

Savanta:

# The Top 100 Most Loved Charity Brands 2020

*Who is winning the hearts of UK charity supporters?*

savanta.com

Savanta:  
**THE 100**  
MOST LOVED  
CHARITY BRANDS  
**2020**



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>03</b>
The power of love	04
How does brand love manifest among charities?	05
What drives love?	07
<b>Which charities are the top performers?</b>	<b>08</b>
Top 3 category medallists	09
— Animal welfare	10
— Healthcare & mental health	11
— Children & families	12
— Social justice	13
— International aid	14
— Environmental protection	15
— Disability	16
<b>Applying the lessons</b>	<b>17</b>
Three ways charities can inspire love from supporters	18
<b>The league table in full</b>	<b>19</b>
No. 1 — 100	20
<b>How Savanta can help you</b>	<b>23</b>
How we support our charity clients	24
How the BrandVue data engine works	25
The team behind the report	26

# Introduction

- 04 The power of love
- 05 How does brand love manifest among charities?
- 07 What drives love?



# The power of love

Welcome to the Top 100 Most Loved Charity Brands – a recognition and celebration of the most emotively connected brands within the third sector.

We know that people's most deeply held relationships with charities are emotional by default. Whether based on a connection to a specific cause or driven by desire to help others, relationships with charities are full of personal meaning.

However, the relationship between supporters and charities is like a bridge. It requires thoughtful design, sturdy construction and regular maintenance.

The potential result is an emotional connection between a charity and its

supporters that is highly personal, valued and can last for decades.

Within this report we reveal the most loved charity brands, and the leaders within seven categories: animal welfare, healthcare & mental health, children & family, social justice, international aid, environmental protection and disability.

These rankings are based on 60,000 interviews collected over the past year, through Savanta's market intelligence platform BrandVue Charities: the largest and most comprehensive brand, audience and supporter tracking engine in the market.



# How does brand love manifest among charities?

## 1 Love can serve as a vehicle to increase both financial and in-kind support for a specific charity and improve its key brand metrics.

Consumers who love the top three charities in each category are almost six times as likely to have supported them in the past 12 months (5.7x) compared to people with lower affinity.

Moreover, the support rate of people who love a specific charity can grow much higher. It is more than ten-fold for Mencap (10.4x) and thirteen or even close to fifteen-fold in the cases of Make-A-Wish (13.2x) and The National Autistic Society (14.8x) respectively in comparison with people who are less passionate about these charities.

Furthermore, people who love any of the top three charities have an average of 4.4 times higher understanding of the charities and their cause or mission (73%) compared to those who are more lukewarm towards these charities (20%).

However, understanding in itself is not enough; trust is a necessary ingredient for establishing a healthy relationship with a charity – and we see that loved charities are significantly more trusted by the public.

Based on our Brand Vue results, we see that an average of eight out of ten respondents who love the top three loved charities trust them (80%). This share is three times higher compared to people with lower affinity (24%).

## 2 Love is also the force which deepens support for a specific charity and turns their relationship into a long-lasting one.

This logic can be demonstrated in patterns of engagement with various channels of a charity.

People who love the top three charities are more likely to have engaged with almost all tested channels of engagement in the past 12 months, with 'fundraiser support' the only exception. We argue that engagement with more modes of support translates into loyalty as outlined below.

These channels include financial donations (both individual and regular); interpersonal word-of-mouth and endorsement on social media; purchase of branded merchandising and volunteering; and engagement with charity shops.

We were particularly interested in monetary forms of support as these are crucial elements that help ensure longevity of a charity.

For example, the average growth of *individual*, one-off donations amongst people who love the top three charities is up by +3% compared to those who feel less passionate about these.

Importantly, regular financial donations amongst the same group of top three charity lovers are up by +24% on average.

