SCIENCENOTFICTION.
It’s been another fantastic 12 months for BHF Northern Ireland and, like every year, I am constantly inspired by the amazing people that are changing lives every single day.

From our scientists at Queen’s University, the healthcare professionals we support through to our dedicated volunteers and the heart patients we meet, their collective time and energy fuels the fight for every heartbeat.

This year we continued to support world-class research at Queen’s University. We were delighted to grant £190,000 to Dr Andriana Margariti and her team to investigate heart repair and re-establishing blood flow after a heart attack.

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We’ve spent the year championing the BHF’s history in research and the research we will carry out in the future. During the year we held two very successful events at the NI Science Festival and were delighted to officially become STEM Ambassadors to encourage our younger generation to learn more about the life saving work carried out by BHF-funded scientists.

In September we brought our science to Stormont. We held a very successful Parliamentary event to showcase our research in Northern Ireland and highlight the ongoing problem of cardiovascular disease.

We are supporting over 180 healthcare professionals working with people living with heart disease, have supplied 97 defibrillators and 80 Call Push Rescue kits to local communities, and have trained around 80,000 people in CPR skills since we launched our nation of life savers programme.

None of this could have been achieved without the generosity of our remarkable supporters, volunteers and staff. From our fundraising and retail volunteers to everyone holding breakfasts and bake sales, running marathons and giving up chocolate for us, we recognise every single one for their effort in the fight for every heartbeat.

In Northern Ireland we are currently funding £2.6m of cardiovascular research, to help identify life saving scientific discoveries which will change people lives in the future. We’ve also trained 80,000 people in Northern Ireland in life saving CPR since the launch of our nation of life savers programme.

These are the headlines of the transformational work of BHF Northern Ireland, working on behalf of the 225,000 people with heart and circulatory disease.

But we still have so much more to do, as each year over 3,700 people here die of heart and circulatory disease.

In order that we can invest in saving lives we have to earn and maintain the trust and confidence of our supporters and volunteers. The new Fundraising Regulator was introduced this year to set and maintain standards for charitable fundraising.

We are grateful for everything they are doing towards winning the fight for every heartbeat.

Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive

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Our research strategy

In Northern Ireland, over 3,700 people die of heart and circulatory disease each year, and an estimated 225,000 people live with its burden. So we fight on. To bring an end to heart disease sooner. To end the suffering for good.

Our fight in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is fighting for every heartbeat. Here are just some of the incredible numbers that played a part in this year’s battle.

- £2.6m Total amount of research currently being funded in Northern Ireland
- £1m Total amount raised through fundraising and legacies this year
- £1.1m Sales made in BHF shops across Northern Ireland this year
- £1m Total spent on prevention, survival and support in the financial year
- 80,000 people trained in life saving CPR to date through our nation of life savers programme
Progressing our research in Northern Ireland is the difference between life and death for many people. That’s why we are currently investing £2.6m in our pioneering team at Queen’s University. Every day they make strides towards bringing us closer to ending heart disease.

Our research in Northern Ireland

New heart attack project in Belfast
BHF Northern Ireland was delighted to award Dr Andriana Margariti and her team at Queen’s University a grant of £190,000. This grant will help progress their research exploring the possibility of turning skin cells into blood vessel cells, an idea that has the potential to reduce damage caused by heart attacks. The impact of this research could change the landscape of recovery for those who have suffered a heart attack.

Northern Ireland Science Festival
BHF researchers attended the Know Your Enemy event at the Northern Ireland Science Festival to talk about their latest research with the public. The Science Café played host to Dr Dana Dawson from the University of Aberdeen who talked about her research into Takotsubo cardiomyopathy, a stress-induced condition where the heart muscle is temporarily ‘stunned’. By raising awareness of these conditions our researchers are able to show what they’re doing on the front line of the fight against heart disease.

Parliamentary Reception
September 2016 saw BHF Northern Ireland host a highly successful Parliamentary Event sponsored by Health Minister Michelle O’Neill. Politicians met with BHF-funded researchers from Queen’s University who shared their insights into the most pressing issues in the fight against heart disease and the ground-breaking work being carried out to help save lives. Events like this help demonstrate the scale of the problem of heart disease in Northern Ireland and the urgent need to tackle it with the support of Parliament.

Total currently being invested in research in Northern Ireland

£2.6m
Our goal is to end the unnecessary suffering caused by heart disease in Northern Ireland. Reducing risk, sharing information and education are essential to this mission. This year we spent £1m in prevention schemes and support for patients.

All Party Group on Heart Disease & Stroke
We were proud to spearhead the relaunched All Party Group on Heart Disease and Stroke in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Working with other charities and partners in healthcare, we secured the largest attendance on this issue as researchers, survivors and politicians all came together to discuss how we can beat heart disease. Our next goal is to secure a motion at the NI Assembly that emphasises the danger posed by heart disease.

Remembering BHF
Professor Frank Pantridge
Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council held a special lunch to mark what would have been the 100th birthday of BHF Professor Frank Pantridge. The cardiologist is credited with saving thousands of lives around the world by developing the first portable defibrillator in 1965.

BHF Alliance
In order to win the fight against heart disease, health professionals must have access to the most up-to-date training and innovative ways of supporting patients. Through our free BHF Alliance membership scheme, we support around 180 healthcare professionals across Northern Ireland who work with people affected by, or at risk of, heart and circulatory disease.

Genetic testing for HCM
Around 120,000 people across the UK are thought to be living undiagnosed with the inherited heart condition hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM). HCM can cause a sudden cardiac arrest without warning, so identifying those at risk is vital.

