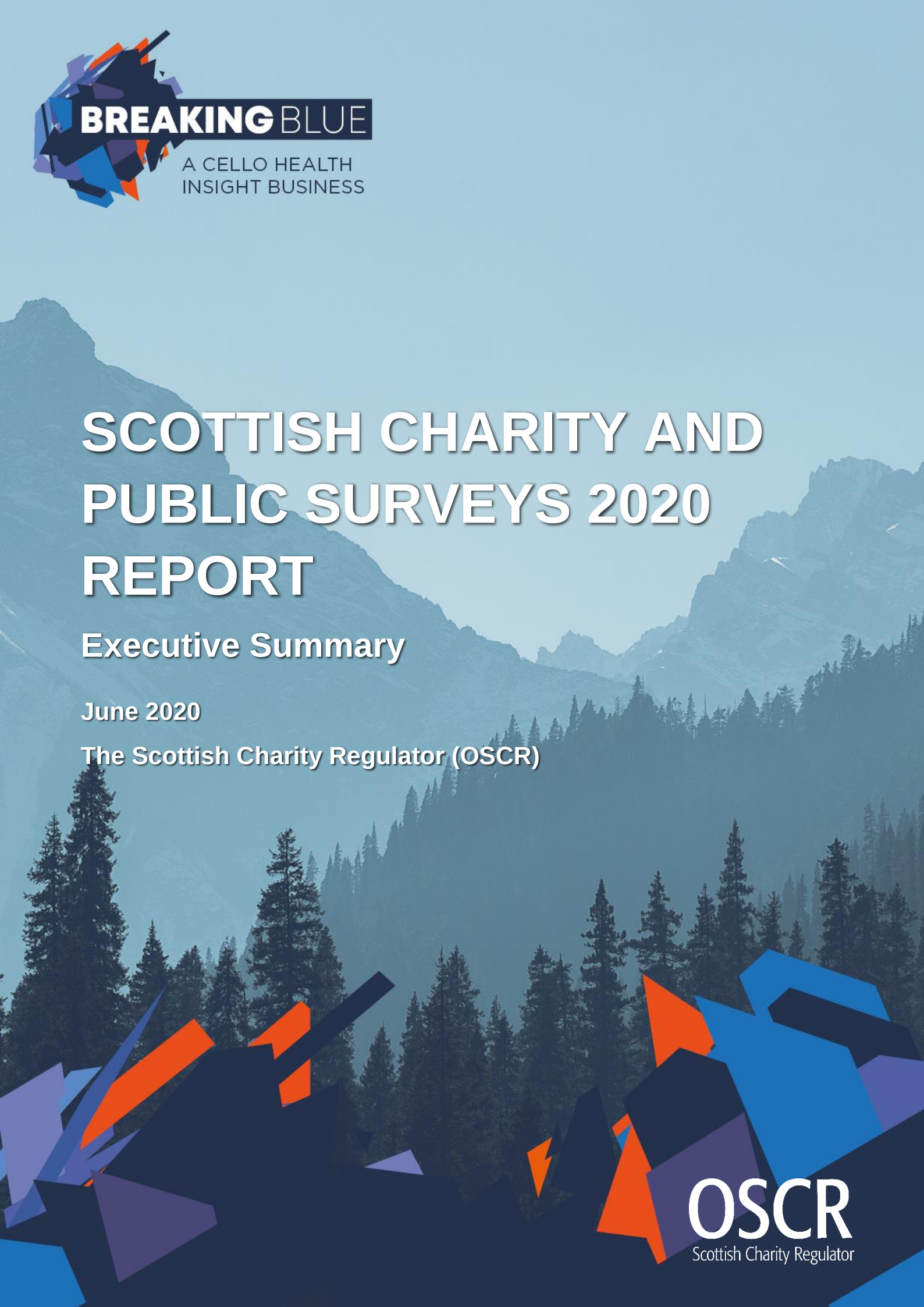


SCOTTISH CHARITY AND PUBLIC SURVEYS 2020 REPORT

Executive Summary

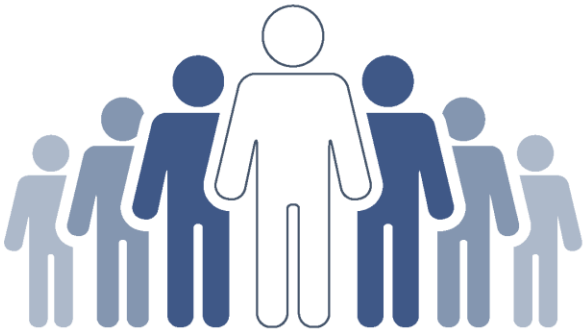
June 2020

The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)

