StandOut

THE BIG GIVE CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE 2023

AWARDS APPLICATION



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STANDOUT

People leaving prison need the best possible chance to rebuild their lives if they are to move out of the justice system for good.

For many people, the key to achieving that is long-term holistic support through a relationship based on trust.

StandOut is an award-winning charity that empowers people to make positive change, realise their potential, and rebuild their lives after prison.

Our unique programme begins in prison with coaching and practical support and continues after release, for as long as someone needs us. On our intensive course in prison, people can discover who they are and what they want to achieve. It's here that they develop a relationship with StandOut that forms the foundations of our work with them after prison.

Each journey is individual, and leaving prison isn't easy. It's why StandOut provides one-to-one coaching and support that bridges the transition between prison and the community. We are determined that more people leaving prison are empowered to make positive change that has an impact on them, their families, and society.

At StandOut we aim to live out our values in every aspect of our programme delivery and wider organisational life. They inform and strengthen our work in the continuing day-to-day as much as in how we approach questions of strategic development; and from how the team works together as much as how we work with our partner prisons and in the delivery of the StandOut programme.

Champions
We are people first

Connected
We are stronger together

Committed
We are in it for the long haul

First Class
We aim for excellence

PREVIOUS CAMPAIGNS

StandOut has a strong track record with the Big Give Christmas Challenge. In each of our previous three campaigns, we were generously Championed by Monday Charitable Trust.

- In **2020** our initial target was £40,000, extended to £60,000 during the campaign. In total, we raised £72,975.
- In **2021** our initial target was £60,000, extended to £90,000 during the campaign. In total, we raised £91,570.
- In **2022** our initial target was £40,000, extended to £60,000 during the campaign. In total, we raised £60,084.

Our campaign in 2021 was bolstered by pledges from a number of donors. It was an unusual year, in that the pandemic had prevented us from holding our usual events, and we knew that this was a 'unique' set of circumstances.

In 2022, we lowered our initial target due to holding an event in October where we asked donors to commit to longer term giving pledges. We anticipated this would have more of an impact on our Christmas Challenge than it ultimately did, with some of those pledges committing to the Christmas Challenge for multiple years instead.

OUR 2023 CAMPAIGN

This was our fourth consecutive year running a Big Give Christmas Challenge campaign.

In our first three years, we set our initial target at £40,000 and increased our target over the course of the challenge week. In 2023, given our track record and early indicators from donors, we were confident in setting our initial target at £60,000 instead. This was the same as our total raised in 2022, and it felt achievable.

Choosing to aim for £60,000 from the outset meant that we could apply for £15,000 in Champion funds. Had our initial target been £40,000, as in previous years, we could only have applied for £10,000 - since Big Give participants are eligible for match funds of 25% of the initial target only.

Having put in our application, and confirmed our pledger, we were fortunate to receive £15,000 Champion funding from The Scouloudi Foundation.

StandOut doesn't have a large base of individual donors, though this is growing over time as we work with more people and recommenced volunteering opportunities since they were paused due to Covid-19. The majority of our income comes from Trusts and Foundations, with the Big Give Christmas Challenge being the main way in which individuals donate.



OUR FILM

In previous years, our campaign video had been a series of 'talking heads' contributed by a range of supporters, participants and stakeholders. This year we decided to take a different route to demonstrate the impact of our work and give more voice to those we have worked with.

In August we filmed three participants talking about their experiences. Working with our coaching team we identified three participants who were willing to contribute to the video and had an initial meeting with them to talk through the aim of the recording session, as well as address any of their questions or concerns.

Working with another local charity, World Heart Beat, we were able to use their recording studio and set of professional recording equipment to have two cameras continuously recording conversations with the participants as they unfolded. This created a natural, conversational tone and was a lot more about them and their experiences rather than being purely about StandOut's work. In total we filmed almost two hours of material, which was then edited to an initial video of 1 hour and 17 minutes.





Further editing took place over September and October to ensure the messaging was clear and concise, with final sign off from the participants in early November. This process took longer than we originally anticipated, but ensured that our participants were happy with the finished video and did not distort the key content of their discussion. Thanks to Nick at World Heart Beat we had a finished video which looked professional and really brought our work to life, in a way we had not been able to achieve before.

We will use much more of the video over our communication in 2024. Some of the discussion was so in depth and interesting that it would not have done it justice to be included in a short campaign video.

