



# Stop MS Appeal Impact Report

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**We did it!** Thank you so much for your incredible support.

Over **£101.9 million** raised for our Stop MS Appeal to fund groundbreaking MS research.

Every breakthrough, every discovery, and every step forward made by our incredible MS researchers has been made possible because of you. Over the past 10 years, your generosity has helped fund vital research, support pioneering scientists, and provide hope to people living with MS.

This report documents the impact of the money you have donated to the Appeal, and the life changing ways your support continues to make a difference every single day. Together, we're moving closer to a world free from MS.

“It’s been very emotional, to be able to do what we’ve done in the last ten years, thanks to the Stop MS Appeal. The MS Society and the wider MS community must be utterly congratulated for putting all this together when it did not exist before. In 10 years, I want to have in my hand medicine that really does reduce neuroprogression. I don’t think that’s unrealistic.”

Professor Jeremy Chataway



**“Our Stop MS Appeal wasn’t an end destination, but a foundation which we’ll continue to build on.”**



## Sir Vernon Ellis

### Chair of the Stop MS Appeal Board 2015 - 2020

I was asked to join the Stop MS Appeal board in 2014 with its huge target of £100 million for MS research. I wanted to do everything I could to make it happen. Because I too want to stop MS and I knew what it would take to get us there.

Reaching this milestone represents far more than a financial achievement. It’s a testament to the shared belief that, together, we can drive meaningful change. We’ve come a long way in the treatment of relapsing remitting MS. Today, there are numerous effective therapies available. This is an extraordinary achievement and a testament to the progress made through dedicated research and innovation.

Now, our focus is expanding. Already, researchers are uncovering valuable insights into how MS progresses. These discoveries are paving the way toward targeted, effective treatments for every stage and type of MS.

This report celebrates what we’ve accomplished together and sets the stage for what comes next. Our Stop MS Appeal wasn’t an end destination, but a foundation which we’ll continue to build on. Our work now is to sustain and deepen the impact of these investments, ensuring they benefit many generations to come.

**“Our progress is only possible because of collaboration... each partnership brings us closer to breakthroughs that will change lives.”**



## Mark Wood, CBE

### Chair of the Stop MS Appeal Board 2020 - 2025

When I joined the Stop MS Appeal Board in 2020, I was immediately struck by the passion, commitment, and determination that ran through every part of the MS community. From researchers and clinicians to supporters and people living with MS, it's been an inspiration to witness how deeply everyone is united by a single purpose: to stop MS. It's been a privilege to be part of this remarkable journey.

2025 marked an incredible year for progress in that journey. The Octopus trial, the first ever for progressive MS, uses a groundbreaking multi-arm and multi-stage design. This year, it expanded to new sites across the UK, giving more people living with MS the chance to take part and help shape the future of treatment. Octopus represents a new era for MS research, one that will help us find effective solutions faster than ever before. I couldn't be prouder of what this achievement means for the future. This is real progress and it's happening now.

Our progress is only possible because of collaboration. From our Centres of Excellence in Edinburgh and Cambridge. To the Platypus extension of Octopus in Australia, and our role as an active member of the International Progressive MS Alliance. We're part of a truly global effort. Each partnership brings us closer to breakthroughs that will change lives.

However you've supported us, whether through donations, volunteering, advocacy, or simply spreading the word, thank you. Every contribution matters, and together, we're making a tangible difference.

As we reflect on what's been achieved through our Stop MS Appeal, we also look ahead with renewed energy and determination. The momentum we've built is powerful, and with your continued support, we will reach our goal: a world free from MS.

**“We’ve built a level of coordination and focus around progressive MS that simply didn’t exist before.”**



## **Dr Emma Gray**

### **Director of Research, MS Society**

When we launched the Appeal 10 years ago, we set out with a bold ambition: to stop MS. I’ve had the privilege of being part of that journey from the very beginning. My heartfelt thanks, to you, for helping make it possible.

You believed in our vision. You gave us the support and determination to think bigger and push further. And, together, we’ve come a very long way.

We said we’d build the foundations for real progress, and we’ve done just that. Today, we have late-stage clinical trials underway for all types of MS. That would’ve been hard to imagine a decade ago. We’ve built a level of coordination and focus around progressive MS that simply didn’t exist before, and we’ve created the infrastructure to keep testing treatments until we find the ones that will truly transform lives.

We now fund major research programmes, something we could only have dreamed of back then. Our research community has grown in strength and ambition too. We’ve built something truly collaborative, where researchers at every career stage see us as a home for big ideas.

Perhaps what I’m proudest of is how the MS community has come forward. Thousands of people have signed up to take part in trials. We now have a trial-ready community, united by hope and a shared belief in progress.

