

## What if something goes wrong in a charity?

Members of the public can raise a confidential concern in relation to any organisation published on the list on our website.

Concerns which the Commission can take further and investigate include:

- significant financial loss to the charity;
- serious harm to beneficiaries and, in particular, vulnerable beneficiaries;
- criminality within or involving a charity;
- sham charities set up for an illegal or improper purpose;
- charities deliberately being used for significant private advantage;
- a charity's independence is seriously called into question;
- serious non-compliance in a charity that damages or has the potential to damage its reputation and/or the reputation of charities generally.

Intervening to protect charities when there is serious risk of harm or abuse is an important feature of regulation. Harm can happen in relation to the charity itself, to its assets, its beneficiaries or its reputation.

The Charity Commission will intervene if we can establish that there is serious risk.

You can find out how to send us your concerns about a charity on our website.

## How can I contact the Charity Commission?

We will release as much information as possible on our website at [www.charitycommissionni.org.uk](http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk)

You can also contact us via:

Tel: 028 3832 0220  
TextPhone: 028 3834 7639  
Fax: 028 3834 5943  
Email: [admin@charitycommissionni.org.uk](mailto:admin@charitycommissionni.org.uk)

The postal address for the Commission is:

257 Lough Road  
Lurgan  
Craigavon  
BT66 6NQ

The new  
independent  
regulator of  
charities in  
Northern Ireland



## What is the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland?

The Charity Commission is the new independent regulator of charities in Northern Ireland. It is responsible for ensuring Northern Ireland has a dynamic and well governed charities sector, in which the public can have confidence.

The Commission is non-Departmental Public Body supported by the Department for Social Development (DSD) under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Until now there has been no form of local charity registration and only limited provision for enforcement of legal obligations and good governance. The charity legislation will be phased in gradually, giving the Commission more powers as time goes on.



## What will the Charity Commission do?

The Charity Commission will monitor and regulate the work of Northern Ireland charities so that the public can be confident they are operating properly.

This means ensuring that:

- **charities are independent;**
- **organisations operating as charities are run for public benefit, and not for private advantage;**
- **we detect and remedy reports of serious mismanagement or deliberate abuse by or within charities;**
- **the public can have confidence in those charities registered with us.**

There is no definitive list of all the charities in Northern Ireland, although estimates vary between 7,000 and 10,000. The Commission will register all Northern Ireland charities over the next few years and their details will be fully available to the public.

These organisations will be given a unique Northern Ireland Charity Registration Number (NIC number) and will be obliged to submit annual information on their governance and finances.

## What can the Commission do currently?

Many charities seek recognition by HMRC for tax purposes and during the year the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has made this list publicly available for the first time.

This list is now on our website at [www.charitycommissionni.org.uk](http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk). The list will be used to manage a phased registration process of all charities.

We will contact and communicate with as many charities as possible once registration begins, inviting them to register. In the meantime, charities with a HMRC number do not need to do anything until they hear from us. We will put information on our website and in the press when registration opens so that organisations that do not have an HMRC number can find out about registering with us

### What else can the Commission do?

If a charity trustee applies to us, the Commission has the power to give its opinion or advice to that trustee on the performance of their duties.

The Charity Commission can also:

- require a charity to change its name, for example where it is offensive or misleading;
- give specific directions to protect a charity such as to suspend or remove a trustee;
- authorise special payments, for example facilitating the payment of creditors when a charity is wound up.