

# Top 100 Fundraising Charities **Spotlight**

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**Annual  
Report**  
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**March  
2017**

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## Top 100 UK Fundraising Charities 2016

### Harsher funding climate taking its toll

**Cathy Pharoah, Centre for Giving and Philanthropy@Cass Business School**

### Summary

This year's updated Spotlight report on the income of the top 100 UK fundraising charities in 2015/16 provides the opportunity to 'assess the damage' of an increasingly difficult funding environment. Updating key income data for 2015/16 and analysing trends within the longer-term picture from 2010-2016, this year's financial results suggest the harsh climate for fundraising is taking a toll as growth amongst the major charities slows markedly.

### Key findings

Key messages which emerge from the analysis include:

- The top 100 UK fundraising charities achieved a total income of £9.1 billion in 2015/16<sup>1</sup>
- Fundraising income to the top 100 charities grew by a real annual 2.3%, well under half of last year's growth rate, and the lowest rate for six years
- Total income increased by a real 2%, a modest achievement in a very difficult climate and well under the growth rates achieved in the previous two years
- Seven charity giants held on to the same top 7 places in the table as last year, despite lower fundraising incomes in some
- Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation remain unchallenged in the top two places of the fundraising table they have held for the last six years
- Animal causes did well, with Guide Dogs for the Blind moving up from 20 to 13th place, Cats Protection up from 41 to 33rd, and Battersea Dogs and Cats Home which went up from 60 to 48
- Faith-based charities dominated the fastest-growing fundraisers
- Statutory income has increased much less than voluntary income over the last six years.

### Outlook

Pressures in the funding environment are taking their toll on income growth, and there is little to suggest that this might change in the immediate future. The evidence is of constraint and challenge, however, rather than a cliff-edge. Charities which continue to build on the existing strengths of their fundraising and supporter/ member bases, and to innovate and highlight issues which resonate with the public, are likely to see a good public response. Total top 100 income growth was close to the UK's economic growth in 2015.

<sup>1</sup> Save the Children International was included in the top 100 figures in last year's report, producing a total of £9.7 billion. It has not been included this year, because its figures encompass funds raised by Save the Children UK and many other countries. If it had been included, the total would have been £9.6 billion (after subtracting the Save the Children UK contribution to avoid double-counting).

## Introduction – charities feeling the pressure

The UK's largest 100 fundraising charities bring in 14% of the sector's annual income. As major public institutions and the public face of the charity sector, their fundraising has been particularly vulnerable to the challenges of the funding environment of the last year or so, which has seen charity governance coming under close public and media scrutiny, direct government intervention to overhaul the regulatory environment, new rules and restrictions on fundraising, and attacks on charities' advocacy role and executive pay. These pressures have coincided with the impact of the long-term programme of spending reduction brought in by government, creating a very difficult climate for income generation. An increasingly competitive contract environment, for example, has seen a rise in the number of care homes going out of business, while many charities have reported an increase in the demand for their services resulting from austerity. This year's Spotlight report on the income of the top 100 UK fundraising charities in 2015/16 consequently provides a key opportunity to 'assess the damage'. Is the tight funding environment allowing for any re-balancing of income streams? Are the top charities holding their ground, and how does this year's performance compare with the longer-term trends from 2010- 2016?

### Researching charity trends

The data used in this report draws on Charity Financials' database of annual charity statistics, extracted from registered charities' annual reports and accounts. Charities included in this research are also based on previous lists published in the Charity Market Monitor, and are selected because they carry out fundraising from voluntary individual, corporate and trust donors as well as attracting contracts and fees from statutory and other trading sources (ie donations from the general public, trusts and companies; legacies; donated goods and gifts in kind; fundraising events). In this research they are ranked only by their combined total for fundraising from voluntary sources in 2015/16<sup>i</sup>, benchmarked against their own longer-term annual performance from 2010.

### Top 100 charities – who's who?

There was little change in the composition of the top 10 fundraising charities. Seven charity giants - Cancer Research UK, British Heart Foundation, Macmillan Cancer Support, Oxfam GB, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, Sightsavers International and the British Red Cross Society - held on to the same top 7 places in the table, in the same order as last year. Significantly, for some this was despite gaining a lower fundraising income. Almost the same set of charities have jockeyed for position since 2010/11, as the table below shows, shifting around but not losing a top 10 place in 2015/2016. This consistency is a key indicator of the strength of our top fundraising charities, but may also indicate that the income constraints in the current environment are presenting barriers to entry, and that it is particularly hard for new entrants to gain a foothold.

