

Press release: Charity Commission welcomes NAO report commending regulator's significant progress and improvements

The Charity Commission, the regulator for charities in England and Wales, today welcomes a [report from the National Audit Office](#) (NAO) that recognises the progress it has made in becoming a more effective regulator, including in its digital transformation. The report follows the NAO's previous reports into the effectiveness of the Commission in 2013 and 2015.

The report commends the progress that the Commission has made in a number of key areas of its transformation including:

- becoming a more risk-based regulator – referencing the launch of its Risk Assessment Unit and its refreshed risk framework
- securing new powers and using them effectively – evidenced by the reduced challenges it faces in the First Tier Tribunal (Charity) and the reduction in the average length of its investigations
- the improved services it offers – including the launch of a new registration system that has reduced waiting times despite significant increases in registration applications
- working more effectively with others – including improved external engagement with charities on key projects and an increased number of memoranda of understanding with key partner organisations and agencies

The report also makes a number of recommendations as to how the regulator can continue to make improvements and regulate more effectively.

It stresses that a sustainable funding model will be crucial to the Commission's continuing transformation and suggests a public consultation may be required to agree a shared position between government, the regulator and the sector as to the level and source of longer term funding.

The Commission expects this report to end the NAO's formal engagement with the Commission, following its initial investigation in 2013.

William Shawcross, Chairman of the Charity Commission, said:

I am delighted this report recognises the huge strides we have made in the last five years to become a more effective, risk-based regulator. There is still work to be done but as my time at the Commission comes towards an end, we can rightly be proud of the transformation we have gone through. Huge credit must be given to our incredible staff who have been central to this throughout.

Helen Stephenson, Chief Executive of the Charity Commission, said:

This report chimes with my initial reflections of the Commission – that of a team who are hardworking, innovative and strive to continuously improve in order to achieve the best to protect charities and the public. Great progress was made in transforming our systems, processes, approach and attitude under Paula’s leadership to become a truly digitally focused, modern regulator. I look forward to continuing that progress in line with this report’s positive recommendations in the coming months, including the pressing matter of securing a sustainable funding model for the years ahead.

Ends

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Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [check charity](#) tool.