

# Spotlight

Issue 16 2024  
**FREE**



Our latest  
services  
& support

Fundraising  
spotlight

Brave &  
Courage  
catwalk stars



# How Friends of ANCHOR can support you

Our wellbeing team is based in the ANCHOR Unit – the Aberdeen and North Centre for Haematology, Oncology and Radiotherapy

## SUPPORT IN THE ANCHOR UNIT

### Wellbeing support

Available Monday to Friday, our team offers a listening ear, practical support and signposting services. You'll see the team in the wards with warm smiles stopping for a chat.

### Complementary therapies

Our free chair and bedside therapies include massage, reflexology and mini manicures. We also offer barbering, physio, and podiatry.

### Volunteer-led services

Look out for our volunteers in red tees, who extend a warm welcome and way-finding support to day patients and visitors, with daily rounds of our refreshment trolley too.

Our drivers provide transport for stem cell transplants, while our volunteer-led Listening Service is a lifeline within the inpatient setting.

Once a week, our therapist volunteer Stephanie, and her pup Harvey, do the rounds in the inpatient wards.

### Ward assistants

Recognisable by their green polo shirts, our ward assistants are there to offer non-clinical aid to patients and their loved ones, as well as staff.

## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

### Free packs + provisions

We provide free provisions to bring comfort and practical support at various stages of treatment, including practical aid to help alleviate side effects.

Our free WiFi is available throughout the ANCHOR Unit and we can loan you an iPad if you'd like to stay in touch with loved ones.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

### Mindfulness

Our free, eight-week course provides tools and practices to alleviate feelings of stress or anxiety. Advanced sessions for graduates are available quarterly, in person at our retreat days.

### Retreat days

Connect with others and sample our wellbeing offering at our regular retreats.



### Treat tickets

Look out for our regular draws for sporting and social events, which are free to enter in the ANCHOR Unit.

### Making Memories

Available for people receiving end of life care. Applications are reviewed by a clinical panel and once approved, our wellbeing team facilitates all elements to make possible a memory that can be treasured.



For up-to-the-minute information on all our free support, scan the QR code.

To make a service request or speak to the wellbeing team for any reason, please contact:

**wellbeing@friendsofanchor.org**  
**01224 859222**



# Welcome to Spotlight **Issue 16**



▲ Chairman with daughter and charity CEO, Sarah-Jane Hogg

Hello readers,

**Thank you for picking up your copy of Spotlight. We're always grateful for the opportunity to connect with you and share some of the latest updates from Friends of ANCHOR.**

Our new branding has been a labour of love for our Head of Comms Erica Banks and Balmoral's in-house designer Ewen Milne, who have been working on it since last August, with the support of FortyTwo Studio – the agency behind this new-look edition of Spotlight.

Our new emblem beautifully reflects the sentiments and stories you shared about Friends of ANCHOR throughout our discovery sessions and surveys. To those who gave your voice to that process (nearly 1,000 of you) – thank you for helping shape our new image. Having been in the role of Chairman since our founding day, I've seen the three logos that have developed to become part of our identity and legacy, and I find it profoundly heartwarming to see our latest so beautifully reflect the charity's intent over all these years. I sincerely hope you're as happy with the new branding as we are.

On the funding front, I'm delighted to share with you in this edition the wellbeing impact so far this year within the ANCHOR Unit, and news about additional funding signed off at committee level. There's now an ANCHOR mammography dataset to better utilise AI to identify breast cancer at the earliest stage. And our latest research funding stream – Transition to Independence – has been launched to support promising scientists to become recognised leaders in the field of oncology and haematology. The £135,000 for this fellowship brings our annual minimum research

commitment to over £300,000.

As you read this issue I hope you can get a sense of the tangible impact on made possible thanks to the passionate support of our donors and fundraisers. Some of those efforts are highlighted in this edition, but there are many others and I hope you know how greatly appreciated your kind support is, and the lasting difference it makes.

For the first time we're bringing legacies to the fore, to encourage those who hold Friends of ANCHOR close to their hearts to consider leaving a gift in their will. A gift that would allow us to continue supporting patients, their families and staff, for many years to come.

My sincere gratitude to everyone who plays a part in Friends of ANCHOR – our supporters, volunteers, the hard-working teams in the hospital and our own superstar staff. Together, striving to bring compassion, care and hope to those who need it in the ANCHOR Unit, and beyond.

– Sir James Milne, Chairman



*Here for compassion,  
care and hope*

# We hope you like our new look

You may have noticed we're sporting a new logo...  
Read on to learn the meaning behind the change.

Recently, together with our community of supporters, volunteers, NHS colleagues, patients and their loved ones, we embarked on a journey to frame the charity's identity.