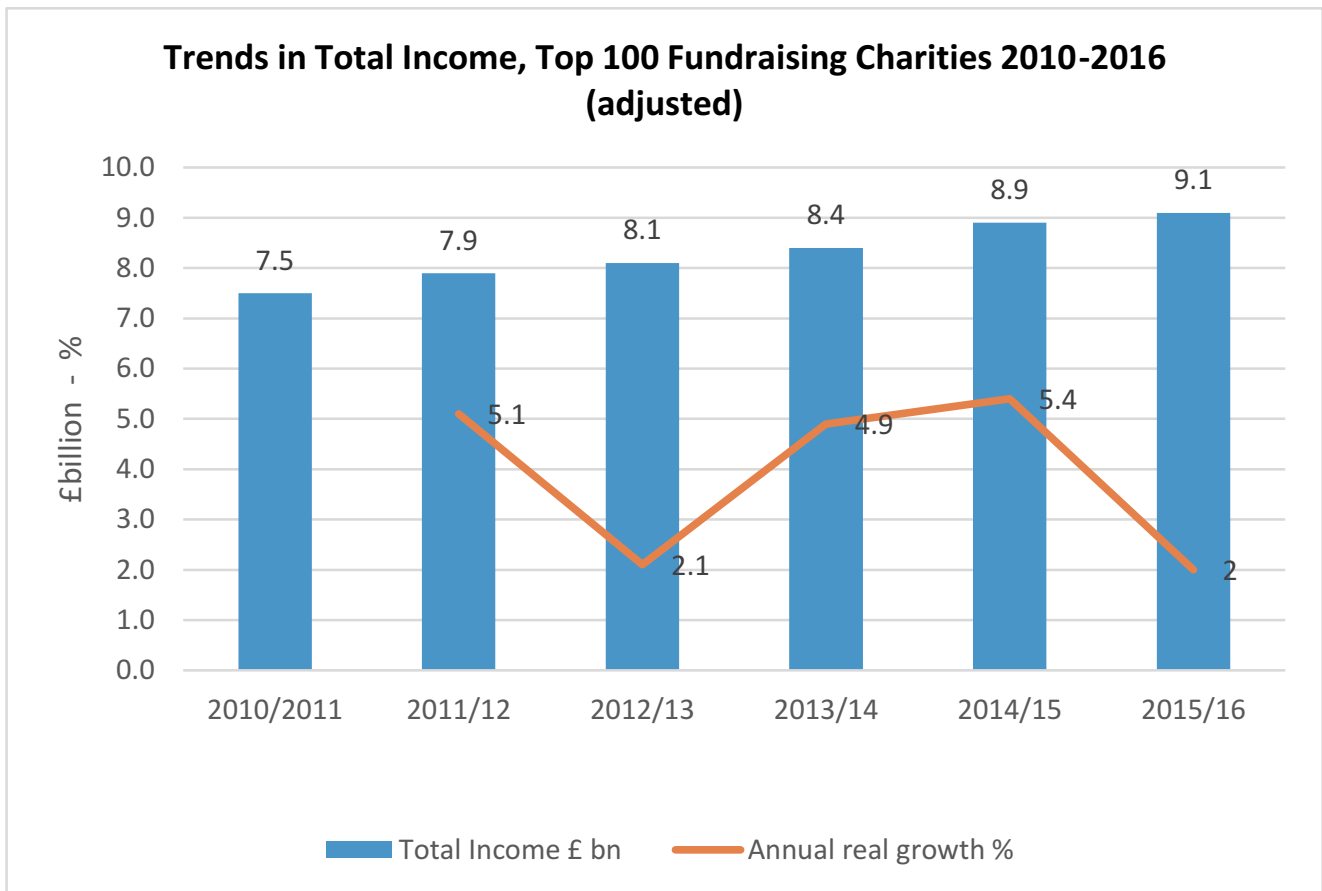
In spite of the difficult environment, Cancer Research UK saw its fundraising and trading income increase by 2.5% in 2016, with growth in several funding streams which was particularly strong in the legacies which form its largest income source. This increase resulted directly from CRUK's strategic planning around one of its central donor strengths. As its Annual Report 2016 notes 'Our investment in legacy marketing continues to be a key priority as we seek to increase the number of pledges we receive...'. The British Heart Foundation also saw income growth in 2016, in both legacies and donations, though its shop income was down slightly. The first full year of its National Charity Partnership with Tesco and Diabetes UK raised over £7.9 million, evidence of the appeal of multi-partnering approaches. Macmillan Cancer Support maintained the third position it gained last year with an increase of £14 million in donations and legacies in 2015, and celebrating the 25th year of its highly successful *World's Biggest Coffee Morning* which raised a record £27.6 million through its strong local fundraising base. Save the Children moved up 2 places from last year, with an increase of more than £2 million in donations and legacies. Its total income grew by 5%, with increases in funding from government and charitable activities. The NSPCC and the Salvation Army Trust both saw lower fundraising incomes in 2015 than the previous year.

Top 10 fundraising charities 2015/16

Rank	Rank		Charity	Fy/End	Income £ million	
	2010-11	2014-15			2015-16	Fundraised
1	1	1	Cancer Research UK	Mar-16	433.6	635.2
2	2	2	British Heart Foundation	Mar-16	265.1	301.5
6	3	3	Macmillan Cancer Support	Dec-15	215.5	230.2
3	4	4	Oxfam GB	Mar-15	192.8	401.4
5	5	5	RNLI	Dec-15	175.0	191.4
4	6	6	Sightsavers International	Dec-15	170.4	198.3
9	7	7	British Red Cross Society	Dec-15	152.8	275.1
8	10	8	Save the Children	Mar-15	127.5	389.7
10	8	9	Salvation Army Trust	Dec-15	126.1	194.2
7	11	10	NSPCC	Mar-16	113.7	128.9