The final edit was published on our YouTube channel 20 November and shared with our existing supporters, ahead of the public launch on 21 November. This meant our existing supporters had a 'sneak preview' of the material and were able to view it before wider publication.

Thank you so much to our three participants, Daniel, Shaun and Segun for making this such a success and being open about the experiences of leaving prison and working with us.

You can find our Big Give film here: bit.ly/3SVuwgD.





PROJECT PLANNING

Our Fundraising and Development Manager project managed the process and had initial meetings with StandOut's Founder and Communications Officer in June to discuss the process and create initial drafts of content.

Having run the campaign previously we had a wealth of material from previous campaigns, some of which needed tweaking to be in line with the aims of this specific campaign. We agreed that initial drafts of all content would be ready in **July**, allowing time for amends and integration with content from the video, due to be recorded in **August**.

We discussed the plans with our Board of Trustees and key donors, including prospective pledgers, in the **June** Board meeting, with a list of potential donors generated by the end of **July**.

Following refinement and the sign off of initial emails, personal approaches were made by Board members, the Founder, and Fundraising and Development manager in **mid-September**. Each person was assigned a list to contact with standard wording - allowing for personalisation depending on the relationship - to gauge initial interest from existing donors. This was helpful in identifying key individuals who had contributed previously, as well as starting the conversation with newly identified contacts.

These initial approaches were followed up in **October**. Once our annual report and accounts had been signed off by our Board and accountants, we also shared these with those who had not responded. This allowed us to keep the campaign on the agenda, and give an insight into our wider work and impact in advance of the public availability of our annual report, which was due to be formally published in **November**.

In 2024, we're planning on starting even earlier!



We hold preliminary discussions with our Trustees and key donors.



We generate a list of potential donors to approach, and we draft our comms.



We film our Big Give video!



Our Trustees, Founder, and Fundraising & Development Manager approach potential donors.



Follow up with potential donors who haven't yet responded, and share with them our annual report and accounts.



We upload our video to YouTube on 20th, and share it with existing supporters ahead of the official launch on 28th.



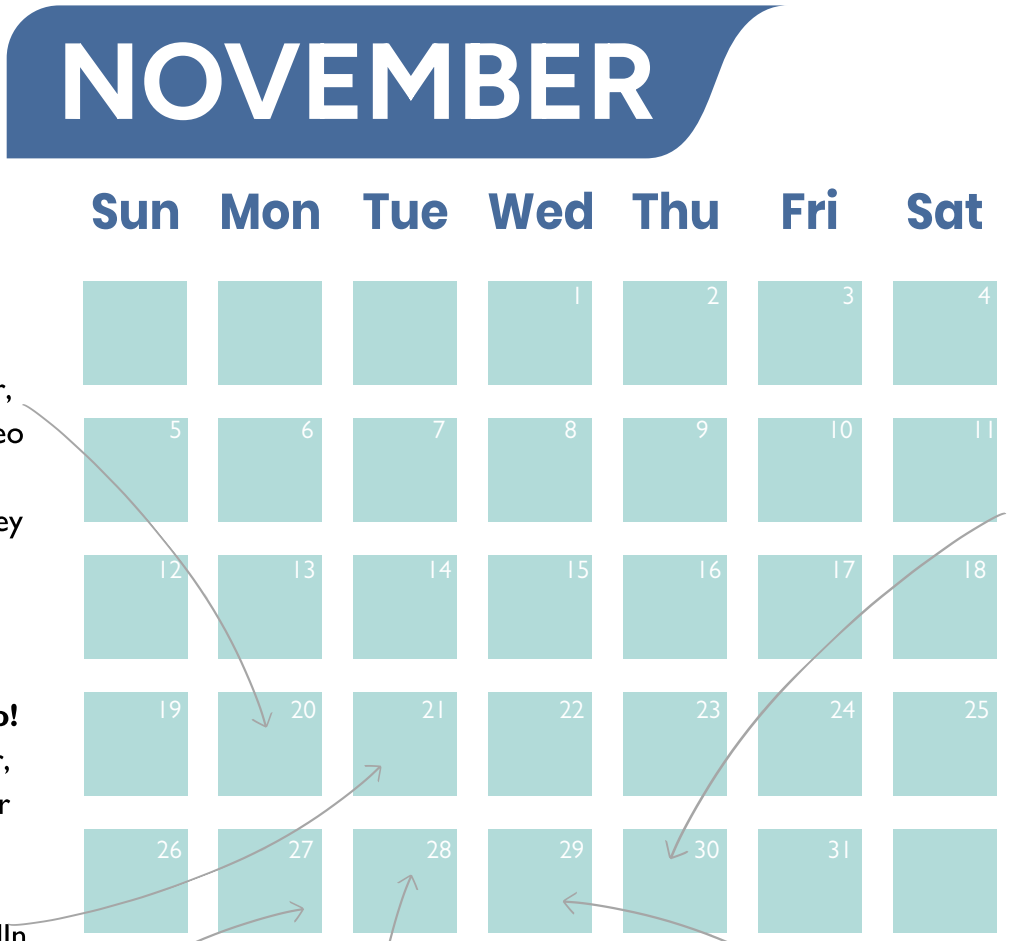
The campaign continues, and we finish with a huge THANK YOU to our supporters.