The Appeal has been a huge team effort, and having the space, focus and support to aim high has transformed what we can achieve. We’re in a much stronger place than we were 10 years ago, and it’s thanks to you. With your support, our research is changing lives and creating hope for the future, and for that we are truly thankful.



Professor Jeremy Chataway, 2015

“Over the past twenty years, MS research has led to major advances in treatment development. No other research into neurodegenerative conditions has made such great strides. We’re now in a unique position to build on that success to continue to transform the lives of people with MS. We can build on the significant achievements we’ve made, but to do so requires a major financial investment in research.”

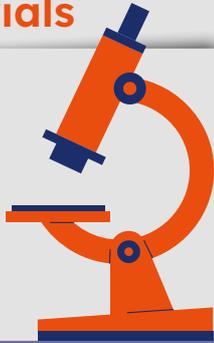


# 10 years of impact

## Clinical trials

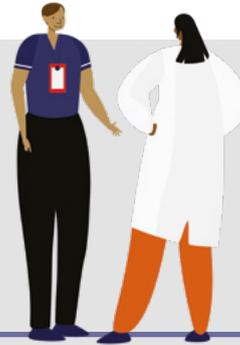
**26**

clinical trials supported



**3,631**

people recruited onto clinical trials



More than

**4,000**

people signed up to participate in the Octopus clinical trial

**1,413**

months of research funded as part of clinical trials



**240,210**

hours of research funded as part of clinical trials



## Research

**171**  
research projects funded



## Early Career Researchers

**40 PhD students funded**

and funding leveraged for a further 8

**34**  
research projects

awarded to support Early Career Researchers totalling over **£4.7M**



Scan the QR code to find out more about the impact of the Stop MS Appeal



## Leverage

**£12.9 million**

leveraged for MS research from partner organisations



## Patient and Public Involvement

**Over 350 people**

affected by MS joined our Research Network



## Infrastructure

MS Society Tissue Bank

**4,426 people** with MS now registered to be Tissue Bank donors

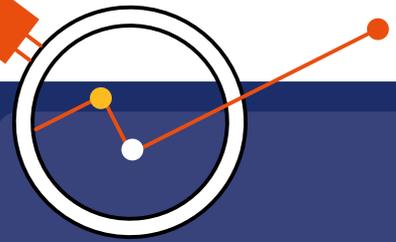
**855 brains donated**

to research by people with MS

Over **500 research groups** requesting tissue

**37,000** brain images in a digital brain bank

Tissue requests from more than **23 countries**



UK MS Register

**50,000 people** have provided data to the UK MS Register (one-third of UK MS population)

**40 million** rows of data from portal participants' responses

**547 participants** have answered every single questionnaire over 14 years



## Publications

**457**

publications supported by research we've funded

**71**

publications using UK MS Register data



## International Progressive MS Alliance

**€36.7 million** committed to fund research to date

**80 projects funded**

Over **350 researchers** supported by the Alliance

Supported researchers in **20 countries**



Organised and hosted

**7 international scientific conferences**

Over **100 publications** have acknowledged Alliance funding



**211**  
institutions  
received  
funding



## Executive summary



When we launched our Stop MS Appeal in 2015, we'd reached a real tipping point in MS research. Years of scientific progress had brought major advances in our understanding of the condition. It was time to turn those discoveries into new treatments that could slow, or even stop, disability progression.

We committed to raising £100 million over 10 years to make that vision a reality. That funding would enable leading MS researchers to deliver vital projects, invest in new infrastructure, and develop a first-of-its-kind MS clinical trials platform. By 2025, our goal was to have treatments for all types of MS in late-stage trials, and we've done it. This is a truly transformative step for people living with MS.

The Appeal has allowed us to make bigger, bolder investments. Each discovery is built on the ones that came before it, paving the way for the next one. Thanks to the Appeal, we've invested in and strengthened every stage of this research pipeline, from ground-breaking experimental work to world-leading clinical trials.

We've brought scientists across the world together. We've played a leading role in facilitating productive, impactful partnerships between the key players in MS research on both a national and global scale. And we've created an environment where the brightest minds can flourish and the MS research leaders of tomorrow can thrive.

Over the past decade, we've seen two treatments licensed for active forms of progressive MS. We've also seen for the first time, two positive phase 3 trials for non-active progressive MS. Our research programme has been a vital cog in this treatment development ecosystem.

Our MS Society Tissue Bank provided underpinning science to support development of one of these treatments. Key outcome measures in trials like these are based on MRI metrics largely developed by our funded researchers. And many neurologists and research professionals leading trial sites at hospitals across the UK have been supported by us throughout their careers.

