

# Legacy Giving – Growing your Pipeline

**BUFFALO**  
A DIVISION OF RUFFALO NOEL LEVITZ



### Background

Many institutions lack an established and cohesive legacy giving programme and instead rely on an ad hoc approach, via direct mails, casual mention of legacies giving during telethons and a page on their website. For a small Development Office doing much more can be extremely difficult due to lack of resources and time. Buffalo have developed a multi-channel legacy giving service to help give our clients a better legacy strategy and grow their pipeline without adding greatly to their own workload. We have adapted the long established, hugely successful, legacy giving model favoured by our parent company – Ruffalo Noel Levitz, to suit our UK clients.

### *Ensuring Fulfilment of Pledges*

The key to Buffalo's legacy giving service is ensuring that pledges are fulfilled. Many alumni are yet to have written a Will or are unsure of the process of updating their Will with a charitable pledge. Therefore, providing them with the means to easily set one up can be crucial to the success of any legacy giving programme. The Goodwill Partnership (TGP) is the largest distributor of home-visit solicitors providing Will writing services in England and Wales. In order to provide a service that delivers tangible results Buffalo has set up a partnership with TGP.

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This partnership means that Buffalo manage the set-up process with TGP so that all our clients need to do is sign the contract. Set up with TGP is free as they get paid per Will they write and are paid by the donor. This structure costs our clients nothing and means TGP are incentivised to complete as many Wills as possible. It also means they do all the

chase work on any legacy leads they receive, saving our clients lots of time! Almost 100% of home-visit appointments are completed with instructions for at least one Will being taken. TGP can be seamlessly added to your established legacy strategy by linking to your own website, giving your alumni an easily accessible, best-practise route to writing their Will. TGP are so competitively priced that many alumni opt to set up a new Will rather than amending any existing Will they may have. What's particularly appealing about TGP is that they keep charities informed of any progress and forward on details of the legacy once it's been set up. This means development teams can thank the pledger accordingly and report on results.

### Pilot Campaigns in 2016 – Two Different Projects

After setting up the partnership with TGP in 2016, Buffalo ran two pilot legacy campaigns with Peterhouse, Cambridge and the University of York. Each campaign was adapted to suit the differing needs of our clients. This white paper will give details of both projects to demonstrate how Buffalo is able to tailor the campaign to your needs.

## York – A Case Study

### *York at a glance...*

- The Development Team have a part-time Planned Giving Officer.
- The legacy programme is mainly face-to-face meetings with some mailings.
- The legacy society has been set up and members enjoy an annual reception as well as other events.
- There are 107 known pledgers.

**Their need:** For Buffalo to provide the Planned Giving Officer with legacy leads.

**Buffalo's solution:** To provide a lead-finding service by selecting prospects to include, sending a pre-call questionnaire and calling all respondents to assess interest in leaving a legacy to York.



### *Campaign Aims*

As York has an established legacy programme and a Planned Giving Officer they didn't need Buffalo to set up a partnership with TGP. The primary aim of the campaign was to identify any interested alumni so that they could be put in touch with the Development Team who would then arrange a face-to-face meeting. Alongside this aim, York wanted Buffalo to promote the idea of legacy giving and identify existing pledgers whom the University was not aware of.

### *Before Calling*

York wanted to focus on over 50s for this campaign. Their thought was that if they targeted alumni in their 40s there was a greater likelihood of the individual changing their Will in the future anyway. 1,448 alumni were sent an email survey which got a response rate of 3%. The purpose of the survey was to gain attitudes to legacy giving, collect correct contact details and find out the type of alumni that should be included in the call pool.

The survey found some initial leads with 21 alumni indicating that they would consider giving to York, which was very promising and meant that Buffalo was able to focus on these individuals during the calling period. The survey identified three existing pledgers that York were previously unaware of. Interestingly, 27 alumni said that they had not considered making a legacy gift before despite many having given donations. It was clear that there was more to be done to promote legacy giving.

### *Postcards*

Once the survey results were collated, Buffalo selected a call pool and sent out a pre-call postcard. After Buffalo provided a brief for the postcards, the York design team were able to put together two excellent postcards. Both postcards were well received with only 5% opting out of receiving a call, which is well below average.



### *Calling Results*

From the 150 alumni contacted during the campaign, York received £13,000 in new pledges, 12% planned on leaving a legacy and 48% were considering making a pledge. Essentially 67% of alumni contacted gave a positive response, only 33% were not interested in leaving a legacy. The fact that York received any confirmed pledges was a bonus since the primary aim of the calls was to generate leads for the Development Team. At the end of the campaign Buffalo was able to provide York with the names of 28 alumni who were happy to be put in contact with the Planned Giving Officer to set up a legacy.

