2026

CFG's Charity Banking Report

Findings and recommendations

CFG Leading the way for charity finance

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Acknowledgements

Almost 2,500 people took time out of their busy lives to share their experiences of charity banking. This report, its findings and recommendations, would not have been possible without them. We recognise that responding to the survey was an additional commitment alongside professional responsibilities, volunteering and everyday life. Thank you. By sharing your experiences, you are supporting our work to drive improvements in charity banking services that benefit charities and the people and communities they serve.

As ever, collaboration across charity infrastructure organisations through the Civil Society Group and beyond made it possible to reach such a large and diverse group of respondents. Collaboration requires time and resource, but we firmly believe it strengthens our organisations, our networks and the sector as a whole. Thank you to everyone who continues to support this collective way of working.

Many colleagues in retail banking are passionate advocates for the charitable sector and have worked to improve the products, services and customer experiences available to charities. We are grateful for their ongoing efforts and value the role they play in supporting the wider charity ecosystem. Together, we share the goal of ensuring charities have access to appropriate products, effective communication and high-quality service.

Finally, we would like to thank colleagues from the regulatory sector for their continued engagement with CFG and their commitment to addressing the challenges facing charity banking. This includes colleagues at the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, as well as the Financial Conduct Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service.

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By sharing your experiences, you are supporting our work to drive improvements in charity banking services that benefit charities and the people and communities they serve

The report's authors

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Executive summary

Executive summary

Key statistics

Between the launch of the 2026 charity banking survey in February 2026 and its close in early spring, almost 2,500 responses were received. This represents an increase of 25% on the 2024 survey when almost 2,000 people responded.

People's willingness to share their experiences of charity banking is a clear demonstration of the sector's continued engagement with this issue. We heard from people across the UK, representing a wide range of roles, sectors and charity sizes, about their organisations' experiences of charity banking. The most commonly reported challenges were:

- Changing the mandate: Over half of respondents (53%) reported that changing signatories on their account mandate was a challenge. This compares to 75% of respondents in 2024. While this represents a significant fall, mandate changes continue to be the top issue.
- Banking charges: 37% reported challenges related to fees for banking services (such as depositing cheques or cash), while 35% reported charges for holding a bank account as an issue. These figures show a marked increase since 2024, when 20% of respondents raised fees for banking services as an issue and 27% were concerned about charges for holding a bank account.
- Access to in-person banking services: Nearly a third (31%) reported that limited access to in-person banking services now presents a barrier to their banking experience. This has risen significantly since the 2024 survey when only 4% of people expressed this concern.

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We heard from people across the UK, representing a wide range of roles, sectors and charity sizes, about their organisations' experiences of charity banking

Key themes

Three clear themes emerged from the 2026 survey: processes, pricing and people. While there is evidence that some longstanding banking challenges are improving, charities across the UK continue to experience significant barriers in accessing and managing banking services.

Processes remain the most significant area of concern. Difficulties changing account mandates, adding or removing signatories, and navigating banking administration continue to affect large numbers of charities, although the proportion reporting mandate-related problems has fallen considerably since 2024. This suggests that action taken by banks and the sector is beginning to make a difference, but further improvement is still needed.

Pricing has emerged as a growing challenge. Concerns about charges for banking services and account fees have increased substantially since our last survey, particularly among smaller charities. For organisations operating with limited resources, banking costs are becoming an increasingly important consideration when choosing and managing accounts. A further area for research could be sentiment analysis among this group of customers: why is there such strength of feeling around this issue, alongside the financial impact.

Executive summary cont.

People reflects charities' ongoing need for accessible, human support. Although most charities now use online banking and many prefer it, respondents highlighted the importance of being able to access knowledgeable staff when complex issues arise. At the same time, the closure of bank branches and reduced availability of in-person services are creating new challenges, particularly for rural organisations.

Across all three themes, respondents consistently described the impact of banking challenges in terms of the time, stress and financial cost involved. For many charities, particularly those reliant on volunteers, improving banking services is not simply about convenience, but about protecting capacity, supporting good governance and enabling organisations to focus on their charitable purpose.

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Recommendations

Three themes consistently stood out from the findings: processes, pricing and people. These themes have shaped our recommendations, which are targeted at the three groups best placed to drive change: banks and financial institutions, charitable organisations, and regulators.

For banks and financial institutions

Improve charity-specific processes

- Continue investment in simplifying mandate and signatory change processes, aiming to make routine changes faster and easier for charity customers.
- Review onboarding, KYC (Know Your Customer) and verification processes to ensure they are proportionate and appropriate for different charity legal structures.
- Ensure digital banking services support appropriate charity governance arrangements, including dual authorisation and multiple user access levels.

Improve knowledge and support

- Provide specialist charity banking training for frontline staff, contact centres and community bankers working in banking hubs.
- Establish clear routes for charity customers to access appropriately trained staff when issues arise.
- Improve communication by explaining why information is being requested, how it will be used and how long processes are likely to take.

Review charging structures

- Regularly review charity and community account offerings to ensure they remain affordable and represent value for money, particularly for smaller volunteer-run organisations.
- Improve recognition of organisations that qualify for charity banking products, including charities that are not required to register with a charity regulator.

Executive summary cont.

Recommendations for charities

Strengthen banking readiness

- Review mandates, signatories and key governance information regularly to ensure records remain up-to-date.
- Develop a 'bank fit' approach by ensuring governing documents, trustee information and key records are readily available when required.
- Consider banking needs strategically and review providers periodically rather than remaining with historic arrangements that may no longer meet organisational needs.

Understand rights and responsibilities

- Increase awareness of Consumer Duty and make use of complaints procedures where service falls below expected standards.
- Ensure trustees, volunteers and staff responsible for banking understand the purpose of KYC, AML (Anti-Money Laundering), CFT (Counter-Terrorist Financing) and fraud-prevention requirements.

Improve risk management

- Review and ensure appropriate online banking controls, including dual authorisation and fraud prevention measures.
- Check for and eliminate workarounds such as using personal accounts or holding significant cash wherever possible and seek support if banking arrangements are creating governance risks.

For charity and financial regulators

Charity regulators

- Continue to gather evidence on banking challenges and share insights with the banking sector and financial regulators.
- Work alongside CFG to produce more guidance for trustees and volunteers on managing banking relationships, maintaining good financial controls and responding to banking challenges.
- Continue to promote discussions between the charity sector and banking sector to support practical solutions.

Financial regulators

- Monitor the impact of branch closures and changing cash-access arrangements on charities and community organisations.
- Consider whether Consumer Duty outcomes are being achieved for charity and community account holders.
- Encourage proportionate, risk-based approaches to charity due diligence and verification requirements.

Joint action for regulators

- Work together to address barriers faced by newly established charities that require a bank account before obtaining a charity registration number.
- Support the rollout of banking hubs by ensuring staff have appropriate understanding of charity banking needs.
- Establish a regular mechanism for reviewing progress against the issues identified in successive charity banking surveys.

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The closure of bank branches and reduced availability of in-person services are creating new challenges, particularly for rural organisations

Methodology

Methodology

The 2026 survey

This report updates and expands on our previous research, tracking how charity banking experiences have changed since our surveys in 2022 and 2024. As with previous surveys, the methodology was designed to ensure the data remained as comparable as possible over time.

The latest survey was published on 6 February 2026 and closed for responses on 30 April 2026. A Welsh language version of the survey was also made available.

The survey was widely promoted by CFG and other charity sector organisations including NCVO, SCVO, NICVA, WCVA, Girl Guiding, Muslim Charities Forum, ACRE and NAVCA. Civil Society Group partner organisations also promoted the survey through their communication channels and networks.

