

Basingstoke Breast Cancer Self Help Group Annual Report 2018

The average number of ladies attending our monthly meeting throughout the year has increased from 24 to 27 during 2018.

REFERRALS

We received a total of 20 referrals, which is a decrease of 3 from 2017. The majority of the referrals came via the DTC nurses/ our leaflet and group members.

I am encouraged to see the referrals from the DTC have increased by 3 since last year. I know they are including our brochure and date cards in the information packs give to newly diagnosed ladies. I am mindful that the group isn't for everyone especially at the time of diagnosis and just after surgery.

For the first time I have included referrals from Facebook which totalled 2 and is new to 2018. Thanks to Renee and Lyn for promoting the group via social media and I think we will see more referrals during the year from this rather than through our group website.

FUNDING

We have two bank accounts - current account and Cadbury account.

The current account is used for the running costs of the group which include:-
Insurance

Donations to the Ark plus Hospice - Sunflower and Light up a Life appeal

Postage for birthday and get well cards etc

Printing of date cards - stationery etc.

Refreshments for meeting new ladies etc

Other incidental items, such as ink cartridges for printing contact sheets and paper etc.

For ladies not familiar with the Cadbury fund, it was set up in 2009 as a result of a £1000 donation to us from Jenny Cadbury a member of the Cadbury family. This account is used solely for group members who have been unwell and perhaps had to spend time in hospital. A £50 cheque is given to them to use in whatever way they want. For example, for travel or parking expenses, toiletries or just for a meal with family or friends. We do not ask for receipts. We also send cards and give flowers as well. Last year we donated £700 to ladies from this account.

FUNDRAISING

April's concert at QMC raised £2520.37

May's quiz night raised £244.60

October's cake sale at the hospital raised £356.20

Sizzling Sausages event at Homebase raised £220.00

Donation bucket collected £171.00

I would like to express mine and the group's thanks to ladies who organised these events - Renee for the QMC concert and Sizzling Sausage event. Issy, Joyce and Pat for the quiz evening. Lyn for the cake sale and Liz and Maureen for their help.

AS YOU KNOW WE ARE NOT A REGISTERED CHARITY AND THE ONLY INCOME WE RECEIVE IS FROM FUNDRAISING EVENTS WE ORGANISE OURSELVES. THIS IS WHY IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT LADIES SUPPORT ANY FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY WE DO IN ORDER THAT MONEY CAN BE RAISED FOR THE GROUP

NEW FOR 2018

Facebook – Paula, our website manager set up a Facebook page for the group which Renee and Lyn now look after, publicising the group and any social or group event. As a result 2 ladies have joined the group after making contact with Renee. Having a Facebook page appears to have reduced the number of people making enquiries about the group via our website enquiry page - last year we only had 1 lady opposed to 5 the previous year.

Newsletter - Liz offered and is responsible for producing our monthly newsletter which is excellent and very informative. Each newsletter makes enjoyable reading with Liz adding a touch of humour in many of the articles. Liz is very happy to add any interesting article or information from ladies - please either phone her or if you're on email, forward it to her.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

STRICTLY ENTERTAINMENT was the title of our major fundraising event of the year and held in March at QMC - once again as our previous concerts it was organised by Renee and raised £2520.37. All the acts gave their time free of charge which resulted in more money being raised for the group.

QUIZ EVENING. Our fundraising committee of Joyce, Isabel and Pat organised a quiz evening in May which was held at Greywell Village Hall. The evening was most enjoyable and along with ladies of the group, their family and friends, they raised £244.60 for the group which is much appreciated.

CAKE SALE. This is an annual event which takes place every October (breast cancer awareness month) outside the Health Information Point (HiP) at the hospital. A total of £356.20 was raised in just two and a half hours. This was an INCREASE of £86.65 from the previous year and we could have made more if we had not run out of cakes!!