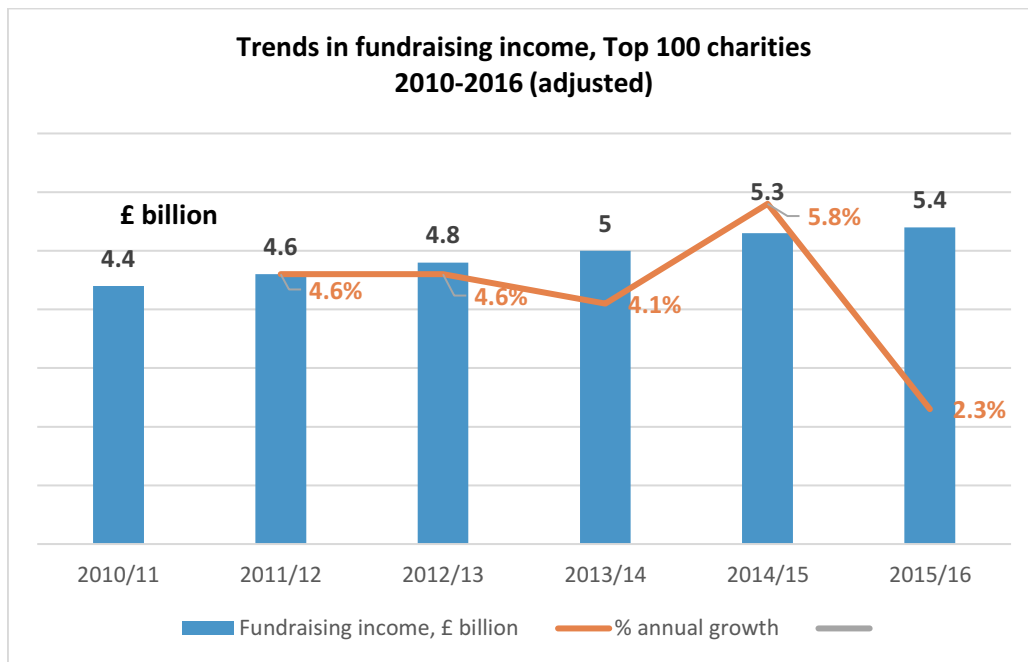
Total Top 100 income 2015/16

In spite of the challenging environment in 2015/16, the top 100 fundraising charities as a group managed to maintain positive income growth. They achieved a combined total income of £9.1 billion, out-performing total annual amounts generated in the previous five years in real terms. The annual rate of growth, however, fell dramatically, reaching just 2% in 2015/16, compared with the impressive 5.4% of the previous year. This was the lowest growth rate in total income for six years.



## Top 100 Fundraising Income 2015/16

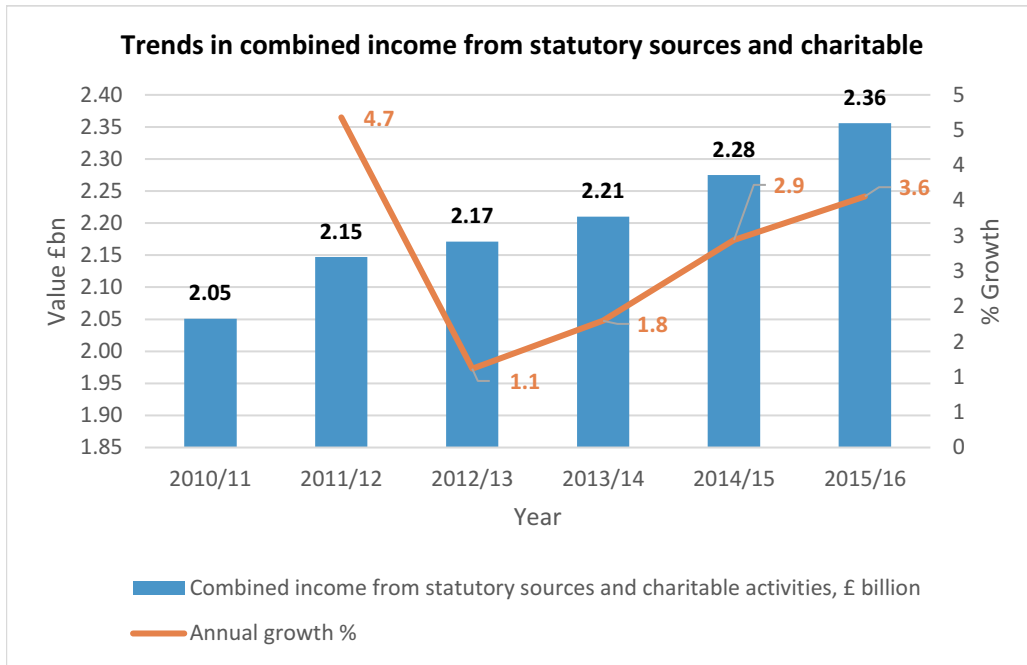
The picture for results on fundraised income was similar, as the next chart shows. It was worth £5.4 billion in 2015/16, the highest level since 2010 in real terms. This was undoubtedly partly the result of top charities' special efforts to make up for potential fall-out from unfavourable press and government attitudes, as well as the ongoing loyalty of the public towards favourite causes. However, as the next chart shows, the growth rate fell steeply from the impressive 5.8% achieved in 2014/15 to 2.3% in 2015/16, and was only around half the rates achieved in other years since 2010. This is a highly significant result. The charities selected for inclusion in the Top 100 are our highest-performing fundraising charities, with the largest resources. If these charities are finding things hard, it suggests things must be very challenging indeed for many other parts of the sector. The NSPCC notes 'Reliance, however, upon voluntary donations in a competitive and highly regulated environment heightens levels of uncertainty'.<sup>ii</sup>



