




VCS Emergencies
Partnership

stronger together

MARCH - AUGUST 2020

impact report



In response to Covid-19
we've grown our network of partners
by almost **30%** and driven
collaboration across civil society.

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Jane Ide
Chief Executive, NAVCA

A global pandemic like Coronavirus is unlike anything we've dealt with before in emergency response.

In a matter of days it forced the Emergencies Partnership to spring into action, using what we already knew about the importance of cross-sector collaboration to quickly set up new ways of working together that would hopefully allow our sector to strengthen how we help people impacted by this crisis.



Mike Adamson
Chief Executive,
British Red Cross

Growing a partnership at pace during a crisis of this nature hasn't been without its challenges. But, crucially, we've begun to build a structure that we believe will offer real solutions to the unprecedented challenges facing our society.

Over the past months we've built relationships that we hope will last well into the future. At the height of the crisis, our network grew by almost 30% and we continue to drive engagement across central and local government. But it's still early days and we need to continue to make the case for cross-sector collaboration to ensure what we've set up can form the basis of emergency response going forward.

This report is a proud reminder of the distance we've come so far.

**Thank you from Jane & Mike,
co-chairs of the partnership**

2020 in brief





Created 5 regional hubs to provide coordinated cross-sector support across England.

2020 in brief

A SNAPSHOT OF THE PROBLEM



1.5 mn

people have gone a day without eating since lockdown began



8.6 mn

people's incomes reduced because of Covid-19



879,000

people would need to isolate in the worst affected month of a 2nd peak

THE ACTION TAKEN



240

local orgs directly linked to national support



31

local orgs supported



1 front door

for government to access voluntary sector support in an emergency



85

orgs networking together



16 tonnes

of food distributed

2020 in brief

2020 has been an extraordinary year for everyone – and the Emergencies Partnership is no exception.

In a few short months, we have moved from a position of well-intended discussion, to a growing evidence base and practical ways of bolstering grassroots capacity and encouraging better collaboration across our sector in an emergency.

By coordinating volunteers and representatives from partner organisations across the sector, we have been able to reach 30 organisations who would have otherwise gone without the support they needed to respond effectively to Covid-19.

We have launched a range of products to help the sector in our collective response to the pandemic and future emergencies, including:

- A simple online service for local organisations to request additional support to meet needs locally
- Regional teams made up of representatives from multiple organisations who arrange and deploy the support requested by local organisations
- A network for sector leaders and government partners to connect, build relationships and share crucial insights and activity

- A series of reports, co-created with British Red Cross, to provide actionable insight to partners across the sector
- An online map that layers areas of heightened vulnerability with support services, and enables targeted operational outreach
- A national hub for government to request volunteers for large-scale deployments across the UK.



Understanding people's needs





We've started to create a better understanding of needs at a local, regional and national level

Understanding people's needs



Being new in post, I didn't have the contacts in the sector. Being a member of the Emergencies Partnership has been incredibly useful and helped me to build some very important relationships. The quality of the insight on unmet need coming out from the partnership has been fed back through all of our members and dispersed across the UK. Thank you!

Rosemary Macdonald
CEO, UK Community Foundations



The insight reports have been so helpful, really raising awareness of what's on the horizon - and giving us all permission to share more data with each other and understand more about community needs as a result. Being a member of this partnership has really given me permission to push BITC to do more in our response – and to focus our efforts where we know it is needed.

Hannah Tankard
Campaign Director,
Business in the Community



Behind the scenes, the real impact so far has been the beginnings of a culture change, helping partners to understand the complexities of data sharing and using data to inform insight. We have come a long way in terms of people seeing the value of what we are trying to achieve and feeling there is a safe environment for them to share their data and insights.

Mieka Webber
Unmet Need Platform product owner,
VCS Emergencies Partnership

Strengthening relationships



Building broader and deeper relationships across the VCS and government

Collaboration across the voluntary sector, and between the voluntary and community sector and government is reliant on strong relationships. It is still early days, but we have already started to build new relationships, and strengthen existing ones, that we believe will have a real impact on our ability to respond in a more coordinated and effective way when emergencies hit.

We have:

- Established multi-agency cells, where 48 local representatives, who between them have a network of over 200 local infrastructure organisations, meet weekly to share local insights on the impact of Covid-19 in their communities. Between **5 and 12 national and regional charities** also join these meetings to share operational insight and coordinate responses to local requests for support.
- Scaled up our weekly National Network meeting, attracting an audience of between **30-50 people from across the voluntary sector and government**. This forum is shaping new connections, providing a unique opportunity to share intelligence and fostering a growing level of trust between our sector and local and national government.
- Set-up a food working group, bringing together **more than 30 organisations** including food and health charities, social change organisations, educational institutions and cross-government departments to pool insights, shape operational responses and coordinate influencing opportunities.
- Set-up a **data working group** with representatives from Business in the Community, Citizens Advice, National Emergencies Trust, NAVCA, RE:ACT, St John Ambulance, Victim Support and Volunteering Matters. Within this space we hope to co-design the Unmet Need platform and foster curiosity and excitement for a cohesive approach to data sharing.
- Conducted **Q&A sessions with six government departments** and representatives from the NHS
- **Continued to build on and strengthen connections with 78% of Local Resilience Forums** via our multi-agency cells.



