

News and information for Wales from:

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Charity Commission announces key priorities

The Charity Commission has announced its two key strategic priorities for the next three years.

The Commission recently published its Strategic Plan for the period 2012-2015. In it, plans to develop the compliance and accountability of the charity sector, and to develop the sector's self-reliance are outlined.

Regarding the first key priority, the Commission has numerous action points, including:

- Holding charities to account through transparency requirements, and reviewing the information charities are required to submit to ensure its relevance.
- Making decisive interventions when there is malpractice or misconduct, and being more proactive and less reactive in ensuring charities comply with their legal obligations.
- Liaising with regulators and law enforcement agencies to ensure a more co-ordinated role in dealing with malpractice.

And regarding the second key priority, the Commission plans to:

- Improve the accessibility of its guidance and clearly spell out what charities must do to be compliant.
- Develop a partnership strategy that enables early signposting to sector bodies in order to

move to a position where the Commission is not seen as a first or only point of call for tailored advice.

- Promote the early identification and management of sector risk.
- Reduce the requirements of Trustees to seek the Commission's legal consent, through a review of the Charities Act 2006.

Sam Younger, Chief Executive of the Charity Commission, said: 'This is a clear, understandable plan for the future which explains our role in acting on behalf of the public when regulating the charity sector. We are grateful for the input of all those who have shared their thoughts with us about what our future priorities must be, taking into account our reduced funding position over the next three years.'

'This plan should give the public confidence in what they can expect to see both from us and from the charities they are interested in regardless of whether they are a donor, volunteer or employee or beneficiary.'

To read the whole Strategic Plan, including details of how the Commission intends to implement these priorities, at www.charitycommission.gov.uk.

How do you use the internet?

The Government has launched a survey looking at how voluntary and community groups use websites and social media for networking and learning.

The survey only takes about five minutes to complete - access it here:
<http://tinyurl.com/77jlewx>

Supporting Sustainable Living grants scheme

The Supporting Sustainable Living grants scheme, which was launched recently is a newly commissioned grant scheme funded by the Welsh Government. This innovative new scheme will be delivered by Environment Wales, in collaboration with the initiatives' new core partner Cynnal Cymru - Sustain Wales.

The scheme will support projects that will help reduce Wales' greenhouse gas emissions - or build resilience to the impacts of climate change - through tackling specific behaviours or lifestyle choices. Through these pioneering projects, it is envisaged that citizens of Wales will be empowered to undertake changes to enable a more sustainable lifestyle.

The value of the scheme is £250,000 and will be made available to all sectors within Wales. It is expected that the majority of grant applications will range between £5,000 and £15,000. However in exceptional circumstances this figure can rise to up to £35,000.

Information about the new scheme will be made available through Environment Wales on 02920 431727 or info@environment-wales.org. There will also be other opportunities later in the year to learn more about the scheme and how Environment Wales can assist with the development of your project.

Climate Week 2012

Climate Week 2012 will take place between 12-18 March 2012.

Climate Week is a national campaign to inspire a new wave of action on climate change. It culminates with thousands of events and activities taking place throughout the week 12-18 March 2012, planned by organisations from every part of society.

Showcasing real, practical ways to combat climate change, the campaign aims to renew our ambition to create a more sustainable, low-carbon future.

The Climate Week Challenge in 2011 was Britain's biggest ever environmental competition, with over 145,000 people participating in the one-day and one-hour versions.

You can register now for the 2012 Climate Week Challenge, which will be revealed on Monday 12 March.

Entries are also now open for the Climate Week Awards. For more information, please visit www.climateweek.com.



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