Hundreds of you shared what Friends of ANCHOR means to you. Using your words, a renewed and refocused mission, vision and set of values were penned, that wholeheartedly reflect the sentiments you shared, about our dedication to bringing 'compassion, care and hope' to those we support.

During our discovery sessions, Balmoral Group's in-house design team masterfully crafted our new logo, which holds special meaning. A symbolism that represents our new tagline: Here for compassion, care and hope.

Inside the organisation, those three words – compassion, care and hope – are the purpose at the centre of everything we do. The guiding light that'll steer the future for the charity.

Externally, they combine beautifully in our iconic symbol.

## Our emblem explained —



**Compassion**  
Red tulips symbolise compassion and devotion. Also associated with love, joy, friendship and memories

+



**Care**  
The heart shape represents the centre of emotion and caring

+



**Hope**  
The anchor symbolises hope, strength, steadfastness, calm and composure.  
ANCHOR also stands for Aberdeen and North Centre for Haematology, Oncology and Radiotherapy

=



Intricately at play alongside our new look and tagline are our vision, mission and values.

Our values, which we now have down on paper for the first time, were also developed by you, our ANCHOR community, throughout the discovery sessions and surveys. We hope you feel your experience with Friends of ANCHOR embodies these values, and that the charity is one you'll continue to stand proudly aligned with.

## THE BIG LITTLE THINGS



The 'big little things' are important, and always worth caring about

## EMPOWERING OTHERS



Empowering others through funding, support and confidence boosts

## ALWAYS APPROACHABLE



Always approachable with smiling faces and red tees

## ROOTED IN OUR COMMUNITY



Rooted in our community and inspired by local support

## 100% IN



100% in, and always ready to do more

Feeling inspired by our refresh? We'd love to hear from you.

Get in touch with us today about fundraising or stocking one of our freshly branded collection cans at your workplace or till point.  
[info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)



# Meet two of our catwalk stars

Our models Amy Robertson and Ian Rose share what it means to be taking part in Courage on the Catwalk and Brave.

## AMY’S STORY:

When the rest of her friends were fretting about exams and getting into university, Amy Robertson had something different on her mind.

Diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma aged just 17, she was focused on the success of her chemotherapy.

Amy, from Aberdeen, was diagnosed in March 2023 after originally finding a lump on her neck before Christmas.

A round of antibiotics did nothing to stop the lump growing, and Amy kept pushing for answers. She was referred to the hospital, where a biopsy and ultrasound confirmed she had cancer.

She said: “You’re always told ‘if you find a lump, get it checked’ so the idea of a cancer diagnosis had briefly crossed my mind.

“At my first hospital appointment they did say it could be lymphoma but I thought ‘I’m young, I’ll be fine’ and didn’t really expect it to be. It really was a shock. My mum and dad were with me when I got the news. They were trying to be strong for me and I was trying to be strong for them.”

Amy underwent six rounds of chemotherapy, and suffered from sickness and tiredness.

“I was very nervous ahead of my appointments, but the nurses and volunteers in the ANCHOR Unit were very

kind and helped me stay calm,” she said.

**“ They would speak to me in a way that made me feel normal.”**

“It was always good to see Friends of ANCHOR’s staff and volunteers, and they understood if there were some days I didn’t feel like chatting. On the days I did want to, they were never too busy to talk to me.”

The presence of the charity’s volunteers was a welcome support, but Amy remembers how odd it was to walk into the Unit and be the youngest person there. Friends at school didn’t know what to say, and when her hair began falling out as a side-effect of the chemo, Amy was relieved to be on study leave so she could avoid any stares.

But now Amy, who is in remission and studying social work at Robert Gordon University, is building her confidence back up by taking part in Courage on the Catwalk.

While new to the catwalk, Amy dances at the Scott School of Dancing, so is no stranger to being under the lights. The 18-year-old said: “I’m loving every minute of the Courage experience. To be surrounded by a group of women who understand what it’s like has been really helpful – I love hearing their stories.

“I’m looking forward to getting glammed up and trying something new.”



## IAN’S STORY:

Ian Rose was on holiday with his daughters when he got the call confirming he had bowel cancer.

The father-of-two had already steeled himself for the news after watching the screen during his colonoscopy, but it was still a blow.

Otherwise healthy and active, the 55-year-old had gone to the doctor in 2022 for blood tests which revealed his iron levels had completely collapsed.

He was given iron tablets and advised to eat foods like spinach to boost his numbers. Later tests, including a bowel cancer screening, showed Ian’s iron levels had returned to normal and he thought no more of it.

But in June 2023, he was invited for a colonoscopy as a follow-up.

During the procedure, a “fascinated” Ian watched the screen closely and likened it to watching the weather on the TV – clear in places, but with a “black cloud” coming in over the bowel tract.

