



# United Response Information Pack for Companies

Share our vision of a world where people with learning disabilities or mental health needs can enjoy full and equal rights and citizenship.

We are committed to working with the people we support and others to break down barriers and access opportunities to make this vision a reality.



Creating opportunities with people with learning disabilities or mental health needs



# Contents

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	<b>Page</b>
<b>Why support United Response?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Make your customer communications accessible, reach a wider audience and increase your market share</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Our stories</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The benefits of supporting United Response and what we can do for your company</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Opportunities to help United Response and make it happen</b>	<b>11</b>
▪ Payroll giving	11
▪ Charity of the year	12
▪ A corporate donation	12
▪ Sponsoring United Response publications and events	13
▪ Volunteering	14
▪ Employment	15
▪ Personalised Christmas cards	15
<b>Current and previous corporate sponsors</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Contact us</b>	<b>17</b>





# Why support United Response?



- We are an award-winning, innovative charity which helps 1,500 people live the lives they want
- We support some of the most vulnerable people in society
- Funding helps us find jobs for people with learning disabilities or mental health needs, and promote understanding
- We have a specialist fundraising and communications team to work closely with you and ensure your support is publicised

## What we do

United Response is a national charity providing skilled care and support to over 1,500 adults with learning disabilities or mental health needs in over 200 different locations across England and Wales.

About 15% of the people we support have a mental health need, although an estimated 25 - 40% of people with learning disabilities in the UK experience mental health problems, with social isolation and loneliness being a major contributing factor.

We work with some of the most isolated and vulnerable people in society. More than half cannot talk and may have little or no ability to communicate, and in addition, may be deaf, blind and need a wheelchair. Depending on their level of ability, some people need one or two people to care for them 24 hours a day.

**We believe that everybody should have the chance to live the fullest possible life, whatever their level of ability.** We recognise that everyone has different interests, and give them the support they need to explore and fulfil their potential. We work closely with each person to provide the support they need to do what they want to in life, giving them back the control and choices that may have been denied to them all their life.

We provide everything from 24 hour care and support to helping someone to gain qualifications or find a job. As well as supporting people, United Response is involved in several groups working for change. We lobby to break down barriers and challenge attitudes.

## How your contribution will help

We must raise funds to pay for the groundbreaking programmes and activities that move people beyond “existing” to really living life to the full. For example, thanks to advances in technology, new communications techniques mean that people with even profound disabilities can speak up – unthinkable just a few years ago.

**Your support could provide equipment or access to experiences and opportunities that make independence a reality – even a small contribution can literally transform someone’s life.**

Corporate partnerships can make a huge difference to our work, by allowing us to put more opportunities in reach of people with learning disabilities or mental health needs. That is why we need your company’s help.

[Back to Contents](#)



## Not being able to talk doesn't mean you have nothing to say

David's story is just one example of how we have supported someone to live their life rather than to just exist. David lived in institutions until he was thirteen. He was fostered but it was not a happy experience. David cannot talk and people assumed that he did not understand what was going on around him, although he could understand very well. He was nicknamed "Veg" and as a teenager, his humiliating bathing routine consisted of being washed down in the kitchen in full view of the family. David became 'unmanageable' because he could not communicate his feelings of unhappiness and frustration.

When United Response started supporting David, he at last had carers who believed people with learning disabilities had potential, and who were familiar with special communication techniques. They worked with him over the years to find out what he wanted to do in his life. He now communicates with a personalised board which shows words and symbols. Using his specially created board, he has told us that his life has improved immeasurably now he can communicate with the people around him. He is an active campaigner and advocate for people with learning disabilities and has written and published a book about his life.



Some extremely disabled people may have just one body movement they can control which they can use to work a 'big switch', like the one shown in the picture, to say yes or no.

A larger floor version can also be used. People with some physical movements can use adapted keyboards with large, 'one-touch keys' and 'touch' screens with speakers for sound, along with specialist software like 'Widget' that converts words into pictures, helping them to communicate with others.

