



Cabinet Office

Office for Civil Society

September 2014



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The **Office for Civil Society (OCS)**, sits within the Government Innovation Group and is part of the Cabinet Office.

Set up in May 2010 to support the voluntary and community sector and to deliver the 'Big Society' agenda across Government.

- Approx 75 staff
- Reports to Brooks Newmark MP, Minister for Civil Society

OCS key objectives:

- Make it easier to run a voluntary or community sector organisation
- Get more resources into the sector to underpin its resilience and independence
- Make it easier to do business with the state



Voluntary and Community Sector

- UK Government defines the sector as being ‘Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise’ organisations. There is no single definition of this.
- The latest Charity Commission statistics show that **total income** of the charity sector has risen by £2bn to £63.4bn since December 2013. *[end Jun 14]*
- The **total number** of charities in England & Wales has been on a slight upwards trend for the past 4 years, totalling 164,345 in June 2014.
- The UK was ranked sixth most charitable nation in the 2013 World Giving Index and 74% of people give money regularly to charity.



Regulating the Sector

The Charity Commission is responsible for registering and regulating charities in England Wales.

It does this by:

- only granting charitable status to organisations that can demonstrate they meet the criteria for being a charity;
- ensuring charities meet their legal requirement to provide information on their activities each year;
- making searchable information about each registered charity widely available;
- providing online services and guidance to help charities run as effectively as possible;
- taking timely and decisive action when there is malpractice or misconduct.

The Charity Commission is a non-Ministerial Government Department, part of the Civil Service. The Commission is completely independent of Ministerial influence and also independent from the sector it regulates.





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Sector Support Team

Tom Leftwich – Senior Policy Advisor

our mission

“....building a better partnership between government and civil society, and supporting the sustainability of the VCSE sector”

our offer



“Helping government get better outcomes by supporting and partnering civil society”



“Supporting civil society in challenging times”



what we do

1 Open new Markets

2 Support capability

3 A statutory partner

(e.g.)

Work with MoJ to help new public service markets in probation harness the potential of the VCSE

Broker VCSE access to local growth markets with LEPs and BLF

A £40m Local Sustainability programme

Work with businesses and VCSEs to share crucial skills

Support the sector's most important institutions e.g. Big Lottery Fund & Charity Commission

Hold the pen for government updating and renewing charity law

our skills

Public service expertise

Insights & intelligence

Stakeholders & sponsorship

Policy delivery

Charity Law



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Social Action Team

Catherine Mousdale – Policy Advisor

Social Action Team

Aim

To demonstrate the potential of Social Action to provide practical, innovative, cost effective and scalable solutions to public service delivery and challenging social issues.

Key to achieving this is The [Centre for Social Action](#) (a partnership with Nesta), which is investing £40 million until 2015. The CSA will identify and accelerate the development and spread of high impact social action initiatives.

Our work is focused across 5 primary themes:

- **Health, Ageing & Care** - By harnessing the assets of older people and communities we will prove that social action can improve outcomes and decrease pressures on statutory services. The [Reducing Winter Pressures Fund](#) will support projects that help older people to stay healthy. The [Dementia Friends](#) campaign aims to get 1 million people to become Dementia Friends by March 2015 to tackle the stigma that surrounds dementia.
- **Hospitals** - By scaling up high impact health volunteering models we will prove that social action can reduce hospital pressures and keep people out of hospital – through [Helping in Hospitals](#).
- **Community Action** – We will demonstrate that encouraging communities to come together to take their own decisions, run their own services and improve their lives is a legitimate means of delivering public policy. We will have trained 5,000 [Community Organisers](#) by 2015; have established 7 [Cities of Service](#); and match funded thousands of community projects chosen by local volunteers through [Community First](#). A [Community First Endowment](#) worth over £100m will be established for community groups to benefit from for years to come.
- **Rehabilitation** - By working with high impact and innovative programmes taking place in prison and probation services, we will help them evidence their impact and explore their fit with new commissioning models.
- **Young potential and Social Mobility** - By supporting the most effective initiatives that help to inspire young people and help to build their resilience and skills to become more sustainable and explore options to scale them – through the £2.5m [Vulnerable Young People Fund](#)



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Social Investment and Finance Team

Andrew Park – Senior Policy Advisor

Social Investment & Finance Team

Aim

Growing the social economy and increasing social investment to bring new resources into the sector. Social enterprise strengthens communities and is a vital growth industry.

What's been achieved?

- The UK has established itself as the global leader on social investment and hosted the world's first **G8 event** on social investment
- Launched £600m **Big Society Capital** (BSC) - the world's first social investment bank
- Launched a comprehensive **£10m Investment & Contract Readiness Fund** and **£10m Social Incubator Fund** to help social ventures to scale at pace
- Accelerating the number of **Social Impact Bonds**, through the **Centre for SIBs** and £20m **Social Outcomes Fund**
- A 30% **tax relief** for individuals investing in charities, social enterprises, and social impact bonds