




2026

# UK GIVING REPORT

## The state of the nation's giving

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation





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Front cover images: Tapestry Care, Deaf Academy and Toynbee Hall



"Generosity has become increasingly fragile over the past ten years. But, with collaborative action, we can breathe new life into our culture of giving."

**Mark Greer**

Managing Director, Charities Aid Foundation

Generosity in the UK has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade. Where it seems that giving was once a deeply embedded cultural norm, it has now become increasingly conditional, selective, and fragile. This shift is not necessarily about a loss of compassion from the public, but rather a change in assumptions about the act of giving. People find themselves weighing the decision to donate against rising living costs amid a mounting sense of scepticism in society.

Charities can no longer depend solely on habitual generosity or goodwill from the public. Instead, they must work harder than ever to earn the attention, trust, and commitment of potential donors. Over the last ten years, we have lost six million donors and are now at a point where we have the same number of people donating as not donating. Our population is split, not on what cause to support, but on the very act of giving.

In recent years we have talked about the unsustainable nature of charities becoming increasingly reliant on a shrinking group of dedicated donors who continue to give more. Their continued support ensured that the total amount donated kept rising. However, this trend has now begun to bite with this year's research finding that for the first time in five years, the total amount given to charities by the public has fallen.

It's clear that households as well as charities continue to feel squeezed. Rising costs persist, accompanied by an increased demand for the vital services provided by charities and social purpose organisations. There are reasons for optimism. Individuals are most engaged and supportive of charities when they hear stories of impact from their peers or experience the benefits of these organisations first-hand. And encouragingly, more than half of donors are motivated by a desire to be part of something greater than themselves.

We need a collaborative effort from government, charities and individuals to revive the culture of giving across the country. The Government is well-positioned to play an important role and policy action has the potential to unlock greater giving.

Through giving time or support, individuals can feel more connected to the communities they are a part of and build a shared sense of belonging.

With the required attention, actions and collaboration, we can breathe new life into our culture of giving and build a connected, resilient and brighter society.

# Key findings

## In 2025:

**The British public donated an estimated £14 billion.**

This is a decline from £15.4 billion in 2024 and is the first decrease in total giving since 2021. The decrease is driven by lower average donations in 2025 (£65, down from £72 in 2024).

**Direct debit and standing order remain the most popular ways to give.**

Around a fifth of all donations are made by direct debit or standing order, although an estimated 2.8 million people cancelled one of these regular donations in 2025. Nearly a third of donors are still giving in cash.

**One in five people say they cannot afford to give to charity.**

Lack of affordability is the main reason people do not donate, and is common across all demographics. Among those who did not donate, 28% overall suggested they were not interested in charities — rising to half (49%) of those who are higher and additional rate taxpayers.

## Over the last 10 years:

**There are six million fewer donors compared to 10 years ago.**

Since 2016, the number of charity supporters has dropped by an estimated six million people. The decline was steepest during the pandemic, with a cumulative loss of nearly four million donors throughout 2020 and 2021.

**The decline in donors has cost charities an estimated £12.4 billion.**

If the public had continued to give each year at the same rate as they did in 2016, an estimated £12.4 billion more would have gone to charities. This is on par with a year's worth of giving.

**A drop in donors to overseas aid means total donations to the cause have declined in real terms.**

Meanwhile, donations to charities supporting older people, children and young people, and people with disabilities, have outstripped inflation. This has been driven by larger value donations, rather than more donors.



Image: Toynbee Hall

# A DECADE OF GIVING



# Donors in decline

## Six million

**fewer people give than 10 years ago.**

For the second year in a row, just 50% of people donated to charity in the past 12 months, and a fifth (21%) sponsored someone. In total, 55% of the public gave financial support to charities in 2025 through a combination of the two.

Over the past decade, the number of charity supporters has declined significantly. In 2016, an estimated 37 million adults donated or sponsored someone (equating to 69% of adults). But, by 2025, this had declined to around 31 million to (55% of adults) — a drop of around six million people. These calculations take account of the increase in population size over that time period.

A particularly steep drop occurred during the pandemic, when there was a cumulative loss of nearly four million donors throughout 2020 and 2021, which was followed by a (much smaller) bounce back during 2022 of around 1.4 million donors.

Although there was some variation across the decade, since 2016 the UK has lost on average around 600,000 donors per year.

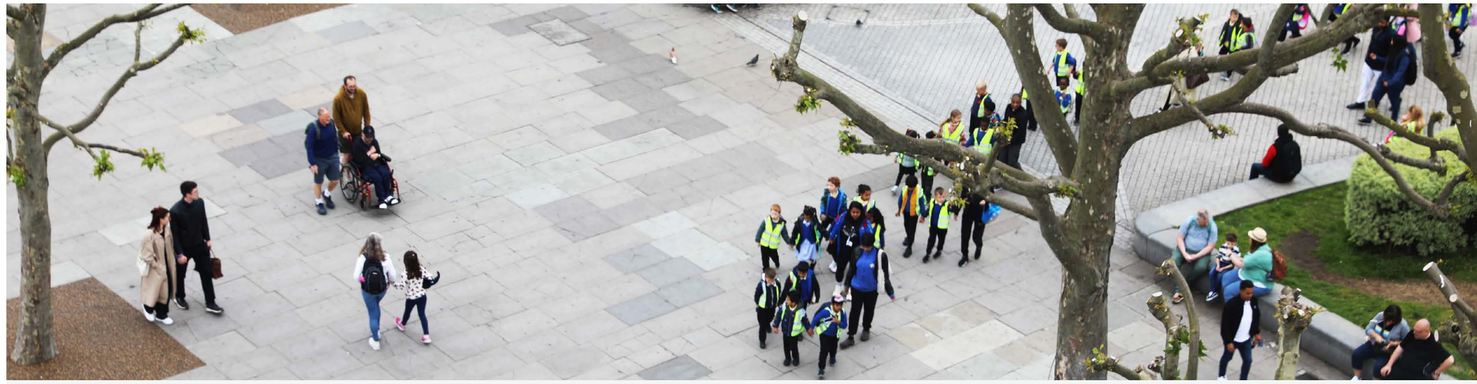
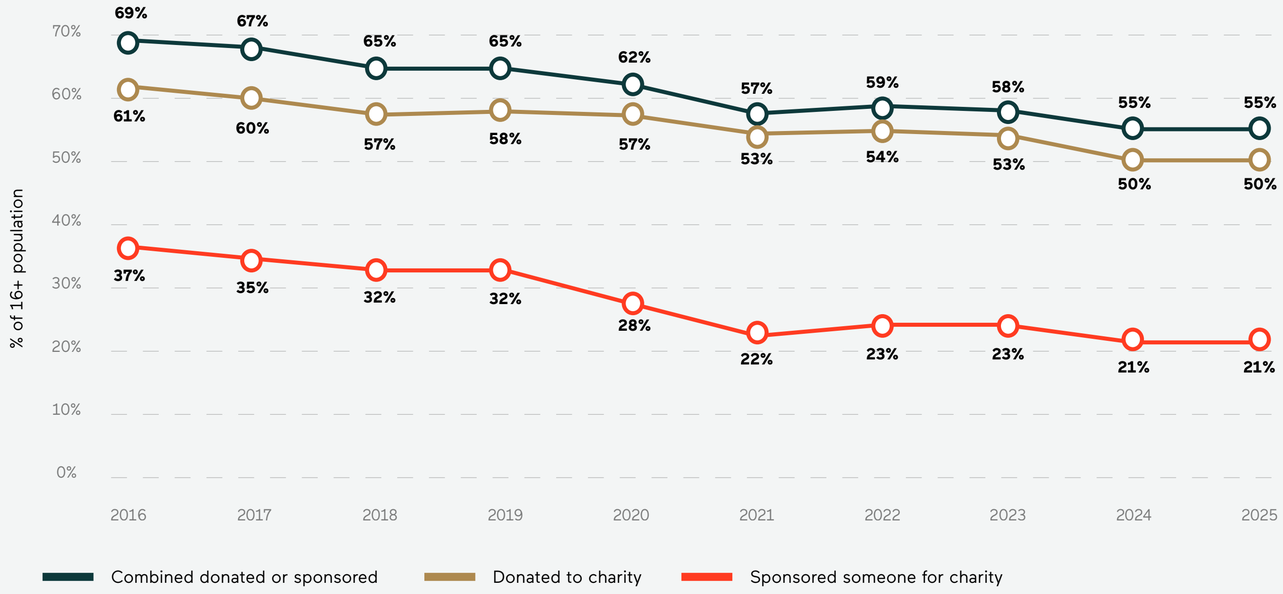


**Figure 1.** Proportion of people who donated or sponsored someone in the past 12 months.




Base: All respondents. 2016, N=8,137; 2017, N=12,211; 2018, N=13,277; 2019, N=13,499; 2020, N=13,406; 2021, N=13,575; 2022, N=13,140; 2023, N= 13,164; 2024, N=13,459; 2025, N=12,913.