## Our reputation

Our Chief Executive Su Sayer has over thirty years experience in championing the rights of people with learning disabilities or mental health needs. Su had to overcome prejudice and scepticism to push forward solutions she knew people wanted and needed. She is passionately committed to improving the lives of people with learning disabilities or mental health needs. She has received several awards including an OBE for services to disabled people and two awards for Outstanding Achievement and Lifetime Achievement at the Annual UK Charity Awards.

We have won awards for excellence in the disability field and for our innovative UR First project, set up to create more opportunities for people with learning disabilities to have control over their lives. As a result, United Response has become a leading national provider of support services.

[Back to Contents](#)



## Some facts and figures

### Learning disability

The estimated number of people with mild learning disabilities in the UK is **580,000 – 1,750,000**. It is estimated that **230,000 – 350,000** people have severe learning disabilities, of which approximately **185,000** live in England<sup>1</sup>.

**65%** of people with learning disabilities in the UK are unemployed, able to work and said they would like a job. However, only **17%** of people with learning disabilities who are of 'working age' have a paid job. In comparison, **67%** of mainstream men and **53%** of mainstream women of 'working age' are in paid work<sup>2</sup>.

People with learning disabilities still face huge barriers and discrimination to living full and rewarding lives.

### Mental health

**One in four people will suffer from some sort of mental health illness at some time in their lives. It is three times more common than cancer<sup>3</sup>.**

Over **six million people** in the UK have a diagnosis of mental health illness, and over **200,000** are admitted to psychiatric hospitals in any one year<sup>4</sup>.

Approximately a quarter of the population consult their GP with a mental health need each year<sup>5</sup>. United Response works with people to boost their confidence, promote their independence and to empower them to make choices and decisions about how they want to live their lives. Our emphasis is on early intervention and recovery where possible, and our services include outreach, community support and supported housing to help people to get back on their feet.

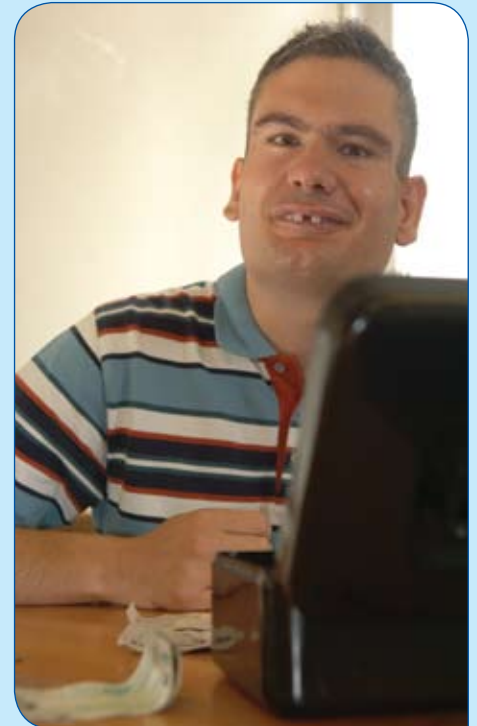
<sup>1</sup> Taken from a variety of sources, including Fundamental Facts: All The Latest Facts and Figures on Learning Disabilities. Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (2000). It was last updated on 10 June, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from the National Statistics & NHS Report (2003/4). Adults with Learning Disabilities in England 2003/4 Summary Report.

<sup>3</sup> The Audit Commission (1994).

<sup>4</sup> Taken from the Department of Health (1999). A systematic review of research relating to the Mental Health Act.

<sup>5</sup> Government Report: Disabled Person's Act 9th Report (1997).







