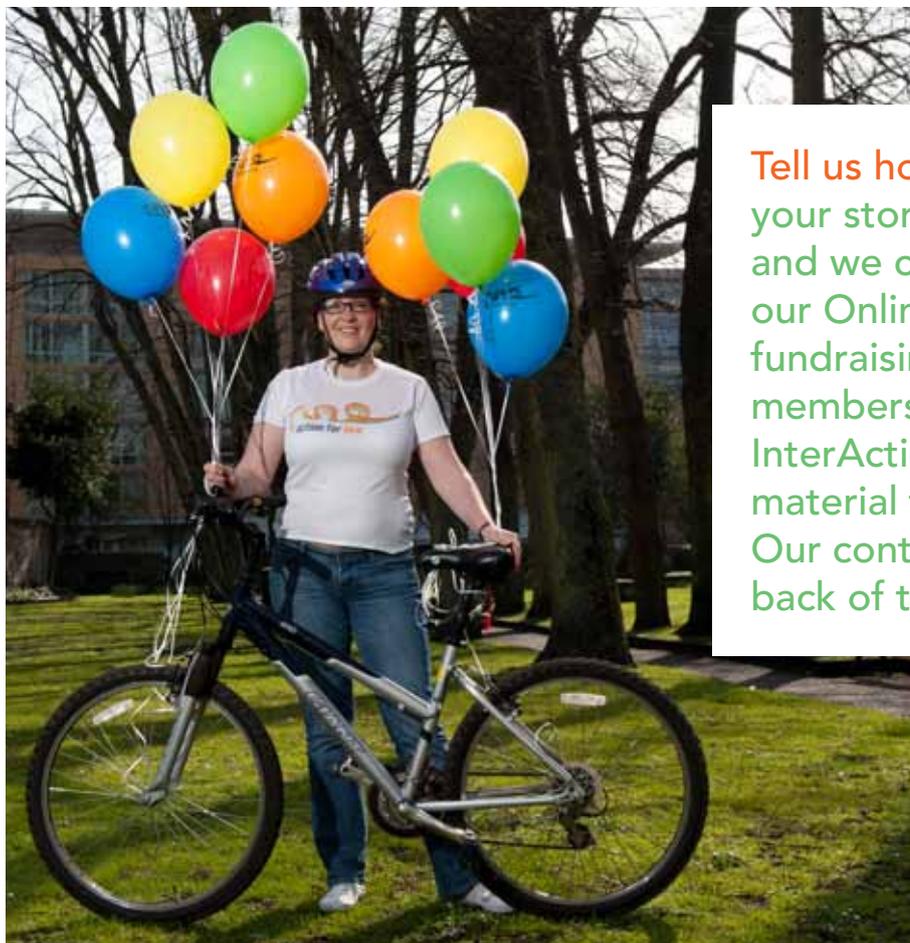
Be sure to capture all your hard work in action. Take pictures, tweet about what you're doing and collect quotes or comments from people that attend. Finally, whatever the event, remember why you're doing this and most importantly, have fun!

## Step 5: Make it pay

See our 'Make it pay' page for information on how to send us the money you raise, then fill out and post the 'Making your donation' form on p 13.

## Step 6: Say thank you

Fundraising relies on people to make it work. Make sure you let everyone who donates, sponsors you or is otherwise involved in your event know how vital their support has been.



**Tell us how it went!** Send us your stories or photographs and we could feature them in our Online M.E. Centre's fundraising pages, our membership magazine *InterAction* and promotional material to inspire others. Our contact details are on the back of this fundraising pack.

# Top tips

## Do what you enjoy!

The best ideas often come from what we know well. Are you involved in a local group or team? Have a hobby or skill you enjoy, a lifelong dream or goal? We'll help you reach your goals, as your support helps us reach ours.

## Set a target

Whatever the event, having a clear target gives you something to aim for. They're great for promotion, and can motivate people to give just that little bit more.

## Give yourself plenty of time

Don't stress out and rush things. Give yourself plenty of time to organise your event and collect sponsorship.

## Don't be afraid to ask

People are happy to support charities, so let them know what you're doing and how it will help the people the charity supports.

## Double your money

An increasing number of employers run matched giving schemes for their staff. Even if the company you work for doesn't, they may have other charity programs available as part of a corporate giving or social responsibility program.

## Pick your moment

Timing is vital, so be aware of any local or national events on the same day as your event. Consider also when people are likely to be at work, or children at school.

## Share your story

Why are you fundraising? Specifically why are you fundraising for Action for M.E.? You are the best possible promotor for your event because only you understand what it means to you; make sure you let others know.

