

# Regulator finds mismanagement at Revelation Foundation

In a [report](#) published today, the Charity Commission is highly critical of the charity [Revelation Foundation](#), after uncovering flaws in its structure and serious governance failings that amount to mismanagement by its trustees.

Revelation Foundation is involved in creating and broadcasting Christian content programmes for television.

The Commission opened an inquiry into the charity in 2014 following concerns raised by the public that the charity was being used for private advantage. The charity had recently moved most of its operations to Spain, and in doing so, had developed an overly complex operating structure.

The Commission found no evidence to support the allegation of private advantage, but its investigation instead exposed a series of governance failings on the part of the charity.

These failings included decision-making processes that were inadequate such as not obtaining professional advice before key decisions, badly managed conflicts of interest and poor financial oversight.

The regulator also found the charity's founder Howard Conder, who had links to companies involved in the delivery of the charity's activities and was a significant donor, held a disproportionate influence over the trustees.

As a consequence of the governance failures, the charity developed an unwieldy structure which placed a significant proportion of the charity's assets beyond its direct control and therefore at risk.

**Amy Spiller, Head of Investigations at the Charity Commission, said:**

The public expects each charity to show that they are doing their bit to uphold public trust in charity more generally. This starts with trustees being able to clearly show how they are acting in their charity's best interests and for its beneficiaries.

Our inquiry found the trustees of Revelation Foundation could not show why decisions were taken or how they had acted in their charity's best interests and that of its beneficiaries. Instead they demonstrated weak governance and oversight and ultimately left themselves open to allegations they were making decisions in their own interests. Whilst our inquiry didn't find evidence of this, our work does demonstrate the importance of good governance and transparency to prevent a charity being exposed to undue risk. We hope other charities will look to this as an example of why

effective governance is so important.

The Commission appointed an interim manager to the charity in June 2015. The [report](#) acknowledges there was a significant delay during which the inquiry sought updates from the interim manager and the trustees' concern that he had been in very limited contact with them. The interim manager was discharged in September 2018 on conclusion of his work.

The charity has, as a result of this inquiry, made many significant improvements to its governance arrangements, which includes Howard Condor stepping back from the charity and the trustees gaining a clearer understanding of their role and responsibilities.

The Commission will continue to monitor the charity.

**Ends.**

### **Notes to Editors:**

- When the charity moved to Spain many Christian broadcasters were operating from the country at the time and so this was not an unusual decision.
- The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

---

## **[Improve a business with new skills: apply for funding](#)**

News story

Universities and research organisations can apply for a share of up to £10 million to work with businesses on solving their innovation challenges.



Businesses can improve their productivity and competitiveness by adopting new ways of doing things developed in universities and research organisations.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships allow universities, colleges, research technology organisations and Catapults to partner with a business or not-for-profit organisation and bring new skills and thinking into the organisation.

The partnership employs 1 or 2 recent graduates with relevant skills, known as an associate, to work in the business.

The business could be asked to contribute between a third and half of the costs of the project.

## **Partnerships must help businesses solve a challenge**

Projects should use innovation to solve a challenge faced by the business. They must show:

- that it helps the business with a real need
- how it fits the strategic aims of the business partner
- there is a genuine market opportunity and route to market
- how the knowledge gained will be embedded within the business partner
- the commercial impact for the business partner, and any wider impacts
- a clear understanding of what qualifications, skills, attributes and experience the associate will need

## **Competition information**

- the competition is open, and the closing date is at 11am on 28 October 2020
- projects must be led by a higher or further education institution, research technology organisation or Catapult, partnering with a business or not-for-profit organisation
- we expect projects will typically cost up to £75,000 a year and include a contribution from the business partner
- projects can last between 12 and 36 months

Published 9 October 2020

---

## Developing new battery technologies: apply for business funding

News story

Businesses can apply for a share of up to £10 million to support development of innovative battery technologies for electric vehicles.