We reflect on the 2023 Big Give Christmas Challenge, and begin to plan for 2024.

OUR COMMS STRATEGY

Our Big Give comms calendar for **November** looked a bit like this.



A sneak peek! On 20 November, we share our video with selected supporters and key donors.

One week to go! On 21 November, we then share our video with our supporters via Mailchimp, LinkedIn and X.

24 hours to go! On 27 November, we continue to build a buzz around our campaign on LinkedIn and X - reminding our supporters that the Big Give Challenge Week drew nearer!

Launch day! On 28 November, we launch our campaign! We update our website, send out a supporter newsletter via Mailchimp, and share posts via LinkedIn, and X.

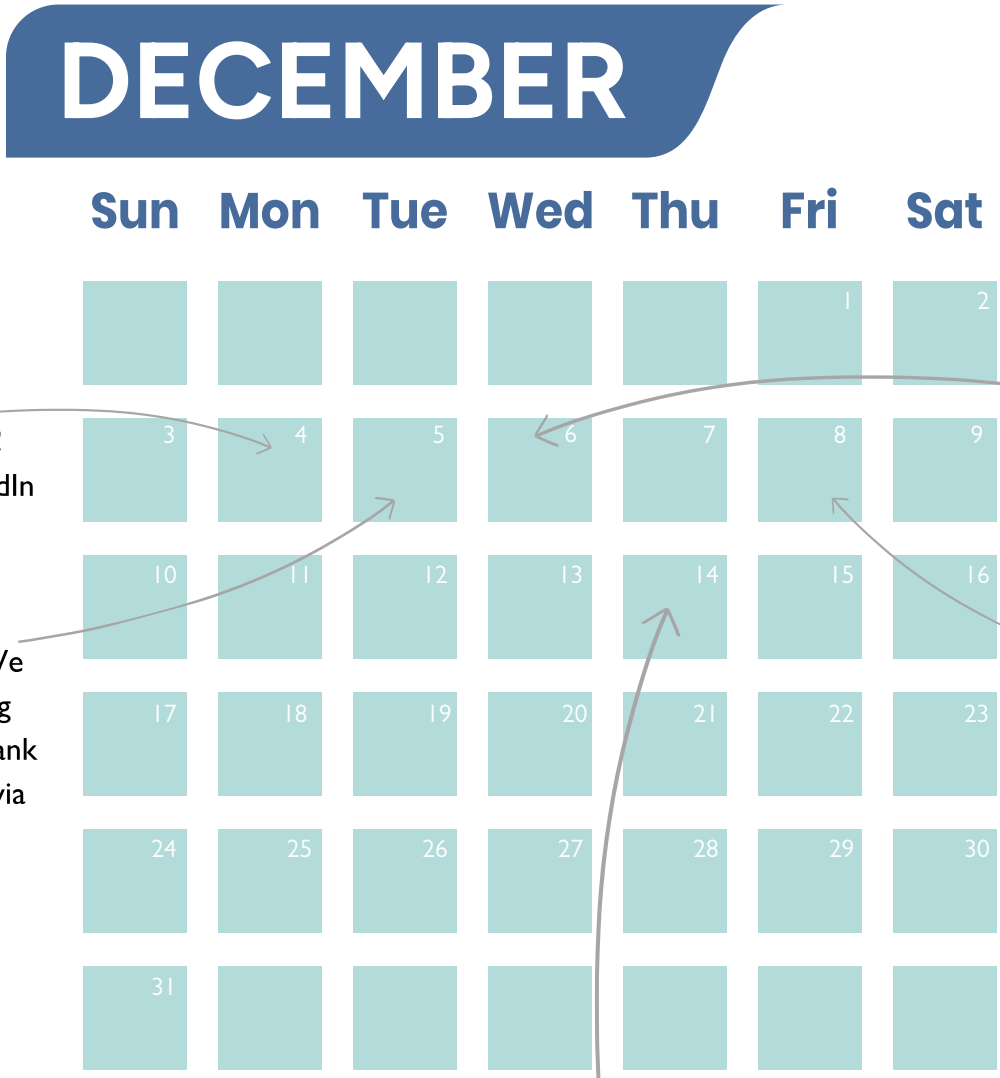
50% of the way towards our target! We encourage our supporters to donate, via Mailchimp.

