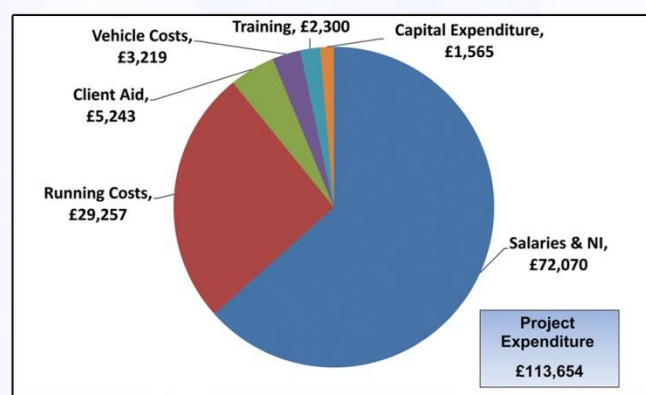
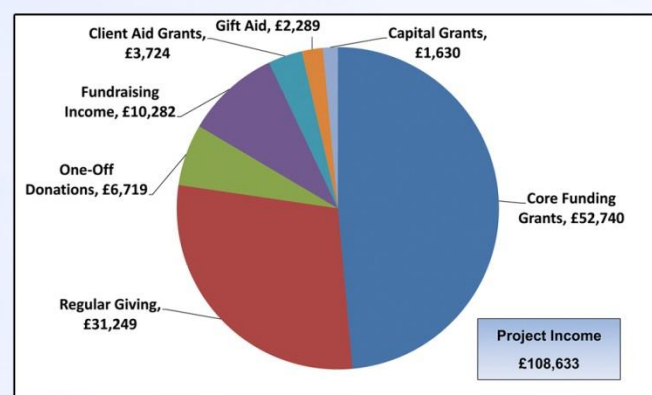


Finances: Sustainability is very much at the heart of what REACH is about, with one of our key objectives to see an increase in our fundraising income. We are pleased to see that this has risen from £7000 to just over £10,000. We were also thrilled to see a rise in regular giving from £29,000 to £31,000. Our income increased as did our expenditure, in particular our IT support. Our current plan is to move to cloud based technology for future expansion; we, therefore, implemented project development with funds given in previous years to advance this area, which ultimately meant that we had a shortfall in terms of our income and expenditure. Our capital expenditure was mainly down to purchases for the IT development as we prepare to move from a paper based structure to a paperless organisation. We are, however, pleased to say that this was fully funded.

We continue to be hugely indebted to Royce Group who have hosted our warehouse and associated office space for free for the last 11 years. The importance of such generosity, over such a long period, cannot be overstated. Generosity is a core REACH value and we are privileged to have partners who share our vision and have been with us since it all started.



Looking forward: Our short term vision is to expand our REACH projects into the community through satellite centres in partnership with local communities. 2016 has all been about building our capacity to enable us to achieve this, updating our policies and procedures; making it simpler for volunteers to get involved. We moved from paper files to electronic case notes in April with further developments on our case notes planned. We expect that by the early part of 2017 we will be able to move to cloud based software.

Another part of building our capacity was to appoint a full time administrator with an official start date of the 1st September. In addition to this we have been exploring the idea of launching REACH as a separate Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and this is progressing well.

We continue to look at ways in which we tackle the root causes of poverty locally by addressing some of the systems that keep people trapped. This is not an easy task but our ultimate aim is to lift people out of poverty and to give them hope and a future. Thank you for your interest and support for REACH Community Projects.

Keep up to date with all that is going on at REACH through our website reachhaverhill.org.uk or via our Facebook page - [Facebook.com/Reach-Haverhill](https://www.facebook.com/Reach-Haverhill).

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Restoring Dignity, Reviving Hope
www.reachhaverhill.org.uk

During the last year we continued to focus on the root causes of many of our clients' problems. This was absolutely crucial in our aim to help lift people out of poverty and has led to some excellent outcomes for our clients (see Jacinto's story). Another of our key objectives was to develop our supported volunteers' programme. We were pleased to begin a new partnership with a local special school in Linton and thrilled to see Ben, a partially sighted volunteer, receive a Special Commendation from the High Sheriff of Suffolk.

