

[Press release: Charities must better communicate to the public through their annual reports and accounts, urges regulator](#)

The Charity Commission has today published the [results](#) of its latest monitoring reviews of charity trustees' annual reports and accounts. The findings reveal a modest improvement in the quality of public reporting, but the regulator says that too many charities are still falling short in this area.

Public benefit reporting plays a key role in providing transparency so that the public can understand exactly what a charity does and how their donations are being used.

As part of its proactive monitoring work, the Commission scrutinised a random sample of 106 charity trustees' annual reports and accounts filed with it to assess:

- how charities are meeting the public benefit reporting standards
- whether the accounts meet readers' needs, including a separate sample of "small charities"

Telling your story well: Public benefit reporting by charities

Trustees have a legal responsibility to comply with the Commission's [guidance on public benefit reporting](#). All registered charities must publish a trustees' annual report, setting out the charity's activities for the public benefit.

The Commission's review found that 51% of the charities reviewed demonstrated a clear understanding of the public benefit reporting requirement – a 5% improvement from last year's result.

The majority of annual reports also included key aspects of public benefit reporting, with 71% explaining who benefitted from the charity's activities, and 62% including a public benefit statement.

Some trustees had expanded their statement to explain why they believed their charity's activities provided public benefit, whilst others discussed the difference that they had made, particularly to beneficiaries.

Do charity and small charity annual reports and

accounts meet the reader's needs?

The Commission examined whether the charities' trustees' annual reports and accounts as a whole met readers' needs, based on a range of [criteria](#).

For the sample of charities with incomes over £25,000, the Commission found that 74% of the trustees' annual reports and accounts reviewed were of acceptable quality, meeting the basic benchmark set by the Commission.

The most common reason for inadequate reporting was that the trustees' annual report did not explain the charitable activities the charity had carried out.

For the sample of small charities, the Commission found that 64% of the charities provided trustees' annual reports and accounts of acceptable quality, meeting the regulator's basic benchmark. The main reason for inadequate reporting was that the charity failed to provide one or both of the trustees' annual report and the accounts.

The Commission has provided regulatory guidance to 89 charities included in the reviews in order to help the trustees improve the quality of future trustees' annual reports and accounts.

Nigel Davies, Head of Accountancy Services at the Charity Commission for England and Wales said:

"Our research into trust and confidence in charities shows that the public no longer give charities the benefit of the doubt; they want evidence that charities make a difference when using their money. Public reporting is an opportunity for charities to tell their story and explain to the public what they do and how they use charitable funds.

"Producing a trustees' annual report and accounts is not an administrative box-ticking exercise. It is a chance to show how your charity is making an impact and how you are delivering on your core purpose.

"Today's results show that too many charities are still not meeting very basic standards when it comes to making key information available to the public. I am encouraged to see that an increasing number of trustees recognise the value of public benefit reporting, but there is clearly more work to be done across the sector."

The full reports are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Commission's research into public trust and confidence in charities was published on 11 July 2018 and is available on [GOV.UK](#).
2. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.

3. Search for charities on our [check charity](#) tool.
4. To assess whether small charities accounts met readers' needs, the Commission included a separate sample of 110 small charities, those with incomes less than £25,000, who are not required to routinely file their trustees' annual report and accounts with the regulator (except for Charitable Incorporated Organisations)
5. In addition to producing an annual report, all registered charities must prepare accounts and, where the charity's income is over £25,000, arrange for them to be scrutinised through an audit or independent examination. They must also file their set of accounts with the regulator.

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[Press release: UK Government response to recent loss of life in Yemen](#)

A UK Government spokesperson said:

The Government expresses serious concern at the tragic loss of life in Yemen over the last month. In the first two weeks of August alone, over 400 Yemenis lost their lives, including young children, and many more continue to face egregious violations of their basic human rights.

We are also deeply concerned by the tragic incidents of 2 August, 9 August, and 23 August in which so many Yemenis were killed. We offer our sincerest condolences to the families of the victims.