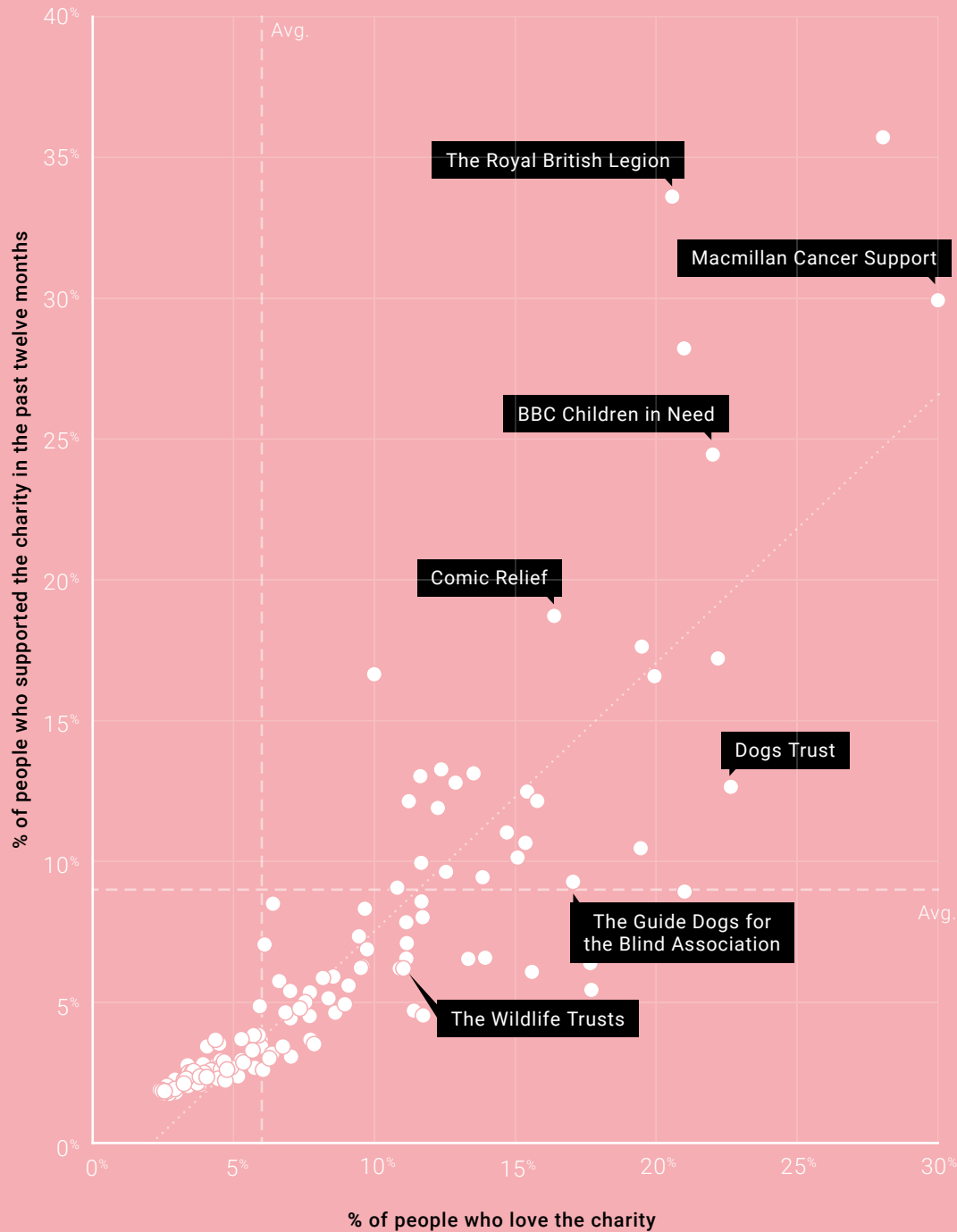
Similarly, the purchase of branded charity merchandise grows by +6% amongst those who love the top three brands.

These findings not only confirm the conversion of love into loyalty but also demonstrate how love contributes to long-term thriving of charities.

Another aspect of loyalty is volunteering, which grows by +19% amongst respondents who love the top three charities compared to those with lower affinity.

Equally important is the power of word of mouth: the propensity to take on the role of informal brand ambassadors and to support organisations in personal interactions as well as online grows by +69% and +5% respectively amongst those who love the top three charities.

# The more a charity is loved, the more supporters it has



There is a strong positive relationship between love and support ( $r=0.86$ ) as visible in the chart adjacent. Moreover, we can see that the level of support for the most loved organisation from each sector is above average compared to other charities. Inspiring love among the general public is in the interest of each charity that operates in a saturated

sector and competes with other organisations for supporters. With an abundance of organisations and causes clamouring for their attention, people need a compass to navigate this increasingly complex sector. Only charities that succeed in creating an emotional bond, can cut through the noise. This anchor point is love.

# What drives love?

A high-level view of the charity sector offers insight into what brand attributes drive affinity towards a brand as well as highlighting opportunities to grow brand love in a way that will cut through and build differentiated relationships with the general public.

The top right quadrant isolates those attributes which drive brand love, and are the qualities associated with the most loved brands: **caring, trusted, committed, passionate, friendly** and **honest**.

These might be considered the 'hygiene factors' of brand love; they are important but don't allow differentiation from other leading charities.

Looking at the top left quadrant, many charity brands are commonly perceived to be credible and established – but these attributes are less important in driving love.

The bottom right quadrant isolates the attributes which are effective in driving affinity towards a charity brand, but are

currently less associated with the charity brands overall.