This helped ensure the opportunity to take part in the survey was visible to as many people as possible across the charitable sector. We are grateful to all those who helped promote and support the survey.

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Almost 2,500 responses were received, a substantial increase on previous surveys. This is a clear demonstration of the sector's continued engagement with this issue

Understanding how trends in charity banking challenges are evolving remains important, as does assessing whether interventions by the sector, government, regulators and banks are having an impact on charities' banking experiences.

Almost 2,500 responses were received, a substantial increase on previous surveys. This is a clear demonstration of the sector's continued engagement with this issue.

Analysis of the raw data was carried out by CFG.

Participation in the 2024 survey

Civil Society Group partners, led by CFG and NCVO, decided to run a survey in 2024 to capture comparable data and understand whether the challenges identified in 2022 had improved or worsened, as well as better understand any new trends.

In total, almost 2,000 people completed the survey on behalf of charitable organisations. The challenges reported fell into three broad themes:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Communication
- The desire for greater simplicity

You can read the full report from the 2024 survey here: Charity Banking Challenges 2024.

Methodology cont.

Where it began – the first survey in 2022

In 2022, we noticed an increase in reports of charities facing challenges accessing banking services. In response, the first survey in this series was conducted to better understand the challenges facing the sector and build a meaningful evidence base. More than 1,200 respondents completed the first survey.

Four key themes were drawn out from the findings:

1. Services charities needed were increasingly unavailable.
2. Services that were available were not well suited to the way charitable organisations operated.
3. Poor service was often encountered.
4. Online banking was not designed to meet the needs of charitable organisations.

The findings from the 2022 survey can be found here: Charity banking challenges: briefing no. 1 (June 2022).

ACRE (Action for Rural Communities in England) produced a separate report focused on communities in rural areas, based on the same data: Rural community organisations: access to and use of banking services.

The Civil Society Group worked closely with UK Finance in the period following to create UK Finance's Voluntary Organisation Banking Guide. Reflecting the vulnerabilities the 2022 survey demonstrated, the banking guide provided information on opening and operating accounts for the VCSE sector, as well as offering an account finder service.

Our respondents

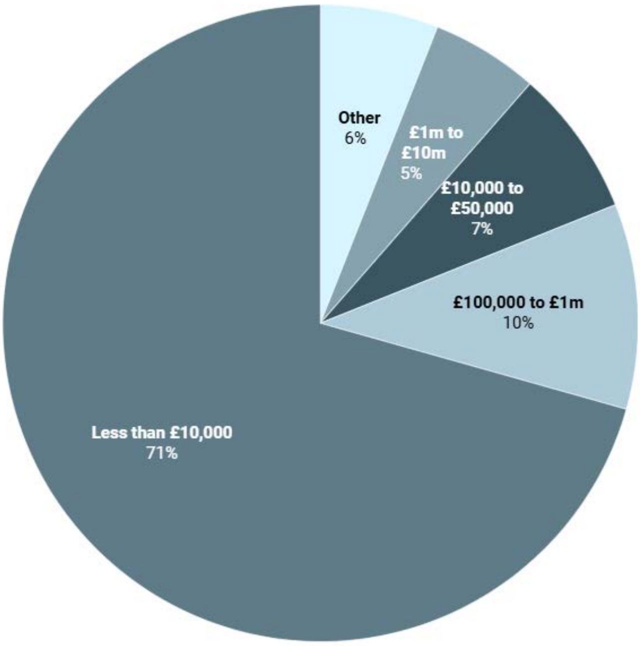
Our respondents

For the 2026 survey, we heard from 2,416 people across the UK, representing a wide range of roles sectors and charity sizes, about their organisations' experiences of charity banking.

Organisations

Organisation size, by annual income

The proportion of respondents by annual income (% of respondents)



Similarly to 2024, almost 80% of respondents reported an income of less than £100,000, with the vast majority handling annual income under £10,000. This broadly reflects the wider UK picture, where around 90% of charities have incomes below £500,000.[1]

Legal form

Responses came from organisations with a wide range of legal structures:

Type of organisation	Number of respondents	Percent
Excepted charity (for example, a Scout or Guide unit)	1,653	63
Registered Charity	484	19
Charitable company (limited by guarantee)	206	8
CIO or SCIO	127	5
Place of worship	63	2
Unincorporated association	36	1
Community interest company (CIC)	13	0
Exempted charity	7	0
Trust	5	0
Constituted Community Group	2	0

As there is no single, uniform 'charity' structure, legal forms of charitable organisations create challenges for banking services. Knowledge of charity governance and legal structures would be of benefit to banking staff, to help them address customer queries or process issues.

In addition, a one-size-fits-all approach to due diligence for charity customers is also likely to cause difficulties for bank processes, particularly as legal form, charity status, and registration are not interchangeable. NCVO provides a helpful explanation of the distinctions between these elements.[2]

[1] Annual Return 2024 analysis report, Charity Commission for England and Wales, published 26 March 2026

[2] Understanding charity status and registration, NCVO

Our respondents cont.

Geographical area of operations

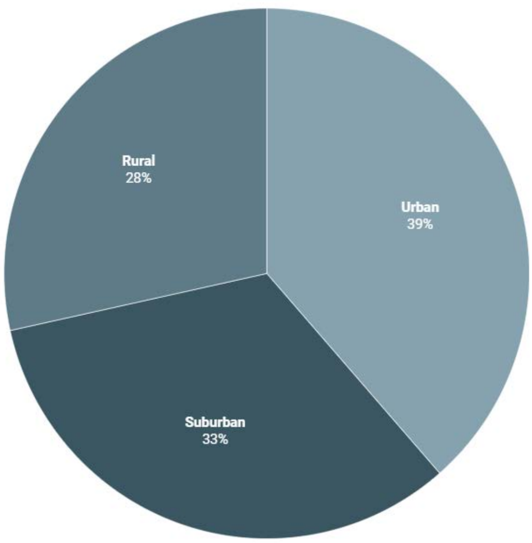
Respondents worked across the UK and often in multiple regions.

Area of operations	Number of respondents	Proportion (%)
England	1,281	51
UK-wide	709	28
Scotland	269	11
Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland	109	4
Wales	109	4
Overseas	58	2

Communities served

We also asked charities about the type of area they operate in, with responses showing a relatively even distribution across the different categories.

Region type (% of respondents)



https://www.datawrapper.de/_/fJRp0/

This is important because the impact of some banking challenges varies by region. Fifty-five per cent of respondents operating in rural areas said that in-person banking services were either not very available or not available at all, compared with fewer than 40% of respondents operating in urban areas.

Focus of activities

A strong majority of respondents worked in youth services, most of whom were Girlguiding groups (Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Ranger Guide units). In comparison with the wider UK picture, the survey's most notable difference is its higher representation of respondents working in youth services. However, this pattern was also broadly reflected in the 2022 and 2024 editions, meaning it has little effect on comparability over time.

Organisational focus (first 15)	Number of respondents
Youth services	1,665
Faith	107
Health (including mental health and public health)	76
Community development	71
Arts and culture	66
Social infrastructure (community centre, village hall etc.)	64
Families and children	50
Disability	49
Education (not including employability services)	41
Environment, nature and/or climate change	28
Social care	23
Advice (including for finances, debt, benefits etc.)	19
Homelessness support	18
Domestic violence and sexual abuse	13
Funding	13

Our respondents cont.

The focus of the organisations that responded extends beyond youth services. Activities also covered faith, health and mental health, homelessness support, infrastructure, arts and heritage, sports, and animal welfare.

