

Donor Pulse

2025: Insights from Enthuse Intelligence



Contents

Foreword from Chester

page 3

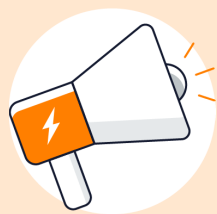
Thoughts from our founder.



Introduction

page 4

What's in the 2025 edition of Donor Pulse?



About the data

page 5

A look at the report's methodology.



Stable giving

page 6

How are key donation indicators rising?



Trust in charities

page 13

What is the public's trust in charities and does this impact overseas aid?



How do people want to give?

page 19

How donors prefer to give and what this means for good causes.



Opportunities for good causes

page 25

Six key takeaways from the research to help plan your fundraising.



About Enthuse

page 27

Who is Enthuse?



Foreword by Chester Mojay-Sinclare

Welcome to the latest edition of Donor Pulse. I can hardly believe I'm saying this, but this is the seventeenth instalment of the report. We began this research series back in 2020 during the pandemic, delivering insights at a time of great upheaval, which required quarterly updates just to keep up with the rate of change. Things have thankfully returned to normality somewhat since then, which is why we've reverted to an annual cadence for this report. This is what we'd intended for Donor Pulse back when it was just an idea on a whiteboard.

When I look back at the last twelve months the word 'change' comes to mind. Most notably a change in government. Since then we've seen decisions made on school meals, National Insurance contributions, local government funding, welfare and overseas aid. All of these changes impact the sector one way or the other – and this means charities have to be incredibly agile to adapt.

Charities are expected to fill in the gaps in society and this often comes without the recognition of exactly how difficult that is. That's why it can be particularly frustrating to see column inches dedicated to staff salaries or 'where the money goes', instead of the positive impact being made by charities on people's lives.

Despite the headlines, I'm delighted to see the data show that the overwhelming majority of people see charities as either very important or essential to our lives. The public appreciates the work good causes do, so much so that they're the most trusted British institution – and by some distance too! I think it's important that everyone working in this sector hears that.

Despite a whole host of economic challenges in recent years, the data suggests that many people are actually starting to feel better off. Combine that with the fact that giving has been remarkably consistent, not just month to month, but year on year, and that should give charities confidence that people will continue to donate. Another reason to be optimistic.

Lastly, I think one of the key messages from this research is just how important it is for charities to own their channels. People trust news about charities the most when it comes straight from the source. They also prefer to donate directly via a charity's website, showing how good causes interact with the public can impact the number of donations they receive.

I hope the research provides you with useful insights for your fundraising plans. Thank you once again for taking the time to read it and best of luck with your fundraising efforts this year!

Chester



Introduction

The latest edition of our donor research report, Donor Pulse continues to examine how fundraisers and supporters are reacting to major issues affecting the UK and the impact this is having on how the public interacts with charities.

The data includes a series of regular tracking questions that form the backbone of the study, dating from 2020. These include the different types of charity being donated to, the percentage of the population giving to good causes and the popularity of online giving.

At the time of writing, the news headlines are dominated by a fraught and challenging geopolitical landscape. It's times like these that the charity sector is most relied on for help. In response to this, the report looks at the public's trust in charities – and other British institutions. From there, it will examine how this relates to people's perception of overseas aid.

Finally the study looks at how donors like to give and the impact this makes on charities. This includes insights on online and offline giving preferences as well as the concept of 'give and forget' – where people can't remember the name of the charity they last gave to. This leads into the importance of prominent charity branding when it comes to brand recall and repeat giving.

This report will explore all of these questions and provide insights and answers to help guide charities with their fundraising strategy and campaigns.

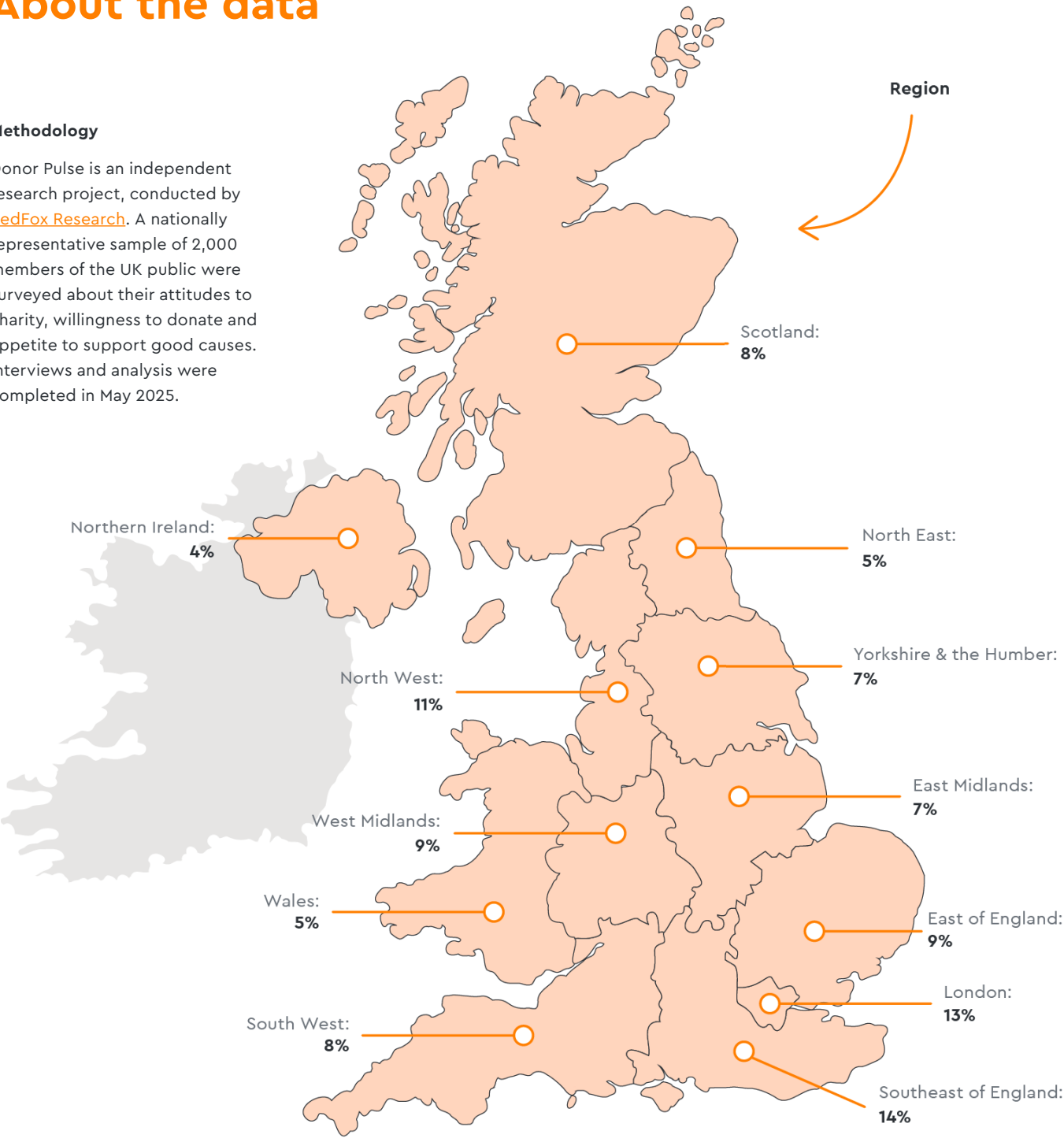




About the data

Methodology

Donor Pulse is an independent research project, conducted by [RedFox Research](#). A nationally representative sample of 2,000 members of the UK public were surveyed about their attitudes to charity, willingness to donate and appetite to support good causes. Interviews and analysis were completed in May 2025.



