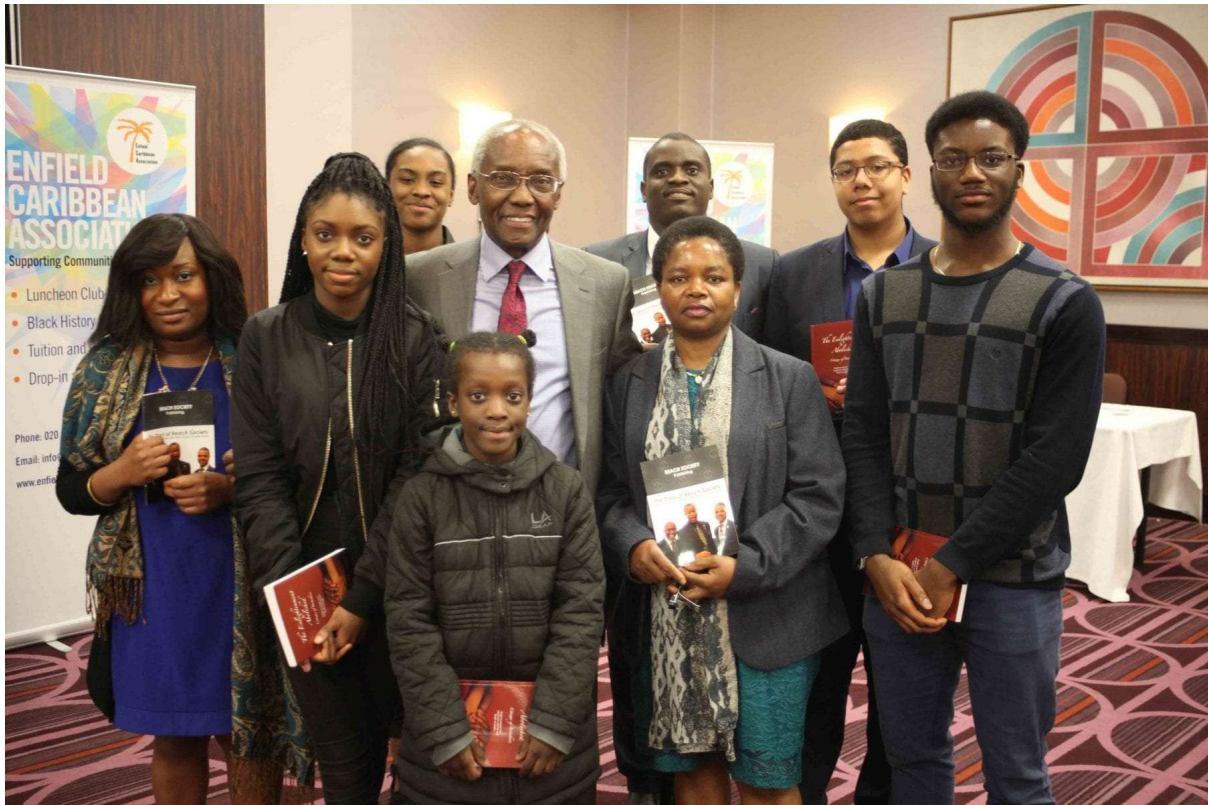


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Britain Benefited From Sir Geoff Palmer’s Genius. Many Still Don’t Know His Name.

Reach Society marks one year since the passing of the pioneering scientist, educator and Windrush figure whose contribution shaped industries and inspired generations.



(Image: Sir Geoff Palmer with young people supported by Reach Society)

Most people may never have heard of Sir Geoff Palmer.

Yet millions have benefited from scientific breakthroughs he helped pioneer in brewing and whisky production, while generations of young people continue to draw inspiration from the story of a boy once labelled “educationally subnormal” by the British education system who went on to become Scotland’s first Black professor.

One year after his passing, Reach Society is using Windrush Day 2026 to honour the extraordinary life and legacy of the Jamaican-born scientist, educator and human rights campaigner whose impact stretched far beyond academia.

Sir Geoff Palmer served as a patron of Reach Society for ten years and became a powerful symbol of resilience, excellence and contribution for many of the young people the organisation supports.

Born in Jamaica and arriving in London as a child during the Windrush era, Sir Geoff faced racism and educational discrimination early in life. Despite being written off by the education system, he went on to become an internationally respected grain scientist whose discoveries helped transform modern brewing processes used in beer and whisky production around the world.

Alongside his scientific work, he became one of Britain's most respected public voices on slavery, racial justice and the contribution of the Windrush generation to British society.

Now, Reach Society says his story is more important than ever.

On 20th June 2026, the organisation will host its annual Windrush Day Thanksgiving Gathering, centred around Sir Geoff Palmer's life, legacy and continuing influence on younger generations.

The gathering will include:

- The Windrush Nation Anthem, first suggested by Sir Geoff Palmer himself
- The launch celebration of the Sir Geoff Palmer Appreciation Society
- Readings from the winners of the Windrush essay competition
- Windrush Nation Awards presented to young people
- Intergenerational reflections on progress, education and legacy

Throughout 2026, Reach Society has incorporated Sir Geoff Palmer's story into events and workshops designed to inspire young people through examples of leadership, resilience and achievement.

Dr Dwain Neil OBE, Chairman of Reach Society, said:

“Sir Geoff Palmer’s life reminds us what can happen when determination refuses to accept limitation. He came to Britain as a child and was underestimated by the very system that should have nurtured him. Yet he went on to become one of the most respected scientific and intellectual figures of his generation.

Many people may never realise that the man whose work influenced industries they interact with every day was also a passionate advocate for education, justice and the importance of understanding our shared history.

This year, we are ensuring young people understand not only who Sir Geoff Palmer was, but what his life represents: resilience, contribution, excellence and impact.”

The June gathering forms part of Reach Society's wider 2026 tribute programme honouring Sir Geoff Palmer's contribution and legacy, culminating in the organisation's

Annual Recognition Awards Dinner on 24th October 2026, where the Sir Geoff Palmer Award will recognise an individual whose contribution has created significant national or international impact.

Reach Society hopes the commemorations will encourage more people, particularly younger generations, to engage with the history, contribution and continuing influence of the Windrush generation.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Reach Society

Reach Society is a UK-based social enterprise established in 2010 to inspire and support young people, particularly young Black men and boys, through role model programmes, careers conferences, school workshops, role model engagements and cultural esteem events.

The organisation works with professionals, educators, corporates and community groups to help young people broaden their aspirations, build confidence and access opportunities.

Reach Society's annual calendar includes careers conferences, leadership conversations, educational workshops, Windrush Day celebrations and the Annual Recognition Awards.

About Dr Dwain Neil OBE

Dr Dwain Neil OBE is Chairman and Co-founder of Reach Society. He was awarded an OBE for services to the African Caribbean community and has spent decades championing educational aspiration, cultural esteem and intergenerational progress within the Black community. He is also the author of "Dreams from My Life: My Autobiography."

Media Assets

Video link – short clip, 3 mins: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ole-0nomV4r3pps9_2rtZ32e6C_o7ldA/view?usp=drive_link

Video link – short clip, 1 min 20 secs:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DZwLzGRKJhhgs7EA7LM6dKbIRBVLWwAL/view?usp=sharing>

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