Helping people with upper limb differences live life beyond limits

Within Reach

Summer 2025 | ISSUE 159

Front cover star Sophie

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For details contact reach@reach.org.uk or your local branch coordinator

Hello!

From the Editor & Designer of withinReach

Reach's magazine proudly shares the stories and lived experiences of the Reach community and it only grows stronger with every issue because of YOU; your heartfelt contributions, unbelievable fundraising and the dedication of Reach's volunteers. Enjoy this summer 2025 issue and if you have suggestions for future articles please get in touch at withinreach@reach.org.uk.

Your Within Reach creators, Max & Tom

Reach Membership

Membership is open to parents of children with upper limb difference, and individuals of 18 years and over. By joining Reach, you gain access to a supportive community, resources that we hope will enrich your life and the opportunity to participate on your terms:

The UK and Ireland subscription is £35 annually, £18 bi-annually, or £9 quarterly and the Full Overseas subscription is £40.

Views expressed in Within Reach are not necessarily those of Reach and are not intended to reflect or constitute Reach policy, or in any way portray an official view.

EVENT

Stay up to date

All event news is on our website www.reach.org.uk and facebook page www.facebook.com/reachcharity.

Meet our Wonderful Branch Coordinators

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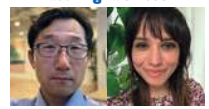

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Support your branch!

You don't have to be a branch coordinator to help organise events and meet-ups. If you know of a venue, sports club or hall that would be perfect for a private meet-up and you're keen to help but can't commit to the role of branch coordinator, no problem, help your local BC by simply making that first contact with a venue or getting a quote for an event. Don't underestimate how important your help can be. Get in touch with your local branch or the Reach team at reach@reach.org.uk.

Schools out for the Summer!

As I write this the sun is coming out after a rather stormy start in the Lake District for RAW 2025. Eight wonderful mentors, for three of them their first time mentoring but not their first experience of RAW as all three came as children, are there with 35 young people and RAW Lead, Claire Hermon who has been involved with RAW for 25 years!

Together they are exploring and enjoying the beautiful Cumbrian countryside, somewhere that I saw for the very first time in July when I went along to the magical North West Family Weekend, and what a weekend it was. It was so lovely to meet all the families, see Chris and Lindsay in action as youth workers, event organisers, quiz hosts and friends, joined by RAW Mentor and Reach member Louise they made every one of us feel so welcome: "We had a smashing time…thanks to everyone who makes this happen…and mother nature for the top-notch weather. Take care everyone. X". Chris and Lindsay weren't alone, since the spring as part of our Regional Family Weekend (RFW) Programme, our Branch Coordinators in Scotland, South Wales and, for the first time ever, East Anglia 'made it happen' for 35 families - 130 people across the UK - thank you to them and everyone that got behind them; running, dog-walking, sewing, climbing, singing, the difference you have made is writ large in the pictures we have been posting on our social media forums.

It might be the RFW bug is infectious, with the venue for Reach On the Beach South Wales 2026 already booked, East Anglia keen to repeat and other branches wanting to join in, e.g. Northern Ireland where this summer Reach member Tracey Atkinson will run her 9th race for Reach this year, along with 11 compatriots, at the County Antrim Coastal Half Marathon. All funds raised by Tracey and friends will kickstart the RFW Northern Ireland in 2026! Thank you everyone for making the Reach community one of the most vibrant communities I have ever known.

All the best,

SJ

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Welcome to the Summer edition of Within Reach

The last quarter has been so busy and so exciting that it is hard to keep up. Still, it's a good complaint when we have so many Branch Coordinators (BCs) and so many of our young adults taking the initiative and organising events for the benefit of all our members.

Last year we discussed with our Branch Coordinators the idea of bringing "Reach" closer to their members where they live. It's not realistic to expect every family to attend the Annual Family Weekend every year for both economic and logistical reasons. If we can make the "Reach experience" available at local level for more member families, then we will have achieved more meaningful benefit for Reach and its members.

We are so proud of our volunteer Branch Coordinators as four Regional Family Weekends (RFWs) have now been delivered in Abernathy Outdoor Centre, Scotland, Reach-on-the-beach at YHA Gower in South Wales, Hilltop Activity Centre in Norfolk East Anglia, and Patterdale Hall in Cumbria. The feedback from families on our social media is so positive and so enthusiastic, considering our BCs delivered a family event for their members in their part-time role, ably assisted by the Reach Team. Well done to Mags, Iain & Liz, Melissa and Sian, Jay and Navdeep, and Chris and Lindsay.

And there's more ... we are being pulled between supporting new RFWs in other branch areas and supporting repeat events in the four RFWs already delivered. What a good complaint to have? Thank you for your enthusiastic support for your members. Very often it is the informal get-togethers that are so beneficial to new families than the formal speeches at national events. At the local level, strong friendships are formed, both by parents and children, and as we are witnessing with the young adults coming back to Reach, those friendships, formed at Branch meetups and RAW Reach Activity Week, are lifelong unbreakable bonds.

In a charity as small as Reach, it is due to the contributions of volunteers that we can deliver as many events as we do. The newly joined young adults are very progressive and willing to give their time and their lived experience to help members younger than themselves. The number of young adult volunteers coming back and offering to help with social media, RAW, Branch meetups – not to mention admin and member support functions – is very rewarding for those that have been involved for so long. A huge thanks is due to them for their energy and enthusiasm. It makes us very confident that the future of Reach will be in good hands. Buckle up and be prepared to be amazed at the new projects they are undertaking – Reaching Out, Young Persons Advisory Group, Podcasts and loads more. Watch this space!

Make a note on the calendar for the Annual Family Weekend in Swansea for 17th – 19th October. If you cannot attend in person, please follow us online, thanks to James Jones, our Audio-Visual wizard who makes us look amazing – another young adult giving us his professional expertise for the love of Reach.

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The first seeds of Reaching Out are being sown... Introducing Reach's Young Person's Advisory Group!

Are you aged 17–25 and passionate about making a difference in Reach?

We're setting up a Young Person's Advisory Group (YPAG) at Reach, and we want you in the room.

This is your chance to have a real voice in how Reach evolves, helping shape our work as we grow to support not just children and families, but adults too. You'll meet face-to-face with other driven, creative young people (aged 17–25), and work with our Trustee Board to share your ideas and influence the future of Reach.

It's also a fantastic opportunity to build experience, develop leadership and communication skills, and boost your CV. Whether you're exploring future career options, want to gain insight into how charities work, or are just eager to make an impact, this role will help you grow and learn as you go.

In-person meetings mean you'll form genuine connections, have deeper conversations, and avoid the usual Zoom fatigue. We'll cover your travel expenses, so there's no cost to being involved!

The group will be chaired by Trustee Ella Dickinson, and we're looking for a diverse mix of voices and experiences to help shape a better Reach for future generations.

Interested or have any questions? Email Ella at ellad@reach.org.uk or message us through our social media accounts - we'd love to hear from you.

The Big Give Christmas Fundraiser

We have entered the BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge....

To help the funds you raise for Reach, reach further....

Every pound you raise could be doubled as part of the BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge!

1. What are we fundraising for?

Reach Further will enable three Reach Family Focused Project Strands in 2026: The Regional Family Weekend Programme, RAW and our new Liaison Nurse Pilot that has gone into development this year.

2. What do we have to do?

If we can raise £10K during Christmas Challenge Week, and we are lucky enough to be chosen by the Big Give (we find out in October), all donations will be doubled by Big Give Champions and our Pledgers - please note if we are not chosen all funds raised will still go toward our 3 projects - so it's a win-win!

Christmas Challenge BigGive

The Big Give Christmas Challenge Week runs from Tuesday the 02 December to Tuesday the 09 December 2025

Could you/would you take on a challenge during the first week in December to raise funds for local family weekends across the UK, Reach Activity Week for young people, and our new Liaison Nurse Pilot. It could be a Bake Sale at school, a Carol Concert, a Christmas Sewing Bee, a sponsored run, walk, hop, even a cold-water swim – whatever floats your boat! Perhaps you might coordinate with your local Reach branch to spread the word about the Big Give and encourage donations in your area?

To find out more about the Big Give visit:
https://biggive.org/christmas-challenge/

To find out more about Reaching Further and our Big Give campaign contact: SJ sarah-janel@reach.org.uk
M: 07932 747 652.

Please help our volunteers reach further this Christmas.

Interested or have any questions? Email Ella at ellad@reach.org.uk or message us through our social media accounts - we'd love to hear from you.

Reach further

Thank you!!

From every member of the Reach team, we'd like to say thank you to Hannah Harrington, our South London branch coordinator who is stepping back after arranging some fabulous events for her local Reach community, the last, this summer, bringing 12 Reach families together to enjoy a potluck picnic – thank you Hannah, we will miss you!

Another BIG thank you, this time to another Hannah Harrington this time in Kent who has been 'holding the fort' with Reach Volunteer, Lesley Goodfellow, running wonderful events for us over the past two years. We now welcome Kent's newest branch coordinators, Charlotte and Richard. Meet them on page 3

Winner Arla's unforgettable day with GBT!

Steve Green, Manager of New Sport Projects at GB Taekwondo told us all about Arla's winning experience:

"At last year's Annual Family Weekend, Arla Phinbow was the winner of the silent auction; her prize, to meet Amy Truesdale at the National Taekwondo Centre, followed by tickets to watch the Senior event at the British Open.

On 21st March GB Taekwondo welcomed Arla and her family for this incredible experience and while there are no immediate plans for Arla to take up the sport, it was a wonderful day surrounding Arla with upper-limb different individuals who happen to be athletes, and giving her a genuinely memorable experience meeting Amy at the National Centre.

Amy Truesdale PLY MBE, Beth Munro PLY, Matt Bush PLY and Joe Lane PLY were all there, Sarah Stevenson-Jennings MBE (our very first Olympic medallist from Beijing 2008) also did a meet and greet.