Building broader and deeper relationships across the VCS and government



2020 has shown us the impact of forging new partnerships. One of our most successful examples was Operation Shield. 580 visits were made over 573 hours to track and contact shielding individuals across Southwark. London Search & Rescue worked closely with RE:ACT, the local authority and other charity groups to achieve the task. Seeing the different organisations coming together so effectively convinces me of the power a good partnership can have, particularly in connecting national initiatives with local feet on the ground.

Allan AUBEELACK
Trustee & Search Manager,
London Search & Rescue



The organisations provided through the Emergencies Partnership to help us, worked so well as a team I would never have realised they were staff from totally different organisations!

Poppy, a medical student involved in the Healthy London Partnership with University College Hospital



Being a part of the VCSEP Local Intelligence Network means that the information we have about what is happening in Torrington, Devon contributes to the wider understanding of the impact of the pandemic. This gives us a chance to identify issues at an early stage and work collaboratively to address them whilst informing the national picture. As a new CEO this has been invaluable to me in understanding the networks and getting the support I need to protect our communities.

Darran Hill
Chief Executive of Torrington
VCS and a member of the
VCSEP Local Intelligence
Network

A coordinated response





A more coordinated
cross-sector response to
meet the needs of people
hit by Covid-19

A more coordinated cross-sector response to meet the needs of people hit by Covid-19

The Emergencies Partnership aims to ensure that during every emergency, individuals who are worst hit get the support they need, when they need it.

Our goal is to help ensure local VCS organisations have the support they need to continue the brilliant work they do in communities during a crisis.

We have:

- St John Ambulance and RE:ACT volunteers worked alongside staff at 35 care homes across Lancashire to carry out Covid-19 tests for 1,000 care home residents.
- Leominster foodbank, Fareshare and RE:ACT worked together to transfer 800kg of food from FareShare's Birmingham hub to Leominster food bank, who had seen a 487% increase in demand.
- British Red Cross, FareShare South West and RE:ACT teamed up to deliver almost 30 tonnes of food to 42 charities across the South West. This was a truly collaborative effort, with support from Bristol charity Children's Scrapstore, to deliver the equivalent of 67,000 meals
- Working alongside the Healthy London Partnership, British Red Cross and RE:ACT volunteers helped to arrange 1,000 health assessments of 325 people experiencing homelessness, at 35 Covid-19 hotels across London



A more coordinated cross-sector response to meet the needs of people hit by Covid-19



Community groups and volunteers in Tendring have gone above and beyond since lockdown. We have really appreciated being part of a wider network so that information and expertise can be shared and cascaded. This has helped us to plan our activities in order to ensure people are supported and kept safe. The Emergencies Partnership network is invaluable, and as we face winter it is reassuring to know that we have access to the combined knowledge and support of fellow members.

Sharon Alexander
Chief Officer of CVS Tendring and a member of the VCSEP Local Intelligence Network



The vast majority of the homeless people we spoke to were very appreciative. Some didn't have any other way of talking to someone about their medical and social needs so the chance to speak to a medical professional was gratefully received. The impact seemed to be really positive for everyone involved, and at a time of national crisis to see local and wider community collaboration is very encouraging.

Nick Herrick
British Red Cross (supporting Healthy London Partnership and University College Hospital)



Food insecurity was an issue for many prior to the coronavirus crisis. The last few months have exacerbated already fragile situations for people. Being able to meet people's basic need for food will be, for many, the reason they do not fall deeper into more complex issues relating to poverty.

Shelley Wright
FareShare Development Manager,
Devon and Cornwall

The journey so far

The journey so far

As a sector, we can and must do more to better coordinate local and national efforts to support people who need it most in a crisis.

We're in this together. Responses must be coordinated, scalable and person centred. Better connected communities must play a central role in preparing, responding and recovering from disasters.

Covid19 impacts everyone, and as a sector, we must ensure we understand and address the unmet needs of the most vulnerable.

UK Emergencies of **2017** including Grenfell Tower fire, terror incidents and other local emergencies

2018
VCSEP formed

2019
VCSEP Yorkshire floods response

Mar
Needs assessment and research of our role in response to Covid-19.

