

# Reach Community Projects

Tackling Poverty in and Around Haverhill

## Annual Review 2016/17

What a year it's been! We have continued to see fantastic generosity from local people whether it's food, financial gifts or volunteering, it never ceases to amaze me.

As well as seeing the many hundreds of clients it's been a year where we've transitioned into becoming a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) along with new branding, too.

There have been so many highlights and it's difficult to pick out just one, but one of them has to be Jayne (cover story) and being able to help her into a home just before Christmas, or when Janet rang me to say thank you for helping her become debt free and the throw away comment "this means I can now get my hair done whenever I want!" That's what really makes me get out of bed in the morning, bringing that little bit of hope in people's darkness.

Thank you for supporting Reach. Together we can continue to make a difference in people's lives in and around Haverhill. For more on our annual review, visit our website [www.reachhaverhill.org.uk](http://www.reachhaverhill.org.uk) and look for 'Annual Review' on our 'Latest Info' page.

*Henry Wilson*

Henry Wilson, Projects Director

## Charity Success



Snape Maltings is a very desirable venue on its own but, add a glass of wine and some canapés and it makes for an exceptional setting for the High Sheriff of Suffolk's annual awards night – and for Reach to be shortlisted for 2 awards was an amazing privilege in itself, just to be there, but to win Community Group of the Year was fantastic and completely unexpected!

What made it extra special was that it was the last 'outing' with the River of Life Community Church charity and very fitting that our outgoing chair of trustees Paul Turner was able to be present with us.

Thank you to the Suffolk Community Foundation for organising the event and their amazing support for Reach!

## Current Priorities

As well as continuing to focus on the root issues of our clients' problems at the Resource Centre so that more people can be lifted out of poverty, we also plan to do the following:

- Develop further our 'Reach into the Community' project so that we are giving more help to clients who live in villages surrounding Haverhill
- Fine-tune our systems that will demonstrate clearly the impact our projects have on people's lives
- Develop our volunteer program, especially for those who need additional support
- Increase our regular giving program to become more sustainable into the future

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Reach Community Projects is a Charitable Organisation (CIO) and works with Haverhill & District Churches Together  
Registered Address: 8 Lime Grove Estate, Falconer Road, Haverhill, CB9 7XU | Registered in England & Wales, Charity No. 1169108



## Project Statistics

### Reach Resource Centre since April 2016



### Foodbank since April 2016



### Furniture between April-October 2016



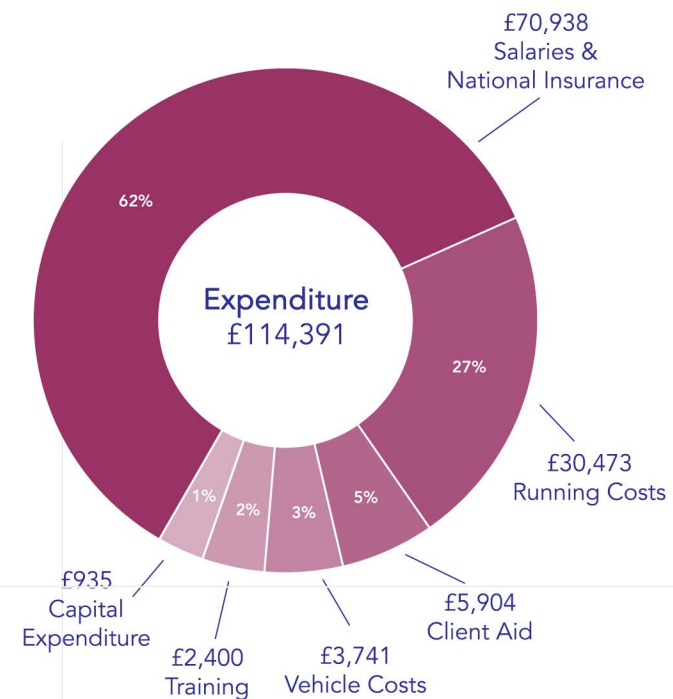
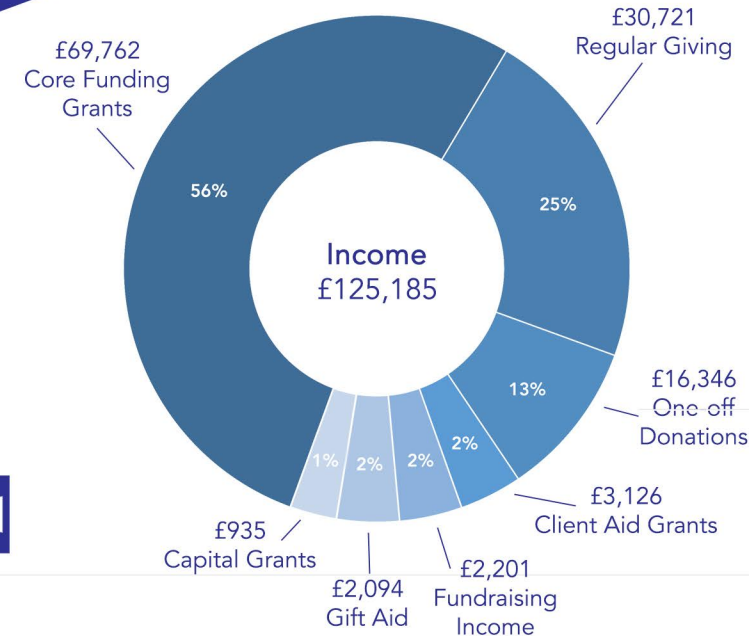
### Starter Pack since April 2016



