



Our impact 2023



Introduction

Welcome to this year's Make 2nds Count Impact Report. The report describes the latest steps and achievements on our journey of giving hope to those affected by secondary breast cancer. Make 2nds Count is now in its fifth year, and we are even more passionate and dedicated to our purpose: "For patients, by patients: giving hope through clinical trial education, sharing knowledge, providing support and funding research."

Our patient community is at the centre of all we do, and we are thankful that our community ambassadors help to shape our priorities and strategy. In the last year we have been delighted to see an increase in our online and in-person support programme in terms of attendees and number of events, and our yearly retreats continue to be popular.

Our Patient Trial Advocate service continues to expand, helping patients by connecting them with clinical trials across the UK that have the potential to improve outcomes and extend life. Our online clinical trials registry also launched, providing up-to-date information for patients.



Professor David Cameron
Chair of Trustees

In the area of research, we launched our first UK-wide open research funding call asking for research ideas designed to deliver tangible outcomes for people living with secondary breast cancer within the next five years. We have been overwhelmed by the responses and will be excited to announce our chosen project in Summer 2024.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we want to thank everyone who has supported Make 2nds Count in 2023. For every penny raised, every retweet, every hour volunteered, every act of support, every personal story shared—we are incredibly thankful to our fundraisers, donors, supporters, ambassadors, staff and community for joining in our ambition to make those living with secondary breast cancer feel heard, seen and empowered.

While we celebrate our accomplishments in 2023, we know there is still much to be done as more patients across the UK are diagnosed with secondary breast cancer. Please join us as we Make 2nds Count.

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Our impact in numbers

30%

growth in our
2nds Together
Facebook Group

920

people supported
by Tea & Chat
groups

£599,978

raised

255

referrals to our
Patient Trial
Advocate Service

90

pieces of media
coverage

355,411

reach across our
social channels

£219,560

committed to
secondary breast
cancer research

476

'Little Book of
Life Admin' sent
out to families

160

supporters taking
part in challenge
events

Research

Research on secondary breast cancer is severely underfunded in the UK. We are one of a few organisations providing funding for research that is dedicated to improving the quality of life of people living with secondary breast cancer.

2023 highlights

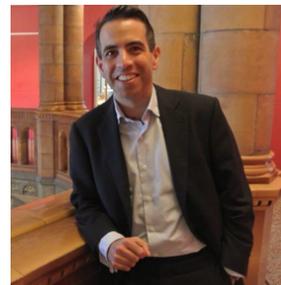
We saw the completion of the first-ever research grant we awarded. Back in 2019, we awarded £145,000 to fund a postdoctoral research scientist for three years focussing on Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC). Dr Olga Oikonomidou and her research team at the University of Edinburgh studied tumour samples from TNBC patients from initial diagnosis to recurrence, looking at how gene mutations in the cancer change and evolve over the course of treatment. Their findings will help to improve our understanding of the genetics of TNBC and lead to more treatment options in the future.

We awarded our largest ever grant (£219,560) to support a new study taking place across the UK & Ireland investigating screening secondary breast cancer patients for brain metastases before they become symptomatic. Co-Chief Investigators of this study are Prof Carlo Palmieri at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust in Liverpool and Dr Sara Meade at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust.

And we celebrated our first research paper being published: 'Living with metastatic breast cancer (LIMBER): experiences, quality of life, gaps in information, care and support of patients in the UK.' The LIMBER study found that the impacts of secondary breast cancer on daily life were made worse by significant gaps in support, communication and information available. The research team at Sussex University used the findings to develop an educational film to help family and friends better support their loved ones living with this disease.

£450,860

committed to
research
since 2018



The ROYAL MARSDEN
NHS Foundation Trust



Research funding call

In September, we launched our first UK-wide open research funding call asking for clinical research ideas designed to deliver tangible outcomes for people living with secondary breast cancer within the next five years. Research topics could be related to the care, services, treatment, mental wellbeing or quality of life of the secondary breast cancer community.

Research criteria:

- Up to £250,000
- UK based
- Research teams must include a patient advocate
- Projects must be accessible to patients in the Developed Nations

Our mission is to build a research programme that amplifies our community voice and helps people live longer, better lives alongside secondary breast cancer.

We received 15 applications from NHS trusts and universities in Northern Ireland, England and Scotland. Our panel of patient advocates, oncologists and research experts are currently reviewing these applications and we will be announcing our decision in May 2024.

