New Report Finds Local Charities Fear for long-term Survival

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PRESS RELEASE

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- *Just 46% of local charities confident of 5-year survival*
- *Sector stretched to capacity: 78% of groups face increase in demand for services - but just 18% sufficiently resourced to meet it*
- *60% know of another local charity that has been forced to close over the last year*

A new report by Localgiving has found that fewer than half of local charities are confident they will still be operating by 2021. Escalating demand for services, coupled with ongoing volatility in the funding landscape has left many groups fearful for their long term survival.

The *Local Charity & Community Group Sustainability Report 2016* is the result of a survey of 598 representatives from the local charities and community groups from across the UK.

The report finds that:

- Just **46%** of local charities are confident they will be able to sustain themselves over the next five years.
- **67%** of groups were still predicting stagnation or a downturn in their financial position over the coming year.
- **78%** of groups predict an increase in demand over the coming year, of these groups just **18%** feel that they are sufficiently resourced to meet this demand.
- Reductions in staff numbers pose a serious problem, impacting on the continuity of services and affecting overall skill levels. **76%** of respondents had seen a reduction of staff over the last year.
- **60%** of respondents know of one or more local groups that have been forced to close in the last year.
- **77%** of charities do not believe that they have the skills to run a successful fundraising campaign.
- Public trust and confidence in local charities and community groups has not been significantly affected by recent scandals that hit the charity sector. **59%** of respondent claimed that there has been “no impact”.

Read the full report here

Stephen Mallinson, Chief Executive of Localgiving said:

“Our second annual Local Charity and Community Group Sustainability Report illuminates key issues facing the local voluntary sector. While most groups are confident about their short term survival, fewer than half retain this confidence over 5 years.

At present the sector lacks both the time and resources required to invest in their future. Rapid staff turnover, reductions in workforce size and an over-reliance on volunteers are major concerns - inevitably affecting the quality, continuity and durability of services.

We welcome the launch of Local Charities Day as an important step towards increasing public awareness of the work and needs of local charities. However there is more to do and time is short, if we are to ensure that these groups can continue their vital work.”

This report has already been recognised by a number of key sector bodies:

"...a powerful insight into the world of local charities... smaller voluntary organisations continue to be disproportionately affected by the current economic climate" - **Gillen Knight, Head of Marketing and Membership at NCVO**

"...an important benchmark of the sector [that] reflects the wider picture we are seeing…We need to take action based on these findings." **- John Barrett, Chief Executive of the Small Charities Coalition**

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"...a timely reminder of the challenges that smaller charities face in securing support for the essential work they do for the wellbeing of local communities" - **Ceri Edwards, Director of Policy and Communications at the Institute of Fundraising**

"[The results] very much reflect what our 5,000 + member charities are reporting… Small charities are under enormous pressures as they seek to support those who are most vulnerable in our society" - **Pauline Broomhead, Founder and Chief Executive of The FSI**

As part of Local Charities Day Localgiving is matching 1,000 x £5 donations made to local charities via Localgiving.org today. It's #GiveMe5 match-fund campaign is co-funded by the Office for Civil Society and a private philanthropist. Donations will be matched at random and people can make as many £5 donations as they wish before midnight - each with an equal chance of receiving match funding.

Find out more about Local Charities Day here and #GiveMe5 Here.

For more information about the Local Charity & Community Group Sustainability Report 2016 or

Localgiving's #GiveMe5 campaign, please contact Localgiving at: help@localgiving.com / 0300 111 2340.

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