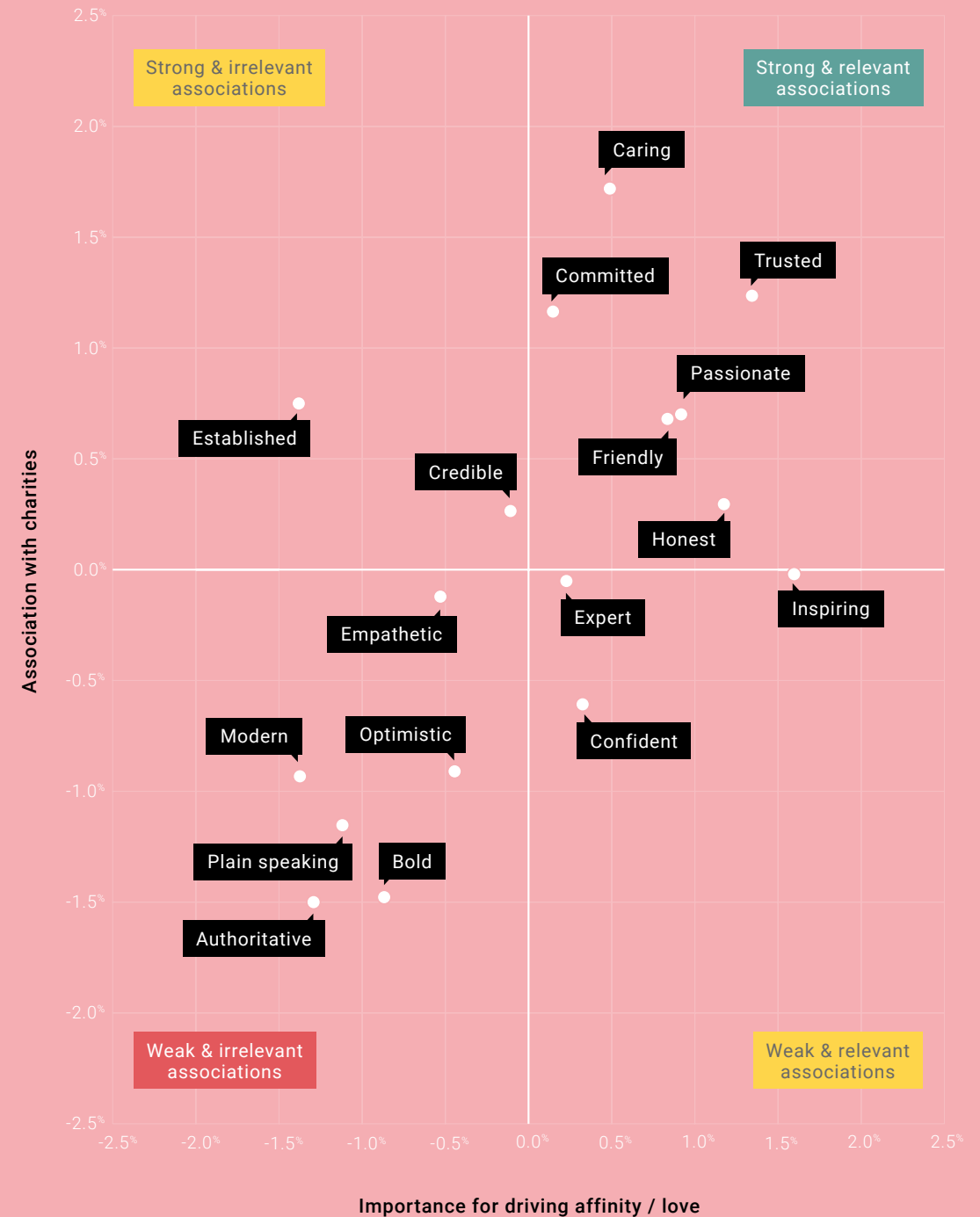
By communicating that the organisation is expert, inspiring and confident, it can drive brand love amongst the general public in a way which cuts through the noise and delivers a clear positioning within the charities sector.

Our analysis clearly illustrates the continued value of warm and nurturing associations with the charity sector, but also that these are generic attributes throughout the sector. There is room for charities overall to take a bolder stance in their positioning, and to drive love through stronger expression of their vision and expertise.

.....

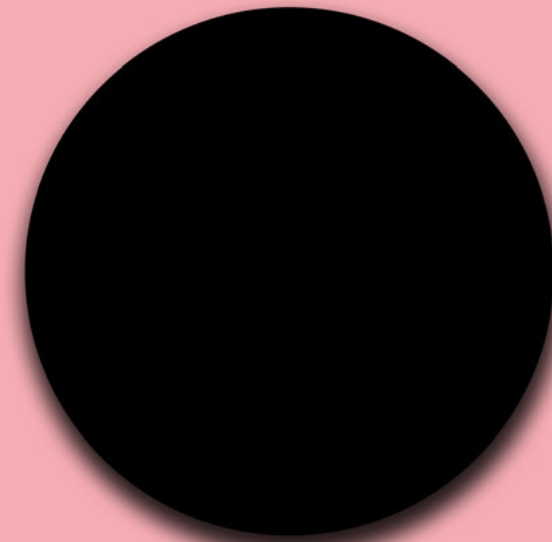
This analysis provides a clear roadmap for building a loved and differentiated brand. This particular analysis provides a view of how the overall charity sector operates and, naturally, this will vary by charity category and by individual charity. Savanta can tailor this analysis to your organisation and identify how you can position your brand to generate a unique affinity amongst the general public.

## The drivers of love for charities



# Which charities are the top performers?

- 09 Top 3 category medallists
- 10 Animal welfare
- 11 Healthcare & mental health
- 12 Children & families
- 13 Social justice
- 14 International aid
- 15 Environmental protection
- 16 Disability





# Top 3 category medalists

---

Context is everything. While there are valuable insights to be seen in how the charity sector operates as a whole, brand associations, engagement and support vary by sub-sector.

We have compiled a top three of charity brand love across the following sub-sectors, appearing in order of average love across the category: animal welfare,

healthcare & mental health, children & family, social justice, international aid, environmental protection and disability.




The most loved sub-sectors are animal welfare, healthcare & mental health, and children & family, reflecting a tendency for the public to invest the most emotional energy into the causes to which they are most able to relate.





CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Animal welfare

- 1** Dogs Trust 
- 2** RSPCA 
- 3** WWF 

Animal welfare is the most loved sector overall in the Top 100 most loved charity brands. This is perhaps due to the number of animal lovers across the country, with around 40%<sup>1</sup> of households owning a pet.

Charities tend to resonate more deeply with the public when they are associated with a strong British heritage and local presence. It is therefore no surprise that the top two animal welfare brands tick both of these boxes and have led highly successful campaigns in recent years.

Dogs Trust is the most loved brand in the sub-sector and has a widespread local presence running re-homing, training, micro-chipping and neutering

schemes across the UK. Recent memorable campaigns include: 'A dog is for life, not just for Christmas'; raising awareness of puppy breeding and smuggling; and a campaign to repeal the Dangerous Dogs Act.




Whilst RSPCA comes in second place, it is in fact the most well-known and most likely to receive public support in this sub-sector. This reflects the charity's long-standing record as the UK's first and world's oldest animal welfare charity, going back to 1824.

WWF takes third place, with its well-known 'Adopt an Animal' campaigns and Christmas advertising.