OSCR
Scottish Charity Regulator

Executive Summary

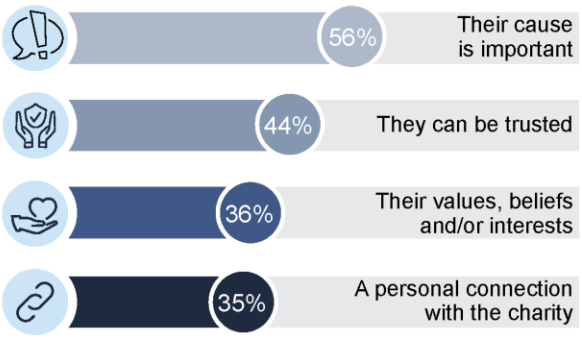
What motivates people in Scotland to support charities?



93% of Scottish Adults have given money, time or goods to a charity in the last year

(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

The top reasons the Scottish Public gave for giving to a charity were:



Respondents asked to name top three reasons for donating
(Base: Scottish public who have given to charity 933)

35%

When given no prompting, the Scottish public viewed transparency as the quality that would most inspire trust in a charity

Unprompted
(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

Direct transparency

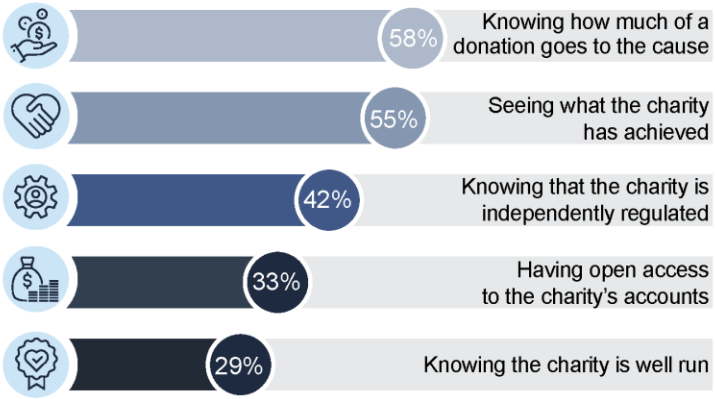
Seeing a positive impact made using donations

Administrative accountability

Being open with accounts and internal processes

And even when given a range of options to choose from, being transparent about the charity's impact and use of funds was important for perceived trustworthiness:

Respondents asked to name three options most likely to increase perceived trustworthiness
(Base: Scottish public 1,010)



42%

...feel **knowing that the charity is independently regulated** is important for trustworthiness

The principles that a charity should embody:

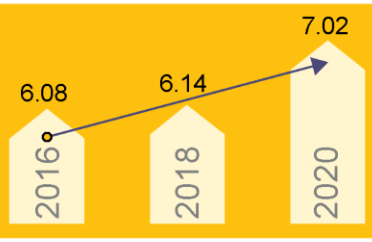
Honesty
Vision
Motivation
Transparency
Empathy
Passion
Committed
Volunteering
Trustworthy people
Local impact

How the Scottish public would communicate a charity's trustworthiness:

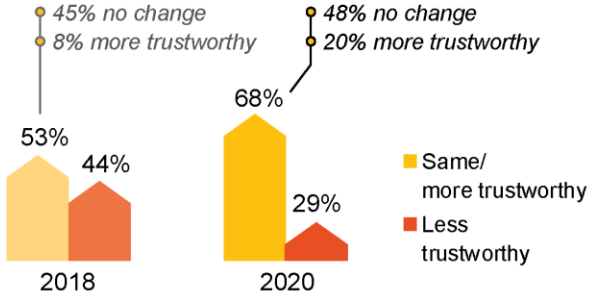
Does the Scottish public trust charities?