24 hours into Big Give week! We keep up the buzz we've created on socials, by posting on LinkedIn and X.

At these points we shared with our staff team and Trustees, a 'pack' of resources - including newsletter copy, sample social media posts, and graphics - to encourage the whole organisation to support the campaign, quickly and easily!

OUR COMMS STRATEGY

Our Big Give comms calendar for **December** looked a bit like this.



24 hours to go! Mailchimp, LinkedIn and X.

Celebration! We celebrate meeting our total, and thank our supporters, via LinkedIn and X.

Thank you! And total, to everyone who donated to the Big Give - via Mailchimp.

Celebration! We make sure our supporters know we're appreciate them, with another post on LinkedIn and X.

We publish our regular supporter newsletter, with a link to donate via the website, for those who missed the campaign.

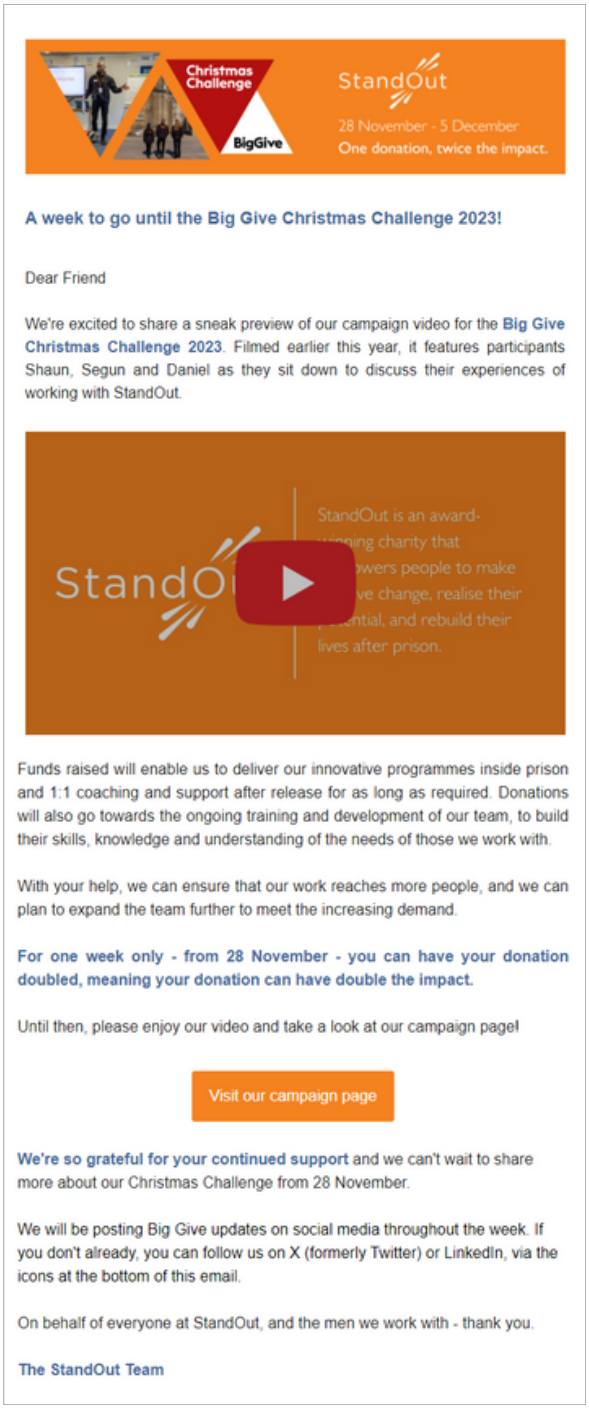
Good to know

Throughout the campaign, our call to action was featured prominently on our website, and in the email signatures of the staff team.