We welcome the speed of the investigation into the incident of 9 August, and the Coalition's announcement of regret and action to

address the recommendations of that investigation. We are reviewing the investigation's conclusions.

We welcome the Coalition's announcement of an investigation into the incident of 23 August and encourage the publication of the outcomes of this investigation as soon as possible. We also call for clarification of the circumstances around the incident of 2 August.

The Government condemns the attacks against Red Sea shipping, and regular missile attacks against Saudi Arabia which have been launched by the Houthis with Iranian support. These attacks have targeted residential areas and shown no regard for civilian life. Coalition countries have a legitimate right to defend their own territory.

The UK urges all parties to the conflict to do everything possible to protect innocent civilians and to demonstrate their commitment to International Humanitarian Law.

This conflict began following a seizure of power in some parts of Yemen by the Houthis, forcing out the legitimate government from these areas. The urgency now is for everyone to enable and support the UN-sponsored political process beginning with talks in Geneva on 6 September.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

Media enquiries

For journalists

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Newsdesk

[News story: Civil news: CWA bulkload spreadsheet updated](#)

You need to use version 1.24 of the bulkload spreadsheet to submit claims in Contracted Work and Administration (CWA). This is now available for you to download on GOV.UK.

The updated version 1.24 has been amended in line with the new contract changes that were introduced on 1 September 2018. It replaces version 1.23 which should no longer be used for submissions.

Further information

[Submit a CWA claim online](#) – to download version 1.24 of the bulkload spreadsheet

[News story: Forest Gin branches out into new spirits and overseas markets](#)

Husband and wife team Karl and Lindsay Bond have big plans for their new whisky brand – Forest Whisky – to help secure the firm's future through exporting. They plan to increase their exports to constitute 90% of their total revenue in 5 years' time.

Currently, the family-run distillery's exports make up 17% of its sales, with its gin sold in 10 countries, including Japan, China, Australia and the US. UK stockists include Harvey Nichols and their gin is available by the glass in the Virgin Trains First Class lounge in London.

Interest in the new whisky brand follows repeat orders from distributors in Japan for the firm's earl grey infused gin over the last year.

Forest Gin is the only gin to have ever been awarded 2 separate Double-Gold Medals at the San Francisco World Spirit Awards in 2016, a competition that assesses hundreds of spirits from all over the world.

Since starting operations 3 years ago, the business has leveraged worldwide demand for premium products with a clear British heritage to fuel its

impressive growth. The team joined trade missions to China, Japan and the US, organised as part of the Food is GREAT campaign, a joint initiative by the [Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs](#) (Defra) and the Department for International Trade (DIT) to help British food and drink businesses sell their goods and services overseas.



Founders Karl and Lindsay Bond with their daughter. (c) Forest Gin

Karl Bond, co-founder of the Forest Distillery said:

We've been amazed at the reception to our gin from overseas buyers. We're expecting our exports to grow substantially over the next few years, especially as we continue to find trusted contacts in new markets, with support from DIT.

We're very excited about the launch of Forest Whisky. We're only the 15th distiller in England to be granted a licence to mature whisky, and to receive pre-orders at this early stage shows how highly regarded British distillers are internationally.

We expect to face a few challenges as we grow our exports. The logistics of transporting our porcelain bottles is an obvious one. But support is on hand from DIT to help us connect with distribution partners that we can trust to take maximum care of our products. With the support that's available, there's nothing stopping others like us in the drinks business to find a footing in new markets.

Paul Stowers, Head of North West region at DIT, said:

While it's the Scottish that are typically best known for their whisky exports, ambitious drinks businesses like the Forest Distillery are beginning to fly the flag for English whisky overseas.

We're also currently seeing a surge in demand for British gin from abroad, as part of a so-called 'ginaissance', which is the result of excellent products like Forest Gin.

