It means so much to be launching our new Ambitions in our 20th anniversary year. If anyone had told me in 2003 – when five young people from Great Ormond Street Hospital came sailing with us for the first time – that 20 years later, 2,836 young people would have sailed with the Trust, I’m not sure I’d have believed it.

Three years ago, we launched our 2020-2022 Ambitions, ‘Better Connections, Bigger Impact.’

The pandemic inevitably affected how we supported young people in that time. But those Ambitions kept us on track to keep building ‘Better Connections’ to have a ‘Bigger Impact’ on more young people. Now we are ready to write the next chapter.

Our understanding of the life-changing difference we make to young people living through and beyond cancer is greater than ever. We are learning just how to have that ‘Bigger Impact’.

And with that comes ‘Brighter Futures’ for more young people who experience the transformational magic of the Trust, whether that transformation happens after one trip or through coming back for adventures every year.

Over 20 years we have evolved as a charity, and we will keep evolving as we strive to be a truly diverse and inclusive youth organisation that is relevant in the world we live in today.

This is what drives our Ambitions for 2023-25.

To deliver:
- Belonging and impact for more young people
- Improving ourselves to improve outcomes
- The platform to achieve our Ambitions

What we achieve in the next three years will lay the foundations for the next 20. Please help us get there.

Thank you,

Dame Ellen MacArthur
“Before that first trip, I was so unhappy, so alienated. I didn’t know who I was. With treatment, you’ve got one end goal for so long. When it’s over you’re lost, you don’t know what to do or how to live anymore.

“When you’re younger, you don’t understand as much and tend to block out your treatment. I wanted to move straight on. But as you get older you remember bits and want to find out more. I have quite a few medical issues from my treatments and still experience a lot of pain and fatigue. It can be difficult.

“After treatment, you feel like you’re dropped, like ‘You’re cancer-free now, off you go’, and you should snap back to normality. But it’s not that simple.

“My first trip was amazing. I came home a completely different person, I had so much more confidence. My mum was amazed. Then with each trip you get something different, you feel much more independent.

“When you’ve been ill for so long, you’re told everything you can’t do and are held back. On trips you’re given so much opportunity to push your boundaries and remind yourself you’re still capable of doing stuff. No one mollycoddles you, you’re encouraged to do as much as you can. But if you don’t feel well, or need a sleep, there’s no judgement because everyone is in the same boat, literally.

“It’s nice to be in a place where you all belong and get each other. I don’t know where I would be without the Trust.”

Libby
Diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia aged seven
Cancer can have a big impact on a young person’s mental wellbeing.

Young people are vulnerable after cancer treatment as it comes at a time of rapid physical, emotional and social development.

For many young people, simply picking up where they left off before their diagnosis isn’t possible. That is why when treatment ends, our work begins.

“The Trust won’t ever drop or forget about you. It’s always there for you.”
HOW DID WE DO?

WE ACHIEVED MANY OF THE THINGS WE SET OUT TO DO…

Opened new avenues
The pandemic made us view things through a new lens. We ran online support in 2020, raising the potential for year-round opportunities, and in 2021, we hosted UK-wide taster days, highlighting possible alternative access points to support.

Clear purpose
Work with impact specialists, Trust Impact, led to a clear, evidence-based understanding of our impact, a revised Theory of Change and new purpose statement. Now we could really prove what works and why (see p20-21).

Dug deeper
We can now measure by how much and in what ways our support improves mental wellbeing through independent, verified questionnaires young people complete pre and post trip. (See p20-21).

Built partnerships
The formalisation of a three-way partnership with Young Lives vs Cancer and Teenage Cancer Trust in 2021 was hugely significant. This partnership will continue underpinning our Ambition to grow the number and diversity of young people we support.

Went digital
The digitalisation of core operational processes, including medical forms, freed up admin time and resource significantly. The team now have greater capacity to invest in building relationships and partnerships to reach and engage young people.

Grew our team
During the pandemic, we invested in building our team to hit the ground running on the other side. This included the creation of new roles, such as full-time Relationships Fundraiser, Communications Manager, Communications Officer (North) and Volunteer and Team Development Manager.

Focus on mental health
Professional year-round mental health provision was introduced for our team, while a partnership with specialist charity, Mind Over Cancer, enables us to signpost or refer young people who are experiencing more complex or challenging mental health.

Strong pipeline
Despite the pandemic globally affecting fundraising, we achieved an ambitious revised 2021 target - £1.1m adjusted from £1.39m - exceeded our 2021 £1.9m target, raising £1.79m, and met our £1.4m target in 2022. This came partly from new virtual events and a renewed focus on regular and philanthropic giving.

A decade with People’s Postcode Lottery
2020 marked 10 years of support from players of People’s Postcode Lottery. The funding was vital during the pandemic as it enabled us to diversify our support. The new £450,000 award will be fundamental to achieving our 2023-25 Ambitions.

WEACHIEVEDMANYOF
THETHINGSWESETOUT
to DO…

BUT THERE IS STILL WORK TO DO...