<sup>1</sup> [statista.com/statistics/308235/estimated-pet-ownership-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/](https://www.statista.com/statistics/308235/estimated-pet-ownership-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/)

CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Healthcare & mental health

- 1** Macmillan Cancer Support 
- 2** Cancer Research UK 
- 3** British Heart Foundation 

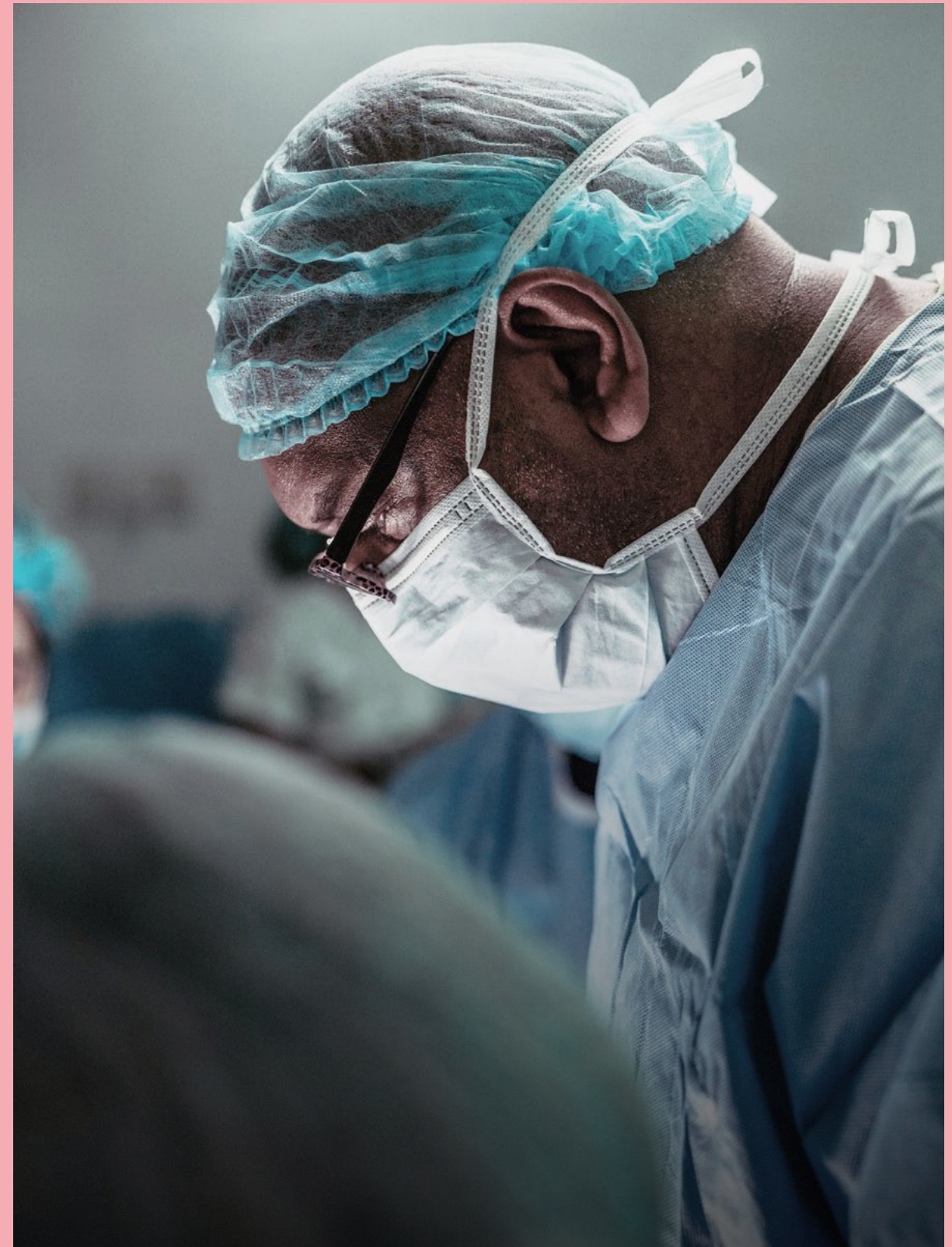
Cancer charities top the leader board, with Macmillan Cancer Support and Cancer Research UK (CRUK) receiving the most 'love'. The public are likely to engage with and donate to cancer charities for two reasons – they are affected by cancer, and also have the knowledge that their donation will make a positive difference. There has been an increase in the chance of developing cancer in the UK; it was previously one in three, and is now one in two, most likely linked to our ageing population.

Macmillan Cancer Support has continued to focus on the practical aspects of living with cancer, including raising awareness of the financial impact a diagnosis can have. Its approachable campaigns and on-the-ground support are likely to have

contributed to its highest 'love' score among the public – topping the table.

CRUK is the most well-known brand, and the UK public are most likely to say they have supported the charity in the last 12 months. Not without controversy, its move into the prevention space this year with its obesity campaign hit the headlines. The word 'obesity' was featured on images of cigarette packages, making a visual link with the traditional association between smoking and cancer.

The third most 'loved' brand in the healthcare and mental health space is British Heart Foundation (BHF), again likely to be in public consciousness and receiving support due to the prevalence of heart and circulatory diseases.





CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Children & families

-  **BBC Children in Need** 
-  **Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity** 
-  **Make-a-Wish** 

BBC Children in Need which supports disadvantaged children in the UK is the most loved brand within the sub-sector. The charity has achieved an extremely high level of awareness amongst the UK public due to the broadcaster maximising its opportunities for campaign reach and coverage, resulting in a relatively high proportion of the public supporting it over the past year. Children in Need, which features the iconic Pudsey Bear, was born in 1980 with its first telethon appeal and has grown to become a major television show and annual event. Last year's show featured messages and support from celebrities across a range of BBC

programmes including Mock the Week, Call the Midwife, Graham Norton and Countryfile. This enabled the campaign to reach a broad and diverse audience. Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity which raises money for the famous London hospital, is the second most loved in the children & families sub-sector – although it has a comparatively smaller proportion of the public providing support. Make-a-Wish is the third most loved charity. While both charities have a high level of awareness amongst the public, the proportion of public support over the past year is only around a fifth of those who have supported Children in Need.

CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Social justice

1 The Royal British Legion



2 Help for Heroes



3 Age UK



Brand love towards charities working on social justice issues is moderate compared with other charity sub-sectors.

However, the top two most loved – The Royal British Legion (RBL) and Help for Heroes (H4H) – are twice as likely to be loved than other charities from this sub-sector.

Greater brand love for these two organisations – with both supporting and celebrating veterans and service personnel – is most likely rooted in British patriot culture, influenced by the country's rich history.

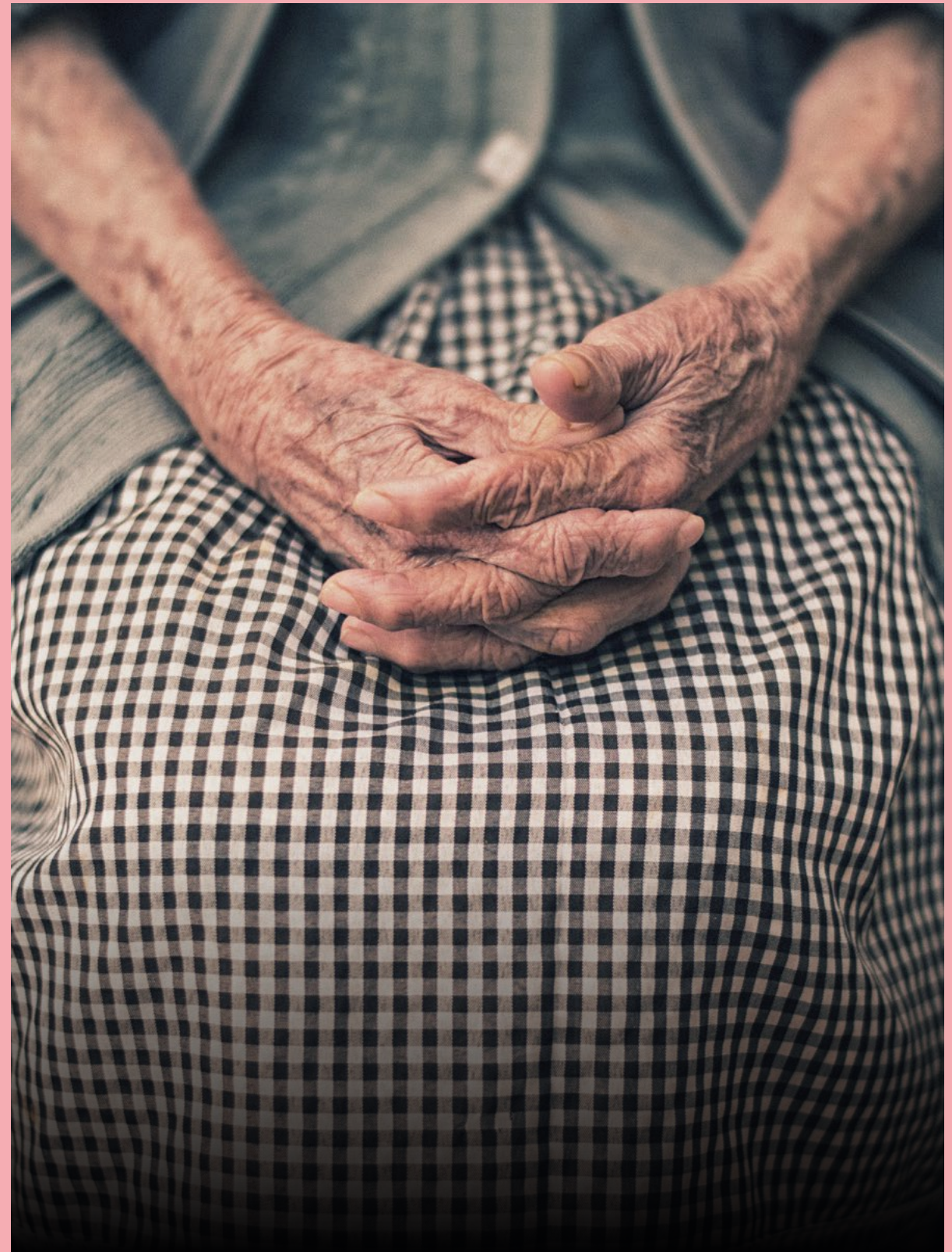
High levels of love are probably owed to the visibility of these two organisations through annual landmark events such as The Invictus Games – supported by both RBL and H4H – and RBL's Poppy Appeal.

Ranking third in the sector in terms of brand love is Age UK. Love for this charity may be driven by the attention paid to the UK's changing demographic landscape and the barriers impeding people from ageing comfortably.

With more and more people living longer, thinking about ageing and how to live a full and independent life is becoming a personal concern for a growing number of people in the UK.

Furthermore, Age UK's wide network of support organisations combined with campaigns such as #DonateYourWords in collaboration with Cadbury likely add to its high awareness and – importantly – love.

Level of support over the last 12 months is highest in the sector for RBL, with the organisation ranking second among the top 100 in total.





CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# International aid

- 1** Comic Relief 
- 2** Save the Children 
- 3** British Red Cross 

International Aid is amongst the best represented sectors in the Top 100 loved charity brands, second only to the healthcare & mental health sector.

