



# 2024 IMPACT REPORT

**Giving  
hope**

to those affected  
by secondary  
breast cancer

# INTRODUCTION



**Samantha Dixon**  
Chief Executive

I am delighted to have joined Make 2nds Count this year at a very exciting time of growth. 2024 has been a tremendous year with some strong additions to our staff team and service provision ahead of launching an ambitious three-year strategy in 2025.

Now in our sixth year, we are as dedicated as ever to our mission of giving hope to those affected by secondary (metastatic) breast cancer.

We've joined a number of cancer coalitions to make sure our voice, and that of our community, is counted. We are now members of the NI Cancer Coalition, One Cancer Voice, and the Scottish Cancer Cross-Party Group. We are also a stakeholder in a number of NICE drug consultations to try to influence treatment recommendations.

Our Clinical Trials Service continues to expand, helping patients to understand the potential of trials and have empowered conversations with their care teams.

We have also begun round table discussions with clinical teams to try to understand the barriers to accessing trials and hope to share important findings with decision-makers in 2025.

A huge success for us was the launch of the UK's first Secondary Breast Cancer Patient Summit, in partnership with ECMC and The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust with almost 500 people attending online and in-person. And our support and wellbeing programme continues to thrive with new activities and events, including our first retreat in South-East England.

None of this would be possible without the incredible fundraising efforts from our wonderful supporters and funding partners. In these difficult times, this support is needed, and appreciated, more than ever. Thank you.

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# IMPACT FIGURES

**1,900**

people now belong to our 2nds Together Facebook Group

**17**

Tea & Chat support groups now established across the UK

**490**

people attended our Patient Summit in persons and online

**366**

referrals to our Clinical Trials Service

**80%**

users rate Clinical Trial Service as 'highly effective' in building knowledge of trials

**750**

Wellbeing group attendees

**£400,00**

committed to secondary breast cancer research

**221**

people joined our Tea & Chat Whatsapp Support Groups

**183**

supporters taking part in challenge & fundraising events



# RESEARCH & EDUCATION

We are one of a few organisations that currently invests fundraising money into secondary breast cancer research. This year, we have invested over £400,000 in to research projects that could contribute to advancing an increased quality of life for our community.

In September 2023, 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.

In July 2024 we held the UK's first patient-focused Secondary Breast Cancer Summit designed to empower our community through increased knowledge and understanding of research, treatments and options.

In partnership with The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust and ECMC, the event saw 88 women and men from our community come together to hear first-hand from a number of experts in the medical field about how to navigate and understand clinical guidelines, and how to live well alongside secondary breast cancer. We were also joined by over 400 people online.

Thank you to our funders Novartis, AstraZeneca, Pfizer, InsuranceWith, Gilead, MSD and Menarini Stemline. And to our friends at Maggie's Liverpool, ABC Global Alliance, Breast Cancer Now, Independent Cancer Patients' Voice and Met Up UK for providing support and information in the exhibitors room.

We received 15 applications from NHS trusts and universities in Northern Ireland, England and Scotland. Our panel of patient advocates, oncologists and research experts chose a number of projects which are in initial stages, including:

- **ESTABLISH** (Exploring Suitable Treatments for Advanced Breast cancer patients with Long-term Insomnia through StakeHolder collaboration). This will look at the impacts of insomnia in secondary breast cancer patients and demonstrate the effectiveness of CBT tailored insomnia intervention. We hope to launch this research project in March 2025.

"The speakers were all great and I have left feeling like I've got more information to add to my arsenal. It was all very accessible, even when things got technical it was still understandable."





# SUPPORT

**Our Support Service team has grown this year with Liz, Support Coordinator, joining us in January, enabling us to grow our service provision to the secondary breast cancer community.**

We saw 136 people attend our 2nds Together Retreats in Crieff, Liverpool, Northern Ireland, Aylesbury and Whitstable for two days of wellbeing and relaxation. It was our first year of trialling a day retreat and received positive feedback.

Our Tea & Chat groups continue to expand bringing our total to 17! We saw our first group open in Wales at the seaside town of Rhyl, as well as groups start in Bath, Carlisle, Dumfries, Chelmsford & Suffolk. Our Belfast, Hereford, Glasgow, London & Boston/Lincoln groups celebrated their second birthday and Birmingham, Devon, Edinburgh, Manchester, St Helens and Inverness turned one! We are continually thankful to our Community Ambassadors and volunteers who host the Tea & Chat groups so well.

Our online Wellbeing Programme also continues to grow. We were delighted to launch Pilates in October with Community Ambassador, Janet. Our 'Breathwork' and 'Be Kind to your Mind' sessions with Louisa from Breathe Balance Be continue to well attended, as is our Birdsong Yoga Physio session with Yvonne.