Tate Willis (England Football Amputee Squad, goalie and captain of the team representing England Lionesses at the Amputee World Cup in November 24 in Colombia) was also there training with us, so we had no fewer than five upper limb different individuals with Arla.

We spent lunch together and shared candid conversations, from Rhiannon and Rich's pregnancy experience with Arla, to sharing of what names Arla, Amy, Beth and Tate give their limb differences. In the afternoon we even managed to get Arla and Dylan in to see the BMX track at British Cycling, and I took Dylan to get some snaps outside the Etihad stadium (Manchester City's football stadium) before I dropped the family off at their hotel."

Congratulations!

Eliot (aged 5) has just passed his first mixed martial arts grading and his family are very proud of him and his hard work. He has moved from a white belt to a white/red belt after only being in the class for around 8 weeks.

Award-winning Luca's tennis journey continues!

In addition to playing mainstream LTA tournaments Luca has explored Para-standing Tennis, a format of tennis for people with physical limb differences such as limb loss, difference or cerebral palsy who play tennis competitively without the use of a wheelchair. Whilst relatively new in the UK its popularity is growing fast. In June this year, having won the junior event in Surrey and reaching the finals in doubles, Luca was invited to the World Championships in Barcelona, playing singles and doubles with adults, where he was the recipient of an award for youngest player of the tournament.

In Luca's words, "I made a lot of friends, and got a lot of inspiration and confidence from playing people with differences just like me at a high level and it pushed me on to see how far I can take this sport".

Go Luca!

Reach on the Beach 2025: Sunshine, Surf & Spirit

By Melissa Beesley

As the first cars pulled up to Borfa House on Friday afternoon, the excitement was already bubbling. Sian, Mel, and Bethan were first through the door, quickly filling up the kitchen with everything from food shopping to generous donations from local producers. There was a shared sense of anticipation in the air–would this weekend be as magical as last year? Would the Welsh weather hold out?

One by one, the Reach members began to arrive, quickly finding their rooms and slipping back into the familiar rhythm of chatter, games, and laughter—as though no time had passed since our last gathering. The house was alive again, filled with joyful noise and familiar faces.

Saturday: Sea, stories & sweet treats

Saturday morning dawned a little chilly, but that didn't stop us. After a hearty self-made breakfast, we wrapped up warm and headed down to the beach. The tide was out, revealing rock pools perfect for exploring. Children and adults alike got stuck into beach art, with our now-iconic "Reach on the Beach" sign taking centre stage once again.

After a quick sandwich lunch back at the hostel, we set off to the Gower Heritage Centre, where we were swept into the eerie tales of Old Moll. The stories told by Rachel Webb of Inspire U had us hooked, and the creativity continued as we painted and crafted beautiful pieces with Katie Kneath, one of the talented local artists.

By late afternoon, we were back at Borfa, greeted by the wonderful Sally Cupcake and her magical Thermomix. With the help of some very enthusiastic young chefs, she whipped up a round of delicious soup starters. Then out came chilli, jacket potatoes, and finally—Sally's legendary puddings and cakes. Every dish was met with joy (and groans of being "too full" that were quickly ignored).

As parents melted into the sofas, kids kept the energy going with card games before we all slowly drifted off to bed.

Sunday: Surf, scenery & sunset feasts

Sunday began with breakfast and a beach walk led by Sian, winding over sand and pebbles. Some of us stayed near the Salt House to explore, while the more adventurous climbed the narrow paths up to Port Eynon Point, rewarded with stunning views and windswept smiles.

Lunch was a quick affair back at the hostel before we set off again—this time to Caswell Bay, where we reunited with our friends at Surfability. Wetsuits were wriggled into (those little blue booties made this task a sinch) and after a round of instructions, it was time to hit the waves. Laughter, splashes, and moments of triumph filled the beach as first-timers and seasoned surfers took on the sea.

Back at Borfa House, exhaustion had set in, but thankfully dinner was a no-fuss, joy-filled chip shop supper—freshly cooked by the brilliant Captain's Table. Fish, sausages, curry sauce…and just enough room for ice cream. This was followed by a fun-filled raffle, henna tattoos and more games before everyone settled in for the night.

Monday: Goodbyes & garden photos

The final morning came too soon. The smell of bacon sandwiches filled the house as everyone pitched in to pack up and tidy the place that had once again become the venue for a lovely weekend. We took one last group photo in the garden—sun-kissed, windswept, and happy—before saying goodbye (for now).

Volunteers shaping Reach communities

One of the truly special things about Reach is that all the branch coordinators are volunteers; Reach parents, family members or members themselves, taking it upon themselves to fly the Reach flag in their area.

Every BC brings something different to the role, professional and personal skills that lend themselves to organising such events. Steadfast Reach ambassadors, BCs give their time to support, help and arrange meet-ups for fellow Reach members; this forges friendships and unbreakable support groups for members when they need it, which in turn continues to shape and grow the formidable Reach community.

Which is why we must celebrate them all!

Reach's NEW Volunteers in Kent!

WR recently caught up with new Kent branch coordinators, Richard and Charlotte. As Reach parents, they saw the benefit of attending meet-ups when their daughter turned aged 7 and began to ask questions about her upper limb difference. Noticing a need for dedicated coordinators in their area they put themselves forward and now begin their journey as BCs with ideas and plans for their future meet-ups, both bringing their own skills and experience to the role.

We wish them the greatest luck and took the opportunity to introduce them to the wonderful Reach community…

Hi Richard and Charlotte, for those who don't know you, please could you introduce yourselves and share a bit about your family's connection to Reach.

We are Rich and Charlotte and are going to be Branch Coordinators for Kent. We first went to a Reach event in Tunbridge Wells – to a dry ski slope. Our daughter was born with an upper limb difference, and until the age of 7, we had not considered attending anything. However, when she got to the age of 7, she began to ask more questions and seemed keen to meet others with a similar hand to hers. It was lovely to meet other parents who also had a child with an upper limb difference.

What motivated you to take on the role of branch coordinators? What do you think you'll bring to the role of BCs as a couple?

We saw how positive the meet ups were for our daughter and we were aware there wasn't a dedicated person for our area. We have lots of ideas for the group and we hope to engage with many families.

How do you hope to support other families through your branch?

We hope to provide a space where children and families can get together and feel safe to explore how they feel, give each other advice, as well as signposting to help, as well as having lots of fun. Friendships, we feel, are key for both children and adults.

Do you have any particular plans or ideas for gatherings, activities, or ways to bring members together?

We have ideas in terms of activities such as treasure hunts, 'get to know you' games. We would also like to explore different venues that would be good to meet.

How would you like new families to feel when they come along to their first event?

Understandably, families may feel apprehensive about attending their first event. It is within our role to greet them and try to help them feel comfortable. This could be through introducing them to others in the group or directing them to activities.

Lastly, what message would you like to share with members 'meeting you' in Within Reach magazine for the first time?

We want people to know that we are here to talk. That everyone is wanted and included. The space we provide is nurturing and safe.

Your Reach Branches!

You don't have to be a BC to fundraise or help arrange events. If you have ideas or skills that could be helpful to your local BC, get in touch with them. They're juggling work and life just like everyone else and they need support sometimes too.

The branch in Northern Ireland want to hold their own Regional Family Weekend, so members have been fundraising!

Tracey Atkinson took 'running for Reach' to the next level by pledging '12 Races 12 months 12 countries', to spread awareness of Reach to families who haven't yet discovered the charity, and to raise money for NI's first ever family weekend.

Rebecca and James, seeing Tracey's fundraising, hopped on the running train and organised their own fundraising run for Reach to support the effort to fund the NI branch's first ever Regional Family Weekend, with hopes of one coming together in 2026!

https://www.justgiving.com/page/tracey-atkinson-1 https://www.justgiving.com/page/james-lindsay-1

Catch up with Melita on the radio!

The youngest presenter on Cheshire's Mix 56, 10-year-old Reach member Melita is taking Cheshire's fastest growing local music station by storm and loving her role as presenter on 'Kids Live at 5'. We caught up with Melita to find out how this amazing opportunity came about and how she works with mum Mika to write the show.

Melita, congratulations on your new role, how did you feel when you found out you'd be hosting Kids Live at 5?

Thank you! I felt so happy because the role could have been given to anybody in the team and I felt so lucky that I was chosen. But I also felt a little bit nervous because it's a big job.

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? What do you enjoy doing when you're not on the radio?

I really like being creative and I discovered a new skill last year - crocheting. I love it! It helps me to relax and exercise my hands too. I also really like drawing and reading, as well as performing in shows with my Stage School. The last show we did was Annie and it was so much fun. I was cast as the chauffeur.

You're just 10 years old which means you're the youngest presenter on Cheshire's Mix 56 — that's awesome! How did the opportunity come about?

Elizabeth, the first presenter on the show, was leaving for university. I had already been part of the reporting team since I was 8 and had been sending a 40 second audio in for the show every week for 2 years. Elizabeth's mum, the show's producer, said she thought I would be great as the new presenter and asked if my mummy would like to take over her role too. It's a lot of work, but a great opportunity for me, so my mummy agreed to learn the ropes.

For those who haven't heard the show yet, can you tell us what Kids Live at 5 is all about, and what kind of things can listeners expect to hear when they tune in?

Cheshire's Mix 56 is currently the only radio station in the country that dedicates a whole hour-long show to kids AND features reports by kids only. The team consists of 30+ children between the ages of 4 and 16. It may even be the only show in the world (as far as we know). Every week there is a new theme! We share facts, stories, and tips. We play catchy pop tunes and great music that works well with each theme. The second half of the show has regular features such as a book review, local night sky/ space facts, dinosaur facts, local sports report and a weekly joke. As well as a feature called Young at Heart where a grown-up shares some advice with the younger generation. Briony May Williams and Claire Cashmore have both been guests on the show for this feature and we have Alex Brooker joining us soon too!