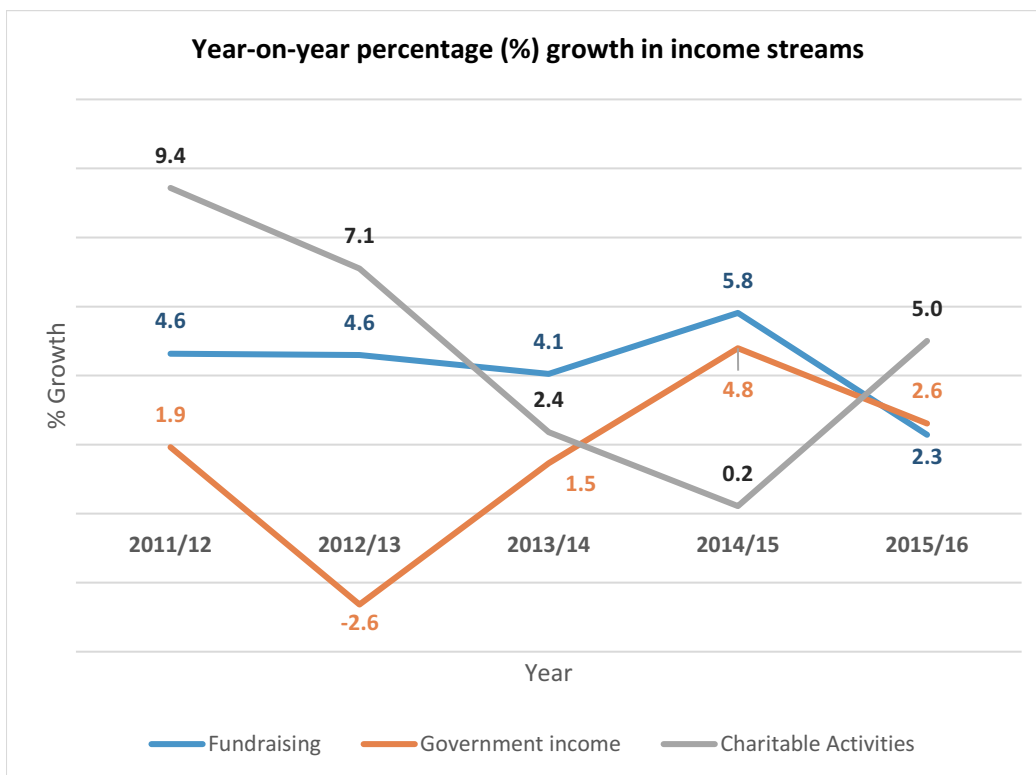
## Non-voluntary income streams 2015/16

It is difficult to get a clear and accurate picture of trends in statutory funding and in income earned from charitable activities because in practice the two headings appear to be used inter-changeably, with income being switched between them. For the analysis in this report, some figures were re-classified to maintain consistency in measuring trends.

So, it is useful to look first at trends in the combined income from government and charitable activities, and the chart below shows that its real value amongst the top 100 charities grew consistently between 2010 and 2016. However, the trends in annual growth rates reveal a less comforting picture. The growth rate plummeted from 4.7% to just 1.1% in 2012/13, picking up slowly in the two years after this, and has never reached the pre-2013 level again.



Looking at trends in statutory income and charitable activities separately throws some light on the picture. The 2012/13 plunge in the growth rate directly reflects falls in the charitable activities and statutory growth rate (which was actually negative). Growth rates in both income streams have fluctuated since 2010, reflecting the recession and the uncertainties in the market-place. The growth rate in statutory income fell again in 2015/16. In contrast, charitable activities' income growth rate was up. The National Trust, for example, increased member income by £18m, CRUK expanded income from cancer research activities by around £7m, and the National Theatre grew the value of charitable activities by £3m in 2015 (though this fell in 2016 due to lower touring income after a huge touring programme the year before).



## UK's Fastest-growing charities

Some of our major charities show a steady growth in fundraising income over the 2010-2016 period, including British Red Cross, British Legion, Al-Khair Foundation and UNICEF. This may be partly related to the causes they serve, and for example, the high media profile around international humanitarian needs generated from recent global conflicts. Noticeable in 2015-16, however, was that the group of fastest-growing charities was dominated by the faith-based sector.

### Fastest-growing in most recent year<sup>iii</sup>

- The fastest-growing charity in voluntary fundraised income was The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Britain, whose voluntary income including from cash and donations increased by 69% in real terms (2015)
- Following it closely was the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Great Britain whose voluntary income increased by 67% after a large grant from its parent company in Utah
- Other fast-growing faith-based organisations were the International Bible Students Association (6th for fundraising growth), and the United Synagogue (8th)
- Absolute Return for Kids (ARK) was third, with a fundraising increase of 56% in 2015
- Guide Dogs for the Blind Association was 12th: its increase of 24% was largely due to FRS-2 accounting policy changes in recording of legacy income, now recognised at the time of probate, rather than when executors indicate a distribution from an estate<sup>iv</sup>
- The fastest-growing charities for fundraising income over the whole six-year period from 2010-2016, include Al-Khair Foundation, a number of arts organisations such as The Royal National Theatre, Tate, Victoria and Albert Museum and ROH, Battersea Dogs and Cats Home, and Alzheimer's Research UK which has shown very steady growth over the period.

These examples of fundraising growth show how, in spite of the political, governance and financial challenges faced by the sector, charities with particularly committed donors and members, and/ or strong fundraising strategies can successfully continue to increase donations from private sources. Public giving represents only about 1% of overall consumer spending, so there is always a challenge and scope to prompt people to give more.

