



British Heart  
Foundation

CYMRU

HEART  
DISEASE

HOPE

BRWYDRO  
DROS BOB  
CURIAD CALON

[bhf.org.uk](http://bhf.org.uk)

Rewriting the future  
for the people of Wales

Annual Review 2016

# Message from our Chief Executive

**It has been another incredible year for the British Heart Foundation – our vision of a future where people do not die prematurely from heart disease has been taken forward with determination, energy and skill by our staff and volunteers.**

Thanks to our supporters we are currently investing an incredible £6.8m in life saving medical research in Wales, delivering significant breakthroughs that will help change the lives of millions of people across the UK and globally.

Each year 8,800 people in Wales lose their lives to heart and circulatory disease. But we are fighting to reduce that number and put an end to the unnecessary suffering of so many families in Wales.

We see research as being at the heart of achieving this goal, and we continue to adapt our approach to keep the BHF at the forefront of research into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease and stroke across the world.

We have seen some truly remarkable results from our researchers at Cardiff University, and the progress they've made this year will transform lives across Wales and around the world.

These ground-breaking discoveries made over the past year have only been made possible by the enormous generosity of our supporters across Wales, raising millions of pounds, donating thousands of items to our shops, and volunteering tens of thousands of hours for the BHF.

Their time and energy fuels the fight for every heartbeat and I am confident that with the partnership between our tireless supporters and dedicated researchers we can win the fight, and transform millions more lives in Wales, the UK and beyond.

We won't stop until we've won the fight against heart disease.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Simon Gillespie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single red stroke.

Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive

# Message from Head of BHF Cymru

**Over the past 50 years, the BHF has helped to halve deaths from cardiovascular disease in Wales. However, it still causes more than 1 in 4 deaths in Wales and there are an estimated 375,000 people living with heart and circulatory conditions across the country. Only when we fully understand the complex reasons behind why people develop heart and circulatory disease will we be able to find new ways to prevent and treat them.**

Cutting-edge research is central to our mission to win the fight against heart disease. We know that supporting world-class science is how we will make the advances that will save and improve lives. And it's thanks to the incredible efforts of our committed supporters across Wales that we can continue to make breakthrough after breakthrough.

We're working hard for heart patients too. We continue to push for high-quality care, and we provide heart health information that patients can trust.

Our dedicated supporters and fundraisers across Wales, and the major Welsh organisations that have chosen us as charity partners over the past year, have helped us fund our two distinct teams of scientific researchers at Cardiff and Swansea Universities who are working on research that has the potential to transform the way we treat and understand heart disease.

Wales is punching above its weight in the fight against heart disease, and we're proud of that. Every step we take reduces the devastation that heart disease causes in our country.



Ruth Coombs, Head of BHF Cymru

# Our research strategy

In Wales there are currently around 375,000 people living with heart and circulatory disease. These devastating conditions claim the lives of around 8,800 people in Wales each year. We fight for every heartbeat, everywhere. Until we win.



## Our fight in Wales

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

**£6.8m**

Currently being spent on life saving research in Wales

**23**

BHF-funded research projects currently investigating heart and circulatory disease

**33**

BHF shops across Wales fuelling the fight for every heartbeat

**500**

Fundraising volunteers across Wales

**209,000**

The number of heart resources dispatched last year to addresses in Wales

**160**

The number of Call Push Rescue CPR kits issued to communities and schools in Wales to date

# Highlights from the year

Across the country our supporters, our fundraisers and our researchers are putting everything they've got into the fight against heart disease. Here's a snapshot of our year.

## June 2015

More than 1,400 cyclists in Swansea take part in our annual South Wales Bike Ride.



## August 2015

Partnership with Merched y Wawr raises over £23,000 for BHF Cymru.



## August 2015

Launch of partnership with the Farmers Union of Wales.

## December 2015

After two years of influencing Welsh Government, BHF Cymru welcomes the new Welsh opt-out model for organ donation, increasing the number of heart transplants possible.

## December 2015

Nearly 200 people take part in Cardiff fundraising event Chase the Pud.



### March 2015

Local personality Gareth Wyn Jones celebrates the opening of our Llandudno Furniture and Electrical store.

### June 2015

Ruth Coombs joins as the new Head of BHF Cymru.



### August 2015

Welsh language booklet launched to raise awareness of women and heart disease.



### November 2015

New Fundraising Group launched in Bronant, Ceredigion.



