



# Impact Report 2022

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# Welcome from our CEO and Chair



It has been another very busy year for Reach: charities and groups have posted a record number of trustee and volunteering roles to our service and over 9,000 people have signed up to volunteer.



We anticipated that volunteer registrations would start falling as the cost of living crisis began to bite, but amazingly, people joined Reach at an accelerating rate through the autumn, taking us back to levels only ever seen at the height of the pandemic. This trend has continued into 2023.



**Looking back at this last year, we are encouraged by the abundance of people willing to help.**



We experience these huge surges at times of acute social challenge, which suggests that they are driven by people's care for others and the world.

Amidst this growth we have seen a couple of interesting trends. Firstly, our most prolific service users are now small and micro organisations with a turnover of under £50,000,

with the most rapid growth coming from organisations with a turnover of less than £10,000.

Amongst them are a number of grassroots groups led by, and for, communities facing structural injustice. Given the growing inequality in the UK, we are particularly keen to support these groups, and will implement monitoring to better track their activity.



**the capacity and expertise that volunteers can bring is more valuable than ever.**



Secondly, many more climate action groups are using Reach. Some are well established, some are very new. Together they are tackling climate and biodiversity crises in a multitude of creative ways.

Supporting these groups to build their capacity through voluntary expertise is vital given the urgency of the crises.

At the same time, many people are looking for an opportunity to take action on climate as an outlet for their anxiety at the worsening situation.

We said goodbye to Andrew Dent (Chair) and Graham Warner (Treasurer) on completion of their final term of office. We are really grateful for their long and steadfast service through turbulent times. We are delighted that Jane Ide, CEO of ACEVO, has been appointed as our new Chair, and Deborah Morton-Dare as our Treasurer.

Looking back at this last year, we are encouraged by the abundance of people willing to help. Given the uncertainty and challenge facing civil society, the capacity and expertise that volunteers can bring is more valuable than ever.

**Janet Thorne, CEO and Jane Ide OBE,  
Chair of Trustees**

# About Reach

## What we do

We inspire, support and connect civil society organisations and volunteers to work together, sharing skills and expertise to create a better society.

In 2022, we supported 2,658 good causes to recruit 3,586 trustees and volunteers, bringing over £50m of expertise into the sector.



**Volunteering gives me the ability to play a role in making a difference to people and giving back to society.**



**Christina Taylor**

## How we do it

Through our bespoke self-service platform, people who want to volunteer their skills and expertise can connect with civil society organisations for projects, longer-term engagements and as Trustees.

We also:

- Offer bespoke recruitment for trustees through TrusteeWorks, our executive search service.
- Promote good practice so that volunteers and good causes can make the most of skills-based volunteering and get guidance on related topics such as trustee recruitment.
- Work with our partners to run workshops and webinars, and produce useful resources such as the Trustee Recruitment Cycle.

# Our Vision and Mission



This year we revised our vision and mission, and created a new set of values and underpinning beliefs to give us a clear direction and a strong sense of purpose.

In an unpredictable and rapidly changing world, this framework helps keep us focused on the most important things, and makes us quick to respond to new opportunities and challenges.

## Vision

A world where people come together to create a thriving, fair and sustainable society.

## Mission

To inspire, support and connect civil society organisations and volunteers to work together, sharing skills and expertise to create a better society.

# Our Values



## Bold and Experimental

We think big and encourage others to take a leap too. We value learning and experimenting, underpinned by a rigorous test and learn approach.

## People-centred

We care deeply about the needs of the people who use our service, our team and wider society. We continually improve our service by applying service design principles. We value diversity, and we work to be inclusive.



## Collaborative

We achieve more, together. Our service connects people to make change. We partner with others who share our vision, and internally we work in a way that builds collaboration.



## Honest

We behave with integrity. We do what we say we will do, and are open and transparent about our work.



# Our Beliefs

Our Vision, Mission and Values are underpinned by four core beliefs:

01

## **The importance of volunteering**

People are naturally co-operative and social, so volunteering contributes to their well being and to civil society.

02

## **The power of connection**

Connecting people generates shared understanding, collective action and social cohesion.

03

## **Equity, diversity and inclusion**

Inequality is a pressing problem and civil society has a particular responsibility to help tackle it.

04

## **Climate action**

The climate crisis is an existential threat to civil society and we all have a part to play in addressing it.