Brill Power battery packs. Credit: Adam Gasson.

There is a growing global demand for new and more efficient batteries to support the switch to electric transport. This demand is driven by plans by the UK and other governments to ban the sale of conventional petrol and diesel vehicles within the next two decades.

The battery supply chain could be worth £12 billion to the UK economy by 2025 if the country can establish itself as a global leader in battery technology.

The UK government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund Faraday Battery Challenge has up to £317 million to help businesses and researchers to develop market-leading battery technologies.

Innovate UK, as part of UK Research and Innovation, has up to £10 million from the fund to invest in feasibility studies and in research and development into promising and innovative battery technologies.

### **Work could include battery cost, efficiency, and recycling**

Projects can focus on a variety of improvements to battery technologies for the propulsion of electric vehicles. They could look at automotive applications or other sectors such as rail, marine, aerospace, defence, or off-highway vehicles where innovation could meet challenging performance

requirements or enable electrification.

Areas of work could include:

- cost reduction at the cell and pack level and in manufacturing
- increasing energy density of battery cells
- increasing the power density of battery packs
- eliminating thermal runaway risks
- lengthening cell and pack life
- broadening the temperature ranges for efficient operation of a pack
- new models to better predict range and battery health
- recyclability, including second life, design for end of life, reuse, or recycling
- technologies enabling the efficient design, development, or manufacture of batteries
- next-generation battery technologies

## **Competition information for feasibility studies**

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at 11am on 9 December 2020
- projects can be led by a business of any size working with other businesses or researchers
- projects could range in size between £100,000 and £1 million and last between 3 and 12 months

## **Competition information for research and development**

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at 11am on 9 December 2020
- projects can be led by a business of any size working with other businesses or researchers
- projects could range in size between £300,000 and £1.5 million and last between 3 and 12 months

Published 9 October 2020

---

## **[26-year bans after father & son flout previous disqualifications](#)**

Leslie Walker Crossland and Richard Walker Crossland are both from Barnsley and from 9 October, father and son are banned from acting as directors or directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the

court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

Richard Crossland (41) is banned for 11 years, while Leslie Crossland (71) has received the maximum disqualification term of 15 years.

Their bans are connected to the company R&L Electrical Engineers Limited, an electrical installations firm operating in the Barnsley area. The company was incorporated in September 2016 but entered into creditors voluntary liquidation just three years later in May 2019, which brought R&L Electrical Engineers to the attention of the Insolvency Service.

Investigators established that Richard Crossland was appointed a director of R&L Electrical Engineers in January 2018 after his previous 9-year ban from 2008 had expired. The previous ban was handed down to Richard Crossland after he allowed his father to illegally run two companies, in breach of Leslie Crossland's previous bans.

Enquiries uncovered that Richard Crossland repeated the same misconduct when for a second time he allowed his father to illegally run R&L Electrical Engineers until the company was liquidated in May 2019 – again breaching Leslie Crossland's active bans.

Further enquiries established that father and son carried out additional instances of misconduct while running the electrical installations firm.

Richard Crossland failed to ensure R&L Electrical Engineers maintained adequate accounting records, which meant that the Liquidator could not verify the legitimacy of £350,000 worth of payments from the company's accounts. Contentious payments, made between January 2018 and February 2019, totalling more than £137,000 was paid to R&L Electrical Engineers' de facto director – Leslie Crossland.

And while acting as a shadow director, Leslie Crossland carried out factoring fraud. The banned director impersonated the factoring company to ensure creditors diverted funds to R&L Electrical Engineers. Leslie Crossland also fabricated a backdated letter to the factoring company, attempting to release the previous de jure director from her personal guarantee responsibilities.

Investigators also established that Leslie Crossland had served a 3-year prison sentence after he breached his 14-year disqualification he received in November 2008.

On 18 September 2020, the Secretary of State accepted disqualification undertakings from both Richard and Leslie Crossland.