## Make your customer communications accessible, reach a wider audience and increase your market share

**“With 1.4 million people with a learning disability, 2.9 million who are partially sighted and 7.2 million with some degree of deafness, this is a huge potential market that many companies are failing to access”**

Su Sayer, United Response Chief Executive

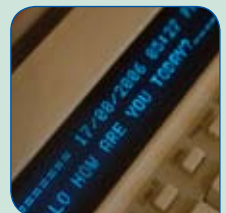
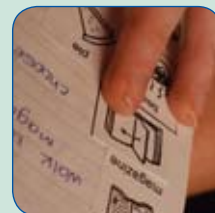
The organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Basic Skills Agency estimates that **20% to 40% of UK adults are “functionally illiterate”** and unable to “understand and employ printed information in daily life, at home, at work and in the community”. Meanwhile, companies have to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2003, which says companies must make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to ensure their information is easy to access. United Response can help you get on the right track to communicate more effectively with people with learning disabilities, and people with low levels of literacy. We have already worked with more than 20 top household name companies to do this.

**“When the government recently announced that disabled people in the UK have a combined spending power of £80bn, many people were surprised at how large the figure was and wondered whether businesses were making the most of their opportunity to get a slice of the cake.”**  
BBC News Online<sup>6</sup>

With an estimated 9 million disabled people in the UK, businesses who communicate with people in ways that are meaningful for them will benefit by accessing new customers and employees. When information is presented in a way people understand, they are more likely to engage with it – whether this means opening a bank account online or making a purchase.

United Response has set up a disability consultancy, called UR Consultants, that employs people with learning disabilities or mental health needs as consultants, harnessing their unique skills, knowledge and perspective of what it is like to have a learning disability or mental health need. The consultancy delivers a range of services and products to companies, including:

- Learning disability and communications awareness training
- Mental health and communications awareness training
- Accessibility audits, focusing on assessing an organisation’s publications – including websites - signage and staff knowledge via ‘mystery shopping’ exercises
- Follow up, including providing accessible “translations” of signage and literature
- A stand-alone accessible translation service (for signage, reports and literature)
- Tailored follow up training on request – either to build on core training or bespoke training in specific skills (e.g. financial inclusion)
- Communications awareness tools for purchase (publications and CDs)



<sup>6</sup> BBC News Online, Last of the Big Disabled Spenders, 28 January, 2004

Disability awareness training is offered by various providers. Although this is an important contribution it is generally a “one size fits all” focus, providing a generic grounding in accessibility, rather than taking a tailored approach. What United Response offers is fundamentally different as we make our approach or audit fit the needs of the organisations and companies we work with. We are experts in the field of accessible communications and reassure you that creating accessible publications and websites is not difficult!

## We can help your company

- To make information easier to understand for people with learning disabilities
- Use simplified text and pictures
- Pay attention to layout for visual accessibility
- Make information easy to share

### **The benefits of working with United Response to make your publications and website more accessible:**

- Exposure to a wider audience
- Develop goodwill in local communities or markets
- Improve customer loyalty and increase sales
- Offer good PR opportunities and generate positive publicity
- Demonstrate a positive impact around key social issues
- Association with a respected national charity, enhancing corporate social responsibility presence
- Training exactly tailored to your company's needs

**“The IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission) commissioned United Response to translate our ‘How to Make a Complaint’ Leaflet into an accessible format, originally aimed at people with learning difficulties. We were really pleased with the response which made the complex police complaints system into something that made sense. We’ve now taken some of the skills United Response taught us about communicating better and applied them to all of our leaflets - getting a very positive response from our stakeholders.”**

Nick Hardwick, Chair of the IPCC.

### **How can I find out more about increasing our market share by making my customer communications more accessible?**

Please contact Diane Lightfoot, Director of Fundraising and Communications on  
☎ 020 8246 5200,  
@ diane.lightfoot@unitedresponse.org.uk.

## Thank you!



[Back to Contents](#)



# Our stories

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**Jane** had severe mobility difficulties and could do little for herself. Then she moved into a United Response supported house. Now she goes horse riding and shopping. The service manager says that “her mobility has increased 100%. She even goes upstairs to do her washing, and shops for her toiletries.”

**Bob** used to keep all his possessions in a large bag, which he carried around with him for security and comfort; he had no confidence in the place he lived. He used to hurt himself because of frustration and confusion, but that doesn't happen now that he is supported by United Response. Bob loves animals and horse riding. He feeds birds and swans in the nearby lake. He also volunteers at a farm, where he looks after the rabbits.