Patient advocates

Our expert panel of patient advocates help remove bias in decision making and guide us in funding research studies that will make the biggest difference to the patient community. Rachel and Bobbie share what inspired them to get involved:

“

Research was a large part of my job so I joined the panel to ensure I still have purpose and meaning in my life since having to give up work due to secondary breast cancer diagnosis."



Rachel

“

Being involved with the M2C research panel made me feel that I was part of the solution and not the problem and that my experience counts and that my voice matters."



Bobbie

Support

We know that living with a secondary breast cancer diagnosis is both mentally and physically gruelling for people and those closest to them. With a focus on quality of life, our online and in-person support programme helps patients and families affected by this incurable disease through events, information sharing, and practical advice and support.

2023 highlights

We saw 106 members of our community join one of three fully funded retreats. Our two-day retreats were in three different locations across the country throughout the year giving you the chance to take part in wellbeing activities, crafts and meet with others in the community.

Our Tea & Chat in-person groups continued to grow with four new groups launched bringing our overall total to 12! We introduced new groups to the areas of Birmingham, Aberdeen, Inverness and Devon.

We reached the milestone of 1300 members in our '2nds Together' Facebook private support group. This group offers a safe space with daily encouragement to our community to share their experiences and worries along with their achievements.

We continued to expand our wellbeing offerings, as we know being diagnosed with secondary breast cancer and coping with treatment plans can put pressure on your mental health and wellbeing. We launched two weekly yoga sessions and twice monthly breathwork and mindfulness sessions with help from Birdsong Yoga Physio and BreatheBalanceBe.

We supported over 100 patients during Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October with a series of events during the week of Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day (13 October). We visited Future Dreams House alongside Secondary Sisters and celebrated our community of 80 strong resilient ladies supporting each other.

Programme

- Tea & Chat - monthly in-person at 12 locations
- Online Tea & Chat
- Retreats
- 2nds Together Support Group
- Wellbeing
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Resources



"The Patient Advocacy Trial service gave me the tools and ideas on how best to approach my oncology team to ask and push forward the idea of trials."

PTA patient

"The Make 2nds Count FB group has been a real comfort to me where you can chat to people who understand, which helps you to not feel so isolated"

Kelly

"Living in Spain, with nothing in the way of support in my area, M2C and other groups like it have been invaluable to me. Thank you."

Mary

"The Make 2nds Count Retreat at Rainhill has given me lifelong friendships."

Anne

Voices
from our
secondary breast
cancer community

"The support from Make 2nds Count has made a huge difference in my life living with metastatic breast cancer."

Rachel

"Connecting with others on Make 2nd Count Facebook Group has been an absolute lifeline both for my mental health and for the incredible knowledge and support."

Helen

"Make 2nds Count has offered me information and empowerment to self advocate, to be informed and do all of the things I want to do. From speaking to other people and having the support of the charity, it has shown me that I can still live and there is still hope to be here as long as I can be."

Jess

"It was nice to speak with a sympathetic ear who seemed positive about finding something for me if it was out there. I felt for a moment that I wasn't a lost cause."

PTA patient

Lisa's story

Lisa, age 44, lives in Edinburgh with her two cats George and Jetty. She was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer.

"I was first diagnosed with triple negative primary in January 2019. I had 16 months of treatment and came out the other side. I was able to get on with life—I bought a cottage, I got new jobs, I got two cats. Then a year later, I found a lump in my neck. I knew it wasn't good, but the specialists thought they could treat it and remove it. I was relieved until one day before I was due to start chemotherapy, I was told that actually the cancer had spread to my spine. It was secondary. And it was the week before my birthday.