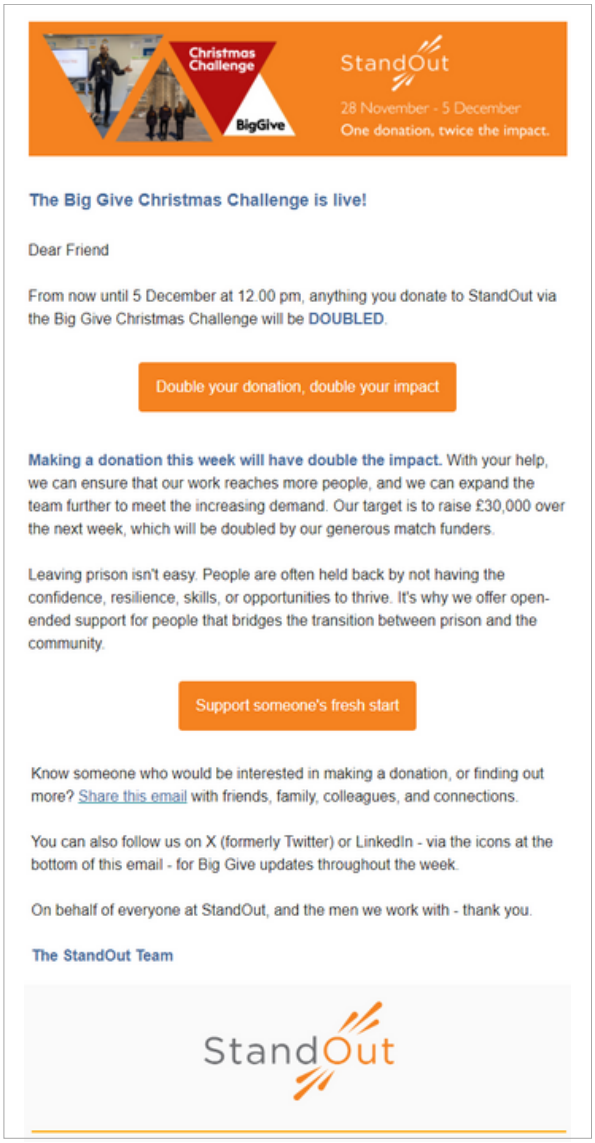
We used Buffer to schedule posts to LinkedIn and X, and Mailchimp to send emails to our supporters. We created eye catching graphics in Canva - often drawing on the content of our Big Give video, to tie the campaign together.

SAMPLE MAILINGS & SOCIALS

This is the Mailchimp we sent to supporters a week before launch.



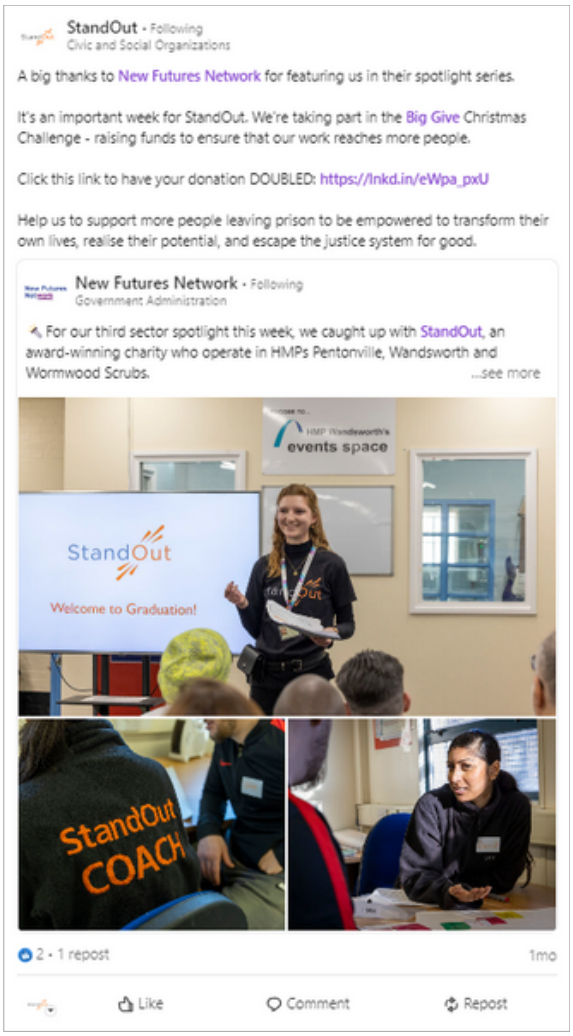
And this is the Mailchimp we sent to supporters on launch day.