## Get your first sponsorship in early

Get your first sponsor quickly and the rest will follow, so ask those close to you first. Once you have a few sponsors they tend to set the amount given by others.

## Stay organised and manage your costs

Be sure to keep an eye on the cost of your event. Keeping costs low is key so that as much money as possible can go towards our work. Try to get local businesses to donate services to help cover costs, or to donate items you can sell and use as prizes.

## Ask after the event

Around 20% of donations on platforms like Just Giving are made after the event, so make sure you keep that energy and enthusiasm going as long as possible – it will be worth it! For offline fundraising, make sure you collect all final sponsorship pledges.



# Be inspired

Whatever you choose to do, remember that fundraising events and activities work best when they grab people's attention, and when they have a clear link to the cause. Try to make your event individual and personal to you and what you hope to achieve.

If you would like to take part in an organised run, walk, race or challenge, we have lots of resources to support you in this – be inspired by Steven and Andy (below), and contact us (see the back page) for more details.

We also have lots of ideas for fundraising events and activities you can organise yourself. Whatever your personal capacity and resources, we'd love for you to get involved.

You know your body better than anyone, so if you have M.E. please be alert to the potential hazards of 'boom and bust.' Balancing activity and rest, or pacing, can enable you to make the most of the energy you have and avoid ill effects. We've included some M.E.-friendly ways you can help to support our work.

## Low energy

- Sell unwanted items on our behalf on eBay
- Have a birthday or event coming up? Instead of gifts, ask people to make a donation on your behalf.
- Collect and recycle old clothes for us.
- Shave or dye your hair and ask for donations.
- Take part in a sponsored silence.
- Give up something you love, like chocolate, for a week – or longer! – and ask people to sponsor you

## Make it local

- What's special and unique about where you live?
- Local history buff? Organise a history tour or walk and ask for donations.
- Local event? Ask to get involved, like setting up a stall at a local fete to sell cakes.
- Involve a local landmark.
- Get your local school involved: organise a bake sale or other event. Read about Sofia and Kimi's cake sale on p 7.
- Organise a tournament or league for local sports teams.
- Dress up as a local celebrity or historical figure and hold a collection, see 'Keep it legal' on p 15. You could ask for donations for photos or collect sponsorship to spend the day as them.



## Steven and Andy's half marathon

"M.E is close to my heart," says Steven, who ran the Southampton half with his friend Andy to raise money for Action for M.E. "My wife Liz fell ill with this condition only 10 months after we got married. It has changed our lives completely. Friends and family have been absolutely amazing but it's difficult for people to understand the daily struggles that we both go through. This is why we want to raise much needed funds and awareness for this debilitating illness."

### Make it personal

- What are your own special skills or interests?
- Do you have a hobby? Think about how you could use it to collect sponsorship or donations.
- What are you afraid of? Overcome one of your greatest fears, like holding a spider or doing a bungee jump, and ask for sponsorship.
- Part of a local sports team? Organise a tournament or competition like 'Beat the Goalie'
- What effect has M.E. had on your life? Symbolic events are a great way to not only raise money but to show the strength and determination of those overcoming this condition.
- Hold a community event like a coffee morning or fundraising evening. You could provide cakes or other items to sell, or collect donations for entry or music requests.

### Make it creative

- Do you have a talent, or want to indulge a creative streak? Get crafty. Make cards, jewellery or other crafts and sell them online.
- Organise an art show or photography show for local artists and ask for donations. You could also sell any pieces and donate the proceeds.
- Be unfashionable for a day. Take donations to wear the ugliest outfits you can find, or take nominations for particular costumes.

### Add a little extra

Reach out beyond the event. Giving somebody something in return for their money makes them more likely to give. It can also help raise awareness of M.E. and the work we do.

- Doing a sponsored walk or run? Run a sweepstake for people to guess your time.
- Organising a quiz or other event? Bring along snacks, sweets or homemade crafts and ask for donations. We also have wristbands, car stickers and badges you can sell.

### Sofia and Kimi's cake sale

"The sale was my friend Kimi's idea and me and my other friend Leah helped her to come up with a plan," says Sofia (pictured middle), age 10. "My mum, who has M.E., was really pleased and she soon set up a donation page. When we told our class about it, loads of people wanted to help, and my teacher donated straight away. We asked the head teacher if we could have it in the playground and she agreed. On the day, we went into school with bags full of cakes. There were so many people! We were so busy! Pretty much all the cakes were eaten – we reckon there must have been about 400 cakes altogether."



