



The National Business Response Network

Connecting national business support to local needs

As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on towns and cities across the UK intensifies, the need to link business support to community need in the right place, at the right time and at the right scale has never been more urgent.

We know the impact that the private sector can have at times like these and our members tell us every day how much they want to make a difference to those most in need.

We have over 750 companies in our membership, many with much needed resources, capacity and desire to help. The only way to ensure the right level and kind of help is delivered in the right place and time is by identifying local needs and bringing in the right business support. That is why we have launched our **National Business Response Network**.

We were founded over 40 years ago by HRH The Prince of Wales and we are the oldest and largest network of our kind convening businesses on resilience, response and long-term recovery. When floods, cyber-attacks or riots strike, we match need with the enormous support that the private sector can offer. We connect communities with government, the voluntary and community sector and companies to make sure that help is channelled to the right places and that the burden is shared.

The COVID-19 crisis is no different and we are mobilising the collective resource of The Prince's Responsible Business Network and our partners to provide lifelines to people and communities affected by the pandemic. We have 300 business leaders committed and ready to take action through our regional and national boards, ready to mobilise thousands of employees, supply chains and partners in their local community.

What is the National Business Response Network?

Through Business in the Community's vast regional and local connections and leaders on the ground, the National Business Response Network identifies national and local community needs from community groups, schools, local authorities, local resilience bodies, charities and small businesses and connects business resources to meet the following community needs:

- **Food:** Ensuring people have continued access to food.
- **Technology:** Support to enable children to continue learning, and older people to stay connected to families.
- **Social care:** Support to vulnerable groups and older people to enable continued access to food, healthcare, social interaction and other essentials.
- **Small businesses:** Creating resources with advice and practical tools specifically for small businesses; providing business continuity and wellbeing support through mentoring for small businesses.

The business resources we will be matching to community needs are:

- **Professional support:** Using the untapped resources and goodwill of our member companies to provide human resource to support business in the UK.
- **Lending/donating resources:** Lending or donating resources to organisations and people to meet need.
- **Logistics:** Transportation of people, goods and services.





Our approach



The National Business Response Network in action

The Business Response Network is already delivering business support to direct to communities. FareShare is a charity aimed at relieving food poverty and reducing food waste in the UK. It does this by rescuing good quality surplus food that would otherwise have gone to waste and sending it to almost 11,000 charity and community groups across the United Kingdom.

We identified that Fareshare distribution centres in Edinburgh, Leeds and Newcastle needed support with food distribution and matched them with a London North Eastern Railway (LNER) offer to provide support. LNER have distributed over 11,000 sandwiches and are working with us to look at how they might increase the scale of this further.

To meet Fareshare’s needs, the National Business Response Network:

- **Identified and mapped community need in the regions:** Our delivery and impact team have worked through our existing community networks to identify needs and gaps in support and map this across our regional networks.
- **Solicited support:** We requested the support of the leading businesses across all of our regions through our member network and relationship managers.
- **Brokered the support between the businesses and Fareshare:** We facilitated conversations between LNER and Fareshare regional distribution centres and multiple independent food charities to distribute LNER’s supply of food to centres and charities in Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds and York.

How you can help

To find out where community needs are and to offer your support, contact your Business in the Community Relationship Manager or email businessresponse@bitc.org.uk.