**David** had little self-confidence, and no experience of managing his own money, as he had never had a job. He used to feel isolated and if someone said something negative to him, it would take a long time to pick himself back up. After David started work supported by United Response's employment scheme, he gained loads of confidence in himself and his abilities. He now enjoys socialising with his new friends and has the money to spend on his hobby, house music.

Before **James** was supported by United Response he lived in a residential care home. We helped him and his pet dog to move in to a shared house with two other men where he learnt to do many new things like shopping and preparing food, but as his confidence grew, his needs changed. We continued supporting James for many years before he shared a long-held dream with us – he told us that more than anything, he dreamt of owning his own home. He asked United Response to help so we gave him a list of things that he would need to do to make this happen. James contacted all the estate agents in his area to send him details of properties in his price range. James looked at more than thirty houses before he found his dream home. He now owns half the house and the other half is owned by United Response, but he says he feels as though it is all his!

James says **“I'm on cloud nine. I have the keys to my own house which has been my dream since I was 13. It took me a long time to get here, but it has all been worth it. I am so pleased with United Response. They are the best and they are going to continue to support me in my new home.”**





# The benefits of supporting United Response and what we can do for your company

## Positive media coverage for your company's support

We have an excellent communications team who will be happy to create a specially tailored PR package for your company. The PR team will work closely with your marketing team to do any of the following (all, of course, are optional):

- Make the biggest possible splash in national and trade magazines when announcing your support
- Introduce your spokespeople to key journalist contacts
- Work on stories that demonstrate the benefits your support will bring in
- Lend their expertise as to what charity-orientated press stories are likely to best serve your communications goals
- Work with you on press-focused case studies, opinion pieces, letters to editors and features targeting.

### Other benefits would be developed on a by project basis, but could include:

- Acknowledgement of your support on all relevant material and publications, with logos as appropriate
- Launch events, with the opportunity to showcase your own information and/or have an exhibition stand
- Inclusion of your company's information in our staff magazine, which goes out to over 2,000 named individuals every quarter
- Logo, branding and information on our website with links to your website
- Invitations to other United Response events, with opportunities for networking
- Other benefits could be explored as required.

## Effect on your business

- Visible and demonstrable corporate social responsibility policy
- Access to new audiences
- Improved corporate profile in the communities you work in
- Improved customer relationships by building goodwill, and strengthening brand perception by publicising your work with United Response
- Improved customer loyalty and an associated increase in sales.

## Association with a top 100 charity

- Your company will be seen to be working with one of the top 100 charities with an outstanding reputation.
- You will demonstrate your support by helping some of society's most vulnerable people.

## Dedicated fundraising team

We have an enthusiastic team on hand to help you in a number of ways:

### Account management

- We will work with you to get the best benefits for your business and for United Response, whilst staying true to our organisational values.

### Fundraising ideas

- Employees will be encouraged and supported to get involved with United Response through fundraising advice and support tailored to your company and staff team.

[Back to Contents](#)

## Merchandise

- Promotional items for your staff, such as balloons and pens can be provided to hand out at events, reinforcing positive publicity.

## Information about United Response

- As part of getting your employees and customers involved, we will provide you with as much information as you need and can deliver tailored presentations to your staff.

## Annual report and publications

- Reach a new audience with your brand by having your commitment to United Response acknowledged on our website and in publications like our annual review.

## Staff Motivation

- Volunteering is a great tool to motivate your employees. You could involve them in team building activities for the people United Response supports.
- Your staff will enjoy a sense of achievement knowing that they have contributed to an important and worthwhile cause.
- Boost employee morale and encourage team building.
- Your company can match the funds that your staff have raised, which will help motivate employees to meet their targets.



## Make a difference

- Last but by no means least, you will be making a positive impact around key social issues. You will be making a real difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities or mental health needs.