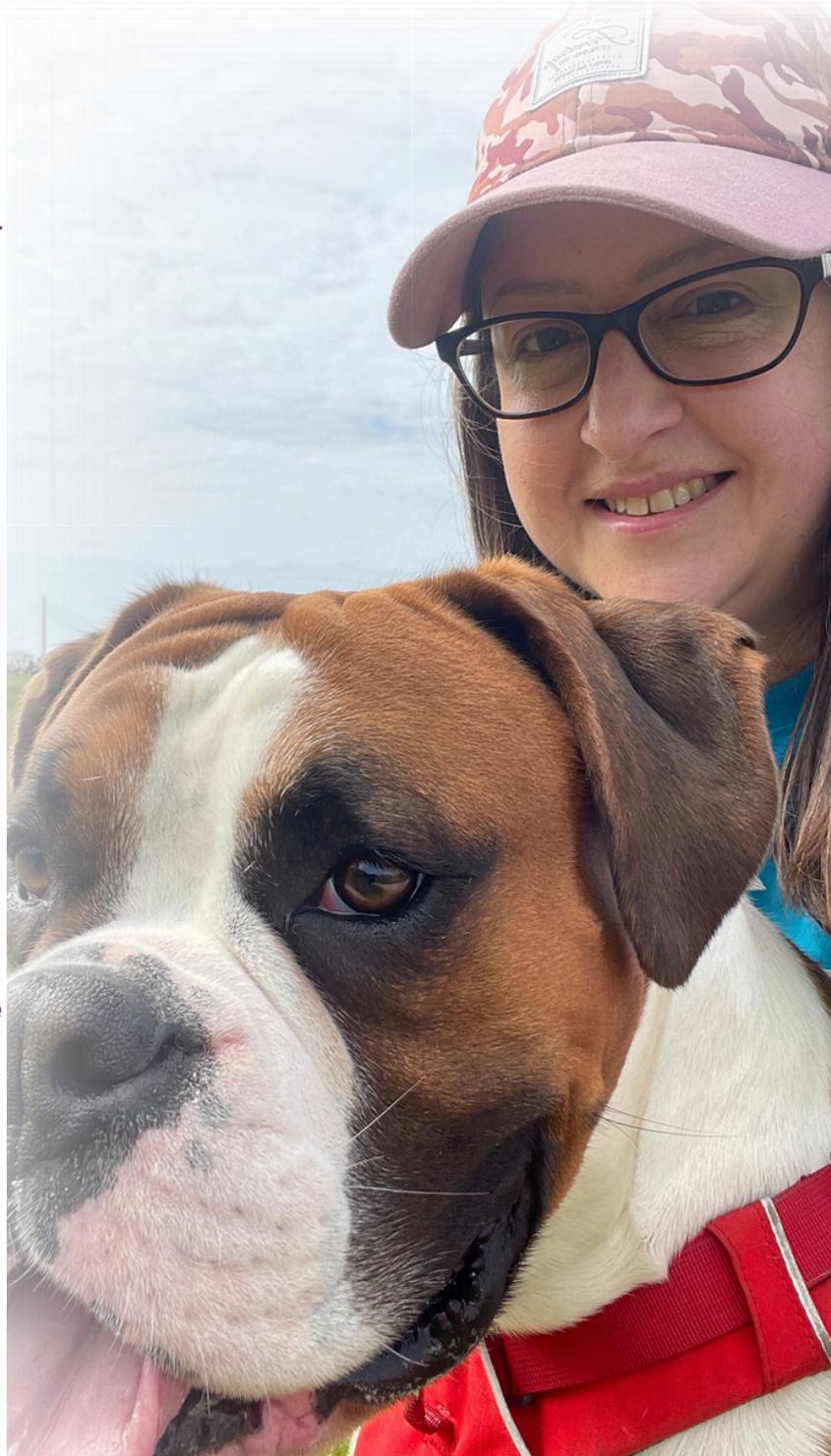
I'm on my second line of treatment which is oral chemo tablets. I've not had a single day off sick since I was diagnosed the second time. I have three jobs and I just get on with it—people tell me to make time for myself, but my time is always about helping others. I don't know how to do 'sitting back.' I feel if I stop I'll never start again.

Secondary breast cancer doesn't define me—but cancer does. And that's my choice. As a patient advocate and volunteer I help researchers develop new ways of monitoring and treating cancer. I provide a friendly face and a cuppa for anybody who wants to come and get some advice with Macmillan at Edinburgh Libraries. I've met some wonderful people and made some fantastic friends as a result of having breast cancer.

Whilst you never get a break from secondary breast cancer, it is a welcome pause to go to a Tea & Chat session and meet other women who really get it and have a chat, a laugh or get some reassurance. I am grateful for being able to make new friends in a supportive, relaxed environment. Make 2nds Count makes me feel less isolated."

“

Whilst you never get a break from secondary breast cancer, it is a welcome pause to be able to go to a Make 2nds Count Tea & Chat group and meet with others who really get it.”



Education

Our Patient Trial Advocate service was a key area of focus for our Education programme this year: helping people living with secondary breast cancer to access the information they need to explore the option of clinical trials as part of their treatment pathway.

We believe that it's vital that every patient has access to any treatment type, including clinical trials. It is part of Make 2nds Count's mission is to raise awareness and inform and facilitate access to patient trials. Our team of dedicated specialist nurses help patients find out more about how clinical trials work and how to get involved as a participant.