The overall level of trust and confidence in charities in Scotland has gone up since 2018 *(mean score out of 10)*

(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

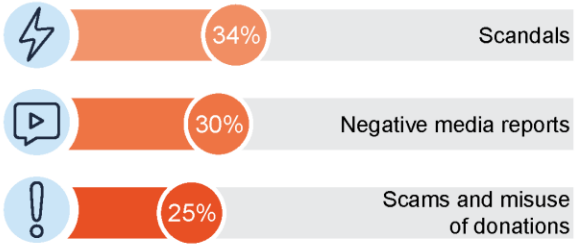


Two thirds of the public feels that the charity sector is as trustworthy, or more trustworthy, than two years ago, up from only a half in 2018



(Base: Scottish public 2020 1,010, 2018 1,010)

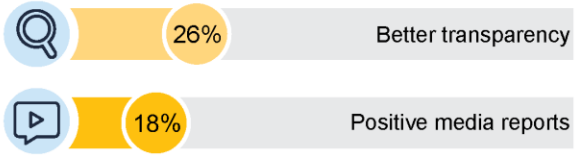
The primary reasons for members of the Scottish public feeling that the sector was less trustworthy than two years ago revolved around scandals and other negative stories in the media



(Base: Scottish public who felt charities are less trustworthy 283)

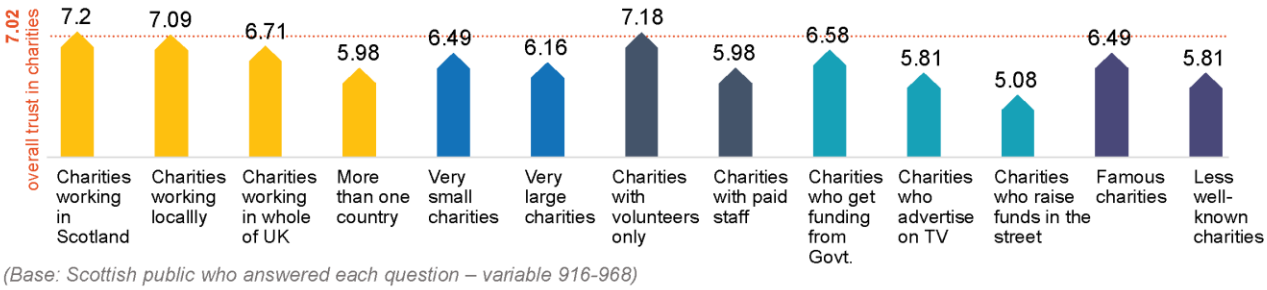
For those who believed that the sector was more trustworthy than two years ago, better transparency was the most common reason, followed by good news stories in the media

(Base: Scottish public who felt charities are more trustworthy 207)



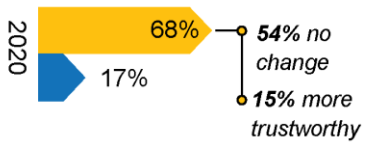
Charities working in Scotland, as well those working in local communities were more trusted than those with a UK-wide or international reach

While smaller charities were more trusted than larger ones, the size of a charity was less influential on its assumed trustworthiness than its geographical scope



(Base: Scottish public who answered each question – variable 916-968)

Charities themselves were less likely than the Scottish public to feel there had been a drop in the sector's perceived trustworthiness over the past two years



(Base: All charities 1,102)

Two-fifths of charities who felt the perceived trustworthiness of the sector had increased reported an increase in support because of this

(Base: Charities who felt public trust had increased in the past two years 166)

However, only one fifth of those who felt perceived trustworthiness of the sector had decreased felt that this had led to lower public support for them

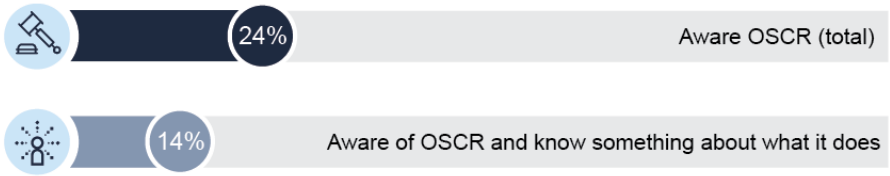
(Base: Charities who felt public trust had decreased in the past two years 194)

