

Corporate Plan  
2020-23



# Vision

The Scottish Charity Regulator's vision is for a **trusted** and **respected** Scottish charity sector which **positively contributes** to society.

# Purpose

We hold charities in Scotland **to account** and help the charity sector to **improve** so that the public have **trust and confidence** in charities.



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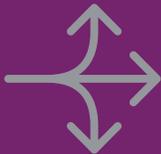
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# Foreword

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**Lindsay Montgomery CBE**  
OSCR Chair



**Maureen Mallon**  
OSCR Chief Executive

# 2020-23

We are delighted to share our Corporate Plan for the next three years.

There is no doubt that this is an important time for charities and the wider third sector as their essential contribution to Scottish society continues to grow. As an **empowering regulator**, it is vital that we make sure that the sector operates to the **very highest standards** and that **public confidence, trust and understanding** of charities is strong.

Our Corporate Plan starts at a time of unprecedented and unpredictable challenge for us all with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting every walk of life. The public need to be able to have confidence in charities of all shapes and sizes and it is important that we find new and creative ways to make sure they know that we are both a strong and enabling regulator. A significant number of charities, and the wider third sector in every country face very real difficulties in respect of ongoing viability; just at a time when many services are in greatest demand. For that reason, this Corporate Plan, by necessity must be considered and implemented with some flexibility, reflecting how as an enabling regulator our actions and priorities will require to flex and alter in response to the rapidly changing environment and pressures which charities face.

We will work with policy colleagues, elected officials and other organisations to make sure that they take account of the charity sector when forming legislation, guidance and operational delivery at national and local levels. Our partnership with the Scottish Government and our work with the Scottish Parliament will be further developed so that the knowledge and data we have in relation to the rich and diverse charity sector is well used to inform and inspire their thinking and implementation.



Our Corporate Plan 2020-23 sets out our strategic direction of business for the next three years. This plan will evolve as the charity sector and our operating environment changes. We will publish an annual business plan detailing our priorities and activities for the year ahead on our four strategic outcomes set out in this corporate plan. These outcomes support our vision and values, and positively contribute and promote delivery of the national outcomes as set out in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.



The National Performance Framework's purpose is to create a successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. A well-regulated and thriving Scottish charity sector is fundamental to delivering this ambition.

Our team here at the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) have a real passion for ensuring that charities are the best they can be and we will have an increasing focus on improving the public's awareness and confidence in Scotland's charities.

# Who we are, what we do

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OSCR is the independent regulator and registrar for Scotland's 24,900 charities. We grant charitable status, monitor registered charities, and identify and take action where we believe misconduct including mismanagement has occurred.

We are a non-ministerial office of the Scottish Administration, operating independently of the Scottish Government, reporting directly to the Scottish Parliament.

All charities in Scotland must be registered with us and must meet annual reporting requirements to keep their status. We are an enabling regulator and offer a wide range of services to support and encourage improvement within the charity sector.

Our work with charities ultimately supports public confidence in the sector. We support and champion the charity sector through a collaborative working approach, working with other organisations, government and the charity sector to build strong and effective internal governance, share good practice and encourage improvement, in order to drive up standards within charities.

# 24,900

OSCR is the independent regulator and registrar for Scotland's 24,900 charities.



**Monitor charitable status.**



**Monitor registered charities.**



**Identify and take action where we believe misconduct including mismanagement has occurred.**

We use our knowledge and intelligence to positively influence and inform the development of national policy, legislation and practice.

We are a high functioning public body, committed to delivering good quality services to the charity sector, and to improving the lives, wellbeing and safety of the communities and environment where we work and live.

We involve people in shaping and improving our work and our services, through consultations, user testing and reference groups, putting equality and diversity at the heart of all that we do. We will continue to involve people in shaping our work throughout the lifetime of this plan and beyond.

We are driving forward improvements to our digital services and internal processes at a pace with support from the Scottish Government Digital Transformation Team. Our ambition is to take OSCR forward and use this opportunity to transform how we conduct our business of regulating and engaging with charities registered in Scotland. To achieve this successfully we will need to have a cross discipline team and an implementation plan and take advantage of partnership working to increase the potential for success.