### *After the campaign*

Since the campaign, York has managed to follow up on 20 of the 28 leads. They have had a 100% success rate with the individuals that they have contacted and the total number of legacy pledgers on record is now up to 127 from 107 before the campaign. This represents a 20% increase. All the new pledges have been unrestricted residuary gifts (preferred by York), ranging from 5% - 50% of the pledgers estate. The average is 10% due to the inheritance tax benefits associated with gifts of this value.

## Peterhouse – A Case Study

### *Peterhouse at a glance...*

- Legacy giving is a small part of the Annual Fund Officer's role.
- The legacy programme is mainly ad hoc mailings.
- The legacy society has been set up and members enjoy an annual lunch.
- There are 153 known legacy pledgers.

**Their need:** For Buffalo to help identify and convert alumni into pledgers.

**Buffalo's solution:** To provide a comprehensive campaign, managing all aspects of the process from establishing a relationship with solicitors, selecting prospects for the pool, sending a questionnaire, calling, to writing the final report.



Peterhouse Cambridge

### *Building Partnerships*

Peterhouse was slightly different to York in that they didn't have the manpower to follow up on leads so Buffalo also needed to convert the leads into gifts. To do this Buffalo set them up with TGP. Peterhouse also had the idea to use two alumni solicitors. They agreed to help on the condition that they wouldn't be inundated with requests. This meant that there would be two options for any interested individuals.

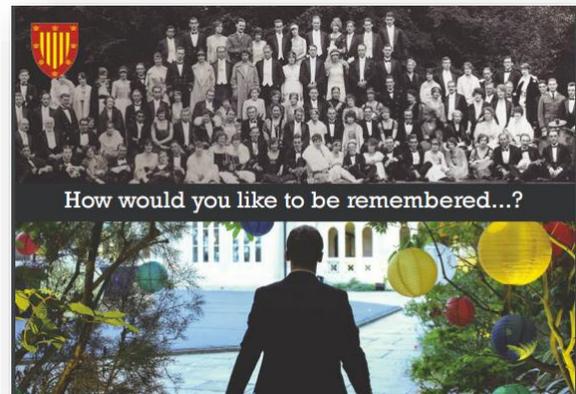
### *Campaign structure and results*

The majority of the campaign worked very similarly to York, in that Buffalo

sent a questionnaire, identified a selection and sent a postcard ahead of calling.

Buffalo used two dedicated legacy giving callers for the duration of the campaign. 147 calls were completed, 67% of alumni gave a positive response and 18% made a pledge. Peterhouse identified £230,000 in existing pledges by the end of the calling period. This group can now be thanked and stewarded appropriately. Interestingly, one of the alumni who had pledged a legacy had never given to Peterhouse before which proved that non-donors shouldn't be left out of legacy campaigns.

In total, 14% of the original calls reached the final closing stage. Of the 13 leads that were given to the alumni solicitors, four were still in progress as of December 2016, and six hadn't been contacted. As yet, no Wills have been completed. TGP fared better, while five of the seven leads are still in progress, everyone has been successfully contacted and to date two Wills have been completed.



These results show that while using affiliated solicitors may seem a great way of encouraging alumni to pledge, using solicitors who have a vested interest in getting the Will set up will yield better results. On the whole the results were very promising. Buffalo found or converted over £300,000 worth of legacy gifts and alumni were very receptive to the campaign and talking about legacy gifts. The Development Team are now in a position to better steward their existing pledgers, to obtain new pledgers in the future using TGP and report on the results of their investment in legacy giving.

### What We've Learnt

- Make the most of Planned Giving Officers by outsourcing time consuming lead generation, enabling them to focus on working with donors to secure the pledge.
- For small development teams, collaborating with incentivised solicitors is a way of ensuring tangible results from a legacy campaign. They also take the chase work off the work-load of development staff.

**// Collaborating with incentivised solicitors is a way of ensuring that you achieve tangible results from your legacy campaign. //**

- Working with alumni solicitors can be tricky and doesn't always yield the best results.
- Conducting direct mails, putting a page on the College website and casually mentioning legacy giving during a telethon are not enough in themselves for the legacy message to resonate because many of the alumni Buffalo spoke to had never considered giving before.
- Think about legacy literature. A good piece of design can encourage a more positive response.
- Donors will always be the warmest legacy prospects but don't ignore non-donors.

**For more information on the Legacy Giving service provided by Buffalo, please contact our business development team on 01179 33 55 80 or at [marketing@buffalofc.co.uk](mailto:marketing@buffalofc.co.uk)**