“The consultant and his assistant glanced at each other and they didn’t smile,” Ian said.

“I asked the consultant to give it to me straight – did he think it was cancer? He said yes, but that we’d need to wait for further clarity from the biopsies and take it from there.”

Two weeks later, the call came to confirm the news. Ian, who lives in Aberdeen, was grateful to have his daughters Emma and Sophie by his side. Together, they spoke through the diagnosis, treatment plan and how they were all feeling.

“I have a fantastic relationship with my daughters, and having them there really helped,” he said. “Emma is studying to be a vet, so she understood everything.

“Sophie is logical, and being able to reflect and speak together was great.”

Just four weeks after being diagnosed, he had part of his bowel removed.

While sat in the waiting room with his partner Sandra, a Friends of ANCHOR team member, popped in and handed him an inpatient care pack.

He said: “Everything in the box had been carefully considered, like the ear plugs and sleep mask. There was a wee bit of this and a wee bit of that – little details that made the whole process better.”

**“ I’d never asked Friends of ANCHOR for anything, but it was delivered because they knew it would help and they were absolutely right.”**

On 1st September last year, Ian was told he was cancer-free and would not require further treatment.

“It happened so quickly and being told I was cancer free was hard to process,” he said. “I feel like I’ve dodged a bullet, but I had to process how things might have been so different.

“If I had £1million I don’t think I could have paid for a more professional team, from the surgeons, nurses and navigators, to the innate care from Friends of ANCHOR.”

Ian is now focused on spending more time with his loved ones. He is also encouraging people to get checked out if they notice anything unusual, adding: “We have a one in two chance of being diagnosed with cancer – that’s a coin flip.”



## Lisa's always happy to chat – or offer a hand to squeeze

From volunteering at events and at the hospital during Covid to becoming a core member of staff, Lisa Baird shares what she loves about her role.

*Lovely Lisa* →



Every morning, Lisa makes her way along the ANCHOR Unit corridors laden with newspapers. She pops into each inpatients' room to offer one, and often stays to chat – becoming a well-known face to both patients and their families.

Lisa is our wellbeing support worker, having made the move from a volunteer to funded member of staff in December 2021.

"I love my job – it's so rewarding," she said. "I really enjoy meeting the patients and feeling a wee bit helpful, even in a small way.

"I'm a friendly face, letting each patient know about the wellbeing services available. New patients receive one of our complimentary care packs and I tell them about the support on offer, like the massage and mini manicures from our therapists, and our provisions, like ginger sweets and nausea bands for sickness, and PICC line and stoma covers which are made by our sewing bees.

"If someone is missing their dog, I'll be sure to tell them about our therapeut visits on Fridays."

If there's ever a question Lisa can't answer, she's straight to work finding out the details that could help or signposting to fellow third sector organisations, as well as the NHS Chaplaincy service.

**"Sometimes it's something small, like helping set up a TV or getting someone a pair of reading glasses for the paper"**

Lisa is primarily based in the oncology and haematology inpatient wards but can be called upon in outpatient areas too. A key element of her role is supporting people undergoing brachytherapy, an internal radiation therapy often used to treat cervix and prostate cancers.

Patients are admitted for the treatment, and have applicators fitted in a procedure room before being taken back to their ward, where they must lie completely flat between treatments, which can make even the smallest tasks impossible.

Lisa, who works closely with NHS staff every day, said: "I act as the bridge between the departments, making sure everyone is aware of the restrictions the patient is facing.

"I accompany them to the procedure and am waiting to take them back to the ward when they come out. There's lots of to-ing and fro-ing for scans and treatments, and I can be a familiar face offering emotional and practical support.

"I'll make sure they've got drinks – in bottles that are easy to use when lying down – and finger food. I'm not a clinical member of staff, but I can recommend everyday things that will make a patient's treatment time a little more comfortable."

When the treatment is complete and it's time for the applicators to be removed, it's Lisa who's in the room with the patient, offering them a hand to squeeze.

The sheer number of daily steps clocked up in the job suits Lisa, who considered applying to be a hospital porter before the Friends of ANCHOR job came up.

"I started volunteering at FoA events in 2016 and when Covid hit, I became a volunteer in the ANCHOR Unit – that's when I realised how much I enjoyed working in the hospital environment.

"I liked the interaction with people and the feeling of doing something worthwhile – and the steps that I was getting in!"

”

**I don't think there are enough words to explain how thankful I am to have had Lisa hold my hand (or rather let me squeeze the life out of her hand) and be by my side through my brachytherapy treatment.**

**Her positivity, support and kindness alone are things I will never forget.**

– Former patient



# Fundraising heroes

From organising balls to taking on individual running and bike challenges and braving the shave, our fundraisers are incredible!

In this all-new feature, we'll be shining the spotlight on their achievements.