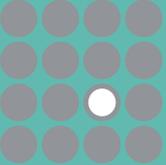
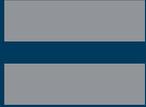
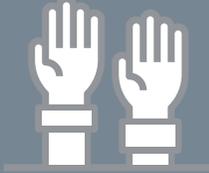
## How we work

### Our values

Our values drive what we do, how we interact with each other, and how we work together and with others to achieve results. We strive to practice and demonstrate these daily.

We will review our values during the period in which this Corporate Plan applies, to make sure they remain relevant and appropriate for a modern regulator.

### Our values are:

<p>Independent</p> 	<p>Proportionate</p> 	<p>Accountable</p> 	<p>Transparent</p> 
<p>Consistent</p> 	<p>Fair</p> 	<p>Targeted</p> 	<p>Informed</p> 

### **Focused on the public, charity beneficiaries and the wider charity sector**

We will develop and provide products, services and guidance that positively benefits those we regulate, the public and the wider charity sector. We will achieve this through proactive communications and partnerships, building strong relationships and mutual understanding.

We will carry out our activities in a way that helps charities to meet their reporting requirements and grow sustainably, benefitting Scotland's economic growth.



# Our funding

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### Our funding

OSCR is funded by an annual budget of just over £3.3m, which we receive from the Scottish Government. We are based in a single office in Dundee and employ around 50 members of staff. We do not charge for any of the services we provide.

As a publicly funded body, we are aware of the requirement to make the best use of all of our resources, and to apply the principle of best value at all times. Throughout the life of this plan, we will invest in technical infrastructure enhancements to facilitate delivery of our digital vision. By doing this we will enhance the range and delivery of information and services we provide to all of our stakeholders, and help promote public trust and confidence in the charity sector.



**£3.3m**

OSCR is funded by an annual budget of around £3.3m, which we receive from the Scottish Government.

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**50**

We operate from a single office in Dundee and employ around 50 members of staff.

# Our strategic outcomes 2020-23

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## Our strategic outcomes for 2020-23



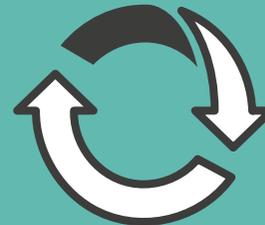
### **The public have confidence in charities**

We will help the public to have a clear understanding of the Scottish charity sector and its regulation so that they can engage with confidence.



### **Charities are well run and thriving**

We will actively improve standards and practice in the Scottish charity sector through an effective balance of support and challenge.



### **Charities are at the heart of a vibrant and sustainable Scotland**

We will influence and inform the development of national policy, positively influencing and shaping the Scottish charity sector.



### **The Scottish Charity Regulator is a highly effective organisation**

We will be a strong non-ministerial office and an employer of choice, delivering quality services for the Scottish charity sector.

# Delivering the corporate plan

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### **Delivering this corporate plan**

This corporate plan sets out four strategic outcomes with a set of actions underpinning each of them, as described on the following pages. The outcomes are aligned to measures that we will monitor and report on at our Board meetings. Our Board and Chief Executive will continue to provide strategic oversight, direction, and governance to our staff.

Over the three year period of this plan, our suite of key strategies and projects will form the building blocks on which our activities will be based. Implementation of these can be viewed on the next page:



2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
 <p><b>Digital Strategy</b> Providing smarter, simpler ways of working and reporting</p>		
 <p><b>Guidance on Inquiries</b> Taking swift, robust action, protecting the charity sector</p>		
 <p><b>Engagement Strategy</b> Raising awareness of Scottish charity regulation across government, the charity sector and with the general public</p>		
 <p><b>Organisational redesign</b> Enabling us to build a more flexible workforce to deliver the priorities outlined in this plan</p>	 <p><b>Knowledge Management Strategy</b> Greater focus on using knowledge and intelligence to develop the sector</p>	
 <p><b>Sector Overview Report</b> A comprehensive analysis of the state of the Scottish charity sector to support debate and inform future policy</p>	 <p><b>People Strategy</b> Attracting, retaining and developing the very best people</p>	
	 <p><b>Modernising Charity Law Programme</b> Driving positive changes in the law to improve our powers</p>	 <p><b>Charity Sector Impact Strategy</b> Greater collaboration leading to better outcomes</p>



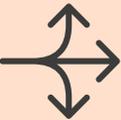
Delivery of this corporate plan will be supported by annual operational plans setting out agreed activities, resource commitments, responsibilities and specific deliverables for the year ahead.