How do you prepare before you go live? Do you help come up with the ideas for each show?

Actually, the show is pre-recorded. I always giggle that it would sound funny if it was called "Kids Pre-recorded for 5". The real name is much catchier, don'tcha think!? It might not be live, but I do still prepare for recording with some funny voice warm ups. Some names and words I have to say are big tongue twisters!

Mummy and I choose the themes each week and send a message out to the team on WhatsApp. They let us know what they plan to say and then send us their recordings by the following week. My mummy arranges everything into a good order with songs that we choose together. She has to check everything fits into the timing of the show and then I record my links. Finally, we send the plan and audio files over to the amazing tech guy, Alex, who mixes it all together ready for airing each Sunday at 5pm.

Since presenting, do you have a favourite moment or segment from your time on the show so far?

My favourite moment was getting invited to review driving lessons for Kids with the Young Driver Scheme. My fellow radio reporter (and BFF) Beno and I each got to try out lessons for under 17s in a real car! It was amazing! I used a steering ball which was really cool. I even got to drive up to 40mph and parallel park!

Hosting a radio show sounds really fun but also like a big responsibility! What's the most challenging part of being a presenter for you?

Recording lots of links in one go can sometimes mean a few "Ox-car moments." That's what Mummy and I call the outtakes! One of the longest show links is of me introducing the regular reporters and one of those reporters is Space Oscar who tells us an amazing space fact each week. When I'm saying his name, I sometimes get really tongue-twisted and say 'Ox-car' instead! I then get the giggles!

Some of the other names and words I've stumbled over have made my mummy and I laugh for ages before we could start recording again. We have a whole folder of audio outtakes on our computer that are hilarious.


Melita at Deva Fest, where she found herself on the main stage with the radio team, facing a crowd of around 5,000 people!

Are you off to any star-studded radio events this summer?

Just this month I had the amazing opportunity to join the radio team at Deva Fest at Cholmondeley Castle and had a moment on stage introducing the headline acts. I even got to go back stage! It was so exciting".

Who are your role models — in the radio world or in life?

Obviously, my mummy, just because she is the best person that I have ever known. She manages everything really well in her own way, so I know that I can too.

Another role model has to be Briony May Williams. I really like her cheerful presenting style. She really is fab. And Alex Brooker too because, well, he's #comedygoals and a really natural, and relatable presenter.

What advice would you give to other young Reach people who might be dreaming of working in radio or tv?

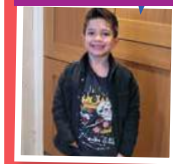
Just go for it! But always have multiple hobbies so that one thing doesn't take over all your thoughts. It's good to have a lot of hobbies as the things you learn from each one will always help you with the other ones in some way.

Where do you see yourself in a few years — still on the radio, or maybe trying something new?

I'd like to continue with radio presenting and discovering new music forever, even if it's just in my spare time. Music makes every day better.

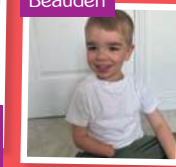
Welcome to Reach

Alfie is 6 years old and enjoys playing football & climbing with brothers, Logan & Ruben.

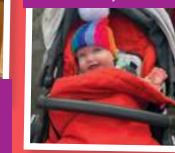


Ashe is 5 years old and loves playing outside and helping to look after her 2 dogs, Douglas and Pepper.

Beauden

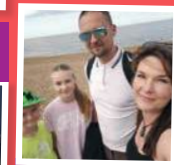


Carter is 7 years old with radial dysplasia. He's such a happy boy and never lets anything get him down.



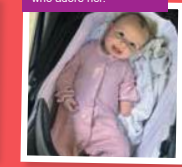
Cleo This is our beautiful daughter, she was born with symbrachydactyly affecting her left hand. We're so happy to have found a welcoming and supportive community with Reach, and look forward to the future with this wonderful charity.

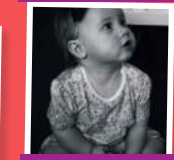
Cuan loves football, animals (especially dogs), and being outside.



Ezmae Hi, I'm 12 and part of the Co-op Juniors Theatre Company. I love life at home with my mum, dad, little bro, and my dog Fabio.

Harper is 4 months old, and has 3 big sisters who adore her.

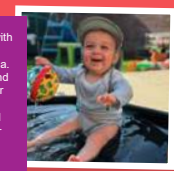




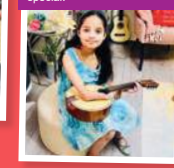
Heidi This is my lovely daughter Heidi Halliday, who turned one on the 24th of May.

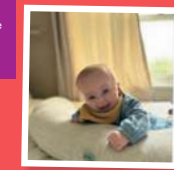
May She loves the colour orange, laughs when you tickle her feet, and is very snuggly. May was born with an underdeveloped right hand. She has 3 little nubbins, an index finger, and a thumb.

Noah Hi! I was born with an upper limb difference called ulnar hand dysplasia. I've learned to crawl around and love chasing my sister Isabella – she makes me giggle a lot! My family and I are excited to meet other Reach members over the next few years.



Noya My daughter is a bright, independent 9-year-old with phocomelia of her right hand. She does well at school, tackles things on her own, and only asks for help when needed. Noya is learning the mandoline, enjoys camogie, and her determination makes her truly special.





Wren Our little girl was born with a congenital hand difference – we think it makes Wren special and unique. She was born with just two digits (a thumb and one finger) fused together on her right hand. This will not hold her back – she'll adapt and even show us a thing or two.

Make it Monthly

Visit Reach.org.uk, click 'Support us', then select 'Make this a monthly donation' and follow PayPal's instructions.

PayPal

Monthly Donations

Annette Gabbedey Goldsmiths £5

£10 Heather Nash

Jonathan McGee £10

Donations

£100 Bobby
Award and donation given for services as a buddy for the Suicide Prevention Service

High Peak Comps £500

£5 Christine Honeywill
The audience were deeply touched by the foundation of Reach

Suzanne Appleyard £50
In celebration of Fraser's grandparents Golden Wedding Anniversary

£50 Tim Mosey
Aka Robopug, donating his 2nd place winnings from the Ghetto Gang Charity Fantasy Football League

Tracey and India Atkinson £306
NI Rave Runs

£294 Dean Close Foundation

Sandra £260
Asked for donations for her 80th birthday instead of presents

£50 Carol Hitchmough
My granddaughter Rosie Byrne ran the London Marathon and in recognition wanted my donation to go to Reach. Ella Dickinson, a Trustee of Reach is also my Granddaughter

Helen and Neil McDonnagh £30
Neil Ran the Belin Marathon

£10 Vicky Glanville
In memory of Frank Letch

£200 Puvvada A & J Appleton Ladies

Dysnet / Raggiungere £100
In memory of Frank Letch

£51 Eoin Kelly

Moose International £300
Friends and associates of Frank Letch. In memory of Frank Letch

£500 Sally Blake
Thank you for making such a difference to my brother when he was little

Fundraising

China Bond £1030
Hampton Court Palace Half Marathon in March

£1100 Rebecca Nelson & James Lindsay
Lisburn fun run

Jason Johns, Jon Wright, Reuben Knott & The Lowson Family £2350
Took part in a variety of running events to raise funds for Reach's Northwest Family Weekend

In Memory Gifting

By Lesley Goodfellow

There are so many ways to fundraise for Reach, and one that's not talked about much is 'In Memory Gifting'. This can be a great way to do something positive and it can be uplifting to reflect on a loved ones outlook on life or perhaps how they encouraged you or someone in your family. Only 20% of families know their loved ones' preferred charity for donation, the cause that matters most to them, so it's definitely a conversation to have!

Frank Letch, long standing supporter, chairman, trustee and ambassador for Reach, chose Reach as one of two charities he wanted to have friends and family support in his memory. His wife Natalia has kindly written the following words:

'Thank You for Supporting Reach in Memory of Frank William Letch MBE. I would like to express my deepest thanks to all who so generously donated to Reach in his memory.

Frank dedicated his life to public service, inclusion, and equality. As a long-standing supporter of Reach, a charity close to his heart, he championed the rights and opportunities of children with upper limb differences. Your kind contributions not only honour his legacy but also continue the work he cared so deeply about.

Every donation made in Frank's name will help to support families, provide resources, and give children the confidence and encouragement to live life to the full.

Thank you for helping me celebrate his memory in such a meaningful way.'

We also chose to raise funds for Reach in memory of my Mum recently, and this led us to talk for the first time about the impact on the wider family of a child - me - arriving with an ULD. It was surprising how many stories from the past this revealed, and it was good to reflect on the strength that Mum showed in her unwavering love and support whilst always encouraging me to 'just do my own thing in my own way.' I wonder how it would have been different for her if Reach had existed back then and she had found that crucial early support and community that Reach now offer?

I know that the £900 we have so far raised for Reach via the online tribute page, so quickly and easily set up for me by our funeral directors, will all be used to help shape the future of our Reach community.

Julie Detheridge £530
Regency 10k, Coventry 10K and coffee, cake and craft sale that her mum held in June

£1575 Kirsty Mackenzie's office at National Grid
Raised money by completing Couch to 5k, raffles, bake sales and our office tuck shop

£555 John
Norwich 10k

Kit £54
organised a cake stand in his primary school.

25 years of RAW | Frank Letch's unforgettable legacy

Max Swinhoe

Frank saw a need for Reach children to "connect, face new challenges and push themselves"

It began as the 'Camp 2000 Project' which would become the activity week we now know and love.