It has been an eventful year; please see below for some of our highlights:

- Focusing on resolving the root causes of our clients' problems has led to a further 6% reduction in the number of people needing foodbank support
- Increase in our supported volunteer programme
- We celebrated our 10th anniversary with a year of fundraising events including our Showcase event with Matt Bird - CEO of the Cinnamon Network
- Continued excellent support from the local community

REACH Numbers - Our Projects:

- **The Resource Centre:** the access point for all REACH projects; in total we have opened 262 new cases with a footfall of 2130; 6% primarily came in for food, 13% for debt along with many other issues e.g. form filling, housing and computer / telephone use. In total we had 447 active cases for the last 6 months of the year
- **REACH Money Advice;** over the last year we've helped 43 new debt clients including 5 DROs (a Debt Relief Order effectively clears their debts within 1 year)
- **Foodbank;** we've had similar results as last year. We received 13 tonnes of food and distributed 13.6 tonnes through 631 boxes and fed 997 people (743 adults and 254 children). In total that's a 6% drop in the number of food boxes going out. We're also pleased to report that out of the 375 referrals to the Foodbank, 64% only required 1 box of food
- **Furniture Bank;** a total of 191 families / individuals have been helped from 162 donors. 389 items of furniture were collected and 428 items delivered
- **Acts 435;** 61 gifts of client aid have been given to local people totalling £5,750 (see www.acts435.org.uk)
- **Client Aid;** £3550 was distributed to 36 families or individuals. Most of the client aid was given via the Warm Homes Healthy People initiative for gas & electricity
- **Starter Packs;** a total of 110 clients were helped with bedding and kitchenware kits



Jacinto's Story

"I first heard of REACH through my family support worker who gave me a food voucher. She asked me to go up to get some food. We had a support worker as my partner was pregnant and she was worried about us.

"We were not eating properly and we had no money for gas and electricity"

A few months back, I was working and earning a good salary, but then I suffered a back injury through doing repetitive work and this led to statutory sick pay of £88.45 a week. I was not on any benefits as every time I applied, something went wrong with the forms. I had lots of struggles and anxiety due to my debts, and I could not pay my rent or my utility bills. My relationship was suffering too and we nearly separated. My home was damp and cold and it was not in a good state, no matter how much I tried to draught proof or do home renovation. It was affecting my stepson too. He was misbehaving at school, and I was called in to see the teachers on a regular basis. I was not receiving tax credits or child benefit for over a year.

"I tried to go back to work but, because I was signed off, the company could not take me back"

When I went to get help from REACH, I was not in a place where I could open up. I just didn't believe that anyone can really help me apart from giving me food and money to top up my gas and electricity. The advisers would always ask me questions, but I refused to answer. However, one day, an adviser was very concerned with the frequency of my visits for help. She sat down and asked me what was going on and I opened up. I was upset, about my debts, my rent arrears and had no money coming in except my SSP.

They made a debt appointment for me and it was onwards and upwards from then on. It took a while, but REACH not only got my tax credits and child benefit up and running, but they also managed to get all our benefits backdated for over a year. Maternity benefit started; my debts on a more manageable payment plan, with some of them paid up due to my backdated benefits, the bailiffs (enforcement officers) backed off, council tax and housing benefits were put in place and my faith was restored. The advisers, with our support workers, even managed to get a better house for my family that was dry and clean. My baby daughter arrived in October 2015.

"I started to feel better and volunteered for REACH's Furniture Bank while I looked for employment. It felt good to give something back after all the help I had received"

Within a few weeks though, I found full time employment. I couldn't believe how good our lives were. Everything has changed so much now, we have our three children together, and my partner and I are talking. We want to give the children the best life we can. I feel now that I have employment, I can support my family. My partner and I don't want to give up on each other and we have a talk if we have something to discuss."

"Coming to REACH has made a big difference; no one has helped us like you have"

