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The most famous dragon of British folklore is, of course, Saint George. However, the UK has many other dragons including Scotland's Loch Ness Monster, Nessie. No wonder then, Louisa heard the call.

Inspired by Eve Elliot Pearson from Liverpool, and following her visit to Singapore, Louisa was keen to use the experience of a lifetime in a way that would enable other breast cancer survivors' greater access to dragon boating. Louisa lives on the edge of the Lake District National Park in the North of England and close to Lake Windermere, the largest lake in England. In 2007 she co-founded Paddlers for Life Windermere, which encourages a strong participatory ethos and undertakes to raise awareness of the benefits of dragon boat paddling. The team is now actively supporting the development of novice crews affiliated to Paddles for Life in Scotland, the North of England and Manchester.

In the UK, dragon boat paddling for breast cancer survivors is in its infancy. Louisa is learning from those international teams that have gone before and created sustainable success around the world. By presenting and explaining the concept, ideas and issues to others who are unfamiliar to them, Louisa continues to encourage the active involvement of a range of partners, locally and nationally. She is proactive in seeking out different styles and methods of communicating to help with the longer term needs and aims of a UK breast cancer dragon boat programme.

Louisa has produced detailed health improvement proposals about dragon boat paddling which show the benefits for people affected by breast cancer. While she has been successful in attracting funding from the major national Charity, Breast Cancer Care and Macmillan Cancer Support, she recognises there is still much work to do in influencing opinions and attitudes.

Her understanding of the importance of a UK evidence base which reflected Dr Don McKenzie's finding, led to establishing an effective and 'enquiring' relationship with Dr Helen Crank, Sheffield Hallam University. With the help of a National Health Service (NHS) Research Bursary, Louisa contributed to the decision making process which enabled a feasibility study to go ahead in 2008. She was one of thirteen ladies who took part. More recently, Paddler for Life Windermere supported the knowledge transfer study in Peterborough in 2010.

Having trained as a registered nurse during the late 70s Louisa's early professional experience of breast cancer fortunately bears little resemblance to her personal journey. She has worked within the UK National Health Service for many years in a number of different roles. A scholarship award presented by Princess Alexandra enabled Louisa to gain her Master in Science from the University of Lancaster in 2004. She is committed to the principles of public health, preventing ill health and

promoting improvements in health and well-being by building on others' knowledge, experience and values.

Louisa was diagnosed with breast cancer, aged 45 in 2004, when she requested her doctor's opinion of a dimpled area of skin. Treatment involved chemotherapy, mastectomy, radiotherapy and hormone treatment which continues to date. In 2007 she elected for a prophylactic mastectomy.

Only with the support of her caring family and friends is Louisa able to pursue her wish to share riding the dragon with other UK breast cancer survivors.