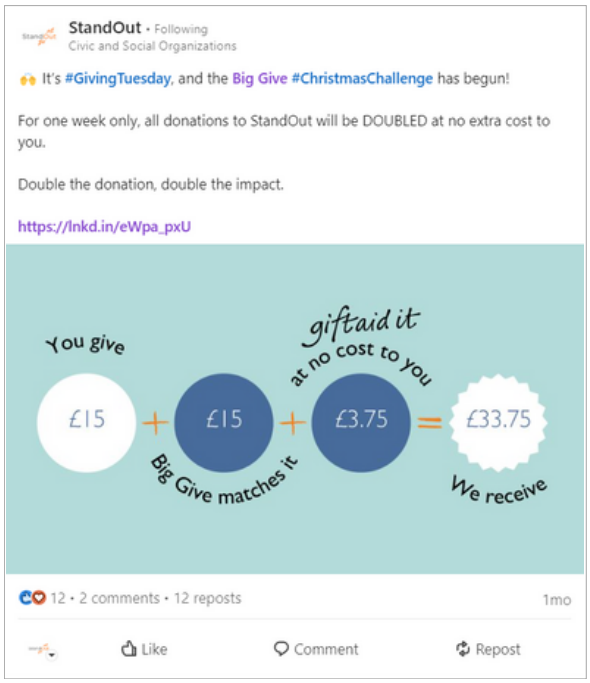
This is a post to X a week before launch.



We received some coverage from a government initiative during the Big Give; we capitalised on it to help our fundraising! This is a post from LinkedIn.



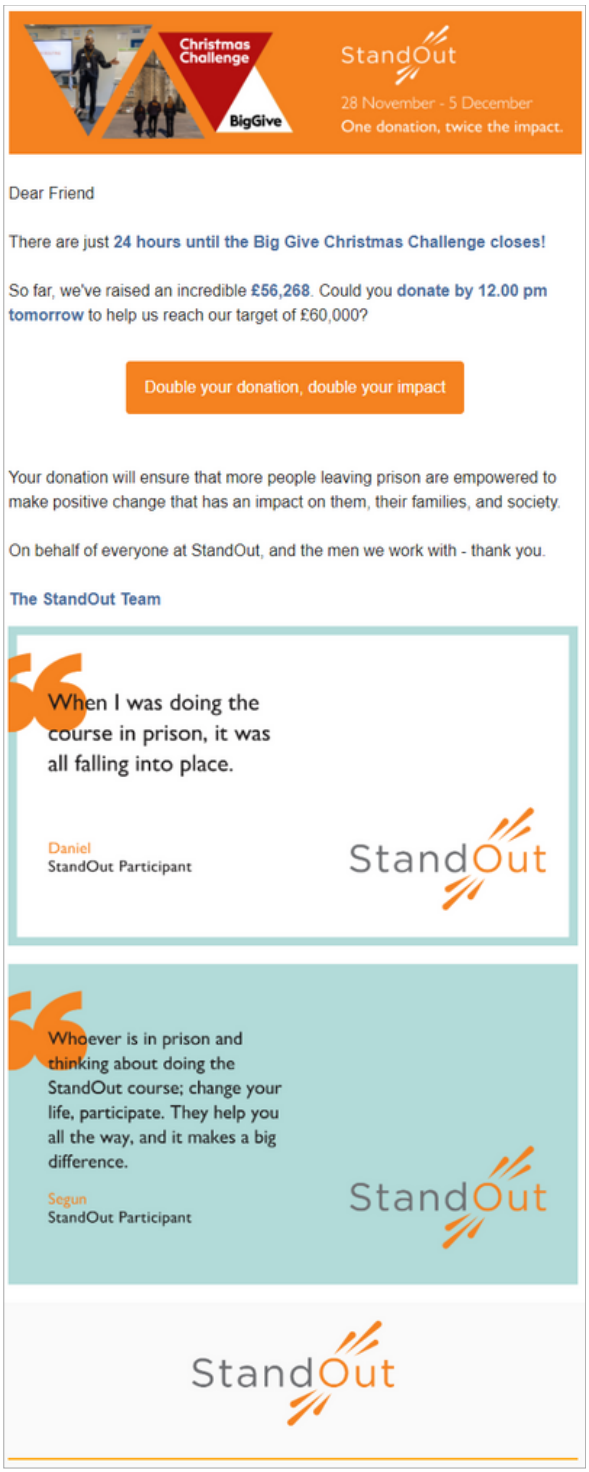
This is a LinkedIn post from launch day.