Age	
18-24	11%
25-34	19%
35-44	18%
45-54	20%
55-64	16%
66-80	16%

Gender	
Male	49%
Female	51%
Other / ref	<1%

Stable giving



Stable giving

A lot has happened in the UK, and beyond, since the last edition of Donor Pulse twelve months ago. There's been a new government that has made changes on business taxes and winter fuel payments as well as free breakfast clubs and overseas aid; the latter coinciding with increased tensions in multiple regions across the globe. All told there have been numerous factors that could have an impact on charities, as well as donors' ability and propensity to give.

It's positive news that against this backdrop, giving has remained stable over the last year. As shown in Figure 1, nearly three quarters (73%) of people have given to charity in the past three months. Looking back at the same point in 2024 this figure sat at 75%, it was 70% in 2023 and 74% in 2022. There have been numerous challenges for charities and the public in that time so it's encouraging to see that giving levels have remained remarkably consistent.

Figure 1: Percentage of the public who have donated to charity in the past three months (annual trend)

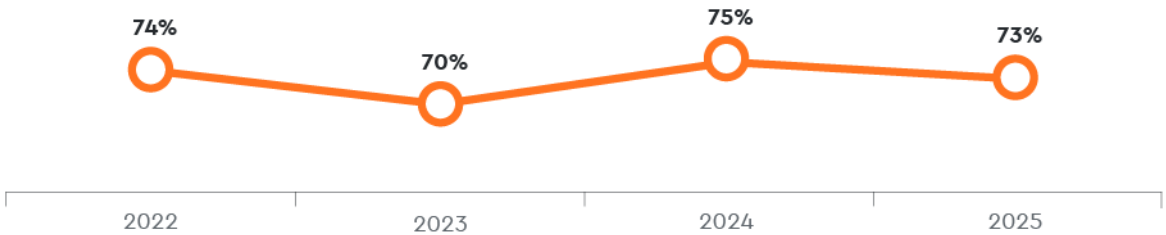
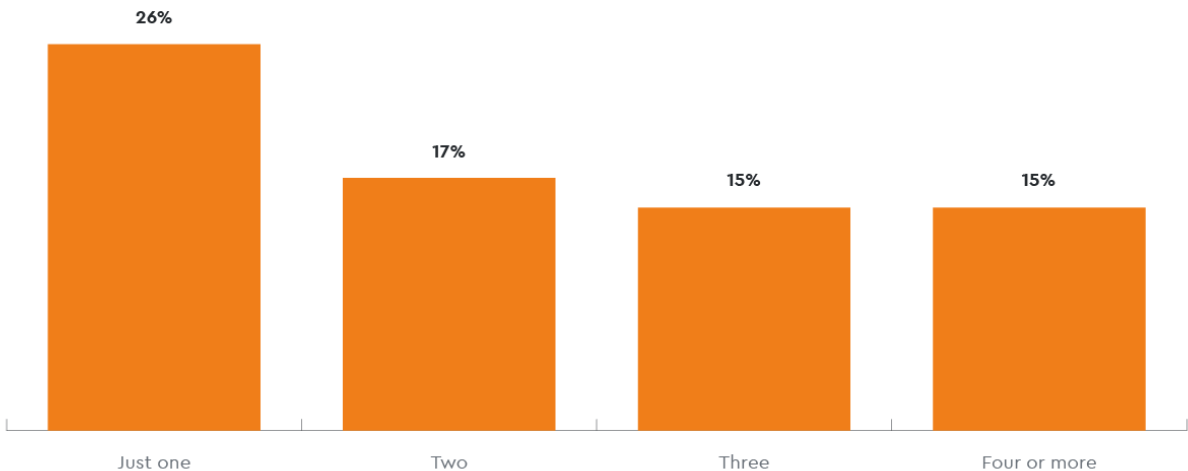


Figure 2 shows the number of supporters giving to multiple causes. It paints an interesting picture for charitable organisations, with close to a third of the public donating to three or more charities, and close to half (47%) giving to at least two causes. Younger age groups remain the most generous with 53% of 18-44 year olds having given to multiple causes in the last three months, compared to 42% of those aged 45 and over.

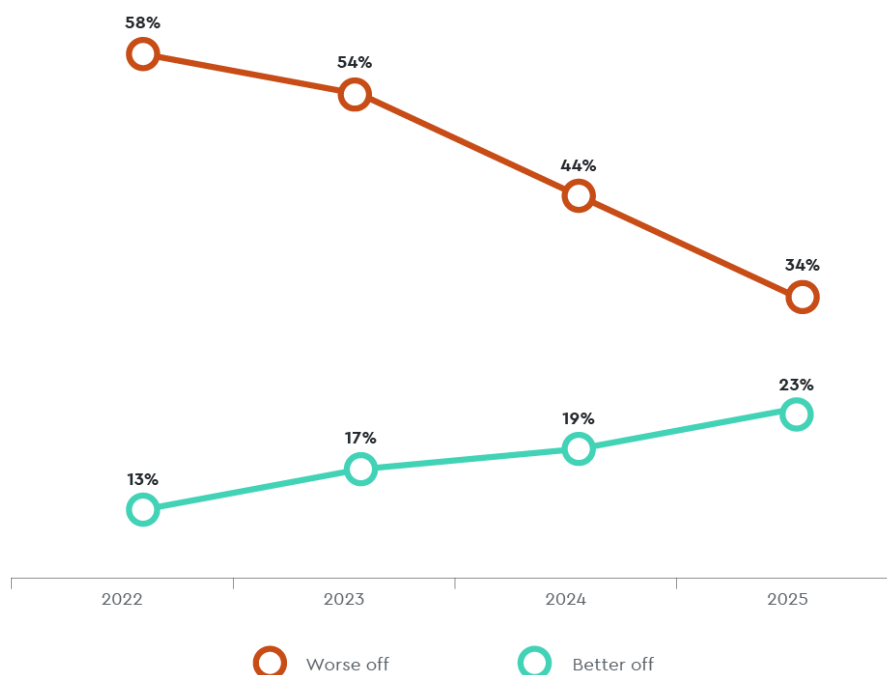
Figure 2: Percentage of the public who have donated to multiple charities over the last three months



Stable giving

While giving remains stable there is also positive news on how the public is feeling about their financial situation, which has an impact on their ability to give. Figure 3 shows that the public's finances are continuing to improve year on year. Three years ago, 58% of people said they felt worse off financially than they did six months prior, with just 13% saying they felt better off. The gap between those feeling worse and better off has closed over time and now sits at its lowest point since this research began tracking the question, with just an 11 percentage point gap. While one in three (34%) are still feeling worse off than six months ago, nearly a quarter (23%) say they're feeling better off. Should this trend continue, the next 12 months may well see the two points cross; hopefully an indicator of more favourable giving conditions on the horizon. With a further 43% of people feeling about the same economically, this means that the majority of the public (66%) are either feeling better off or the same.