# Promoting your event

Promoting your event or activity helps you raise more money and awareness for your cause. You can do this through your local press, social media, local posters/flyers and word of mouth.

## Local media

If you are holding an event, your local newspaper or radio station might be interested in coming along, or sending a photographer. If you are undertaking a personal challenge, it could make a really interesting article.

For a guide to contacting your local press, see the 'Contacting your local media' section on p 10.

## Online media

Online fundraising pages and social media are a great way to publicise your event. Let us know what you're planning – our contact details are on the back page – and we can promote it across our own social media pages.

One of the best things you can do is to set up a Just Giving ([www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com)) or Virgin Money Giving ([www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving](http://www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving)) fundraising page. Not only does this provide a quick and safe way for people to donate online, but pages like these are also easy to share across social media.

Make the most of your fundraising page by

- telling your story: why are you supporting Action for M.E.? Why did you choose to fundraise the way you did? Personal stories help to grab people's attention and make them want to help.
- uploading photos. These grab the attention and make your page seem much more personal and interesting.
- posting links to your fundraising page on Facebook, and including a link if you set up a Facebook event.
- posting the link on your Twitter feed or tweet us directly @actionforme and we'll retweet to our followers. If you're taking part in a major challenge or event, check what hashtags the promoters have been using and include these in order to reach more people. You could also use the #MECFS hashtag.
- including a link to your page in your email signature and in any email invites you send out.

For any aspiring writers out there, why not start a blog about your fundraising? Tumblr or WordPress allow you to set up blogs for free and keep people up to date with your progress.

### Other ways to get the word out

Smaller, personal means of promotion can be effective alongside online or media coverage, especially for smaller events or activities.

### Posters and flyers

Make up posters advertising your event and ask to put them up in your workplace or school. Action for M.E. has a poster template you can use to promote your event, as well as awareness raising posters about M.E.

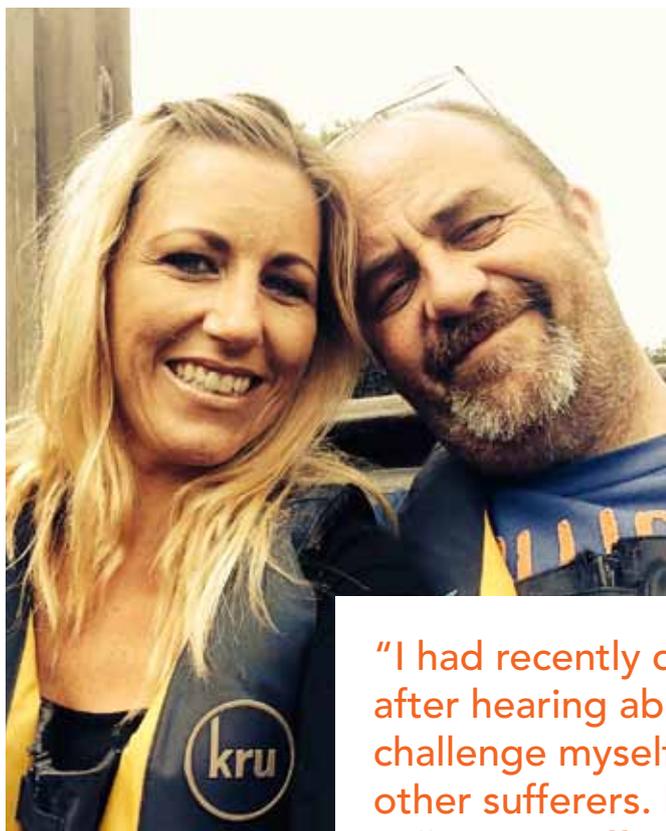
Ask local businesses if they would mind if you put a flyer or poster for your event in their window. In the cases of large public events ask to leave flyers on the counter or at tables for people to pick up.

### Invitations

Send out invites. Whether printed, written or via email an individual touch can help to gain a person's support.

### Your own social circle

Who else do you know who might want to help? Try to promote your event to as many people as possible including friends, people at work or at local clubs and societies you're a part of. Get the word out to the people you know and ask them to pass it on.



"I had recently decided to get fit and healthy and after hearing about Laura's diagnosis I decided to challenge myself and show my support for her and other sufferers. I was thrilled that three work colleagues offered to join my team and also run for Action for M.E. They took a bit of nagging to get them to set up their JustGiving pages! My advice for people who want to run their own event? Just do it! Three months ago I never would have believed I'd be doing this, but I made the commitment and now I can't wait."

British 10K London runner Leigh, whose wife Laura has M.E.