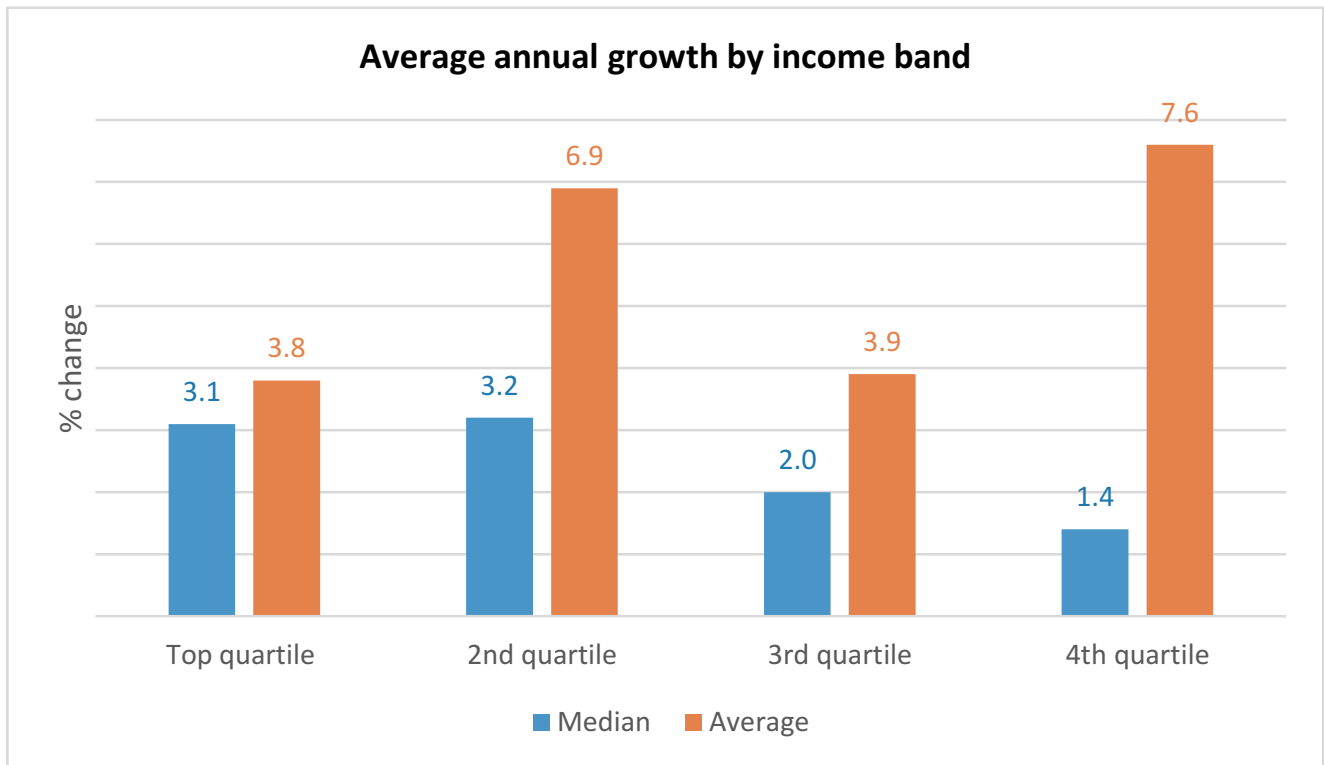
### Size matters

Size, however, matters. Comparing growth rates between charities of different sizes within the Top 100 clearly shows faster growth in 2015/16 in the largest charities. It is useful to look at the median and the average, as the median shows the actual midpoint for the group, while the average can be distorted by one or two unusually large organisations. The comparative figures for the median (below) indicate that annual growth was considerably greater amongst the top two quartiles, in charities with incomes over £30 million, than the bottom two. This provides more evidence that the UK's largest fundraising charities have a robustness and resilience that is not shared equally across the charity sector. Around two-fifths of the Top 100 saw a negative annual growth rate in their fundraising income in 2015/16. This was considerably more than the one-quarter in the previous year.

#### Comparison of annual growth rates in Top 100 quartiles by fundraising income

Quartile	Fundraising Income	Annual growth 2014/15-2015/16	
		Median	Average
Top quartile	over £65 million	3.1%	3.8%
2nd quartile	between £30 and £65 million	3.2%	6.9%
3rd quartile	between £21 and £30 million	2.0%	3.9%
4th quartile	between £15 and £21 million	1.4%	7.6%