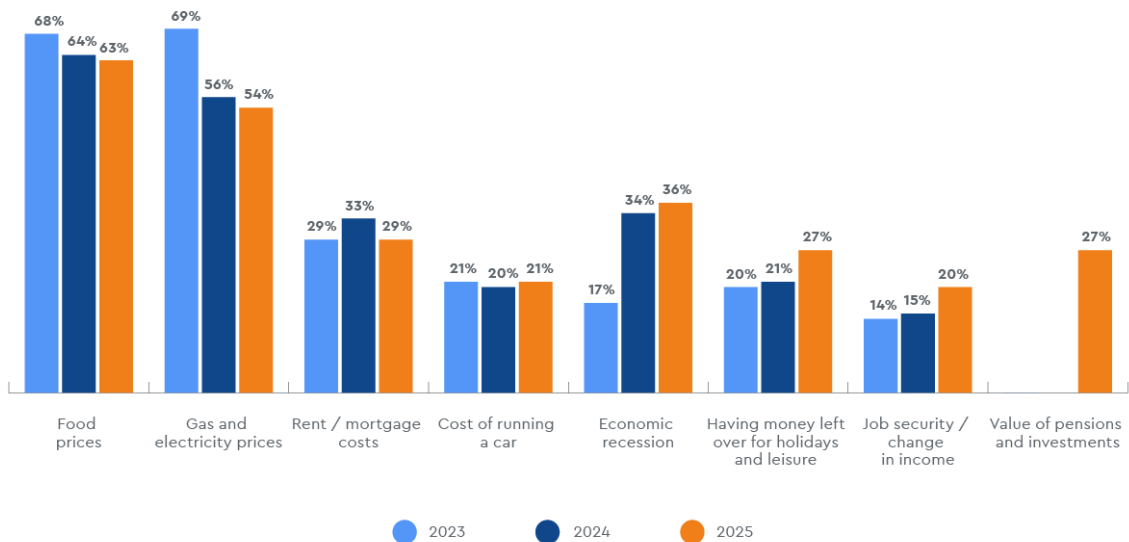
Figure 3: Change in financial situation year on year



There are still some concerns among the public when it comes to finances, as shown in Figure 4. The cost of food comes out on top with 63% of people saying this is their top concern financially. This is followed by gas and electricity prices (54%) before a drop to economic recession (36%) and rent and mortgage costs (29%). The fact that having money left over for holidays and leisure has risen from 21% to 27% in the last year suggests that some people are able to turn their attention to the nice-to-haves rather than necessities. This, combined with how people are feeling indicates they may have more disposable income, and ability to donate to charities.

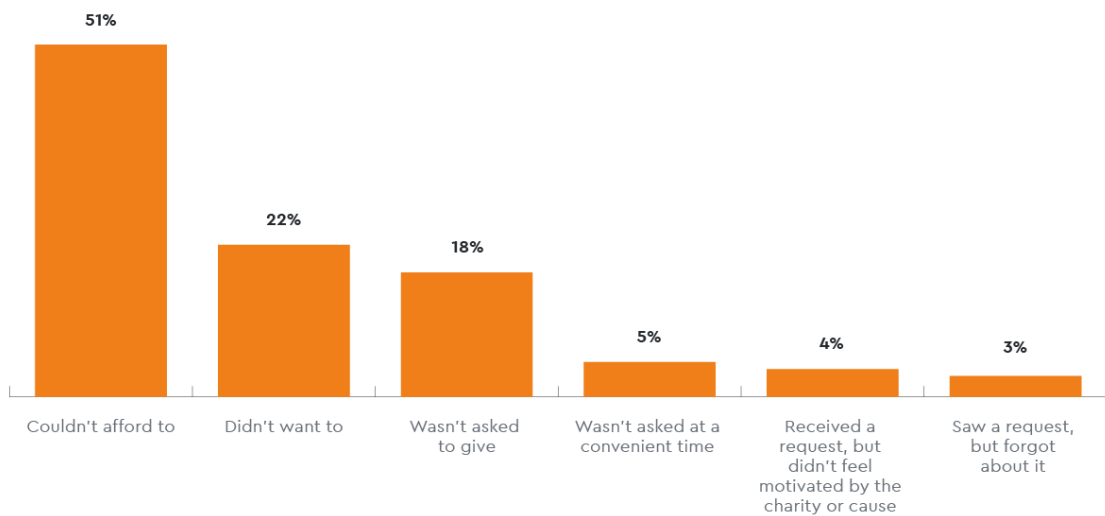
Stable giving

Figure 4: Top financial concerns among the public, year on year



While for many the financial picture is improving, this is not the case for the majority who have not given to charity recently. In fact 51% of those who have not donated say it's because they could not afford to, as shown in Figure 5. What's more, a further 23% said they did not donate because they were not asked or were asked at an inconvenient time. It is worth charities considering sharing this data with fundraisers to help motivate them to ask for donations. It is also encouraging news for charities that only 1 in 5 (22%) said they did not give because they simply did not want to.

Figure 5: Reasons for not giving to charity in the past three months

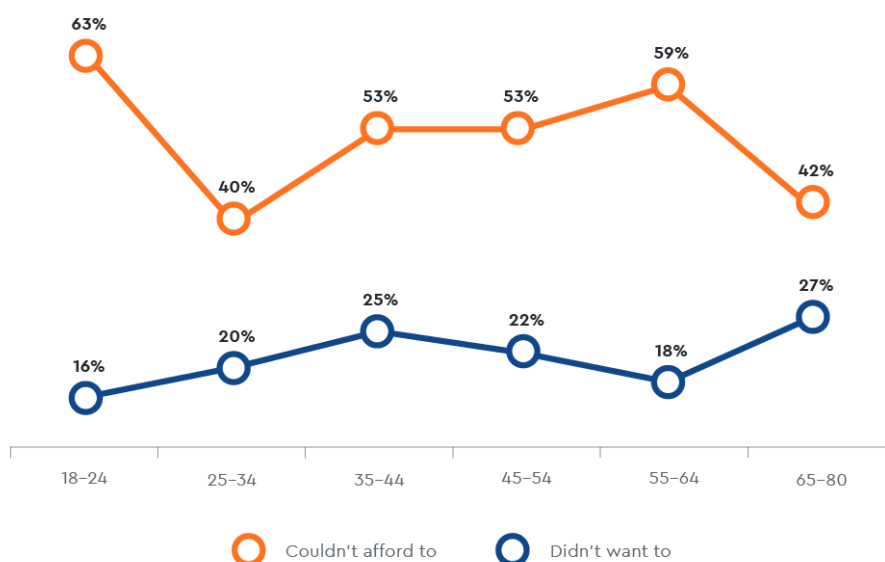


Broken down by age, the data shows us that in keeping with previous editions of the report – younger generations tend to be the more generous. Three quarters (75%) of 18–44 year olds gave to charity over the past three months, slightly higher than the 45+ age range where 72% gave. Looking at reasons for not giving to charity split by age, there's a clear trend when it comes to not being able to afford to give and not being able to give.

