



Themes and trends in charity registrations

More than just a number

Contents

Overview

Key findings

Charity Commission analysis

New registrations: facts & figures

Registrations & removals

Average age of trustees

Income

Charitable purpose

Spotlight on ... charities today

Responding to the economic climate

Helping the armed forces

Communities in action

Overview

This is the second in a series of bulletins presenting key facts and figures on new organisations¹ on the register of charities in the second half of the financial year 2011/12.

In addition to the register data we present some examples of new charities joining the register. By doing so, we wish to highlight the breadth of charitable activity in England and Wales and overseas, and encourage the public to use the register to help them make more informed decisions about supporting charities.

¹ Some of the charities which were registered during this period are existing charities that were previously exempt from registration, rather than newly established ones, but we have used the term 'new charities' throughout the bulletin for simplicity. Charities that have re-registered during the period with the same registration number are excluded in these facts and figures.

Key findings

- From 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012, 2,615 organisations joined the register of charities.
- Over a third of these new charities (972 in total) provided their gross income as recorded in their latest set of published accounts. Their combined total annual income is £293,198,628.
- The average (mean) income of these 972 charities is £301,645. 3% reported their income to be above £1 million whilst 73% declared their income to be below £100,000.
- As in the first bulletin, the most common charitable purpose is education and training. 57% of new charities work in this field. This is followed by general charitable purposes (33%).
- Over half of new charities serve a wide range of people, with 58% serving the general public/mankind. The second most frequently cited beneficiary class was children and young people (54%).
- As in the first bulletin, the most common method of operation was providing services (59%). This was followed by providing advocacy, advice and information (36%).
- Most new charities operating at a local level do so in London (14%), whereas only 4% work in the north east.
- Many new charities are addressing the fallout from the economic downturn. Their activities range from helping people out of long-term unemployment to providing basic provisions such as food.
- In recent years the armed forces charity sector has grown hugely and this trend continues today. Such charities offer advice and support to the forces and their families, often by working with people to develop skills and confidence after they leave the forces.
- New charities are emerging that are engaged in community development and active citizenship. Growing numbers of 'street pastors' are playing an important role, tackling social problems and disharmony on city streets.

Charity Commission analysis

The second Charity Commission registration bulletin highlights again the breadth of activity going on across the charitable sector and shines a spotlight on newly registered organisations that are tackling complex problems in myriad ways. It aims to promote the charity register as a rich source of information that encourages transparency and accountability across the sector.

Registration continues at a healthy rate. In the first half of the financial year 3,000 charities were registered, whereas the total figure for the past six months is slightly lower, at around 2,600. The reason for this drop is likely to be the lower numbers of formerly exempt charities coming onto the register in the second half of the financial year as the Commission's project to register formerly exempt charities drew to a close. In total, we registered more than 5,600 charities over the past twelve months, a very similar figure to the number (excluding re-registrations) that registered between April 2010 and March 2011. However, it is important to take the number of removals into account; of these there were 5,800. Overall, it is clear that the total number of charities has been relatively static over the past year.

What is certain is that the charity sector has a very high turnover; new organisations are being created all the time whilst older ones 'die off' and wind up their affairs. This is part of the natural evolution of the sector. However, it is important that those highly motivated individuals who want to start a charity in 2012 are aware of the existing opportunities spanning a sector comprising around 160,000 organisations. They may sometimes find that supporting the work of an existing charity is an equally effective and fulfilling way of achieving change.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the profile of new registrations is very similar to the one presented in the first bulletin. Whilst there is no such thing as a 'typical' charity, new or otherwise, the common characteristics of organisations joining the register today are: being small; working at a local level; working in the field of education and training; and delivering services to a wide range of people. It remains to be seen whether this profile will change much in future as charities continue to respond to social, environmental and economic change.