The impact of the Stop MS Appeal on MS research over the last 10 years has been profound. Our researchers have driven radical change in the clinical trials landscape. They've dramatically increased our knowledge of the mechanisms of MS progression, and transformed the myelin repair field. We've also funded research that's helped build the evidence base for a holistic approach to stopping MS and taken big steps towards precision medicine in MS. We've found better ways to help people live well with MS, and we're laying the foundations for preventing MS for future generations.

We're incredibly proud of what we've achieved together and we're grateful for the vital role you've played in making this impact possible.

“The Stop MS Appeal showed huge vision. It was very ambitious but it’s been incredibly successful, both in terms of the money raised, but more importantly, what has been achieved through this funding: the research. We’ve addressed all our goals, moving the dial forward in every area. That’s because of the incredibly generous funding and the way in which that funding was spent. The last 10 years really have been quite extraordinary in what has been achieved. There’s more to be done but there’s huge potential based on what we’ve done already, and we’re in a really good place. One key development is the International Progressive MS Alliance which I was privileged to lead and which brought together world-leaders in MS to look at how we understand progression, accelerate clinical trials and enhance well-being. If you have a major problem - and progressive MS is certainly a challenging problem - then you need international collaboration to address it. That’s what we’ve done. This has been an incredibly productive international collaboration, and the UK MS Society was fundamental to its success.”

Professor Alan Thompson,  
Chair of the Stop MS Scientific  
and Clinical Ambassadors



### Jacqueline Krarup Longstanding supporter

“It doesn’t seem long ago since we filmed the advert to launch the public phase of the Stop MS Appeal. Singing our hearts out to Fleetwood Mac, “Don’t stop thinking about tomorrow...” I feel that tomorrow is now tantalisingly within reach.

“I wasn’t expecting the Appeal to produce a cure. But today we’re so much closer to understanding the causes of progressive MS and identifying and raising awareness of early symptoms. As well as this, two treatments for progressive MS are already being tested on the multi-arm multi-stage trial platform Octopus - with more to follow.

“And the Appeal has done so much more than that. It’s forged interdisciplinary (with other auto-immune conditions) and international MS research relationships. We’ve learnt lessons from the inevitable bumps along the way, including the results of the MS-STAT2 trial. Together these are leading the MS research community closer to finding a cure and a means of stopping the illness progressing. And in the future, even preventing it starting in the first place.”

# The impact on MS research through the Stop MS Appeal

## Leading the field on myelin repair

The myelin repair field is unrecognisable from 10 years ago, thanks to researchers at our Cambridge and Edinburgh Centres of Excellence. We now have a detailed understanding of how the stem cells that make myelin work and how we can target them to improve repair. And crucially, this knowledge has been swiftly translated to trials of repurposed drugs.

Our CCMR1 trial of the cancer drug bexarotene confirmed what's long been hoped for: that it's possible to boost myelin repair in people with MS. While there were some severe side-effects, the researchers are hopeful about exploring a different formulation of bexarotene going forward.

The success of CCMR1's trial design and infrastructure also set the stage for another myelin repair trial: CCMR2. The trial tested a combination of two drugs. The potential of one of these – the diabetes drug metformin – was identified because of ground-breaking lab discoveries by MS Society-funded researchers. In a series of landmark publications, they found myelin repair declines with aging and becomes less responsive to drugs. But these changes can be reversed in different ways, such as transplanting older cells into a younger environment or through fasting, or drugs that can mimic the fasting effect, like metformin.

State-of-the-art techniques made it possible for the CCMR2 team to capture even a small effect of these drugs. And in 2025, top-line results showed the drug combination may be able to boost myelin repair in people with relapsing MS.

“We are on the brink of a new class of treatments to stop MS progression. Within the next decade we could see the first licensed treatment that repairs myelin and improves the lives of people living with MS. I'm incredibly thankful to the MS Society's supporters, who have supported my research from my PhD all the way through to this important milestone.”

Dr Nick Cunniffe 2025,  
CCMR2 trial lead



“Joining the trial was a no brainer. The team have all been so positive and amazing – I've made friends for life! I love helping and I know being on this trial will make a difference to someone else in the future – even small ripples have long-lasting effects! It would mean everything to find a way to stop MS progressing and would be the answer to our prayers. This research gives me even more reason to believe that in my lifetime everyone with MS will have treatments that work for them.”