Stable giving

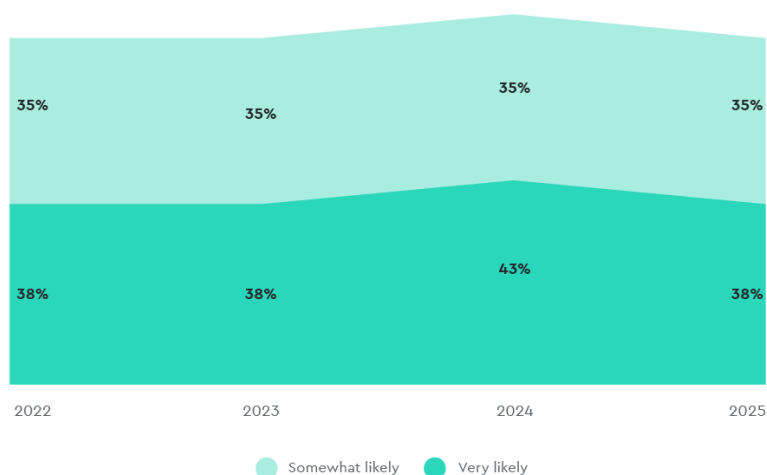
Figure 6 highlights that Gen Z – a demographic labelled 'Generation Generous' in past reports – will give if they can. Approximately two thirds (63%) of 18–24 year olds say they did not donate in the last three months because they simply could not afford to. By contrast, 42% of 65–80 year olds said the same. And this is reflected in older age groups being more likely to not give because they do not want to; more than a quarter (27%) of the 65–80 age group feel this way. A notable difference from the 16% of Gen Z who said the same. For charities, understanding this difference could be important to their stewardship approach. Providing a range of donation amounts to cater for all ages and financial situations could be a smart move, as well as tailoring communications by target audience.

Figure 6: Reasons for not giving (by age)



Looking ahead, there is a consistent number of people planning to give as have donated in the past quarter. Nearly three quarters (73%) of UK citizens say they are 'very' or 'somewhat' likely to give to charity in the next three months. This is very much in line with results since 2022, as shown in Figure 7.

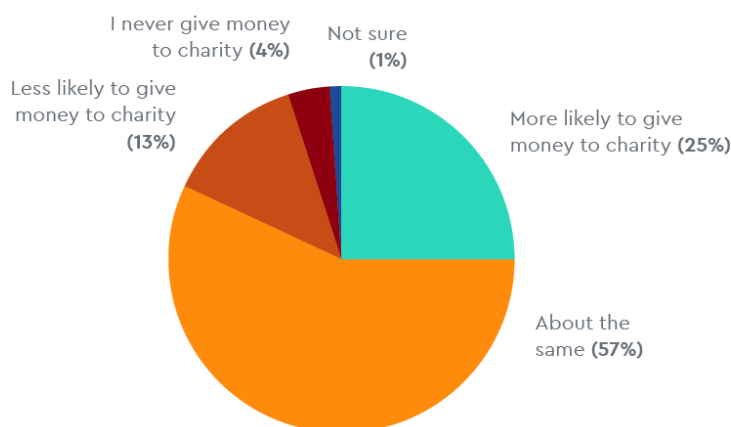
Figure 7: Likelihood to give in the next three months (split by commitment level)



Stable giving

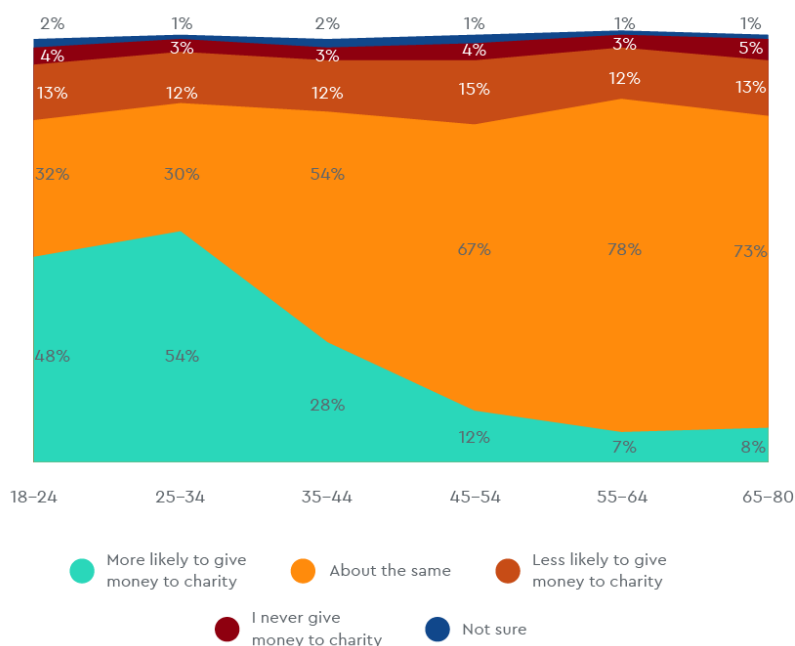
Furthermore, Figure 8 shows us that more than four in five (82%) people say they are just as or more likely to donate to charity in the next three months. This healthy appetite to give should provide good causes confidence that donations will remain stable in the near future.

Figure 8: How likely the public is to give compared to three months ago



Charities with a younger-leaning supporter base may be particularly well placed to receive donations over the coming months. Figure 9 shows that over half (54%) of 25–34 year olds are more likely to give to charity than they were three months ago. Gen Z isn't far behind with 48% saying the same. Putting on events that engage those younger demographics could be a good way for charities to generate income in the near future.

Figure 9: How likely the public is to give compared to three months ago (by age)



Stable giving

While the headlines might paint a bleak picture, the reality is that donations have remained consistent over the last year, and the majority of the public have seen their financial position either stay the same or improve. When you combine that with the fact that the appetite to give in the next three months is healthy, there's plenty of positives for the sector.