Equity, diversity and inclusion sits at the heart of our vision, and is woven through our strategy. In 2022, we focused on developing the foundations for this work, drafting an ethics policy and our EDI Theory of Change and extending our equalities monitoring for volunteers.

We also further developed our Trustee Recruitment Cycle, adding a full guide and templates for running a diversity audit and tips on recruiting first-time trustees.

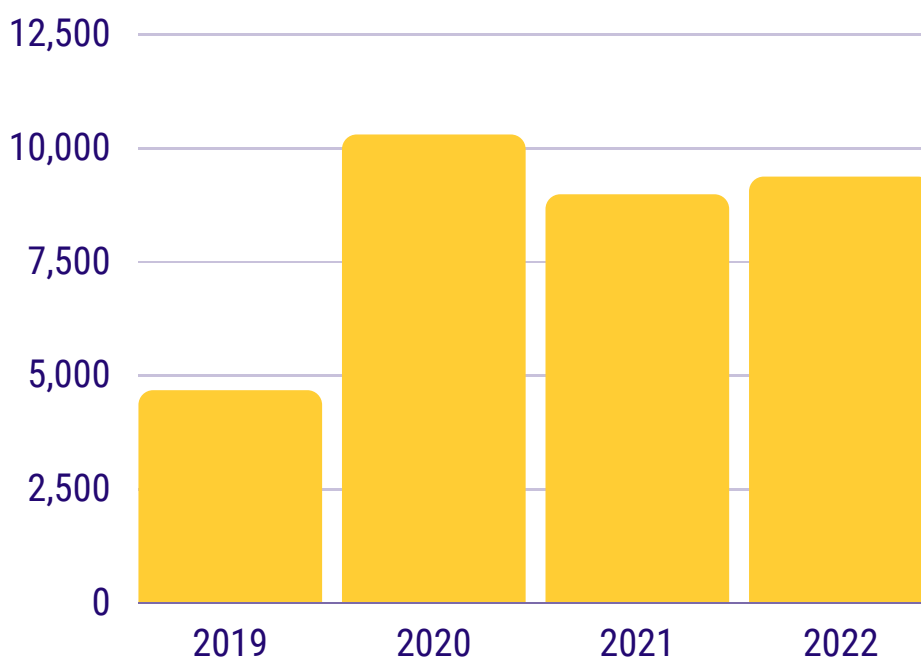
# Helping people make a difference

Despite predictions that the cost of living crisis would negatively impact the number of people willing to volunteer, over 9000 people signed up to donate their skills through Reach.

This is one of our highest numbers ever (coming second only to sign ups during the pandemic in 2020). It suggests that once again, people were inspired into action during a time of crisis, driven by compassionate values such as community, care and helpfulness.

People made a phenomenal 17,971 applications through our service last year - the highest to date by some distance. 2835 applications were for short-term roles, 8,940 for ongoing roles and 6,196 for trustee positions.

## Volunteers over time



**88%**

of respondents cited that volunteering gave them the opportunity to use their skills to make a difference.

# Volunteers building capacity and capability

We helped 2,658 organisations to recruit volunteers and trustees in 2022. There was a significant increase in the number of smaller organisations or organisations with an income below £250k using our services since 2019: growth that continued throughout 2022.

In particular, small charities used our service to source volunteers for short-term or ongoing projects.

These micro organisations often have few or no staff and volunteers are crucial for delivering services, building business operations and developing strategy.

Last year, more volunteer and trustee opportunities were posted than ever before - 6,032.

1,070 good causes filled 3,586 placements including 790 short-term opportunities, 1,607 ongoing roles and 1,189 trustee positions.