Hannah Threfall,  
CCMR2 participant



## Dramatically increasing our knowledge of progression

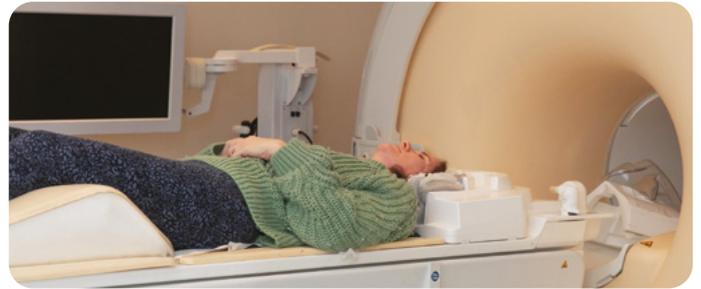
We've brought about a step-change in understanding the key players involved in MS progression. And our researchers have identified drugs targeting new mechanisms that are now poised to enter trials like Octopus.

Our Edinburgh Centre researchers found nerves have the natural ability to boost their energy supplies after being damaged, by moving mitochondria (the energy powerhouse of cells) to the damaged area. And crucially, the diabetes drug pioglitazone could provide an extra energy boost to protect nerves in mice. Pioglitazone is now in early trials with people with MS, supported by the International Progressive MS Alliance, and could be a future candidate for Octopus.

Recognising the important role of the brain's own immune cells has been a striking development in recent years. For instance, Professor Veronique Miron discovered that the death of a certain type of inflammatory microglia is needed for efficient myelin repair. We supported Veronique as a junior researcher and she's gone on to run her own lab. This finding has been cited as an example of a paradigm-changing discovery by women scientists in the MS field.

“Scientific research can be a slow and careful process, but every step we take builds the foundation for real change. I'm proud that the knowledge we're generating is helping to move the field forward, and bringing us closer to treatments that could truly make a difference in the lives of people living with MS.”

Professor Veronique Miron



## Driving radical change in the clinical trials landscape

To revolutionise the MS treatment landscape, we first needed to revolutionise the trials landscape. Just a few years ago, trials for people with progressive MS were relatively rare. We've taken the most promising lab discoveries and transformed them into world-leading late-stage trials of potential neuroprotective drugs.

MS-SMART was the first MS trial to test multiple potential treatments at once. It was successfully completed in 2018 and followed by the largest ever academic-led trial in progressive MS: MS-STAT2.

These game-changing trials didn't give us the results we hoped for. But they revealed valuable insights about progressive MS, and created the infrastructure for the world's first multi-arm, multi-stage platform trial for MS. Octopus can receive the most promising drugs from the lab and move them seamlessly into late-stage testing, speeding up future breakthroughs by testing potential treatments up to three times faster.

Now, Octopus has gone international. The Platypus extension is open to recruitment across Australia, made possible through partnership with the leading MS charities in Australia.

We know people have better health outcomes simply from taking part in trials. Our trials have given hundreds of people with progressive MS their first opportunity to take part in a clinical trial. They can finally experience the many physical and emotional benefits of trial participation after years of hearing there's nothing for them.

## Mark Offord

### Brand Strategic Lead at MS Society

Mark was diagnosed with relapsing remitting MS in 2005 and moved into secondary progressive MS a decade later. He joined the MS-STAT2 trial in 2019. The trial didn't provide the results everyone was hoping for. But he looks back on his trial experience as wholly positive.

“I recall the day like it was yesterday, when my consultant confirmed that my MS had shifted to secondary progressive. He asked if I had ever considered signing up for a trial.

“I'd not considered joining a trial up until this point. I think in part that's because committing to a trial felt a bit like admitting to myself and more openly to others that my MS was now progressive, and that did not chime well with me. But my consultant was confident that the structure and exposure to personalised information that would come from being on a long-term trial would benefit me. I trusted his experience, and he was right.

“So, roll on spring 2019, I signed up and got the call to visit UCL in Queen Square, London, for my first trial appointment. It was a bit of a travel for me from sunny Suffolk, but I actually rather enjoyed the idea of meeting a new team of experts. And what an incredible team they are. They were welcoming, upbeat, positive, and set me at ease.



“I quickly realised that being on a trial would give me the best possible chance to see what was going on inside my body on a far more regular basis. This information would become my roadmap for how to get the best out of my health. With repeated visits to UCL over the course of the trial, I got to see why my symptoms play out in the way that they do.

“All of this insight was worth its weight in gold to me as I could reframe my MS by being equipped with as much information as possible. And there's nothing like seeing rather than just hearing it.

“When the news came that the medication trialled in MS-STAT2 had not been successful in slowing progression, of course I was disappointed for the greater good. But I would not change my experience of being on the trial for one minute. It was the best decision I ever made for understanding my MS, and it fills me with hope for the future.”

## Getting closer to precision medicine

Every person with MS has a different experience of the condition. This immense diversity is part of what makes MS so challenging. It means a treatment that works for one person may not work for another. We've taken big steps towards combatting these complexities.