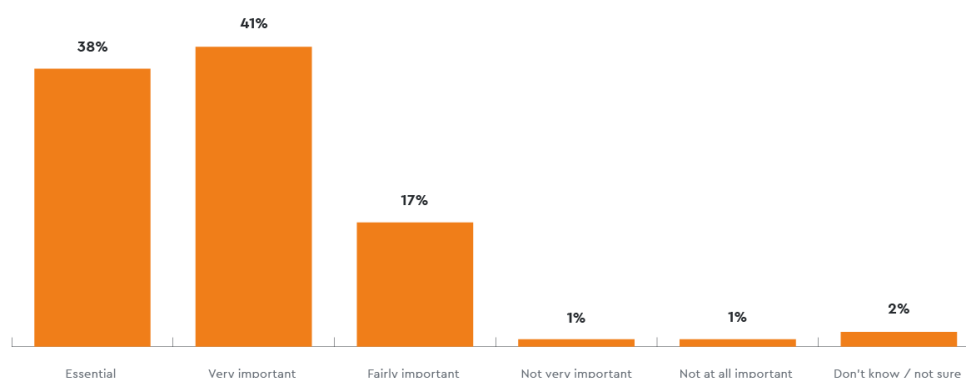
Trust in charities



Trust in charities

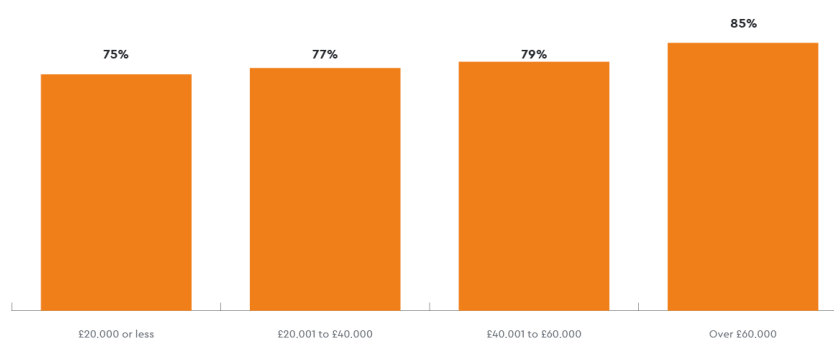
Good causes can go about their work buoyed by the fact that their role within society is greatly appreciated by the general public. As can be seen in Figure 10, four out of five (79%) members of the public consider charities' work to be essential or very important. In fact just 2% considered charity work to not be important at all; encouraging news for the sector and testament to the hard work of staff and volunteers.

Figure 10: The public's perception of how important charity work is



The importance of charity work for the public is consistent when split by age, 39% of 18–44 year olds see it as essential compared to 38% of the over 45s. Interestingly though, there is more of a difference when it comes to household income, as shown in Figure 11. The data suggests a correlation between income and how important the efforts of charitable organisations are seen to be; ranging from 75% seeing it as essential or very important at a household income of £20,000 or less through to 85% at over £60,000. This might suggest that people's levels of disposable income impacts their view of charity work as well as their ability to give.

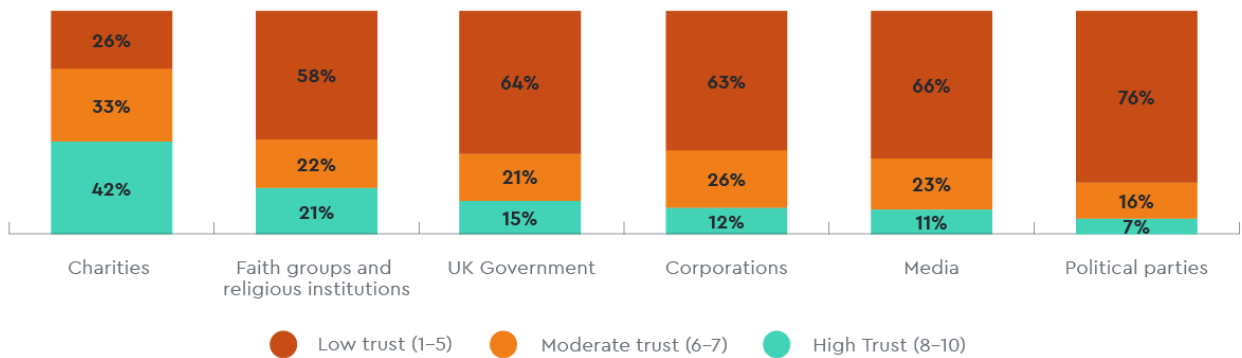
Figure 11: Perceived importance of charities' work by household income



Alongside the importance of their work, having the public's trust is crucial for any charity looking to raise funds for a good cause. And the trust levels highlighted in Figure 12 make for positive reading for the sector. Three quarters of the general public say they have moderate to high trust in charities, with 42% stating they have high trust. This makes them the most trusted British institution, and is up two percentage points on a year ago. To put that level of trust into perspective, the second highest scoring institution for trust was faith or religious groups at 43% moderate to high trust – a thirty-two percentage point difference. This was followed by corporations (38%), the UK government (36%), the media (34%) and political parties more broadly (23%).

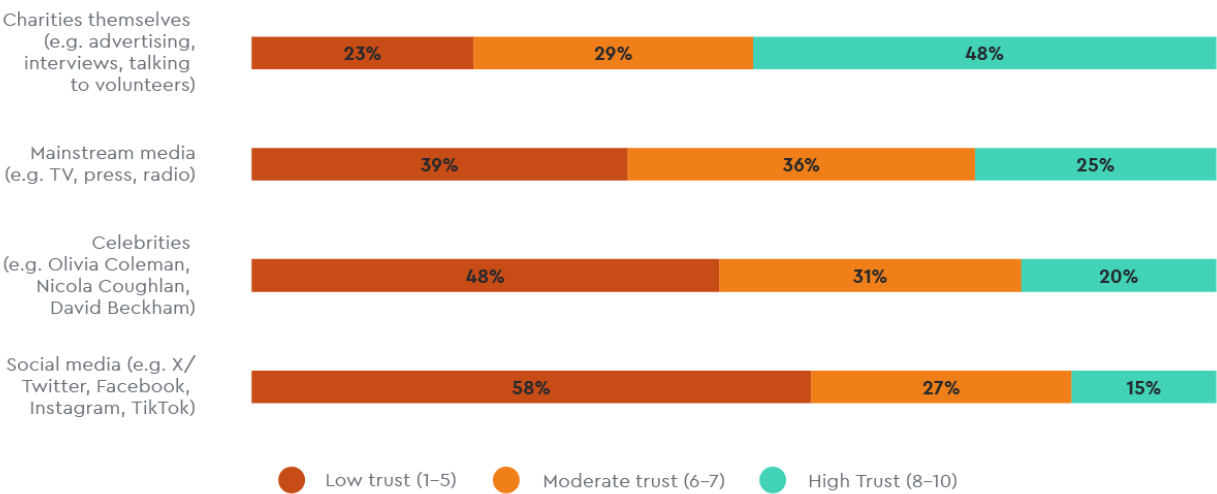
Trust in charities

Figure 12: Public trust levels in British institutions



Trust in good causes may be high but that doesn't mean the public trusts every news source on charities to the same extent. Looking at Figure 13, the most trustworthy source to hear information about charities is directly from the charities themselves. Over three quarters (77%) say they have moderate to high trust when it comes straight from the source. This is followed by mainstream media at 61%, celebrities at 51% and social media coming in last at 42%. In fact 58% of people say they have a low trust in charity-related news on social media. And perhaps surprisingly, nearly half (48%) of the public say the same about celebrities. This highlights the importance of charity's owned channels for getting their message across. It's more trusted if it comes from them rather than anyone else.

Figure 13: Trust in different sources for news on charities



Trust in charities

When it comes to which causes are receiving the most donations, the top four remain unchanged from this time last year. Animal charities and support/research into disease share top spot for the most popular causes to give to in the last three months, 21% have given to a charity in this area. This is followed by children's charities (20%) and then the NHS, hospitals and hospices (19%). Poverty-focused charities then come in at the number five spot (15%) followed by mental health (15%) and disability charities (13%).