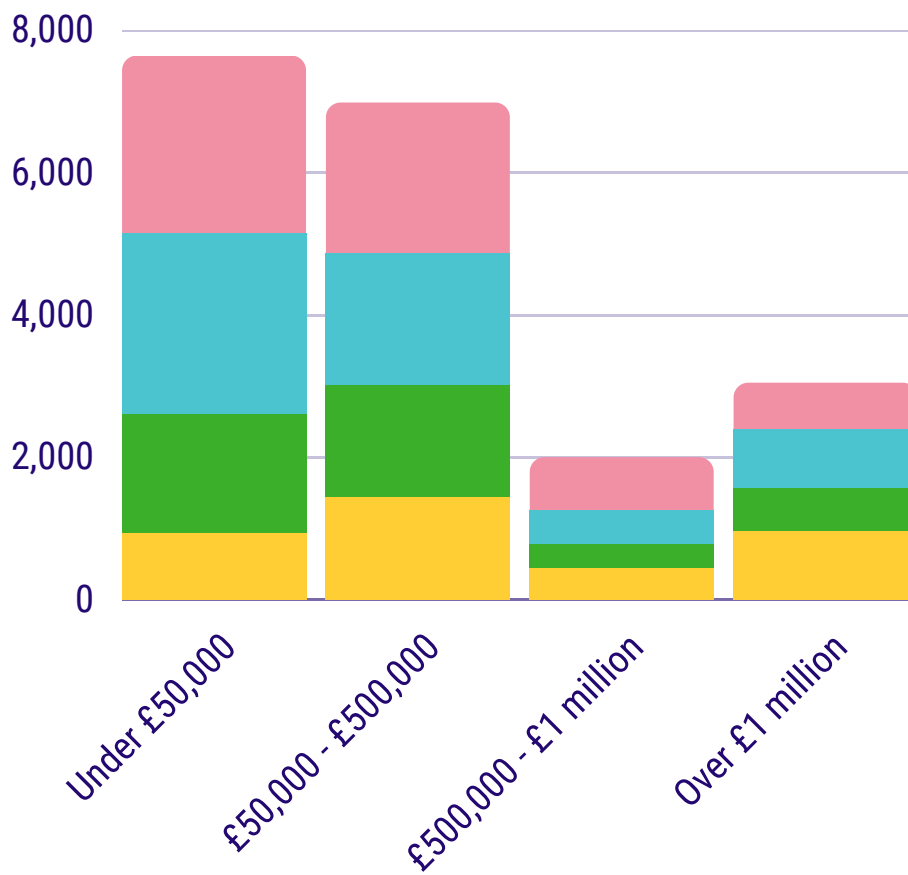


**We recruited for a volunteer to provide fundraising support. Our volunteer helped us to apply for (and win!) more funding bids than we would have had capacity for without her.**

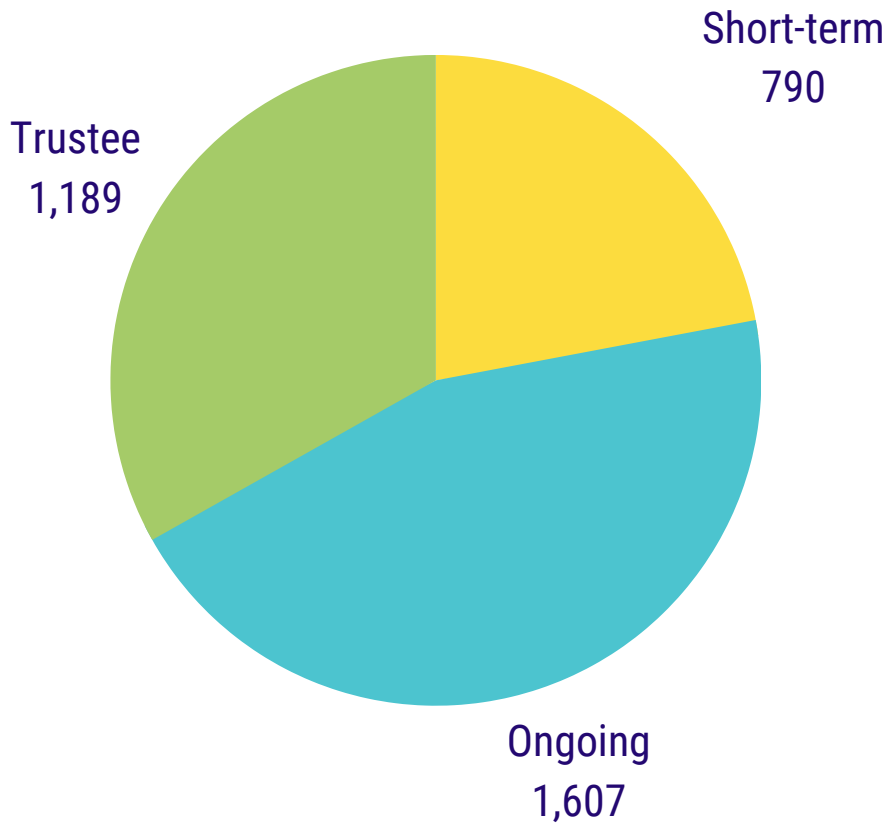


**The Together Project**

### Roles registered, by size of organisation



### Number of placements by type



# Fighting social injustice

A growing number of organisations run by and operating for communities facing social injustice used our service in 2022.