For example, researchers at our Edinburgh Centre used information from post-mortem brain tissue to separate people with MS into four groups, based on how their brain cells behave. We've also made significant progress towards being able to predict how people's MS will progress, and treatment response in the clinic, using advanced MRI techniques to identify new markers of progression. These steps are helping us move to precision medicine – something that's already revolutionised the cancer field.

“This is such an important discovery as it tells us that we can put people with MS into subgroups according to what's going on in the brain at a molecular level. And these subgroups might respond to therapies differently.

“So far, we have observed these subgroups using post-mortem brain tissue. To help treat MS, we need to work out how to group people with MS using blood tests. We could then design clinical trials specifically for these subgroups, which could help us get the right drugs to the right people.”

Professor Anna Williams,  
Edinburgh Centre Lead



## Building the evidence base for a holistic approach to stopping MS

It's become increasingly recognised that certain lifestyle factors play a role in increasing or reducing the risk of MS progression, by protecting neurological reserve – or 'brain health'. Such discoveries can offer people with MS more immediate strategies to reduce their individual risk. Our researchers are making significant contributions to this evidence base.

They've connected cardiovascular comorbidity (poor heart or blood vessel health) with worse MS outcomes, which has important implications for how cardiovascular risk is managed in people with MS.

They led the first study to demonstrate the significant positive impact of quitting smoking. Their findings showed that, after quitting, the rate of disability progression slows to the same rate of people who've never smoked.

They've discovered that inflammation outside the brain, caused by infections like colds or UTIs, is linked to nerve damage in the spinal cord. This highlights the potential importance of measures such as prompt treatment of bladder infections and having all recommended vaccinations.

## Finding better ways to help people live well with MS

We've addressed the growing need for strategies to reduce the impact of MS symptoms and improve quality of life. Funding high quality interventions for fatigue, and psychological and cognitive difficulties.

Fatigue is the single biggest factor affecting people's quality of life in MS. It's also the most cited reason for the need to retire early. We've funded the FACETS fatigue management programme since its infancy. It's now been delivered to around 14,000 people with MS, as well as being adapted for other countries and languages.

We've built on that success to support development of a new, personalised fatigue management app – RefuelMS. The programme aims to bring together the latest evidence on effective fatigue treatments and overcome existing barriers to access in routine care.

“We know MS fatigue is extremely disabling, yet it remains largely untreated in the UK. So far over 100 trials have tested potential fatigue interventions, yet very few patients receive one of these evidenced-based approaches in routine care in the UK.

“We have gathered experts in MS fatigue treatment from around the country. We also included people with lived experience and specialists in culturally adapting interventions. Our researchers and a leading digital health company worked together to create RefuelMS.

“We are currently running a large trial of the cost and clinical effectiveness of the app-based treatment. We will also be working with NHS services to implement the app. Our hope is that RefuelMS will change how we treat MS fatigue and will ultimately address the concerning unmet need that currently exists.”

Professor Rona Moss-Morris,  
Chief Investigator of RefuelMS  
at King's College London



We've also launched our first ever Doctoral Training Centres for symptom management. These Centres focus on finding effective ways to manage MS symptoms, from pain to sexual difficulties, testing approaches such as dance, virtual reality and digital tools. At the same time, the Centres are providing high-quality research training for talented PhD students, giving them a unique opportunity to explore new research ideas and enhance their research skills.

## Laying the foundations for preventing MS

Our UK MS Prevention Taskforce is up and running. The taskforce is exploring strategies to identify who's at risk of MS and pathways to prevention, building on recent breakthrough papers on the causal role of Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) in MS.

We've already supported truly pioneering research into the genetics of MS, challenging the historic focus on people of European ancestry. The ADAMS study has built a comprehensive bank of genetic information from people with MS from diverse backgrounds, focusing on those from African and South Asian ancestry. The data is already providing insights into how genetic risk factors for MS may vary between groups. Which is crucial to understanding how MS develops in different individuals.



# In the news

We delivered thousands of pieces of high-quality media coverage over the course of the Appeal. It spanned every region and nation of the UK. From national double-page spreads and primetime broadcast features to in-depth research stories and personal case studies.

This sustained visibility transformed how MS is discussed and understood in the media, but also established us as an authoritative voice on MS research. Our communications work helped build public belief in the possibility of stopping MS. It also played a vital role in supporting our ambitious £100 million fundraising target.

## Major advertising campaign

- We ran an advertising campaign, including our first TV advert in decades. The campaign ran for 12 weeks across newspapers, billboards online and on screens on Channel 4, Dave, Drama and 4Seven. It featured six people with MS and their families and showcased the daily challenges of living with MS. In the film the stars were shown singing Fleetwood Mac's much-loved song, 'Don't Stop' – our Stop MS Appeal anthem. The song's lyrics reflect our community's hope for the future of treatment, and the positive changes possible through the Appeal.