Beyond the numbers and statistics, this bulletin explores some of the themes and cases that emerge from the Charity Commission's registration casework. Hull Foodbank, for example, is a new charity that works with people in crisis, some of whom are at the sharp end of the economic downturn. The charity Wood for Wounded, on the other hand, was set up by a former soldier to teach woodwork skills to ex-servicemen and women and is just one of a growing number of armed forces charities. Finally, the newly registered Barnsley Street Pastors patrol the streets at night, supporting the police and helping those in distress. All are examples of the innovation, commitment and dynamism that make the charity sector unique.

New registrations: facts & figures

The following analysis provides information on charities that were registered from 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012.² Comparisons are made with all registered charities based on the information provided to us both at registration and in their Annual Returns.

Although we have made comparisons with the last bulletin covering March 2011 to September 2011 in the key findings where there are areas of significance, we have not made such comparisons in the facts and figures that follow.

Registrations & removals

A total of 2,615 organisations joined the Charity Commission's Register of charities in the period 1 October 2011 to 31 March 2012. A further five charities registered as subsidiary charities in the same period.

2,626 charities were removed from the register in the same period, but none of these were subsidiary charities.

² Charities that have re-registered during the period with the same registration number are excluded in these facts and figures.

Average age of trustees

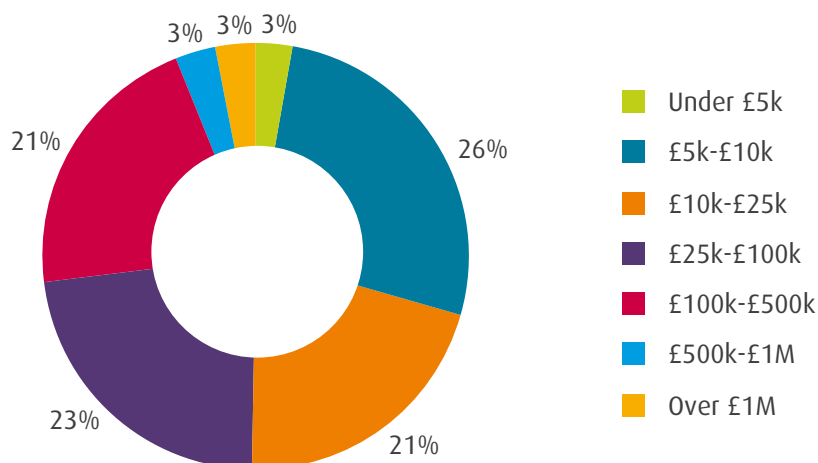
When charities are registered we ask their trustees to provide some personal information, including date of birth. From this, we can calculate the average age of trustees. The average across the whole register is 57, whereas the average age of the trustees of newly-joined charities is 51.

Income

Prior to registration, applicants are asked to provide details of their annual income. Many organisations do not yet know what their income will be or only expect to receive funding after registration. As a result, some register applicants provide only a rough estimate whilst others simply do not provide anything; clearly, this data is patchy and unreliable as an indicator of income.

However, if register applicants are already well established organisations, and have previously published a set of financial accounts, they are asked to supply the gross income as recorded in these accounts. In total, 972 charities (37% of total new registrations) provided this. Although these figures do not tell the whole story, they nevertheless offer a snapshot of the considerable resources coming into the charitable sector in this six month period.

Chart 1: Declared income of new charities as recorded in published accounts



Base: 972 charities providing a pre-registration income figure

3% of charities have a declared income of over £1million. Several students' unions and two Universities joined the register. They all had an income of over £1million.

Very few organisations (3%) recorded an income below £5,000. This can be explained by the fact that charities with an income of no more than £5,000 are no longer required to register. The Commission does not usually register such charities, in fact we only register in exceptional circumstances, for example, where the charity may lose a large grant or donation, or it has a high public or media profile. The highest proportion joining the register (26%) have incomes just over the threshold for registration.

The total combined income of the 972 charities is £293,198,628 with an average (mean) income of £301,645, though as the diagram clearly shows just over half of all new charities (51%) have incomes of £25,000 and under.

Charitable purpose

As we reported in the previous bulletin March 2011-Sept 2011, the most common charitable purpose the new charities have is, by far, education/training (57%, 56% in the last bulletin). This is followed by general charitable purposes (33%), the prevention or relief of poverty (27%) and religious activities (26%). These figures compare with just 30 charities (1%) that promote the efficiency of the armed forces or the emergency services.

