

Meet Ben Hilton, ReachOut's new CEO

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Company: Reachout Academy

Location: Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry United Counties (Alexandria)

Category: other-general

We're excited to announce that Ben Hilton has been appointed as ReachOut's new Chief Executive Officer.

Ben joins ReachOut from Dame Kelly Holmes Trust where he's worked for 9 and a half years, most recently as their CEO and before that as Director of Programmes and Head of Young People Programmes. Alongside this, Ben has volunteered mentoring young offenders and worked in youth services supporting employers to recruit young people into careers.

Take a look below to find out more about Ben including what mentoring means to him, and why he wanted to join ReachOut.

On Ben's appointment, Professor Simon Hepburn, ReachOut's Chair of Trustees said:

"We're very excited to have Ben join ReachOut as our new CEO. Ben brings with him extensive experience supporting young people from under-resourced communities to grow in character, confidence and self-belief. It's clear he has a life-long passion for making sure young people get the chances and opportunities they deserve and we're thrilled that he'll be bringing that drive and determination to our next chapter at ReachOut. I'd also like to offer my thanks to Alice Memminger for her service as ReachOut's interim CEO since February."

Ben will be starting at ReachOut on 09th October.

Find out more about Ben
Can you tell us a bit about your background, and what led to where you are in your career today?

"I grew up in a single-parent household in what is now known as the poverty triangle in Redruth, Cornwall. I struggled in school as I was a hyperactive child, and the formal structures of the classroom and teaching model didn't support my learning style, so I grew up with little

aspirations of what I could achieve. Acting and Drama was the one subject that grabbed me though, and that is the route I took through college and University via Manchester and London.

For the past 9 and a half years (over 5 and a half as CEO) I've been working for the youth development charity Dame Kelly Holmes Trust which puts world-class athletes shoulder to shoulder with young people, equipping them with a winning mindset and shaping their futures. Before that I worked for Business in the Community as the Head of Community Impact in the South West, before taking on a national role under the Work Inclusion campaign, supporting people who were homeless or at risk of homelessness into work. Alongside this, I have volunteered as a needle exchange worker, mentoring young offenders and in youth services supporting employers to recruit young people into careers, not just jobs."

Have you ever had a mentor?

"I've had a number of mentors throughout my life but the one who always comes to mind was my college lecturer in Manchester. At that time, I was living on my own and struggling with aspects of my life outside of college and he went above and beyond to support me and ensured that I remained on track to get to University. His ability to inspire, communicate authentically and bring the best out of people is something that I still reflect and learn from 25+ years later."

What attracted you to the role of CEO at ReachOut?

"The model, the impact and the potential. ReachOut is working in communities where young people don't have the same opportunities as their peers who live in more affluent postcodes, to develop their character, achieve their aspirations and build relationships with positive role models. The fact that a young person is experiencing this on a weekly basis, and they are able to be supported year-on-year from primary to post-16, is really inspiring and something that I knew I had to be part of."

What are you looking forward to in your role as CEO?

"Seeing the impact first-hand and working with the amazing young people, team, Board and volunteers that make ReachOut what it is. It is such a privilege to be joining an organisation that has made a positive difference to so many lives over the past twenty years and I look forward to leading the charity through its next chapter."

ReachOut is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under number 4604379 and registered as a Charity number 1096492.

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