Vivienne, our Lead Patient Trials Advocate Nurse says: "It can be very time consuming and challenging for clinicians and patients to search for suitable clinical trial options. My role as a specialist nurse with experience in secondary breast cancer and clinical trials, is to advise, inform and support patients to find out more about clinical trials. We provide a free, confidential service for patients, family members and health care professionals, where we explain how clinical trials work and answer any questions they may have. We can also conduct a personalised and detailed clinical trials database search, seeing what clinical trials might potentially be available to patients as a next line of treatment.

The portfolio of UK studies changes frequently with around 75 active trials open to recruitment at the moment. All are ethically regulated and scientifically based. Patient trials have shown to help patients live longer and have a better quality of life."



Vivienne, Lead Patient Trials Advocate Nurse

“ My message to fellow patients is to raise the subject of a trial early on with your clinician, and every time you have to change treatment lines ask again about trials. —Lesley



75

active clinical trials are listed on the Make 2nds Count public registry of UK clinical trials for secondary breast cancer

255

Patient referrals in 2023

84%

of patients were matched to suitable clinical trials

88%

patients feel confident about having conversations with their clinical team after seeing a PTA Nurse.

Margaret's story

Margaret, age 58, was born and brought up on a dairy farm in East Ayrshire. She moved to Greenock on the west coast of Scotland to train as a nurse and met her husband there and stayed.

"I was initially diagnosed with breast cancer at 41 yrs of age. I had a left mastectomy followed by full lymph clearance, eight rounds of chemo and 20 bursts of radiotherapy.

I had a sore back and, after a short delay, had an MRI that showed some abnormality. When the consultant checked my X-ray I was sent for a bone scan where secondaries to spine, pelvis and upper left arm were found, and a further CT showed liver and lung secondaries with a plural effusion. The worst part of being diagnosed was telling my close family—any negative changes are always hard to deal with.

Finding information is never easy as most of it is very negative or outdated. The unit I originally attended for treatment was very supportive. As my treatment progressed, I became aware of Make 2nds Count and I started talking to people about the Patient Trials Advocate Service (PTA).

Access to the PTA service has given me new hope and support, as well as a new way of opening discussions with my treatment team and allowing myself and others as patients to have more control of the journey we are on.

I have learnt that I am a lot more resilient than I would ever have believed and I still have optimism—perhaps due to the fact that I am still well after 8 years and I have a lot to be thankful for, especially living to see the birth of my grandson and being fit enough to help care for him when needed."



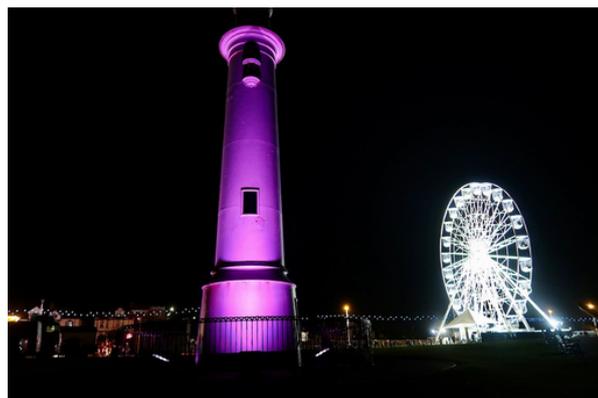
“**The Patient Trial Advocate Services has given me a new hope and support.**”

Raising awareness

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2023, we proudly launched our Shine a Light campaign, again lighting up iconic UK landmarks in the radiant colours of Make 2nds Count on Secondary Breast Cancer Day (13 October). Over 50 venues joined this awe-inspiring visual spectacle symbolising hope and resilience for all those affected by secondary breast cancer.

Alongside Shine a Light, we created a series of striking photos called Truth Be Told, shot by the talented photographer Jennifer Willis. These striking photos showcased two sides of the same story, both the visible and not-so-visible experiences of people living with secondary breast cancer.

We are very grateful to outdoor media operator 75Media who donated 34 digital billboards, from London to Scotland displaying images from Truth be Told over the course of several days to help raise awareness of the disease.



Sarah, Dumfries



Joanna, Co Antrim



Tansy, East Lothian

Fundraising

A huge thank you to everyone who raised funds for us in 2023! From our fantastic corporate partners, individual donors, trusts and foundations and challenge event fundraisers—we could not continue our work supporting people affected by secondary breast cancer without you!

2023 highlights

- Our two-year partnership with **Dalkeith Country Park** raised **£8,217.69** thanks to various fundraising initiatives such as the Tree of Hope at the Christmas Spectacle of Light event, product fundraising, fashion shows and an art auction.
- **Bothwell Castle Golf Club** charity of the year partnership raised £18,000 through their pro-am event and individual initiatives from the club captains and members in the club.
- Continued support from the **Karen Henderson Legacy Fund** and this year's **Kiltwalk** brought in **£7,193**
- Our new **Love Your Tribe** lunches raised **£15,738** with 153 attendees over the two events.