However, the overall brand love expressed towards the sector is moderate compared to other charity sectors, reflecting the ideological and reputational challenges it faces.

The last decade has seen a growing scepticism towards the aspirations of global altruism, along with an emerging ideological split between those who prioritise international versus local need. It is therefore no surprise that the leading organisations in the sector



are those which address these varying public expectations and serve both international and domestic need.

Comic Relief is the most loved brand within the sector, having built a strong relationship with the UK public via its family-oriented flagship campaign, Red Nose Day. This established event has also earned Comic Relief a place amongst the most supported charities over the last twelve months.

Save the Children and British Red Cross are the next most loved in the sector, with a similar proportion of the public supporting them in the past year.

CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Environmental protection

- 1** The Wildlife Trusts 
- 2** Royal Society for the Protection of Birds 
- 3** Greenpeace 

In 2019, the phrase ‘climate emergency’ was chosen as the Oxford Dictionaries’ word of the year, reflecting a year of climate action in the UK. Over the past year, environmental issues have moved to the forefront of public debate. Public awareness of the environmental charities in the top 100 is high compared to other sectors.

However, despite high levels of awareness, public love towards these brands remains moderate compared to other sectors. Additionally, support overall has been relatively low comparatively. This suggests that while public engagement with environmental issues may be on the rise, this is yet to manifest in widespread active support for charities in the sector.

The sub-sector’s most loved are led by two national organisations: The Wildlife Trusts and The Royal Society for the Protection of

Birds (RSPB). Greenpeace comes in at third despite being the largest in size and reach.

With its huge international and national presence, as well as a skill for grabbing media attention, it’s no surprise that Greenpeace has the highest public awareness in the sub-sector. With significantly less visibility in mainstream media, RSPB has the second-highest awareness followed by The Wildlife Trusts.

The strong local presence of The Wildlife Trusts and RSPB perhaps explains the slightly higher proportion of adults reporting both love and support over the last 12 months compared with Greenpeace.

Furthermore, while the leading two focus more on community-engagement in their approach, Greenpeace is more divisive – known for its often provocative protest tactics.





CATEGORY MEDALLISTS:

# Disability

-  The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association 
-  The National Autistic Society 
-  Mencap 

Across the nation's most loved charities, disability rights causes feature comparatively lower than others, reflecting the wider and stronger appeal of healthcare, mental health and animal welfare charities.

This represents a space that disability rights charities can utilise by leveraging the support of the public alongside the health sector. The Paralympic Games is also taking place in 2020 and offers the chance for charities to get involved in topics such as inclusivity and sport.

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (Guide Dogs UK) is the most loved disability charity. This reflects the prominence of causes supporting the blind and visually impaired while speaking to the wider appeal of the nation's most loved pet.

Guide Dogs UK captures an emotive shift from puppies to people in its

most recent campaign 'By My Side' and harnesses relatability by drawing out the importance of family.

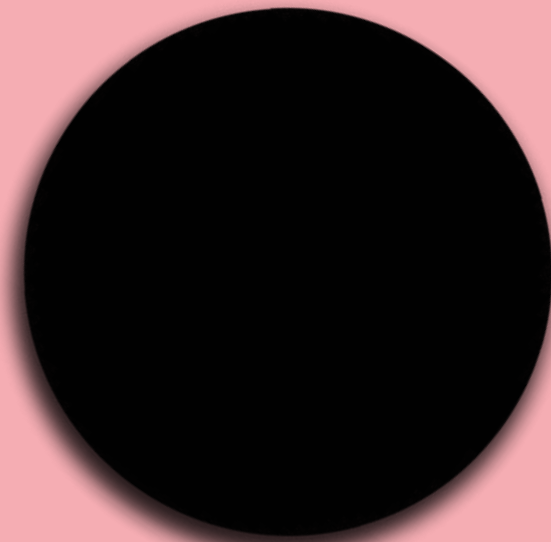
The charity continues to hold a wide reach among the public with more than four in five (83%) having heard of it. However, with only 9% offering support in the last 12 months, transitioning awareness into support highlights the challenge for the charity – and this sub-sector more widely.

The National Autistic Society and Mencap are the second and third most loved in this sub-sector. Again, while most members of the public have heard of them, evidence of support is significantly lower. While almost three quarters (72%) of the public are aware of Mencap, just 4% have supported the charity in the past year.



# Applying the lessons

18 Three ways charities can inspire  
love from supporters



# Three ways charities can inspire love from supporters

## 1 Build a personal connection

Personal connections are important for building love, and often charitable support is driven as much by personal resonance as by perceived need.

Our BrandVue data shows that having a personal interest in the charity's work is the most common reason for supporting charities. When it comes to charitable giving, people want to know that their donations are making an impact; a personal connection to a charity or cause also enables a better understanding of charitable work.

People feel connected to charities that focus on issues which are close to themselves or loved ones. This connection can also be connected to an issue which an individual may not necessarily have experienced first-hand but believes is important.

While personal connections are commonly considered at the micro level, these can also be fostered at the macro level whereby charities create a connection through a shared community, such as through British heritage or being part of a faith community.

## 2 Build awareness through communities

From our BrandVue data we know that there is correlation between awareness, love and support, highlighting the importance of continually building and maintaining awareness of a charity and its aims. Building awareness through existing communities, whether physical or online, improves depth of connection of that engagement.

Local presence allows charities to engage with supporters at a grassroots level, and to build a more intimate relationship. Charities can embed themselves into the infrastructure of a community through the presence of shops and centres, and by encouraging supporters to engage with campaigns at

a local level through fund-raisers, coffee mornings or volunteering opportunities.