At the end of each year, we will review our business activities to make sure they remain relevant to the achievement of our strategic outcomes. We will publish a report on our performance, highlighting examples of where our interventions and activities have led to improved outcomes for the charity sector.

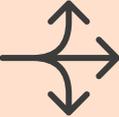
# Strategic actions, outcomes, outputs and indicators

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<p><b>Strategic outcome</b></p>	<p><b>The public have confidence in charities</b>  <i>We will help the public to have a clear understanding of the Scottish charity sector and its regulation so that they can engage with confidence.</i></p>			
<p><b>We will:</b></p> 	<p>Raise public awareness of our role and charity regulation in Scotland.</p>	<p>Maintain and promote the Scottish Charity Register.</p>	<p>Take robust action to protect the charity sector and the public when we need to and when we believe charity trustees are doing wrong.</p>	<p>Work with charities to improve their understanding of and compliance with charity regulation in Scotland.</p>
<p><b>Outputs and Outcomes</b></p> 	<p>The public will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a better understanding of how charity regulation works in Scotland</li> <li>• know who to report to when complaining about a charity and what to expect from us</li> <li>• know that charities are regulated, bringing confidence to the charity sector.</li> </ul>		<p>We will deal with those doing wrong and share the lessons learned for others to learn from.</p> <p>We will achieve effective reduction of common risks and concerns within charities.</p> <p>We will know which of our activities are most effective in demonstrating the trustworthiness of charities.</p>	
<p><b>Outcome indicators</b></p>	<p>Building public awareness (to 65%) of OSCR and charity regulation.</p> <p>Building confidence and trust (to 80%) in the charity sector.</p>	<p>Increased visits to our website, social media platforms and OSCR Reporter sign-ups.</p>	<p>Increased use of powers.</p>	<p>Use of evidence and knowledge from complaints and concerns received to improve our services and products.</p>

<b>Strategic outcome</b>	<p><b>Charities are well run and thriving</b>  <i>We will actively improve standards and practice in the Scottish charity sector through an effective balance of support and challenge.</i></p>			
<p><b>We will:</b></p> 	<p>Support charity trustees to run their charities effectively.</p> <p>Adopt further risk-based approaches to our decision-making, focusing our resources where they will make the biggest impact.</p>	<p>Promote and support the consistent use of charity legislation.</p>	<p>Make charity regulation easier, faster and simpler.</p>	<p>Listen to charities, their ideas and issues and use these to shape our work.</p>
<p><b>Outputs and Outcomes</b></p> 	<p>Charity trustees have the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies to run their charities well.</p>	<p>Charity reporting standards improve and good quality accounts are being prepared on time.</p>	<p>A dynamic charity sector, positively adjusting to market fluctuations.</p>	<p>OSCR Charities Reference Group established and positively influencing our work.</p> <p>Engagement Strategy published and implemented.</p> <p>Charity Sector Impact Strategy developed.</p>
<p><b>Outcome indicators</b></p>	<p>Wide range of effective services, support and guidance available and used.</p> <p>Varying volume of OSCR interventions used wider.</p> <p>Wider, more preventive range of OSCR interventions.</p>	<p>Clear and useful information.</p> <p>Increasing levels of volunteering and giving.</p>	<p>Reduced numbers of charities failing to meet legal reporting requirements.</p> <p>Effective and impactful partnerships.</p>	<p>Building confidence and trust in the charity sector and in OSCR.</p>