# Contacting your local media

**Telling local media about your fundraising activity is a great way to increase interest in your event and will also help raise awareness of M.E.**

Contacting local media may seem a bit daunting but it is relatively easy. All it takes is a little forward planning. Your local press will be interested in stories with a local link and a good human interest angle.

Here are our tips for sharing your story with local media:

## **Step 1: Find out who to contact**

You should be able to find email addresses and phone numbers for your local press on their website. The 'Contact us' page is the best place to start.

If you have trouble finding a contact, give us a call on 0117 927 9551 and we will try to help.

Local newspapers: try to speak to someone on the newsdesk. Larger regional papers may also have a health correspondent. You could call them or send in a press release (see below).

Local radio or television are often keen to promote local interest news, especially if there is someone they can interview for a 20-30 second soundbyte. This can be either live or recorded, which allows for re-takes. Try to contact the station as far in advance as possible and again the day before.

## **Step 2: What to say?**

Local journalists are always on the lookout for local interest stories, so don't be shy about getting in touch.

Contact them as soon as you know the key details of your event or activity:

- what the event/activity consists of
- why it is taking place
- time/date
- where it is taking place
- who is involved
- how people can get involved

It's best to phone but it can help to have the information ready to hand, typed up in a press release, available to email if you can.



### Step 3: Writing a press release

If you can communicate the 'what, when, where, who, how and why' of your event or activity, concisely, in three or four short paragraphs, under a catchy headline, you have the basis of a press release.

Always try to include a photo with your press release if you can as this increases the chances of it being published.

See below for a simple guide to writing a press release.

Ideally your press release shouldn't be longer than a page and try to write short, sharp paragraphs.

## Press release

**Catchy headline** (Keep it short and include the name of your town/city if possible, eg. Bristol Family's Fun Day Fundraiser)

**First paragraph** summarising the key facts of your story (who, what, where, when and why) in about 50 words.

**Second paragraph** explaining a bit more about the story you have outlined.

**Third paragraph** could be a quote from you or someone central to the story, saying more about the reason for the event.

The **last paragraph** should provide extra relevant information eg. how people can get involved, get more information, or sponsor you.

**Ends** (On a new line, type the word "Ends" to indicate the end of the press release.)

**Leave a line** then put your name and contact details, so that journalists can get in touch if they need more information.

**Notes for Editors** (This is an optional extra section which goes at the end, if there is further relevant detail to which a journalist can refer if they decide to write a longer article, eg. For further information about M.E. contact Action for M.E. [www.actionforme.org.uk](http://www.actionforme.org.uk))



# Make it pay

**Your fundraiser is over: it's time to get those all-important funds to us. You should aim to get your fundraising money to us within a month of your event. Please see instructions below to complete and return the 'Making your donation' form on p 13.**

## By credit or debit card

Payments can be made over the phone using any credit or debit card. Contact us on 0117 927 9551 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). Alternatively, complete and return the 'Making your donation' form on p 13.

## By cheque

Cheques should be made payable to 'Action for M.E.' and sent to the office address on the back of this fundraising pack. Please include the 'Making your donation' form on p 13.

## Online

You can pay your fundraising total to us directly through our Just Giving page at [www.justgiving.com/actionforme](http://www.justgiving.com/actionforme). Please also give us a call, or send us the 'Making your donation' form on p 13, to let us know what your payment was for.

## Bank payments

Any money collected can be paid directly into our account using the following details:

Action for M.E.  
Royal Bank of Scotland  
Account number: 10117505  
Sort code: 16-13-18

Please also give us a call, or send us the 'Making your donation' form on p 13, to let us know you have made the payment.

Our address and other contact details are on the back of this fundraising pack.

## Send us your sponsorship forms

If you've collected offline sponsorship, or have a Gift Aid form completed for any of your donations, please return them to our office address on the back of this fundraising pack.

## Whatever you raise, Gift Aid it!

Gift Aid makes donations to registered charities worth more by allowing them to claim 25p from the government for every £1 donated, substantially boosting your fundraising total. Gift Aid can be applied to any donation from a UK tax payer, as long as the amount claimed is no more than the tax paid that financial year. When collecting donations or sponsorship, make sure to ask whether the supporter would like Gift Aid applied. All we require for Gift Aid to be applied is a full name and address.

## Share your success

Thank you so much for your support. We love to hear about the ways people choose to fundraise for us. We could feature quotes or photographs from your event in our publications, online or in materials like this, so get in touch and let us know how it went. See the back page of this fundraising pack for our contact details.



# Making your donation

Whatever you raise, the sooner we get it, the sooner we can use it to help support people affected by M.E. You should be aiming to have sponsorship and donations collected within a month of your event.

