

Finding more effective ways to detect and treat cancer

Thank you for your interest in the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation. I hope you enjoy reading about our work and fantastic fundraisers in this annual newsletter.

Bob was so positive and determined in every aspect of his life, and he was so keen to see his charity succeed. He'd be very proud, and amazed I think, to see how many people share his vision and to know what we're achieving together.

Every penny raised is helping us to help other people who are facing this terrible illness and we're very grateful to all our supporters.

We're very lucky to meet so many wonderful people through the charity. It's a pleasure to chat to new fundraisers and see 'old faces' alike. Every one of us part of the same team.

I think it does us all good to know we're doing something proactive against cancer. It seems to provide a measure of comfort and a sense that we're not alone in being affected by this cruel disease.

Thank you all.

E. M. Robson



Lady Elsie and Graeme Swann at the 'Sir Bobby Golf Day' at Rockliffe Hall

Very special fundraising



It has been another tremendous year of fundraising for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation. The commitment and imagination of fundraisers seems boundless and there is only space in this newsletter to feature a tiny fraction of so many people's great efforts.

As ever, the majority of money raised has come from relatively small community and family events, from the thoughtfulness of so many individuals 'doing their bit,' and from people marking special occasions and remembering loved ones by making a donation.

The Foundation has also received tremendous support from a host of businesses, including its fantastic partnership with Newcastle Building Society, and there are a number of fundraisers who repeatedly challenge themselves to achieve incredible new goals in aid of the charity.

A Review of Our Seventh Year

Run Geordie Run Around the World

Charity runner Mark 'Run Geordie Run' Allison has already run from John O'Groats to Land's End, across America and, most recently, across Australia.

In spite of everything he has achieved, the thousands of miles covered and hundreds of thousands of pounds raised for charity, he still feels he has one more challenge he needs to complete and, incredibly, he is going to run around the world.

It will take Mark until at least 2024 to finish the challenge, which he will complete in eight segments as family life, work and finances permit.

Mark, from Bedlington, Northumberland, will need to cover 20,000 miles, over four continents and it will take him approximately 1 year and 243 days, in total, to complete.

His round the world challenge began, although he did not know that at the time, with his John O'Groats to Land's End 874 mile run in 2007.

Mark has also already 'ticked off' the USA (2011) and Australia (2013), 3,100 miles and 2,384 miles respectively, but still has approximately 13,642 miles to go.

The next segment of 'Run Geordie Run Around the World' is the European leg, which Mark will undertake in 2016. Mark will begin in Portugal and finish 100 days and 3,400 miles later in Istanbul.

His route passes through Portugal, Spain, Andorra, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

Mark says: "As before, my fundraising target for this run is £50,000. If I can achieve that for The Children's Foundation and the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation, then I'll feel like all the hard work is worthwhile."

Lady Elsie with Mark Allison announcing 'Around the World Run'



Mark Allison celebrates after completing gruelling run across Australia

Teamwork and Clinical Trials



Lady Elsie trying a genetic taste test with clinical trials assistant, Irene Jobson

To mark International Clinical Trials Day in May, Lady Elsie joined researchers and patients at the Northern Centre for Cancer Care (NCCC), to raise awareness of the importance of clinical trials.

The day also celebrated the benefits of charities, Newcastle University and the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospital's NHS Foundation Trust working together as a team. Together, this partnership is helping develop vital drugs for cancer patients in the North East and Cumbria.

One of the drugs being tested in the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre at the NCCC is Rucaparib, which is giving patients with terminal cancer a 'lifeline.'

It is a type of drug known as a PARP inhibitor (PARP is an enzyme that helps damaged cells to repair themselves) and Rucaparib was initially developed in collaboration between Newcastle University and Cancer Research UK.

PARP inhibitors are targeted treatments that kill cancer cells, while leaving healthy cells relatively unscathed. If PARP is blocked, cancer cells may not be able to repair themselves.

Cancer Research UK-funded researchers here in Newcastle upon Tyne have played a pivotal role in the development of PARP Inhibitors and the first cancer patient in the world to be given this new type of drug was treated in Newcastle in 2003.