## Launch success

Thanks to concerted PR efforts, talk of our Stop MS Appeal spread quickly. National, regional and local media outlets across the entire UK covered the news:

- Journalist Caroline Wyatt talked about the MS research that's offering her hope in a broadcast exclusive on BBC News at Six.
- The Financial Times highlighted our new research findings showing a type 2 diabetes drug can repair nerve damage caused by MS. After reading this, Mark Wood contacted Michelle Mitchell, our former CEO, and later became the Stop MS Appeal Board Chair.
- The Express ran the headline 'Give us the cash and we can halt MS, say experts'. Our Chief Executive, Nick Moberly, told readers the time to act was now.
- Mail Online referenced a series of scientific discoveries that led us to say this was "the most significant and exciting time we have ever seen" in treating MS.
- Professor Alan Thompson is a Consultant Neurologist and Chair at the International Progressive MS Alliance. In an exclusive blog for Metro, he wrote "There have been major advances in treatment and, following a series of more recent discoveries, we believe we can stop MS."



## Keeping momentum going

- We announced new figures on how MS affects young people. We spoke to 30 under 30s to feature in a new story and photo series in collaboration with award winning photographer Spencer Murphy. The Daily Express, The Sun and tens of prime-time regional news programmes across the country including BBC One - Look East and ITV Meridian covered the story.
- We launched #TeamStopMS, and our incredible campaign film starring a host of celebrities was covered by over a hundred outlets, including BBC Morning Live and the Daily Mirror. It also achieved an exceptional amount of regional press coverage across the UK, including ITV Granada and regional Heart and BBC radio stations (see more below).
- Fundraising Magazine spoke to our then Director of Fundraising, Emma Whitcombe. The exclusive piece focused on the fundraising strategy behind our campaign. Emma said “The Stop MS Appeal could truly change what it means to live with this condition.” This was also covered in Civil Society.

## Celebrating research wins

- We worked on an exclusive report about MS research and the MS-STAT2 trial on BBC News at Six. BBC Online and BBC Radio 4: PM also covered the story.
- We secured widespread coverage for new research we helped to fund at the University of Edinburgh. It found that an existing diabetes drug could help prevent disability progression. Over 70 outlets covered the story, including The Times, Daily Express, iNews, BBC Science Focus and Scottish Metro.
- BBC journalist Caroline Wyatt also ran an exclusive for BBC News when Octopus launched.
- Octopus has been covered by hundreds of outlets across the UK since it launched, including, BBC Wales, ITV News Belfast Live, and BBC Online.
- We shared results of the CCMR2 trial in an exclusive with the Guardian. BBC Online, ITV News Anglia, The Independent, The Times and Daily Mail (online and print). Belfast Telegraph also ran the story with radio outlets including Heart Radio, Greatest Hits Radio, and over 200 regional titles joined in.

## Celebrity support

- Our Team Stop MS ‘auditions’ film starred Kit Harington, Rose Leslie and Andy Serkis among others. It was the most watched video we’ve ever posted, reaching an incredible 1.5 million accounts on Instagram. Team Stop MS content appeared over 350,000 times in people’s timelines on Twitter and the film was one of our most re-tweeted tweets of 2021.
- The film also won the People’s Choice Award at the annual Smiley Charity Film Awards 2022. Celebrities including Tom Kerridge, Nicola Walker and Sir Ranulph Fiennes shared photos of themselves wearing ‘Team Stop MS’ t-shirts on social media to encourage people to fundraise.
- Our annual Carols by Candlelight concerts featured some of the most impressive line-ups of celebrity readers in the sector. This helped us feature in ‘best carol concert’ lists in the press, including in luxury magazine, Tatler. Readers included Simon Callow CBE, Kadeena Cox OBE, Kit Harington, Suranne Jones, Rose Leslie, Deborah Meaden, Scott Mills, Sue Perkins and Nicola Walker. Clare Balding and Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen hosted after-concert dinners and auctions, as well as giving readings.
- Our Ambassador Ivo Graham hosted two ‘Some Nerve!’ comedy nights at Indigo at the O2 and The Shaw Theatre. The shows featured some of the biggest names in stand-up comedy, including Maisie Adam, Ed Gamble, Rosie Jones, Tim Vine, Phil Wang and Joe Wilkinson.
- Our Ambassadors Felix and Hugo White dedicated their first reunion show with their band The Maccabees to raise funds for our Stop MS Appeal. The sell-out show took place at The Dome in London, raising more than £28,000 and achieving coverage in outlets including The Standard, NME, and Radio X.