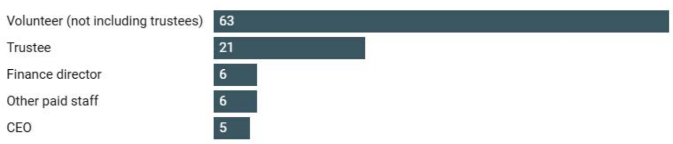
The people responding

Role of respondents

Compared with 2024, there is a higher proportion of volunteers (63% compared to 50%), alongside a corresponding lower representation of senior staff. As shown below, the vast majority of respondents were volunteers. However, trustees, finance directors, CEOs, and other paid staff still made up over one-third of the respondents, a meaningful proportion.

For the purpose of this and previous surveys we have separated volunteers and trustees, even though trustees also give their time voluntarily. This is because trustees hold a distinct role in relation to organisational governance. Banks and other financial institutions frequently ask for identification information for all trustees, regardless of whether every trustee is a signatory on the organisation's bank accounts.

Role of respondents (%)



Why improving charity banking remains so important

Since our last survey in 2024, volunteering rates have continued to stagnate at below 30% (of people volunteering at least once in the last 12 months).[3] The main barriers to volunteering continue to be work commitments, competing priorities and childcare responsibilities, all of which suggest that concerns around time commitment continue to be the biggest obstacle to volunteering.

Across the UK, charities continue to face significant challenges recruiting and retaining trustees. In England and Wales, 79% of charities have at least one trustee vacancy, with more than one-third reporting vacancies that have remained unfilled for over a year.[4]

Sector bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have also identified trustee recruitment as an ongoing challenge and continue to promote initiatives to attract new trustees.

There is no doubt that volunteers play a central role in the daily running of many charitable organisations, particularly small and micro charities. The impact of banking administration on volunteers' time and motivation is therefore an important issue for the sector as a whole.

In our 2026 survey, many respondents explained the impact banking-based administrative tasks were having on them. As one respondent described:

> *"I am very anxious about current bank situation, and it is causing me to question my volunteering."*

Another similarly detailed the impacts it was having on volunteers:

> *"Our volunteers can be extremely frustrated over banking issues with being charged/changing*

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[3] Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Community Life Survey 2024/25: Volunteering and charitable giving (10 December 2025) [gov.uk]

[4] Understanding Trustee Recruitment and Retention Challenges

Our respondents cont.

accounts – although they've not left the organisation, it is an ongoing issue and takes away valuable volunteer time."

These quotes are illustrative of themes we have heard consistently, both in our casework and through survey responses:

> *"We would lose volunteers because of the banking challenges, but it's only because one volunteer has stuck with this, but this will alter soon as she wants to leave."*

For charities, many of which are reliant on volunteers and trustees, banking challenges are placing additional pressure on already limited time and capacity, and in some cases are affecting volunteers' willingness to continue in their roles.

The responses to this year's survey also point to a number of clear and recurring issues, which are explored in more detail in the following section through the key themes emerging from the research.

Our volunteers can be extremely frustrated over banking issues with being charged/changing accounts – although they've not left the organisation, it is an ongoing issue and takes away valuable volunteer time

Key findings

Key findings

Three clear themes have emerged from this research:

1. Processes, and how they could improve for charities in operating their bank accounts
2. Pricing, or paying for accounts and services
3. People, and the need charities have for in-person, human support in understanding and operating their bank accounts

In this section of the report, we analyse the experiences shared with us and the challenges faced, and explore some of the issues in more granular detail.

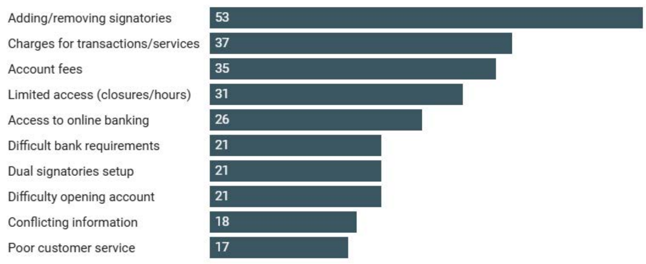
What banking challenges have been experienced?

According to our respondents, the top five most common banking challenges in 2026 are:

1. Changing the mandate
2. Being charged for banking services
3. Being charged to hold a bank account
4. Limited access to in-person banking services
5. Accessing online banking

We asked: 'Thinking about the last two years, has your organisation experienced any of the following banking challenges?'. Respondents could select multiple challenges to reflect their experiences.Every respondent reported experiencing at least one banking challenge. Notably, despite significant differences between the largest charities (income over £100m) and the smallest (income under £10k), the same three issues emerged as the most commonly reported challenges across almost all regions, roles and organisational work areas.

Top 10 most common banking challenges faced (% of respondents)



How does this compare to 2024?

Issue	2026 ranking	2026 % of respondents	*2024 ranking*	*2024 % of respondents*
Changing signatories on bank account (mandate	1	53%	*1*	*75%*
Being charged for banking services	2	37%	*5=*	*31%*
Being charged to hold a bank account	3	35%	*13*	*24%*
Limited access to in-person banking services	4	31%	*25*	*4%=*
Access to online banking	5	26%	*26*	*2.5%*
Completing checks not designed for charities	n/a	n/a	*2*	*40%*
Attending the bank in person for signature verification	12	17%	*3=*	*34%*
Setting up dual signatories on the account	8	21%	*3=*	*34%*
Your bank losing information you have supplied	20	12%	*5=*	*31%*

Changing the mandate

As in 2024, the most frequently reported challenge was difficulties in changing the mandate, specifically when adding or removing signatories. More than half of respondents (53%) identified this as a banking challenge. The mandate is the document that sets out who owns the bank account, who is authorised to operate it, and who can access information relating to the account.

As described in our previous report, for a charitable organisation, the mandate would set out that the organisation owns the account. It will show who is an authorised signatory on the account and whether transactions can be authorised on just one signature, a number of signatures or all signatures. It will also specify

Key findings cont.

who can have access to information, which could include the organisation's accountants or auditors as well as the signatories.

The governance of many charities necessitates regular changes in signatories, as new trustees – who frequently serve as signatories – are typically appointed at annual general meetings. Some organisations will require a proportion of their trustees to step down each year, adding to 'churn'. Charities may also have members of staff as signatories on their account, and again, if those members of staff leave or new members of staff join in roles with authority to access the accounts, the mandate will need to be changed.

As a result of difficulties changing mandates, outdated signatories may remain on bank accounts, posing a significant risk to the organisation's financial security. Since trustees serve on a voluntary basis, the time-consuming procedures involved in updating signatories are particularly burdensome for individuals who may also have full-time employment, or caring or other responsibilities which require their time. The length of time taken to enact changes can also be a contributing factor to trustees remaining in role, particularly when this takes months.

For charities with paid staff, spending a great deal of time on what should be straightforward banking administrative tasks is an inefficient use of resources.

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Our primary account holder passed away and it was impossible to remove her from the account

Although this remains the most commonly reported issue by some margin, it is worth noting that the proportion of respondents identifying it as a challenge has fallen by 22% since the 2024 survey. This represents a significant improvement and indicates that progress is being made.

CFG has had regular discussions with colleagues from many of the banks serving charity customers and, since the 2024 report, several banks have invested in improving customer journeys and experience in relation to mandate processes. The training CFG provided to one major bank also covered the reasons why charity mandates may need to be changed regularly, helping staff understand the issues from the charity perspective. CFG has also worked to encourage charities to 'get bank fit' by keeping their mandates and records more up-to-date.