Apr
VCSEP Covid-19 operational model approved

VCSEP local Liaison Lead network formed

May
VCSEP multi-agency cells/ National Volunteer Coordination Cell launched

Launch of first British Red Cross & VCSEP 'deep dive' insight reports

Jun
VCSEP Request for Support launched

VCSEP Food working group launched

Jul
VCSEP funding and insight sharing launched

Sept
VCSEP Data working group launched

The **impact** of the Emergencies Partnership

Summer 2017

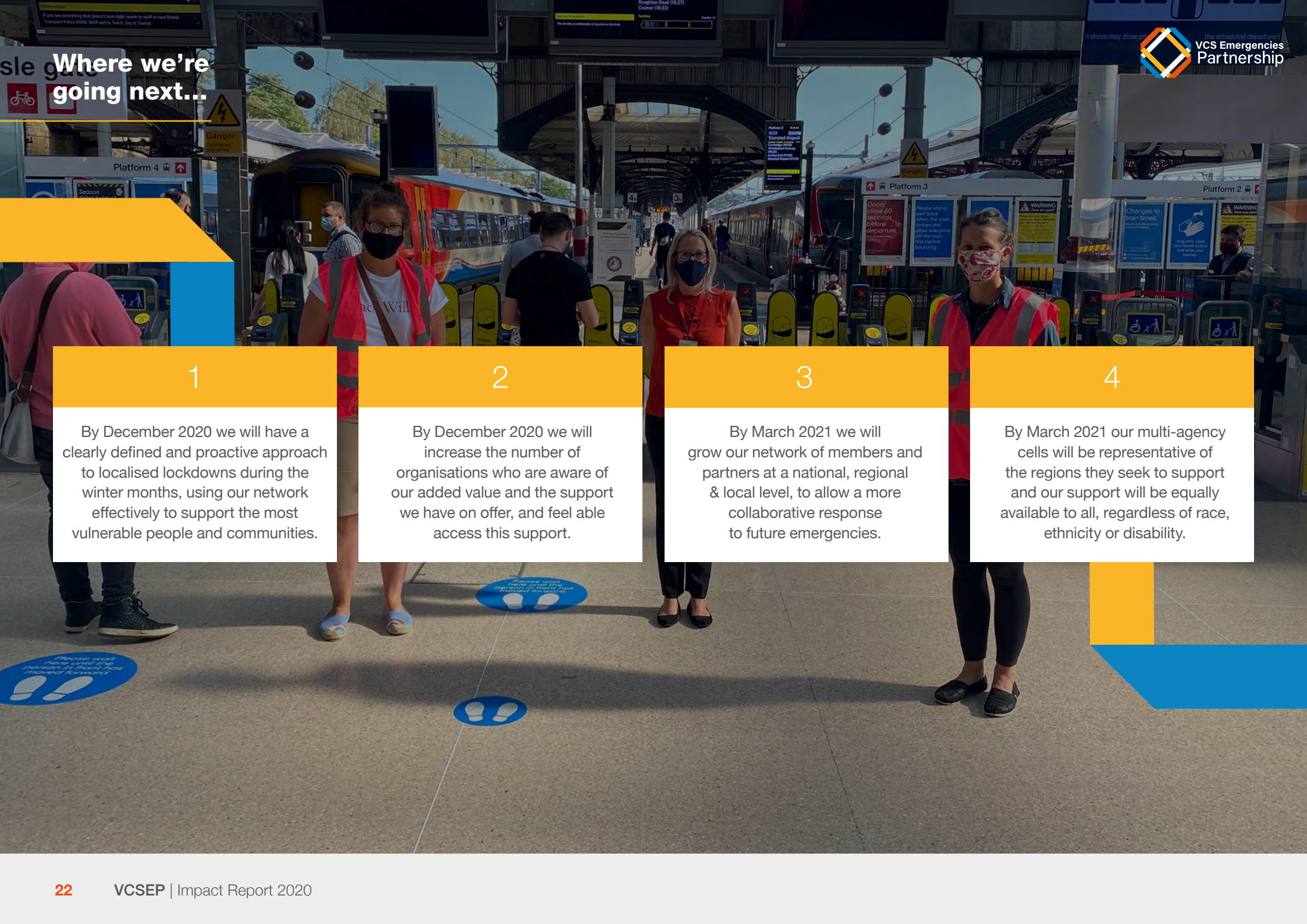
2020

Covid19 Pandemic begins

August 2020

Where next?





Where we're going next...

1

By December 2020 we will have a clearly defined and proactive approach to localised lockdowns during the winter months, using our network effectively to support the most vulnerable people and communities.

2

By December 2020 we will increase the number of organisations who are aware of our added value and the support we have on offer, and feel able access this support.