Awareness of charity regulation and of the Scottish Charity Regulator

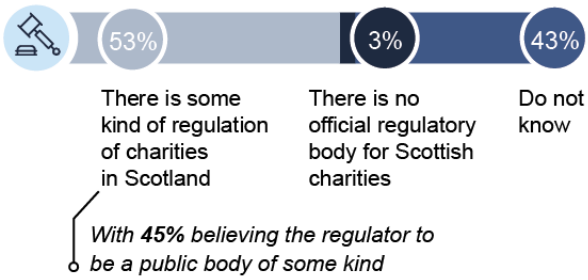
In general, there is a **low level of awareness** among the Scottish public of charity regulation in Scotland and of OSCR itself

A quarter of the Scottish public recognised the name of 'the Scottish Charity Regulator' or 'OSCR' when prompted

(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

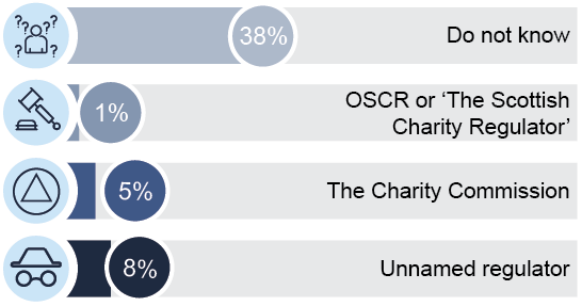


However, even where members of the public had not heard of OSCR specifically, there was a widespread belief the sector is regulated



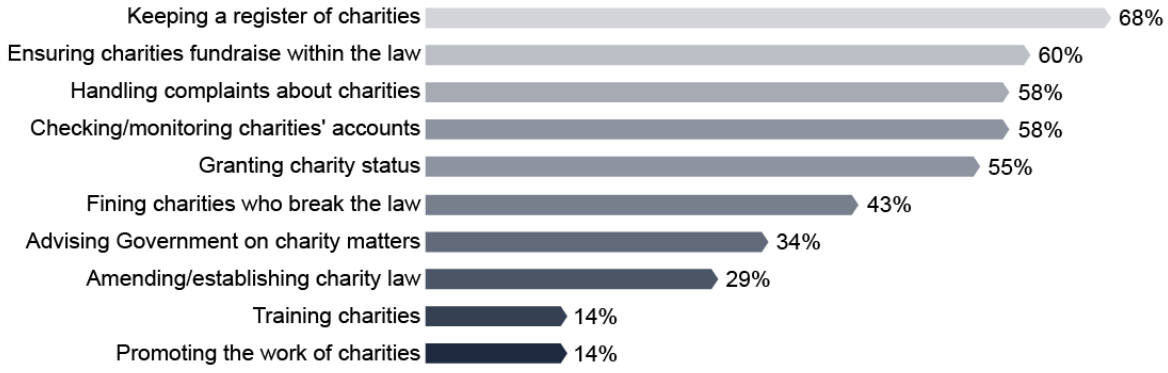
(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

When asked where they would turn to report concerns about a charity, two-fifths of the Scottish public did not know



(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

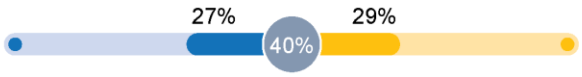
The Scottish public believed maintaining a register of charities and ensuring compliance with the law to be the core roles of OSCR



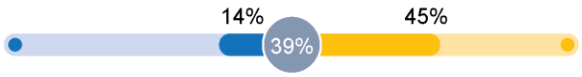
(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

Locus of responsibility

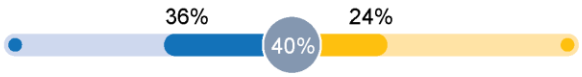
01. Making the public aware of the full list of charities' trustees



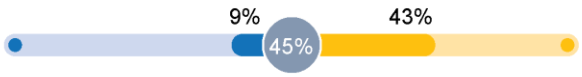
02. Ensuring that the public has access to charities' annual reports and accounts



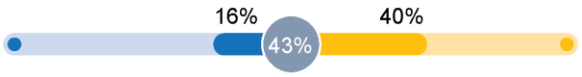
03. Ensuring that the charities are well-run



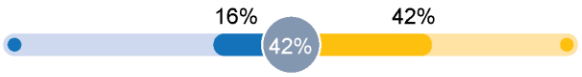
04. Supporting public trust in the charity sector



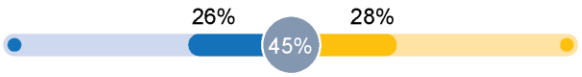
05. Ensures that charities are transparent and accountable