Social media provides an opportunity to engage in a similarly 'local' way. Charities can reach a wide audience in a highly personalised way, and improve the return on investment by asking supporters to act as advocates in the promotion of a campaign. Stand-out examples of successful supporter-led campaigns include Movember, the Ice Bucket Challenge, and the No Makeup Challenge. BrandVue data also shows that social media is the most popular method for supporters to stay in touch with charities.

## 3 Build love through boldness

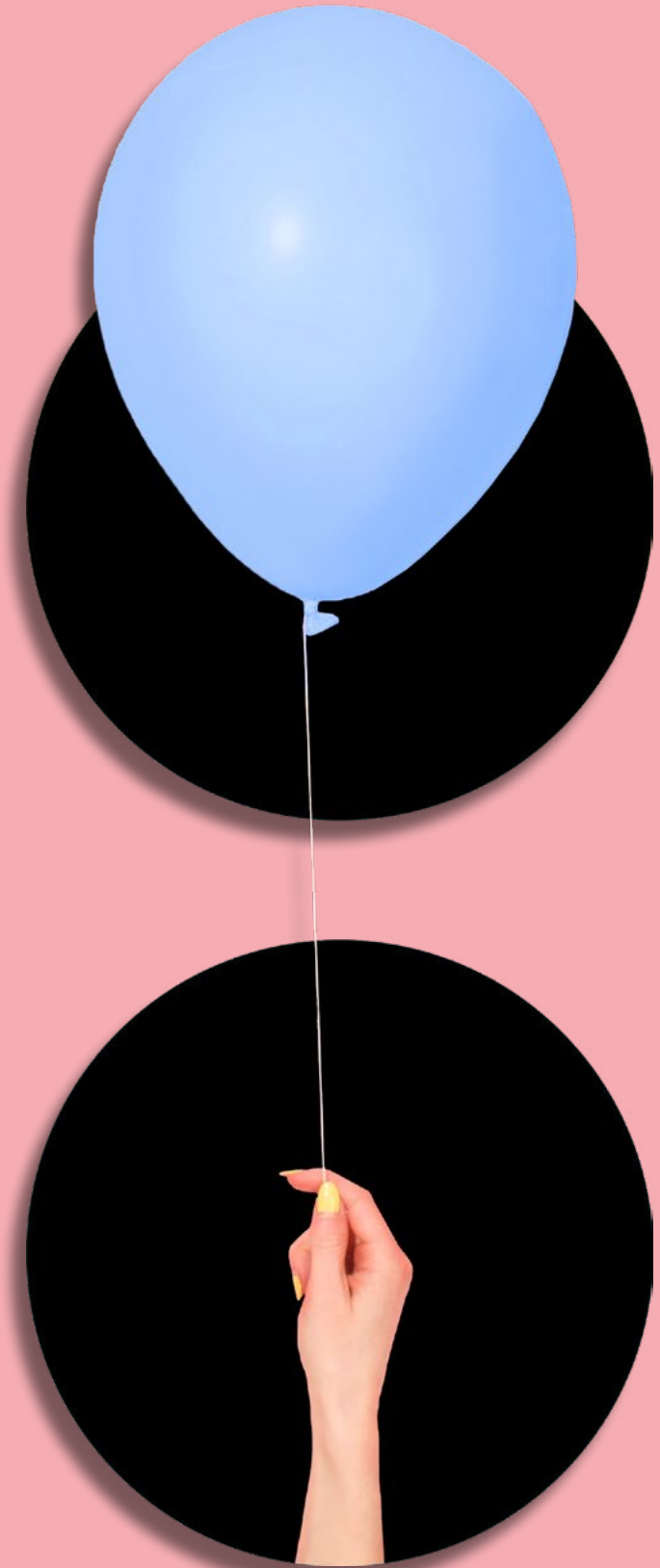
Charities have a shared challenge to stand out in a noisy environment of brands, media, and messages competing for attention.

BrandVue data shows that most charities demonstrate certain qualities which people expect them to have: being caring, trusted, honest. Whilst these are important qualities to uphold, and indeed for driving brand love, these attributes are considered a minimum requirement by supporters.






Our data shows that charities can both drive love amongst supporters and differentiate their voice in the sector by being expert, inspiring and confident. Charities should consider how they can convey these qualities within their mission, campaigns and interactions with supporters. In so doing, they can both align with traditional charity values, and set themselves apart by showing leadership within their sector.

# The league table in full

20 No. 1 – 100






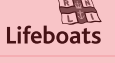



















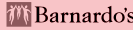





















# No. 1 – 100

Ranking	Charity
1	 Macmillan Cancer Support
2	 Cancer Research UK
3	 Dogs Trust
4	 RSPCA
5	 BBC Children in Need
6	 Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity
7	 British Heart Foundation
8	 The Royal British Legion
9	 Help for Heroes
10	 Marie Curie

## Our methodology

We capture people's love for a charity with the most positive option of our BrandVue affinity question 'How would you describe your opinion of the following charities?'. The top box 'Love' represents the true brand affinity. The table of top 100 charities is created by ranking the organisations by their brand love.