In each edition, you'll be able to read about some of the latest goings-on.



## The 'Ban-Car Ladies'

Over the last two decades, Tina Gibbins, Val Esslemont and Sandra Simpson have raised £210,102.

Tina and her husband David, who own the Ban-Car Hotel in Lonmay, near Fraserburgh, first began fundraising after she was treated for cervical cancer.

Friend Val then got involved, and soon a committee was formed to regularly raise funds for Friends of ANCHOR.

Tina, Val and Sandra – who joined the group more than a decade ago – hold an annual dinner dance at the Ban-Car Hotel and do plenty of other fundraising throughout the year, with their husbands and children also assisting.

From selling charity pins and Christmas hampers to fun runs, Zumbathons and car washes, the ladies are always trying to think of a different way of supporting the charity – and raising awareness.

Tina, who was a Courage on the Catwalk model in 2014, has even thrown herself out a plane for Friends of ANCHOR,

taking part in our annual skydive challenge in 2021.

She said hitting the £200,000 milestone had been “overwhelming” and praised friends, family and the wider community for backing their efforts.

She said: “When we first reached £100,000 that was 10 years in, so we said we wanted to hit £200,000 in 20 years – which we did.

“We want to keep giving back as long as we can, and support those in the community going through a cancer diagnosis since all the money stays in the local area.

“Everyone knows someone that has been affected by cancer and when they see the red tees and learn what Friends of ANCHOR does, and that the money stays local, they’re happy to support us.”



## Tyler Summers

He’s strutted his stuff on the catwalk and is preparing to jump from a plane for FoA – despite being scared of heights.

In his latest fundraising effort, Tyler Summers from Peterhead held a carnival ball at The Palace Hotel. Guests enjoyed a fantastic night of entertainment and helped Tyler raise £3,200.

The 25-year-old, who had double reason to celebrate after being told he is cancer-free earlier this year, said: “I wanted to give the guests a great experience and I achieved that. My own personal highlight of the night was walking in and seeing the room transformed by the decor.”

Tyler was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma in 2018, aged just 18. When he first arrived at the ANCHOR Unit for chemotherapy, he saw the red t-shirts but wasn’t familiar with Friends of ANCHOR. As his treatment went on, he soon understood the extent of the charity’s support.

**“Everything that Friends of ANCHOR supplies, and the support offered to each cancer patient is phenomenal”**

Since deciding to start fundraising, Tyler has hosted three balls and taken part in Brave. His next challenge is his upcoming skydive, which has been postponed twice due to the weather – adding to his nerves – but he’s keeping himself busy with plans for his 2025 fundraising ball!



## Ellen Bain

Ellen Bain braved all weathers to clock up 100K in March, raising nearly £2,500 for Friends of ANCHOR.

Rain, snow and even injury couldn’t put her off, and with the help of personal trainer Lisa Mitchell she hit her goal – completing four runs, of varying distances, each week – even slowing the pace to battle through a leg injury in the final week to reach her goal.

Ellen’s dad Ian was first diagnosed with cancer in 2016, and earlier this year was told it had returned. The news left musician Ellen – who often performs at Courage on the Catwalk and Brave, feeling powerless, so she decided to do something positive and pull on her running shoes.

“I love playing at Courage and Brave, but wanted to do something to physically and mentally challenge myself.”

Ellen previously took part in our Going the Distance mileage challenge during lockdown, but admits her running slipped after the events came to an end.

“I winged it that time,” she said. “I’m not really a runner. But having a running plan really helped, and I wanted to push my limits, and turn a negative into a positive – that’s been my motivation.

“I wanted to make a difference like Friends of ANCHOR does every day, and help where I can.”

Fancy fundraising? We’d love to hear from you.

Pop us an email today and let us know your plans:  
[info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)





# Thank you!

We love nothing more than seeing you pull on your red tees at events across the north of Scotland and beyond.

This year we've ticked off The P&J Run Fest – Aberdeen's newest running festival – and Run Garioch, and we've had fundraisers cross the finish line in their red tees at the London Marathon.

We'll be cheering on our fundraisers at Kiltwalk events across Scotland, Ride the North and Banchory Beast Race too – as well as all the individuals who are organising their own challenges. Check out our gallery from the latest season of fundraising and get involved!

If physical challenges aren't for you, you can still support us by being part of the Red Army Cheer Squad – we'd love to have you join us.



Ready to get involved?



Feeling inspired to set a goal and make your mark in 2024? Whether you pull on a red tee for a run, or your apron for a bake sale, get in touch with us today to start the ball rolling. The fundraising team will be alongside you every step of the way with advice, encouragement and fundraising support.

Email us: [info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)



## Sewing bees get busy for patients

A life-long crafter, volunteer Sally Paton tells us how she's putting her skills to good use.