Still 1 in 10
We currently support 9% of young people we could do so on first time trips. The pandemic hit our Ambition to support 13% by 2022; we ran no trips in 2020 and a limited programme in 2021. Our renewed Ambition is to support 16% in 2025.

Removing barriers to support
An extensive listening exercise undertaken in 2022 identified several barriers to coming on, or returning for, one of our trips, particularly for young people of colour. The findings of this work are the foundations of our 2023-25 Ambitions.

Generational difference
To be a truly progressive and representative youth organisation in the 21st century, we must gain a deeper understanding of, and response to, the needs of generations Z (born 1995-2009) and Alpha (born in or after 2010).

Over-reliance on one funder
The pandemic affected our ability to reduce our reliance on one funder. Although new funding streams did emerge during COVID-19, not least virtual events, we did not secure alternative funding to the extent we hoped.
OUR AMBITIONS FOR 2023–2025 | BIGGER IMPACT, BRIGHTER FUTURES

TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL...

Listen and learn
Understand and remove barriers to accessing our support, and through infrastructure, partnerships, and recruitment, be inclusive of all young people.

Widen our scope
Provide wider mental health, education, training, and careers support to young people, through developing our own work and partnerships (existing and new).

Use evidence
Analyse the findings from validated young people’s pre and post-trip wellbeing questionnaires to do more of the things that make the biggest difference.

OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS WE WILL...

Build belonging
Be visible, relevant and accessible to every young person who has a cancer diagnosis in the UK and be somewhere every one feels they belong.

Go further
Take what we do beyond the water and develop our online and offline mental wellbeing and year-round support of young people after treatment.

Drive impact
Put impact measurement at the heart of shaping what we do and why, to improve young people’s mental wellbeing.

IT MATTERS BECAUSE WE WANT...

Bigger impact
Increasing the positive effect we have on the wellbeing of more young people who are living through and beyond cancer.

Brighter futures
Giving young people the environment to feel more accepted, independent, and optimistic, so they can rediscover their purpose and place in the world.

“I realised I wasn’t alone. There were people that can relate to what I’ve been through. Suddenly the stigma I felt disappeared.” Alex

Belonging and impact for more young people
Callum

Diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma aged 13.

“After my last round of treatment, I lost the routine I’d been in for two years; of waking up at a certain time, having chemotherapy at this time, or radiotherapy at this time.

“You feel lost about what happens next, and there’s a feeling of uncertainty, like could it come back? How do I get back to normal life, back into school, back onto the routine before you had cancer?

“After a disease you feel you’ve never had control of before, to then take control in that boat environment, with people that have gone through the same thing, who understand you, get you, and what you’ve been through, is really important.

“Being at the wheel, you feel so in control, like you’re finally in the driver’s seat, literally and metaphorically. You feel that sense of power. That’s a new feeling in you. You feel you must take control of your life because something could have taken it away. You find a new sense of who you are after you’ve had cancer.

“I made new friends, and we made jokes you could never make outside of a trip like this. But you also have serious conversations about how things have been and share experiences and tips about getting back to a normal state after your disease.

“You just throw yourself in and get involved with everything. I cooked on a boat, helped get ready to set sail, I helmed. I’ve had the opportunity to do loads of new things I never would’ve done without the Trust.”

“It’s made me realise what I truly want to do with my life.”
OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS WE WILL...

Keep the magic
Preserve the special ‘magic of the Trust’ as we grow to support more young people and expand the type and variety of activities we offer.

Ask questions
Strive for our team (staff, volunteers, skippers, and board) to be increasingly representative of, and relatable to, all young people we support.

Think planet
Evaluate and reduce the negative impact our trips, fundraising, communications, and team activities have on the planet.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL...

Maintain quality
Invest in specific, role-appropriate training and development across the whole team to have the biggest impact possible on every young person we support.

Look inward
Promote a curious and open-minded culture throughout our team and evolve our recruitment processes so more young people feel like they belong with us.

Take stock
Review the environmental impact of what we do, and make sustainable, green choices and decisions on the things in our control.

IT MATTERS BECAUSE WE WANT...

Bigger impact
Delivering positive, enjoyable experiences in an environment where everyone feels equal will help more young people benefit from improved mental wellbeing.

Brighter futures
Addressing the issues that matter most to generations Z and Alpha keeps the Trust relevant to these young people. A progressive future for us means a brighter future for more young people.

“I love the idea I can come back and keep meeting people who, because you have the same foundation and life experience, you’re not going to be judged for anything you say.” – Isla
Chrissy

Diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma in her shoulder aged 22.

“I was two weeks out from graduating university. My whole future was ahead of me, then I got diagnosed. It felt like my world came crashing down. I still feel like I’m trying to climb a mountain to get back to whatever normal was.

“During that time, I had quite an aggressive tumour, the size of a grapefruit, and it started breaking the surrounding bones, so I was left with just one shoulder.

“Going sailing was quite surreal. I didn’t think I’d ever be able to do anything like it. I’d opted out of quite a few things since having one working arm. The fact the Trust caters for our age-group too is amazing, as we don’t really get that support elsewhere.

“I didn’t know how much I’d be able to get involved. I didn’t know if people would get annoyed by me if I didn’t get it right, because my arm was completely in a sling. Just meeting new people can be quite daunting itself.