### Acts 435 (Client Aid Resource) since April 2016



## Financial Review



The above figures are extracted from the full financial statements. If you would like a copy of the financial statements, they are available on our website, [www.reachhaverhill.org.uk](http://www.reachhaverhill.org.uk) under 'Latest Info'



Ray's Story

"I first met Ann at the foodbank just before Christmas in 2008. I had to stop working at the time which meant I couldn't pay all my bills and I had debts! I met Henry shortly afterwards and he helped me get on top of my debts.

Not long after, Henry asked if I could help him with collecting and delivering furniture. That's pretty much how the 'Furniture Bank' project started in 2009 and I ran it, first as a volunteer then part time after Reach got some funding for me.

Three years later, the Church (that Reach was part of) offered to help me with learning to drive. I passed my driving test in 2012 and was now able to drive for the Furniture Bank.

Things slowed down quite a bit in the Furniture Bank and I knew it was probably going to close so I looked for a new job and started working for Asda as a delivery driver last October. I'm really enjoying it. I was sad to leave Reach but I'm happy that I'm moving on to the next stage of my life.

I've come a long way since I first had a food box, my head was in the ground, my pride was low and I didn't feel like a proper father, I wasn't providing properly! But *now I can drive, and I've got a car! Life has changed. My head is not in the ground, I feel like a father, home life is better and I know it will continue to improve. Thank you to Reach for helping me and my family"*

Janet's Story

"I recently turned 75 and a few years ago I got myself into a situation of hardly having any money or food because I had got into debt with loans and credit cards.

I just didn't know what to do; there were many tears and sleepless nights.

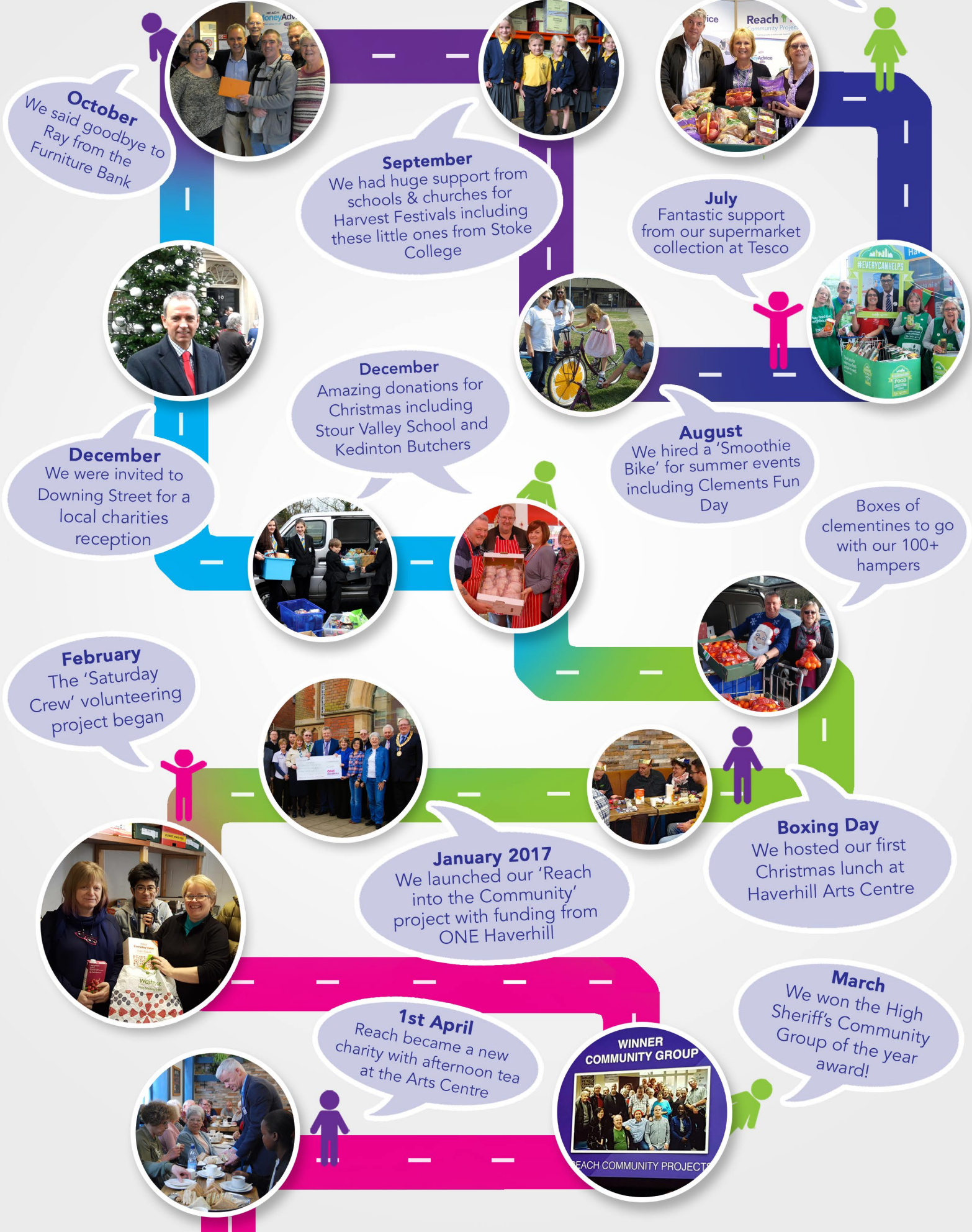
My son said that I should contact Reach. They came out to see me at my home. I had loads of paperwork from companies that I owed money to. Reach helped me with food and took all my debts and worked out a plan to help me start paying it all back.