As a little girl, Sally Paton liked nothing more than making clothes for her dolls.

By the time she got to secondary school, she had moved onto creating pieces for herself – finishing three dresses in the time it took her classmates to make one.

Now 70, Sally is putting her talents to good use as one of Friends of ANCHOR's sewing bees.

Our volunteers make hundreds of PICC line covers, mastectomy cushions, stoma bag covers and drain dolly bags every year for oncology patients.

They also rise to the odd extra challenge from the wellbeing team, recently making twiddle muffs – a fidget tool for anxious patients – and precious memory blankets for families.

For Sally, being able to help those going through treatment makes all the hours of stitching worthwhile.

She makes 100 PICC line covers at a time, several times a year – roping in her mum, Thelma, to help too. She also draws up the master patterns for all of the provisions the sewing bees make.

In fact, it's a family affair as daughter Joyce also gets crafty for FoA – using her creative skills for the gifts Friends of ANCHOR give to Courage on the Catwalk and Brave models.

Sally first got involved with Friends of ANCHOR after her best friend – and fellow volunteer – Iris Murray's daughter, Naomi, took part in Courage in 2017.

"I was invited along to cheer on Naomi and it all started from there," Sally said. "After seeing the show, I volunteered at the next one and helped out at events handing out leaflets.

"Then there was a night for packing Christmas cards, and at that I was making the dolly bags for surgical drain bags to slip into.

**"In 2020, I was asked if I could make Christmas stockings that are filled with gifts for inpatients in the unit over Christmas, and I've been doing it ever since."**

Sally drew up the pattern for the stockings, found the perfect material – red with white anchors – and got to work.

On average, she makes around 50 stockings each Christmas but had to make 76 one year.

"It takes me three days to make 50," she said. "I love doing them though – even when there's white fur trimming everywhere.

"It does always make me a bit sad to see how many people are in

hospital over Christmas, but it's so good that Santa (aka Sir James Milne, Friends of ANCHOR's chairman) goes in and hands out the stockings to spread a bit of cheer at such a difficult time."

Year-round, Sally makes comfy covers to protect patients' PICC lines, and again, admits it saddens her to see how quickly the stock needs topped up again.

"That's the worst bit – I've learned just how many people go through treatment each year," she added.

Last year, Sally was a regular visitor to the ANCHOR Unit to see her sister-in-law Hazel, who spent five months in hospital being treated for aplastic anemia.

She sadly died in July, but Sally knows Hazel was grateful for the support and care she received.

Sally, who used to work in fabric shop Remnant Kings, added: "Over those months, I saw more and more just what the FoA team does – there's so much good work going on all the time. I just want to help them, and I know it's appreciated."

When not supporting Friends of ANCHOR, Sally makes memory bears for friends and family – including one that sits on her mum's sideboard, made from a well-loved jumper belonging to her late dad.

The goodwill extends further than Friends of ANCHOR too, as Sally and her mum, who live next door to one another, also make knitted and crocheted toys and blankets for AberNecessities.

Distributed monthly to patients

**50 mastectomy cushions**

**65 PICC line covers**

**30 drain bags**

To request a sewn provision, email:  
[wellbeing@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:wellbeing@friendsofanchor.org)