3

By March 2021 we will grow our network of members and partners at a national, regional & local level, to allow a more collaborative response to future emergencies.

4

By March 2021 our multi-agency cells will be representative of the regions they seek to support and our support will be equally available to all, regardless of race, ethnicity or disability.

Where we're going next...

How we're investing to bring the sector together



£2.3m

to create 5 regional hubs providing coordinated cross-sector support



£70k

to evaluate and continue to improve our response to emergencies



£700k

to build an insight hub on unmet and changing need during an emergency



£1.3m

in direct grant funding for local organisations



£5k

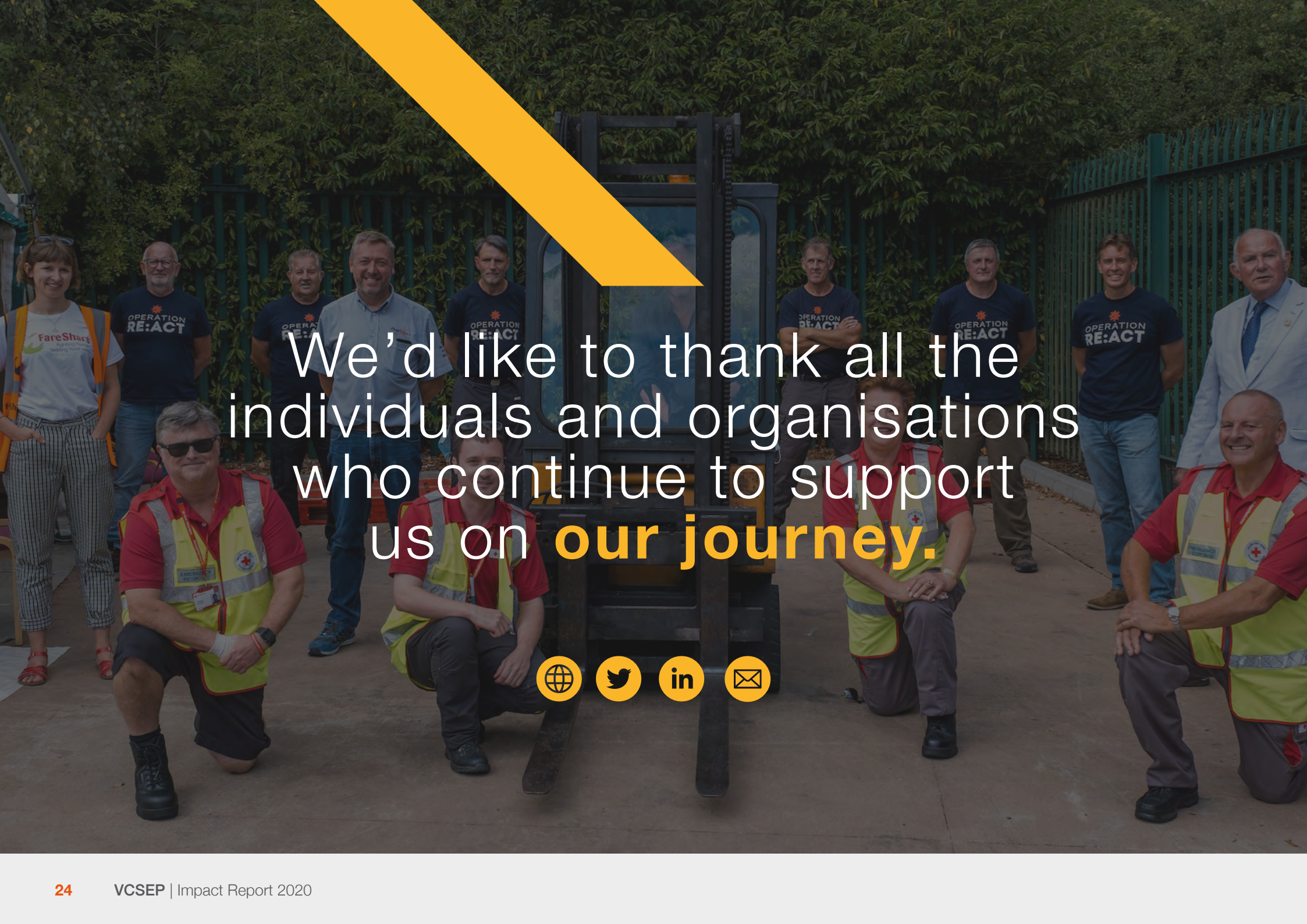
for brand development and comms, to help promote our value and the support we have on offer



£300k

to provide a single access point for government to request volunteers for large-scale deployments





We'd like to thank all the individuals and organisations who continue to support us on **our journey.**