Now, 12 years on, work on this drug is continuing with current trials open in ovarian, breast and pancreatic cancer and it is likely other cancer types may also benefit.

Professor Ruth Plummer is a Cancer Research UK clinician at the Northern Institute for Cancer Research in Newcastle. She is also Director of the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre and is a Trustee of the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation.

Professor Plummer explains: "Rucaparib is actually the very first PARP inhibitor to be given to patients and it's one of an exciting new class of drugs.

"It's the first cancer drug developed by chemists and scientists at Newcastle University which has then been trialled with patients treated in the Sir Bobby Robson Centre at the Northern Centre for Cancer Care.

"It's been a great team effort and patients are benefiting from that partnership."

The Sir Bobby Robson Centre was equipped by the Foundation and the charity also funds posts of a clinical trials doctor and nurse within it.

Clinical trials of Rucaparib are being followed through with patients who have solid tumours that have grown into surrounding tissue or spread to another part of the body and whose cancer is otherwise untreatable.

Jean Vipond, from Darlington, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2008 and in 2012 she was given the devastating news that her cancer was terminal.

Jean has been receiving treatment at the Sir Bobby Centre since February 2012 and credits the team there, and the drug trial, for extending her life.

Jean explains: "It's so devastating a diagnosis and you just want to carry on living your life as best you can, for as long as you can. I can still go away on holiday and just try to live life to the full.



International Clinical Trials Day at the Northern Centre for Cancer Care



Professor Ruth Plummer with Jean Vipond, who is receiving treatment in the Sir Bobby Robson Centre

"Our grandkids come every week for their tea. They're lovely boys and it means the world seeing them grow up and seeing our own children maturing and enjoying themselves. Every day is extra."

Launched in July 2009, the Newcastle Cancer Centre at the Northern Institute for Cancer Research (NICR) is a collaboration between Cancer Research UK, North of England Children's Cancer Research Fund, Newcastle University and Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and, since 2013, the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation.

Working in partnership with Newcastle's other leading cancer organisations helps reduce any duplication of work, meaning charitable funds can go even further.

Professor Plummer explains: "This partnership is an exciting opportunity to bring even closer the NHS Trust, University and local charities, all working together to bring better and innovative treatments for cancer patients.

"Effective teamwork was very important to Sir Bobby during his football career and it was something he was equally committed to when he launched his charity too.

"Ensuring that teamwork continues for the benefit of cancer patients is vital to us all.

"By promoting collaboration between scientists, doctors, nurses and funding organisations, we aim to speed the delivery of new therapies like Rucaparib and improve cancer services in the area."

Fundraisers celebrate 'first outside London' technology



Dr Ian Pedley (left) shows Lady Elsie and Sir Bobby Robson Foundation fundraisers around the new stereotactic radiotherapy unit

Purchase of exciting new cancer technology has been made possible thanks to a special collaboration between the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Charlie Bear for Cancer Care, Newcastle Healthcare Charity and the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation.

The Foundation made its largest contribution to date, £850,000, to help fund the stereotactic radiotherapy system, which uses detailed scans and computerised 4D treatment planning to treat cancer and deliver radiation with tremendous accuracy.

Small, thin beams of radiation are directed from different angles to meet at the tumour, which receives a high dose of radiation while the surrounding healthy tissues receive a reduced dose.

Lady Elsie visited the completed unit for the first time recently and shared the moment with some of the Foundation fundraisers who helped make it happen.

Dr Ian Pedley, Consultant Clinical Oncologist and Clinical Director for NCCC, helped explain how the technology works and why it is such an important step forward for local cancer patients.