I recently pored over 25 years of Within Reach magazines to gather photos and feelings from the past quarter of a century, delving into the wonderful legacy that Frank left us…

Frank felt that Reach's young people, the 10+ year old members, needed time together to play, try new activities and grow in confidence. The idea of a Reach activity week was born, but the charity needed funding. Frank began raising awareness, sought donations from high and low, and in the run-up to 2000, Frank campaigned tirelessly. In WR 1999 he shared, " I have been dashing around Devon giving my 'Feet first' talk and raising money for our Camp 2000 project."

Wonderfully in 2000, Sue Stokes announced the good news, that the camp was going ahead!

"25 children over the age of 10 have already reserved places for an event which will include sailing, climbing, archery, canoeing, pony-riding, abseiling, dancing, socialising, and much more."

Frank's fundraising continued into the summer of 2000:

"On the 19th May I am off to the House of Lords, this time the guest of the Calvert Trust who are helping us with our camp 2000."

Finally, on the 5th August 2000, at the Calvert Trust Centre at Keilder in Northumberland, forty campers arrived for the week, including a youth group from Hungary, and the rest is history.

Year after year, funds were raised and the Reach kids had this wonderful week to look forward to.

Lifelong friendships were made in that first week, and they've continued to be forged year on year ever since. A week that was and is so much more than children with upper limb differences abseiling and climbing – it's a week of learning from each other, observing, sharing and being 100% themselves. RAW invites an unexplainable feeling of connection; a space of complete acceptance, no questions of how or why, no stares, but plenty of looks of awe and interest. Inspiration in its organic form. Young and old, all in it together.

RAW thoughts

Louise Devlin was at the very first camp. 25 years on, Louise is an adult member and mentor...

"I was recently reminded of my time attending RAW as a 12-year-old, when Max sent me the article from 2000 written by Reach legend Frank Letch — who I have very fond memories of. The article, about the first ever RAW at the Calvert Trust Centre had a quote from 12-year-old me saying: 'I was very scared climbing up the tower, but the instructor Addie made me feel safe!'"

Life can be scary for a limb-different person — and not just when climbing to great heights, but in navigating the world day to day. A safe space is what RAW gave me, and what Reach as an organisation continues to provide for children and adults alike.

There's nothing quite like being surrounded by people who can relate to your life experience in a way that limb-typical folk simply cannot. It was true for me as a young person, and it was true again when I was warmly welcomed back as a mentor in 2023 and 2024.

I love that the young people who attend now can keep in touch through social media, with albums on their smartphones to flick through in years to come. I hope they'll stay connected to the Reach community, as I believe it will help equip them with the confidence to embrace their difference out in the world.

I only attended one RAW before becoming a teenage girl who wasn't so interested in identifying as a one-handed person or drawing attention to that aspect of myself. Because of that, I never attended again. But it was a part of my journey — and it's why I'm so keen to encourage members to get involved and stay involved!

I have hazy but treasured memories of the friends I made there. I remember a girl called Danielle — she didn't wear a prosthetic (I wore a cosmetic one at the time), had tanned skin, and long dark hair she could whip into a ponytail herself. I thought she was the coolest! Another lovely friend, Clare, with a short brown bob, was sweet and kind. We remained pen pals for a while. She would send me posters of my favourite band, Steps, torn from Smash Hits magazine, and I'd reciprocate with posters of 5ive. (We were quite the cool cats.) I lost touch with both of them as the years passed — I can't remember why. House moves, growing up, life.

When Max sent me that old article, I remembered Danielle abseiling down an outdoor climbing wall on the front cover. Two minutes later, she sent me the very photo I'd pictured— my friend from 25 years ago, mid-descent. It took me straight back to Calvert, and the admiration I felt for my Reach friends there. A quiet reminder of how some people and moments never really leave you.

If you've ever thought about attending RAW, or encouraging someone you care for to attend, I can only say: do it! You never know whose face, words, or encouragement will stay with you for the next 25 years.

"[RAW] changed my life in the best way; confidence, tenacity, determination, courage, compassion, and of course I had the MOST fun! A place where you are the norm for once. Nothing is considered "odd" or unusual because we all get it and can all learn and grow from each other." Emily Tisshaw

Nurse Liaison Project Update

Ruth Lester

Emma Gilpin

As a result of the Parental Experience Survey which many of you contributed to a couple of years ago, we are excited to announce that Reach has obtained funding to support a years' project to:

1. Improve the knowledge and communication between first healthcare responders, new parents and specialists at the time of the surprising news that a newborn baby has a limb difference
2. Raise awareness of Reach and improve access for all new parents
3. To provide for extra support for new Reach parents
4. Mentor Reach Branch Co-ordinators who support new parents voluntarily

Our very own Emma Gilpin – has agreed to step up and help us one day a week, with the hope of starting in September. Emma is a Reach mum and an experienced children's nurse who brings both personal understanding and professional insight to this new role within the charity.

When Emma found out during pregnancy that their son would be born with an upper limb difference, it came as a complete shock. She says: "I remember it so clearly, all the questions, the fears, the not knowing what it would mean for him or for us as a family. It was knowing about Reach that helped us see things differently and reminded us that we weren't alone."

Alongside her lived experience, Emma has spent many years working with children and families in all sorts of healthcare settings, from intensive care to community services and everything in between. She's seen first-hand how powerful early support and good communication can be for families receiving unexpected news.

> "It was knowing about Reach that helped us see things differently and reminded us that we weren't alone."

In this new role as Reach Liaison Nurse, Emma will be helping to raise awareness of Reach within the NHS, supporting new parents, and working closely with healthcare professionals to make those early conversations more informed, compassionate, and consistent. She believes that professional education, early intervention, and clear signposting are key to improving the experience for families.

Emma continues, "This project means a lot to me, both professionally and personally. It's a chance to really make a difference, and hopefully make things just a little easier for the next family."

We will start by surveying the Obstetric units around the country and ask where they currently get their information on upper limb differences from – and then feed back to them and help improve their training etc.

Working together with the NHS, Reach is in a unique position to improve the experience for all new parents.

Do let us know if you have any further thoughts on this project.

You are welcome to contact Ruth Lester, our trustee, who is a retired Consultant Plastic Surgeon with many years of experience of working with children with upper limb differences and their families, and continues to have contact with the healthcare professionals involved in this project. Ruthl@reach.org.uk.

The story behind Finn's Jig

In 2022 Laura and her family were at Sidmouth Folk Festival where a chance encounter with Honey & The Bear turned into a wonderful tale of connection, understanding and representation.

Within Reach chatted to Laura (Mum of Finn) and the band for both sides of this very special story...

Laura, how did your wonderful connection with Honey & The Bear begin and how did Finn's Jig come about?

We started following Honey & The Bear back in lockdown. At the time, Danny—Finley's dad—was living in Great Yarmouth, and we were in a long-distance relationship. We used to watch their Facebook Live gigs every Sunday evening, together but from opposite ends of the country. It became our way of feeling connected despite the distance.

Eventually, we moved in together in Somerset, but we still shared a love for the music that helped keep us going when we were apart.

Fast forward a few years to when Finley had been born and we were living together—we took our usual family holiday to Sidmouth Festival and saw that Honey & The Bear were playing. We went along and really enjoyed the show.

Afterwards, Lucy brought their little one over to play with Finley, as they were a similar age. It was then that my middle son started asking Jon about songwriting. He'd heard that they often write about inspirational people, and he said he'd love it if they wrote a song about Finley and his limb difference.

I later messaged them on Facebook with the suggestion—and they kindly agreed to give it a go!

How did you feel when you first heard Finn's jig?

It was such an emotional reaction. The first time we heard it; it was just a short snippet of the instrumental—but even that caught us completely by surprise.

After that, we waited a couple of months for the album to be released. The day the CD arrived in the post; we raced home to play it. I was in floods of tears—completely overwhelmed. Even now, it's such a beautiful song.

What was Finn's reaction to his song?

Finley absolutely loves his song—he dances as soon as it comes on. He was so excited to share it with his preschool, and they now use it during music time for all the children to enjoy.

For you, how important is representation for children growing up with difference?

I think it's such an inspirational song. It sums up the sheer determination that so many of our remarkable children share. It reminds them that they really can achieve anything their hearts desire.

[Just an extra note, that Honey & The Bear also put a lyric book together along with artwork to accompany their songs. They did a picture for Finley which I have photographed for you to see along with a picture of Finley.]

2025 Limb Loss & Limb Difference Awareness Month

#LLLDAM

Reach's community amplified! Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month is growing each year and now, with new alliances, Reach can stand proudly alongside other leading limb loss and limb difference organisations including Steelbones, Limbpower, Finding Your Feet, Amputation Foundation & Blesma, to share the voices and stories of individuals across the UK and beyond.

Reach's recent successful bid secured vital social media campaigning support from the National Lottery Community Fund, which over the next 3 years will give Reach dedicated communications expertise to help spread awareness and break down barriers for people with upper limb differences.

For April 2025 Limb Loss & Limb Difference Awareness Month saw Reach share a video daily for the "How Do I Do It?" campaign. These videos highlighted the limb difference community doing what they love…

Just some of the wonderful contributions...

This year's "How Do I Do It?" campaign for #LLLDAM was kicked off by Reach ambassador @jay_howard who loves to sing karaoke!

Find out more online with links to instagram videos:

www.reach.org.uk/within-reach-magazine/celebrating-2025s-limb-loss-limb-difference-awareness-month

Lucy & Jon aka 'Honey & The Bear'

Where it all began...

We met Laura and Finn at Sidmouth Folk Festival in 2022. They watched us perform our concert in the Ham marquee, and afterwards, when we went out to sell our merchandise, we met this beautiful little family for the first time. Finn and our daughter Gracie were very similar in age (not quite a year old), so she was drawn to the only other small person in the room like a moth to a flame and we formed an instant bond. During our gig that day, Jon had asked the audience for story suggestions for songwriting and a few days later, we received a lovely message from Laura saying that her son Ash, Finn's older brother who doted on him, thought we should write a song for Finn who had limb difference. He suggested it could be about overcoming difference and being just like everybody else. We instantly felt that it was possibly the sweetest thing we had ever heard, so Lucy set about penning some lyrics!