Ranking	Charity
11	 WWF
12	 Make-A-Wish
13	 Battersea Dogs & Cats Home
14	 The Guide Dogs For The Blind Association
15	 Comic Relief
16	 Royal National Lifeboat Institution
17	 Childline
18	 Mind
19	 NSPCC
20	 Cats Protection
21	 Save The Children
22	 Samaritans
23	 PDSA
24	 British Red Cross
25	 St John Ambulance
26	 Breast Cancer Campaign
27	 Salvation Army
28	 Sport Relief
29	 UNICEF
30	 The Donkey Sanctuary

Ranking	Charity
31	 Prostate Cancer UK
32	 Age UK
33	 Alzheimer's Society
34	 Barnardo's
35	 CLIC Sargent
36	 Children with Cancer UK
37	 Breast Cancer Care
38	 The Wildlife Trusts
39	 The Blue Cross
40	 Alzheimer's Research UK
41	 Oxfam
42	 Dementia UK
43	 Shelter
44	 WaterAid
45	 World Cancer Research Fund
46	 RSPB
47	 Teenage Cancer Trust
48	 Greenpeace
49	 Action for Children
50	 Breast Cancer Now
51	 The Children's Society
52	 Diabetes UK
53	 The Prince's Trust
54	 Movember
55	 St George's Hospital Charity

Ranking	Charity
56	 Amnesty International
57	 National Autistic Society
58	 The Woodland Trust
59	 Medecins sans Frontieres
60	 Mencap
61	 English Heritage
62	 The Stroke Association
63	 Rethink Mental Illness
64	 Christian Aid
65	 Sue Ryder
66	 Friends of the Earth
67	 World Animal Protection
68	 Scope
69	 Starlight Children's Foundation
70	 Asthma UK
71	 Blind Veterans UK
72	 RNIB
73	 Crisis
74	 Bliss
75	 Parkinson's UK
76	 Carers UK
77	 YoungMinds
78	 British Lung Foundation
79	 MS Trust
80	 Cystic Fibrosis Trust

The league table in full

Ranking		Charity
81		Royal Marsden Cancer Campaign
82		Brooke
83		Stonewall
84		Centre Point
85		Tommy's
86		The Royal Horticultural Society
87		Sand's
88		Combat Stress
89		MS Society
90		Islamic Relief Worldwide
91		Terrence Higgins Trust
92		Sense
93		ActionAid
94		ABF The Soldiers' Charity
95		Muslim Aid
96		World Vision
97		Disasters Emergency Committee
98		Sightsavers
99		Versus Arthritis
100		Muscular Dystrophy UK



# How Savanta can help you

- 24 How we support our charity clients
- 25 How the BrandVue data engine works
- 26 The team behind the report



# How we support our charity clients

## Coverage and capabilities



### Target audience engagement

- Audience segmentation
- Core and 'stretch' audiences
- Touchpoints and trends



### Campaign optimisation

- Framing and values alignment
- Message development
- Campaign evaluation



### Brand management and growth

- Health audit
- Perceptions tracking
- Strategic evolution



### Stakeholder & comms management

- Advocacy & reputation
- Senior opinion formers
- Crisis communications



### Fundraising strategy

- Maximising effectiveness
- Testing concepts
- Future-proofing



### Informing policy

- Highlighting service need
- Framing policy reform
- Programme evaluation





# How the BrandVue data engine works

## Leveraging the full power of BrandVue for charities



We ask 60,000 people annually



120+ charity brands surveyed



Tracking perceptions daily



Sharing the who and why



Seeing the real-world value



### We ask 60,000 people annually

It's important that we can be confident in our results, even when looking at niche groups. That's why we speak to 15 times more people than some Charity Index products offered by other companies. We believe all charities should have access to world-class research no matter how small their audience may be, and BrandVue gives the flexibility to do just this.



### 120+ charity brands surveyed

No charity operates in isolation, so it's important for us to understand the competitive environment, not just the big brands. We currently track 120 brands and we're always looking for the next charity to add to our list – suggestions welcome.



### Tracking perceptions daily

Charities experience fluctuations throughout the year, with seasonal peaks like Christmas, campaigns and external news events. This is why instead of taking readings at one fixed point in time, we run our research continuously, and use averages to get a true reflection of where a charity is at, as well as measuring day by day change.



### Sharing who they support and why

Many products can tell you which charities the public support, but few can give a read as to why. At Savanta we place a lot of value on the supporter journey – vital to ensuring a customer centric marketing approach and allowing marketers to focus on how to retain and grow supporters.



### Showing the real-world value of a charity brand

Creating a strong brand can pay dividends, however it can sometimes be hard for charities to justify the expense. Using our robust data and publicly available records, we have provided a real-world value to charity brands, empowering brand managers and marketers with the information they need to make brand decisions.

# The team behind the report

Get in touch with our charity experts:



## Nicola Marsh

**Social and Political Research Director**

Nicola heads up Social and Political Research at Savanta ComRes, advising public and third sector clients on their brand and communications, reputation, and public policy. She has extensive experience applying advanced research methods to complex and divisive topics, working across a range of sectors such as young people, social integration, equality and human rights, and ageing society.



## Rachel Phillips

**Health and Sport Research Director**

Rachel leads all research for clients across the health sector at Savanta ComRes, ranging from charities to representative bodies and pharmaceutical companies. This means she understands the full breadth of policy, reputation and communications objectives her clients might have. She has worked on high profile campaigns for many health charities, providing robust data and high quality insight to help raise their profiles and the issues they care about.





Savanta:

**BrandVue  
Charities**

☎ 020 8038 0607

✉ [better.decisions@savanta.com](mailto:better.decisions@savanta.com)

This report has been prepared for general interest only and no representation or warranty (express or implied) is given as to the accuracy or completeness. Of the information contained in it, to the extent permitted by law, Savanta Limited and its employees and agents do not accept or assume any liability, responsibility or duty of care for any consequences of anyone relying on the information contained in this report or for any decision based on it. We expressly reserve all rights in and to the name "Savanta" and "BrandVue", our logo, service marks, trading names and/or trademarks. © 2020 Savanta Limited. All rights reserved.