### Prioritising income streams

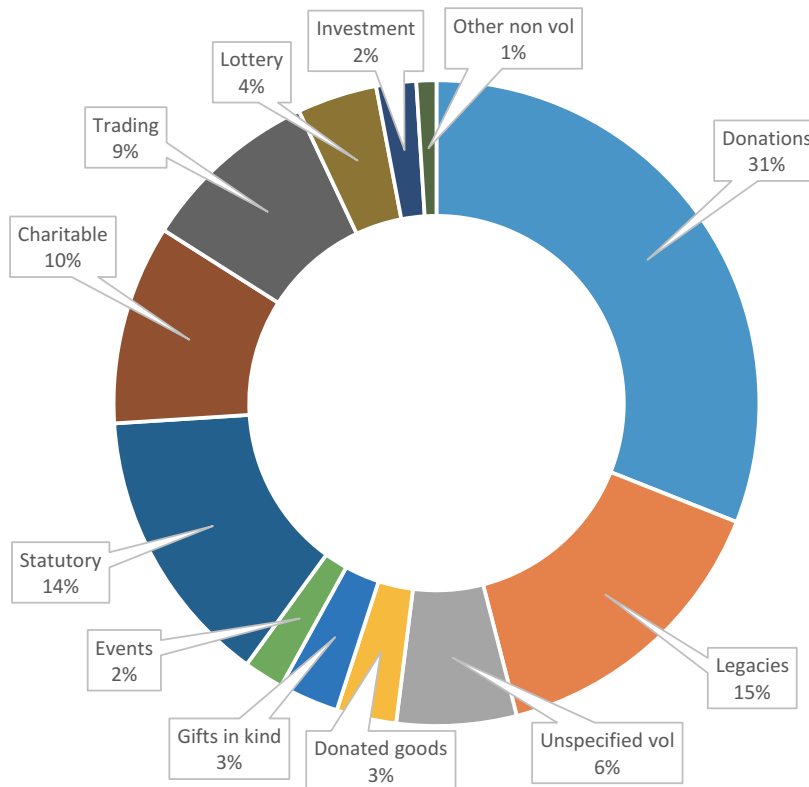
Fundraised income still remains the largest part of the income of the top fundraising charities, at around three-fifths. This shows how absolutely vital it is for charities to retain public trust and support if they are to do their work. The sector has addressed weaknesses in its fundraising approach, but as sector representative bodies have recently stated<sup>4</sup>, Government, the Charity Commission and others need 'to trust the sector' and ensure that both their words and actions truly strengthen charities in the public's eyes.

The breakdown of income by type, shown in the next table and chart, shows how private donations contribute well over one half of voluntary income and almost one-third of total income (31.5%). Legacies represent one-quarter of voluntary income, and 15% of total income. These two streams still constitute by far the largest elements of top charity income, and must be protected. Income from statutory sources comes next, closely followed by charitable activities (with which it overlaps). Trading contributes an important 9%, with Age UK earning the most from trading, followed by CRUK and then the National Trust. Investment income represents a small share of service-providing charities' income, reaching just 2%, and is concentrated in a few charities such as the National Trust and Arthritis Research UK. Most top charities are principally dependent on the daily business of raising the funds they need.

Top charities' £9.1 billion income – breakdown by type

Voluntary, private	£ million	% of Voluntary Sub-Total
Donations	2,831	52.5
Legacies	1,331	25.1
Unspecified	510	9.0
Donated goods	300	5.7
Gifts in kind	229	4.2
Events	189	3.6
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>5,390</i>	<i>100</i>
Non-voluntary/ statutory		% of Non-Vol Sub-Total
Statutory	1,266	33.6
Charitable	1,946	29.3
Trading	803	21.5
Lottery	321	8.2
Investment	176	4.7
Other	100	2.6
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>3,612</i>	<i>100</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,002</b>	

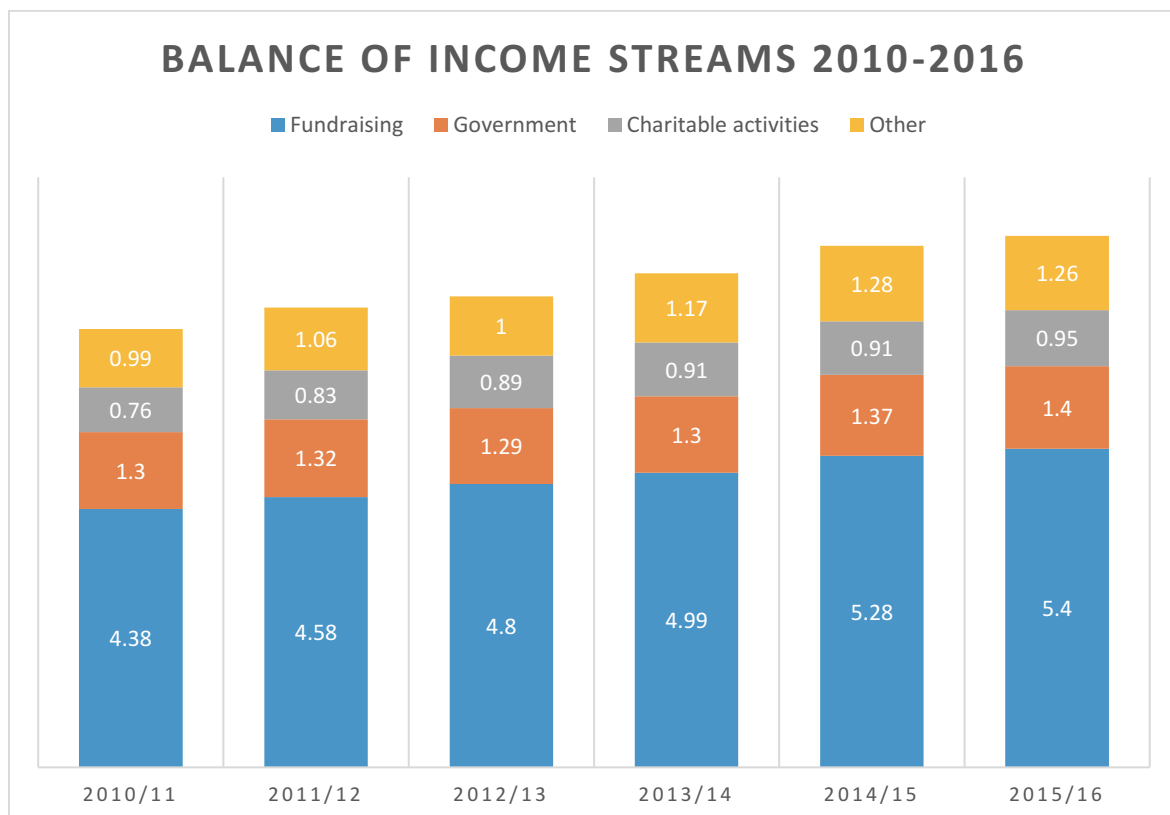
Percentage (%) share of Top 100 charities' total income by funding stream 2015/16



