



Parliamentary Briefing

Survey shows rise in public trust and confidence in charities

Charities' role in society is increasingly seen as essential, according to independent research carried out by Ipsos MORI for the Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. The research shows that charities are still one of the most trusted groups, with only the police and doctors being more trusted.

Public trust and confidence in charities has gone up

- Public trust and confidence has increased to a mean score of **6.7**, up from 6.6 in 2010 when the survey was last conducted.
- Overall, **96%** of people say charities' role is essential, very or fairly important. **37%** say charities' role is essential, compared to 30% in 2010.
- **74%** agree that charities are trustworthy and act in the public interest.

More people are using charities for advice and services

- **37%** of people say they, their close friends or family have received advice from a charity – up from 31% in 2010.
- **34%** say they, their close friends or family have used or benefited from the services of a charity – up from 30% in 2010.
- Charities are seen by the public as offering a caring approach in the services they provide; **47%** thought that charities would be more caring than other providers.

How transparent charities are and how they spend their money are directly linked to levels of trust

- The overwhelming majority of people believe charities should provide information on how they spend their money (**96%**) and how they benefit the public (**94%**).
- People who have seen or experienced what a charity does are more likely to trust charities (**38%**).
- The main reason for trusting charities less is lack of information about how charitable money is spent (**36%**).

People are more likely to trust charities they have heard of and that work locally ... but there are concerns about some fundraising methods

- Familiarity with charities has a strong bearing on trust – **82%** of people trust charities more if they have heard of them.
- **59%** of people trust charities more if they are providing services within the local community.
- **67%** of people say that some fundraising methods used by charities make them feel uncomfortable – up from 60% in 2010.

A well-regulated charity sector is seen as essential

- When the Charity Commission's role is explained, **98%** of people say that role is essential, very or fairly important.
- Awareness of the Charity Commission as regulator has increased in recent years. **55%** have heard of the Commission, up from 46% when the survey was first conducted in 2005.

Main conclusions to emerge from the research

It is vital that charities take heed of the factors that lie behind public trust and confidence. They can do this by:

- Ensuring that they file their annual documents with the Charity Commission on time so these can be seen on the public register of charities;
- Recognising the importance of fundraising methods on public trust and confidence in charities; and
- Taking joint responsibility with the regulator to protect the high levels of public trust and confidence in charities that currently exist.

The [full report](#) and [analysis](#) are available on the Charity Commission website.

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