October was busy with our Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day events with an afternoon tea at Tigerlilly, Edinburgh, and our annual joint event with Future Dreams charity, Secondary Sisters and InsuranceWith in London. We also helped to host an afternoon at Jennifer Young headquarters in Crewe. These events are really important as Breast Cancer Awareness Month can be incredibly emotional for the community so it gives a chance for people to come together and support each other.



Hereford Tea & Chat



Aylesbury 2nds Together Day Retreat



Whitstable 2nds Together Retreat

# MANDY'S STORY

**Mandy (53) from South-West Wales lives with her husband Marc and two sons. She had concerns after finding a lump in her breast and was diagnosed shortly after with Oligometastatic de novo breast cancer.**

In February 2021 I was play-fighting with my energetic youngest son Daniel and he accidentally elbowed me in my boob. It was instantly very painful and tender. Almost immediately there was swelling, and a few days later it was still very tender and I could still feel a lump. As someone who regularly checked their breasts, I knew this was unusual for me so I booked an appointment with the GP.

The GP thought it was an enlarged lymph node and referred me to the Breast Care Clinic. They discovered three lumps buried deep in my breast and after nine biopsies, I was told I had cancer.

I realise in hindsight that I had been suffering with other symptoms of breast cancer: fatigue, pain, and feeling unwell, but as someone who has a pre-existing condition of fibromyalgia, slipped discs, degenerative diseases and arthritis which has the same symptoms, I had not considered it to be anything else. Within a few days, I travelled to Swansea for a PET scan where they discovered that the cancer had spread to my spine. I had NO idea you could go straight to stage 4.

Nearly four years later I continue to be stable. I am on my first line of treatment and am very grateful that my treatment is keeping the pesky cancer cells at bay. There was so little information about metastatic breast cancer, so I looked on Facebook for support. This is when I found Make 2nds Count and joined the community support group.

I went on a 2nds Together Retreat and it was the best thing to have happened to me. For the first time since my diagnosis I felt supported, less alone and less fearful of the future. These women showed me that you can live a good life with this disease. It gave me hope at a time when I felt hopeless. I learned that life doesn't have to stop because of the diagnosis.

I have also learnt a lot through the website where there are trusted sources of information and experiences of treatments, medicines and living with the disease.

“

**I found a tribe of people who knew just what I was going through.**





# CLINICAL TRIALS

**Our Patient Trial Advocate Service (PTA) - now known as the Clinical Trials Service - has continued to expand in 2024. Senior oncology nurse Mel joined the team permanently in July taking over from Vivienne who has now retired.**

The Clinical Trials Service has been running for almost four years now and we have been delighted to hear so many people talk about the service and benefit from it.

Thanks to funding from Walk The Walk, we were able to employ Mel as a full-time Clinical Trials Nurse in July alongside Vivienne. Mel has over 20 years of nursing experience and brings with her a wealth of knowledge. Together, they have had conversations with 366 people living with secondary breast cancer about investigating clinical trials as part of their treatment pathway.

“

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

Patient

We've been delighted to share with our community about our clinical trial service at Tea & Chat groups across the country, at our 2nds Together Retreats, and at the Secondary Breast Cancer Patient Summit in July in Liverpool.

We have also started a series of Round Table events with health care professionals across the country to try to understand some of the barriers their patients experience around clinical trials. We hope this will inform our service provision for the future and plan to present the findings to decision-makers in November 2025.



To find out more about our free and confidential Clinical Trial Service, visit: [make2ndscount.co.uk/clinical-trials-service](https://make2ndscount.co.uk/clinical-trials-service)



# AWARENESS

**We are committed to raising awareness about secondary (metastatic) breast cancer and the signs and symptoms of the disease through effective marketing campaigns.**

Throughout the year through social media, eNewsletters, PR and blogs, we share content to educate, inspire, challenge perceptions and give a voice to our community.

Our two main awareness raising campaigns in 2024 have been '1,000 Truths' for Breast Cancer Awareness Month alongside our 'Shine a Light' initiative, and our Truth Be Told Exhibition.

## 1,000 Truths

Through this campaign, we shone a light on the many realities of living with secondary breast cancer by sharing twelve powerful stories from our community and their loved ones. We also asked the wider community to add their picture to our microsite, bringing together over 400 voices all with different truths to tell.

On Secondary Breast Cancer Awareness Day (13 Oct) we shared a film to amplify this message, with over 70 buildings lighting up in our brand colours of pink and purple to symbolise hope, resilience, and unity.

We received 60 pieces of media coverage (compared to 33 in 2023) and had a 165k reach across social media (compared to a 100k reach in 2023).

You can watch these films and find out more on our [1,000 Truths](#) microsite.

## Truth Be Told Exhibition

In 2023 for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we worked with artist Jennifer Willis to capture 11 women in some incredibly powerful images that showed the visible and not-so-visible experiences of people living with secondary breast cancer. The difficulties, but also the hope, strength and positivity.

We decided to have the imagery printed in large canvas format and create an exhibition that we could take to locations across the UK to help raise awareness with local communities, decision-makers and health care professionals.