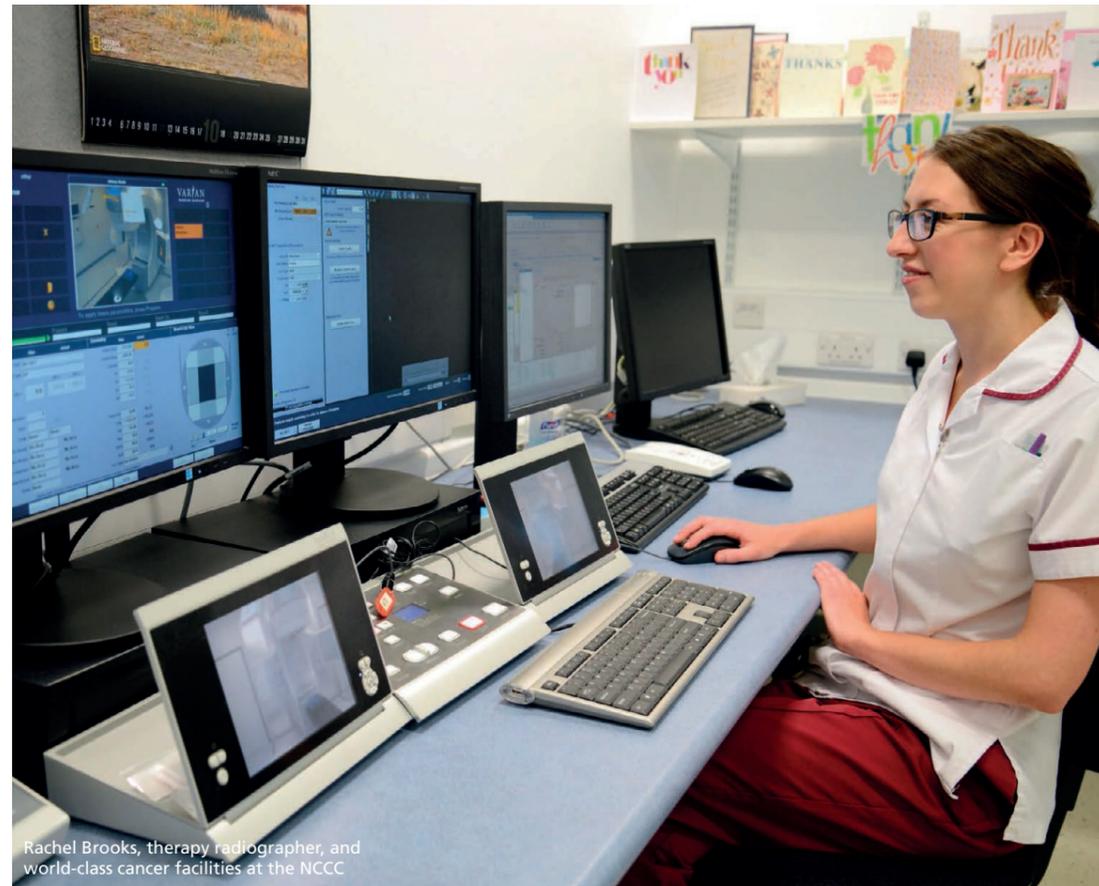
Dr Pedley spoke of how: "Until we had this unit, patients referred to the NCCC travelled to Sheffield, Leeds or London for similar treatments. In fact, this particular combination of technology was only available in London.

"The Novalis Truebeam STX alone is a hugely exciting piece of cancer treatment technology and that was funded by the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

"But we've been able to do even more for our patients thanks to the additional charitable funding we've received and that's enhanced the stereotactic radiotherapy unit with additional technology.

"All working together, the new system delivers such high doses of radiation to tumour sites that treatment for patients can, in some cases, be reduced from weeks to just one to five days. And effects on nearby organs are minimised.

"Having this equipment at the Northern Centre for Cancer Care enables cancer patients from the region to be treated more quickly and effectively than ever before. It's amazing what the NHS and local hospital charities have achieved together."



Rachel Brooks, therapy radiographer, and world-class cancer facilities at the NCCC



Clive Sinton, from Blyth, demonstrating his treatment in the unit

Patients with lung cancer are already receiving stereotactic radiotherapy treatment with scope to extend treatment to other tumour sites in both children and adults.

In addition, prostate cancer patients are now receiving radiotherapy treatment in the unit, which has such sophisticated imaging technology that the standard treatment of 37 sessions can now be delivered in 20.

There are plans to reduce this still further, to just five treatment sessions, which will then be delivered with stereotactic radiotherapy.