This breakdown is similar to the full charity register, although there are some differences, as table 1 shows. The areas of 'human rights/religious or racial harmony/equality or diversity', 'recreation' and 'armed forces/emergency service efficiency' were only recently introduced as categories on the registration form. This explains why the percentages are higher in these areas compared with across the register as a whole.

Table 1: What charities do

Description	No of charities (joined Oct 2011 – March 2012)	Percentage of new charities	Percentage of all charities on the register
Education/Training	1488	57	52
General Charitable Purposes	851	33	30
The Prevention or Relief of Poverty	708	27	18
Religious Activities	667	26	19
The Advancement of Health or Saving of Lives	640	24	16
Economic/Community Development/Employment	475	18	13
Recreation	465	18	2
Arts/Culture/Heritage/Science	457	17	18
Disability	353	14	13
Overseas Aid/Famine Relief	261	10	7
Amateur Sport	258	10	19
Environment/Conservation/Heritage	237	9	11
Human Rights/Religious or Racial Harmony/Equality or Diversity	221	8	1
Accommodation/Housing	148	6	6
Other Charitable Purposes	134	5	4
Animals	51	2	2
Armed Forces/Emergency Service Efficiency	30	1	0

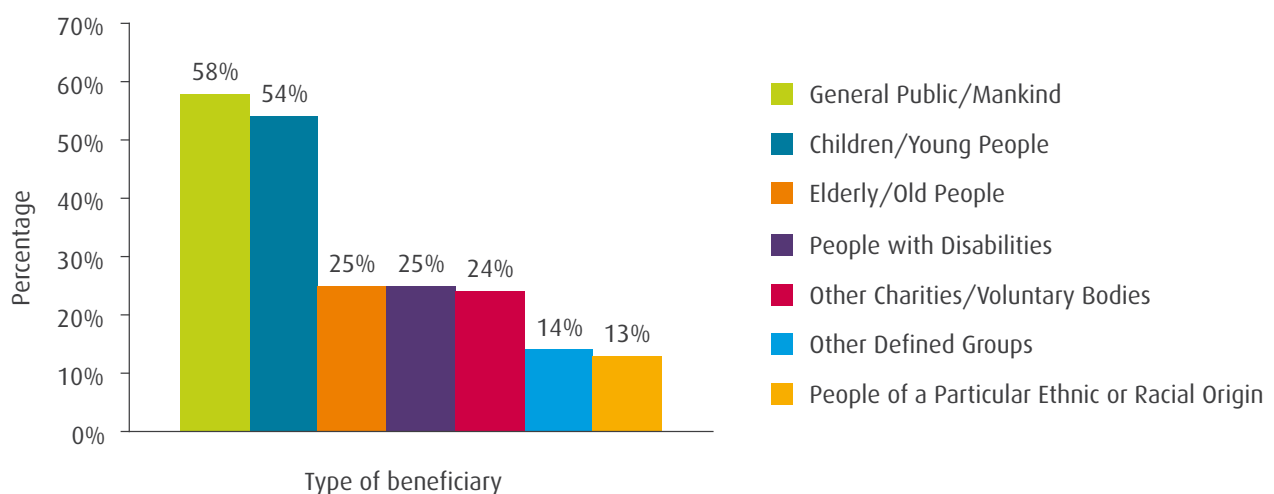
NB: Charities provide this information by self assessment so the charity provides this information at the time of applying, however, this may not be in alignment with the charitable purposes (activity) under which it is registered. Charities can tick more than one area charitable purpose so percentages add up to more than 100. Decimals have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Who the new charities serve

The chart below shows that over half (58%) of new charities serve the general public/mankind; a similar proportion (54%) work with children and/or young people. A quarter (25%) serve people with disabilities and the same proportion serve the elderly or old people. Just under a quarter serve other charities or voluntary bodies.