### Long-term balance of income streams

Perhaps surprisingly, the balance of income streams to the major fundraising charities as a group has not changed markedly over six years, however a slight trend towards slower growth in non-voluntary statutory income streams can be discerned. This finding is consistent with the environment of the long-term reduction in government spending which we are experiencing. Between 2010-2016 voluntary income has hovered between 59- 60% of total income, income from charitable activities has lain between 10-11%, but the share held by statutory income fell from 17% in 2010 to 15% in 2014, though is now at 16% in 2015/16.

Significantly, the research has found that statutory income grew little in value over the six-year period, increasing by just 8%, while voluntary income grew by 23% and charitable activities by 25%. The result of this is that over the period non-voluntary income as a whole grew by 2% less than voluntary income (21%). Two points emerge from these findings. One is that the major charities have been able to build voluntary rather than non-voluntary income more easily over the last six years, even in a difficult fundraising environment. The other is that the major charities may be in a stronger position in relation to the effect of reduced government spending than many other charities in the sector, and more able to consolidate contracts. Some organisations have taken more of a hit than others. Scope, for example, saw a fall of £4.7 million in fee income from statutory funders ‘caused by a challenging commissioning environment’, while arts organisations like the British and the National Theatre report on their annually reducing government grant-in-aid. Falls in statutory income put increased pressure on fundraising from the general public, fuelling competition in the voluntary fundraising environment. The NT reports (2016) ‘Arts Council funding, which has declined over 25% in real terms since 2010-11, represented 15% of turnover.’<sup>vi</sup>



### Future Outlook

Last year's report questioned how far the strong growth seen in 2014/15 could be maintained or surpassed in the near future, noting the 'storm clouds on the horizon'. This year's results indicate that pressures in the funding environment have indeed affected charity growth, and there is little to suggest that this might change in the immediate future. Total charity income growth is close to World Bank estimates of UK growth of 2.2% in 2015. The evidence is of constraint and challenge, however, rather than catastrophic collapse or cliff-edge. This year's results indicate that if charities continue to build on the existing strengths of their fundraising and supporter/ member bases, and to innovate, the public is likely to respond. For many charities the future challenge in the medium-term is to maintain their position, but if charities can manage to develop new fundraising techniques or messages which particularly resonate with the public, there is still potential to grow.

<sup>i</sup> Foundations' accounts are published at different times of the year. This, coupled with the research time-lag, means that the data used may relate to either financial or calendar years 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> [http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends01/0000216401\\_AC\\_20160331\\_E\\_C.pdf](http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends01/0000216401_AC_20160331_E_C.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Most recent data available to this research

<sup>iv</sup> [http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends17/0000209617\\_AC\\_20151231\\_E\\_C.pdf](http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends17/0000209617_AC_20151231_E_C.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/news/government-needs-to-start-trusting-charities-lords-committee-told.html>

<sup>vi</sup> <http://mytheatremates.com/news-national-theatre-publishes-2014-2015-annual-report/>

Top 100 Fundraising Charities Table 2015/16

Rank	Charity	Yr End	Fundraising Income £m	Total Income £m
1	Cancer Research UK	Mar-16	433.60	635.20
2	British Heart Foundation	Mar-16	265.10	301.50
3	Macmillan Cancer Support	Dec-15	215.52	230.21
4	Oxfam GB	Mar-15	192.80	401.40
5	Royal National Lifeboat Institution	Dec-15	175.00	191.40
6	Sightsavers International	Dec-15	170.42	198.30
7	British Red Cross Society, The	Dec-15	152.80	275.10
8	Save the Children	Dec-15	127.50	389.72
9	Salvation Army Trust	Mar-15	126.08	194.25
10	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	Mar-16	113.66	128.91
11	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	Dec-15	109.83	124.40
12	Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, The	Dec-15	98.90	103.70
13	Royal British Legion, The	Sep-15	98.54	161.32
14	UNICEF-UK	Dec-15	95.51	100.71
15	Marie Curie Cancer Care	Mar-15	92.14	155.88
16	Dogs Trust	Dec-15	83.31	89.89
17	Tate	Mar-16	81.28	156.08
18	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Mar-15	78.71	132.87
19	PDSA	Dec-15	77.60	91.67
20	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Dec-15	76.96	105.58
21	Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity	Mar-15	74.71	80.98
22	National Trust, The	Feb-16	69.32	522.17
23	Royal National Institute of Blind People	Mar-15	64.63	114.47
24	Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Britain, The	Aug-15	61.03	82.05
25	Christian Aid	Mar-15	56.87	99.91
26	WWF UK	Jun-15	56.69	63.20
27	BBC Children in Need	Jun-15	52.84	56.05
28	Alzheimer's Society	Mar-15	52.27	90.57
29	Church of Scotland Unincorporated Councils and Committees, The	Dec-15	51.59	109.74
30	Cats Protection	Dec-15	50.91	55.86
31	WaterAid	Mar-15	50.54	83.60
32	World Vision UK	Sep-15	46.49	90.94
33	Age UK	Mar-15	45.69	174.12
34	Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance	Sep-15	44.94	65.33
35	ActionAid	Dec-15	44.20	65.33
36	Medecins sans Frontieres (UK)	Dec-15	42.72	46.00
37	Barnardo's	Mar-16	42.41	298.66
38	Tearfund	Mar-15	40.90	62.21
39	Prince's Trust, The	Mar-15	39.92	66.03
40	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development	Mar-15	39.70	56.01
41	Royal Opera House Covent Garden Limited	Aug-15	39.64	141.59
42	Scope	Mar-16	38.96	99.52
43	SHELTER - National Campaign for Homeless People Limited	Mar-16	38.08	57.43
44	Compassion UK Christian Child Development	Jun-15	36.43	36.48
45	Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust	Dec-15	35.16	55.52
46	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Great Britain	Dec-15	34.61	72.95
47	Battersea Dogs & Cats Home	Dec-15	32.49	36.72
48	International Bible Students Association	Aug-15	32.29	38.92
49	Donkey Sanctuary, The	Dec-15	31.93	35.06
50	Children's Society, The	Mar-16	31.62	43.83