**Danielle works at Krumbs for 2 days a week, she enjoys it so much that she has asked to do another day. She works in the café, kitchen and does some housekeeping as well. She likes working in the kitchen best because she really enjoys preparing food. She is very good at pastry work and her favourite thing is to make quiches. Danielle is very good with the customers at the café. She can do all the tasks required of her with little support. She really enjoys using the till. Since starting at Krumbs, Danielle has gained confidence and is making lots of friends there.**

Danielle, Krumbs Cafe

[Back to Contents](#)



# Opportunities to help United Response make it happen

These are just some of the opportunities currently available – we would be delighted to discuss these or any other ideas you may have.

For all the opportunities mentioned, our team will work with you to implement them; make processes as easy as possible; help you promote schemes internally and answer staff questions; support you in organising promotional events and provide your company with as much information and support required to make your schemes successful.

## Payroll giving

Payroll giving is a very easy and cost effective way for your employees to give regular support to their favourite charities. It allows people to make regular donations directly from their pay packets before any tax has been deducted. If you pledge £10 from your gross salary, it will only cost £7.80 (at 22% tax rate) or £6.00 (at 40% tax rate).

If you pledge this much each month...	...and pay tax at 22% it will cost you:	...or if you pay tax at 40% it will cost you:
£1.00	£0.78	£0.60
£2.00	£1.56	£1.20
£5.00	£3.90	£3.00
£10.00	£7.80	£6.00



## And the good news is

The government has also introduced a Payroll Giving Quality Mark that rewards companies for making payroll giving available to their staff. All companies offering this cost effective and tax efficient fundraising method are awarded a quality mark to use in their literature. Companies that show excellence in promoting the scheme will be given bronze, silver and gold awards.



[Back to Contents](#)

## Charity of the year

A charity of the year partnership with United Response is a great way of demonstrating a caring image to customers, suppliers and the communities you work in. We guarantee a constructive working relationship that best fits your company and inspires your employees to take part in fun and rewarding initiatives. There are many exciting ways that your company can get involved, for example, through:

- Promoting payroll giving
- Taking part in fundraising challenges and events
- Community events in the localities you work in to generate profile and boost staff morale
- Running for us in the Flora London Marathon or other challenge events
- Volunteering

## A corporate donation

We welcome donations from companies or corporate trusts. We can use your funds where they are needed most, or your company can choose to support specific items or areas of work like:

### Inclusion

- Funding to train people with learning disabilities to train United Response staff so carers know how people want to be supported in their daily lives
- Funding for self advocacy groups so people can be supported to speak up for themselves
- Funding to support our work around financial inclusion that gives people with learning disabilities access to financial services and products
- Funding to help people with learning disabilities take part in activities in their local communities
- Funding to help people find work or join social enterprises
- Research into parents and young people with learning disabilities attitudes around employment opportunities

### Mental health

- Therapeutic art, poetry and photography projects

### Employment

- Training in work skills for people with learning disabilities
- Training people with mild learning disabilities to become social care workers like nursery assistants

### Gifts in kind

- One off donations
- Tax effective gifts such as share donations

**“We are pleased to be able to contribute to an EPOS machine for Krumbs Café in York as this will be a very practical way of helping these disadvantaged youngsters into useful local employment.”**

Chris Mason, Shepherd Group

[Back to Contents](#)



## Sponsoring United Response publications and events

United Response can work with your organisation to provide a sponsorship package that best suits your marketing needs. Your company could sponsor:

Leaflets – we produce a range of leaflets to promote our work and publicise the issues that people with learning disabilities or mental health needs often face.



Annual Review – this is sent to all our supporters and partnerships and used to promote our work. By sponsoring our annual review, we can spend more on projects for people with learning disabilities.



Your Link – the quarterly magazine written for 2000+ United Response staff. Sponsorship means publicity in a magazine with a wide circulation to a targeted group of people.



### Running events

Each year, United Response is involved in a number of events like the Flora London Marathon. This is a brilliant way to raise PR and brand profile, with your company's name on all promotional material, press releases, in mailings to runners and at the venue. The events themselves present good networking opportunities for you and your guests.