Figure 14: Causes supported in the last three months

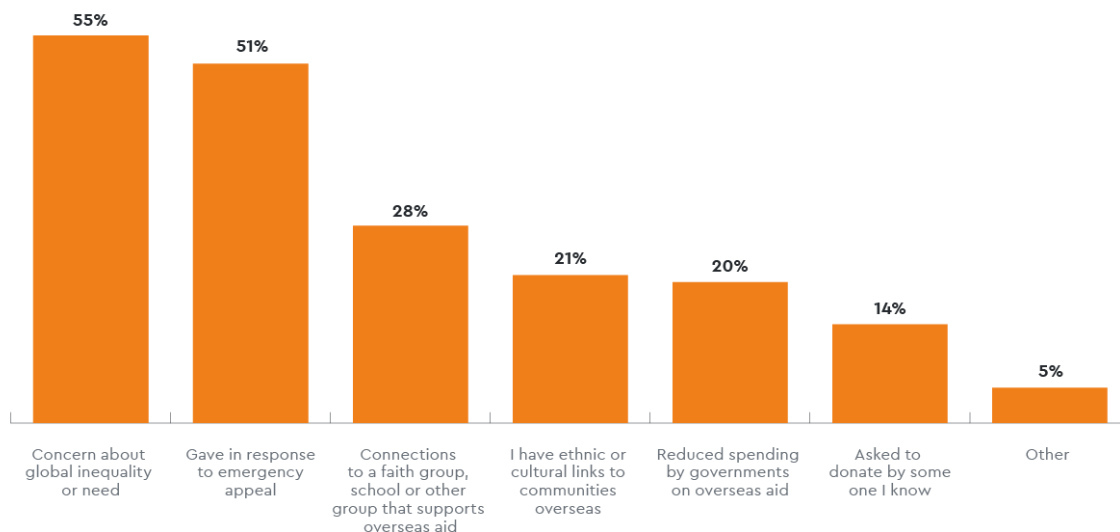
Causes supported	2025
Animal	21%
Support/research into disease	21%
Children	20%
NHS, hospitals or hospices	19%
Poverty e.g. foodbanks, homelessness	15%
Mental health	15%
Disabilities	13%
Older people	10%
Local/community causes	9%
Environment	8%
Overseas aid	7%
Faith	7%
Armed services/veterans	7%
Education	7%
Arts and culture	3%
Other	3%

At the time of writing, demand for overseas aid is significant. With heightened conflict in the Middle East and natural disasters such as floods in Vietnam and landslides in Papua New Guinea, UK-based charities that support those further afield are seeing a great demand for their services. And this reliance on charities will arguably grow in the light of the [government's cuts to the aid budget in early 2025](#).

Trust in charities

In the last quarter, 7% of donors gave to overseas aid charities. When asked what prompted them to donate, 55% said it was concern about global inequality. This was closely followed by responding to an emergency appeal (51%). Having some kind of personal connection was also a motivation to donate for many. Over a quarter (28%) of those that gave to overseas aid said they had a connection to a faith group or school that supports overseas aid, with a further one in five (21%) saying they had an ethnic or cultural link to communities overseas, as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Reasons for donating to support overseas aid

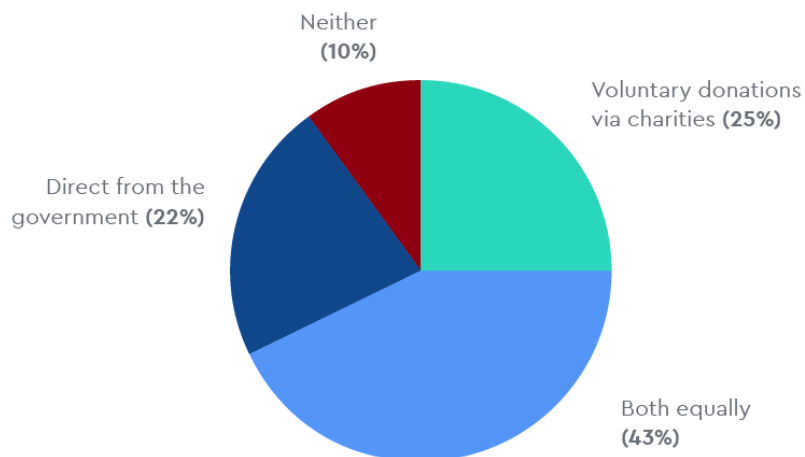


Reduced spending from the government on overseas aid was a catalyst to donate for one in five, which underlines that decisions on a macro level can influence the way donors behave. Lastly, approximately one in seven (14%) said they donated to overseas aid because they were asked by someone they know – this shows the importance of fundraisers' passion and their willingness to ask for donations across their networks.

Just under one in ten (7%) have given in support to overseas aid in the last quarter and Figure 16 shows what the public thinks is the most effective way for the UK to support those further afield. Good causes will be heartened to learn that people believe charities are the most effective way to get aid overseas; more than two thirds (68%) said they were as good or better at this than the government. This is slightly higher than the 65% who argued the government was as good or better suited to this task.