## Top 100 Fundraising Charities Table 2015/16

Rank	Charity	Yr End	Fundraising Income £m	Total Income £m
51	Plan International UK	Jun-16	30.50	70.16
52	Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom	Dec-15	30.50	31.45
53	Help for Heroes	Sep-15	29.41	40.96
54	London Diocesan Fund, The	Dec-15	29.00	40.90
55	Diabetes UK	Dec-15	28.97	37.03
56	Woodland Trust, The	Dec-15	28.44	37.50
57	Blue Cross (Incorporating Our Dumb Friends League), The	Dec-15	26.85	34.16
58	Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat International	Dec-15	26.67	26.71
59	United Synagogue	Dec-15	26.41	50.63
60	British Museum, The	Mar-16	25.93	111.32
61	World Society for the Protection of Animals	Dec-15	25.17	30.89
62	Arthritis Research UK	Mar-15	25.14	39.87
63	Multiple Sclerosis Society	Dec-15	24.96	27.74
64	International Planned Parenthood Federation	Dec-15	24.42	78.72
65	Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark	Dec-15	24.26	29.49
66	Foundation and Friends of The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, The	Mar-16	24.19	25.17
67	Stroke Association, The	Mar-15	24.10	37.50
68	Amanat Charitable Trust	Nov-15	23.83	24.91
69	Muslim Aid	Dec-14	22.81	34.66
70	National Deaf Children's Society, The	Mar-16	22.07	23.52
71	United Bible Societies Association, The	Dec-15	22.05	30.62
72	United Reformed Church	Dec-15	21.85	28.64
73	Rhodes Trust, The	Jun-15	21.85	28.06
74	CLIC Sargent Cancer Care for Children	Mar-16	21.74	24.87
75	Royal Marsden Cancer Campaign	Mar-15	21.28	22.78
76	Methodist Church In Great Britain, The	Aug-15	21.13	44.34
77	Crisis	Jun-15	21.05	25.75
78	Absolute Return for Kids (ARK)	Aug-15	20.92	21.93
79	Blind Veterans UK	Mar-15	20.70	27.17
80	National Trust for Scotland, The	Feb-16	20.57	52.94
81	Al-Khair Foundation	Jul-15	20.51	21.96
82	Helping Foundation, The	Dec-15	20.11	36.73
83	Jewish Care	Mar-15	19.92	50.98
84	International Fund for Animal Welfare	Jun-15	19.68	20.67
85	Prostate Cancer UK	Mar-16	19.59	20.03
86	Victoria and Albert Museum	Mar-16	19.39	94.47
87	Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance, The	Dec-15	19.35	25.63
88	ABF The Soldiers Charity	Mar-16	18.77	22.84
89	Samaritan's Purse International Limited	Mar-15	18.52	18.52
90	Action for Children	Mar-16	18.09	160.88
91	South London Church Fund & Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance, The	Dec-15	17.77	23.83
92	Royal National Theatre, The	Mar-15	17.40	137.90
93	Children with Cancer UK	Dec-15	17.38	17.55
94	Brooke Hospital for Animals	Mar-15	17.09	17.42
95	Alzheimer's Research UK	Aug-15	16.53	17.75
96	Maggie Keswick Jencks Cancer Caring Centres Trust, The	Dec-15	16.41	19.07
97	Gurkha Welfare Trust, The	Jun-15	16.18	26.24
98	Motor Neurone Disease Association	Jan-16	15.99	16.68
99	Teenage Cancer Trust	Jun-15	15.89	16.02
100	Mission Aviation Fellowship International	Dec-15	15.82	26.63

# New Charity Benchmarking Reports

**Charity Benchmarking Reports** are designed to save you time preparing your performance strategy so you can effectively compare your financial performance against your peers. Just choose up to 10 of your peers within the top 5000 UK charities and we'll:

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- Use costs to calculate net returns looking at yearly change and long term averages
- Include key financial ratios e.g. net asset cover and asset turnover
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