

24th October 2016

## Charities against fraud: new site launches in Charity Fraud Awareness Week

*New website will help charities collectively tackle fraud*

The Charity Commission, in collaboration with members of the Charity Sector Counter Fraud Group, has today launched [www.charitiesagainstfraud.org.uk](http://www.charitiesagainstfraud.org.uk), a new website dedicated to helping charities in the fight against fraud. It provides an initial point of reference for trustees, staff and volunteers who want to find out more about tackling fraud in their charity, and includes guidance, top tips, case studies, as well as signposting users to other organisations tackling charity fraud.

The launch of the new website marks the start of Charity Fraud Awareness Week (24-28 October). According to the National Crime Agency, 'individuals, the private sector and the charity sector lose billions of pounds each year to fraud'. The campaign - led by the Commission and the Fraud Advisory Panel - will be reminding charities how to limit their fraud risk. It aims to ensure that trustees and charity staff can recognise the warning signs of fraud and shape an effective and proportionate response.

Top tips to reduce your charity's vulnerability to fraud include:

1. Develop a strong counter fraud culture where staff are encouraged to play their part in the fight against fraud.
2. Have in place and robustly apply internal financial controls.
3. Encourage staff to voice concerns.
4. Have a fraud response plan so that everyone knows what to do and when - stay calm but act quickly when incidents do occur.
5. Ensure you report incidents to [Action Fraud](#) and to the Commission, via the dedicated reporting facility: [RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk).

**David Kirk, Chairman of the Fraud Advisory Panel, commented:**

"Fraud presents a serious threat to every organisation but unfortunately charities can be particularly vulnerable due to the high number of financial transactions they undertake. Fraud can manifest itself in many different forms and is constantly evolving - which is why we are urging everyone working with charities and not-for-profit organisations to join together and stop fraud against charities. Charity staff and trustees must stay alert to the risks and understand how to manage them."

**Diana Isiye, Head of Counter Fraud at Oxfam GB, said:**

"We know that charities can fall victim to fraud. Working together to encourage trustees and staff to start a conversation about fraud and share their experiences is a crucial way to ensure the sector is better equipped to meet the growing challenge posed by fraud."

**Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission, added:**

"Fraud can thrive in an environment of weak governance and poor financial management, so we are reminding charity staff and trustees, as part of Charity Fraud Awareness Week, to seek out the good practice guidance that is widely available and to review their charity's financial controls and



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procedures. We're keen to work closely with charities to improve their fraud resilience and hope that the new site will enable charities to access and learn from the best practice that's already out there."

Charity Fraud Awareness Week will conclude with the [second National Charity Fraud Conference](#) in London on 28 October, which will include panel discussions and presentations from Michelle Russell and Commission board member, Mike Ashley. Two regional events will follow in [December](#) and [January](#) for those not able to attend Friday's conference. The Fraud Advisory Panel and the Commission will also be producing a conference report, summarising issues and conclusions and reminding trustees to maintain a counter-fraud focus.

If you'd like to get involved and help spread the word, a [supporter's pack](#) is available and you can follow #CharityFraud on Twitter for live updates.

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#### **Notes to editors**

1. The [Fraud Advisory Panel](#) is the respected, influential and independent voice of the fraud-fighting community. It champions anti-fraud best practice and works to improve fraud awareness, understanding and resilience. The Panel is a registered charity. It was established in 1998 by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) which continues to provide valuable support.
2. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
3. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
4. Details of how the Commission reports on its regulatory work can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

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