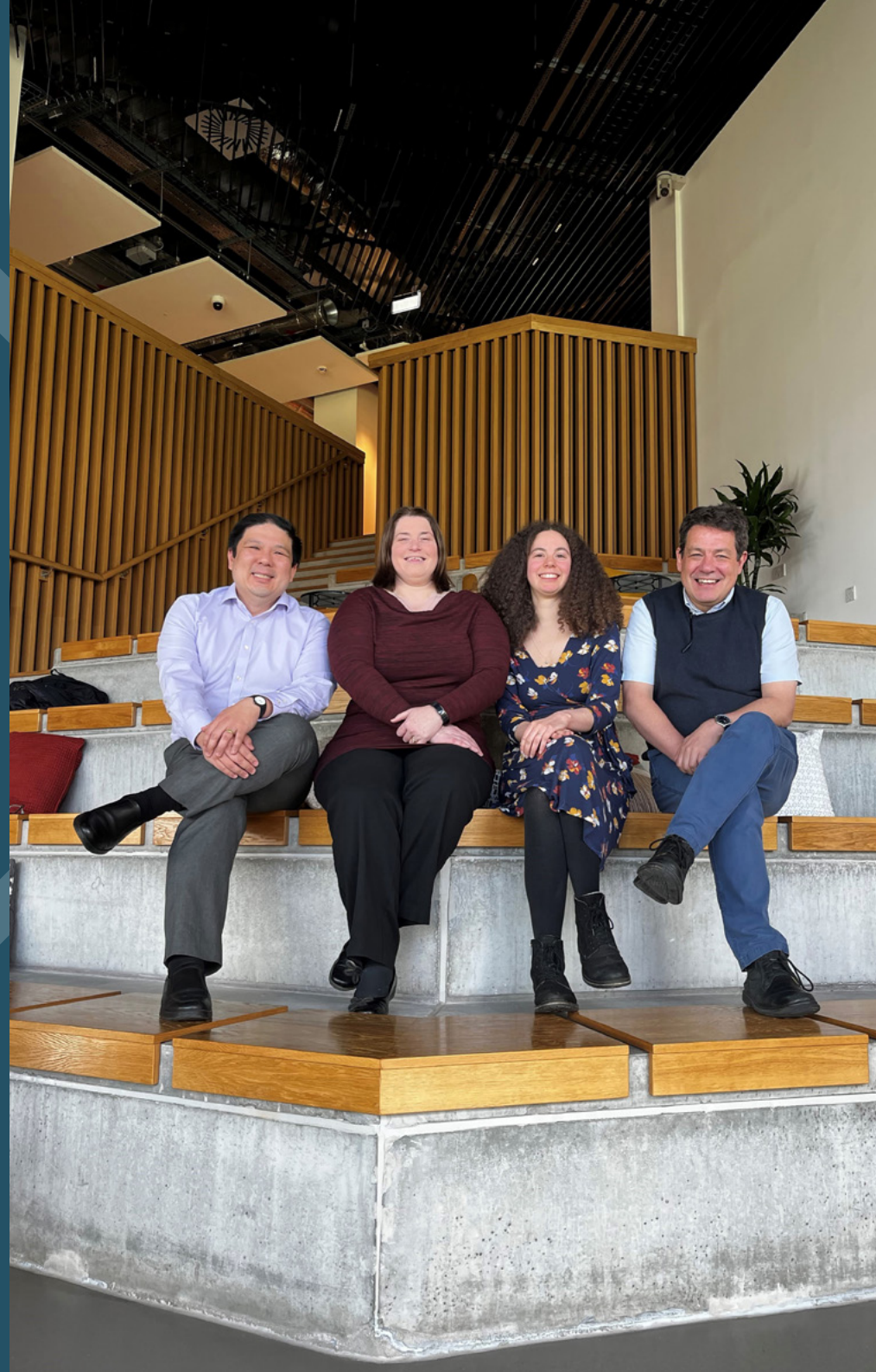




# We're driving forward early **breast cancer diagnosis**

Thanks to the support of our fundraisers and donors, we've provided funding to advance early diagnosis of breast cancer.

*Trailblazing Team* →



Breast cancer patients could soon be diagnosed faster thanks to an artificial intelligence research capability being funded by Friends of ANCHOR.

Earlier this year, we signed off £70,000 to pay for a digital dataset, which will be used by breast clinicians and scientists at Foresterhill in Aberdeen, with direct benefits including faster diagnosis.

The dataset is a digital treasure trove packed with anonymised patient information which can be fed to AI tools to assess how they would work at NHS Grampian.

Our funding to procure the dataset makes NHS Grampian the first site in Scotland to host such capabilities – making ARI and the University of Aberdeen international leaders in breast imaging research and service development.

Professor Lesley Anderson, Chair in Health Data Science at the University of Aberdeen, submitted the request for charity funding.

She explained: “A comprehensive dataset incorporating medical images is crucial to evaluate and develop AI technologies to improve cancer detection. This will enable AI tools to be developed and tested to increase cancer detection and enable more efficient use of resources.”

**“ This funding will lead to substantial advancements in breast cancer screening in the Grampian region and beyond.”**

The data, within the digital vault – scans of people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer – is already in storage, but

needs to be optimised to allow AI to be developed and tested.

Our funding will do just that, anonymising the scans and linking them with healthcare and clinical data to enhance how AI interprets the information. Thanks to our grant, the dataset will also be expanded to include an additional eight years' worth of scan images. The information that's captured and made available to research and development will be coined the 'ANCHOR breast imaging dataset', in a nod to the funding.

Dr Gerald Lip, Clinical Director for the North East of Scotland Breast Screening Programme, explained how it will help spearhead future improvements.

He said: “The success of artificial intelligence in healthcare will rely heavily on a high-quality local dataset. In other words, the data that's fed to AI needs to be fine-tuned first, and matched with appropriate local healthcare information, right down to what kind of imaging equipment has taken a scan.”

