Key events which shaped today's charity sector

NCVO releases recommendations on fundraising practice, in response to years of concerns from the Charity Commission about dubious fundraising practices which were attracting increasing levels of negative publicity.

1987

NAO and Woodfield reports

Building on NCVO's report, the National Audit Office reviews the ability of the Charity Commission to regulate, and finds it needs more resources and further powers. Following the NAO report, the government commissions Sir Philip Woodfield to undertake an inquiry into the regulation of charities. His recommendations form the bedrock, five years later, of the Charities Act 1992.

Founding of CFDG

Adrian Randall, FD of Cancer Research Campaign, starts the Charity Finance Directors' Group, with support, amoug others, from Andrew Hind, Pesh Framjee and Ian Theodoreson

PAC report

The Public Accounts Committee delivers a damning verdict on the Charity Commission's work, including - famously - criticising it for not having any qualified accountants on its staff.

1988

Sorp 2

The Accounting Standards Committee publishes Sorp 2. The Charity Commission, keen to respond to criticism that they hadn't done more to lay down accounting guidelines, warmly welcomes this initiative.

1994

The National **Lottery launches**

The National Lottery starts, leading to the formation of the National Charities Lottery Board, and subsequently to the creation of the Big Lottery Fund.

1992

Charities Act 1992

The first new major charity legislation since 1960 gets Royal Assent. It increases NGO FINANCE the powers of the Charity Commission and the obligation of charities to be accountable to the public.

1990

NGO Finance launches

Daniel Phelan launches NGO Finance (retitled as Charity Finance in 2001). The first issue looks at the case for the reform of the Trustee Investments Act 1961.

1989

The White Paper

The Home Office publishes a White Paper which translates the recommendations of the Woodfield report into legislative proposals.

2004

Charities Bill

VGO FINANCE

The first comprehensive

launches, this time fronted by

the Charity Commission. The new

statement of financial activities

attracts a great deal of attention.

1996

Sorp for charities

Deakin report

NGO FINANCE

NGO FIVANCE

GO FINANC

Professor Nicholas Deakin chairs NCVO's

influential Commission on

the Future of the Voluntary

of the Charities Act 2006.

Review of charity tax

Gordon Brown's first Budget

1997

has welcome news for the charity

sector, with the announcement

of a comprehensive review of

their tax treatment. The review

concentrates on irrecoverable

VAT and business rates relief.

Compact established

Designed as an agreement

between local government and

service delivery charities, the

Compact aims to revolutionise

promote equal partnerships

between statutory funders

delivering frontline services.

Another critical PAC

report into CC

1998

The PAC issues a highly critical

report on the work of the Charity

Commission. The "complacent"

its performance targets

in 1996/97, and failing to

use powers "to anything

like their full potential".

Commission is attacked for

failing to achieve many of

and voluntary groups

funding agreements and

Sector. It is the genesis

Eight years after Deakin, a Charities Bill includes a new public benefit test, an extended list of charitable objectives and new duties for the Charity Commission.

2002

Private Action, Public Benefit

The Prime Minister's strategy unit proposes a major shake up of UK charity law in this key report.

2001

CIO development

Liverpool University's charities unit, NCVO and the Charity Law Association originally developed the idea of the CIO. This year it gains traction in the Cabinet Office.

2000

Further changes are made to charities' accounting requirements, and they now have to include a risk statement in the trustees' annual report.

Trustee payment

In response to an increase in the number of charities seeking the Charity Commission's authority to pay trustees, consultation begins on the circumstances, if any, in which charity trustees should be paid.

1999

Gift aid threshold scrapped

Following the Charities' Tax Review, government abolishes the minimum donation threshold of £250 and introduces a simplified gift aid declaration (the gift aid scheme was introduced in 1990).

2005

A charity regulator for Scotland

The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 receives Royal Asset in July. It establishes an independent regulator for the sector in Scotland, known as the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Sorp 2005

Sorp 2005 arrives, described as an evolution of Sorp 1995 and 2000, rather than a revolutionary change. One development is that the trustees' annual report becomes even

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more comprehensive.

CICs kick-off

The community interest company is introduced by government as a new constitutional form, designed for social enterprises.

2014

OTS created

2006

Reflecting the government's commitment to the sector, it sets up the Office of the Third Sector (now Office for Civil Society).

Charities Act 2006

The Charities Act 2006 gets Royal Assent in November.

2008

Big Society Capital

The Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Act 2008 lays the foundation for the development of Big Society Capital, a new social investor

for the sector.

2011

CC vs ICS The Charity

Commission and the Independent Schools Council battle over the interpretation of public benefit at the Charity Tribunal.



Lobbying Act The Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade

Union Administration Act 2014 is introduced and criticised by many charities. It contains rules which require some charities to register with the Electoral Commission and report on their campaigning.

2013

Cup Trust

The Cup Trust controversy places charity tax issues squarely in the public spotlight and leads to another PAC report on the Charity Commission.

Another new Sorp

Consultation on Sorp 2014 finishes in November.

2012

Charities Act review

Lord Hodgson leads a review of the Charities Act 2006. Despite sector opposition, he controversially recommends it be made easier to pay trustees. The government rejects this recommendation.

2015

Fundraising scandals

Charity fundraisers are accused on the front pages of national newspapers of "hounding" 92-year-old poppy seller Olive Cooke to death. Fundraising practices come under increased scrutiny throughout the year

following this.

Kids Company

Government-backed youth charity Kids Company closes suddenly after funding was withdrawn by a donor. The charity had reserves of less than £500,000 despite having a wage bill of more than £15m.

2016

Fundraising Regulator

The Fundraising Regulator is launched to replace the Fundraising Standards Board.

Charities fined for data breaches

The Information Commissioner's Office fines 13 charities for breaching data protection law, the first of which are

CharityFinance

RSPCA and BHF in December 2016 due to so-called "wealth screening" and selling of donor data.

Civil Society Strategy

series of

resignations.

The Office for Civil Society publishes a new strategy, which is broadly welcomed by the sector but is also criticised for not going far enough.

CharityFinance

2018

scandals at aid charities

among Oxfam staff in Haiti in

2011 are published in the

Times, prompting a media

storm. Revelations of

behaviour at other aid

leading to a drop in

donations and a

inappropriate

charities follow

Allegations of sexual misconduct

Sexual misconduct

2017

Fundraising Preference Service

The Fundraising Preference Service is launched to help donors to opt out of fundraising communications. Some 19,583 stop requests were made in the first year, with 5,318 made to suppress charity communications on behalf of another person.

£2bn dormant assets identified

The Independent Dormant Assets Commission, set up by the government, identifies £2bn of unclaimed assets lying dormant in the financial sector that have the potential to "transform the charity sector".





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