Despite the progress made, challenges with mandates remain the most pressing issue and there is still room for further improvement. As one respondent described:

> *"I would like to change the account to have a debit card but I dare not risk it. I had enough problems changing signatories, the threatening letters, the bank insisted my Brownie unit was a company, owing to the misleading question 'income per year', threatened with account closure verbally and in letters. I can't face that situation again."*

Another:

> *"Our primary account holder passed away and it was impossible to remove her from the account..."*

Mandate changes, along with processes around signatory and trustee ID verification, and dual authorisation, are the among main process challenges faced by charities in operating their accounts.

Key findings cont.

Charges for banking

Almost 40% of charities cited charges as a key challenge. Compared to 2024, concerns about the cost of banking have increased. The proportion of respondents reporting charges for services, such as depositing cash and cheques, rose from 20% to 37%, an increase of 17 percentage points. Similarly, the proportion reporting charges for holding a bank account increased from 27% to 35%.

These findings suggest that the financial cost of banking is becoming an increasingly significant hurdle for charities, especially for those smallest organisations (in terms of annual income). For organisations already operating with tiny margins, rising banking costs represent an additional pressure on already stretched resources.

During regular conversations with some of the banks, CFG has been made aware of work to improve knowledge and understanding around the types of organisations holding charity and community accounts. As the opposite table shows, a number of high street banks offer charity and community accounts, and the fee structure varies.

Respondents commented on changes to accounts which have led to charges:

> *"[Due to our] bank changing our type of account which means we now face some charges, previously we banked for free."*

Another:

> *"[Our] charity account was unilaterally changed to a business account with charges."*

Bank	Charity	Community account	Fee/charges
HSBC	Yes	No separate community account identified	No monthly account fee. Charges may apply for some services, including cash and cheque transactions.
NatWest	No separate charity account identified	Yes	No monthly account fee for eligible organisations. Standard charges may apply depending on eligibility and the services used.
Lloyds	Yes	Yes (for clubs and societies)	No monthly account fee for eligible charity accounts. Other charges may apply depending on the account and services used.
Barclays	Yes	No separate community account identified	No monthly account fee for eligible charity accounts. Standard charges may apply depending on eligibility and the services used.
Santander	Yes	No separate community account identified	Monthly account fee may apply. Registered charities may be exempt, while other organisations may be subject to a monthly fee and additional service charges.

Details correct as of 14 July 2026

Key findings cont.

Respondents highlighted the impacts of charges on paying in both cheques and cash:

> *"They [the bank] have changed the terms so we will now be charged for all cheques in or out and paying cash in."*

One issue is that some banks require a charity to have a charity registration number in order to be recognised by the bank as a charity. This is not a problem in Scotland, where all charities are required to register with OSCR. However, in England and Wales, charities are not required to register with the Charity Commission unless income is in excess of £5,000 per annum. In Northern Ireland, the regulations are changing and organisations will not be required to register with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland until their annual income exceeds £20,000. For some organisations in England and Wales/ Northern Ireland, with lower levels of income but with significant assets, registration is required.

CFG case study

CFG was asked to help a charity that had an annual income of under £5k and so was not registered with the Charity Commission. Their bank had deemed that they were not a charity because they did not have a charity registration number. The community account they were allocated incurred charges of £5 per month. CFG contacted the relevant bank with the details, including a copy of the charity's constitution document. This action led to a refund of five months' charges for the charity, and no further charges being applied.

While charitable organisations are often understandably concerned about the introduction of banking charges, paying for banking services should not be seen as something to automatically challenge.

As with any supplier relationship, the key consideration is whether the service provides value for money. In some cases, paying for a banking service may prove more cost-effective in the long-term if it reduces administrative burdens, saves staff and volunteer time, improves security, or provides functionality that better meets an organisation's needs.

Rather than focusing solely on avoiding fees, CFG recommends that charities look for banking services that offer a clear and proportionate return on investment of time, as well as money. The concern should not necessarily be the charges themselves, but whether those charges are offset by the quality, accessibility and suitability of the banking services provided.

CFG is producing a separate guide for charities on understanding your banking needs, which will be published shortly after this report.

Access to in-person services

An issue often discussed in relation to financial exclusion in personal banking has emerged as a significant and immediate challenge for charities. Of particular concern is the sharp increase in reported difficulties with access to in-person banking since the 2024 survey. In 2024, only 4% of respondents identified this as an ongoing challenge, compared with nearly a third (31%) in 2026 who reported that bank branch closures now present a barrier to their banking experience.

According to research from 'Which?', banks and building societies have closed 6,795 branches since 2015, with 52 parliamentary constituencies (8%) across the UK are now without a single bank

Key findings cont.

branch, and a further 91 (14%) have only one[5]. In the time between the 2024 Charity Banking Challenges report and this survey, almost 1,000 branches have closed across the UK[6].

These closures reflect broader shifts in consumer behaviour. UK Finance reports that two-thirds of UK adults (72%) were using online banking and over half (54%) were using mobile banking in 2020[6]. This trend is also evident within the charity sector: almost 80% of charities surveyed now bank (at least partially) online, and more than half report a preference for online banking.

However, this still leaves a substantial minority, around 20% of organisations, who are finding it increasingly difficult to access in-person banking services.

Many respondents described how this issue is impacting them, one said:

> *"Closure of our local branch is making paying in cash and cheques exceedingly challenging."*

Another survey respondent stated:

> *"Local banks have closed; we have to travel 20+ miles to use a bank."*

"

Our local branch is closing, so we're no longer able to pay in coins

And another:

> *"Our local branch is closing, so there is no face-to-face help now banking all has to be done online or by telephone."*

Less common use cases are often the most affected by changes, such as branch closures.

> *"Our local branch is closing, so we're no longer able to pay in coins."*

These issues are particularly apparent for rural charities. In our survey, almost 55% of rural respondents said that in-person banking services were either not very available or not available at all.

Lack of access is further exacerbated by changes that have, in some cases, removed the ability to deposit cash through Post Office branches.

One charity described the situation:

> *"Being based in a rural village up until recently I was able to deposit cheques and cash into a Bank of Scotland account via the local Post Office. Now I cannot deposit cheques through the Post Office. I have to travel a 30-mile round trip to pay in a cheque."*

The recent introduction of banking hubs, and the planned expansion of the banking hub network, could potentially address some of the concerns raised. There are currently over 200 banking hubs across the UK and plans to grow to 350 banking hubs by the end of this parliament[7].

However, the benefit for charities will depend on the extent of knowledge that community bankers have about charity banking.

[5] 'Which? Bank branch closures: is your local bank closing?'

[6] UK PAYMENT MARKETS SUMMARY 2021

[7] Banking Hubs: Standards

Key findings cont.

CFG plans to engage with Cash Access UK and the high street banks to push for dedicated training for community bankers on charity banking.

What are banking hubs?

Banking hubs offer easy access to face-to-face cash and banking in the heart of communities across the UK. They are owned by Cash Access UK and operated by the Post Office.

A number of high street banks operate from banking hubs. Typically, a different bank will staff and operate the hub on each day of the week. A small town with a banking hub may no longer have any bank branches, but customers have access through the hub to NatWest on Mondays, Lloyds on Tuesdays, Halifax on Wednesdays, and Barclays on Friday – the details of the rota will depend on local arrangements. Some days may not have a dedicated community banker yet, as hubs are still being rolled out.