Keith Owen, Director of Investigation and Enforcement for the Insolvency Service, said:

Father and son are prolific offenders. Over a number of years Richard allowed his father to run companies in full knowledge that he was banned from doing so, while Leslie not only breached his various disqualifications but also deceived factoring companies and

customers to ensure debts could not be paid.

Richard and Leslie's substantial disqualifications should serve as a stark warning to other rogue directors that we will investigate instances of misconduct and apply to have you removed from the corporate arena in order to protect customers and creditors from suffering harm.

Leslie Walker Crossland is from Barnsley and his date of birth is October 1949.

Richard Walker Crossland is from Barnsley and his date of birth is December 1979.

#### **Leslie Crossland background**

- Accepted a 10-year disqualification undertaking in September 2005 in connection with failing to maintain records while director of Yorkshire Electronic Services (Barnsley) Limited:
- Accepted a 14-year disqualification undertaking in October 2008 in connection with failing to maintain records for CCN Shopfitting Limited and Total Solutions (Build) Limited, and for acting as a director whilst disqualified
- Between September 2017 and May 2019, acted as a director of R&L Electrical Engineers in breach of previous disqualifications

#### **Richard Crossland background**

- Accepted a 9-year disqualification undertaking in October 2008 which commenced from November 2008 after allowing a banned director to run a company in connection with CCN Shopfitting Limited and Total Solutions (Build) Limited
- From January 2018 to May 2019, knowingly allowed a banned director to act as a company director of R&L Electrical Engineers

#### **About disqualifications**

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

]

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

---

# [HMCTS response and progress update on Dr Natalie Byrom report](#)

## Government response

A detailed response outlining progress against recommendations from Dr Natalie Byrom's 2019 report on data and academic engagement.



HMCTS has published its detailed response to [Dr Natalie Byrom's 2019 report on use of data and academic engagement](#), and set out the progress that has been made against the report's recommendations over the past 12 months.

Dr Byrom published her report following an initial secondment to HMCTS from The Legal Education Foundation in autumn 2018, during which time she advised on strategies to enhance the organisation's academic engagement and improve how it makes data available for research purposes. From October 2019, she re-joined on a part-time secondment to support HMCTS in developing and strengthening its data governance proposals.

Announcing today's response and progress update, Acting Chief Executive of HMCTS, Kevin Sadler, said:

I want to wholeheartedly thank Dr Byrom for her vital report on open data and academic engagement, and for her support in enabling us to implement many of the recommendations over the past year.

We welcome these recommendations on data collection to support the evaluation of reform and on developing our approach to open and shared data. Dr Byrom's sustained contribution, both during her secondment and now through this report, have been particularly integral to our progress on open and shared data.

Since the publication of the report, HMCTS has begun to implement



many of the recommendations, working closely with the judiciary and MoJ. Today's paper sets out in detail how we have put these recommendations into practice over the past 12 months and outlines our future plans on open data and academic engagement for the year ahead to further support transparency and open justice, including establishing a new data governance mechanism.

I am pleased that we have been able to make specific commitments about the timeframes for many of these crucial areas, including collecting data on protected characteristics, while for those areas in which the timeframe has in part been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we commit to delivering them as quickly as possible whilst working within the current constraints.

Dr Byrom said:

Today is a pivotal moment for the government to fully embrace – and fully fund – a data strategy that will deliver digital justice for all. Over a year on from delivering my report to HMCTS, I welcome its acceptance of my recommendations and the work undertaken so far to implement them. I urge the government to now put words into action. There is no better moment than now to step up the implementation of those recommendations. Otherwise, we will waste the opportunity to make the UK a world leader in delivering digital justice for all.

Dr Byrom's full response and update to recommendations are published below.

PDF, 533KB, 12 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology.

Request an accessible format.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email [hmctsforms@justice.gov.uk](mailto:hmctsforms@justice.gov.uk). Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

Published 9 October 2020