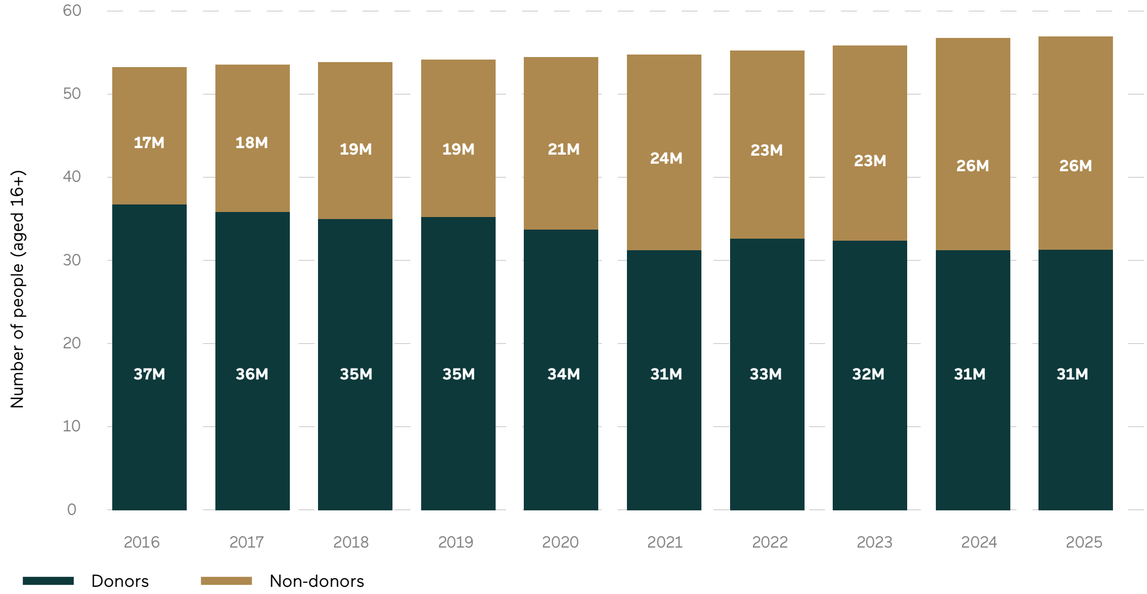



## Fewer donors means that the sector has missed out on billions.

Since 2016, the British public has donated an estimated £119 billion to charity. If the public had continued to give each year at the same rate as they did in 2016, charities could have received an estimated £12.4 billion more than they did over that timeframe. This is equivalent to around one year's worth of recorded giving over the period.

In 2016, 39% of people donated in any given month, and the average (mean) monthly donation value was £39. Our calculation assumes that this £39 had an inflationary uplift each year between 2016 and 2025, and that the proportion of people donating remained constant over the period (in other words, that it did not decline).

**Figure 2.** Estimate of the number of donors/sponsors and non-donors/sponsors.




The total number of people each year reflects the UK population aged 16+, taken from ONS mid-year estimates.
The base for estimates is all of those surveyed for UK Giving each year, c. 12,000 per annum.



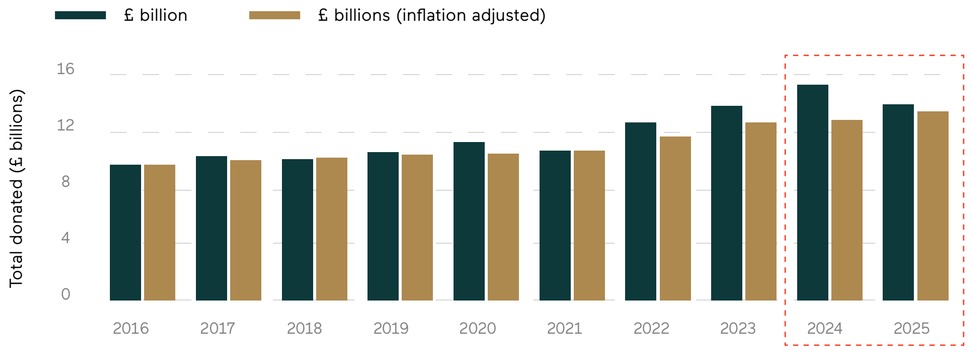
**Philippa Cornish**
Client Relations Director,
Charities Aid Foundation

"The decline in charitable donors over the past decade is stark. Giving is no longer a habit in this country. Yet charities continue to face rising demand for their services coupled with increased costs, meaning they are having to work harder than ever, just to stand still."

## Giving has broadly kept up with inflation over the last decade.

Giving has broadly kept up with inflation because, although fewer people give, the average amount given by those who donate has increased over time.

**Figure 3.** Total amount donated each year in £ billions.




Since 2024, we asked respondents to report their charitable giving in a new way, which likely led to more accurate respondent recall of their donation behaviour over the past month. This is probably the cause for the uplift seen in 2024.

Base: All donors per year, c. 4,000 per annum. Calculations were made using the Bank of England inflation calculator.



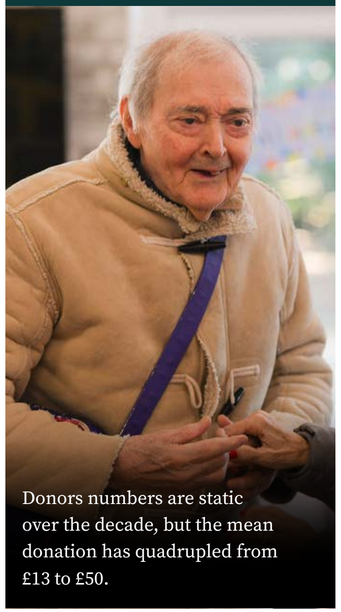
**Alison Taylor**
CEO, CAF Bank and CAF Financial Solutions Limited

"Being financially and operationally fit is a core component to resilience. It allows charities to manage the challenges that can come from a changeable income.

It is essential that charities, no matter their size, have access to specialist financial services, such as investment funds and deposit platforms, that allow them to protect the value of savings against inflation and grow their finances to ensure they're able to do more of their crucial work."

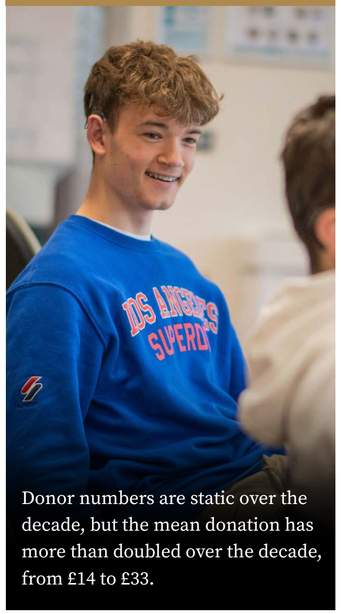
## Donations to some causes have beaten inflation since 2016.

### Older people



Donors numbers are static over the decade, but the mean donation has quadrupled from £13 to £50.

### Children and young people



Donor numbers are static over the decade, but the mean donation has more than doubled over the decade, from £14 to £33.

### People with disabilities



Donor numbers declined slightly since covid but the mean donation has tripled over the decade, from £13 to £36.

## A drop in donors to overseas aid and disaster relief means the value of total donations to the cause has declined in real terms.

Fewer donors give to overseas aid and disaster relief than ten years ago (from 19% of donors in 2016, to 11% in 2025). In 2016, donations to overseas aid totalled an estimated £970 million. By 2025, this had fallen to an estimated £727 million — a significant decline in absolute terms, but a much larger decline when accounting for inflation.