Usually open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, each banking hub has a counter where customers can access cash services, including:

- paying in cash (notes and coins) and cheques
- withdrawing cash (notes and coins)
- checking balances on accounts
- paying utility bills
- accessing change-giving services (for registered businesses)

"

The challenges identified in our survey have tangible day-to-day impacts on staff, trustees and volunteers

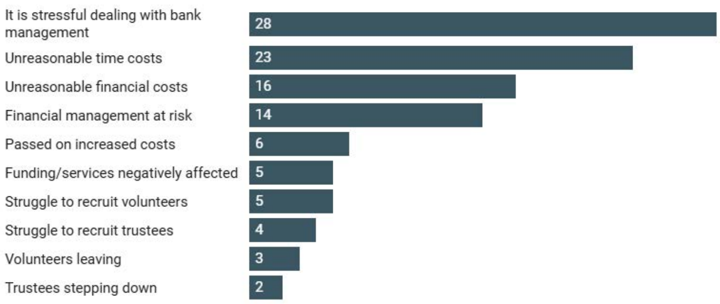
Services and limits may vary across banks. Customers can also talk to a community banker from their bank on the designated day when their bank is in the hub. Hubs have private space where customers can talk face-to-face about more complicated banking enquiries like payments and transfers, managing accounts, and how to use online banking.

Time, stress and financial cost

The challenges identified in our survey have tangible day-to-day impacts on staff, trustees and volunteers. They impose costs either directly through charges or indirectly through time spent, taking vital resources away from charitable activities.

Only 26% of respondents said banking did not have a serious impact on their organisation. In contrast, more than a quarter (28%) found it stressful, 16% said it was leading to unreasonable costs, and around 5% reported that it was making it harder to recruit volunteers and trustees. See below for the top 10 most reported impacts.

Impacts of banking challenges (% of respondents)



One respondent described their situation:

> *"There is a disproportionate amount of time spent on banking and admin. Time better spent on organising activities for our meetings."*

Key findings cont.

A similar sentiment was shared in this quote:

> *"Our volunteers can be extremely frustrated over banking issues with being charged/ changing accounts – although they've not left the organisation, it is an ongoing issue and takes away valuable volunteer time."*

The following comment from one respondent shows how time spent on banking tasks diverts resources away from the charitable purpose:

> *"I would never leave...because of the poor performance of the bank, but I have had to spend so much time dealing with the bank that I've had to put some activities that I had planned...on hold, as there were just not enough hours in those weeks to do everything."*

Counting the cost of charity banking

Banking challenges continue to place a significant burden on charity staff, trustees and volunteers, not only in financial terms but also through the time and stress they create.

Based on our survey findings, we estimate that collectively the UK's 204,000 registered charities spend around 12 million hours each year on banking administration, equivalent to more than 6,000 full-time employees working for a year dedicated solely to banking-related tasks.

Banking controls, compliance requirements and good financial governance are all essential, and charities recognise their importance. However, the evidence suggests that many routine banking processes remain more complex and time-consuming than they need to be. Streamlining these processes would reduce administrative burdens, improve customer experience and allow charities to devote more of their limited resources to delivering public benefit.

Reporting when things go wrong

Although awareness and understanding of the Consumer Duty has improved since 2024, nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents had still never heard of it. Respondents were asked how often they made complaints. A clear majority (58%) said they had not made a complaint in the past two years. Far fewer (12%) reported that they had made a complaint which was successfully resolved, while a further 8% said they had made a complaint that remained unresolved.

As in 2024, we asked charities about their awareness of the Consumer Duty, as it plays a key role in understanding what to expect from the bank and what should and can be fairly contested. We have seen a relative improvement in respondents' knowledge of the Consumer Duty. In 2024, only 3% reported being familiar with the Consumer Duty, compared with 10% in our 2026 survey. Meanwhile, 83% said they had never heard of it in 2024, compared with 63% in 2026, and 14% had heard of it but were not familiar, compared with 27%.

Overall, this shows a positive trend towards greater knowledge, though there is still significant room for improvement across the sector. Notably, more than half of respondents had never heard of the Consumer Duty.
Many respondents felt the process of filing complaints adds to the overall stress of banking:

> *"It takes too long and as volunteers we don't have time to spend on it."*

The example below illustrates how a deeper understanding of the Consumer Duty could help mitigate situations in which charities feel unheard or that their concerns are not being adequately addressed:

> *"Previous complaints have not been dealt with so why should any new complaint be any different."*

Sub-sector analysis

Sub-sector analysis

Small charities

One-third of small charities said they faced limited access due to branch closures or restricted opening hours.

'Small charities' is usually taken to mean those organisations with an annual income under £1 million. Particularly at the lower end of that income bracket, they are more likely to be entirely volunteer run, rather than having any paid members of staff.

Small charities can be local, connected to a particular place or even building – such as community centres, local ats venues, youth projects or faith groups. They may also be organisations that connect communities of experience or practice, such as support for a particular health condition or disability, or specific characteristic. In the digital age, 'community' can bring people together from across the country, as well as meaning a specific geographical place.

As was the case with our 2024 report, small charities made up the vast majority of the survey results in 2026. This reflects the composition of the charitable sector across the UK. We received more than 1,665 responses from small organisations delivering youth services, predominantly through Girlguiding and Scouts (all age groups). We also had responses from a wide range of other small organisations including, but by no means limited to:

- Arts and culture
- Services for families and children
- Social infrastructure
- Community development
- Education
- Faith

"

Nearly a third (32%) of small charities highlighted limited access as a current challenge and 38.6% noted the impact of charges for banking services

The nature and scale of banking challenges identified by respondents from small charities has shifted between 2024 and 2026.

In 2024, the most common challenges related to governance and compliance processes. Access to banking services and charges for those services were relatively minor concerns. By contrast, these have become some of the most significant issues raised by small charities in our 2026 survey.

Nearly a third (32%) of small charities highlighted limited access as a current challenge and 38.6% noted the impact of charges for banking services. With every pound fought for, against a backdrop of intense cost of living pressures that have had an effect on public giving , around 40% of respondents reported being charged for banking services as a challenge, while 35% said that charges for holding a bank account had become a significant concern.

The landscape for small charities is undoubtedly increasingly challenging. Cost pressures continue to mount and, as the data suggests, access to value-for-money banking services that are available locally is only adding to this. Local infrastructure bodies across the UK, including councils for voluntary service and third sector interfaces, and national umbrella organisations, continue to play an important role in supporting charities. However, there is a significant variation in the availability and capacity of support, by area.

Sub-sector analysis cont.

Major charities

Among major charities, one in ten said that banking challenges had resulted in the loss of trustees or volunteers.

Major charities have incomes greater than £10 million a year. They made up 2% of our respondents and represent less than 1% of charities in the UK . Major charities are unlikely to rely on volunteers for administrative tasks. Despite their more complex structures and greater access to expertise, major charities faced the same primary challenge as micro charities, with almost half (44%) reporting difficulties in adding or removing signatories from the mandate. The next most reported challenges were being asked to supply personal information for all trustees (35%), followed by bank processes being difficult to comply with (31%).

For major charities, the impacts of these challenges are pronounced. Around 27% reported that the time spent dealing with banking challenges incurs unreasonable costs. Worryingly, 10% said that volunteers or trustees had left as a direct result of these issues. This is also reflected in recruitment, with a further 10% reporting that banking challenges have made it harder to recruit both trustees and volunteers.

Scotland

We received 269 responses from organisations in Scotland. Of these, 36% were from urban organisations, 38% from rural areas, and 24% from suburban settings.