You can use this form to send us your donation by credit/debit card or cheque, or to let us know that you have paid the money by bank transfer or our JustGiving page.

Please do not send cash – it's much safer to use one of the payment methods below.

## 1. Your details

Title	
First name	Surname
Address	
Postcode	
Tel (landline)	Mobile
Email	Date of birth DD / MM / YYYY

I wish to receive news and updates from Action for M.E. by email

## 2. Payment method

### Cheque

Please find enclosed a cheque payable to 'Action for M.E.'

### Bank payment

The money from my event was paid into your account using the details below

Bank name
Account number <input type="text"/>
Sort code <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Date deposit made
Reference used

*continued on next page*

**Online**

The money from my event was paid to you via Just Giving

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Date payment was made \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit or debit card**

I wish to pay by credit or debit card

Donation amount \_\_\_\_\_

Card type \_\_\_\_\_

Card number

Start date     End date

Three-digit security code

**3. Other information**

Please find enclosed sponsorship forms       Please find enclosed Gift Aid forms

**4. Your signature**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Your story**

We'd love to hear how your event went. What was your favourite part? And what advice would you give to anyone else raising money for Action for M.E.?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this completed form and payment to  
Action for M.E., 42 Temple Street, Keynsham, BS31 1EH**

**Action for M.E. cannot achieve all that it does without  
the support of wonderful fundraisers like you. Thank you!**



# Keep it legal, keep it safe

Charity fundraising is regulated by law. The guidelines below will help to ensure your fundraising is both legal and safe. In addition, full guidelines are available from the Institute of Fundraising ([www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk))

## Licences

You may require a license for the following:

- alcohol or entertainment, including recorded music
- holding a raffle, lottery or auction
- doing a public money collection
- putting up banners or signs in public areas.

## Public collections

Collecting money in a public place of any kind requires permission from your local council. For more information contact either your local council, or the Action for M.E. fundraising team who will be happy to give you more information. Similarly, if you're fundraising on private property, make sure to ask the owner's permission first.

## Lotteries and raffles

Events like these are subject to licensing from local authorities. For more information contact your local council.

## Insurance

If your event involves the public you will need to have Public Liability Insurance. Please check what public liability insurance the venue has in place before your event. Unfortunately, Action for M.E. cannot accept liability for a fundraising activity or event you undertake in support of us.

## Money

Advice for handling and counting money at fundraising events:

- where possible have two people present when money is being counted
- collect cash using a secure container e.g. a sealed container for a collection or a secure cash box for change
- bank the money collected as soon as possible.



## Food

Contact the Food Standards Agency ([www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)) for guidelines about food hygiene.

## First Aid

You can get advice from a professional first aid provider such as St John Ambulance or the Red Cross about what first aid you should have at your event.

Contact our fundraising team  
on 0117 937 6626 or email  
[fundraising@actionforme.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@actionforme.org.uk)



42 Temple Street  
Keynsham  
BS31 1EH

General enquiries 0117 927 9551

[www.actionforme.org.uk](http://www.actionforme.org.uk)

 [www.facebook.com/actionforme](https://www.facebook.com/actionforme)

 [www.twitter.com/actionforme](https://www.twitter.com/actionforme)

Registered charity in England and Wales no. 1036419

Registered in Scotland no. SC040452

Company limited by guarantee, registered in England no. 2906840

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If you are a UK tax payer every £1 you give will be worth at least 25 pence more to the charity if you Gift Aid it. To do so please confirm: *giftaid it*

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please notify the charity if you: want to cancel this declaration/change your name or home address/no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. Thank you very much for your support.

Full name	Full address	Postcode	Gift Aid it?	Permission to contact	£

Total raised

For office use only

\*You need to have paid UK tax this year at least equal to the amount we claim

### Fundraiser's details

My title                      First name    Surname

---

Address

---

Postcode

---

Tel    Email

---

Signed (By parent or guardian if under 18)    Date of birth (if under 18)

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We would like to keep in touch. Tick here if you don't want us to

**After the event** sponsorship forms and cheques should be returned to:  
 FREEPOST RTJR-TJLZ-CHLT, Action for M.E., 42 Temple Street, Keynsham BS31 1EH.  
 All cheques should be made payable to 'Action for M.E.' You can also pay by card on  
 0117 937 6626 but we will still need your forms to claim Gift Aid.

**Download more forms at [www.actionforme.org.uk](http://www.actionforme.org.uk) or call 0117 937 6626**



**M.E. affects around 250,000 men,  
women and children in the UK.**  
**Thank you for your support.**