UK exports of gin have risen by 19% in the first half of 2018 and are predicted to reach £600 million by the end of the year. This is more than double the value exported in 2008. The US and Australia in particular are hot markets for British gin, and we'd urge any distiller to get in touch with one of our local [international trade advisers](#) to find out how they can begin or grow their trade overseas.



Forest Gin Distillery (c) Forest Gin

Online support, find a buyer, and export readiness tools are available at great.gov.uk, where thousands of live export opportunities are also promoted.

[Press release: Innovative technique to install two bridges in one weekend on A14 upgrade](#)

How do you build two 1,000 tonne bridges over a very busy road while (nearly) keeping the road open throughout? You build them at the side of the road and wheel them into place at the end!

This is exactly what the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon upgrade team has been doing over the past few months. They have built four abutments to support the new bridges as well as two bridge decks at the side of the live carriageway, and are now ready to wheel the bridge decks, each measuring 44 metres, into place on top of the abutments.

Now the team has released an engineering video to show exactly how they plan to tackle the challenge – and it involves a very big, remote controlled platform on wheels.

[Animation – Bar Hill junction bridge replacement September 2018](#)

The new bridges, which are being built as part of the £1.5 billion major improvement scheme and will be located at Bar Hill, will be installed during the weekend of 14 September. They will form a new, improved Bar Hill junction which will connect the A14 to the future local access road between Cambridge and Huntingdon, as well as to the existing local road between Bar Hill and Longstanton (B1050).

David Bray, project director for the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon upgrade at Highways England, said:

Redesigning and building the Bar Hill junction was identified from the start of the project as one of the main challenges we would have to tackle. I am delighted that we've found a way to build the two bridges while keeping the A14 open as much as possible and disruption for people locally and road users to a minimum. And I am also excited that we're using such an innovative solution to our challenge – that's what makes my job so interesting.



The abutments for the two new bridges can be seen just south of the existing bridge and further down on the right of the road, the bridge decks are under construction

To carry out the bridge deck installation work safely, the A14 will need to be closed between Friday 14 September, 9pm, and Monday 17 September, 6am.

During the closure, clearly signed diversions will be in place as traffic not needing to enter or exit the A14 at Bar Hill will not be able to travel through the junction along the A14 in either direction.

Through traffic travelling eastbound toward Cambridge will be diverted to leave the A14 at Godmanchester (junction 24), follow the diversion via the A1198, and A428. Through traffic travelling westbound toward Huntingdon will follow the same diversion in reverse.

The team will also need to make some temporary changes to the slip road during the closure.

Traffic wishing to travel westbound from Bar Hill will be able to access the A14 towards Huntingdon but it won't be possible to travel eastbound on the A14 from Bar Hill. Traffic wishing to travel eastbound will be diverted via the westbound A14 to Godmanchester and join the through traffic diversion towards Cambridge.

The new bridges will ultimately replace the old bridge which will be demolished in 2019.

To help people find out more about this work and the closures, the A14

upgrade team will be available with their Mobile Visitor Centre at Tesco Bar Hill on Monday 3 September, 4pm to 8pm and Thursday 6 September, 4pm to 8pm.

There is no space to safely watch the work taking place, during the weekend but people can find out more about the work and closure details, and watch the work via a live stream online by visiting the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon social media channels and website.

Highways England is upgrading a 21-mile stretch of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon to three lanes in each direction including a brand new 17-mile bypass south of Huntingdon, with four lanes in each direction between Bar Hill and Girton. The project, which includes 34 bridges and main structures, will add additional capacity, boost the local and national economy and cut up to 20 minutes off journeys.

To check the latest traffic information for the A14 and other roads, listen to traffic bulletins on local and national radio stations, visit <http://www.trafficengland.com/> and follow Highways England on Twitter via @HighwaysEAST.

For the latest information about the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme, visit <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/A14C2H> follow @A14C2H on Twitter and like the scheme Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/A14C2H/>.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.