Here's a post we sent out via X, partway through the campaign. Quotes pulled from our video made for attractive graphics.



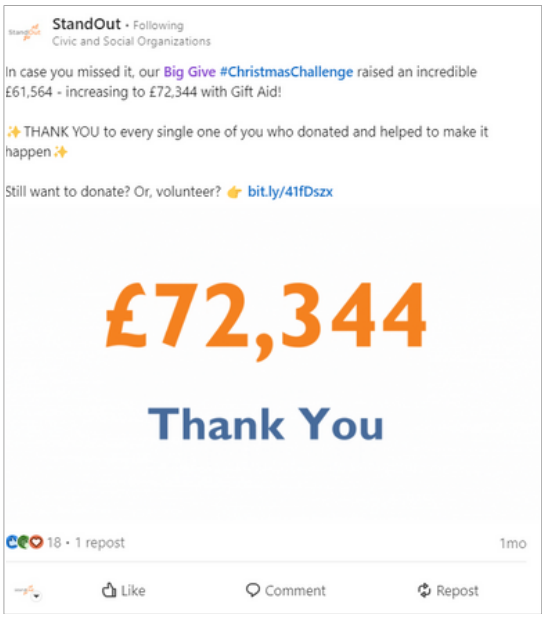
This is the final Mailchimp we sent to all supporters - a last push for donations.



This is the 'thank you' Mailchimp we sent to those who donated.



Here's one last LinkedIn post, thanking our supporters and announcing our total amount raised.



RESULTS

We are delighted to be able to report that we exceeded our £60,000 target! On this page, we share the breakdown.



On top of this, two Trusts contacted us to ask if they could donate towards our Campaign - which we had as an option for additional pledgers. As we did not hit our target earlier these donations were sent directly to us, totalling £15,000.

We also had some individual donors get in touch who wanted to contribute, but were unable to via the online platform. They gave an additional £7,735 between them.

And so, through the online platform, gift aid, and donations outside of the platform, we actually raised a total of £95,069 as a direct result of the campaign!

ANALYTICS

Mailchimp

Subject	Recipients	Opens	% Opens	Clicks	% Clicks
A week to go	723	398	56.9%	43	6.1%
Launch day	717	410	58.8%	28	4.0%
50% raised	718	381	54.4%	29	4.1%
24 hours left	715	362	51.8%	23	3.3%

The open and click rates for our emails are very good across the board; particularly at the beginning of the campaign!

If we look at the 'email marketing statistics and benchmarks by industry' information provided by Mailchimp, **our highest click rate (6.1%)** is higher than the average click rate of any industry listed, which peaks at 5.01% ('hobbies').

Interestingly, **our lowest open rate (51.8%)** is actually considerably higher than the highest average open rate of the industries listed ('government' at 28.77%).

Social media

Between 20 November (when we first posted our video) and 8 December (when we sent out our final 'thank you' to supporters, we posted about our campaign 26 times across LinkedIn and X. These posts were viewed 4,413 times and received 270 clicks, likes, shares and comments.

Despite having a similar number of followers on each platform, our posts generated considerably more engagement on LinkedIn. Due to diminishing returns, we had previously spoken about the value of continuing to use X, and these analytics will be a helpful source of information as we continue this conversation.

As a small charity, we need to think carefully about where we focus our efforts, and which platforms give us the best reach. Our Big Give 2023 campaign suggests that we should prioritise engaging with and growing our audience on LinkedIn.

ANALYTICS

In previous years we had a much earlier response to our campaign launch, with the majority of initial donations being made in the first 48 hours.