Were there any particular emotions or moments you wanted to capture in the lyrics?

Honestly, it was a really tough song to write. Lucy wrote several versions of the lyrics which were literally screwed up and thrown into the bin! She wanted to capture the right vibe … childlike, fun, adventurous, no element of sadness or negativity, just looking at all the joy to be found in life, whilst celebrating our differences. So, the final piece ended up being a jig time song, interweaved with tunes, upbeat and dramatic, featuring lots of twiddley diddley fiddley bits (the technical term) where the focus of the song was setting your mind on something and just doing it, defying those who may doubt your abilities. The overall piece feels quite 'piratey', trying to capture the rumble tumble essence of boys in their youth.

How did Laura and Finn react to the song?

We were honestly so nervous to send Laura and Finn the final version of the song, just in case we hadn't captured the right feel - but Laura was effervescent with praise and told us it made her and all the ladies at Finn's nursery well up with tears. Apparently Finn was loving it too and all his little nursery friends had been playing shakey eggs and bells along to it - it paints a very sweet little picture that we are so happy to have played a part in. They've since been to see us on our UK tour and Finn sat in the front row! It was really very special to be able to perform it live to him and his family, so much so that Lucy felt quite overcome with emotion and had to stop singing at one point!

Lillie told us how much she loves to go on the zip wire at the park!

Paralympian Taekwondo gold medallist Amy Truesdale loves to kick!

Kit loves to do back flips and climb trees!

Eadie loves to be pushed on the swings by her daddy!

@crosslandshanny loves to go line dancing!

Toby is just 2 years old and loves football!

Fighting for Inclusive Maternity Care

Believed to be one of the first MPs to have congenital upper limb difference, disability campaigner Marie Tidball is sharing her lived experience as a disabled woman, and maternity and pregnancy journey, to shine a light on maternity care – to ensure the next generation of disabled parents can access the support they need and deserve.

"I think there was a kind of anxiety because we don't really know what caused my own disability, my own limb differences - all four of my limbs are affected."

Marie's main concern at first was whether she could get pregnant and carry safely, but until 32 weeks she enjoyed a healthy pregnancy.

However, it wasn't until Marie's first midwife appointment that she realised the barriers she would face as a pregnant disabled woman.

"I told the midwife that she might not be able to take my blood," Marie recalls. "She asked me to repeat myself, and still didn't understand. By the third or fourth time I'd explained my disability—foreshortened arms with a digit on each hand and an amputation at my ankle—she thought I was saying four shortened arms. She was searching for my missing pair of arms! It was funny in hindsight, but at the time I just thought: how are we going to get through this if there isn't even familiarity with basic language around disability?"

In the end Marie needed a consultant and a special ultrasound to find a vein just to take routine pregnancy blood tests.

At 32 weeks Marie developed Obstetric Cholestasis, a liver disorder, which can lead to complication and causes severe itching, for this, she says her care was excellent.

However, it was then that Marie's midwife tried to refer her to a specialist consultant midwife but that appointment never came.

"I was thinking, how am I going to be able to give birth? I've had King's procedure on my hips when I was a child and other surgeries. How would a natural birth affect my hips if I had to use stirrups or have a forceps delivery?"

She did see a registrar, and she raised her concerns, but instead of reviewing x-rays, the registrar simply asked, "Can you open your legs."

"There are literally academic papers written about my hips…but in the end, he just had me like laying on the bed, fully clothed with leggings on, to see how wide I could open my legs."

It wasn't the scientific approach Marie expected and then again, Marie's pregnancy experience was disrupted. The first to contact Marie after that was the genetic counselling service.

"That really upset me because the implication was, do you want to keep this baby? What if this baby's got the same disability as you? It felt entirely inappropriate."

Marie didn't engage with that service and didn't get a meeting with a consultant midwife until the day before she had her baby, which ended up being an emergency caesarean.

Who knows?

Something that repeatedly occurred to Marie was the lack of a "mental checklist" from her health professionals about elements of her disability and how it might interact with her pregnancy.

"I probably never had an accurate blood pressure reading in the whole of my pregnancy."

It wasn't until later, after speaking with Sue Kent of Gardener's World, that Marie would learn of adaptations that could have been helpful to her.

"She [Sue] talked about the work that The Thalidomide Society have done - research on how to accurately take blood pressure for people with limb differences. But none of the professionals that I came into contact with seemed to know this."

This wasn't the only physical barrier that Marie faced, "So much stuff in the maternity space is inaccessible, like little clips, little poppers, things that are really challenging for people with limb difference."

After the birth of her daughter, Marie asked for help from an Occupational Therapist about adaptive slings to help her carry her baby or breastfeed but, "They had no clue about any adaptations."

Marie also struggled with her post-natal mobility due to a longer recovery from her caesarean.

"I rely on my core muscles loads, and when you have caesarean it slices through those muscles but no one had factored that in. I think often non-disabled professionals, including clinicians, assume that the disabled person themselves has all the answers."

And it wasn't just physical barriers that Marie faced.

"It was like being five years old again, going to ballet and not being able to do up my shoes. Suddenly you're going to these mum's groups or weigh-ins with the baby and it always took me longer...I became really self-conscious so I'd often take my mum with me, but then it very much felt like I was having to have help to look after my own baby which made me lose a huge amount of confidence."

I asked Marie whether she thinks being disabled means you lessen your expectations, or expect people not to cater for you because you're the only one who might need help.

"We're having to advocate for ourselves all the time and educate professionals who should understand these things better, and that's just exhausting. Particularly with something you've never done before."

"I just thought, we'll just fumble through and as long as my baby's healthy, I'll take the indignity, I'll take the level of anxiety because I don't know."

But it wasn't until she had time to process it that Marie realised what an issue it had been to consider herself and her "body integrity as a secondary issue".

"I needed that space and that time to come to terms with it…and get that confidence back."

The Campaign

Marie began to harness her professional, academic background to turn her negative experiences into a positive and progressive campaign for disabled women.

She began to research the guidance and policies that existed and what, if any, research had been done on disabled mothers' experience of maternity to find out whether hers had been "unusual or as suspected, indicative of a much bigger problem."

Bringing together academic colleagues and conducting research papers, by the time she ran for Parliament, Marie had built a "national campaign", confident that she wasn't alone in her experience.

Marie's campaign was born directly from her experience; as a public figure, she felt "duty bound" to use her platform to lead change.

Marie and her team worked closely with Professor Hannah Cooper at the London School of Tropical Medicine who conducted a rapid review of the literature and also discovered, "Exclusionary practices" and a lack of "inclusive maternity care."

"We now also know, as a result of that research, that disabled mothers are 44% more likely to have a stillbirth than non-disabled mothers."

"There is no expertise on this anywhere. The best experts are the disabled mothers themselves - so we brought together a group of disabled mothers including Paralympians, and mothers with a wide range of disabilities", some of which are midwives themselves.

Marie and her team began working closely with the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) and the Royal College of Obstetricians (RCO). After launching their campaign in March, they held a summit in April in Parliament, building on the recommendations of Hannah's report which states that there needs to be "increased expertise" made up of disabled women, "more research and NICE (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidelines on disability.

"None of the 30 guidelines on fertility, pregnancy and childbirth focus specifically on disability and when disability is mentioned it's only in passing."

But it doesn't stop there, Marie says there needs to be improved accessible health care facilities and information. The system needs to move past the use of genetic counselling "as a gateway to disabled women getting advice and support" and move towards the social model, and "better understanding by all medical professionals" to ensure we're developing specialism with key midwives.

Looking ahead!

Marie wants the campaign to help "strengthen maternity care delivery in the UK; to improve access experience to reduce that 44% stillbirth risk" and support vital training.

The team are looking at disability passports for disabled mothers with the help of people like, Sarah Faye, an occupational therapist, and a disabled mother.

"[Passports] have already been developed in relation to mothers with autism and learning disabilities, but we want a more general disability passport." They would include prompts around aspects of pregnancy, such as adaptive equipment or what a particular disabled woman needs in terms of facilities.

Changing attitudes

"Some of the senior members of the RCM were visibly very shocked hearing some of the women's stories."

Marie talked about a Paralympian, and a maternity professional, both of which "hadn't realised that they were pregnant until they were over 30 weeks." Marie puts this down to the stigma that surrounds disabled women.

"Their clinicians checked out everything else, but the question was never asked. This was within the last five to ten years. The assumption being that disabled women don't have sexual relationships."

These kinds of attitudes spur Marie on.

"We've met such phenomenal disabled women and they deserve better."

Marie wants the next generation, Reach children and young adults growing up today, to know that having healthy relationships and families themselves, if they choose to, is absolutely something for them.

This campaign also supports future dads, as a parent with an upper limb difference there may be "challenges for them, in terms of how they hold the baby and doing up clothes and fastenings and getting in and out of cots and things."

What can Reach do?

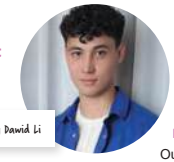
Marie says, "Talk about it! And ask people to share any adaptive technology that they discovered."

Marie would also like to hear from any Reach members who are "obstetricians, gynaecologists, health visitors, occupational therapists or midwives" too.

"We are really trying to include as many people that have both disabilities themselves but also work in the clinical space, I'd encourage them to get in touch with my office and with the Royal College of Midwives as well. I want our house to be more and more inclusive and have greater disability representation as we go on."

Never choose between accessibility, functionality, and identity

How AMBODY is designing prosthetics that adapt to you, not the other way around.