It took quite a bit of my pension, but I was able to eat, pay the water, gas and electric. It was hard though, but I stuck to it. I'm pleased, though, to say that *I received a call recently to tell me that I was now debt free* and that I didn't have to pay them anymore! I couldn't believe that they were all gone, I am so relieved!

It means I can have my hair done whenever I want to now! What a place. Where would I be without it and the people that work there. *Not only have they helped me clear my debts but become my friends as well."*



Reach Highlights



**October**  
We said goodbye to Ray from the Furniture Bank



**September**  
We had huge support from schools & churches for Harvest Festivals including these little ones from Stoke College



**July**  
Fantastic support from our supermarket collection at Tesco



**May 2016**  
We launched our 'fruitbank' with support from Haverhill South Peoples Forum



**December**  
We were invited to Downing Street for a local charities reception



**December**  
Amazing donations for Christmas including Stour Valley School and Kedinton Butchers



**August**  
We hired a 'Smoothie Bike' for summer events including Clements Fun Day



Boxes of clementines to go with our 100+ hampers



**February**  
The 'Saturday Crew' volunteering project began



**January 2017**  
We launched our 'Reach into the Community' project with funding from ONE Haverhill



**Boxing Day**  
We hosted our first Christmas lunch at Haverhill Arts Centre

**March**  
We won the High Sheriff's Community Group of the year award!



**1st April**  
Reach became a new charity with afternoon tea at the Arts Centre



Jayne's Story

A few days before Christmas a local Police support officer called into the Resource Centre asking for food help for a lady (Jayne) who had suffered a house fire.

We helped with food that didn't require cooking and said let us know if we can help any further.

On the Friday before Christmas, Havebury contacted us about Jayne; she had been offered temporary accommodation in a Travel lodge but wouldn't go because she couldn't leave her cats behind and was sleeping in the garden shed. Havebury pulled out all the stops to provide a bedsit flat, gas & electric but there wasn't any furniture, what could we do to help?

Within a couple of hours we had put together a Z-bed, a microwave, a fridge and Starter Pack items (bedding, towels, cutlery, crockery etc). A food box, Christmas hamper, toiletries, a kettle, some cat food & dishes were all delivered that afternoon.

We recently caught up with Jayne who needed help with a cooker. We began to raise the funds through Acts 435 ([www.acts435.org.uk](http://www.acts435.org.uk)) but were contacted by Hughes who wanted to donate a new cooker to one of our clients – and Jayne was the recipient! When we called at Jayne's with Sam from Hughes, a very happy Jayne said *"I am so grateful, I can't thank you enough for all your help"*



Ashley's Story

Ashley came to see us after losing his job just before Christmas. He had been made redundant but, unfortunately, no redundancy was given as he had only been there for 15 months.

Ashley applied for Income Support as his oldest son is disabled. (He and his wife have 10 children). They wouldn't hear until after Christmas. During that time, the family would be living off Tax Credits & Child Benefit. Reach helped with food, a Christmas hamper (maybe 2!) a Warm Homes Healthy People grant for gas & electric, (as well as some cash following a very generous anonymous donor who had given us money to give away to families struggling at Christmas) and a very large fresh turkey that was donated by a local company!

Ashley called into to see us at Reach just before Easter with a large amount of Easter eggs for families who may be in a similar position to him and his family and updated us on his how things were progressing:

*"I've now secured regular employment at a warehouse in Wickhambrook and wanted to give something back. Reach were there when we really needed them. The generosity was out of this world and we tell everyone as it has really touched us – we're so grateful"*