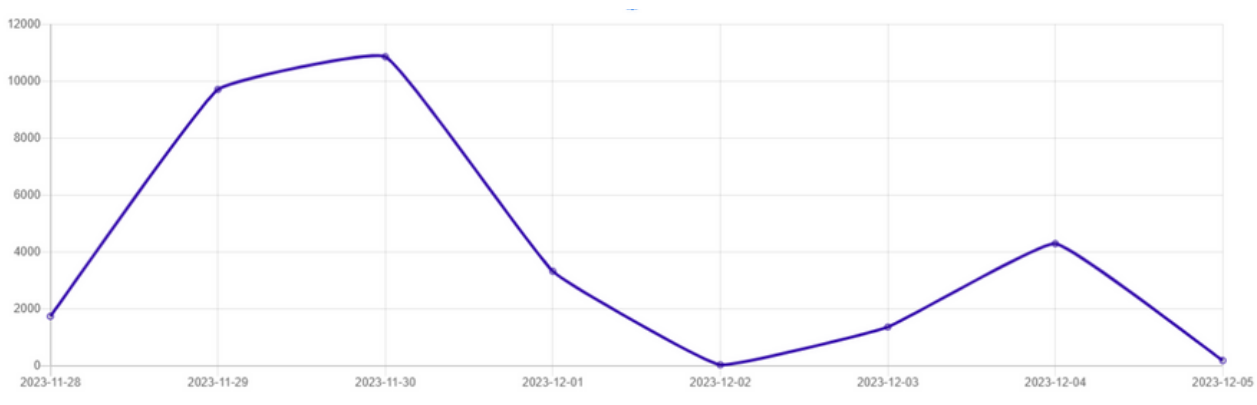
This year was a bit slower to get going, and we had to remind a few pledgers to donate. On top of emails, phone calls were made to remind individuals of the link and check in with them. This personal touch helped generate some momentum as the week went on.

In previous years we had reached 75%+ by the end of Wednesday, and 100% of the initial target by Thursday lunchtime. Whilst we didn't achieve that rate of donations this year, we still exceeded our target and are overjoyed with the result.

Having spoken to a few donors there has been no obvious reason why this was the case, but keeping a consistency to the regularity of communications and personal approaches, ensured we remained on target.

Value of donation	No. of donations
£0-£10	2
£11-£50	40
£51-£100	13
£100-£250	8
£251-£500	6
£501-£1,000	6
£1,001+	6

Via the Big Give portal, we received a total of £31,564, made up of 81 donations; averaging £389.68 per donation.



LESSONS LEARNED & TOP TIPS

Start early

June may seem early to be planning a Christmas campaign, but with the number of people involved, especially if reliant on the Board for their contacts, the time does fly. This year, for 2024, we are having initial planning meetings in May to make sure we are on top of everything. In fact, whilst it is only January, a few initial discussions have started internally!

Be brave with your content

We chose a different route with our campaign video this year and it paid off. It felt much more personal to the participants involved and less about StandOut and what we do. It is worth the investment in the long run to make a video which packs a punch and everyone involved can be proud of.

Preparation is key

We had drafted different options of content depending on how the campaign went, and we were very glad of this during the campaign week. Being able to make a quick tweak to mailing or social, rather than going from scratch, meant we could adapt quickly and much more easily when the pressure was on.

Stick with it and trust the process

We had a slow start this year, in comparison to previous years, and had some concerns we might not reach our target. However, we knew that this would pay off and some gentle nudges during the campaign week ensured it was in our supporters minds. A phone call is often better than an email when you need an urgent response - don't be afraid to pick up the phone and check in with a donor about their pledge.

Think about your audiences

We have learnt that the chance to double a donation is a big draw for a number of our committed supporters. They are more likely to support us during this campaign than at other points during the year, so utilise this as a selling point to new donors. They are part of a bigger movement through the Big Give and this is a benefit to generating higher donations. We are planning even more of a push for 2024 with specific fundraising events to help direct donations to the Big Give.

THANK YOU

To everyone who was involved this year in making this Campaign such a success, a massive thank you.

To our pledger, Champion and donors thank you for supporting us financially and we hope you will continue to get involved in our work in other ways.

Our Board and staff supported the Fundraising and Development Manager and Communications Lead throughout the process, sharing posts, suggesting ideas and trying to get involved despite a very busy period in other parts of the organisation. Thank you for everything.

The team at World Heart Beat made our video the success it was, taking time to work with us to get this right and spending hours on the editing to make sure it was a polished end product. A special thank you to Nick for his time and patience as we were agonising over final edits.

The biggest thank you goes to Daniel, Shaun and Segun who gave up their time to record the video and were so gracious and vulnerable with sharing their personal reflections and stories. Having the opportunity to work with such inspiring people is what makes this all worthwhile.

StandOut

Get involved

As a charity, we couldn't continue our work without the amazing and generous support of funders, donors, volunteers, and partners.

There are lots of ways to get involved and show your support for StandOut. Scan the QR code or visit our website to find out more.

Join the conversation

info@standout.org.uk

standout.org.uk

StandOut is the trading name of StandOut Programmes.
Registered charity no. 1177813 and company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 11257739.

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