The pattern is similar to that seen on the full register of charities, apart from the two largest categories where the largest categories are reversed: across the register as a whole a greater proportion serve children young people (55%) than serve the general public/mankind (45%).

Chart 2: Who charities serve



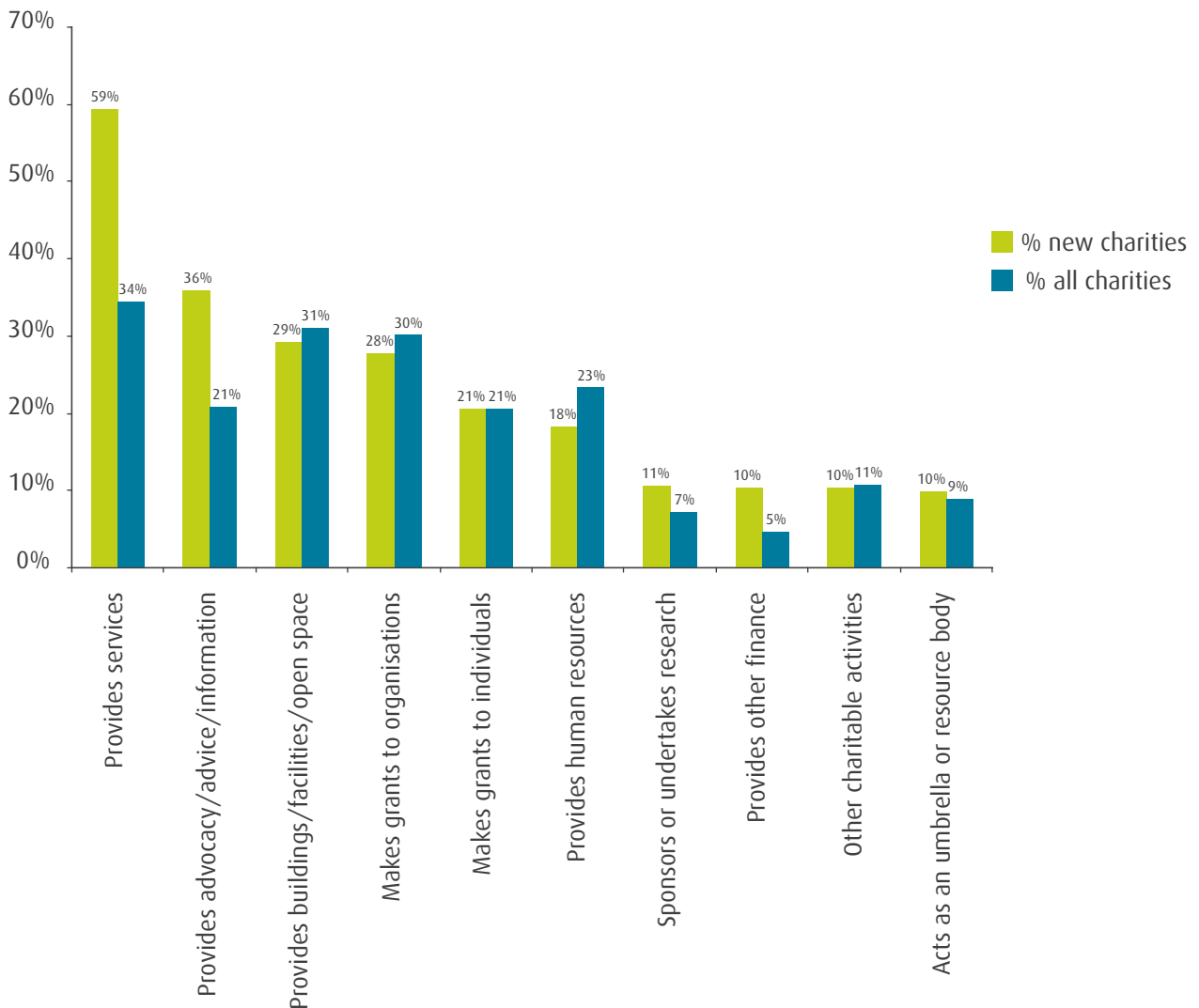
NB: At registration charities can tick more than one type of beneficiary so percentages add up to more than 100.