# 2025 IN DETAIL



# Participation rates

**84%**

**of people engaged in civil society last year.**

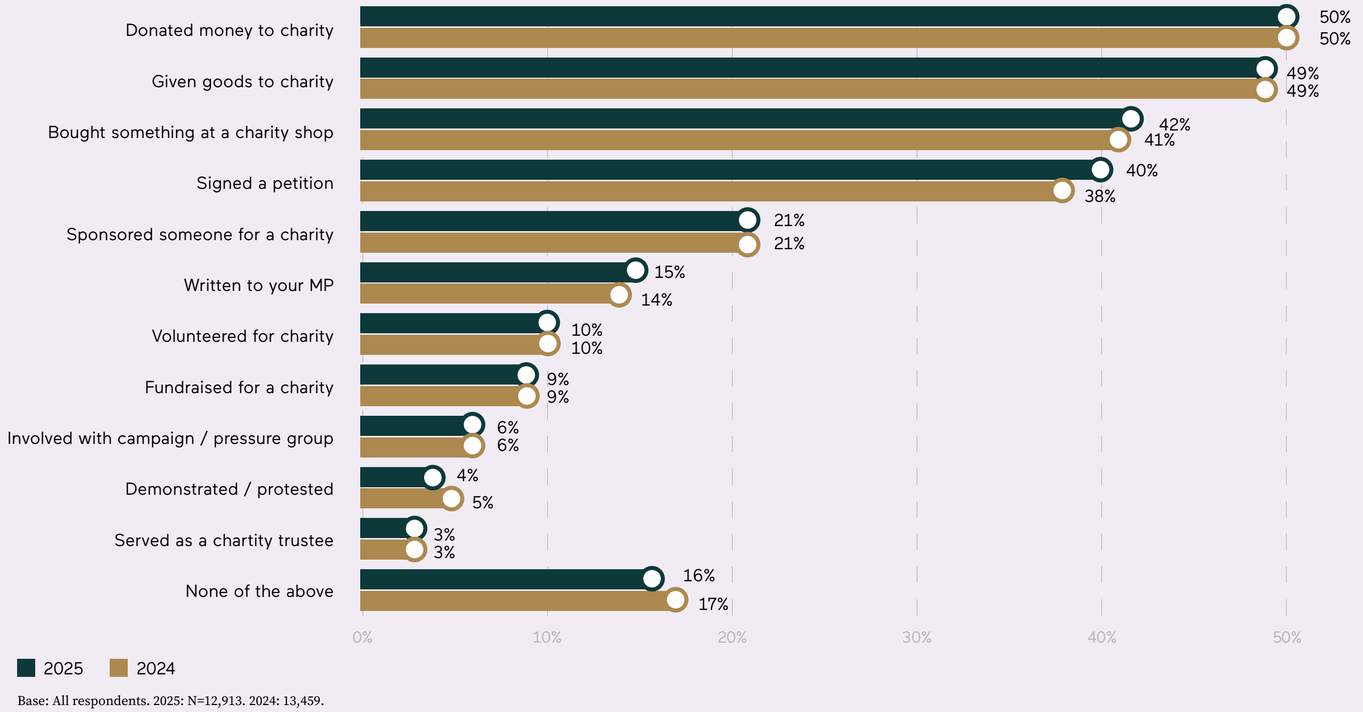
Most people engaged with civil society in the past 12 months, and the three most common actions were charity focused. On average, people do two to three things on the list and there is little variation by place. Those who volunteer for charity engage the most overall, doing nearly twice as many activities (four to five on average).

Women do more things on the list than men, and participation increases with age. So, 16- to 24-year olds do the fewest and the over 65s do the most.

From the list of activities, the over 65s are most likely to have donated goods to charity, while 16- to- 24 year olds are most likely to have bought something at a charity shop. The only activity where younger and older people take part at the same rate is volunteering, which is lowest among 35- to- 44 year olds.


Image: Deaf Academy

**Figure 4.** Proportion of people who engaged in charitable or civic activities in the past 12 months.




Base: All respondents. 2025: N=12,913. 2024: 13,459.



# £14BN

Estimated total donated by the public in 2025

## Donations are down ten percent since 2024.

The British public donated an estimated £14 billion in 2025, down from £15.4 billion in 2024. This is the first decrease in the total donated since 2021.

The number of people who donated or sponsored for charity remains at 55% — the same level as last year. However people are donating smaller amounts on average.

The average (mean) monthly donation was £65 in 2025, down from £72 in 2024. The typical (median) donation was £26, down slightly from £28 in 2024.

# Most donations are unplanned

In Figure 5, we break down the ways in which the £14 billion total was donated.

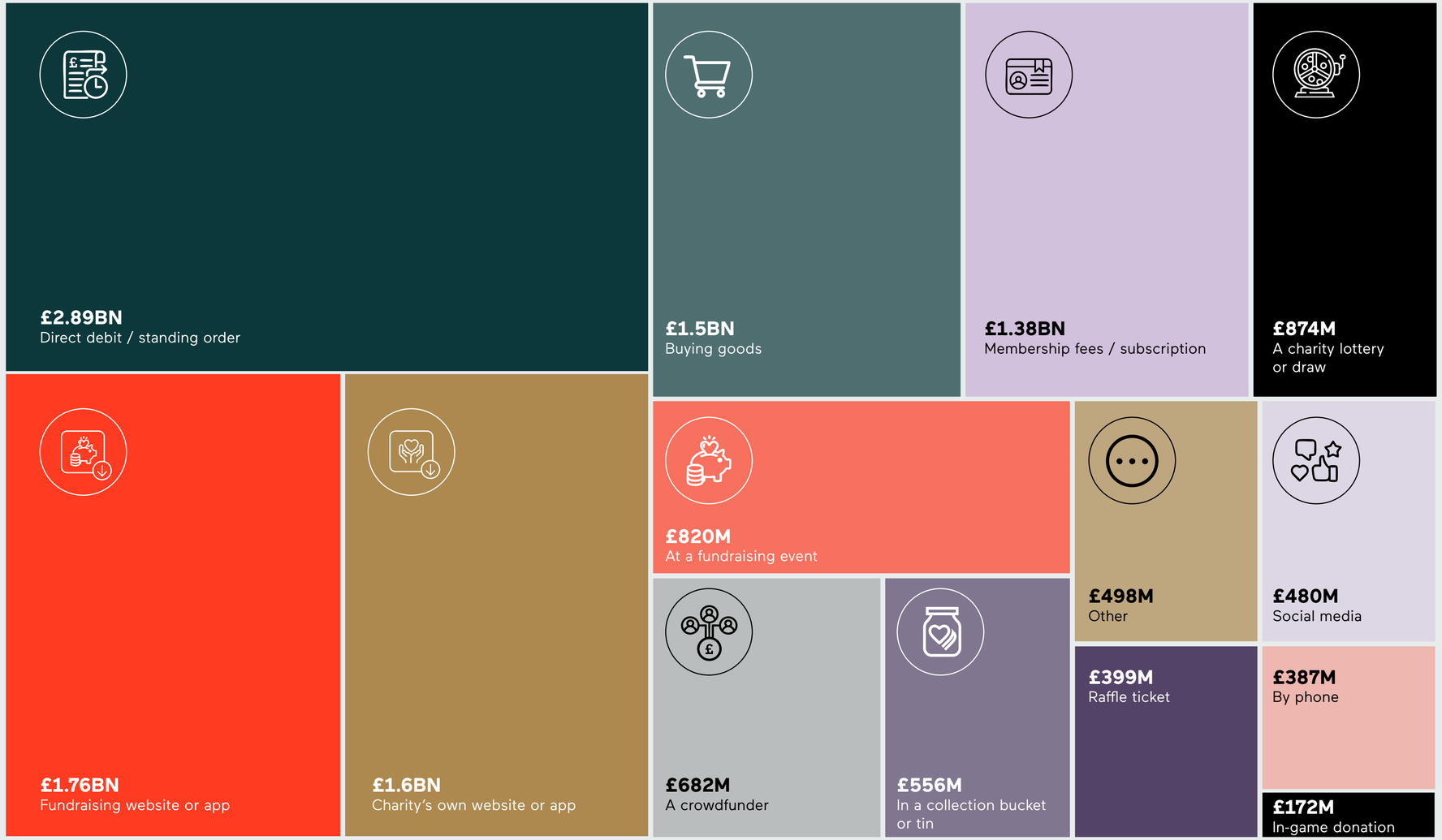
Over £4 billion in donations is planned or automatic – namely through direct debits, standing orders, membership fees and subscriptions. In any given month, 46% of donors give via direct debit or standing order.

The remaining two-thirds of the total value given is likely to be largely unplanned, for example, through a fundraising website, crowdfunding, on social media or in a collection bucket. As many as two in five (40%) donors said they normally only give to charity when directly asked or moved by an appeal.

**Approximately 2.8 million people** cancelled a regular donation last year.

**Around two-thirds of giving is unplanned,** with one in three donors still making gifts in cash.

**Figure 5.** Estimated total amount donated by each method.




Base: All respondents who donated in the past four weeks and reported their donation amount, N=3,936.



**Ashling Cashmore**
Head of Impact & Advisory, Charities Aid Foundation

"Donors who commit to a regular, unrestricted donation — whether that's via direct debit, subscriptions or payroll giving — are investing in charities' resilience. The benefit of regular giving is that it enables charities to plan, unlocking income for core costs and provides an opportunity to build deeper relationships with donors who may then go on to support other aspects of the charity's work."

## KEY INSIGHTS FOR CHARITIES

1. **Protect your regular givers:** invest in your stewardship to build the trust and loyalty for retention that will deliver greater returns in the long run.

2. **Continue to invest in fundraising capacity:** in this challenging environment, charities need the skills, systems, tools and resources to be able to maintain or grow giving.

3. **Build the resilience of your fundraising:** ensure that your fundraising is relevant, reflecting the public's concerns and offering meaningful opportunities to engage in your impact.