## The Stop MS Giving Club

Founded in 2016 as the Stop MS Pioneers, this remarkable group of individuals, trusts and companies was chaired by Sir David Bell. It set out to help fund the ground-breaking research needed to stop MS.

Now known as the Stop MS Giving Club, their generosity has been an integral part of the Stop MS Appeal. They’ve funded over £2.1 million of MS research alone. Thanks to their ongoing support, we’ve been able to:

- Fund new PhD studentships – nurturing the next generation of researchers leading vital MS breakthroughs
- Sustain the MS Society Tissue Bank at Imperial College London – providing scientists with essential tools to better understand how MS causes damage
- Grow the UK MS Register – deepening our understanding of what life with MS is really like

Every one of these achievements has been made possible through the dedication and generosity of our Stop MS Giving Club members, helping bring us closer to a future free from the effects of MS.

“Thanks to tremendous developments in medical research, today we have a unique opportunity to transform the treatment and management of MS. Incredible breakthroughs are on the horizon, but we need a dramatic increase in investment to make sure they happen.”

Sir David Bell, Stop MS Giving Club Chair





## Event highlights

Over the past 10 years, the events held in support of our Stop MS Appeal have brought our community together in an extraordinary display of generosity and compassion. Each occasion has been a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when people unite behind a shared purpose. Thanks to the heartfelt support of our donors, sponsors, and volunteers, we have not only raised vital funds but also inspired hope and strengthened the spirit of our cause. Our events have done more than generate financial support; they've built lasting connections. They've celebrated shared values and highlighted the difference we can make together.

The following are just a few highlights from our special events that have helped drive our Stop MS Appeal forward.



## Carols by Candlelight at St Paul's Cathedral

The Carol Concert at St Paul's Cathedral in 2015 marked the launch of the Stop MS Appeal. We were part of an unforgettable evening of celebration, reflection, and generosity. Guests were welcomed to a series of special gatherings, including a Sarasin & Partners drinks reception. They then enjoyed a reception in the St Paul's Crypt and a moving carol concert in the cathedral itself.

In 2021, we returned to St Paul's to celebrate reaching the halfway point of the Stop MS Appeal. These two events alone raised over £1.6 million for our campaign.

None of this would've been possible without our extraordinary committee, led by Kate Hely-Hutchinson. Kate's dedication and leadership contributed greatly to the success of these events.



## Jacqueline du Pré tribute concert

Jacqueline du Pré was a world-renowned cellist who lived with MS. We hosted two exceptional tribute concerts at the Royal Festival Hall to mark 30 years since her passing. Both were conducted by her husband, Maestro Daniel Barenboim, and performed by the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in their debut London appearance. The concerts honoured Jacqueline's truly remarkable legacy through music and unity.

The commemorative weekend also featured a Skylon drinks reception, Saturday evening tribute concert, Sunday matinee performance, and a pledge dinner hosted by Maestro Barenboim and Sir Vernon Ellis. Together, these events celebrated Jacqueline's timeless influence and raised over £1 million, as well as awareness in support of our Stop MS Appeal.



## SMS Battles

We hosted our very first SMS (Stop MS) Battles in 2019. The event was a vibrant and entertaining celebrity quiz created by the wonderful Fran Forman Hardy and her friends. It was designed to engage a new audience and raise awareness of our mission. Hosted by Clare Balding OBE, the evening brought together supporters, donors, and well-known personalities for a night of friendly competition and fun.

We've since hosted SMS Battles in 2022 and 2024, with the next event planned for summer 2026. Quiz participants have included Ade Adepitan MBE, Emilia Clarke, Ioan Gruffudd and Bianca Wallace, Kit Harington, Rose Leslie, David Morrissey, Lina Nielsen, Dr Ranj Singh and Matt Tebbutt. To date, these events have raised an incredible £860,600 – proof of the energy, generosity, and enthusiasm of everyone involved. And a special thank you to Fran for her amazing work in making these events such a success.



## Stop MS Corporate Challenges

Our dedicated corporate partners have taken on a range of exciting challenges since 2023. Teams have tested their endurance and teamwork through activities such as spin-cycle events and climbs of Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike. They've raised over £50,000 in support of our Stop MS Appeal.

These challenges have generated vital funds and strengthened corporate engagement. They've inspired lasting connections between colleagues united by a shared commitment to stopping MS.

“The climb was a huge positive for all who took part, combining an outdoor challenge with team building and fundraising for an amazing charity. We received a lot of organisational and motivational support from the team at the MS Society, which really helped to make the trip a huge success.”