We will be introducing monitoring to help us better understand how these groups are using our service, and how well it is working for them in 2023.

## Invaluable trustees with the right skills and expertise

**From ensuring compliance to acting as critical friends, Black Beetle Health's trustees have been invaluable.**

Black Beetle Health is a community public health organisation and registered charity dedicated to promoting health, wellbeing and equality for LGBTQ+ Black and People of Colour. We focus on sexual and reproductive health, mental health and wellbeing, and chronic conditions management.

Our mission is to promote health through evidence-based, peer-reviewed resource development

and signposting to culturally safe services and support groups for people of colour throughout the UK.

We have developed resources including a Health and Education Library with 14 cultural-safe health guides, held over 70 virtual and face-to-face health and wellbeing presentations, and engaged directly with more than 20 partnering organisations.

Our Health Equity and Advocacy Training programme also aims to redefine standard health and help-seeking practices within

communities of colour and counteract negative visibility of LGBTQ+ Black and People of Colour.

Our organisation is predominantly run by volunteers including trustees and advisors. We were looking for people to support our charity in the wider sense, specifically trustees who could help us with our governance and infrastructure.



**Thanks to our trustees, we have the infrastructure required to receive public funding and donations and an accountability framework**



We did a skills analysis to identify skills gaps within our charity and through Reach, we were able to find trustees with the experience and expertise that we needed.

Our trustees have a very specific set of skills and a certain level of understanding in a particular area of

work. For example, one of our trustees specialises in HR and employment, and was able to help us understand and mitigate any possible risks associated with freelancers doing work for the charity.

We also found an individual with a finance and accounting background to be our Treasurer. We wouldn't have been able to do this on a generic volunteering platform.

Thanks to our trustees, we have the infrastructure required to receive public funding and donations and an accountability framework so that we can better manage what we do with donations.

They have helped us with compliance and supported the overall governance of the charity. They have also acted as critical friends, providing the necessary expertise to inform organisational and strategic planning.

Our trustees have been invaluable, scrutinising our plans, activities, and methods of delivery to ensure they align with our charitable purposes, our vision and our mission.

The resilience and flexibility of our trustees to meet the changing needs of our charity (especially during COVID-19) has been astounding. During the pandemic, a lot of charities were shutting down because they could no longer

support their community. We were able to sustain ourselves and are still here, that speaks volumes. Without a doubt, we have an ongoing need for volunteers and they will continue to be an essential part of our charity.



## Big synergy, big impact

**CBS share how volunteers with the right mix of talent and experience took their impact to the next level.**

Centre for Big Synergy (CBS) is a civil society organisation of the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs. We are a not-for-profit global facilitator tasked to create a more responsible future for all. Through our projects, since 2018, we have touched over nine million lives in over 120 countries and donated over £1m worth of time and expertise.

Our projects and initiatives are wide-ranging; from setting up neighbourhood kitchens for homeless people; combating plastic pollution; encouraging societies to avoid risk factors for life-threatening diseases – to organising film festivals which help educate millions across the globe about the crises our planet faces.

We were seeking volunteers for several of our projects, to help assist and lead initiatives, particularly in editing, content creation, communications, video editing and social media management.

We were having difficulties reaching out to a pool of diligent and experienced volunteers. It made perfect sense to choose Reach as they had the right kind of volunteers who would be really committed to an important cause such as ours.

“

**They have used their experience and have contributed to strategy and creativity to add more value to our impact.**

”

The volunteers we found through Reach have proven to be professional and effective. As a facilitator, our impact is in successfully facilitating projects through to completion and our volunteers have helped us to do exactly that. They have improved the efficiency of the management and operations teams many fold. They have used their experience and have contributed to strategy and creativity to add more value to

our impact. They have also helped projects to maintain their continuity and prolong the educational impact more efficiently than before.

“

**Our volunteers have had a major impact. They have shown exemplary dedication to our cause and meticulous ways of working.**

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With their help, CBS' advocacy for the Global Goals (UN Sustainable Development Goals that are an urgent call to action by all countries in a global partnership) has reached many more millions across the world than it otherwise would have had without them.