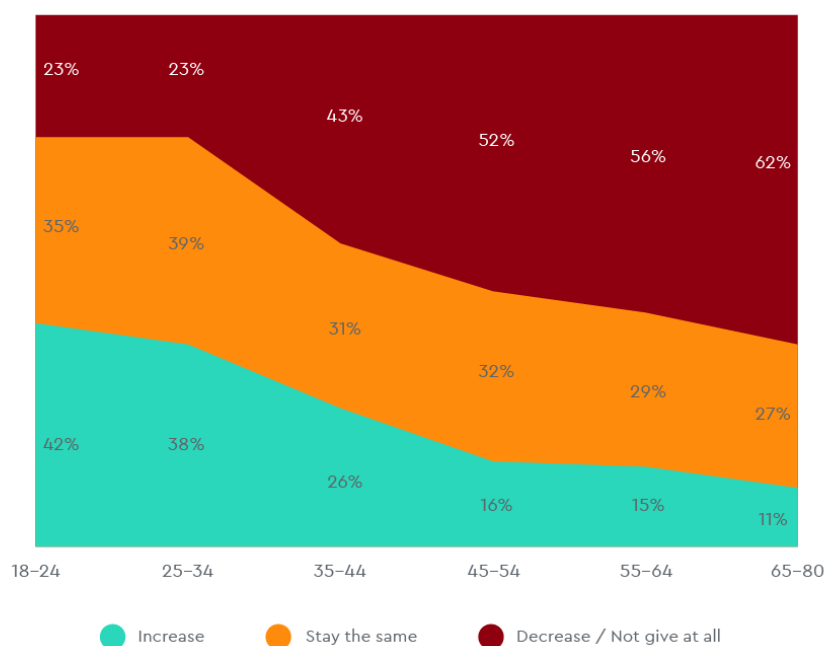
Trust in charities

Figure 16: What's the most effective method to get aid overseas



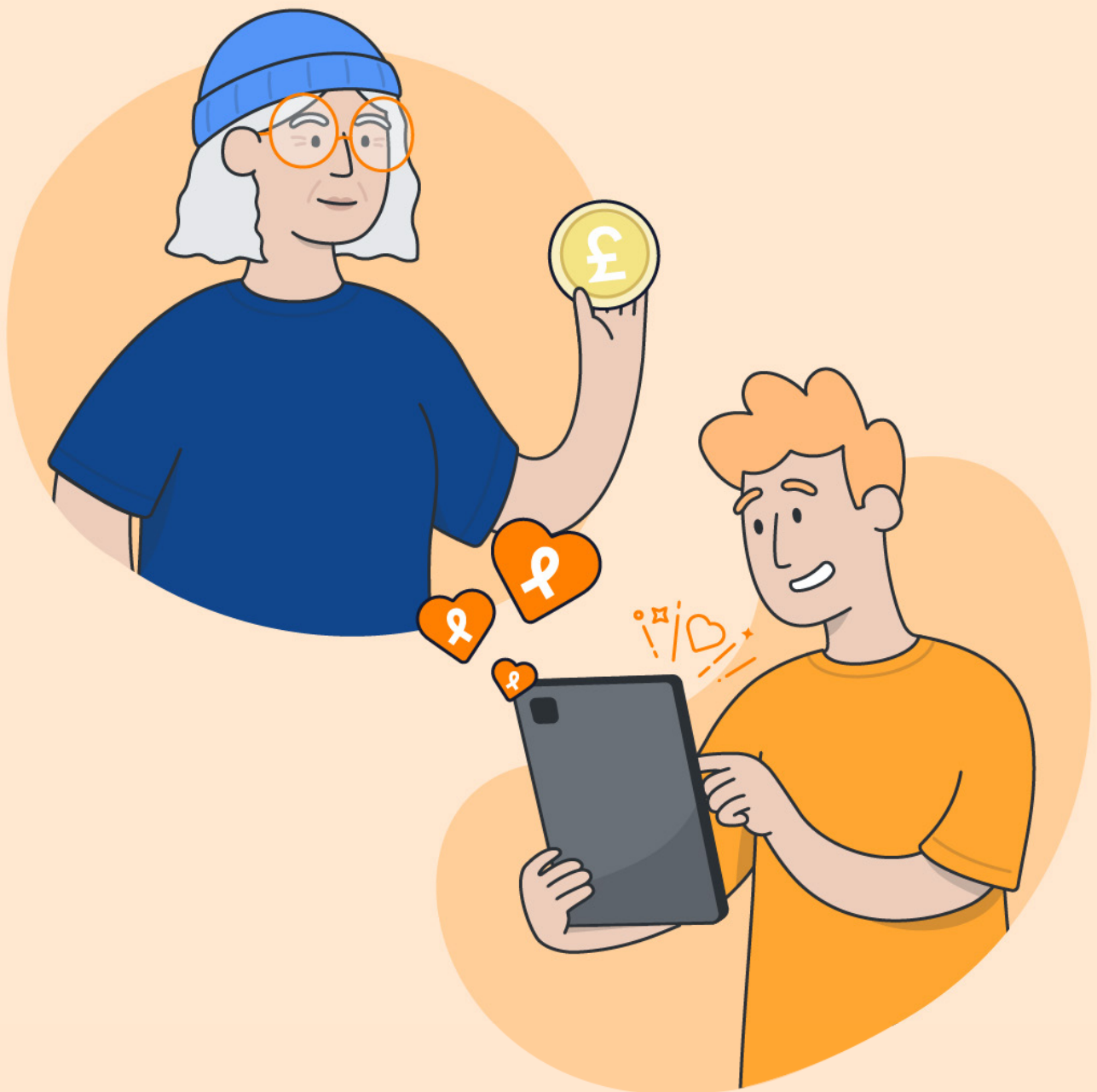
The research also reveals that over half (55%) of the public think the government should either maintain or increase its spending on overseas aid; encouraging news for charities in this area. Younger age groups are the most bullish in that regard, with 77% of 18–24 year olds wanting to see the government maintain or increase spending on overseas aid (Figure 17). The data shows that this sentiment decreases with age with as few as one in ten (11%) of 65–80 year olds wanting to see increased government spending on this issue.

Figure 17: Should the government increase overseas aid split by age group



The third sector has been heavily relied upon in recent years so it's positive to see this acknowledged with charities seen as the most trusted institution – and more than that – a real appreciation for the work good causes do. This is also reflected in how effective charities are seen to be at delivering overseas aid. A major topic of conversation across the globe.

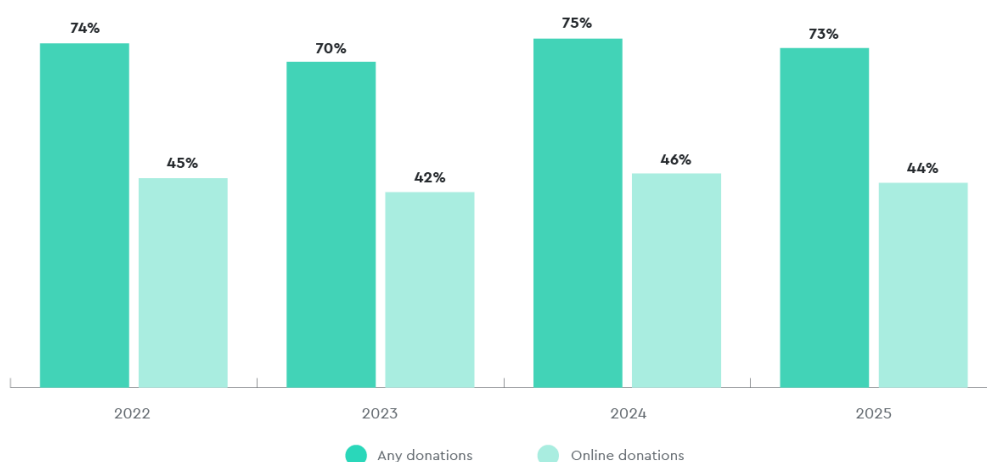
How do people want to give?



How do people want to give?

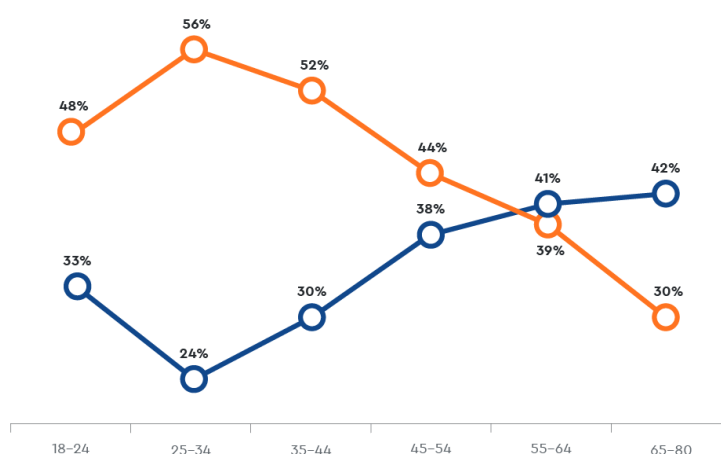
In 2025, how do people want to give to charity? Figure 18 shows that a total of 44% of the public are donating online, meaning 60% of all donations were made online. This is reflective of an overall trend since 2022, with the numbers being very consistent, and having moved sharply during the pandemic and remaining that way.