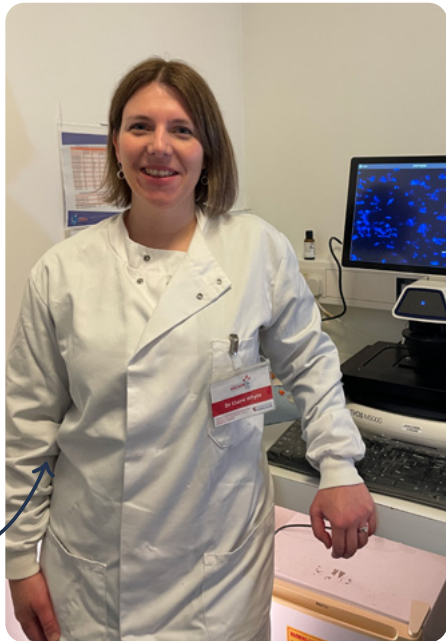
Friends of ANCHOR has funded other initiatives tasked with improving breast cancer outcomes too. Enhanced contrast mammography is a method supported by £25,000 of charity funding, which will in future take patient wait times from 60 days to same-day answers for complex cases. During the pandemic in 2020, the charity also fast-tracked £27,000 for radiofrequency tags and detector probes. A Scotland-first at the time, the tags increase surgical accuracy in operating theatres, and streamlined a patient's pathway to surgery.



# New fellowship to advance scientific careers

The transition from postdoctoral researcher to independent investigator can be one of the most challenging steps in a scientist's career. Our new fellowship has been designed to give locally-based researchers the support they need to become leading figures in science.

Dr Claire Whyte



Friends of ANCHOR's newest research fellow will investigate blood clots suffered by breast cancer patients.

Although Dr Claire Whyte's 18-month study will focus on people with breast cancer, it will have relevance for other types of cancer too.

She explained the benefits it will bring for future ANCHOR patients and said: "Patients with cancer have an increased risk of developing life-threatening blood clots, known as thrombosis.

"My research focuses on understanding how blood clots are broken down in the body and how this might be disrupted in disease situations, so that we can improve outcomes."

Current treatments rely on preventing further clot formation, but they don't resolve the clots that have already developed in a patient's body, and come with a risk of complications.

Dr Whyte's lab-based work at the

University of Aberdeen will analyse the proteins associated with clot formation and clot breakdown. She will compare plasma samples from two groups – patients with different types of breast cancer, and healthy volunteers.

She said: "A better understanding of the mechanisms that contribute to a higher risk of thrombosis in ANCHOR patients and cancer patients in general is urgently required, so we can develop improved and more targeted treatments for the problem."

Friends of ANCHOR is fully funding the £135,000 project thanks to the generosity of fundraisers and donors. The fellowship funding has been launched to support promising scientists to become recognised leaders in their field.

Coined the Transition to Independence Fellowship, it's designed to enable scientists to generate important research data that will allow them to go after big pots of funding from national charities.

"This research is crucial in improving our understanding to develop better treatments and therapies," said Dr Whyte.

As a previous recipient of Friends of ANCHOR's pilot research funding, Dr Whyte says she is "fully aware" of the importance of the charity in supporting and facilitating research in Aberdeen.

Dr Whyte has even got her family, and lab colleagues, involved in fundraising efforts.

**"I am very appreciative of the amazing fundraising by the charity, and it's been great fun to get involved through the years too – with my family and the lab team, who took part in Going the Distance as 'The Clot Busters'."**

"Now, I feel honoured to be the first recipient of the charity's new fellowship," she said.

# Leave a legacy

By leaving a gift in your will to Friends of ANCHOR, you can help us continue our work for many years to come.

If Friends of ANCHOR is a cause that's close to your heart, will you consider leaving a gift in your will?

Knowing how important it is to sustain the charity's support for the generations to come, we now, for the first time, have a will-writing service available. And, it's completely free.

After you've taken care of your loved ones, a gift to Friends of ANCHOR (and other causes close to your heart) in your will would make a lasting impact, helping those causes you care about continue their work.

With Friends of ANCHOR, every penny of every pound would sustain the support we offer patients and their loved ones.

**"For me, it's important knowing that a charity I care about in life will benefit when I'm no longer here – a valued and treasured charity at that."**

– Legacy donor Sandra McLennan



## Leave a gift in your will

### Option 1:

Ask your solicitor or will writer to update an existing will with a codicil.

### Option 2:

Write a new will through our free will writing service with Bequeathed.

If you'd like to discuss leaving a gift in your will, we're here to chat and help line up helpful information for making the decision. Contact us on: [info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)





# Wellbeing retreat

## “You feel cared for and special”

Our wellbeing retreat days are something special. They bring together past and present patients and their relatives, giving them the opportunity to try our range of complementary therapies and services and share their experiences.

The programme includes:

- mindfulness taster
- mini treatments
- music and movement
- tasty lunch

For a feel of what to expect, scan the QR code to watch a video from one of our recent retreats.



“ Just to be able to discuss your good/bad days with others makes you feel like you’re not on your own and the team in red make you feel so cared for and special, like you’re one of the family.”