SIZZLING SAUSAGES. This is the first time we have been involved in such a fundraising event which was held at the entrance of the Homebase store in Basingstoke over the weekend of 20th/21st October. A steady stream of customers throughout both days resulted in a profit of £220.00 was raised after deductions.

Prior to this event it was decided to order a fundraising bucket from Amazon and it was on display at both the cake sale and Sizzling Sausage event. As a result £171.00 was donated from these two events over three days so well worth the £11.88p which was the cost of the bucket.

DONATIONS MADE BY THE GROUP

The group continues as in other years to make an annual donation to the Ark to show our appreciation for letting us hold our meeting here free of charge. In 2018 we

made a donation of £800.

ST MICHAELS HOSPICE: We made two donations totalling £440 in memory of our friends of the group. This was for the Sunflower and Light up a Life event.

DONATIONS RECEIVED BY THE GROUP

£1100 received from the WOTE Street Club. As in previous years this club continues to be very supportive of the group and once again made a generous donation to us. £300 received from the Lions who volunteered to serve drink at our concert at QMC.

Other donations received during the year have come from members of the public, and group along with their family and friends for which we are most grateful.

PRINTING

With the help from Wendi and her connections with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council we were able to reduce our printing cost considerably this year. This year the total group cost of printing was £386.73 and this was for leaflets, date cards plus flyers and tickets for Renee's two events she is organising. From now on and with the help of Wendi we will ask these people to do all our printing.

GUEST SPEAKERS

As in previous years we continue to have guest speakers and this year was no exception.

February: We very much enjoyed hearing about the work of the Hampshire and IOW Air Ambulance Service given by Ryland Lee The group was very happy to make a cheque donation of £50 which was increased by ladies of the group to £79.31 to this excellent organisation.

April: The group welcomed Hannah Varian a radiologist from the Candover Centre who told us about the work and future plans for this excellent radiotherapy department opposite the Ark. Having this radiotherapy centre in Basingstoke has been invaluable and saved many local people from the surrounding area having to travel to Southampton for treatment thereby reducing travelling time and cost for them.

May: This month is reserved for Kevin Harris the consultant surgeon here at the hospital who is always willing to answer ladies' questions and tells us what's new in breast cancer treatment. Most of the ladies in the group know him professionally but it is nice to see him outside of his clinic and see a different side to him. We are most grateful that he comes to our meeting especially after a long and at times difficult day in the hospital.

June: This month we welcomed two speakers - Barbara Parry who is a senior research dietitian in the breast unit at Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester and Penny Erickson who is a chef and wrote the chemo cookery book as a result of her husband undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.

July: We welcomed Tracy Street, Engagement Lead Macmillan Cancer support for South of England and surrounding areas plus Lucy Crane who is also a member of the Macmillan supportive care team. Both ladies very kindly told us about the history and background of the Macmillan organisation and answered numerous questions from the group.

October: Lizzie lead cancer nurse at the DTC (diagnosis and treatment centre) and Francesca lead cancer trials nurse from Winchester told us about the new and exciting research currently being undertaken in respect of breast cancer. Lizzie told us about the work and new initiatives being planned for the DTC. Francesca told us for new trials being undertaken regarding breast cancer and subsequent treatment.

November: This month has always been reserved for Miss Stebbing consultant surgeon here at the hospital who was a great favourite with the ladies of the group and has now retired. Although enquiries were made for her replacement Mrs Rosie Stanton to come to the November meeting it was felt it was too early for her as she only took up the post in September. It is hoped she will come in November 2019

Gary Burrow Community Health Development Manager kindly came as our speaker for November and told the group about wanting to start an exercise class for ladies who specifically had breast cancer surgery. He is offering to do a free taster session in January/February and if enough ladies are interested he will organise weekly classes.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING NEW AND REGULAR SPEAKERS DURING THIS COMING YEAR.

WEBSITE

This year Paula the manager of the Health Information Point at the hospital kindly offered to take over and look after the group website which I was delighted to accept. She initially updated our current website and gave it a new and fresh look which was great plus adding new photographs of various group outings etc.

