



Making progress possible: our volunteering highlights from 2025

Every year, thousands of incredible people up and down the UK give their time to support our mission to beat cancer.

From cheering on runners at our events to welcoming shoppers in our stores, from sharing their stories to campaigning for change – together, our volunteers and supporters power our progress.

Every hour they give brings us closer to a world where people live longer, better lives, free from the fear of cancer.

As 2025 draws to a close, we're reflecting on some of the highlights from across our brilliant volunteer community this year.



Creativity and community in our Trading teams

Right across the UK, thousands of volunteers have given their time this year to support our shops and superstores. From styling windows with pre-loved fashion to serving shoppers with a smile, our volunteers are at the heart of our shop teams and play a key role in keeping our shops running smoothly. On top of this, our volunteers put huge efforts into supporting the fundraising campaigns running in our shops. Highlights from this year include:

- The Reigate team raised hundreds of pounds in aid of our Bowelbabe Fund cash collection in just a few days by tapping into the talents of their volunteers. Supporting the campaign's aim to break down the stigma of talking about poo, some of their volunteers knitted 'positive poos' and filled them with chocolate truffles, selling them for £4 each.
- Volunteers have also got stuck into organising unique events – including our Horsham East shop, which pulled out all the stops in aid of Stand Up To Cancer, with some very special guests stealing the show. Two miniature donkeys from a local sanctuary joined the team for the day, thanks to volunteer Wendy, who also supports the sanctuary in her spare time. Their

donkey themed fundraiser raised over £700 and attracted plenty of interest and smiles from the local community.

- Some of our volunteers have even used their crafty skills to repurpose unsellable items into fabric bookmarks, gloves and denim tote bags, turning creativity into impact.



This summer, volunteers also helped welcome over 140 MPs to our shops, Cancer Awareness Roadshows, and Race for Life events, showcasing our work and strengthening local support.





Going the extra mile at our events

Volunteers supported over **600** Cancer Research UK events this summer and autumn, including **472** Race For Life events, **17** Shine Night Walks, and **15** Big Hike events. As always, their energy and enthusiasm were vital to making our events a success.

There's been some exciting developments for our events volunteers too. This year, over **100** people signed up for our brand-new role of 'event set-up volunteer'. This role was designed to give those unable to support on a weekend the opportunity to volunteer during the weekday. Volunteers had great fun getting stuck into the event set up, including setting up course signage and erecting flags!

This year, we also introduced a new volunteer thanking scheme, with milestone rewards introduced to recognise volunteer commitment.

We were delighted to see positive feedback from across our events, with **92%** of our event volunteers saying our events are well organised and **95%** reporting that they were satisfied with their experience.



Raising funds for life-saving research

We have over 200 dedicated community fundraising groups, who unite their local communities through their creativity and commitment in order to raise vital funds to support our work. This year has seen some incredible achievements from our volunteer fundraising groups, including:

- Our Salisbury Local Committee marked their 75th anniversary, an inspiring milestone. Since the committee was formed in 1950, they've raised an incredible £2m to support our work.
- Relay for Life Rossendale celebrated their 20th event, with a record number of participants and their highest fundraising total since 2020, raising over £200,000.
- Australian brothers Stefan and Lachlan Lamble, aka the Lambros, ran the length of the UK to fundraise for us. This was an incredible 1,000-mile journey from John O'Groats to Land's End, which raised over £55,000.

- Since 2015, the Miss Great Britain Organisation has chosen Cancer Research UK as a charity partner. This year's finalists, aka the Miss Great Britain class of 2025, have done everything from Race for Life and Pretty Muddy, to hosting charity balls, quiz nights and coffee mornings, to bungee jumping and abseiling down the Francis Crick Institute! Together, this year's finalists have raised over £85,000, bringing the total raised by Miss Great Britain to over £300,000 since 2015.



Campaigns Ambassadors drive change

This year, Campaigns Ambassadors campaigned for change by getting involved in major policy projects. Highlights included:

- Representing Cancer Research UK as part of One Cancer Voice, joining over 40 charities in Westminster to call for a National Cancer Plan.
- Handing in our open letter to the Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, at the Department of Health and Social Care, calling on the UK Government to make the upcoming National Cancer Plan a turning point for cancer.
- From abseiling down the Francis Crick Institute, to attending events at Buckingham Palace, to supporting the launches of our manifestos in

Scotland and Wales – there's never a dull day for our Campaigns Ambassadors!

Campaigns Ambassadors also enjoyed a series of Discovery Days in our four research institute, connecting with scientists and deepening their understanding of our work.

Powering progress through storytelling

Throughout 2025, story volunteers have played a central role in our campaigns, sharing their powerful stories to show the impact of cancer and the importance of research. From giving key speeches about their experiences in support of the Bowelbabe Fund and Race for Life, to speaking about their radiotherapy treatment as part of our Legacy campaign with Channel 5 – story volunteers have been crucial in bringing our mission to life and amplifying our messages.

In September, several story volunteer families helped us to mark Childhood Cancer Awareness Month by sharing their stories through posters in our shops, Digital News articles, and national media. This included a partnership with The Times that saw one family starring in a special film about the SIOPEL6 trial, which received over **186,000** views, while others featured on the 'Off Air with Fi and Jane' podcast.

Story volunteers have also been at the heart of our Stand Up To Cancer activity, appearing in films, social media posts and fundraising materials, and have made an impact by speaking about our key scientific breakthroughs across TV, newspapers and online.

Health awareness in action

Our Cancer Awareness Roadshows reached around 45,000–50,000 people this year, supported by **six** dedicated health awareness volunteers. They joined us at locations right across the UK, where they helped to welcome people to the Roadshows, encourage them to have a free health check and chat to our Cancer Awareness nurses about how to reduce their cancer risk and spot symptoms early. Together, their efforts make a real difference in communities across the UK.



Patient voices shaping our work

In March, we marked **10** years since Cancer Research UK began formally involving people affected by cancer in shaping our work. Patient voices are now central to our work, helping to guide everything from research priorities to communications.

This year, the Patient Involvement Team delivered **43** involvement opportunities across Cancer Research UK, creating meaningful ways for people affected by cancer to shape our work. **265** new members also joined our Involvement Network in 2025, helping us continue to build a more inclusive and representative community.

Their contributions made a significant impact on several campaigns this year. Insight from our Cancer Insight Panels helped to refine the messaging and inspire creative ideas for the Bowelbabe Fund's bold campaign to break down stigma around bowel cancer in April. Patient insight also helped to shape the landmark report published by Cancer Research UK and the University of Southampton, *Nothing Should Stand in the Way*, which gained national media coverage and is already influencing conversations between EU and UK policymakers about how to make it easier for cancer researchers in different countries to work together.

We also hosted workshops in April and August to ensure we're involving our members in the most effective and impactful way possible, and a special celebration event to thank panel members and strengthen relationships for the future.



Thank you!

To every volunteer who gave their time, energy, and passion in 2025: thank you for playing your part to make life-saving research possible. Together we are beating cancer.