Image: Trussell

## THE CHARITY PERSPECTIVE:

Peter Hurst, Trustee and Treasurer at Swansea Foodbank, says the number of regular donors is dropping by a handful each month: "Older donors' lives are coming to an end or changing as they go into care. Other donors are putting their own families first during the cost-of-living crisis, which is perfectly understandable."

Regular giving is vital for Swansea Foodbank, providing core funding for running costs. However, Peter notes, "this is not the right economic environment for an increase in regular donations."

They have, however, seen a notable rise in one-off donations; their Christmas appeal raised over £12,000, a record amount. The charity has become more creative to raise funds, using social media and email newsletters to reach both personal and corporate donors. While supermarkets are still important for food donations, they now have food collection points in various workplaces, which today accounts for about 15% of food donations, compared to none 18 months ago. "We have to work both harder and smarter to fund our seven foodbanks."

# Giving by tax bracket

**Higher rate taxpayers are the most likely to donate — even more so than those paying the top rate of tax.**

Overall, 59% of basic rate taxpayers donated or sponsored in the last 12 months, compared to 68% of higher rate taxpayers (those with an income of roughly £50,000 or more).

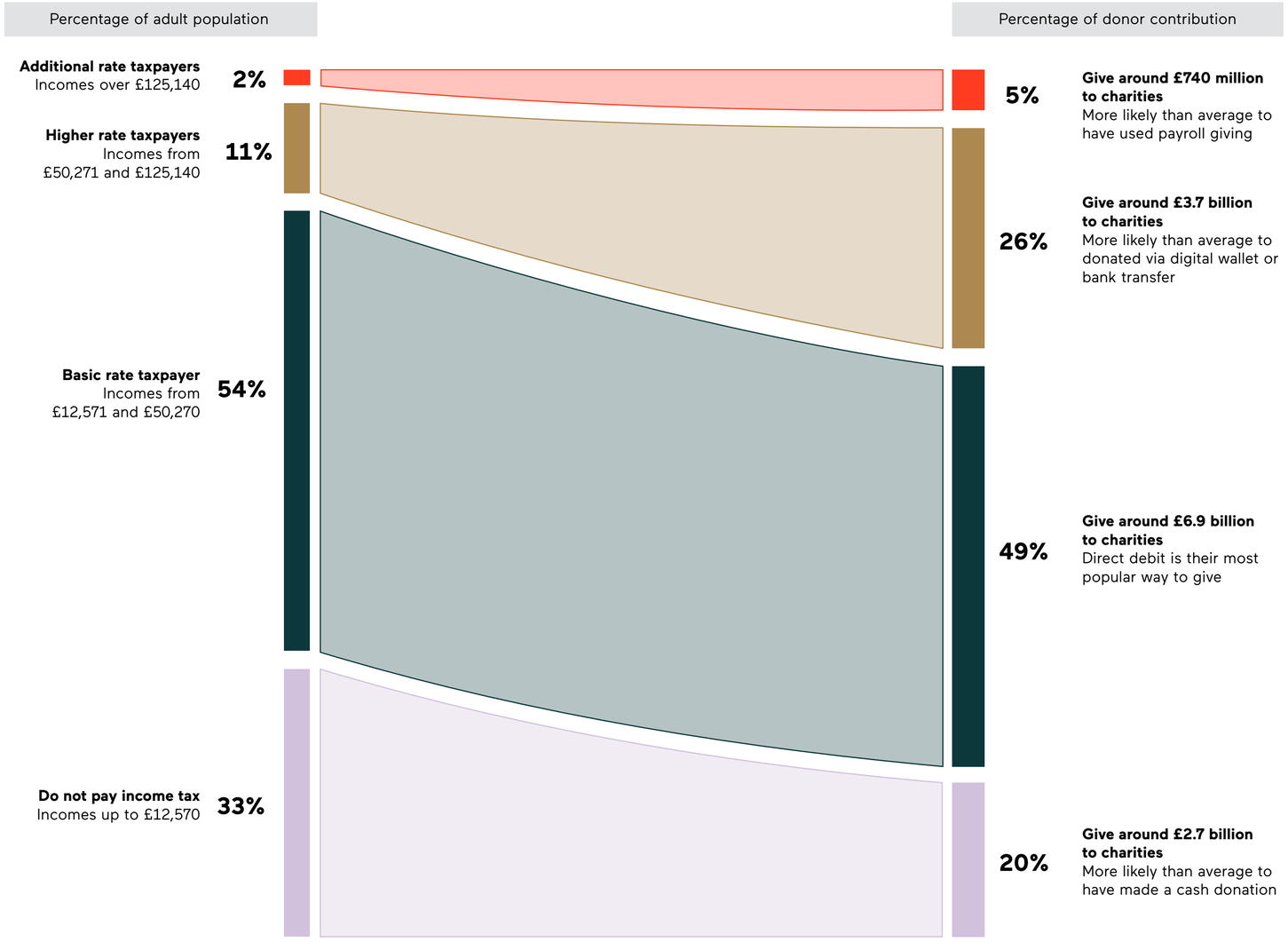
Despite incomes of at least £125,000+, additional rate taxpayers were no more likely to donate than those whose income is so low that they do not pay any tax at all (50% vs. 49% respectively).

In Figure 6, we have estimated the total amount donated by the people in each of these tax brackets.

Due to our research method (online public polling) we are unlikely to have captured individuals with high levels of wealth in our sample. The sums in Figure 6 are best thought of as representing the broader population. Previous research by CAF found that high-net-worth individuals (those with investable assets of over £1 million) are donating around £8 billion a year in addition to the £14 billion highlighted in this report.


Image: MK Snap

**Figure 6.** Estimated total donated per donor tax bracket.




Income tax population-level statistics are taken from HMRC. While Scottish tax bands are accounted for in the population statistics, due to low base sizes, we have used donation behaviour data collected for tax bands in England, Wales and Scotland when estimating the amounts donated by each tax band. We then extrapolated this to the UK as a whole because analysis of the data collected in Scotland indicates the pattern of giving by Scottish tax band is in line with that seen elsewhere across the UK.

# Using Gift Aid

## General awareness of Gift Aid is high and most donors use it at least some of the time.

Nine in ten donors (89%) are familiar with Gift Aid. While most (75%) are using it at least sometimes, only half (51%) are using it for every donation. Some donors are not using it because they are ineligible, while other barriers to use are detailed on page 15 of this report.

Usage of Gift Aid jumps among 35- to- 54 year old donors (60%). Donors aged 16–34, who in many cases will be newer to the workforce or still in education, are the least likely to use it (37%).



**Mark Greer**
Managing Director,
Charities Aid Foundation

"As the number of people donating falls, and charities are under increasing strain, it's important that more people understand the tax incentives available when giving to charity. With more people expected to enter higher tax brackets, knowing this relief is on offer to them could encourage higher rate taxpayers to consider donating more, unlocking additional funds for these crucial services."

## Many higher and additional rate taxpayers are missing out on the full benefits of Gift Aid.

As well as claiming Gift Aid for the charity to receive, higher and additional rate taxpayers who donated to charity in the previous year can claim for personal tax relief in their tax return. The difference between their tax rate and the basic rate of tax on the value of their donations can either be claimed as personal tax relief or donated to charity.

Two-thirds (69%) of higher and additional rate taxpayers always claim Gift Aid when making donations, ensuring the charity can claim an additional 25% of the value of the donation. However, only a minority are making the most of the benefits on offer:

**46%** Half are unaware they can claim back money on the taxes they have paid on their charitable donations.

**27%** Only a quarter claim the tax back, with one in three donating the extra money to charity.

**24%** A further quarter are aware of the incentives but do not claim anything back, often due to not keeping a record of their donations.

Base: All higher rate and additional rate taxpayers, N=529.

GIFT AID

**How the tax relief process works for higher and additional rate taxpayers.**

Make a donation (for example, £1,000)

+

Tick the Gift Aid box

+

Include charitable donations in Self Assessment and claim tax back

| Donate tax relief to charity | Claim personal tax relief |
|---|---|
| Donation 'costs' £1,000 | Donation 'costs' £750 for higher rate taxpayer or £687.50 for additional rate taxpayer |
| Charity receives upwards of £1,500 | Charity receives £1,250 |

Note: In practice, to make tax-effective donations to charities, donors are likely to increase their original donation to account for the personal tax relief they will receive at a later date. Also, if making a further donation to charity after receiving tax relief, donors could again claim Gift Aid and higher rate relief.

**Gift Aid was worth**

# £1.7 billion

**to charities in 2025, but an estimated £560 million is left unclaimed each year. [1]**

## Why Gift Aid matters

Gift Aid represents a major opportunity for charities of all sizes — yet many organisations still miss out. UK data shows that tens of thousands of charities do not claim Gift Aid at all, and smaller organisations are disproportionately likely to miss potential income. Improving how charities communicate and promote Gift Aid can help close this gap and ensure more funding reaches the causes that need it.