### February 2016

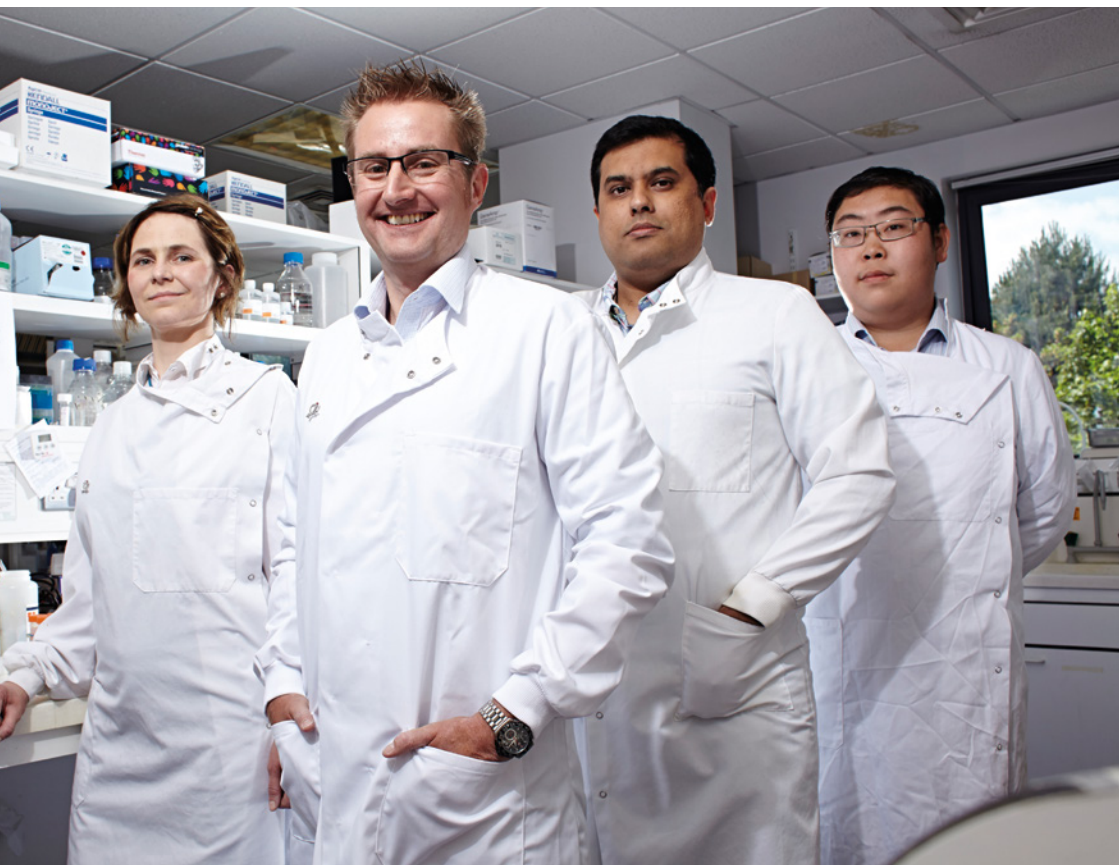
New Fundraising Group launched at Ystradgynlais.

# Introducing our researchers

Wales is an important site in our fight to end heart disease through research. We're currently investing £6.8m in ongoing projects across the country to investigate different aspects of heart and circulatory disease. Here's just a snapshot of the work we've been doing in 2015-16.

# £6.8m

The amount currently  
being invested in heart  
and circulatory disease  
research across Wales





## Breaking new ground in lipid research

Our scientists at Cardiff University's Systems Immunity Research Institute believe that tiny molecules known as lipids (or "fats") lie at the root of heart disease. Professor Valerie O'Donnell and her team are on a mission to understand how the tens of thousands of these unique molecules in our bodies impact the heart.

Initial findings are showing that whilst some lipids are a threat to heart health, others actually regulate normal healthy processes. And we still know nothing about half of the lipids in our cells. So the team will continue to investigate other types of lipids and how they are involved in atherosclerosis – a process that can lead to heart attacks. We are hopeful that our results will reduce suffering from cardiovascular disease.



**Heart research happening in Wales is truly world class. Our scientists at Wales' universities are pushing forward with projects that could help see the end of suffering for thousands.**

Professor Peter Weissberg,  
Medical Director of the BHF

## New ways to treat heart rhythm disorders

BHF Professor Alan Williams at the School of Medicine at Cardiff University is an internationally renowned expert in disturbances in heart rhythms caused by unusual amounts of calcium in the heart muscle. He is leading BHF-funded research to reveal new ways to block calcium release. This is a crucial area in the fight against heart disease as heart rhythm disorders are still a major issue. The team intends to find new ways to diagnose the disease earlier and potentially lead the way for life saving treatments for certain types of heart rhythm disorders.

**I was utterly shocked  
when I found out  
I had heart disease.  
Medics recognised a  
pattern of early heart  
attacks in my family**

**Thanks to BHF  
research a genetic  
test told us we have  
an inherited condition.  
I believe it saved  
my son's life.**

**Rachel, 70**



# Prevention, survival and support

**Ending unnecessary suffering and early death through cardiovascular disease is central to our mission. In Wales we've spent £1.4m helping to reduce the nation's risk factors and supporting patients in 2015-16.**

## **CPR Training in Wales**

In 2014 we launched our Nation of Lifesavers campaign to give people the skills they need to become a lifesaver if they witness a cardiac arrest. Less than one in ten people survive a cardiac arrest out of hospital in the UK. This is partly because bystanders don't have the skills or confidence to perform CPR.

Our new quick-and-simple CPR training programme, Call Push Rescue enables schools, workplaces and community groups to teach the life saving skills needed in the ultimate medical emergency.