So far, the exhibition has travelled to Liverpool, Newcastle and London and viewed by over 200 people, including the Scottish Secretary of State, Rt Hon. Ian Murray MP. We hope to expand the campaign for 2025.



# FUNDRAISING

We are incredibly grateful to our partners, funders and supporters who have helped to raise money over the last twelve months to continue the work we do supporting those living with secondary (metastatic) breast cancer.

From cold water swimming and head shaves, to fashion shows and coffee mornings, we have been bowled over by the many ways people have been raising money for us this year. We've seen 183 people take on a challenge event or do a community fundraiser for us this year - thank you!

Our successful Make 2nds Count 'Love Your Tribe' events took place in Belfast and Manchester, bringing our community together for food, fun and entertainment, alongside raising vital funds. We saw 270 sing their hearts out at our Massaoke fundraiser in November with karaoke legends Rockstar Weekend.

Ruth joined our team as Corporate Partnership Manager in May bringing a wealth of connections and new business experience. We have been delighted to start a new charity partnership with beauty experts LAB FACTOR this year and develop new relationships with Fox Begin and Smith & Nephew.

We are thrilled to continue our valuable partnerships with Pinsent Mason, Little Greene, InsuranceWith and Jennifer Young, as well as to have been chosen as the charity partner for the Big BooBee Campaign in Manchester, alongside Prevent Breast Cancer.





# OUR TEAM



**Professor David Cameron**  
Chair of Trustees

It is with great pride as Chair of Trustees to thank the team of people that collectively have contributed to our achievements over the last year, alongside our individual supporters, funders and partners.

We will continue to use our passion, skills and positioning to inform, support, inspire and influence change so that the secondary breast cancer community is heard and feel supported and empowered. Our community is at the centre of all we do, and we are thankful that our Community Ambassadors take on such an active role to shape our priorities and strategy.

## Community Ambassadors

Alexandra Moore  
Kay Andrews (deceased)  
Denise Bates  
Elise Belsher  
Joanna Bingham  
Anne Blacklock  
Janet Butler  
Mhairi Campbell  
Kelly Carson  
Carol Dugaid  
Dianne Ellingham

Cheryl Graham  
Debra Hill  
Nicola Hughes  
Marie Johnston  
Amanda Jones  
Sam Kelly (deceased)  
Lorraine Landman  
Joanne Magee  
Tansy Main OBE  
Sarah McDiarmid  
Emma McKay

Carla Mitchell (deceased)  
Sam Morris  
Su Pierce  
Danielle Robinson  
Donna Sartain  
Jacqui Shadrake  
Mandy Smith  
Kirsty Snare  
Rachel Stewart  
Diane Wildbur

## Trustees

John Ward, Treasurer  
Heather Moffitt (SBC patient)  
Ian McCarlie  
Joanne Lacey  
Lesley Stephen (SBC patient)  
Dr Peter Canney  
Jenna Chick



## Operational team



Samantha Dixon, CEO  
Emma Hall, Deputy CEO  
Dr Sarah Thomas, Head of Research & Education  
Mel Tolson, Lead Clinical Trials Nurse



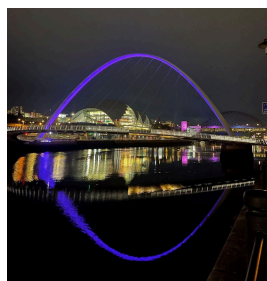
Corinne McDougall, Clinical Trials Service Coordinator  
Clare Cox, Marketing & Communications Manager  
Claire O'Donnell, Support & Patient Engagement Manager  
Elizabeth Smith, Support Coordinator



Ruth Harris, Corporate Partnerships Manager  
Lianne Bryce, Fundraising Manager  
Dr Alex Turner, Research & Education Content Creator



# 2024 IN PICTURES





**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.**

- AABIE
- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- Astrazeneca (Patient Summit)
- Blackford Trust
- BooBee Campaign
- Caron Keating Foundation
- Cunmont Trust
- Dumfries and Galloway Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund
- East Coast Community Fund
- Fiona Shortt
- Gilead (Patient Summit)
- Heather Hoy Charitable Trust
- Herefordshire Community Foundation
- Hugh Fraser Foundation
- InsuranceWith
- James T Howat Charitable Trust
- Karen Henderson Legacy Fund
- Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable Trust
- Little Greene
- Lutterworth Young Farmers
- Merarini Stemline (Patient Summit)
- Mickel Fund
- Mrs M A Black Charitable Trust
- MSD (Patient Summit)
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Novartis (Patient Summit)
- North Hoyle Windfarm Community Fund
- Pfizer (Patient Summit)
- Pink Ribbon Foundation
- St James Place Foundation
- Tesco - Stronger Starts
- W M Mann Foundation
- Women's Collective Dundee



# THANK YOU

[make2ndscount.co.uk](http://make2ndscount.co.uk)

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