## Explaining it to donors

Charities can strengthen their Gift Aid messaging by keeping explanations clear, friendly, and focused on impact. Donors respond best to simple language that highlights how Gift Aid helps their support go further — for example, reminding them that it effectively adds 25% to their donation at no extra cost. Clear reassurance also matters. Many supporters worry about complexity, sharing their details, or accidentally owing money later, so addressing these concerns up front can significantly increase uptake.

Making Gift Aid a routine part of every giving moment, from donation pages to thank-you emails and in-person interactions, can meaningfully increase participation. National moments like Gift Aid Awareness Day also offer easy opportunities to reinforce the message and tap into wider public attention.

[1] Charity Finance Group, October 2025

## How charities can claim Gift Aid

To claim Gift Aid, your charity must be registered with HMRC and hold valid Gift Aid declarations for every eligible donation. Claims are submitted online through HMRC's service and must be supported by accurate records of donations and donor information. Consistent, well-managed processes mean you can maximise Gift Aid income and reduce the risk of missed claims.

## Barriers to donors using Gift Aid

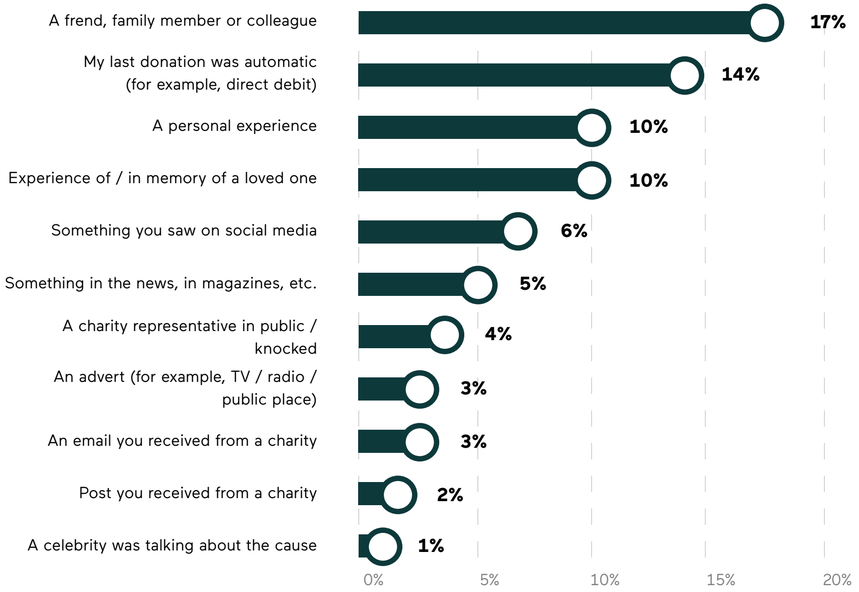
Donors told us in their own words why they don't always use Gift Aid.



# Most donations are not the result of a charity prompt.

Donations are most frequently prompted by conversations, shared experiences and recommendations from people we know, while the underlying motivations are closely tied to emotion and social connection. An email from a charity is around five times less likely to prompt a donation than word-of-mouth from a friend or family member.

**Figure 7.** Did any of the following prompt your last donation?




Don't know (4%), Other (4%) and none of these (18%) are not shown on the chart.
Base: All respondents who donated or sponsored in the past 12 months, N=7,247.

## Motivations for donating

**Figure 8.** Reasons for donating in the last 12 months.

| | |
|---|---|
| **78%** | **HAD AN EMOTIONAL REASON** (mentioned at least one) |
| 58% | I care about the cause |
| 38% | I want to help people less fortunate than me |
| 36% | I trust the organisations I donate to |
| 19% | It made me feel good |
| **53%** | **FELT PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER** (mentioned at least one) |
| 34% | I felt my donation would make a difference |
| 27% | I wanted to support my local community |
| 9% | My religion encourages giving |
| **35%** | **HAD A PERSONAL REASON** (mentioned at least one) |
| 24% | Because of the experience of a loved one, or in memory of a loved one |
| 20% | Because of a personal experience |
| **32%** | **GAVE A REASON RELATED TO DUTY** (mentioned at least one) |
| 24% | It's our duty to give to charity if we can |
| 10% | To set an example for others (for example, my children, grandchildren) |
| 6% | I don't really think about it, it's just expected that people will donate |
| **22%** | **WERE INSPIRED TO DONATE** (mentioned at least one) |
| 12% | I was impressed by the fundraising activity that prompted me to donate |
| 12% | I was inspired by news coverage (for example, of a natural disaster) |

Base: All donors, N=7,247; 'Other' (3%), 'Don't know' (2%), and 'None of these' (2%) answers not shown.

CASE STUDY

## Tapping into the news agenda



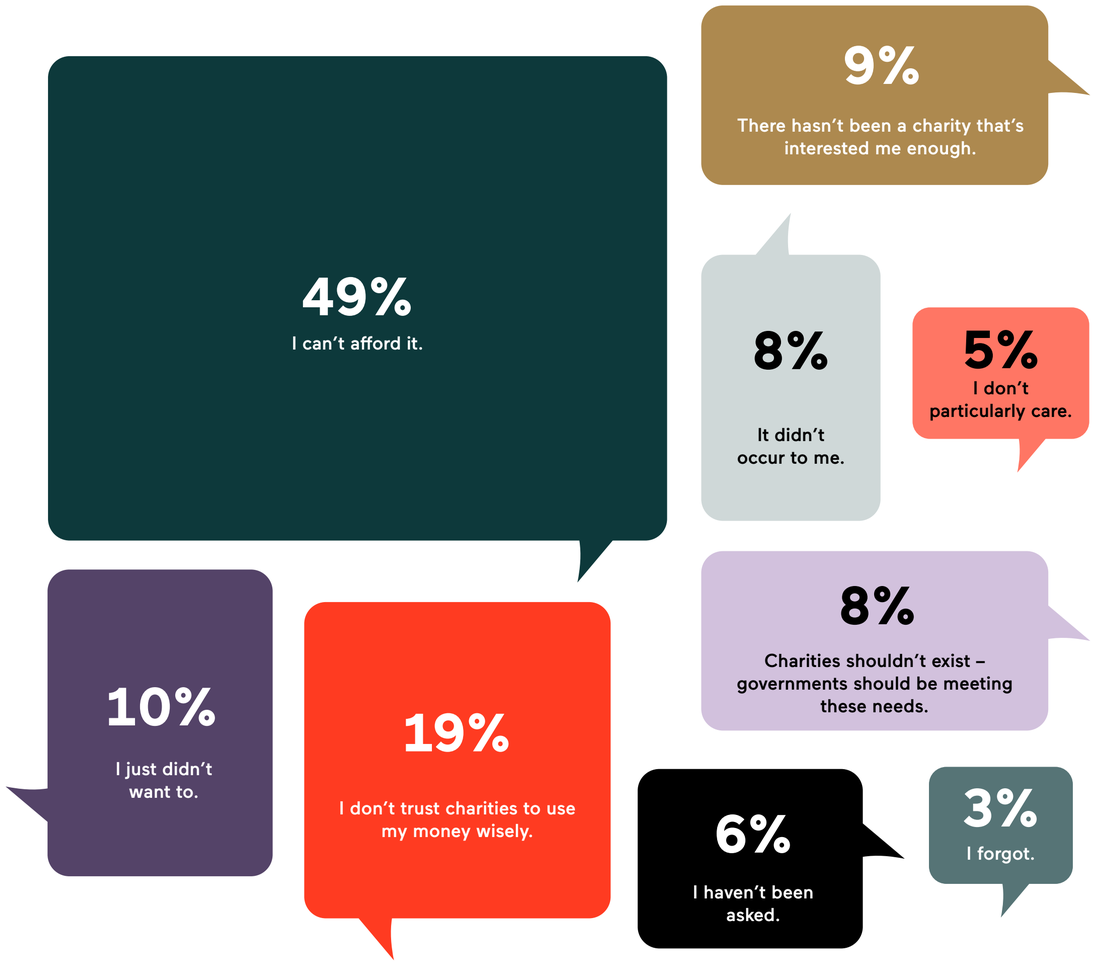
Organisations of all sizes have shown how being present in the news cycle can help their fundraising efforts. Forget Me Not Children's Hospice launched an urgent appeal in late 2024, needing £1m to cover a funding gap and keep vital services going.

Linking their needs to a wider story around hospice funding led to the appeal appearing across numerous local and national news outlets, including the BBC. Powered through a collective response amongst the community and businesses in West Yorkshire, they surpassed their £1m target.

Image: Forget Me Not Children's Hospice

## More people in 2025 said they didn't give because they could not afford it.

**Figure 9.** Main reasons for not donating to charity in the last 12 months.




Base: All respondents who did not donate in the past 12 months, N=5,666. The graphic does not show don't know (9%), other (5%), and prefer not to say (6%) answers.