How the new charities operate

The majority of the newly registered charities (59%) are engaged in service provision; around a third (36%) provide advocacy, advice or information. Slightly fewer charities (29%) provide buildings, facilities or open spaces. The least common types of operation are acting as an umbrella or resource body (10%), providing other finance (10%) and involvement in other charitable activities (10%).

Chart 3 below compares the methods of operation of charities that registered in the period October 2011 – March 2012 with those of the whole register of charities. Whilst the overall distribution is similar, there is a marked difference in the percentage of charities engaged in service provision. Whilst the majority (59%) of new charities provide services, only 34% of all registered charities do this. Similarly, while over a third (36%) of the new charities provide advocacy, advice or information, just 21% of all charities do this.

Chart 3: How the new charities operate



NB: At registration charities can tick more than one method of operation so percentages add up to more than 100.

Geographic coverage/area of operation of new charities

Based on the information provided by charities at registration, it is possible to provide a breakdown of new charities operating at a local level. Chart 4 shows most new 'local' charity registrations were operating in London (14%) and the South East (12%) while Wales and the North East accounted for the smallest numbers (4% and 3% respectively).

Chart 4: New charities working in local areas



NB: This chart excludes those charities working in more than ten Local Authority areas and those working only overseas. This is why the percentages do not add up to 100. Percentages are based on the 2615 newly registered charities.

The majority of new charities (60%) operate locally, with only 16% of them working over a wider geographic area. 18% of new charities work outside England and Wales. Across the register as a whole there is a far greater percentage of charities working in local areas (75%) and fewer working internationally.

Table 2: where new charities operate

Area of Operation	Number of new charities	% of new charities	% of all charities
Local (fewer than ten local authority areas)	1579	60	75
Outside England and Wales	465	18	11
Wider geographic area ³	417	16	13
Unknown/not captured ⁴	154	6	1

NB: Each charity is only counted once, however many areas of operation it has. The 'widest' area of operation takes precedence eg a charity that works overseas but also in a local area in England will only show up as 'outside England and Wales'.

Spotlight on ... charities today

In this second section of the bulletin we shine a spotlight on some new additions to the register of charities which collectively make up a diverse mix of over 160,000 organisations in England and Wales.

Unlike the first section, this is not a statistical analysis of charity registration trends. The examples have been selected to demonstrate the wide range of charitable activity and the amount of information about individual charities that is available publicly through searching the Commission's online register.