<b>Strategic outcome</b>	<b>Charities are at the heart of a vibrant and sustainable Scotland</b> <i>We will influence and inform the development of national policy, positively influencing and shaping the Scottish charity sector.</i>		
<b>We will:</b> 	Work with and advise Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Government, ensuring the charity sector is dynamic, modern and fit for purpose.  Have an active presence and engagement with the Scottish Parliament.	Build proactive partnerships which support the charity sector.	Use and share our knowledge and intelligence about charities to help lead and inform others.
<b>Outputs and Outcomes</b> 	We will have effective legal powers. Modernising Charity Law programme delivered.  Increased influence and engagement with the Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament and Ministers delivering an effective legislative programme.	Increased co-production leading to better outcomes.  Charity Sector Impact Strategy delivered.	Knowledge Management Strategy delivered.  Our knowledge and intelligence is used to inform thinking and planning in the Scottish charity sector and beyond.
<b>Outcome indicators</b>	Use of statutory powers where required. Policy influence across government and parliament.	Effective and impactful partnerships.	Respected and joined-up regulation.

<b>Strategic outcome</b>	<p><b>The Scottish Charity Regulator is a highly effective organisation</b>  <i>We will be a strong non-ministerial office and an employer of choice, delivering quality services for the Scottish charity sector.</i></p>				
<p><b>We will:</b></p> 	<p>Use technology to provide smarter ways of working, delivering our outcomes successfully, while minimising our impact on the environment.</p>	<p>Identify, assess and complete low-risk casework more efficiently.</p>	<p>Review and update our performance indicators capturing the right information to inform our work.</p>	<p>Attract, retain and develop the best people to help us deliver our objectives.  Review and develop our performance management process.</p>	<p>Maintain high standards of corporate governance.  Review and develop our quality assurance process.</p>
<p><b>Outputs and Outcomes</b></p> 	<p>Digital Strategy delivered and action plan implemented (2020).  We work towards becoming a carbon neutral public body.</p>	<p>We will protect the charity sector and public by removing tasks that are unnecessary or add little value, allowing us to commit more resources to high-risk areas.</p>	<p>We can better measure the contribution our work and policies make towards achievement of national policy and outcomes.</p>	<p>We are an employer of choice, developing staff and delivering quality services.  We have a happy and healthy workforce, supported by an effective People Strategy.</p>	<p>We have a flexible and agile workforce.  We have a supportive culture, celebrating our successes and learning together from our mistakes.</p>

Continued on next page

<p><b>Strategic outcome</b></p>	<p><b>The Scottish Charity Regulator is a highly effective organisation</b>  <i>We will be a strong non-ministerial office and an employer of choice, delivering quality services for the Scottish charity sector.</i></p>			
<p><b>Outcome indicators</b></p>	<p>Faster processing of low-risk casework resulting in operational efficiencies.                  Improved consumer experience.</p>	<p>A suite of updated performance indicators to better report charity sector trends and our performance.                  Projects and programmes are meeting ambitious targets.</p>	<p>Staff turnover.                  Decreased absenteeism levels.                  Achieved HWL Gold Membership (2021).                  Decreased carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Internal and external audits provide evidence of good corporate governance and effective use of our resources.                  Improved engagement across charities, the public and staff.</p>

How we will report  
on our progress towards  
our strategic objectives

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We are committed to reporting on our progress towards achieving our strategic objectives in a transparent and timely manner.

We will do this in a number of different ways including:



**Annual Report and Accounts**



**Annual Review**



**Annual Business Plans**



**Sector Overview Report**



**Inquiry Reports**



**Thematic Reports**



**Key Performance Indicators**



**Charity and Public Survey results**



**Annual Civil Service People Survey results**



**Expenditure Reports**



**Public bodies reporting duties**

### Scotland's National Performance Framework

OSCR believes that charities are essential to the implementation of the National Performance Framework (the framework). We will work with the Scottish Government and others to support the sector's understanding of the framework and to enable others to understand and recognise that contribution.

We have identified five outcomes out of the eleven in the framework where we as an organisation will make a substantial contribution.

These are noted on the next page.



## Our contribution to the National Performance Framework