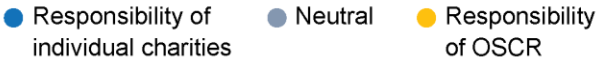


06. Ensuring charities operate within the law



07. Ensuring charities operate in an ethical way



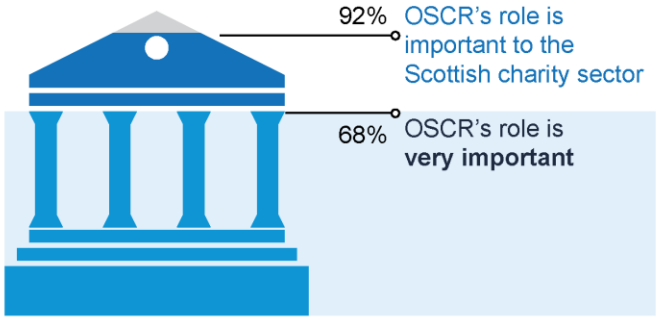


The role the Scottish Charity Regulator plays in supporting public trust and confidence in charities

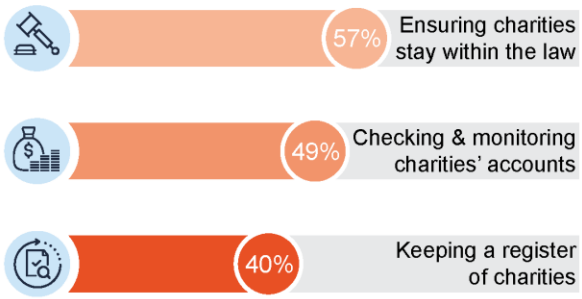
While the Scottish public did not have a very high awareness of OSCR and the nature of charity regulation in Scotland more widely, there was a common assumption that a regulator probably does exist

When promoted, overwhelmingly, the Scottish public thought that OSCR plays an important role in the charity sector

(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

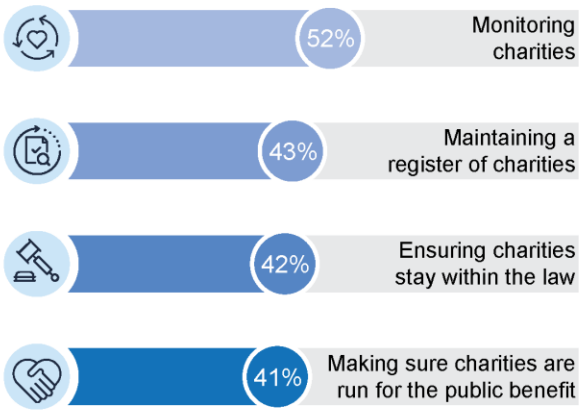


When it comes to maintaining high levels of trustworthiness in the charity sector, the public most values OSCR for its ability to ensure good conduct in accordance with the law



(Base: Scottish public 1,010)

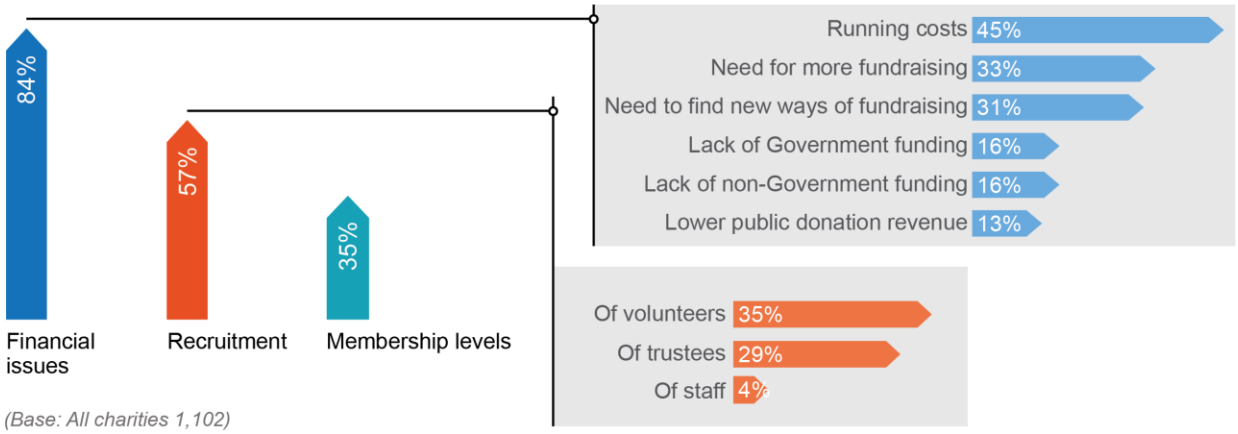
For the charities themselves, OSCR's most important role for maintaining the trustworthiness of the Scottish charity sector was the ongoing monitoring of charities



