The British Heart Foundation (BHF) is at the forefront of pioneering research, prevention activity and ensuring quality care and support for everyone living with heart and circulatory disease – the UK’s biggest killer, claiming 200,000 lives a year.

As well as being an important source of health information, the BHF saves thousands of lives every year thanks to the research and health initiatives it funds.

Donations from the charity’s supporters then enable scientists to study heart and circulatory disease in great depth, and their discoveries have contributed to medical advances that benefit people today. In fact, a £34 million initiative has seen four BHF Centres of Research Excellence established around the UK, specifically to fuel scientific discoveries and medical advances in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

Its £9 million Hearty Lives programme aims to tackle problems of inequality through tailored activities in specific communities. The charity works with local authorities, community groups and health organisations to help people understand the risks of heart disease and what they can do to prevent it.

The charity also takes the fight against premature death and disability from heart disease to politicians, government officials, workplaces and schools.

And the BHF’s free Heart Matters service, including an online lifestyle check and a regular magazine, helps heart patients and health professionals with information and support.

To help raise money for its important work, the charity organises hundreds of fundraising bike rides, swims, walks, runs and overseas expeditions every year, including the popular London to Brighton bike ride in June. Its shops and furniture and electrical stores, along with its online shop, are also popular with bargain hunters.

As part of the fight against heart disease, the charity launched its Mending Broken Hearts Appeal in February to celebrate its 50th birthday. The goal is to fund research that could begin to literally ‘mend broken hearts’. The charity wants to raise £50 million for research into regenerative medicine, specifically world-leading stem cell research and developmental biology. BHF scientists hope to find a way to repair or replace damaged heart muscle, potentially helping hundreds of thousands of people in the UK.

To learn more about the campaign, visit bhf.org.uk/mbh or call 0844 847 2787.

The BHF’s vision is of a world in which people do not die prematurely of heart disease, and the charity hopes to achieve this through pioneering research, vital prevention activity and ensuring quality care and support for everyone living with heart disease.