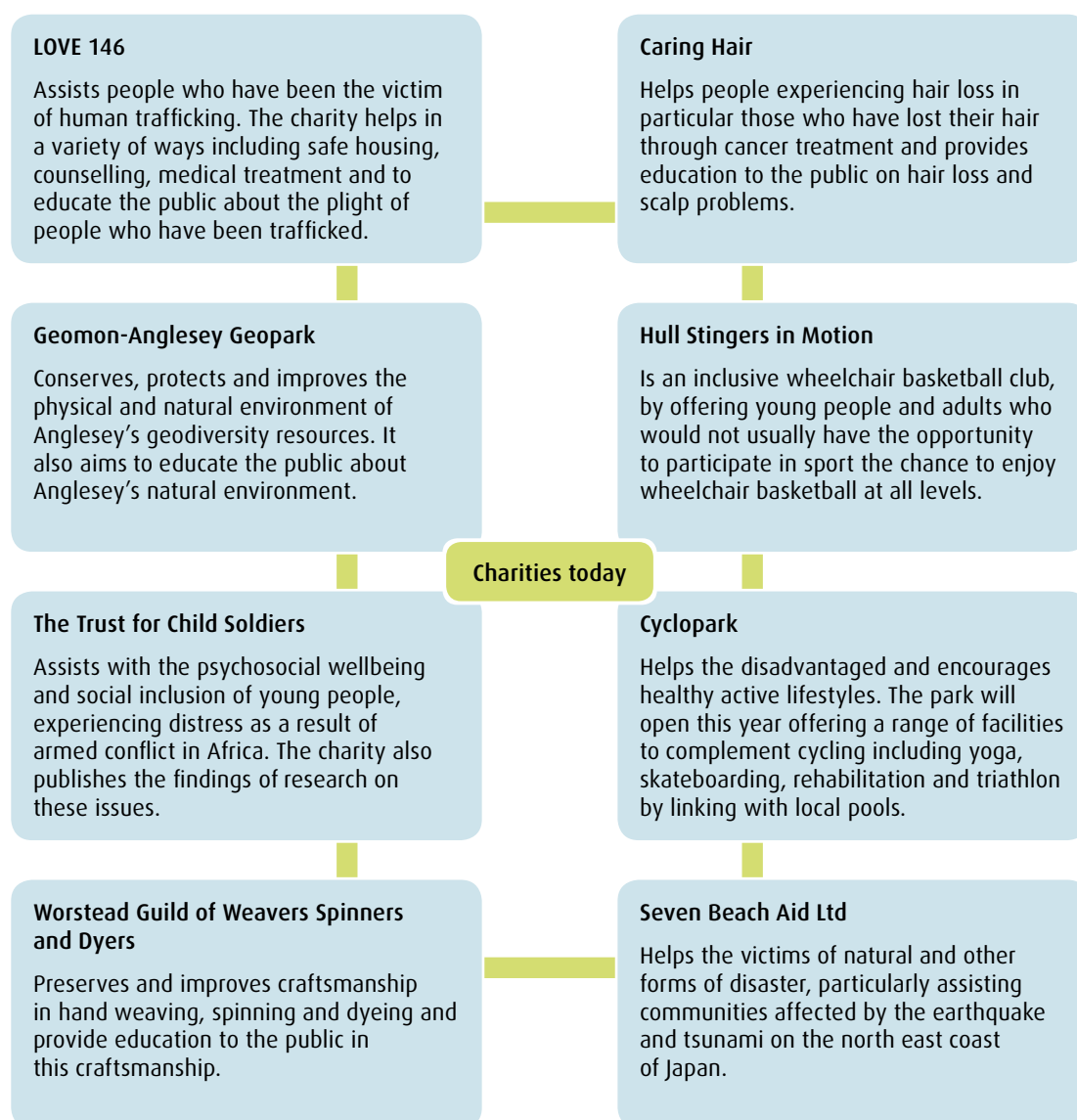
³ Throughout England and/or Wales OR throughout Greater London.

⁴ New charities may not have a defined area at the start of the charities operations.

The Charity Commission's online register

Examples of charities that have joined the register in the last six months include disaster relief organisations, talking newspapers, city farms, youth clubs, playgroups - a huge variety in itself - but, as the diagram below shows, there are many more.

A selection of charities that registered in the past six months:⁵



For anyone who is thinking about volunteering their time, giving a donation or supporting charities in other ways, the Commission's online register is a unique resource. Information about charities that carry out specific activities or that help particular groups in their local area, for example, can all be found using the advanced search facility that is available online.

⁵ Clockwise from top with charity registration number in brackets: **LOVE 146** (1145541); **Caring Hair** (1145258); **Hull Stingers in Motion** (1145006); **Cyclopark** (1144951); **Seven Beach Aid Ltd** (1145659); **Worstead Guild of Weavers Spinners and Dyers** (1144939); **The Trust for Child Soldiers** (1144484); **Geomon-Anglesey Geopark** (1145096). The descriptions of the charities are based on the legal objects and other publicly available information.

We now take a closer look at some new charities working in three broad areas that highlight different responses to issues in society. The figures and information about the charities have largely been compiled using the online register's advanced search facility.⁶

Responding to the economic climate

The economic downturn has affected people in many ways. A look at recently registered charities reveals how some organisations have responded to minimise the impact of the economic situation by helping those affected by it.

Assisting people back into employment

In the last six months, 213 charities have registered to deal with issues that affect 'employment', 'unemployment' and/or specifically help the 'unemployed'.