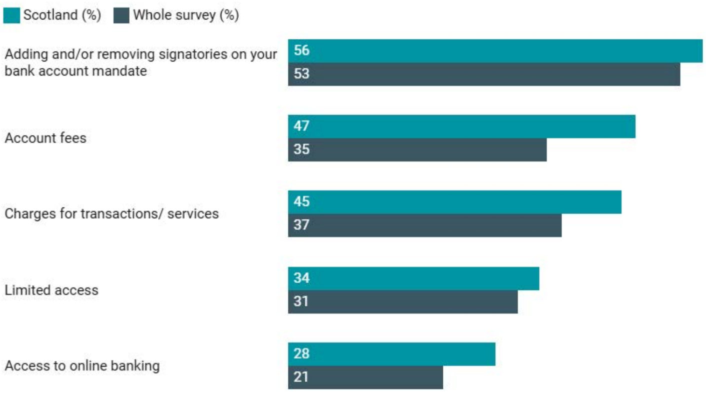
Youth services made up the majority of respondents, accounting for 62%, with faith-based organisations representing a further 24%. We also heard from organisations across a wide range of areas, including arts and culture, community development, environment, and education.

Charity income varied significantly, ranging from less than £10,000 to over £10 million per year. The most commonly reported challenges among organisations based in Scotland closely reflect wider UK trends.

The most significant issue was difficulties with account mandates, particularly adding or removing signatories (56%). This was followed by being charged to deposit cash or cheques (47%), and charges for holding a bank account (45%). Limited access to in-person banking services was also a major concern, affecting around 34% of respondents. These challenges are being felt across different organisational types, regions, and sectors.

Seventy per cent said their organisation used online banking. Sixty-three per cent, a measurable increase on 2024, said they had organisational procedures in place to prevent online fraud.

Top 5 most common banking challenges in Scotland (% of respondents)



One respondent described how challenging access can be in Scotland:

“Bank closed, [so now the] nearest branch options either 50 miles away or 100 miles.”

Sub-sector analysis cont.

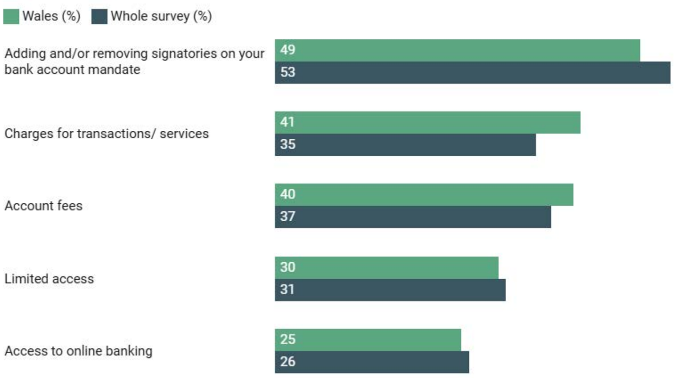
Wales

Thanks to the support of colleagues at WCVA, a Welsh-language version of the survey was also produced and promoted across Wales, to increase accessibility and engagement with the survey.

We received 99 responses from organisations across Wales. Of these, 47% were from urban organisations, 27% from suburban, and 23% from rural. Youth services accounted for the largest share of respondents at 46%, followed by faith-based organisations at 12% and peer support organisations at around 3%. We also received input from organisations spanning a diverse range of sectors, including arts and culture, community development, environment and education. Charity income ranged from less than £10,000 to over £10 million per year.

The most reported issue in Wales was, again, difficulties with account mandates, particularly adding or removing signatories (49%). This was followed by being charged to deposit cash or cheques (41%), and charges for holding a bank account (40%). Limited access to in-person banking services was also a major concern, affecting around 30% of respondents. Almost 90% said their organisation used online banking, and 73% said they had organisational procedures in place to prevent online fraud, demonstrating significantly above average online usage and fraud preparation.

Top 5 most common banking challenges in Wales (% of respondents)



One respondent highlighted concerns about being required to pay fees following a change to their account type:

"Being forced to change the type of account to a fee paying one when the account falls under the registered charity."

Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

We received 95 responses from organisations in Northern Ireland, including 14 that also operate in the Republic of Ireland.

Respondents were spread across different settings, with 46% based in urban areas, 34% in suburban areas, and 18% in rural areas. Youth services were the most common area of work at 44%, alongside contributions from organisations working across sectors such as arts and culture, education, and community development. Charity income ranged from less than £10,000 to over £10 million per year.

The most commonly reported challenges among organisations in Northern Ireland reflect similar trends seen across the rest of the UK. The most significant issue was being charged for a bank account, affecting around 51% of respondents. A third of respondents (36%) also cited charges for depositing cash or cheques as an issue.

Other key challenges included difficulties with adding or removing signatories (47%). Requirements for trustees to attend in person for verification were also a major challenge, reported by around 29% of respondents. Sixty-nine per cent said their organisation used online banking, and 62% said they had organisational procedures in place to prevent online fraud. Almost one-third of respondents said they found maintaining or setting up their bank account very stressful – this has real impacts on the services charities are able to deliver.
In relation to charges, the table below shows the

Sub-sector analysis cont.

range of banks currently servicing the charitable sector in Northern Ireland, the accounts they offer and publicly available information on charges.

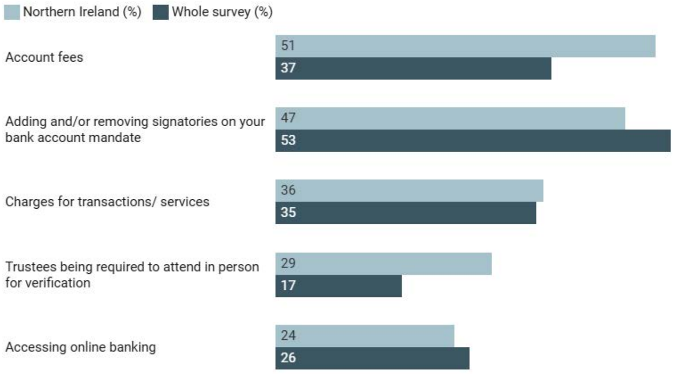
In Northern Ireland, the traditional ‘big four’ banks are AIB (First Trust), Bank or Ireland, Danske Bank and Ulster Bank, which also operate the vast majority of branches.

Bank (Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland)	Charity account	Community account	Account fees and charges
AIB (NI)	Yes	Yes	Charges apply according to business tariff; no specific free banking offer.
Bank of Ireland UK	Yes (supports charities)	No dedicated community account identified	Registered charities receive a 50% discount on transaction fees.
Barclays	Yes	Yes	Charges vary by account and organisation type; specialist charity/community accounts available.
Danske Bank	Yes	Yes	Charity Account: £2.50/month. Community Account: £5/month.
HSBC UK	Yes	Yes (clubs and societies)	No monthly fee identified; free digital transactions, with cheque processing charges.
Lloyds Bank	Yes	Yes	Registered charities with under £250,000 annual turnover receive free day-to-day banking.
Santander UK	Yes (accepts charities/not-for-profits)	Limited/no dedicated community offering identified	Charges depend on business account selected; no specific charity tariff.
Ulster Bank	Yes (through Community Bank Account)	Yes	Up to 2 years' free everyday banking for organisations with turnover under £250k; reduced-fee packages for larger organisations.

This information was accurate at the time of publication in July 2026.

Sub-sector analysis cont.

Top five most common banking challenges in Northern Ireland (% of respondents)



Responses suggested that communication between banks and charities was not always clear, consistent or accurate. One respondent noted:

“Told charities won’t be charged fees but then be charged.”

