Local Charities Stretched to Capacity, New Report Reveals

Tuesday 13 October, 2015

PRESS RELEASE

A report by Localgiving**,** assessing the state of the UK's local voluntary sector, has revealed that local charities and community groups are being stretched to their absolute capacity, leading to widespread concern about the future.

Findings from the Local Charity & Community Group Sustainability Report, which surveyed **538** local voluntary sector organisations from across the UK, revealed:

- **81%** of local charities are facing an increase in demand for services, but only **15%** of those feel sufficiently resourced to deal with a continued escalation.
- **73%** of local groups expect their annual income to either decrease or remain stagnant over the coming financial year and **59%** rate income generation as their most pressing issue
- **42%** of groups have had to use their reserves in the last 12 months; **43%** are concerned about a lack of reserves, whilst only **4%** are able to prioritise building reserves.
- Only **47%** of local groups are confident that they will be able to stay financially afloat over the next 5 years. **53%** of respondents say they know of at least one other local charity in their area that has closed for financial reasons in the last year.
- **76%** of local charities believe they do not currently have the skills to run a successful fundraising campaign.

The study has been released to coincide with the launch of Grow Your Tenner - a national match fund campaign doubling online donations made to UK local charities and community groups by up to £10. The campaign is part of Localgiving's *Incentivised Giving Programme*, a long-term initiative to help raise awareness of the sector and build practical online fundraising skills for local charities.

Grow Your Tenner runs from 10am on 13 October 2015 until the match fund is fully allocated, or 5pm on 18 November 2015 - whichever comes first. The campaign offers each local group taking part the opportunity to access up to £10,000 of match funding.

Stephen Mallinson, Chief Executive of Localgiving said:

"A rapid increase in demand for services, coupled with an inability to access sufficient funding with which to build reserves has left many local groups with fears over their survival. The sector is lacking in both time and resources, leaving charities unable to invest in alternative income sources, training and volunteer recruitment. Without significant targeted intervention, fewer and fewer organisations will be able to continue their valuable work, weakening communities and leaving huge numbers of vulnerable beneficiaries at risk.

"It is vital that strategies are put in place to help better support the sector and address its core issues. Government, industry, philanthropists and the general public can and should all play a part. This means sustained commitment to training, funding and volunteering that outlasts ephemera like annual budgets.

"Localgiving is working to implement initiatives, such as Grow Your Tenner, to address the problems highlighted by this report. Our hope is that through these programmes, we can help to raise awareness and provide motivation for greater engagement and support to safeguard the future of local charities and the beneficiaries they serve."

Read the full report here.

Find out more about the Grow Your Tenner campaign and how you can help to support local charities here.

For more information about the *Local Charity & Community Group Sustainability Report 2015* or *Grow Your Tenner,* please contact Localgiving at:

help@localgiving.com / 0300 111 2340.

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About Localgiving

Localgiving is the UK's leading membership and support network for local charities and community groups. It aims to empower grassroots organisations to fundraise online, connect with supporters and take control of their financial future. In addition, it provides advocacy for the local voluntary sector and works to secure third party funding for its members. It provides free training opportunities, fundraising resources and regular incentivised giving campaigns to help groups raise funds online.

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