Dalkeith Country Park



Bothwell Castle Golf Club



Carol's story

Carol was diagnosed with secondary breast cancer in 2021. She came up with the idea of 'Carol's Walk' soon after, inspired by a love of walking and wanting to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer charities. Carol shares with us about the event.



"The news [of my diagnosis] came as an enormous shock and treatment has often been difficult. However, life is for living and walking is my happy place! I like nothing better than to climb the rolling green hills above our lush Golden Valley.

My vision for 'Carol's Walk' involved sharing my favourite routes, walking with friends, family and our community to celebrate life, increase awareness of secondary breast cancer, and enjoy our beautiful corner of England. At the same time to raise funds for some excellent charities which have helped me."

On Saturday 10 June, 500 walkers (many proudly wearing breast cancer pink) arrived at the starting point full of enthusiasm and energy. They could choose the option of a 13-mile route up to the top of Vagar Hill and then to the top Dorstone Hill either side of the stunning Golden Valley, or three other shorter distances.

At the end of the walk, the hikers were met by 500 others to enjoy a big party at her family farmhouse.

"We enjoyed lots more cake and the hospitality of the Pandy Inn's BBQ, the Shack Bar, Shepherds ice-cream and Field to Fork Pizza Cart. We also held a magnificent "5 Big Prize" Draw which took place during the afternoon-all of which helped to swell the grand total."

Thanks to Carol and her team of incredible hikers, we received £10,939.25.

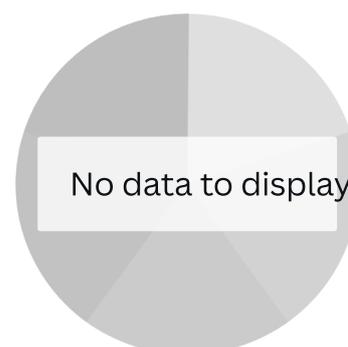


Carol (centre) and her friends

Financial summary

Year ending 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year Ended 31/12/23 Total Funds	Period Ended 31/12/22 to 31/12/23 Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations and legacies	406,624	186,276	592,900	685,486
Other trading activities	825	-	825	85,875
Investment income	6,251	-	6,251	323
Total	413,700	186,276	599,976	564,456
EXPENDITURE ON				
Raising Funds	18,968	-	18,968	60,745
Charitable Activities				
Advancement of Health	313,323	173,765	487,088	503,711
Activity Support				
Total	332,291	173,765	506,056	564,456
NET INCOME	81,409	12,511	93,920	217,228
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
<i>Total funds brought forward</i>	628,512	110,228	738,740	521,512
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	709,912	122,739	832,660	738,740



Our team

Trustees

Professor David Cameron, Chairperson (pictured page 1)

John Ward, Treasurer

Heather Moffitt (SBC patient)

Ian McCarlie

Joanne Lacey

Lesley Stephen (SBC patient)

Dr Peter Canney



Community Ambassadors

Sarah McDiarmid

Mary Johnston

Cheryl Graham

Sam Kelly

Joanna Bingham

Mandy Smith

Anne Blacklock

Debra Hill

Diane Wildbur

Marette Thair

Mhairi Campbell

Kate Harvey

Tansy Main

Anne McClean-Chang

Research Panel Patient Advocates

Patricia Snow (in memory)

Tansy Main

Rachel White

Sam Kelly

Sarah Dale

Debbie Donnison

Claire Wraight

Rachel Stewart

Bobbie Graham

A huge thank you to everyone who has donated or raised vital funds to continue our work giving hope to people affected by secondary breast cancer. We could not do it without you.

- Beard Construction
- Bellahouston Bequest Fund
- Bothwell Castle Golf Club
- Cunmont Trust
- Dalkeith Country Park
- DWF Foundation
- Edith Murphy Foundation
- Edward Gosling Foundation
- Enkalon Foundation
- Gilead UK
- Herefordshire Community Foundation
- Hospital Saturday Fund
- J MacDonald Menzies Charitable Trust
- James Inglis Trust
- James T Howat Charitable Trust
- Karen Henderson Legacy Fund
- Manchester Guardian Society
- Mickel Fund
- Morrisons Foundation
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Pink Ribbon Foundation
- Stafford Trust
- Thistledown Trust
- Walk the Walk Worldwide

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