(Base: Scottish Charities 1,102)

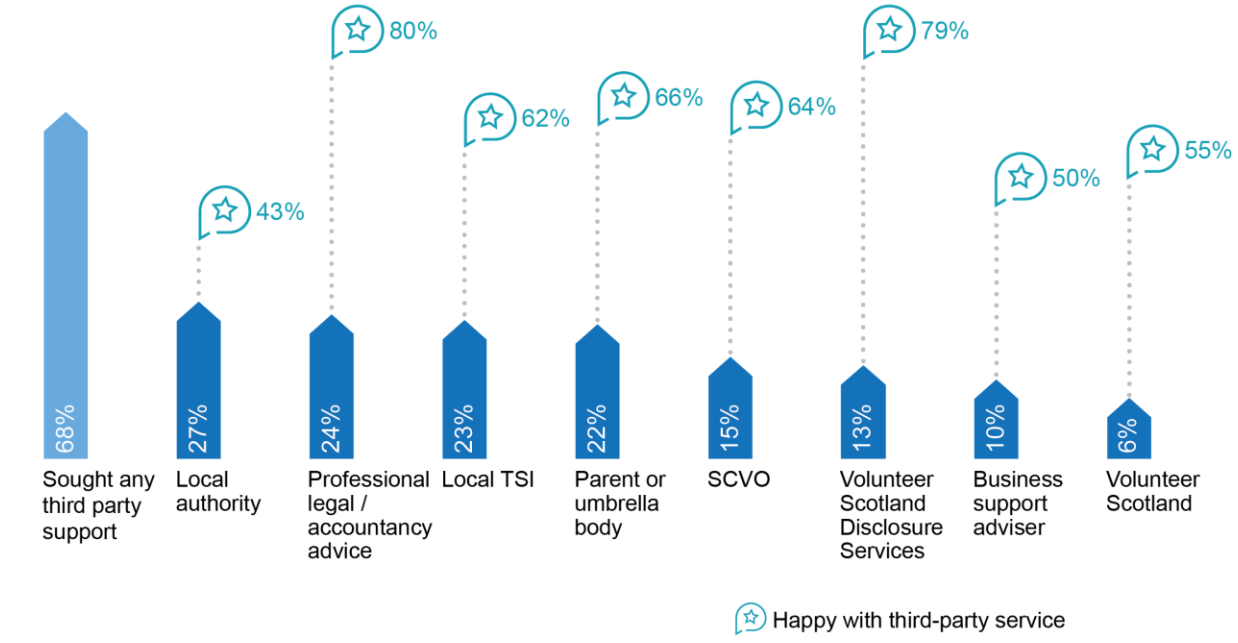
Challenges faced by charities in Scotland

Financial pressure was the most common issue faced by charities in 2020



(Base: All charities 1,102)

Just over two-thirds of charities had sought third party support in the last 12 months



(Base: All charities 1,102)