Through the Miles Frost Fund we have awarded £40,000 to the Inherited Cardiac Clinic at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. This will fund a part-time Cardiomyopathy Specialist Nurse to help ensure that more people receive the genetic test and treatment they need to prevent sudden death.

Restart a Heart Day
The turnout for this year’s Restart a Heart Day was phenomenal, with over 4,000 people across Northern Ireland taking part. BHF Northern Ireland and the NI Ambulance Service trained over 1,000 pupils alone at St Louise’s Comprehensive College in West Belfast.

Our Tesco Partnership
Our partnership with Tesco has been incredibly important in helping champion heart-healthy lifestyles in communities across the country, and supporting people to take simple steps towards a healthier heart. Let’s Do This is an online goal-setter that helps us all be a little bit healthier. Last year nearly 600 people signed up in Northern Ireland and over 300 people got involved with our Let’s Do This events in Derry and Strabane.

Our Beat the Street initiative has also helped 30,000 people in Northern Ireland get more active.

£1m
Total spent on improving outcomes for people with cardiovascular disease in Northern Ireland
Heartbeat of
the community

None of what we do would be possible without the staff and volunteers who give their time and energy to fight heart disease. All across Northern Ireland these dedicated heart heroes work tirelessly to support our life saving work by donating thousands of hours and raising vital funds to help us save lives.

Drumachose Parish set to become life savers
Limavady fundraising branch have been using the Drumachose Parish Hall and facilities for the branch meetings and have come up with a potentially life saving way to say thanks. Branch chairman Alistair Smyth presented the Parish with a public access defibrillator to the Drumachose Parish Church, which will be located in a cabinet in the Church hallway and available to the public at all times. The branch also hopes that CPR training will be available to all groups using the space to make sure that everyone has the skills they need to intervene in the ultimate medical emergency.

In memory of bride-to-be
Lindsey Coulter (27) from Fivemiletown died last year after collapsing at a gym where she was exercising. The young community nurse was due to get married to her fiancé Brian Ellison last October, but died six months before her wedding day. Her family generously donated £2,000 to BHF NI In her memory.

Welcome Lisburn Fundraising Group
We are delighted to welcome our new fundraising group in Lisburn. The city has a long track record in hosting BHF Northern Ireland events and is home to a popular BHF retail store. This new group will continue these efforts to raise funds for research that hopes to stop heart disease in its tracks.

Fundraising for Kevin King
Kevin King was just 22 when he collapsed suddenly during a game of football. He suffered from a condition called myocardial fibrosis, which causes scar tissue to form in the heart, affecting its ability to pump properly. Since their tragic loss, the King family has been dedicated to raising money for BHF Northern Ireland which funds critical research into heart diseases such as Kevin’s. They have raised tens of thousands of pounds in Kevin’s memory.

Total raised by people in Northern Ireland through fundraising and legacies this year
£1m
Giving hope through retail

Through the incredible generosity of the public donating thousands of items to our Northern Ireland high street shops, and the thousands of hours of support gifted by our dedicated volunteers, we are transforming the lives of people across Northern Ireland who are living with heart disease.

Store Superstars
This year we want to say special thanks to Helen Duffy who has dedicated over seven years to our Enniskillen shop after her father passed away from a heart attack. In Newry, Vincent Malone has shown the same incredible level of commitment for seven years. Our heartfelt thanks to Jackie Rooney from our Portadown shop who won retail volunteer of the year.

Christmas Power Hour
Our Derry–Londonderry BHF Shop had its own Christmas tree in St Columbus Cathedral. The public decorated the tree with tags for loved ones who have passed away.

Clothes Swap Party
In Portadown a Clothes Swap Party saw 60 people donate 35 bags between them, which were either swapped or donated to the BHF. Every donation goes towards raising money for our vital research.

More Than A Shop
BHF Northern Ireland has been instrumental in the ‘More Than A Shop’ campaign that wants to stop the imposition of business rates on charity shops. A petition of 19,000 signatures was handed to the Department of Finance. The funds raised by BHF shops is a key resource in the fight to end heart disease.

£1.1m
Sales in our eight BHF shops across Northern Ireland

I was born with a congenital heart condition, I go to hospital a lot. Sometimes I stay for weeks and I recently had a stent put in.

I love British Heart Foundation and I’ve raised thousands of pounds to pay for science to help people.

Mark Lynn, age 7, Ballymena
Our fight in your area

This map shows just some of the activity that’s been going on in Northern Ireland over the past year.

Research
We are currently investing £2.6m in pioneering heart research in Northern Ireland.

Support
We support over 180 healthcare practitioners across Northern Ireland through the BHF Alliance. This free membership programme offers professional development and support for those who work with people affected by, or at the risk of developing, heart and circulatory disease.

Survival
By offering training resources to the public in how to perform CPR, we hope to dramatically improve the chances of someone surviving an out of hospital cardiac arrest. As part of our mission to create a nation of life savers, around 80,000 people have been trained in life saving CPR skills since October 2014.

Prevention
We are supporting activities that will help reduce the chances of people in Northern Ireland developing heart and circulatory disease.

Grow income
We have 8 BHF shops in Northern Ireland helping to fund life saving research.
For over 50 years our research has saved lives.

We’ve broken new ground, revolutionised treatments and transformed care.

But heart and circulatory disease still kills one in four people in Northern Ireland.

That’s why we need you.

With your support, your time, your donations, our research will beat heart disease for good.