

IMMEDIATE RELEASE - WEDS 06/02/08

RESEARCH SHOWS EFFECTIVE LOBBYING REQUIRES VOLUNTARY INCOME

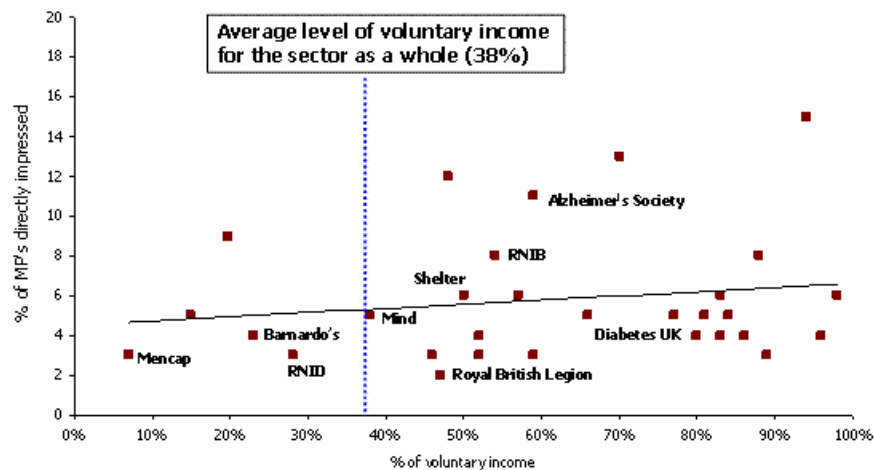
- *Financially independent charities most likely to engage with, and impress, MPs*
- *Top 30 MP-impressing UK charities' average voluntary income is 61%, against 38% sector-wide average*
- *Only 5 of Top 30 MP-impressing UK charities have less than the sector-wide average (but still have large voluntary incomes)*
- *"Thriving and effectual voluntary sector requires independent income," vies Saxton*

Charities whose voluntary funding has given them significant financial independence from governmental, statutory sources are far more likely to have the confidence to engage with, and impress, MPs - according to new data out today.

Leading not for profit sector think tank and research consultancy nfpSynergy's latest Charity Parliamentary Monitor surveyed a representative sample of 180 MPs, asking which charities have directly impressed them most in the last six months – and exploring how this impact relates to a charity's voluntary income - both in absolute terms; and as a proportion of overall income (*see slide image below*).

Only 5 of the Top 30 UK charities that MPs claim most directly impressed them in the last six months have less than the 38% sector-wide average percentage of voluntary income (as proportion of total income); 70% (ie all but 9) of the Top 30 have at least 50% voluntary income; and the Top 30 average is 61% (again, against the 38% sector-wide average). Moreover, whilst true that absolute (as opposed to percentage/proportional) levels of voluntary income bear little correlation per se to impressing MPs, even those very few Top 30 charities with below-average *proportional* voluntary income, such as Mencap, Barnardos and RNID, still seem to have significant *absolute* amounts of voluntary income, by brute virtue of their large size.

Relationship between % of MP's directly impressed and % of income which is voluntary



Source: Charity Parliamentary Monitor/CAF charity trends, 2007

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Editorial note: Unlabelled entries in the above chart relate to subscribers to nfpSynergy's Charity Parliamentary Monitor, whose anonymity thereby ensures their requested/agreed confidentiality.

nfpSynergy's Driver of Ideas, Joe Saxton, said:

"These findings show that – in the current political and regulatory environment, and despite recent Prime Ministerial Compact-related assurances – only charities with significant proportions of non-statutory income feel independent and confident enough to engage with, and thereby impress, MPs. Charities should know that financial independence is the precursor to making you more influential and ultimately effective, not less. An independent, thriving and effectual voluntary sector appears to require independent income. And MPs seem to know, and even value, this as much as any charity."

- ends -

MEDIA INTERVIEWS: To discuss the issue of a charity's financial independence and its ability to impress MPs with nfpSynergy's Joe Saxton, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

• nfpSynergy

nfpSynergy (www.nfpsynergy.net) is the UK's *only* think-tank and research consultancy dedicated to the charity sector and not for profit issues. It provides ideas, insights and information to help voluntary and community organisations thrive in an ever-changing world. Regularly harvesting the social and charity-related views of public and parliament, media and business - not to mention not for profit organisations themselves - nfpSynergy has a vast and ever-growing knowledge pool from which to extract and deliver insights.

• Joe Saxton, Driver of Ideas, nfpSynergy

Joe Saxton co-founded *nfpSynergy* in 2002 after fifteen years experience in the voluntary sector, including as a director of the RNID (Britain's largest charity for deaf and hard of hearing people) and as a trustee of the RSPCA.

Joe is Chair of the Trustees of the Institute of Fundraising (www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk) - the professional body for fundraising and the largest individual representative body in the voluntary sector, with 4000 individual members and 200 organisational members. He was recently named one of the hundred most influential people in UK social policy by *The Guardian* and has been voted the most influential person in UK fundraising by *Professional Fundraising* for the last three years. Joe was named one of the *Ten People of Tomorrow* by public affairs agency, AS Biss, in 2006. He has recently (October 2007) been named by the *Evening Standard* as one of London's Top 50 Most Influential people in Social Affairs.

A well-known and respected voice within the charity world and frequent face at sector conferences, Joe has contributed - via original research, opinion pieces and interviews - to a wide range of specialist and mainstream media, both print and broadcast, from *Third Sector* and *The Guardian* to *BBC Breakfast* and *BBC Radio 4*.