

Charity regulator opens inquiry into Hospice Aid UK



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into Hospice Aid UK ([1092575](#)).

In 2014 the charity was the subject of a statutory inquiry. During that inquiry the Commission issued the charity's trustees with a formal action plan, which required them to carry out certain actions in order to improve the charity's governance, to place it in a better financial position, and ensure its agreement with direct marketing agency, Euro DM, was transparent to the public. The report of that inquiry is available on [GOV.UK](#).

A recent review of the charity's 2018 accounts has raised a number of concerns which resulted in the opening of this new inquiry. The inquiry will look into:

- the proportion of the charity's income that is applied for exclusively charitable purposes
- the adequacy of the fundraising arrangements and the extent to which these are monitored and managed by the trustees
- the extent to which the charity is solvent and financially viable
- the extent to which the trustees have complied with their legal duties and the advice, guidance and directions previously issued by the Commission
- the adequacy of the trustees' policies and procedures in relation to the recruitment, appointment, monitoring and management of staff
- the extent to which potential conflicts of interest are identified and managed

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends.

Notes to Editors

1. The inquiry opened on 20 September 2019.
2. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales; our role is to regulate charity trustees' compliance with the charity law framework.

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[The Copyright Tribunal is moving its London office](#)



The Secretary
Copyright Tribunal
10 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0NN

Our services will be unaffected by this move. The new office is a short walk from Abbey Orchard Street and is opposite the Department for Business. The nearest tube stations are St James's Park or Westminster.

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[Court finds former trustees of](#)

disability charity in contempt of court



CHARITY COMMISSION
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The Charity Commission welcomes the High Court's finding of contempt of court against two former trustees of the [Darren Wright Foundation](#), a Bristol-based charity that raised funds to support the families of people with disabilities and life-limiting illnesses.

The High Court ruled in favour of the Commission's application, finding that Susan and Raymond Wright failed to comply with an order to supply evidence and documentation to the regulator.

The Commission has powers to require individuals to provide information, and failure to do so may amount to contempt of court.

This is the first time the regulator has pursued such a case through the courts.

The Commission continues to investigate the charity over [serious concerns about its management and governance](#).

The Commission stresses that its statutory inquiry into the Darren Wright Foundation is ongoing, and that it has made no findings yet.

Another hearing is expected to determine the penalty against the two defendants.

ENDS

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SIR KENNETH BLOOMFIELD TO STEP DOWN FROM ICLVR



Secretary of State Julian Smith confirms today that he has received notification that Sir Kenneth Bloomfield intends to step down from the position of UK Commissioner to the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains (ICLVR).

The Secretary of State said: "Sir Kenneth has held the position of UK Commissioner from the very inception of the ICLVR with great passion, distinction and professionalism. This has been critical in the success of the work of the Commission, and its outstanding reputation not only in the UK but also internationally.

"I am grateful that Sir Kenneth will remain in post until his successor has been appointed."

Sir Kenneth said: "It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as Commissioner of the ICLVR but after twenty years it is time, reluctantly, to hand over the reins. I am proud of the work that has been done by the Commission and everyone involved, and I wish them every success for the future."

The UK Government will begin the process of appointing a successor immediately.

Notes to Editors

1. The Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains was established by an intergovernmental agreement between the British and Irish Governments, signed on 27 April 1999, and by legislation enacted in the two jurisdictions. The Department of Justice and Equality, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Office, provides financial support for the Commission. The Commission is responsible for facilitating the location of the remains of victims of paramilitary violence who were murdered and secretly buried arising from the conflict in Northern Ireland.

2. The Commission has in place a confidential free-phone number and post office box address through which information can be passed to it. Any such information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be used for any purpose other than locating the remains of victims.
3. Further information about the Commission and its activities and about the Disappeared is available at www.iclvr.ie.

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[New board addresses governance failings at Christ Embassy following regulator's inquiry](#)

A [statutory inquiry](#) has led to significant improvements in the governance and oversight of Christ Embassy ([1059247](#)), after investigators uncovered numerous failings in the charity's management. As a result of the inquiry, a new board of trustees has strengthened the administration and management of the charity.

Christ Embassy operates over 90 churches throughout the country, providing religious services to over 5000 people, and has a substantial international following. An inquiry was opened following a number of concerns about the use of charitable funds on large connected party payments.

Charities can have positive collaborations with organisations they have links to, however these must be managed appropriately. Investigators established that a number of informal grants and payments were made, including over £1.2 million* to a broadcasting company, Loveworld Television Ministry, which was wholly owned by a trustee of the charity. Also, for six years the charity had allowed Loveworld free use of a £1.8 million property it had purchased, and was subsidising a proportion of the company's utility bills. The inquiry found a lack of formal contracts or appropriate record keeping, and a lack of evidence of proper decision-making or of conflicts of interest being appropriately managed.

Financial management at the charity was also found to be poor. The trustees claimed 9 bank accounts held funds belonging to Christ Embassy Nigeria, and that 3 UK properties belonged to Christ Embassy Nigeria, however the inquiry concluded that all of these in fact belonged to the charity.

The inquiry considered that there was serious misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of the charity, and took action to remove two of the

trustees of the charity, however the individuals resigned before the sanction was applied. The Commission has since been granted new powers to address this loophole, which it secured under the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

The Commission also took temporary and protective action by freezing bank accounts, protecting over £600,000 of charitable funds, and appointing an interim manager. He took over the running of the charity to the exclusion of the trustees, and successfully resolved issues of concern**, as set out fully in [the report](#).

The interim manager instigated a full governance review, following which a new board has made significant progress to address the governance issues and improve oversight and control of the charity.

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

This was a complex inquiry that unveiled numerous failings by those running Christ Embassy over a number of years, which exposed the charity to undue risk. I am pleased that these issues have been resolved and that the new board of trustees has shown a clear commitment to move the charity forward responsibly.

Those running a charity should always be guided by their charitable purpose. Trustees have an important responsibility to ensure that they act in the best interests of their charity at all times, and take care to safeguard their charity's assets. Our guidance around governance arrangements is there to help trustees ensure they do just that.

Charities are trusted in a way that is unique, and people often put a lot of faith in religious charities. It is therefore vital that trustees, particularly those with a large following, do all that they can to inspire public trust, so that they can help to uphold wider public confidence in charities.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. *The payments were made between 2009 and 2011.
2. ** The inquiry identified other issues of concern which are set out in [the report](#) including the continued unauthorised use of charity premises as a place of worship, and the charity incurring significant penalties due to late tax return submissions to HMRC.

For any media enquiries directed to the charity please contact Jonathan Goldberg QC at jongold@btinternet.com or 07831586273.