Hunter Gatherer AHP  
Benton Robertson



## MS Walk

The MS Walk is all about coming together. No pressure, no race – just thousands of people united by a shared goal. It's a chance to celebrate community, have fun, and make a difference for everyone affected by MS.

2025 was our biggest year yet. From Manchester, Belfast, and Birmingham in the spring, to Glasgow, Cardiff and finally London in September, participants walked thousands of kilometres in support of our Stop MS Appeal. We were especially thrilled to see the return of the Belfast walk, and what a return it was! The walk saw an incredible turnout and fantastic fundraising results.

A record-breaking 2,014 people took part in MS Walks across the UK this year, raising over £320,000 together to help stop MS. Every step, every donation, and every show of support has brought us closer to a world free from MS.

Together, we're walking towards a future without MS – one step at a time.

“I took part in MS Walk Birmingham and raised over £900 to #StopMS. This time last year I was unable to walk. Now I have completed the 10k walk and raised money for a cause that means a lot to me.”

Response from our anonymous survey

“Amazing experience, challenging but rewarding. It was so great to see many people there for a cause and the energy and the motivation. It feels so good to know we've done something that matters and that will make a difference for those with MS. We have also been blessed by lovely weather!”

Response from our anonymous survey

# The future



Over the next few years, we'll see Octopus report its first interim analysis result. It will add new treatment arms and become a fully embedded, international research platform. It will be able to answer questions about both pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments.

The growing consensus within the research and clinical communities is that the mechanisms underpinning MS progression can start at the earliest stages of the condition. So we will support a greater focus on understanding and targeting so-called smouldering MS.

In just a few decades, we went from a limited understanding of relapsing MS to an explosion of increasingly life-changing treatments to reduce relapses. Progressive MS has now moved centre-stage, and, thanks to the Stop MS Appeal, we've already taken big steps forward along that same path. We believe we're in touching distance of treatments that can slow or stop progression for everyone with MS. We need to make the most of this progress over the coming years.

For more than a decade, the Stop MS Appeal funded groundbreaking research and brought us closer than ever to stopping MS. But the journey cannot stop now. Until we can stop MS for everyone, we need your continued support to fund the next generation of breakthroughs and help create a world free from MS.

**Moving forward, we must make the most of the Stop MS Appeal legacy. We must continue to drive forward our world-leading clinical trials and translational research programmes. And we must tackle the desperate unmet need for treatments that can protect nerves and promote myelin repair.**

**Our bold and ambitious new 2025-29 research strategy will build on our progress so far. Taking us even closer to achieving our vision of a world free from MS.**

**Together, we will stop MS.**



## Thank you to all our supporters

“When I joined the MS Society in Spring 2015, just a handful of months into the Appeal, I couldn’t have imagined what would have taken place over the next 10 years.

“Thank you to everyone who has supported our work and helped us to drive meaningful change every day. Through your contributions, you have, and continue to, help us fund vital MS research, support our community, and move closer to our mission of stopping MS. We’re proud and deeply grateful to be able to recognise so, so many generous people here. Thank you!”

Claire O’Connor,  
Head of Philanthropy and Special Events



### Our Stop MS Appeal Board Members

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Our MS researchers  
And finally, to every single supporter of the Stop MS Appeal since 2015

## Find out more

**Hear from Professor Thompson speaking about disability worsening in progressive MS.** [www.mssociety.org.uk/research/latest-research/research-blog/progress-progressive-ms](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/latest-research/research-blog/progress-progressive-ms)



**Read more about our CCMR2 trial here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/research/news/trial-results-suggest-drug-combo-could-boost-myelin-repair-relapsing-ms](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/news/trial-results-suggest-drug-combo-could-boost-myelin-repair-relapsing-ms)



**Find out more about our Edinburgh Centre here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/research/explore-our-research/search-our-research-projects/ms-society-edinburgh-centre-for-ms-research](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/explore-our-research/search-our-research-projects/ms-society-edinburgh-centre-for-ms-research)



**Read more about the MS-STAT2 trial here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/research/news/ms-stat2-trial-shows-simvastatin-not-effective-treatment-secondary-progressive-ms](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/news/ms-stat2-trial-shows-simvastatin-not-effective-treatment-secondary-progressive-ms)



**Read more about our UK MS Prevention Taskforce here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/support-and-community/community-blog/preventing-ms-not-so-farfetched](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/support-and-community/community-blog/preventing-ms-not-so-farfetched)



**You can find out more about the Stop MS Giving Club here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/get-involved/give-in-other-ways/philanthropy/stop-ms-giving-club](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/get-involved/give-in-other-ways/philanthropy/stop-ms-giving-club)



**You can find out more about our walking events here:**  
[www.mssociety.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise/walking-and-trekking](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise/walking-and-trekking)





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