– 2023 retreat attendee



### Upcoming retreat days:

Retreat days are held three times a year. For upcoming dates and to book a place, please email: [info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)



# Mindfulness course

## offers tips on tackling anxiety

We all know how important it is to look after our mental wellbeing.

That’s why, for the last four years, we’ve had mindfulness tutor Louise Martin deliver a course designed to alleviate stress and anxiety for ANCHOR patients.

Over the eight-week course, which is fully-funded, Louise will go through tips and exercises to help you cope with difficult emotions and improve sleep quality.

The friendly weekly sessions are held online, allowing participants to take part from the comfort of their own home.

Our graduates can then take part in an in-person advanced mindfulness course at one of our wellbeing retreat days.

“ The course has helped me live for the now, the today and this week. I used to be so far in the past or future, but now things are about the now.”

– Mindfulness course graduate



### Upcoming course:

Our next eight-week course begins on 24th August 2024, with the online sessions held on Wednesdays at 6pm. Scan to book.





# Corporate Supporters

In each edition, you'll see us highlight the efforts our corporate partners have been putting in during recent months. Here we spotlight the support from Friends of ANCHOR's founding sponsor, **Balmoral Group**.

With Balmoral being our founding supporter since 1997, the support comes in many forms. This year in particular though, the workforce has got stuck into fundraising, with staff taking on P&J Run Fest and Run Garioch in their red tees.

The running bug well and truly caught on, with another member of the team running the Edinburgh Marathon – and come September, the red tees will be back out, as 12 people tackle Banchory Beast Race.

The spirit of support extends even further than the physical challenges. The company's social committee organises various events throughout the year, and the winners of the staff pub quiz chose to donate their winnings to Friends of ANCHOR – as regularly happens with the cash incentive that accompanies Balmoral's 'See it, Fix it, Report it' initiative. We can call on the expertise of the factory team too, who help with practical engineering support for event props and theming. The free, annual Christmas party that's laid on by Balmoral also sees staff make a donation to Friends of ANCHOR – and the FoA team are invited to make a donation and join in the fun too.

We're incredibly grateful to the staff at Balmoral who choose to do their bit by fundraising and donating. The extracurricular support is always hugely appreciated, as is the daily, internal support structure without which Friends of ANCHOR simply couldn't exist.

The salaries of the fundraising team, and all admin costs like office space, stationery and postage, are covered by Balmoral – while the expertise and support of the company's staff teams, whether it's the finance department, HR, IT or design, are a crucial element of the charity's operations too.

Our new-look logo was even created by the company's talented in-house design team!



### Corporate Partnership

Fancy setting up a fundraising partnership between Friends of ANCHOR and your workplace? We'll be alongside you each step of the way with dedicated team support for the life of the partnership.

Email us today to kick-start your corporate support.  
[info@friendsofanchor.org](mailto:info@friendsofanchor.org)

# Let's get specific

How we've supported patients in the first quarter of this year, thanks to you:



15,165

Patient welcomes by our volunteers



5,522

Miles covered by our volunteer drivers



3,900

Newspapers delivered with a warm hello



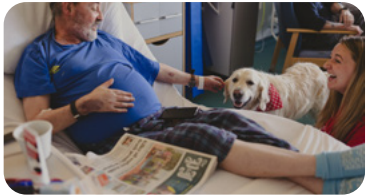
1,048

Care packs gifted to patients



667

Massage, nail, podiatry and reflexology appointments



163

Inpatients visited by our therapist

Here's what that support means to patients...

“ The charity staff, volunteers and ward assistants – these humans are amazing. Always happy to have a chat with you, which makes you feel a little better you're feeling anxious during treatment or whilst having a hospital stay. A hospital stay can be a lonely time and I was very grateful for the team who could take the time to have a blether.”

“ A huge thank you for the wonderful care pack and cushion that I received from the breast care nurse after my surgery. I am now recovering at home with the cushion providing comfort and support. Thank you to every one of you who helps put the packs together for us ladies facing breast cancer, it made me smile on a difficult day and the contents were so thoughtful.”

“ I think the most significant aspect of the ANCHOR services at ARI was the warmth and friendliness of everyone involved that just made things easier. It's a daunting experience visiting these wards and just having a welcoming smile when you get out the lift is great. It's a little thing, but just that little bit of quiet 'you've got this' support really helped me.

That and of course the visits in the ward with water, papers and some well-needed ice-lollies over the summer was superb!”



Help us make a positive difference  
every day with compassion,  
care and hope.

Thank you.



friendsofanchor.org

**Wellbeing team:**

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01224 859222

**Fundraising team:**

info@friendsofanchor.org  
01224 859170

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**Registered Charity No: SC025332**