In May 2019 our existing contract with Go Daddy runs out and Paula has suggested we change to a more modern website provider. This will result in a new looking website and one which is easier for people to follow. We will also be able to add our Facebook and newsletter information onto it as well.

SOCIAL OUTINGS FOR 2018

This year we had three outings which were well attended and enjoyed by everyone.

- 1). July was a busy month as we had two outings within a week of each other. 15 ladies enjoyed a nostalgic lunch trip on the Watercress Line which ran from Alresford to Ropley and back. The lunch was excellent and everyone decided it is something we will want to do again in 2019 - this time for a cream tea!!
- 2). Canal trip. This continues to be a very popular social event with 36 ladies from the group along with family and friends enjoyed a leisurely evening trip on the Basingstoke canal. This was made all the more enjoyable by the fish and chip

supper at the start of the trip and alcohol being served on board. For the past 5 years this trip has been a permanent fixture in our social calendar and I expect it will continue to be so for many more years to come.

3). The Vyne NT House. In October, 10 ladies enjoyed a private guided tour around this lovely house where our guide Peter told us the history of the house and stories of its previous owners and visitors. Afterwards ladies enjoyed a light lunch in the restaurant.

MORE OUTINGS BEING PLANNED FOR 2019

A FARM WALK in February has very kindly been organised by Joyce
ASHE PARK GARDENS - OVERTON in June for tour and cream tea afterward very kindly organised by Anne Knight
CANAL TRIP - JULY
WARERCRESS LINE TBA

In the last six months of 2018 we had the largest continual number of ladies attending each of our monthly meetings than in any time since the group started in 2003.

SUMMARY

2018 has seen new ladies join the group as in previous years - the most popular way has been through word of mouth. Facebook is proving to be a new way of reaching the wider section of ladies although our website is still a great opportunity for people to see and get information about the group and what we do.

This group is about and for ladies who have had breast cancer - moving forward with their lives with the help of family and friends. Every lady in this group has and continues to play a very important part in its success and at this point I would like to mention a few.

RENEE, OUR TREASURER

Renee has organised the majority of last year's fundraising events which has included the concert at QMC in April; menu choices for our canal trip in July; the skittles evening in August; the Sizzling Sausage event in September and our Christmas dinner in December.

Renee is also involved in other aspects of the group which include:-

- 1) Holding meetings with QMC to discuss format of the concert and payment.
- 2) Throughout the year attending local folk clubs and seeking out acts for our annual fundraising concert. Compiling the programme - ordering costumes- etc.
- 3) Collection of money for the canal trip and Christmas dinner
- 4) Arranging food for skittles evening
- 5) and Christmas Dinner

FINANCES

1). As our treasurer, Renee is also responsible for looking after both our current and Cadbury accounts and monitoring the groups expenditure. She also produces a printed spread sheet once a month which she gives me, along with the copy of our monthly income/expenditure which is available for everyone to view at each meeting.

2). Renee also collects and banks the money raised from the teas/coffees plus any money collected for outings etc.

3) All the cash and cheques given to the group needs to be paid into our bank accounts in the town centre. This in itself is very time consuming especially waiting for all the coins to be checked. It is a big responsibility handing and accounting for the group's money which like many aspects of running a group like ours goes on behind the scenes.

Renee and I meet on a regular basis outside the group when cheques need to be signed - our cheques require two signatures and we also exchange ideas.

Renee also meets new ladies and makes home visits to new and existing ladies as well.

As with everything that runs smoothly people do not realise how much is involved in the behind the scenes and without all her help and involvement this group would not be as well-run as it is. Renee helps me enormously in the day to day running of the group and I want to thank her publicly at this meeting for all her help.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH RENEE.

LYN, OUR SECRETARY

Thank you Lyn for all the excellent minutes you produce which are an accurate record of our monthly meetings. Lyn has always forwarded the minutes and photographs to the person looking after our website so they can be added to our website to keep it up to date. Lyn now forwards these to Paula who does an excellent job.