Image: Milton Keynes YMCA

Across all age groups, the main reason given for not donating continues to be lack of affordability, up from 44% of non-donors in 2024 to 49% in 2025. This equates to around one in five (22%) people in the UK.

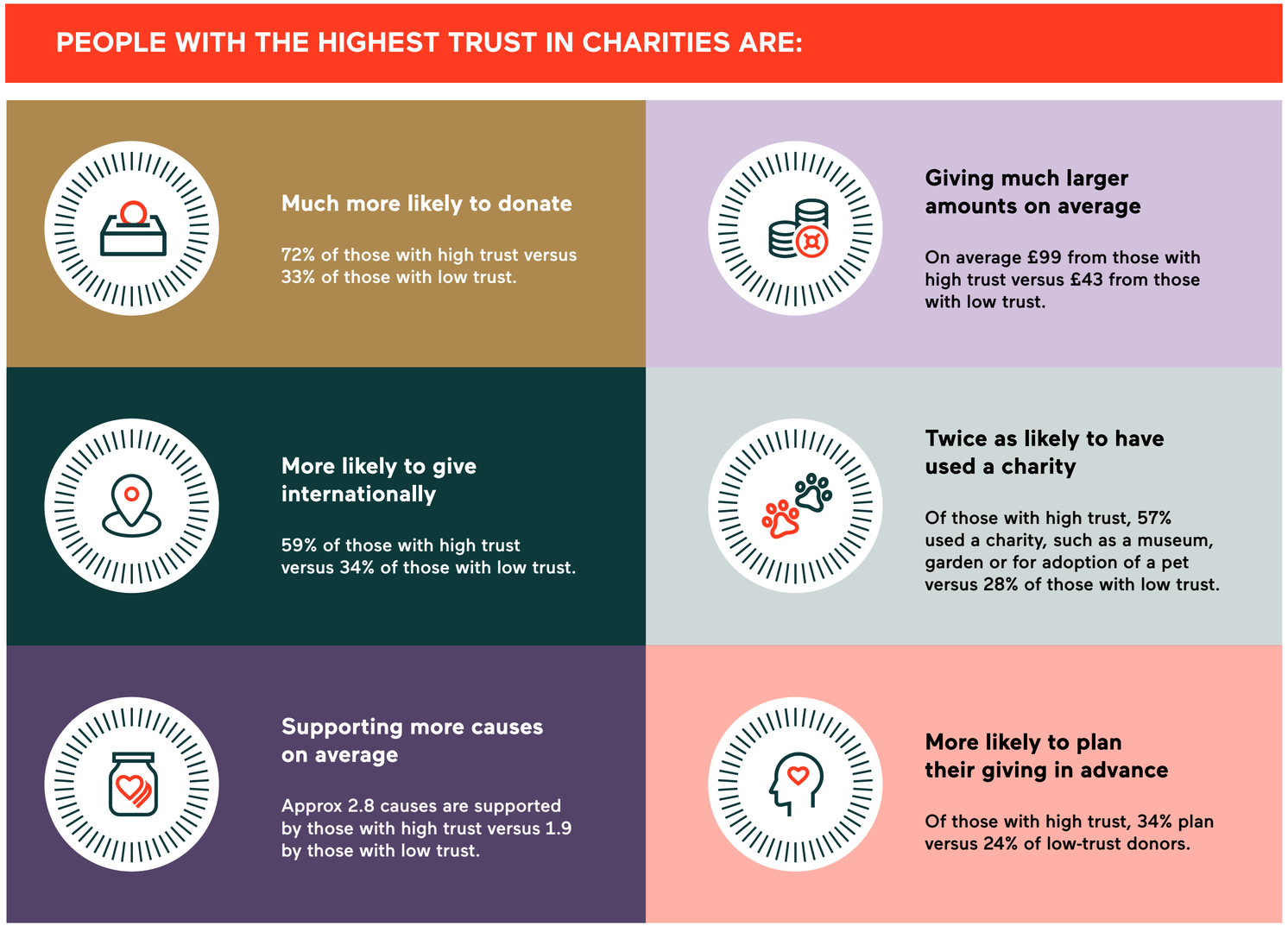
A lack of affordability was the top reason even among higher rate and additional rate taxpayers who did not donate, although they were much less likely than others to say this was why they had not given. Instead, these groups were much more likely than average to say that it did not occur to them to donate, they do not particularly care about charity, they forgot, or they just did not want to. They were also twice as likely to say a charity has not interested them enough to make them donate.



**Nearly 1 in 3 non-donors**

gave a reason that indicated they are not engaged with or interested in charities – and this was even higher for young people and those living in London.

**Figure 10.** How trust affects giving behaviours.




High-trust respondents said that they think most charities are 'very trustworthy'. Low-trust respondents said they think most charities are 'not very' or 'not at all' trustworthy.
Base: Lower trust in charities, N=2,421; higher trust in charities, N=1,730.

## Three quarters of people think charities are trustworthy.

Trust in charities remains stable since 2024 (75% of people think charities are at least 'somewhat trustworthy'). People who trust charities are much more likely to donate and, on average, they give significantly more. However, it should be said that many of those who have lower levels of trust do still give to charity.

## People with lower trust in charities are:

- **More likely to be financially vulnerable.** They are more likely to be low-income, and 54% expect their household's financial situation to get worse in the next 12 months (compared to 35% of those who trust charities).
- **Less positive about their neighbourhood.** They have much lower levels of satisfaction with their local area, and they feel a less strong sense of belonging to their communities compared to those with high trust in charities. They are less involved in their communities (for example, through attending local events or participating in local clubs).
- **Less likely to interact with charities.** They are less likely to have used a charity in the past year (either themselves or someone in their household). This also goes for support from charities (for example, counselling, medical care, debt advice) as well as for leisure and cultural activities (for example, visiting a museum, garden, or arts venue).

## THE CHARITY PERSPECTIVE:

Kangaroos is a hyperlocal charity in Mid-Sussex, offering year-round clubs and trips for people with learning disabilities. The charity currently serves 250 families, but demand is high, with 150 on their waiting list. Alongside rising costs and tougher competition for grant funding, building a base of regular donors is challenging as people review their expenditure.

CEO Emma Hunt notes that most unrestricted funding comes from those with lived experience or personal connections to the cause, "People are thinking they'd love to donate, but can't give to everyone so where do they go? They think about the people they know and their experiences."

Direct engagement, storytelling, and demonstrating impact are vital for maintaining support. Community fundraising events have proven effective and, this year, Kangaroos will hold a swim marathon, a walk and a "kangaroo trail" to boost local involvement and income.

Ultimately, Emma finds that the community are there when Kangaroos need them, "People want to come together around a thing, a project, a cause. When we lost a lot of funding, our community rallied and raised lots of money for us."



Image: Kangaroos

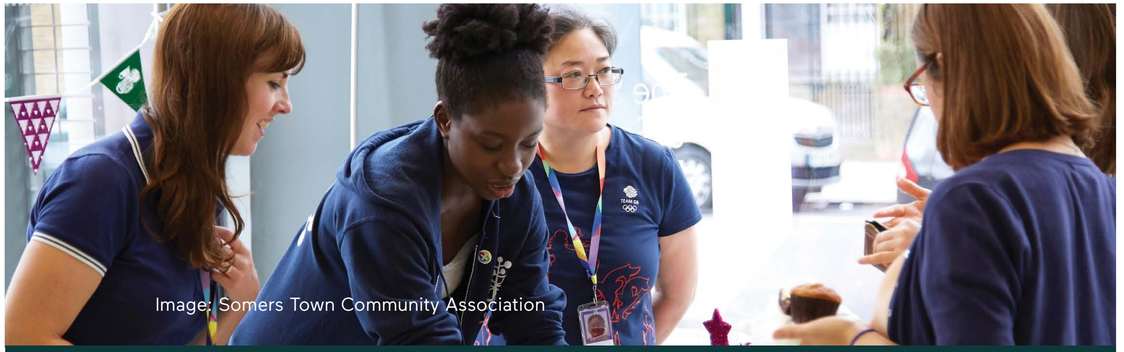


Image: Somers Town Community Association

## KEY INSIGHTS FOR CHARITIES

1. **Harness news and social media to amplify your voice:** look for ways to link your services to the news agenda and offer your expert view on today's challenges.

2. **Show impact simply and clearly:** tangible outcomes reassure donors and increase confidence to give.

3. **Consider the influence of existing supporters:** equip donors to become advocates, storytellers and ambassadors in their own right.

4. **Cherish your donors:** show how much they mean to you in every interaction, appeal and report. Create meaningful experiences with your charity that strengthen trust.

5. **Recognise financial anxiety:** demonstrate how low value gifts are appreciated and make a difference.