**“The newsletters were very informative and kept us updated, and email responses to queries were very quick. Amazing reception, making the day very special.”**  
United Response marathon runner

### Carol concerts

An extremely popular Christmas concert held at the beautiful St Peter's Church in Eaton Square, London. This is an annual event that approximately 500 people attend with over 100 housebound and elderly people across Greater London taking part via telephone conference call. The service includes contributions from people like United Response's President Martyn Lewis CBE and inspirational music groups made up of people with learning disabilities.



We also run many other one off events – contact us to find out more...

**“I am writing to tell you how very much I enjoyed the carol service from Eaton Square on Wednesday. It must have taken a great deal of planning and I could hear every word. Thank you again for a fine hour”.**

K M Loomes

[Back to Contents](#)

## Volunteering

### Help us beat isolation

Many people with learning disabilities lead very isolated lives. The national picture (based on statistics collected by the government in 2004) show that lots of people with learning disabilities only ever get to see people who are paid to be there. Only 44% of people with learning disabilities see their families nearly every week, while 19% never do. 69% have contact with friends - but that is only once a year. 31% do not have any contact with friends while 5% have no friends at all and never see their family.

We need volunteers to help out, by taking someone to the pub or sharing an interest that you may have, like music or art, for one or two hours a month. Building friendships with people who are not paid to look after you is a crucial step to improved self-confidence. Even more importantly, it can provide real steps that lead towards making genuine friends.

### Build your teams

Could your company benefit from team exercises that go just a bit further than basic raft building? United Response offers access to volunteering opportunities that change the lives of people with learning disabilities or mental health needs, as well as giving companies superb team-building opportunities. We need people to help us build sensory gardens, or to volunteer to befriend someone we support.

**“Staff from Fortis Investments really enjoyed clearing the garden at the United Response service in London. We worked hard laying the patio, making it easier for staff to maintain and for people to access the garden. It was great to meet some of the people United Response supports and we really enjoyed the day.”**

Richard Wohanka, Chief Executive,  
Fortis Investments Ltd.

**“We couldn’t wait to get stuck in. There were plenty of volunteers and we think we achieved a lot for the residents over the weekend. We all worked really hard but left with huge smiles on our faces and with a lot of satisfaction at a job well done.”**

Maureen Richardson, Co-op.

## Employment

### Secondment opportunities

Would you like to develop your staff's skills and set them new challenges whilst helping a charity? United Response would welcome any secondment opportunities to help with our business development - for example, helping to get local social enterprises up and running to provide meaningful employment for people with learning disabilities – perhaps for the first time in their lives.

Barbara, an employee at UR Sorted, our mailing and fulfilment company, started working with us last year and received her first ever pay cheque, at the age of 75!

### Why not contact UR Sorted for your mailing needs?

Please contact Sharron McIndoe on  
☎ 07875 736 341  
@ ur.sorted@unitedresponse.org.uk

### Personalised Christmas cards

United Response has teamed up with a publisher to provide a range of Christmas cards for companies. For every card sold, United Response receives a 50p royalty. You can choose from thirty cards and personalise the greeting and include your company name and logo, signatures and contact details.

**“In the last five years 75% of the people United Response supports with severe learning disabilities have become more independent. I think this is outstanding”**

Professor Jim Mansell, Director, Tizard Centre,  
University of Kent



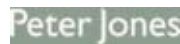
**“I fold up the magazines and put them in the envelopes. I put the address on the front and then stick on the stamps. I just enjoy it all.”**

Barbara, UR Sorted employee



# Current and previous corporate supporters





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**If you have any questions about United Response  
and how we could help you achieve your corporate  
aims, please contact the fundraising team:**

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-  Call Laura Golland on 020 8246 5221
-  Email [laura.golland@unitedresponse.org.uk](mailto:laura.golland@unitedresponse.org.uk)
-  United Response,  
113-123 Upper Richmond Road, Putney  
London SW15 2TL
-  [www.unitedresponse.org.uk](http://www.unitedresponse.org.uk)

United Response is a charity registered with the Charity Commission  
and a company limited by guarantee.

Charity Number: 265249

Company Number: 01133776