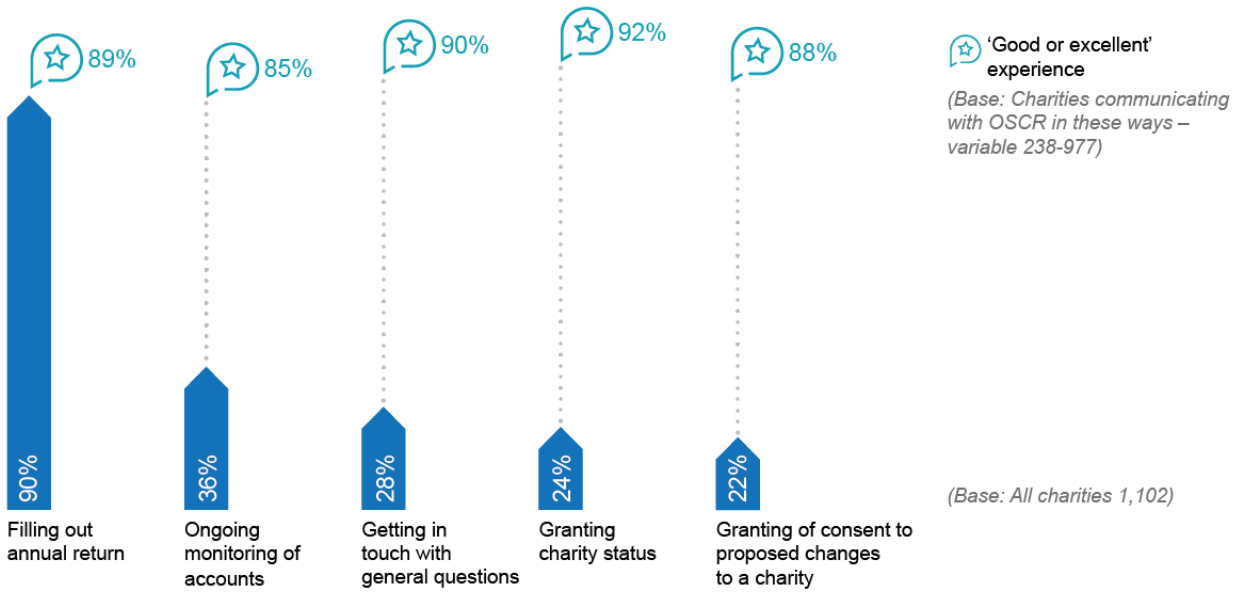
(Base: All charities using each service – variable 70-299)

How do charities find dealing with the Scottish Charity Regulator?

Charities in Scotland felt that OSCR's communications, taken as a whole, were good

(Base: All charities 1,102)

The most common reason for charities to contact OSCR in the last 12 months was to complete the annual return. Under a third had needed to contact OSCR with a general question in the same timeframe



Nearly all charities had cause to use OSCR's website in the last 12 months

86%

...of charities used the website in the last 12 months

80% used OSCR Online

- 73% To fill in the annual return
- 56% To upload annual reports and accounts
- 37% To check their own charity's details

95% Of OSCR Online users found it easy to find what they needed

(Base: All charities 1,102)

55% searched for information

- 42% To look for charity guidance
- 22% To search for more information about OSCR or Scottish charity legislation
- 17% To download the Charity Trustee Information and Guidance Pack

92% Of those looking for information found it easy to find what they needed

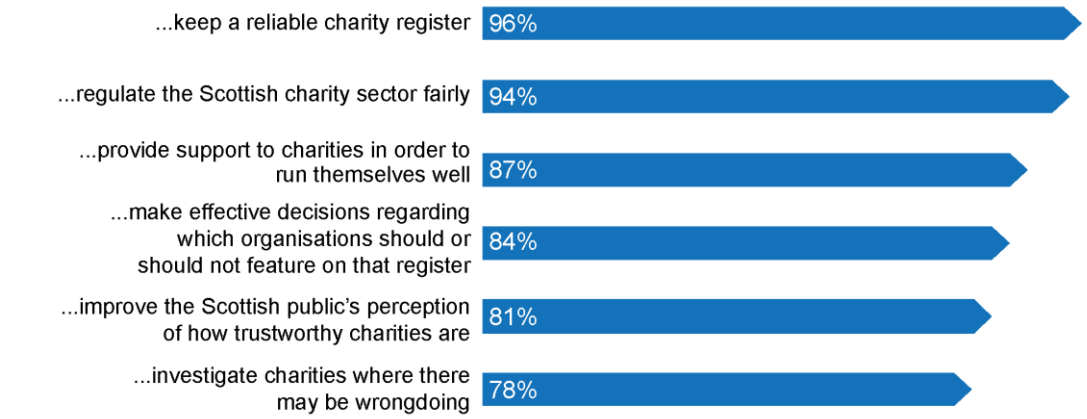
47% searched the charity register

97% Of those searching the charity register found it easy to find what they needed

(Base: Charities using the OSCR website 949)

Charities' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Scottish Charity Regulator

OSCR is trusted by charities in Scotland to deliver fair and effective regulation and support to the Scottish charity sector.
Percentage of charities who trust OSCR to...



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