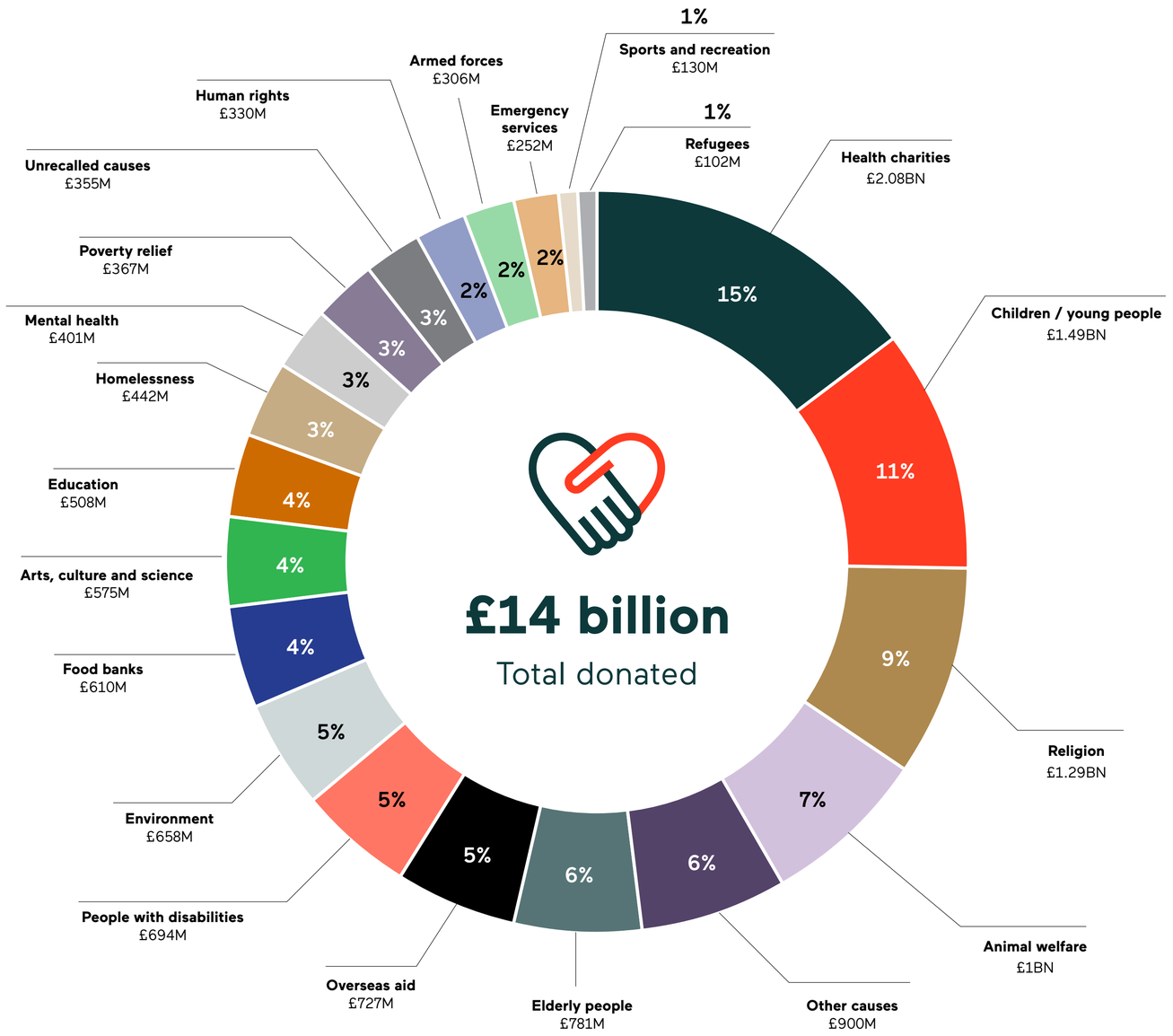
# The £14 billion total broken down by cause area

In Figure 11 we break down the cause areas to which the £14 billion was donated.

Health charities and children's charities continued to receive the most money in total, although in both cases they received a little less than in 2024.

The least popular causes were refugees, along with sports and recreation — each supported by 1% of donors in 2025.

**Figure 11.** Total amount donated by cause.




Base: All respondents who donated in the past four weeks and reported their donation amount, N=3,936.

## Health charities have the broadest support, but the biggest donations go to religious causes.

Health charities enjoy the broadest support, with more than two in five (43%) donors supporting with gifts of money and 17% of volunteers supporting with their time.

Children and young people, along with animal welfare, are the next most popular causes — each supported by 25% of donors. Children and young people is also the most popular cause to volunteer for (representing 22% of volunteers).

Although only 8% of donors give to religious causes, their donations are much larger than average (£90).

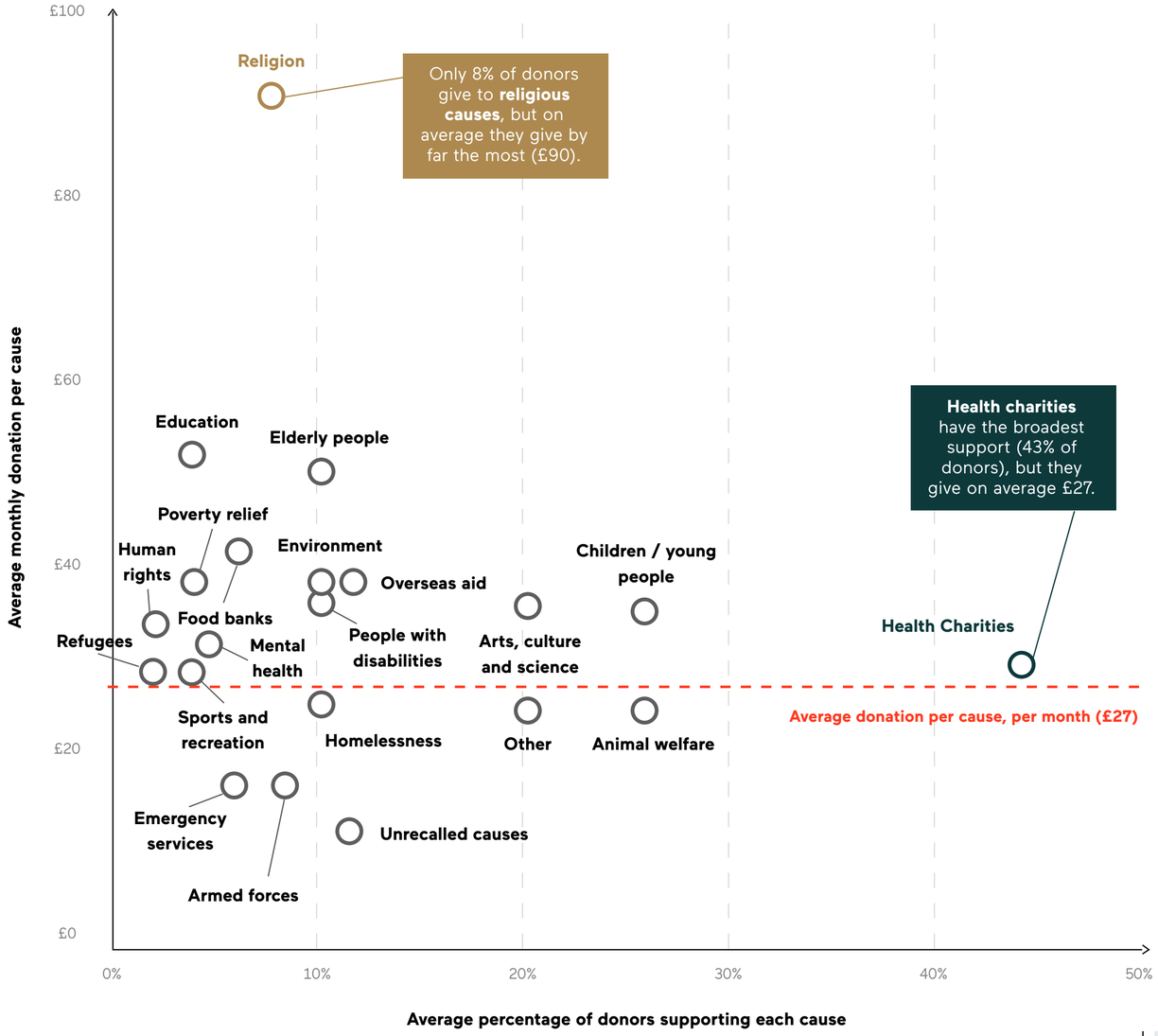
**Environmental causes more likely to be supported by Londoners.**

**Religious donors are most likely to be found in Northern Ireland and the East of England.**

**Donors in the South West are more likely than average to support arts, culture, heritage or science.**

Donors give on average to 2.4 causes per month. Figure 12 shows the average amount donated per cause, per month, and compares this to the percentage of donors who donated to each cause.