Clive Sinton, from Blyth, has received treatment for prostate cancer and joined Lady Elsie and fundraisers to share his positive experiences of the new technology.

Clive says: "There's a tremendous atmosphere when you come here. All the staff are great and you really get to know each other. It's all first name terms. There's no better word for it than tremendous."

Auction online for success

Gina Long, from Suffolk, is a long-time supporter of the Foundation and a friend of the Robson family.

Each year, she puts her contacts and event organisational skills to great use raising money for charities that are close to her heart and, thanks to generous support, her three online auctions have now raised more than £700,000 for charities, including the Foundation.

The 'Sir Bobby' auctions are run with the help of a very dedicated committee, chaired by Gina, and companies like the Saleroom.com, which give their professional services at no charge.

The global auctions offer access to a range of very special items, often donated by high-profile supporters and many of them 'money can't buy.'

In 2014, more than 2,596 bids were made on 114 lots, raising an incredible £97,642 for the Foundation, Suffolk hospitals' charities and the East Anglia's Children's Hospices.

The top lot in the auction was donated by FIFA, an opportunity for two to attend the FIFA Ballon d'Or Awards in Zurich as VIP guests. A Gary Speed match-worn Sheffield United shirt was also greatly in demand. Sir Bobby described Gary as one of his 'blue chip' Newcastle United players.

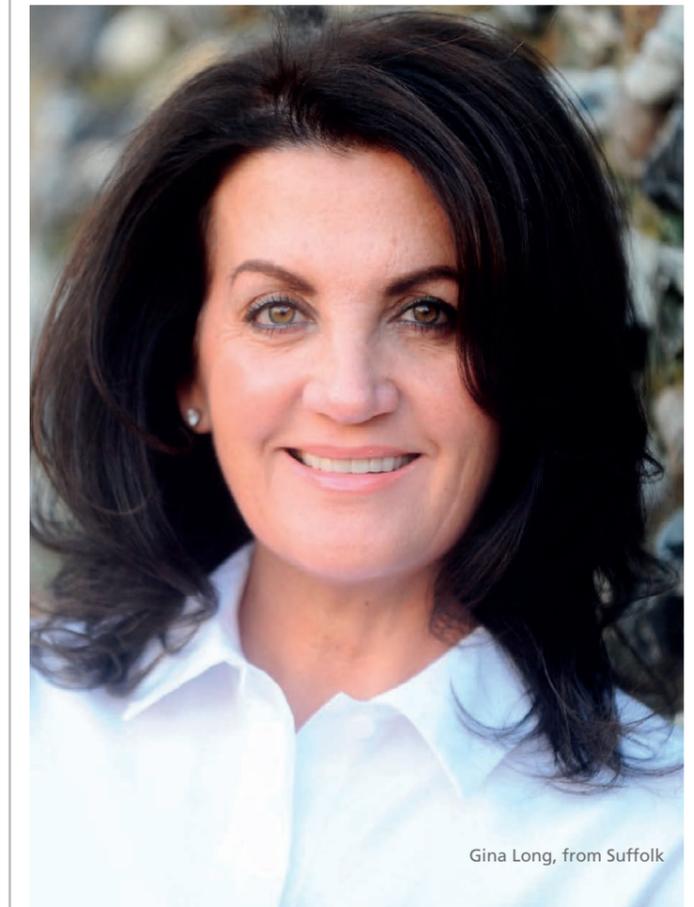
Gina explains: "A colossal amount of money has been raised for very special charities that make a real difference to so many people. And that's thanks to the generosity of everyone who donated a prize or placed bids.

"I marvel at how the momentum behind our very special online auction has grown and grown."

Lady Elsie says: "Gina really is the driving force behind all this. She puts her heart and soul into fundraising and her enthusiasm is second to none."

As we go to print, Gina is hard at work with her fourth online charity auction.

Hopefully, by the time you receive this newsletter, it will have been completed and as successful as the previous auctions.



Gina Long, from Suffolk

The magic of Widnes Vikings

Rugby league club, Widnes Vikings, raised £20,000 by creating a limited edition black and white striped shirt for a special fixture played at St James' Park.