I would recommend Reach unreservedly. Its platform is superb and it has highly skilled volunteers. If your organisation needs experienced hands and heads, please do not dwell on it for too long. Reach already has the right mix of talent and experience amongst its volunteers to take your efficiency to the next level. That will be reflected in your organisation's impact.

# Tackling the climate crisis

We have also continued to support climate action organisations and groups through our service. Over 70 new organisations used Reach to find volunteers and trustees in 2022 alone.

These groups serve a huge array of purposes such as mobilisation, education, behaviour change and campaigning. Given the growing urgency of the climate crisis, Reach is proud to support these organisations in achieving their mission and the many individuals who want to use volunteering as an opportunity to take action.

## Some of the climate action groups we have supported

Earth Hero	The Climate Crisis Foundation
Zero Hour	InterClimate Network
Shade the UK	Frengle
Earth Trust	Scarab Trust Assembly
People and Planet	Treasure Earth
Protect our winters	Lawyers for net zero
Carbon Savvy	ClimateEd
Protect Earth	SDG London
Wicked Weather Watch	Protect our Winters
Climate Science	Dream Big Ghana Foundation
Me and Youth	Clear Community
Collective for Climate Action	Climate and Community
Climate 2025	Zero Carbon Harrogate
Climate Crisis Creative Hub	South East Climate Alliance

## Taking climate education to the next level

**Ben Cuddon, Co-founder of Climate Ed explains why his charity would be nothing without its community volunteers.**

Climate Ed is a volunteer-led climate education charity. In a nutshell, we recruit volunteers and send them to local primary schools in London to deliver education around carbon literacy and climate change. The teaching of climate change in schools is currently limited and many teachers are uncertain about how to cover the issue.

So far, we have delivered our in-depth carbon literacy programme to over 4000 students and the response has been overwhelmingly positive. In stats from our pilot conducted in autumn 2021, 81% of students gave the workshops 4 or 5 (out of 5) for improving their knowledge of climate change. 69% gave the programme 4 or 5 for inspiring them to get involved in climate action.

On top of this, follow-up research conducted four months after the workshops showed that they had



had an impact in changing people's habits. 54% of students reported making fewer car journeys. (Based on a sample of 107 students across five classes in three different schools).

When we started out, we didn't visualise ourselves as a volunteer-led charity. We were still working out what we wanted to do. It was only when we started recruiting volunteers and saw that they were doing such a great job, that we ended up building a volunteer programme around them.

We have been using Reach for the past 3 years. Our very first role was for a workshop facilitator but then, as the need came up, we recruited volunteers for other areas. Our volunteers are core in delivering our services but they also do everything else. They are involved in all aspects of our charity including fundraising, research, website design, recruiting other volunteers, spreading awareness and even being our trustees. Honestly, they are all so passionate, knowledgeable and have brought a huge amount to the charity.



Volunteers are critical to us as an organisation. As a small charity, we are spread very thin and in areas where we don't necessarily have any experience.

We need them and they have a massive impact on our work. Their enthusiasm, their level of expertise and their willingness to donate their skills have been impressive.

We had three web designers who did an incredible amount of work on our website, giving it a complete overhaul and making it look good. Another volunteer secured us critical funding and our trustees gave us the shape, direction, oversight and governance that we were lacking as a charity.

“

**Volunteers are critical to us as an organisation. As a small charity, we are spread very thin and in areas where we don't necessarily have any experience.**

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If you're thinking about getting a volunteer, just do it. We started with one volunteer and now have a large community of volunteers supporting the charity, as well as building connections and sharing ideas with other people in the environmental / climate field. We would be nothing without our volunteers.

# Equipping charities with digital expertise

With the demand for digital skills at an all time high since the pandemic, volunteers with digital expertise are an invaluable source of support for the sector. They fulfil a wide range of roles from moving services online to digital marketing and website development.

Charities often find it hard to recruit volunteers with digital expertise, because they are unfamiliar with digital processes and specialist skills like UX. To support charities we launched a Volunteer Project Library which contains digital role templates, explanations of how volunteers with those skills could help, profiles of available volunteers with relevant skills and examples of similar roles from other charities and groups.

This valuable resource makes it easier for charities to recruit volunteers with digital skills.