Another highlighted a perceived lack of support:

“Basic lack of help and support.”

Improvements since 2024

Improvements

While many of the banking challenges identified in our previous surveys remain persistent, there are some encouraging signs of improvement. As previously explored, the proportion of people identifying mandate changes as an issue has fallen, from 75% in 2024 to 53% in 2026.

In the 2024 survey, over one-third of respondents (35%) reported experiencing inappropriate Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) checks. In 2026, this issue was no longer a prominent challenge raised by respondents. The survey data suggests that inappropriate KYC and AML checks have become less prevalent since 2024, which is an encouraging indication that some banks may be developing a better understanding of charities and their governance structures. However, our casework presents a more nuanced picture.

Requests for extensive trustee verification continue to feature regularly in the charity banking challenges brought to us. In the 2026 survey, 143 charities reported issues relating to KYC checks. While this is a notable reduction from 254 charities in 2024, it remains a significant concern for those affected.

Those who faced these checks often felt that requests for information were disproportionate or unreasonable. Organisations reported being threatened with account restrictions or closures if they were unable to provide the information requested. Improved communication and clearer explanations would help alleviate what can still be a highly challenging and stressful issue for charities.

Similarly, requests for excessive personal information from trustees and the rejection of legitimate documents as invalid appear to have reduced compared with 2024, when both issues were reported by around one-quarter of respondents (24%). Although these challenges have not disappeared entirely, their lower prominence suggests that some financial institutions may be developing a better understanding of charity governance

Improvements cont.

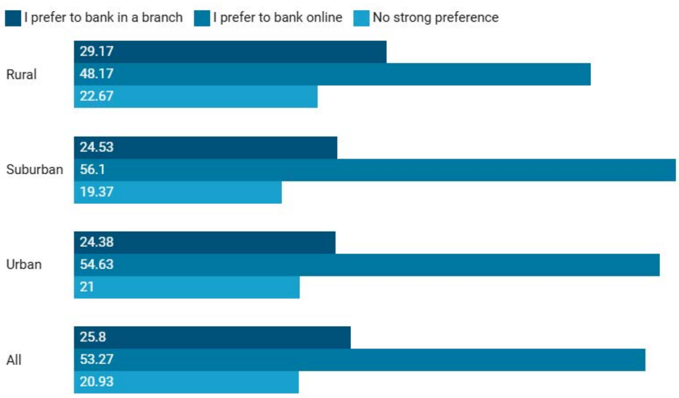
and the types of documentation that charitable organisations can reasonably provide.

These improvements are welcome, however there remains considerable work to do to ensure banking services meet the needs of charities and voluntary organisations.

Digital banking

The wider societal trend towards online banking has been reflected in our sector. Almost 80% of respondents said their organisation used online banking and a majority (53%) said they prefer to bank online.

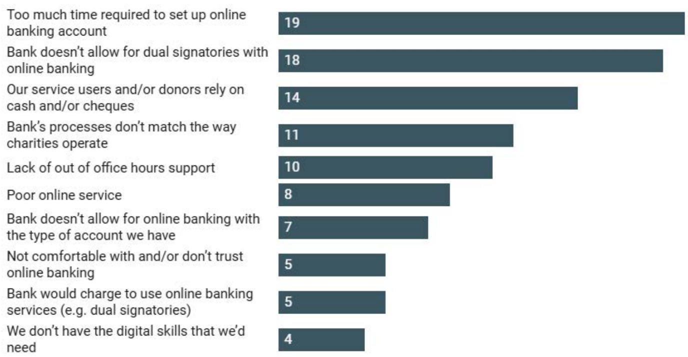
How do you prefer to bank?



While online banking is the most popular option across all regions, organisations in rural areas have a stronger preference for in-person banking, at almost 5% higher than in urban and suburban regions.

In terms of barriers to online banking, 26% of respondents reported facing no barriers at all. The most commonly cited barrier was the perceived time required to set up an online banking account (19%), closely followed by concerns around functionality, with 18% of respondents stating that online banking does not accommodate dual signatories. These barriers were shared across the different regions.

Barriers to online banking (% of respondents)



CFG's work since 2024

With charities

Communication was one of the key themes identified in the survey. In response, CFG produced a guide, 'Communicating with your bank', to help charities build more effective relationships with their banking providers. The guide outlined what charities can expect from their bank, highlights common challenges, and provides advice on how to communicate organisational changes, raise concerns, and make complaints where necessary. By the start of July 2026, the guide had been widely shared across the UK.

CFG has delivered free webinars for charities, directly and with partner organisations including VONNE (Voluntary Organisations Network North East), covering the northeast of England), Sported (a network of over 5000 grassroots sports associations and clubs), NCVO and others. CFG is grateful to those organisation that have made this possible.

Further webinars are planned for 2026. CFG also ran a 'Get Bank Fit' campaign in January 2026 aimed at encouraging charity staff and trustees to check their governance and banking information and ensure they were well-placed for conversations with their bank.

Improvements cont.

CFG's guides, webinars and campaigns have also helped spread knowledge and understanding of banking 'jargon' and acronyms, including KYC/OKYC, AML, CFT and the Consumer Duty.

With banks
CFG's Charitable Sector Banking Forum was reinstated in 2024 and meets online three times each year, bringing together representatives from retail banks offering, or seeking to offer, accounts and associated services to organisations in the charitable sector, charity infrastructure organisations, UK Finance, and charity and other relevant regulators from across the UK nations.

The purpose of the forum is to:

- share intelligence and ideas on themes and topics relevant to the charitable sector and banking activities.
- discuss and seek to find ways forward on challenges encountered by organisations in the charitable sector in relation to banking.
- identify and introduce additional contacts who would find the forum useful.
- boldly lead on issues pertinent to banking for the charitable sector.

Issues explored have included: debanking; changing mandates when contact has been lost with existing signatories or where signatories have died; levels of fraud and attempted fraud; the Charity Commission's 'revitalising trusts' programme; and general operation issues that have emerged.

At the most recent session of the forum, several representatives from the major high street banks reported that changes had been made to their mandate processes since the 2024 report, and hopefully this has contributed to the lower proportion of people raising mandate issues as a challenge. However, there is still clearly work to be done to improve customer experience further. It has been helpful to have attendees from the Charity Commission, OSCR and CCNI as well as the Financial Services Ombudsman, the Financial Conduct Authority and others working in a regulatory space.

Through the Forum, the network of contacts at UK retail banks has been expanded. This has made it possible to raise specific issues affecting individual charities, many of which have been successfully resolved or information has been obtained to explain a situation or decision for the charity affected.

Through CFG, one major retail bank arranged a training package for their staff working directly with smaller charities and those charity customers that do not have an allocated relationship manager. This was a fantastic opportunity to develop understanding of the charitable sector, governance models, income generation and the needs of charity clients and was greatly appreciated by the bank staff. It was also an opportunity to encourage bank staff to consider volunteering as charity trustees.

Through CFG, one major retail bank arranged a training package for their staff working directly with smaller charities and those charity customers that do not have an allocated relationship manager

Other engagement with the banks and financial institutions has generated support more widely for the sector, including around Trustees' Week, Charity Fraud Prevention Week and Small Charity Week.

Finally, CFG has been told by people from various banks that the 2024 report has been helpful in internal discussions about allocation of resources

Improvements cont.

to improve charity customer experiences, such as in making changes to mandate processes.

With charity regulators
The continued support from the Charity Commission, OSCR and CCNI is invaluable. Charities continue to raise banking as a significant operational challenge, and the charity regulators remain committed to working with the sector to secure improvements.