(l-r) Phil Joseph (Widnes Vikings), Peter Beardsley and Danny Craven (Widnes Vikings)

The stadium hosted the First Utility Super League Magic Weekend for the first time in May this year and thousands of rugby league fans descended on Newcastle.

Supporting the Foundation was the brainchild of Vikings' Marketing Director, Brian O'Connor, and the initiative was designed to raise money for the charity and engage more local people in rugby league.

Thanks to the Vikings' principal sponsor, The Parcel Centre, who kindly agreed to vacate their sponsorship space on the front of the playing kit, the striped shirts featured the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation logo front and centre.

The new kit was launched with help from Vikings' Magic Weekend Ambassador, Peter Beardsley, at Walker Technology College.

Brian O'Connor explains: "At the outset, this initiative was about tying our colours in with the famous black and white stripes of our Magic Weekend hosts, Newcastle United."

"Working with the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation has allowed us to do something incredibly special. It has been a privilege to work with a charity that works tirelessly to provide vital services within the North East and Cumbria, and also has an incredible impact on international cancer research."

The Widnes Vikings' initiative generated extraordinary interest and the shirt was endorsed by high-profile celebrities including comedians John Bishop and Paddy McGuinness, TV personalities Tim Lovejoy, Simon Rimmer and the cast of Hollyoaks, pop star Melanie C, rugby union player Sam Burgess and footballers Dietmar Hamann, Rob Lee and John Beresford, as well as Foundation Patrons Alan Shearer and Niall Quinn.



Pop star, Melanie C

100% of the profits from Magic Weekend shirt sales were donated to the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and the cheque was presented to Sir Bobby's son, Andrew, in front of the Magic Weekend's enthusiastic crowd.



Foundation Patron, Niall Quinn

Sunderland 'signing' for Sir Bobby

For years, the iconic signs on the Sunderland Echo building at Pennywell were, for many Wearsiders, an indication that they were almost home.

The giant red letters were clearly visible from the A19 and a familiar sight for regular road users.

Now, they have been carefully removed by the building's new owners, Tecaz, and the bathroom and kitchen retailer auctioned them to raise money for the Foundation.

Susan Coates, 54, from Sunderland is receiving treatment at the Northern Centre for Cancer Care and kindly helped publicise the auction of the sign.

Susan says: "I've nothing but admiration and respect for the way I've been treated at the Centre. All the doctors, nurses and staff are so professional and caring, and there's a wonderfully warm and supportive atmosphere."

"It's difficult receiving cancer treatment and it makes such a difference when the people caring for you are so understanding."

"It's made such a difference to me to have a trials centre here in the region and where I can easily get to. I know not all cancer patients have that."



Susan Coates from Sunderland (left) with Catherine Porteous from Tecaz



Sunderland Echo signs being removed

John Alder and Liam Sweeney



Lady Elsie (left) with Joyce Robbins at John Alder's seat at St James' Park

On 17 July 2014, Malaysia Airways Flight MH17 was brought down, with the loss of everyone on board, in a suspected missile attack over Ukraine.

Liam Sweeney, 28 from Westerhope, and John Alder, 63 from Low Fell, were among the 298 people who tragically lost their lives that day. The two football fans were on their way to watch Newcastle United play in a pre-season friendly in New Zealand.

Money has been raised or donated to a number of charities in their memory, including a collection begun by fans of Sunderland AFC, which raised £33,000 for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and Marie Curie Cancer Care.

John Alder was an avid Newcastle fan and missed just one game, home and away, in 40 years. During that time, he amassed an extensive collection of football memorabilia, which his family generously donated to the Foundation.

Thanks to auctioneers Anderson and Garland and with a great deal of help from Newcastle United, the auction of John's collection raised £26,000.

Thousands of match programmes, tickets and books went under the hammer at St James' Park, dating from 1920s to the present day, and bidders from across the UK and as far afield as Singapore, Dubai and Vancouver vied for the lots.