By Dawid Li

A Warm Hello

Hello everyone – I'm Dawid Li, founder of AMBODY, and I'm excited to join the Reach community. I'd like to share a little about my journey, the work we're doing, and why I believe our approach can make a real difference to people living with upper limb differences.

The Journey

My path into prosthetics didn't begin in a clinic or an engineering lab. It started in product design, with a curiosity about why affordable prosthetic options felt outdated and disconnected from the people who used them. That curiosity became something bigger when I began meeting people living with limb difference, listening to their experiences, and learning where current designs fell short.

A turning point came when I met Nate, founder at Koalaa. He introduced me to Alex Lewis, a quadruple amputee, adventurer, and global advocate. Alex pointed out something so obvious yet so often overlooked: body-powered prosthetics hadn't changed in decades and were missing active wrist movement, a feature crucial for daily life.

That insight lit the fuse. I returned to university, teamed up with Koalaa and Alex, and built our first rough prototype. It worked, and that proof of concept became the foundation for AMBODY.

> **"Your prosthetic should adapt to you - so you can show up in the world exactly as you choose."**

Three Pillars, One Mission

At AMBODY, everything we design is built on three core pillars:

Accessibility – keeping our devices affordable and available to as many people as possible, in both developed and humanitarian settings.

Functionality – no shortcuts on performance; every design decision has to serve real-world use.

Identity – recognising that prosthetics aren't just tools, they're part of how you show up in the world.

We understand the emotional duality of living with limb difference, the balance between pride and privacy, between blending in one day and standing out boldly the next. Your prosthetic should adapt to you, so you can choose how you want to be seen without sacrificing function.

First in its Class

Our first system is a modular upper-limb prosthetic, the first in its class to integrate natural active wrist movement alongside both voluntary opening and voluntary closing (VO+VC) in a single, compact, cable-driven unit.

This combination means one device can adapt to more tasks, more comfortably, without compromise.

- Modular design lets you quickly swap between tools, from hooks and cosmetic hands to job-specific attachments.
- Universally compatible with standard harnesses.
- Configurable as either body-powered or myoelectric.

In short: we adapt to you, not the other way around.

Designed With, Not For

We've tested prototypes with users in the UK and Ukraine, particularly in communities where resilience and access matter most.

Every step is guided by feedback from real users and clinicians. That collaboration has shown us that prosthetics are deeply individual; no two people have the same needs, preferences, or goals. That's why adaptability is at our core.

We're not here to "fix" people. We're here to build tools for bold living - tools that support you in being recognised for what you're becoming, not for what you've lost.

Looking Ahead

We're still in the early stages, refining prototypes, listening to feedback, and making constant improvements. But our vision is clear: to create prosthetics that are accessible, functional, and an expression of identity.

Whether you want to blend in seamlessly or make a bold statement, we believe your prosthetic should give you that choice, always with full functionality.

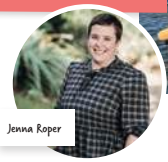
For me, joining Reach is about more than sharing what we're building - it's about listening. If you're curious about what we're working on, have ideas, or want to share your own experience, I'd love to hear from you. Together, we can make sure AMBODY's designs are shaped by the people who'll use them.

Thank you for welcoming me into this incredible community. I'm looking forward to the conversations ahead and to building a future where accessibility, functionality, and identity always go hand in hand. We should never choose again.

www.ambody.life
Dawid@ambody.life

Reach, for You!

Connecting young Reach adults on a weekend designed *for* them...



Jenna Roper

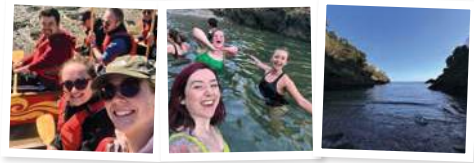
If you're 18 – 25 and you're thinking 'it's going to be just like RAW', you're wrong. Yes, there are activities you can take part in if you wish, but it's your weekend. Chill, chat, connect with like-minded people, and you can have fun wild swimming or playing cards in between if you want.

COMMUNITY FUND · THE VTCT FOUNDATION · Reaching OUT

Introducing the NEW 18–25 Retreat & Mentorship Programme (RAMP)...

Hello! I'm Jenna and I'm delighted to be the new coordinator for the 18–25 Programme, an element of the new Reaching Out project, and share my passion for the impact it could have on our young adult members.

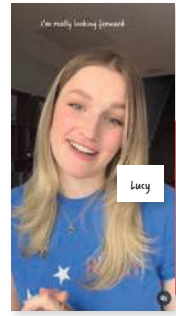
Our organisation has grown into a dynamic, people-led charity, with national and regional opportunities for children and their families to connect, grow, and thrive. As the South West Branch Coordinator — and mum to my Reach child, Kit — I am incredibly grateful for all that Reach has provided us. I know that when Kit turns 10, he'll experience RAW and start building those all-important friendships



and connections that boost self-esteem and confidence at such a pivotal time.

Nevertheless, it became clear that a significant gap was emerging for many young adults with upper limb differences (ULD) who were losing access to the supportive community they had grown up with once they turned 18.

From my professional experience working therapeutically with young adults, I know how challenging this life stage can be — navigating dating, relationships, careers, leaving home, starting university — all while the brain is still developing! For young people with ULD, these challenges can be intensified, and the need for connection and understanding even more vital.



Recognising this gap, Reach stepped forward to support people with ULD for life and the 18–25 Programme is the first major part of that commitment. The pilot retreat in 2024 made clear just how important connection, mentorship, and continuity of care is for 18 – 25s. Thanks to its success, we've secured three years of funding from The National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and The VTCT Project.

What is the 18–25 Retreat & Mentorship Programme?

It's consistent, age-appropriate support for young adults with ULD, helping them to:

- Navigate adult life with confidence and resilience
- Build lifelong friendships with peers who understand
- Develop tools to manage challenges such as discrimination and anxiety
- Strengthen self-image and confidence
- Transition from receiving support to becoming mentors and leaders

We hope to realise this through our free, four-day residential retreat, followed by a nine-month online mentorship programme. Both delivered by a team of experienced, fully trained mentors — all of whom have ULD themselves.

The retreat is a safe, welcoming space in a beautiful location where young people can relax, recharge, and connect. This year's activities include wild swimming, coasteering, yoga, and enjoying delicious local food — alongside plenty of unstructured time to chat and bond.

The mentorship programme is designed to follow the retreat, with built- in flexibility. For some, it's a supportive bridge to help them attend the following year's retreat. For others, it may be their main point of engagement. Whether or not someone can attend the retreat, the mentorship programme offers a warm, online community where young adults can share their challenges and successes with mentors who have lived experience of ULD.

Collaboration with Durham University

A vital element will be our collaboration with Durham University, who are running a ground-breaking research project alongside RAMP. This research could help transform support for young adults with ULD across the UK and beyond. Durham will also evaluate the programme, using feedback from participants to shape future retreats and programmes — ensuring that we provide exactly what our young adult members want and need.

Looking Ahead

I'm confident that RAMP will have a transformative impact on Reach young adults. And while we're thrilled to have secured three years of funding, we want this to become a long-term, sustainable part of Reach — so that in 10 years' time, Kit can benefit from the same support and community.

If you are — or know — a young adult with a ULD, I warmly encourage you to check out the next 18–25 Retreat & Mentorship Programme on our website. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch: jennar@reach.org.uk

Lucy is going to the retreat for the first time this year:

"I haven't been to a Reach event since I was a child, apart from the AFW last year. I'm keen to spend some time connecting with other Reach members and with this side of myself. There are certain experiences that only Reach children and adults can truly relate to, and it means a lot to be around others who get it all. It's always reassuring and uplifting to hear from others who've been through similar things, particularly those at similar life stages!"

Dating with a limb difference

In Within Reach, we love sharing different experiences, and points of view to try break down stigma and build connections with people. In this issue we're chatting to Lily George about dating with a difference and her experience on a Channel 4 dating show...

An interview with Lily George

Lily, welcome to WR Magazine. Please tell us a bit about yourself...

Hi, thanks for having me! I'm Lily, 29 (just!). I was born with Symbrachydactyly on my right hand, and I grew up on the Isle of Wight, where I still work but I now live in Southsea. I'm an Event Manager and Choreographer for Shademakers UK. We get to travel all over, rock some wild costumes, and work with amazing communities. One of our biggest gigs recently was leading the parade for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee through London, right past The Royal Family—such a highlight!

On the Isle of Wight, we've also recently opened a new cultural arts building called Department. It's got everything from arts projects to The National Poo Museum (yep, you read that right)! I'm also running my own dance fitness classes because I just can't sit still.

How would you describe yourself?

I'd say I'm bubbly, a little silly, and I don't take myself too seriously. That said, I can get a bit anxious at times. I'm passionate about my work, my family and friends, and my dog, Murphy! I love spending time with the people I care about and making memories. And I've always loved dancing and singing, even if it's not always in tune! I'm also really into fashion. There's something so fun about switching up your look based on how you're feeling. Clothes are like a form of self-expression for me.

You're really open about your upper limb difference (ULD) on your socials, have you always been confident with your difference?

No, it's tough to admit, but I used to really hate it. That sounds strong but that's honestly how I felt. I think it was a mix of growing up on the Isle of Wight, misinformation my parents had, and the fact that there just wasn't much representation when I was younger. I didn't see anyone who looked like me, and it made me feel uncomfortable with who I was. We didn't find out I had Symbrachydactyly until I was 15, so there weren't many role models or people I could connect with.

My parents were amazing, they always made me feel special and seen, but never like I was different or needed to be protected from the world. I can't even imagine how hard that must've been for them, with no guidance themselves.

One day though, something clicked. I started to embrace my little hand and thought, "Why not use it to help someone else? Why not be that person who comforts others and shows them that it's okay?" I can proudly say now that I wouldn't change it for the world. I love my hand. It makes me, me.

