



Engagement Strategy 2021 – 2024

Contents

	Introduction	3
	Our principles	5
	The drivers	8
	Engagement priorities	10
	How the strategy will be implemented	13
	Monitoring the success of the strategy	15

1. Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to our Engagement Strategy for 2021-24.

Our Engagement Strategy will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2020-23. It will allow us to optimise the impact of our engagement, through developing and embedding a shared approach to engagement across the organisation. It will also serve to communicate to our partners and the wider public our approach in this area. It will be a blueprint for shaping our engagement and the foundation for ensuring that we bring all parts of the organisation into our Engagement Strategy.

Our vision is for a ‘trusted and respected Scottish charity sector which positively contributes to society’, from which we have agreed four strategic objectives.

The public have confidence in charities	Charities are well run and thriving
Charities are at the heart of a vibrant and sustainable Scotland	The Scottish Charity Regulator is a highly effective organisation

Delivery of the Strategy will need excellent cross-organisational working, which will rely on clarity of roles and responsibilities as well as how we will hold ourselves to account corporately.

2. Our principles

In order to have a common approach across the organisation, it is important to identify the principles that will underpin our engagement. They can be summarised as follows. No matter which stakeholders we engage with, the following will be true.

Positive

Across all aspects of the organisation, we will pursue a positive approach to engagement.

Consistent

We will ensure consistent messaging across the organisation, ensuring that our approach is appropriately adapted for our distinct audiences.

Proactive

Through effective monitoring and understanding of the policy environment, we will seek to be proactive in our engagement and communications activities.

Collaborative

Our style and approach will be collaborative in nature, seeking to build healthy and ongoing relationships with key stakeholders that will allow us to spread our messages effectively and support the improvement of the sector overall.

Flexible

Whether developing proactive relationships, or reacting to the unexpected, we will be agile in our approach, building on our shared understanding of key messages and styles of engagement and communications.

Evidence-based

We will build our engagement work on good intelligence, combining information and data from internal and external sources.

Who will we be engaging with?

As the Regulator we engage with a wide range of stakeholders. A comprehensive understanding of our 'stakeholder map' is key to the implementation of the strategy. Our stakeholders are captured in the following groupings.



The size of the text indicates the general level of priority. While trustees and the public will remain at the top of the priority list, there will be an increasing importance of engagement with Scottish Government, Local Authorities and MSPs during the period of the corporate plan.

3. The drivers

The drivers

Key to understanding how and with whom to engage is to understand the key underlying drivers that will help us fulfil our strategic objectives.

Our most recent bi-annual surveys (**which you can find here**) show that 93% of Scottish adults have been involved in some way with a charity over the last year. That includes giving their time, their money or goods. This participation is what makes the charity such a vibrant force across Scotland. Trust in charities is one of the drivers of this involvement. Our survey shows that at the start of 2020, trust in charities was measured at 7.02 out of 10. One of our key objectives is to contribute to that number remaining high and, indeed, getting higher still.

When people are asked what inspires their trust and confidence, they focus on transparency. This is expressed as openness, honesty or accountability. There are two main thrusts to this transparency. The first and most cited of these is that charities should be able to show that they are delivering public benefit with the money that they have received. This might be through clearly communicating the work they do, or through the actual visible impact of their work. The second area related to transparency is the way in which charities are transparent about their internal processes, particularly with respect to their accounting records and financial governance. Much of the power to support growing transparency within the charity sector sits with charities themselves. However, we can play a strong role in this, supporting good governance within charities, enabling improvements in the running of charities and supporting transparency through our charity register and the information we publish about our regulation of charities. This includes including 'lessons learned' in our public facing work, and ensuring that we use OSCR success stories to help build confidence, understanding and visibility.

Knowing that a body is regulated by an independent body is the third most effective method of increasing its perceived trustworthiness. Again, this is something that charities can do something about (through using their charity number, their registration logo and so on). We can contribute to this by helping the public understand the way in which the charity sector is regulated in Scotland.

The charity sector is well respected in Scotland. There is recognition within the public sector that charities play a key role in contributing to Scottish life. However, there is much to do to ensure that there is a more coherent approach to the sector. Intermediary bodies within the sector have a role to play in this. However, we are in a unique position of being able to talk to Scotland's 25,000 charities and can support the public sector overall to develop coherent policies that will best support the sector and secure bigger impacts from its vibrant and creative work.

4. Engagement priorities

Engagement priorities

This strategy will outline the high-level engagement priorities for the regulator. The key activities for these will be detailed in our operational plans, and the measures captured in our key performance indicators. For the purposes of clarity, we have outlined priorities for each of the strategic objectives.

Strategic objective: Charities are well run and thriving

Priorities
We will actively improve standards and practice in the Scottish charity sector by improving the knowledge base of charity trustees, using our intelligence, analysis and engagement with others to inform our guidance, events, contributions to training and the continuing development of our website
We will work with key partners to maximise the use of the Scottish Third Sector Governance code across the charity sector to help drive good governance practice.
We will actively contribute to improving standards and practice in the Scottish charity sector by constructively challenging charities, and supporting shared learning based on that challenge.

Strategic objective: OSCR is a highly effective regulator

Priorities
We will ensure a coherent approach to communications across the organisation thus maximising the impact of our work.
We will develop systems and processes that make interaction with OSCR as easy and effective as possible.

Strategic objective: The public have confidence in charities

Priorities
We will increase the public's understanding of what it means to be a charity in Scotland.
We will increase the public's understanding that charities are regulated.
We will contribute to increasing levels of transparency and accountability of Scottish charities.
We will work closely with Scottish Government and other partners on Charity Law Modernisation.

Strategic objective: Charities are at the heart of a vibrant, successful and sustainable Scotland

Priorities
We will increase the public's understanding of what it means to be a charity in Scotland.

5. How the strategy will be implemented

How this strategy will be implemented

The strategy will be implemented over a three year period from 2021 – 2024. The success of the strategy will be measured through the Key Performance Indicators. The activities required to implement the strategy will be captured in the yearly business and operational plans.

The Senior Manager for Policy and Sector Improvement will facilitate the planning process, which will be a cross-organisational activity. The Leadership Team will play a central role in that process. It is important that everyone in OSCR, including staff and board members, use this strategy as a working document.

6. Monitoring of the success of the strategy

Monitoring of the success of the strategy

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy, the following will be required:

1. The Leadership Team (LT) will review the progress on the Engagement Strategy on a yearly basis. Key parts of the engagement activity will be brought to the LT for input and reflection throughout the year.
2. A formal report on the delivery of the strategy will be shared with SMT on an annual basis and this report will form the basis for a formal discussion at SMT level.
3. A presentation and discussion on the progress of the strategy will be held with the board half way through the strategy period and at the end.



The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)
2nd Floor
Quadrant House
9 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD14NY

T 01382 220446
E info@oscr.org.uk
 [@ScotCharityReg](https://twitter.com/ScotCharityReg)
 [ScottishCharityRegulator](https://www.facebook.com/ScottishCharityRegulator)
www.oscr.org.uk