Shattered Lives (1144445)⁷, for example, provides vocational education and training as part of this charity's activities that will enable long-term unemployed people to find paid jobs.

Assisting people who are socially excluded

87 charities have registered in the last six months dealing with 'social exclusion' and/or are helping those who are 'socially excluded'.

Drop In & Share Centre DISC (1145060) helps people who are socially excluded, including those who are homeless, unemployed or in financial difficulty by re-integrating them into society.

Setting up foodbanks

In the last six months, 12 charities have registered to provide 'foodbanks' in local areas.

Hull Foodbank (1144286), for example, works in partnership with a range of care professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers, and police, who identify people in crisis and issue them with a voucher that can be redeemed at the foodbank for a minimum of three days' emergency food. The food is donated by schools, churches, businesses and individuals.

Helping the armed forces

The country's armed forces protect the UK, including its overseas territories, promote Britain's wider security interests and support international peacekeeping efforts; the register has a wide range of charities connected with the armed forces.

⁶ For example, by searching on specific words, such as 'civic responsibility' within the charity name and/or objects fields. As in the first section of the bulletin, charities that have re-registered during the period with the same registration number have been excluded.

⁷ All charities are referred to by their registered name with their charity registration number in brackets.

Serving those who serve

In the last six months, 22 charities have registered to help serving/former servicemen and women and their families:

The Army Football Association (1144459) promotes the efficiency of the armed forces by increasing the physical fitness, fostering the esprit de corps and raising morale of members of the army and other services through football.

Homeless Heroes (1144435) is established to help people who are, or have been, in the armed services to find housing and recuperate from trauma.

Wood for Wounded (1145010) helps sick and injured ex-servicemen and women by providing training in the design, production and restoration of furniture and assistance to help them find employment.

Honour British Forces (1144437) helps ex-armed forces personnel who have been medically discharged and their families with medical bills, employment training, and by assisting those who are homeless or need help paying the rent.

Communities in action

Charities play a vital role in communities and many new charities harness the willingness of people to get involved. 15 organisations have registered in the last six months with 'civic responsibility' in either their name, objects or both.

There has also been significant growth in the number of charities that provide a street pastor service, where local people are responding to some current social issues.

Action on the streets

There are currently 83 'street pastors' charities on the register. 19 charities have been registered in the last six months, including:

Wallingford Street Pastors (1144477)

Barnsley Street Pastors (1145461)

Kettering Street Pastors (1144471)

These charities have emerged from an inter-denominational Church initiative responding to urban problems, such as alcohol fuelled violence and anti social behaviour.

Each 'street pastor' project is set up by another registered charity, Ascension Trust⁸, and run by a local coordinator with support from Ascension Trust, local churches and community groups.

Street pastor volunteers receive training so that they have an awareness of current social problems, so they know what they might face when they take up the role.

Working voluntarily, for a minimum of one night a month and usually from 10:00 pm to around 4:00 am, street pastors work in teams, in partnership with police over busy weekends when people are out socialising. The street pastor primarily offers practical help, for example by calming aggressive situations and supporting vulnerable people by ensuring they get home safely after a night out.

The initiative now has over 9000 trained volunteers and nearly 250 teams around the United Kingdom.⁹

Further information

The [register of charities](#) is the first port of call for anyone wishing to find out more information about charities, including charities that operate in their local area. The register holds details of organisations that have been recognised as charitable in law; and

- hold most of their assets in England and/or Wales, or
- have all or the majority of their trustees normally resident in England and/or Wales, or
- are companies incorporated in England or Wales.

The register is maintained from information supplied by charities and provides key facts and figures about their work and finances. The entries for larger charities with income over £500,000 include a financial profile.

It also displays details of those responsible for taking forward the charity's work (trustees) and records whether charities above the reporting threshold have filed their Annual Return, Trustees' Report and accounts.

Further information about charities or the Charity Commission's role in regulating charities, is available on our [website](#).

⁸ Ascension Trust (1127204).

⁹ Source: www.streetpastors.co.uk