In Wales we continue to support our 117 Heartstart community and schools schemes to enable them to deliver first aid training. In addition, since the launch of our Nation of Lifesavers campaign we have donated CPR kits to 71 schools and 89 community groups awarding a total of £101,624 on Call Push Rescue training kits across Wales. Since the launch we estimate that around 31,000 people in Wales have had access to CPR training and public access defibrillator (PAD) awareness.

## **Improving quality of life for patients**

With appropriate treatment and support, survival rates and improved quality of life for many people living with heart failure can be dramatically improved.

The BHF has funded two Integrated Care projects within Wales over two years – one in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the other in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg. This enhanced and coordinated support has reduced the need for emergency admissions and provided a better experience for patients and carers, and will improve clinical practice across Wales.

The BHF has also delivered education and training to support more than 500 Health Care Professionals within Cwm Taf and Aneurin Bevan University Health Boards to develop CVD screening and risk reduction programmes, designed to reduce premature death and emergency admissions from cardiovascular disease within deprived areas.

We continue to collaborate with the Wales Heart Disease Delivery Plan Implementation Group to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease across Wales.

Through our BHF Alliance membership programme we continue to support healthcare professionals to improve clinical practice and health promotion across the country.

# A nation of supporters

**When the reality of heart disease touches a person's life, they want to fight back. Thousands of people all across Wales raised funds this year to fuel vital research and make heart disease a thing of the past. Here is a snapshot of what some of our wonderful fundraising team have been doing for the battle against heart disease.**

## Fundraising heroes

A local community group near Ammanford, Carmarthenshire held a healthy event and raised over £1,000.

Narberth and Haverfordwest branch help out with the Western Telegraph Bluestone Car run and raised over £1,500.

Pen-y-Bryn School's sponsored walk in Morriston, Swansea raised nearly £2,000.

Our partnership with Merched y Wawr raised over £25,000 at several key events including a major presence during the National Eisteddfod week.

Aberystwyth Fundraising group raised over £2,000 at their annual dinner.

Local supporter Ann Davies from Llanarthne raised over £2,000 arranging a concert in her local village in memory of her mother.

Students at the Carmarthen School of Art held a craft event in memory of their colleague and fellow student, Nick Patients, who tragically passed away due to a heart condition in December.

Llandegai Patchers raised £7,000 over two years by selling raffle tickets to support us.

The Electrical Contractors Association for North Wales raised £1,200 in an auction as the President's charity of the year.

Peter Barker, chairman of our Cardigan branch braved a skydive raising over £7,000.

Chepstow Leisure Centre held a Wear It. Beat It. day in memory of their colleague who sadly passed away from heart failure, raising over £700.

Port Talbot based steelworks Harsco Metals and Minerals raised over £5,000 from a sponsored walk.

Douglas Place Senior Citizen's Club Saltney raised £1,200 through their year of fundraising for us as their charity of the year.

Pen y Dre High School in Merthyr Tydfil held a triathlon in memory of a pupil's father who passed away from a sudden heart attack. In total they raised an awesome £650.

# Changing lives through retail

We are the nation's largest charity retailer and charity shops play a massive role in the fight for every heartbeat in Wales. As well as generating £6.7m in sales last year to help fund life saving research, our 33 shops are increasingly used as a place where the public learn about heart research and engage in their own heart health.

## £6.7m

The amount generated in sales from BHF shops across Wales last year

### Raising awareness

This year our incredibly popular Furniture and Electrical shops were given a new look and feel that really increases awareness of the BHF and what we do. Customer feedback has been extremely positive and sales have shown a good return on the investment. In addition, our first stunning red BHF delivery van is heading to Wales to help with the movement of stock around Cardiff. We plan to increase the number of vans to support all our shops across Wales, ultimately increasing income and allowing us to support more life saving research.

### A great year in volunteering

This year our 900 retail volunteers across Wales gave so much of their time and energy to help in the fight for every heartbeat. Many of our voluntary staff go on to find paid employment using their retail skills.



### Welsh Dragon

"As part of our strategy to grow income in Wales we have launched Welsh specific branding. Our hugely popular dragon symbol has become a key feature in BHF shops across the charity."

Mike Taylor, Retail Director, BHF

# Our fight in your area

This map shows just some of the activity that's been going on in Wales over the past year.



## Research

In Wales we are currently investing £6.8m investigating all aspects of heart and circulatory disease.



## Support

We support 289 healthcare practitioners across Wales 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

Training the public in CPR increases the chances of someone surviving an out of hospital cardiac arrest. As part of our mission to create a Nation of Lifesavers, BHF has provided 160 Call Push Rescue CPR training kits to communities and schools across Wales to teach vital life saving skills.



## Prevention

We are leading on prevention projects that will reduce the chances of people in Wales developing heart and circulatory disease.



## Grow income

We have 33 BHF shops in Wales helping to fund life saving research.





**British Heart  
Foundation**

**CYMRU**

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that's transformed the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But so many people still need our help.

From babies born with life-threatening heart problems to the many mums, dads and grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in Wales. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

**FIGHT  
FOR EVERY  
HEARTBEAT**

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