Organisations can use and adapt sample projects to fit their needs, or as a starting point to create their own volunteer opportunity. Charities can also recruit a volunteer for some specialist advice, talking them through their challenge and helping them move to the next step.

“

**Our trustee brought a steady but strong influence to our governance and helped us build our digital impact and reach.**

”

**Sussex Prisoners'  
Families CIC**

## From an unfinished website to a thriving community site

**When the pandemic put a halt on plans for their new website, Pannal Village Hall turned to a volunteer for some much needed support.**

Pannal Village Hall was built in 1888 and is a volunteer-run venue at the heart of the Pannal community. We are probably one of the most used village halls in Yorkshire. We rely on a committee of volunteers to function including the completion of a 10-year modernisation project of our 140-year-old building.

We needed a volunteer to help us with our outdated website. We obtained funding from the Home Office for a team of their graduates to produce a new website. Unfortunately, COVID meant they couldn't finish the project in the allocated time and we were left with an unfinished site, written in a code which we were unfamiliar with. Luckily, we found our volunteer Emily. Although she was living 200 miles away, she managed to finish the website, which we were able to launch last month.

Thanks to our website, our community is now able to get a much better idea of the many events that we have to offer. The site, which is still evolving, is essential and is used to contact us for most of our bookings. Emily continues to help us keep the website up-to-date and is a valued, albeit remote, member of our team.



**Thanks to our website, our community is now able to get a much better idea of the many events that we have to offer.**



We are so grateful for the amount of time that Emily has freely given us. We would definitely consider bringing in a volunteer again and would 100% recommend Reach. If you're thinking about getting a volunteer, do what we did and reach out to Reach!

# Inclusive and diverse trustee recruitment

We know how important a good board is and the difference that a trustee with the right skills can make. Through our service last year, charities appointed 64 Chairs and Vice Chairs, 144 Treasurers or Finance Trustees, and 981 trustees with expertise in a wide range of areas such as digital, HR, business development and communications.

Our TrusteeWorks team provided in-depth recruitment support to boards including defining the skills and experience they are looking for, promoting the trustee vacancy and sourcing candidates. The team successfully appointed 68 trustees to a wide range of charities in 2022.

We continued to support inclusive and diverse trustee recruitment in the sector by developing additional resources for our Trustee Recruitment Cycle.

This included a diversity audit (with an online template), advice on recruiting first-time trustees and updated guidance on how to complete a skills audit (with ready-to-use templates).



**The trustees which we have recruited have enhanced the specialist skill set of law and finance within the board. They have significantly helped us advance in these areas, and they are working on different aspects within the organisation.**



**Oxfordshire Discovery College**

# What we have learnt

The step-change in volume of people using our service brings fresh challenges. We have had to tighten up inconsistencies in criteria, streamline processes and ensure policies are robust. We continue to look for ways to make service delivery more efficient.

Placement numbers have increased but not at the rate we expected, given the high numbers of roles and volunteers. There are many factors contributing to this - a priority for 2023 will be to explore how we can iterate the service to get more high quality applications for the groups using our service.



# Partnerships

Our partnerships are fundamental to how we operate:

Our service is co-produced by the impactful, creative organisations which create opportunities, and by the many people who choose to donate their own expertise.

We are able to reach so many potential volunteers thanks to partners such as LinkedIn and Rest Less, which put our roles in front of their audiences. We were delighted to launch a new partnership this year with Fifth Day, who aim to extend pro-bono practice to the many business operations staff of legal firms.

Our service is more effective, thanks to the wider ecosphere of support provided by colleagues such as Getting on board, Action for Trustee Racial Diversity, Association of Chairs, Young Trustees; Cranfield Trust, Pilotlight and other members of the Pro Bono Association. We were delighted to be a lead partner, once again, in the Charity Governance Awards, sponsored by The Clothworkers Company.

# Acknowledgements

We are grateful to:

- The many people and organisations that help us work towards our vision
- The many people who generously sign up to volunteer their expertise, especially in these challenging times.
- The inspiring charities and groups that create such rewarding opportunities for people to contribute to their work, and which are making change in so many resourceful ways.
- Our own trustees and volunteers, who give their time, skills and experience freely, in service of Reach.
- Our staff team who work hard to achieve our goals.
- Our many partners who are an essential part of our service delivery, and a crucial part of the wider ecosphere of support for social purpose organisations.
- Our generous funders, who enable us to provide our service freely, and at scale.



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