With banking regulators
We have worked with the Financial Conduct Authority to better understand the implications of new guidance on charity banking, including the challenges it has created for charities seeking to make deposits through Post Office branches. This forms part of our wider work to ensure charities' experiences and operational needs are reflected in regulatory discussions and decision-making.

Most recently, we have been exploring the 'chicken and egg' scenario which affects many new charities: the intended charity needs a charity bank account but does not have a charity registration number. CFG and others are picking this issue up with the Prudential Regulation Authority over the summer of 2026.

Wider engagement
We continue to engage with the sector and policymakers on all things banking. We shared learnings and issues arising with parliamentarians and government officials in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. This engagement directly informed Parliamentary Questions, parliamentary debates and wider policy consideration of the banking challenges facing charities across the UK.

Other research
- Muslim Charities Forum: The Landscape of Debanking Within Muslim Charities and Its Impact On Charitable Activities
- Charity Commission for England and Wales: Research with trustees: 2026

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Charity banking remains a significant operational challenge for charitable organisations across the UK. The charitable sector needs banking services that recognise the distinct nature of charities and are designed accordingly. Despite efforts to improve, charity customers are still grappling with products and processes that don't really meet their needs – especially smaller charities.

The most persistent issue continues to be changing account mandates and signatories, although there is evidence that there have been some improvements. CFG welcomes the work that banks have been doing to improve customer experiences, but will continue to keep up the pressure on banks and other financial institutions to improve processes further.

Access to local banking services has deteriorated substantially since 2024 and is now one of the fastest-growing concerns raised by charities. Charities increasingly embrace digital banking, but many still require access to knowledgeable, human support when dealing with complex situations. Banking hubs and services available at post offices have slightly mitigated against branch closures, but the loss of access to in person services and knowledgeable banking staff is keenly felt by charities, especially in rural areas.

Charges for banking services have become a major pressure, particularly for small volunteer-led organisations. The decision to charge for a specific account or service is a commercial decision taken by the relevant bank.

CFG urges the banks to consider the value of low or no cost banking for smaller charities and community associations, alongside the cost of providing such services. We would like to see banks celebrating the support they offer to charitable organisations – this is a good story to tell, and can demonstrate institutions' commitment to being a 'good neighbour' and a part of the charitable sector ecosystem which benefits us all.

Alongside financial costs, banking challenges continue to impose considerable time, stress and financial costs on trustees, volunteers and staff. Our research suggests that across the UK's registered 204,000 charities, banking administration takes up an estimated 12 million hours a year – the equivalent of more than 6,000 people working full-time, all year, on nothing else. We don't disagree that banking admin is important, and charities and banks have governance and compliance requirements to fulfil. However, CFG believes that process improvements could significantly reduce the burden of time spent on banking tasks, and free up charity resources for the public benefit.

Our research suggests that there is a growing awareness of the Consumer Duty across the charity sector, which is to be welcomed. CFG and other sector bodies, as well as the banks, have devoted resources to raising awareness of the Consumer Duty and it feels as though this has had an impact. However, significant knowledge gaps remain across the sector.

Overall, the survey's findings suggest that engagement between charities, banks, regulators and sector bodies is beginning to deliver results, but further action is required to translate progress into consistently positive customer experiences. Furthermore, improvements in charity banking are not simply an administrative issue; they are essential to sustaining volunteer capacity, effective governance and the delivery of charitable services.

The 2026 survey paints a mixed but encouraging picture. Some of the issues that dominated previous surveys, particularly around mandates, trustee verification and charity-specific knowledge, appear to be improving. However, new challenges have emerged, most notably rising banking costs and reduced access to local banking services.

Recommendations

The evidence shows that charities need banking services that are accessible, proportionate, affordable and supported by people who understand how charitable organisations operate. Progress has begun, but the experiences shared by more than 2,400 respondents demonstrate that there is still considerable work to do before charity banking consistently delivers the service the sector needs.

Recommendations

Our recommendations echo the themes of processes, pricing and people. As previously, we have drawn recommendations for three groups from the survey findings: for banks and financial institutions, for charitable organisations, and for regulators.

For banks and financial institutions

Improve charity-specific processes

- Continue investment in simplifying mandate and signatory change processes, aiming to make routine changes faster and easier for charity customers.
- Review onboarding, KYC and verification processes to ensure they are proportionate and appropriate for different charity legal structures.
- Ensure digital banking services support appropriate charity governance arrangements, including dual authorisation and multiple user access levels.

"

The evidence shows that charities need banking services that are accessible, proportionate and affordable

Improve knowledge and support

- Provide specialist charity banking training for frontline staff, contact centres and community bankers working in banking hubs.
- Establish clear routes for charity customers to access appropriately trained staff when issues arise.
- Improve communication by explaining why information is being requested, how it will be used and how long processes are likely to take.

Review charging structures

- Regularly review charity and community account offerings to ensure they remain affordable and represent value for money, particularly for small volunteer-led organisations.
- Improve recognition of organisations that qualify for charity banking products, including charities that are not required to register with a charity regulator.

For charities

Strengthen banking readiness

- Review mandates, signatories and key governance information regularly to ensure records remain up to date.
- Develop a "bank fit" approach by ensuring governing documents, trustee information and key records are readily available when required.
- Consider banking needs strategically and review providers periodically rather than remaining with historic arrangements that may no longer meet organisational needs.

Understand rights and responsibilities

- Increase awareness of Consumer Duty and make use of complaints procedures where service falls below expected standards.
- Ensure trustees, volunteers and staff responsible for banking understand the purpose of KYC, AML and fraud-prevention requirements.

Recommendations cont.

Improve risk management

- Review and ensure appropriate online banking controls, including dual authorisation and fraud prevention measures.
- Check for and eliminate workarounds such as using personal accounts or holding significant cash wherever possible and seek support if banking arrangements are creating governance risks.

For charity and financial regulators

Charity regulators

- Continue to gather evidence on banking challenges and share insights with the banking sector and financial regulators.
- Work alongside CFG to produce more guidance for trustees and volunteers on managing banking relationships, maintaining good financial controls and responding to banking challenges.
- Continue to convene discussions between the charity sector and banking sector to support practical solutions.

Financial regulators

- Monitor the impact of branch closures and changing cash-access arrangements on charities and community organisations.
- Consider whether Consumer Duty outcomes are being achieved for charity and community account holders.
- Encourage proportionate, risk-based approaches to charity due diligence and verification requirements.

Joint action for regulators

- Work together to address barriers faced by newly established charities that require a bank account before obtaining a charity registration number.
- Support the rollout of banking hubs by ensuring staff have appropriate understanding of charity banking needs.
- Establish a regular mechanism for reviewing progress against the issues identified in successive charity banking surveys.

CFG membership

CFG is the charity and membership organisation that supports other charitable organisations to make the biggest difference possible. We do this by helping them to make their money and resources go further, by putting financial leadership at the heart of their decision-making.

Since CFG was founded in 1987, we have evolved to welcome all finance professionals working for charitable and social change organisations. We also welcome non-finance professionals who recognise that we deliver greater impact when we are financially confident, trustworthy and dynamic.

CFG Leading the way for charity finance

Today, CFG's vibrant community manages around one-third of the UK's entire charity sector income. We are a diverse and inclusive community of people who are passionate about delivering impact through financial leadership. Together, we lead the way for charity finance.

Join us! If your organisation is not yet a CFG member, email our friendly membership team at membership@cfg.org.uk to find out how you can be part of our thriving community!

Leading the way
for charity finance

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