Lyn also contacts our guest speakers with information about date time and location of the Ark - sometimes by email or in the case of Mr Harris or the DTC nurses it's just a phone call to the secretary.

Lyn organised last year's very successful cake sale which as in previous years was held outside the Health Information Point at the hospital. This year both Liz and Maureen helped her which I know she really appreciated. I know Lyn is very appreciative of all the cakes donated by ladies of the group.

Lyn along with Wendi make the most delicious cakes which we all enjoy at our meetings. I just want to remind everyone that both Lyn and Wendi make and donate these cakes to our meetings and have NEVER ASKED FOR ANY PAYMENT TO COVER COST OF THE INGREDIENTS. They pay for all the ingredients themselves which I think speaks volumes for both these two ladies about their generosity and commitment to the group. I would publicly like to thank both ladies for this on behalf of myself and all the ladies in the group. THANK YOU BOTH VERY MUCH.

LIZ

In the summer Liz offered to produce our newsletter which was originally started by Kirsten but due to her work commitments she was unable to continue. As such a lot

goes on in the group Liz has decided to produce this newsletter monthly in order to keep everyone up to date with group events. The newsletter is printed and handed to each lady at the start of our monthly meeting and from comments received ladies have found most useful to take home and read it at in their own home.

Liz also sends it to ladies who have an email address - thereby keeping everyone informed as to the group activities especially for ladies unable to come to some of our meetings.

I'm sure you will agree with me Liz has done a tremendous job and produced a very interesting and informative newsletter. Visually it is very attractive and I'm always amazed how much information she can get onto one page.

This monthly newsletter will now be uploaded onto our new website so will reach a greater number of people viewing our website. Hopefully any new ladies considering joining the group will be able to see that there is life after breast cancer and want either to contact us or come to our meetings.

Our newsletter - like our website and Facebook page is our shop window of the group and is the way forward to letting newly diagnosis ladies of our existence.

ON BEHALF OF ALL THE LADIES IN THE GROUP THANK YOU LIZ.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Joyce, Isabel and Pat are our fundraising committee and organised our quiz evening in May last year. Joyce is organising a charity farm walk which will take place next month and proceeds will be donated to the group. Both Joyce and Isabel have walked the route and I hope as many if you along with family can come as I think it's going to be a fun afternoon. THANK YOU JOYCE, ISABEL, PAT

DOREEN: Thank you for organising quizzes during the year which are very popular with the ladies and also for buying small token gifts for the winners.

EXTERNAL EVENTS

In September I was asked by Tracy Street Engagement Lead Macmillan support team to give a talk about the group at the Apollo Hotel. It was an interesting day meeting other organisations and people offering help mainly to people with cancer. Lyn, Renee and Doreen came to offer support and I think we all found it an interesting day.

I am always very happy to attend meetings to give a talk about the group as this is an excellent way to publicise the group.

In October Liz and I attended the Wessex Social Capital Workshop which was held in Southampton to promote Cancer Awareness across Hampshire - IOW -Dorset - Portsmouth and Bournemouth. It is a new inactive being set up hoping to spread awareness especially amongst minority groups to tell them the importance of seeking medical help especially for all types of cancer.

Last but by no means least I want to say a personal THANK YOU to all you ladies who continue to give me and the group your continued support by attending each month and for making new ladies feel so welcome.

Being diagnosed with breast cancer is a life change experience and at time it can be the start of a long and sometimes lonely journey - with this group and in particular you ladies this need not be the case.

I hope you will agree with me that a special bond of friendship has developed between us all out of being diagnosed with breast cancer. What we have shown as a group of ladies is a unique bond that has been forged out of being diagnosed with a life threatening illness and that is "FRIENDSHIP."

On a personal note I want to end my AGM report with my thanks to you all for your friendship and continued support which makes this group so special to me.

Looking forward to us all having fun and supporting each other throughout 2019

THANK YOU

Angela Bennett
Founder