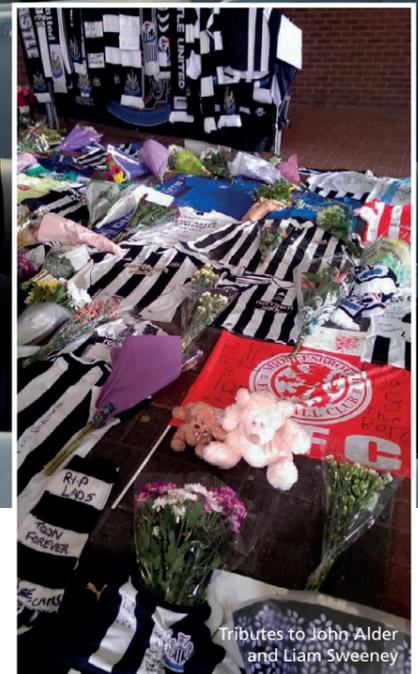
A further £5,000 was donated to the Foundation by a friend of John's, when he took over John's Platinum Club Bond at St James' Park. Thanks to this extremely generous gesture, John's seat at the stadium will remain filled by fellow fans who knew him and attended games alongside him.



Fred Wyrley-Birch from Anderson and Garland



John Alder



Tributes to John Alder and Liam Sweeney

Joyce Robbins, John's sister, says: "The last year has been a roller coaster really."

"It's been very difficult, and extremely painful at times, but we've had fantastic support from so many people, from football fans, Newcastle United, and so many strangers, too many to name."

"And by helping the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation we feel like we're doing something positive. It's been a focus on something good in a bad situation and that's really made a difference for us all."

Colleagues and customers at Morrisons' Killingworth, where Liam Sweeney worked for 12 years, also generously contributed to the Foundation through a year of fundraising in memory of their colleague.

Barry Sweeney, Liam's dad, and store manager, Adrian Farrage, recently presented £6,150 to the Charity.



Viewing of John Alder's extensive collection of football memorabilia

Fantastic support from



Savers and investors with the North East's largest building society have helped raise a staggering £1.5 million for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation.

In Spring 2012, the Newcastle Building Society launched its Foundation-branded ISA and Saver accounts and both are proving phenomenally popular.

The Newcastle gives an additional 0.1% of the balances held in these respective accounts to the Foundation in a unique partnership that has proved so successful that the building society is easily the largest corporate donor to the charity.

Lady Elsie says: *"The Newcastle is very much part of our team effort. They understand what we're trying to achieve and its importance and we're most grateful to the Newcastle and its customers for their support."*

Andrew Haigh, Chief Executive of Newcastle Building Society, explains: *"Our partnership with the Foundation started around three years ago and it really has been a great success."*

"The enthusiasm for the initiative from our customers that have taken out the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation savings products has been wonderful and has enabled us to provide this support to help the fantastic work the charity is doing in the fight against cancer."

Andrew Haigh, Newcastle Building Society's Chief Executive



Steve Urwin from the Newcastle with Lady Elsie and Foundation Patron Alan Shearer

Great North Runners

Everyone who undertook the 2014 Great North Run for the Foundation had their own, often very personal, reasons to support our work.

One of the Foundation's runners was Alison Jane from Monkseaton, North Tyneside, who successfully completed the run even though her partner, Craig Malcolm, was in Intensive Care at the time with an extremely rare cancer related illness, and had been for many months.

Alison raised more than £2,000 for us and was greeted at the finish by her proud parents and Sir Bobby's family.

Very sadly, Craig passed away earlier this year. Alison and her Mam, Mary, ran the 2015 Great North Run in his memory.



Alison with partner, Craig, and his daughter Ayesha



Mary, Malcolm and Alison Jane

For more information, or to donate online, please visit www.sirbobbyrobsonfoundation.org.uk. Or send a cheque payable to 'Sir Bobby Robson Foundation' to Charitable Funds Office, Peacock Hall, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4LP. A letter of association is required to fund-raise for the Foundation to ensure those involved receive support and advice on current charity legislation. Please contact Pauline Buglass by calling 0191 213 7235 or email pauline.buglass@nuth.nhs.uk - thank you.

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Charity (Reg. 1057213)