**Figure 12.** Donation volume and value in the last 12 months, shown by cause area.





## National charities have the broadest support.

Three quarters (75%) of donors said they gave at least some of their donations to national charities in the past 12 months, with a third (35%) saying they made all, or most, of their donations to these causes.

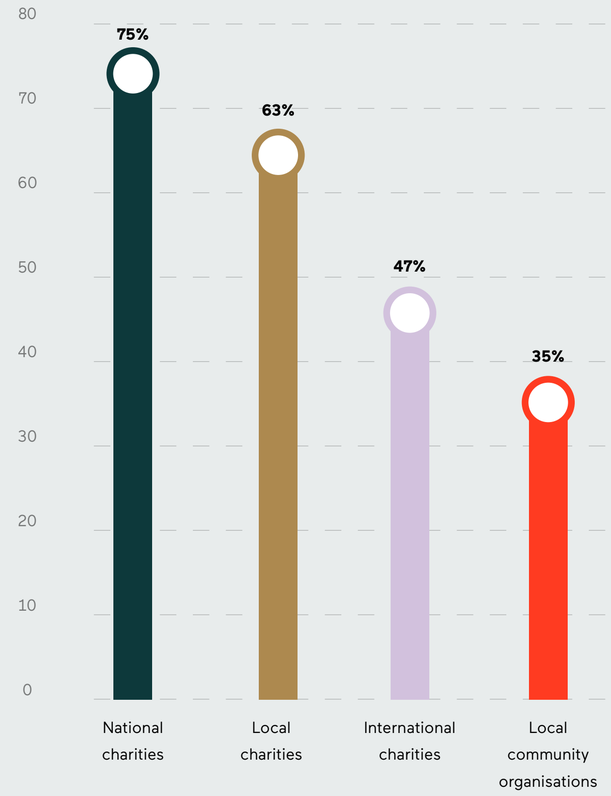
Almost as many donors gave to either a local charity or a local community organisation, such as a sports club, Parent Teacher Association or local fête group. In total, 69% of donors gave to at least one of these types of charity, and most of this group gave to both types of organisation. Parents of children aged under 18 were the most likely to give to local community organisations, often the smallest type of charity with a hyperlocal focus.

Just under a third (29%) of donors gave money to an emergency charity appeal in 2025, most commonly an international appeal (15% of donors), or a local appeal (12% of donors). Around one in 10 (9%) donors gave to a Christmas appeal.

29% of donors responded to an **emergency appeal** in 2025.

**Parents of under 18s** are the most likely to donate to local community organisations.

**Figure 13.** Percentage of donors who gave at least some of their donations to each charity type.




'International charities' is a net of respondents who answered yes to donating to either 'An internationally-registered charity working elsewhere in the world' and/or 'Charities that are registered in the UK but that have an international focus'.

Base: All who donated or sponsored in the past 12 months, N=7,247.

### THE SECTOR BODY PERSPECTIVE:

"Fundraising in the UK will continue to be increasingly shaped by digital innovation and a shift towards efficiency, personalisation and diversification over the next decade. It must be purpose-led, with senior leaders committed to supporting fundraising through multi-year thinking, bold investment and ambition.

AI continues to offer significant opportunities for improving communications and reducing costs — though I acknowledge concerns around ethics and data-privacy remain barriers to adoption, particularly for smaller charities. However, used correctly, I think there is strong potential for it to enhance supporter engagement and streamline fundraising operations.

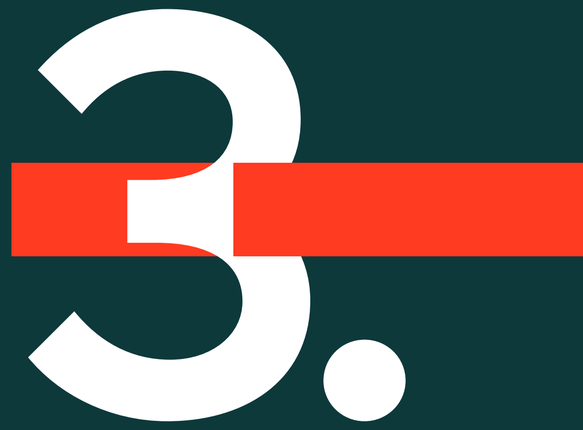
The use of data-driven decision-making is also growing, helping charities better understand donor behaviour and increase long-term value — leading to longer-term sustainability for charities and their service users. Regular giving is crucial to increasing this understanding.

Ultimately, a blend of purpose-led fundraising, understanding what makes a great fundraising organisation, and diversified income streams could help charities remain resilient despite economic pressures."

**Katie Docherty**, Chief Executive, Chartered Institute of Fundraising (CIOF)


Image: CIOF

# OUR CALLS TO POLICYMAKERS



# We are calling on Government to renew our culture of giving

For over 100 years, the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) has worked at the centre of the giving world, helping to understand and shape the environment for charitable giving and inform national conversations about the future of charitable giving and philanthropy.

This report's findings underline our longstanding call on the Government to work with our sector to drive a renewed culture of giving in the UK.

Since the last UK Giving report, there have been some steps in the right direction. We welcome the setting up of the Office for the Impact Economy, which we hope will provide a focus for government work with the sector alongside the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Government is also considering recommendations developed by the Treasury-appointed Social Impact Investment Advisory Group (SIIAG) on how to boost charitable giving and philanthropy. CAF played a key role in the SIIAG.



**Mark Greer**
Managing Director,
Charities Aid Foundation

"There has been significant and welcome progress in reinvigorating the UK's culture of giving. The Government should now seek to build on this foundation and deliver changes that will reverse the deeply concerning decline in giving we have seen over the last decade."

## Our calls to policymakers:

### Encourage more people to give.

The Government should introduce policy changes that encourage more people to give, and for those who are able to, to give more. They can do this by ensuring charitable giving is included in wealth advice, encouraging the use of payroll giving, increasing the uptake of higher-rate relief on Gift Aid donations, and by exploring more match-funding opportunities for donors.

### Improve local philanthropy infrastructure to support charities.

The Government should invest in capacity for fundraising and giving infrastructure, to attract donations into places that need it most. This includes supporting place-based giving schemes (such as Made in Stoke). Better capacity and infrastructure to fundraise will unlock more giving at the local level and better administration of donations.

As government works on its place-based agenda, including through programmes, such as Pride in Place, it should partner with charities, social purpose organisations and the philanthropy sector to strengthen local philanthropic and charitable giving infrastructure.

### Modernise Gift Aid.

The Government should take steps to make sure Gift Aid is easy for donors and charities to understand and use, including digitising the process. It should also explore opportunities for simplification, such as considering streamlining and digitising the process of adding Gift Aid to donated goods, and simplifying the rules so that it can be applied to entrance fees without a surcharge.

# About the research

CAF has been producing the UK Giving report since 2004 and has been tracking giving in the UK for several decades. Over time, there have been changes to how the study is conducted in terms of approach and questions asked. This iteration of UK Giving research has been running since 2016, marking a decade of data collection.

Each year, minor updates have been made to the questionnaire. While no material changes to the questionnaire were made in 2025, changes were made to the questions about donation methods and causes supported at the start of 2024, meaning that direct comparisons to earlier years should be treated with a degree of caution.

To keep a consistent understanding of the state of charitable giving across the country over time, we ensured our crucial questions around donating behaviour in both the 12 months and four weeks prior to interview have remained consistent year-on-year.

The survey is conducted online and collects responses from around a thousand people each month. This monthly approach enables us to capture changes in behaviour and attitudes at a granular level, for instance, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on charitable giving.

In this report, findings for the calendar year 2025 are based on the responses of 12,913 individuals, unless otherwise indicated. The sample is constructed in such a way that it is nationally representative of the UK adults aged 16+ in terms of respondents' sex, age, region/nation and social grade. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.



Image: Clydebank Housing Association



Image: Tapestry Care



Image: Milton Keynes YMCA

# About CAF

CAF exists to accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all. Over the last 100 years, we have led the way in developing innovative approaches to giving. Annually, we distribute over £1 billion to charities around the globe.

As a leading charity operating from the UK, US and Canada, alongside an international network of partners, CAF works at the centre of the giving world. We collaborate with corporate and individual donors to enable them to give more effectively, strategically and impactfully. This includes connecting them to charities globally and providing access to our in-depth sector knowledge, governance expertise and innovative giving solutions.

We help charities to strengthen their resilience and do more of their life-changing work, through our strategic advisory services from our Impact Accelerator, tools to support charities' fundraising activities, and charity financial services from CAF Bank Limited and CAF Financial Solutions Limited. Using our research, policy and campaigns work, we understand and influence the wider environment for charities and donors.

**Together, we give more.**

Registered charity number 268369

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