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PUBLIC TRUST IN CHARITIES SLUMPS NINE POINTS, 2006 - 2007

- *Scarce 2 in 5 British adults claim they trust British charities, according to latest figures (July 2007)*
- *Only the BBC and the Banks seem to have taken a bigger institutional battering*
- *Lower social grades (DEs), 55-64 year olds and those in Yorks/North East spearhead dip in confidence*
- *Sector should adopt "clear communications strategy" and stop being "ostrich-like", counsels Saxton*

Public trust in charities slumped 9 percentage points (from 51% to 42%) between Sept 2006 and July 2007, according to latest figures released today (see attached summary slides). People from lower social grades (DEs: 30%), 55-64 year olds (35%) and those living in Yorkshire and the North East (26%) show least trust.

Leading not for profit sector think tank and research consultancy's nfpSynergy's Charity Awareness Monitor surveyed a representative sample of almost 1200 16+ year olds throughout mainland Britain, asking which British institutions they trust most and, specifically, which factors impact greatest on their ability to trust British charities.

The new figures show charities (42%) lagging behind Armed Forces (75%), Police (55%), NHS (51%), Scouts & Guides (50%) and Schools (46%) in terms of public confidence; having suffered the biggest (9%) dip, since Sept 2006, of all major public institutions suggested - apart from the BBC (down 17%, from 55% to 38%), Royal Mail (also down 9%, from 44% to 35%) and the Banks (down 15%, from 41% to 26%, and that's "pre Northern Rock"). Interestingly, trust in the Government rose from 11% to 16% between Sept 2006 and July 2007, marking an - as it may well have since turned out, short-lived - "honeymoon" for Gordon Brown.

Whilst women (44%) are generally more trusting of charities than men (40%), confidence in charities broadly dips with an increase in age (from 47% amongst 16-24 year olds to just 35% amongst 55-64 year olds) and a lowering of social grade (from 53% amongst ABs to just 30% amongst DEs). Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who have donated to charities (49%) trust them far more than those who have not donated (22%). There also appears to be massive regional variations: people in the North West are most trusting (51%), those in Yorkshire and the North East, the least (26%).

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

"These latest figures may well set nerves twitching throughout the sector. Only two in five British adults claim they trust our charities. Just nine months earlier, the majority said they did. Only the BBC and the Banks took a bigger institutional battering over this period. The situation can surely only be compounded by other research suggesting significant public apprehension, often ill-founded, around such areas as how charities raise and use funds or pay their staff. The sector cannot be ostrich-like and pretend the situation will improve on its own. We need to manage the reputation and image of charities and the sector proactively, backed by a clear communications strategy."

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MEDIA INTERVIEWS: To interview nfpSynergy's Joe Saxton about the significance of these latest findings into how much (or little) the British public now trusts British charities, 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*.