> **"For anyone, dating can be awkward, nerve-wracking, and also fun!"**

You were on Channel 4's Flirty Dancing in 2019! What did you get from the experience and how was it going on a 'dancing blind date'?

[Hahaha!] Yes, I was! It was such an amazing, scary, and crazy thing to do! I had been single for a loooong time, and I thought, why not combine trying to find a boyfriend with the thing I love, dance! It was also a brilliant opportunity to raise awareness and talk about limb differences.

A 'dancing blind date' is definitely one of the scariest things I've ever done. I may not have got a boyfriend out of it, but I made some brilliant friendships, it helped my confidence, and it connected me with so many wonderful people in the ULD community. Whether it was anxious parents or people with a hand like mine. That was the biggest win for me!

How did you navigate dating as a young adult? Did your ULD shape your experience?

For anyone, dating can be awkward, nerve-wracking, and also fun! But my difference definitely shaped my experience. I was probably more guarded in some situations, and I'd say I was a little protective over myself, especially when it came to putting myself out there.

I think when you've been self-conscious about something for most of your life, it's easy to open up the floodgates of picking yourself apart in every way and feeling self-conscious about a lot! It took time to feel comfortable and confident in those situations.

There's been a lot of talk about whether people should disclose disability or difference on dating apps - what do you think?

Honestly, I'd say hell no, you shouldn't have to disclose it to anyone. But that said, I always did. I never felt external pressure to do so, but I definitely felt an internal pressure so I could get it out there so there were no surprises. That way, I felt like I could manage their shock or reaction.

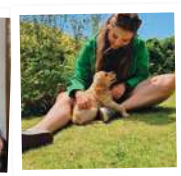
It's a tough one because I'd say, "Why should you have to do that? If they don't like you for who you are, then they're not the right person." But I still always told people before meeting, or if I met someone out, within minutes.

The ultimate answer is, do what feels comfortable for you and what will make you feel more confident. We shouldn't have to be ready to manage reactions. Hello people, we're in 2025 and we are PROUD to be different!

Have you had to deal with awkward or inappropriate questions from guys?

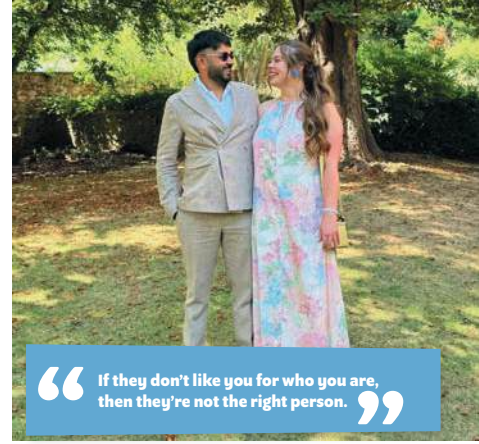
Yeah, but I also got used to dealing with the shock reactions. Over time, I learned there's a big difference between genuine shock and a nasty, "ew" reaction with an inappropriate comment alongside. A genuine reaction is more like, "Whoa, I wasn't expecting that, give me a second to process." And I could never really be mad at that because I didn't see anyone like me or even know what my condition was until I was in my teens. So, chances are, they haven't either and might just need a second to figure it out.

One thing that always sticks in my mind was when one of my best friends had someone they knew asked for a date with me—but referred to me as "Lily, the one with the hand." Obviously, she was fuming about it and didn't put in a good word for him! She wasn't sure whether to tell me and was upset when she did, but she stood up for me. She said, "Your hand doesn't define you like that!" My friends were always supportive and protective in a nice way. My hand makes me, me, but it doesn't define me. There are so many ways you could describe me to people—especially to one of my besties!



You've been out of the dating game for a while, where did you meet your partner?

It was during lockdown, and after swearing I'd never make a Tinder account, my housemates pleaded with me on New Year's Eve to make one just for something to do. I agreed, thinking I'd definitely delete it. I woke up on New Year's Day with a sore head, my phone pinging, and Nam managed to catch my eye—probably thanks to the dog in his picture! We didn't stop talking, had virtual dates until we could meet in person, and now, a house and a dog later, we've just celebrated our 4-year anniversary!



> **"If they don't like you for who you are, then they're not the right person."**

How did you first talk to Nam about your limb difference? Did he have questions?

While we were messaging, I told him about my limb difference, but he had already checked out my Instagram and seen some of my posts, including that I'd been on Flirty Dancing (which he watched) [haha]. He was totally unfazed, and actually said what I was doing, raising awareness was amazing, which naturally opened the conversation—but not in a questioning kind of way.

He always made me feel so comfortable, and when I finally met him in person, I didn't even think about my hand.

For young people entering the dating world, what advice would you give them?

Do what feels comfortable for you and what will make you feel more confident. You do not have to explain yourself, but if giving someone a heads-up would make you feel more relaxed, that's okay too—there's no shame in that!

Also, you are SO much more than your limb difference. While it's probably helped shape you into the person you are, it does not define you. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or less than in any way—whether it's about your limb difference or something else—then walk away.

I promise you, your person is out there, and they will make you feel so comfortable that you forget all those worries.

How do you hope dating culture changes as we become more accepting of different bodies and experiences?

I hope people become less shallow and more accepting. There's so much pressure to be and look 'perfect', but that's not reality. Personality is EVERYTHING—at the end of the day, we all just want to be happy. Some people just won't click, and that's okay, but you don't need to be mean or make hurtful comments to get that across.

Love is love, and you should be allowed to love who you want to love.

Into the mountains I go

I couldn't be prouder to represent upper limb difference (ULD) in mountain rescue. For me, representing disability isn't about showing that everyone can do everything, it's about showing that if you want something and you're passionate about it, you will find a way.

None of us are equipped to do everything in life. Our interests and passions often dictate our ability. You certainly wouldn't want me to be your financial advisor or your dentist because I'm simply not good at those things and therefore I haven't developed the right skills.

In mountain rescue a passion for hiking, being in the outdoors and spending hours in the mountains is hugely beneficial. If you're happy and comfortable on a steep mountainside, you're fit and capable to look after yourself for hours on the hill, and you can work in a team – you're in good stead. You also have to dedicate hours to training – and all as an unpaid volunteer, whilst being on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You have to be enthusiastic about searching for people on the side of the mountain in the worst weather in the middle of the night.

At the time of writing this I have just qualified as a Mountain Leader (big thanks to @Loufreedomoutdoors). Separate to rescue, although advantageous in terms of transferrable skills, this is the result of a year of hard work. Logging 40+ Quality Mountain Days or 'QMDs' (hikes that officially tick off the ML criteria), developing navigational skills with only a map and compass, shadowing multiple group walks and undertaking Mountain Training's 6-day course, followed by the 5-day assessment (once enough QMDs had been recorded). It's not meant to turn you into a superhuman mountaineer, but it's designed to build judgement skills, group management and confidence to lead others and keep them safe in the mountains.

Like mountain rescue, leading people to a summit, or navigating by map and compass in the dark for fun, doesn't appeal to everyone, so ULD doesn't really come into that part of it.

Where it does come in is knowing my limitations, but just as every team member or leader has to also.

Yes, I had to figure out ways around the more dextrous things, attaching additional pockets to my backpack so I had somewhere to stow my compass, for example, or on callouts with mountain rescue, knowing and communicating to others that I have to be on a certain side of the stretcher so I can carry with my right hand.

I can't do everything, but that's the whole point, no one can.

We couldn't rescue people as individuals. One person couldn't carry a stretcher off a mountain, or be responsible for giving someone analgesia, or rig up the ropes for a technical rescue. You need every team member, each with their individual skills to come together and get the job done.

But whilst I say all that I also believe that without the conviction of 'I can do anything' growing up, as someone with a disability, I wouldn't have stepped close to what I now know is possible.

> "I can't do everything, but that's the whole point, no one can."

I have found over the years there are things I do because of others, to prove myself, and there are things I do for me. Usually, the things I start for others don't last. But the things that make me feel alive, bring me joy, give me purpose, are the things that end up being worth fighting for.

From that point of view, I won't be told I can't or shouldn't. None of us should be put in a box because of disability, age, or gender.

At the end of the day, if you can do the job, have something to bring to the table, and can be a team player, you're heading in the right direction.

It's not for everyone, but if you want it enough, you will make it happen.

Special thanks to my teammates at Aberglaslyn Mountain Rescue.

Emma Carvell | On BBC's Interior Design Masters, limb difference awareness

Representation within the Reach community is about seeing upper limb difference in every industry and avenue, from sports arenas to creative spaces; it doesn't need to be talked about or explained. Some things are innately challenging no matter who you are and ULD isn't always the motivation. Emma Carvell put herself forward to be on the 6th series of the BBC show 'Interior Design Masters with Alan Carr' after facing a tough year dealing with a cancer diagnosis, not to prove she could do it despite her limb difference. We caught up with Emma to find out how she found herself on the show and where her creativity has taken her.

Quick-fire questions...

1. Describe yourself in three words. Tenacious, creative, ambitious

2. A place that inspires you? Italy

3. Best piece of advice you've been given? Eyes open, mouth shut

4. Someone from history or present you'd love to have a cuppa with? Vivienne Westwood

5. What's something people would be surprised to learn about you? That I'm one of six siblings

Emma, thanks for joining us for this summer 2025 issue of Within Reach. Let's start with a bit of an introduction... Where are you from and have you ever been a member of Reach?

I grew up in a very remote part of Wales and I never saw anyone with a limb difference unless it was in hospital. And I've never been a member of Reach.

Earlier this year you starred in series 6 of the BBC show – Interior Design Masters with Alan Carr (IDM), what inspired you to apply and what was it like walking onto that set for the first time?

I wanted to do something out of the ordinary for me I'd had a rotten year the previous year so I just thought, "why not?" - I never dreamed I'd get on the show!