“But the Trust said you can get involved as much or as little as you want, and they help you all the way if you need that extra hand.

“I felt quite proud of myself that I managed to do the ropes and even steer the boat with one arm. It really has boosted my confidence in my body. I know my limits a bit more because I’ve been able to push them with that support. I felt more optimistic about the future.”

“I can go and do anything.”
"The Trust really helped me after treatment when my friends and family didn’t understand. It gives me motivation to take on new challenges and makes me feel so much happier." – John

**TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL...**

**Share the load**
Prioritise our different funding streams (donations, fundraising, corporate support, and charitable trusts) to reduce dependency on one funder.

**Inspire and thank**
Ensure everyone who does something to support our work feels valued, understands the difference they have made and is motivated to support us again.

**Be consistent**
Talk about the difference we make, not what we do, to showcase how sailing provides the environment for young people to flourish.

**Diversify income**
Continue to explore and secure alternative funding sources so no one body contributes more than 30% of our total income by 2025.

**Grow loyalty**
Put nurturing positive, long-term relationships across our committed community at the heart of growing fundraising support and donations.

**Talk difference**
Communicate our purpose and impact to connect, engage and inspire more young people, families, funders, supporters, partners, and the public.

**OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS WE WILL...**

**IT MATTERS BECAUSE WE WANT...**

**Bigger impact**
To make the biggest possible difference to more young people, we need the communications and income in place to build the demand for and capacity on our trips.

**Brighter futures**
Diversifying income secures our long-term sustainability, so more young people can benefit from our support to believe in a brighter future living through and beyond cancer.
OUR IMPACT

Improving the impact of what we do

THE NEED

Every year, 4,200 children & young people (0-24) are diagnosed with cancer*. Cancer affects physical, emotional, social, and mental wellbeing and education/career prospects. These can be long-term.

WHAT

Sailing, outdoor activity and canal trips
- Physical challenge
- Recreational experience
- Socialisation
- Peer support
- Inspiring role models
- Being away from home
- Change of perspective

Graduate Volunteers
Training programme for over 18s who have previously been on trips and return to support other young people

OUR IMPACT JOURNEY

Read how we went from ‘what we do’ to the ‘difference we make’ here

OUR VISION

Every young person feels accepted, independent and optimistic living through and beyond cancer.

INDICATORS

- Number of young people on first time trips
- Number of young people on return trips
- Response rates to surveys
- Online engagement
- Satisfaction rates with trips
- Safe management of trips
- Graduate Volunteers trained
- Volunteers trained and retained

CHANGES

- Increased sense of purpose
- Sense of accomplishment
- Personal growth
- Increased feelings of self-worth
- Reduced anxiety
- Reduced self-doubt
- Reduced isolation
- Improved optimism for the future
- Feeling able to take the next step
- Improved autonomy
- Moving from patient to post-treatment
- Independence from treatment/family

IMPACT

Improved mental wellbeing
- Ability to believe in a brighter future

OUR PURPOSE

To inspire young people to believe in a brighter future living through and beyond cancer.

OUR IMPACT

JOURNEY

The next phase is to ‘Drive Impact’ – putting impact measurement at the heart of shaping what we do, to do more of the things that make the biggest difference to improving young people’s mental wellbeing.

*CRUK 2022

Increase of trust

Increased self-esteem

To be able to think clearly

To be able to make up my own mind

To feel useful

To deal with problems well

To feel relaxed

Feeling close to other people

Feeling optimistic about the future

Thinking clearly

Able to make up my own mind

Feeling useful

Dealing with problems well

Feeling relaxed

Immediately pre, post and 3 months after a trip, young people complete a short questionnaire and score themselves in...

Young People
- Aged 8 – 24 (& siblings)
- Living in UK
- Living through and beyond cancer

Trust team network
- Hospital & charity partners
- Shore-based staff
- Skippers & volunteers
- Medics & medical adviser

Yacht charter & outdoor activity partners

THEORY OF CHANGE

Sailing, outdoor activity and canal trips
- Physical challenge
- Recreational experience
- Socialisation
- Peer support
- Inspiring role models
- Being away from home
- Change of perspective

Graduate Volunteers
Training programme for over 18s who have previously been on trips and return to support other young people

Increased sense of purpose
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- Moving from patient to post-treatment
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Feeling close to other people

Feeling optimistic about the future

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Feeling relaxed
Do you know young people with cancer?
If you work with young people with cancer, or you know a young person who could benefit from our support, we would love to hear from you. Please contact our team at gosailing@emcancertrust.org

Can you support our fundraising?
Take on a challenge, rally friends, family, or colleagues to do something fun, make us your company’s charity of the year, join our Brighter Futures Community, or get inspired to do anything else! Contact our team at fundraising@emcancertrust.org

Could you volunteer?
From using your professional expertise – from medical to sailing – to cheerleading at events and accompanying young people when they travel to their trips, it all makes the same huge difference. Email volunteering@emcancertrust.org

TO SPEAK TO OUR TEAM, CALL 01983 297750

For more information on how you can make a difference visit our website at ellenmacarthurtrust.org