What part of the competition pushed you the most creatively, and how did you find the show's pace and pressure?

The whole process pushes you but I suppose the moments that pushed me creatively the most was designing my own wallpaper and sourcing found objects to turn into other more useful objects.

You talk briefly in the show about wanting to show what you can do as a person with a limb difference? As a Reach adult I understand that feeling, a need to prove yourself – is that something you think you have carried through life in your work and/or personal life?

I've never felt that I've carried it so to speak but 'can't' is my least favourite word. If I want it bad enough 'I can!', I think I'm also 'done' with trying to prove myself. My eight-year-old self would be very proud of me!! I've worked for IKEA, Habitat, Elle Decoration, been on Interior Design Masters, Travelled, have loved teaching but most importantly I've had three beautiful children.

Is there a particular moment or design you're most proud of from your time on IDM?

In all honesty it was so gruelling; the driving, designing, sourcing. I did it completely on my own. I am hugely proud of how tough I knew I had to be (especially after dealing with cancer the previous year) and I did it! The moment that swallows wallpaper went up though, that gave me a huge surge of pride.

As an Art & Textiles teacher, how do you think your lived experience has shaped the way you approach design?

I used to say to my pupils that 'a deadline is a deadline' and that softening on that is not negotiable. So as a designer you have to be 'on it' otherwise you are letting someone else in the process down. Your work must be authentic to you and well thought out. There's nothing worse than something going out and you suddenly hate or question the design.

Growing up with an upper limb difference, how did that shape your relationship with creativity and self-expression?

I didn't think about it at all. I grew up on the side of a mountain, my parents met at Art college, we had a kiln, printing facilities, all the art materials you could wish for so I just got stuck in. Throwing pots on a potter's wheel was my favourite.

What advice would you give to young limb different creatives watching you on the show?

You CAN do it!!

You can catch up on all episodes of the series 6 of Interior Design Masters on BBC iPlayer: https://tinyurl.com/3fxxzv8t

Toys making a difference.

Introducing... Mayana & Friend

Anna, what inspired the creation of Mayana & Friends?

Mayana & Friends was inspired by my daughter, who was born with a limb difference. As a mum, I wanted her to grow up feeling seen, celebrated, and confident in who she is — but I quickly realized how few toys and characters reflected her experience. Representation and normalization of differences matters, especially in early childhood when children are forming their sense of identity and belonging.

That's where the idea for Mayana & Friends was born — a joyful, inclusive brand that not only reflects the experiences of children with visible differences and disabilities, but also invites all children to embrace diversity through play. Limb difference became central to our brand's identity because it's personal, and because it's a powerful way to spark conversations about inclusion, empathy, and acceptance from an early age.

How did you approach designing characters that authentically reflect children with differences?

Authenticity was at the heart of the design process from the very beginning. I knew that if Mayana & Friends was going to resonate with children who live with differences — especially limb differences — it couldn't feel like an afterthought. It had to come from a place of lived experience, care, and community.

I drew from our real-life experiences, as well as conversations with other families, educators, and medical professionals. I paid close attention to the small details; the way my daughter naturally uses her limb in everyday tasks, the way kids play and interact with their plush toys, and how we could reflect that difference without defining the character only by it.

We intentionally avoided medicalizing the characters — they don't come with prosthetics or backstories about "overcoming" anything. Instead, they just are — playful, curious, lovable characters who happen to have differences. That subtlety is powerful. It lets kids with limb differences see themselves reflected in a way that feels normal, not exceptionalized — and it helps all children learn that differences are just part of being human.

Why do you believe it's important for children with differences to see themselves represented in toys?

Because representation shapes the way children see themselves — and what they believe is possible.

When kids with differences see themselves reflected in the toys they play with, it sends a powerful message: You belong here. You are seen. You matter just as you are. That kind of affirmation builds confidence, self-worth, and resilience from a young age. It helps children understand that their differences aren't something to hide or fix — they're something to be celebrated.

At the same time, representation also helps other children develop empathy and acceptance. It normalizes diversity and encourages more inclusive play, which is where so many early social skills are formed.

Toys are more than just entertainment — they're tools for storytelling, self-expression, and connection. That's why it's so important that all children, especially those who've been underrepresented for too long, can see themselves reflected in the stories they create through play!

What's been the impact and reaction from parents of children without differences?

That's been one of the most meaningful parts of this journey!

We've heard from so many parents of children without visible differences who've said that Mayana & Friends helped spark important conversations at home — often for the first time. When a child picks up a plushie like Lou and notices their limb difference, it opens the door to talk about how everyone is unique, and how those differences are normal, not strange or scary.

Our toys create a safe, playful space for those discussions to happen in a natural, age-appropriate way. For many families, it's a gentle but powerful entry point to building empathy, awareness, and inclusion early on.

Because the truth is, inclusion isn't just for kids with differences — it's something all children need to learn and practice. And when they do, they grow up more compassionate, open-minded, and ready to stand up for others. That ripple effect starts with everyday moments, and sometimes, all it takes is the right toy!

How does the Mayana & Friends community influence the evolution of your characters?

Our community is at the heart of everything we do — truly. Mayana & Friends has always been about listening, learning, and growing alongside the families, kids, and educators who connect with our mission.

Many of our ideas for new characters, storylines, or features come directly from conversations with parents, therapists, teachers, medical professionals and, most importantly, children themselves. Whether it's a child drawing their own character with a limb difference, or a parent sharing what representation would've meant to them growing up, we take that input seriously. It shapes how we design, what we create, and the stories we choose to tell.

We're not here to speak for the community — we're here to create with them. That collaborative spirit keeps our storytelling authentic, diverse, and constantly evolving. And it ensures that every new plushie we launch isn't just cute or educational — it's meaningful, because it reflects real kids and real families.

Will you be introducing more characters with differences and disabilities in the future?

Yes, absolutely! We're just getting started. There are so many stories to tell and differences to celebrate, and we're excited to continue expanding our world with even more inclusive characters — including those with a variety of limb differences, disabilities, and unique traits.

We're always listening to our community and dreaming up new friends that reflect the beautifully diverse ways people move through the world. So yes — keep your eyes peeled! You never know who might be joining Mayana & Friends next.

Has there been a particular moment or story that's reaffirmed the importance of your toys?

One moment that really stands out for me is getting the opportunity to collaborate with BC (British Columbia) Children's Hospital to help rewrite the language used on their website around limb differences. Being part of that process — ensuring the language is more inclusive and reflective of the community — was incredibly meaningful. It's amazing to see how small changes in language can have a big impact, and I'm so proud that Mayana & Friends is helping to foster these conversations.

One project I'm really excited about right now is a partnership with Dr. Cooper, Walk Tall Program & International Limb Difference Network at BC Children's Hospital. We're currently running a research study on the benefits of limb difference plushies for their young patients — not just socially, but also emotionally, as a source of support and representation. It's been incredibly moving to see the impact.

How can WR readers follow you?

We'd love to have you be part of our journey! You can follow along on Instagram @hellomayana, where we share behind-the-scenes updates, character spotlights, community stories, and lots of joy-filled moments from families just like yours.

You can also visit our website at www.hellomayana.com to learn more about our mission and explore our plushies. Whether you're a parent, a caregiver, an educator, or just someone who believes in inclusion through play — there's a place for you in the Mayana & Friends community. Come say hi — we'd love to connect!

Welcome to our community!

What does it mean to be a member of Reach?

As a valued member, you can look forward to a host of events, opportunities, and support throughout the year:

NEW! The Reach Retreat for 18–25s

A special long weekend designed just for young adult members to connect, share, chill and equip them for life's next big steps.

Branch Meet Ups

Local Branch get-togethers and events (around 2per year). Fun, relaxed meetups with local members and families near you, helping Reach families and young people make meaningful connections.

Regional Family Weekends

Family-focused weekends balancing activities and relaxation inviting you to connect with other Reach families all around the UK. Currently in South Wales, Scotland, North West and East Anglia.

Reach Activity Week (RAW)

In July/August every year, Reach children aged 10–17 go away for a week of fun, friend-making, and fresh air on a Reach Activity Week. Adventure and plenty of action is guaranteed; from climbing, abseiling and canoeing to problem solving, archery and coasteering.

The Annual Family Weekend

Reach's National Annual Family Event in October; an annual conference all about sharing lived experiences, inspiring stories, invaluable resources, and reconnecting the Reach family.

Membership Benefits:

Welcome pack - A special care pack for new parents with information about what to expect, the support available to them, and how Reach can help along the way.

Within Reach Magazine (3x per year) - Reach's own publication, sharing the voices of our upper limb difference community; real stories, celebrations, events, inspiration and representation, all delivered straight to your door and available to read online.

Insurance - For any member in the UK with congenital upper limb difference / who acquired an upper limb difference in childhood / who have had one or both of their upper limbs seriously damaged or amputated in an accident

Reach Blog: NEW! - Articles from Within Reach and fresh pieces about lived experiences, editorials, interviews and features all centred around upper limb difference and your community.

Social Media Community - Public platforms focusing on representation and awareness, and private groups providing a safe space for sharing and celebration within our community. Stay connected with the wider community, ask questions, and share experiences.

Your local WhatsApp Group - (optional sign-up) for easy, real-time updates and friendly chats with families in your area.

Access to the Reach Bursary - fund for essential equipment and adaptations.

Equipment hire scheme - one-handed recorders and various other instruments, plus a 'try before you buy' loan scheme for useful equipment like swim paddles and a variety of scissors and gadgets.

The Big Give Christmas Fundraiser

We have entered the BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge....

To help the funds you raise for Reach, reach further....

Every pound you raise could be doubled as part of the

BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge!

Christmas Challenge Week runs from Tuesday the 02 December to Tuesday the 09 December 2025

Find out more on page 6

Christmas Challenge

BigGive

Reach