Figure 18: Percentage donating online in last three months (annual trend)



Younger age groups (25–34) are the most keen to give online (Figure 19) with 56% favouring online donations versus less than a quarter (24%) saying cash. In fact under 45s in general are the most likely to donate online with 53% preferring it compared to 38% aged 45 and over. It's only at 65+ where cash becomes clearly favoured and even then nearly a third (30%) would like to give online. This highlights the importance of digital fundraising to all good causes. For charities appealing to those 64 and under, offering online donations is essential. And for those that appeal to a large number of people 65 and over, there's a real opportunity to convert many of them to digital.

Figure 19: Preferred method of giving by age

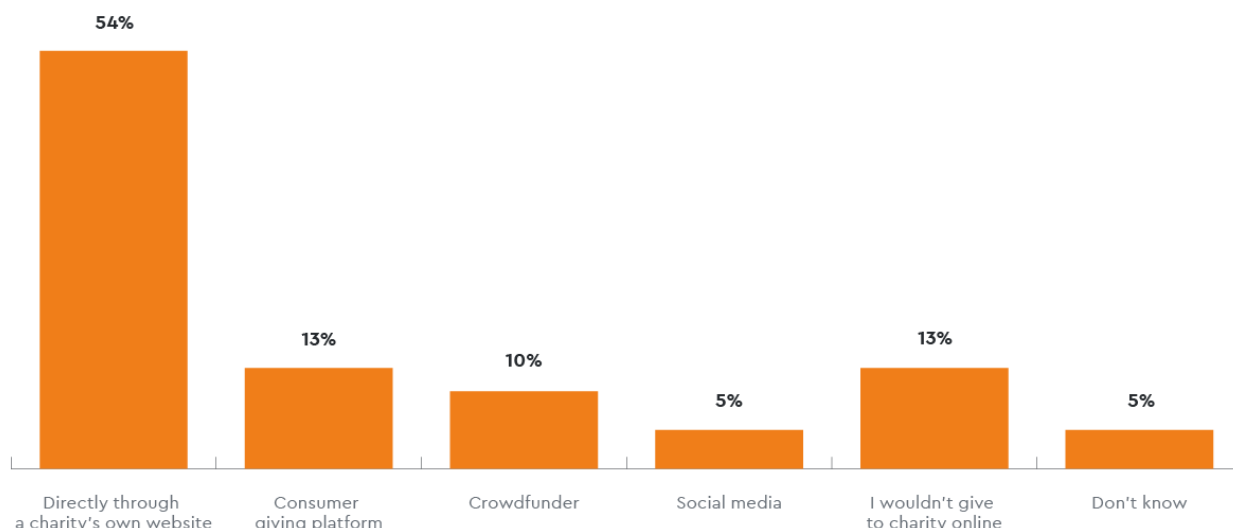


How do people want to give?

Looking at the household income detail behind these preferences, there are marked differences in how people want to give depending on how much they earn. For example, 57% of 55–64 year olds who earn over £60,000 prefer to donate online, as well as 52% of 45–54 year olds. Donors aged 25–34 with a household income of over £40,000 also have a strong preference for giving online, with 64% saying they want to give this way.

When looking at ways to donate online, Figure 20 shows the very clear preference for giving directly via a charity's website. Over half (54%) say they want to give this way. To put that into perspective, this is four times higher than via a consumer giving platform where just 13% listed this as their top option. Crowdfunders came in at 10% and social media giving was just 5%.

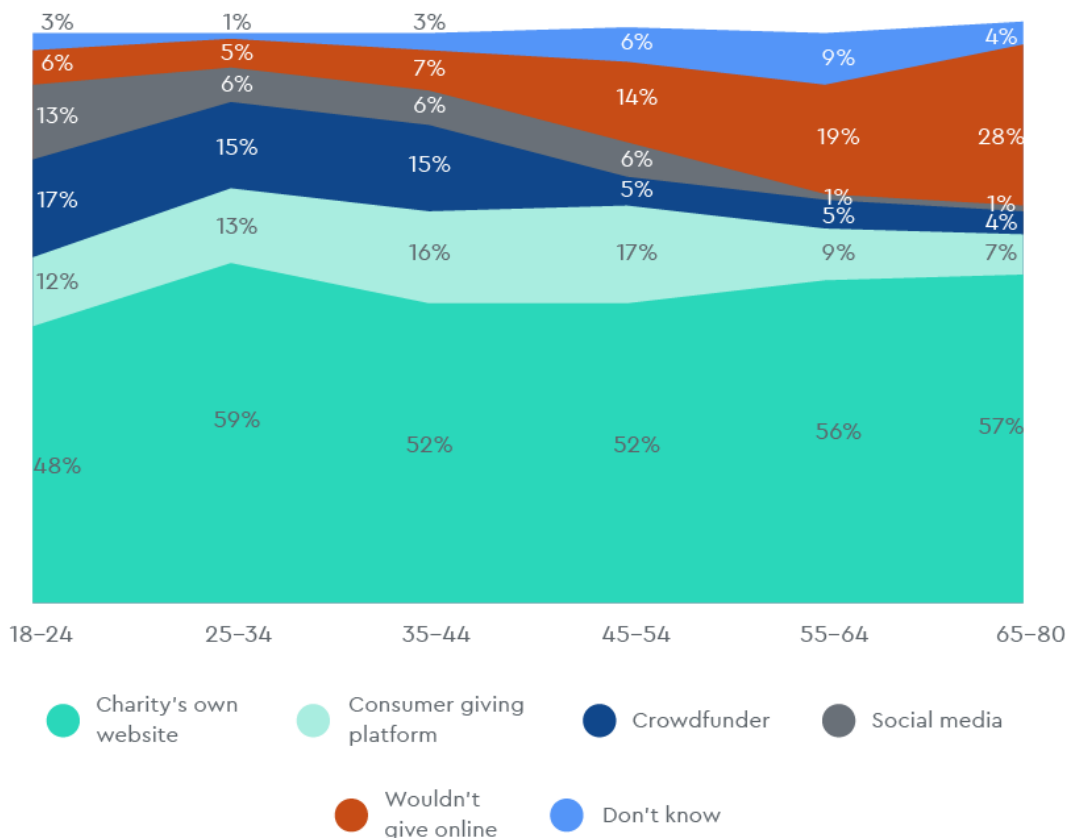
Figure 20: Preferred method of giving to charity online



People of all ages would rather give directly through a charity's own website than other methods. Older generations find giving via a charity's website particularly reassuring. When you consider that 28% of 65–80 year olds say they don't give to charity online – the ones who do donate online – overwhelmingly prefer it to be direct as shown in Figure 21. Nearly six in ten (57%) feel this way, suggesting a peace of mind in doing so.

How do people want to give?

Figure 21: Preferred way to donate online by age

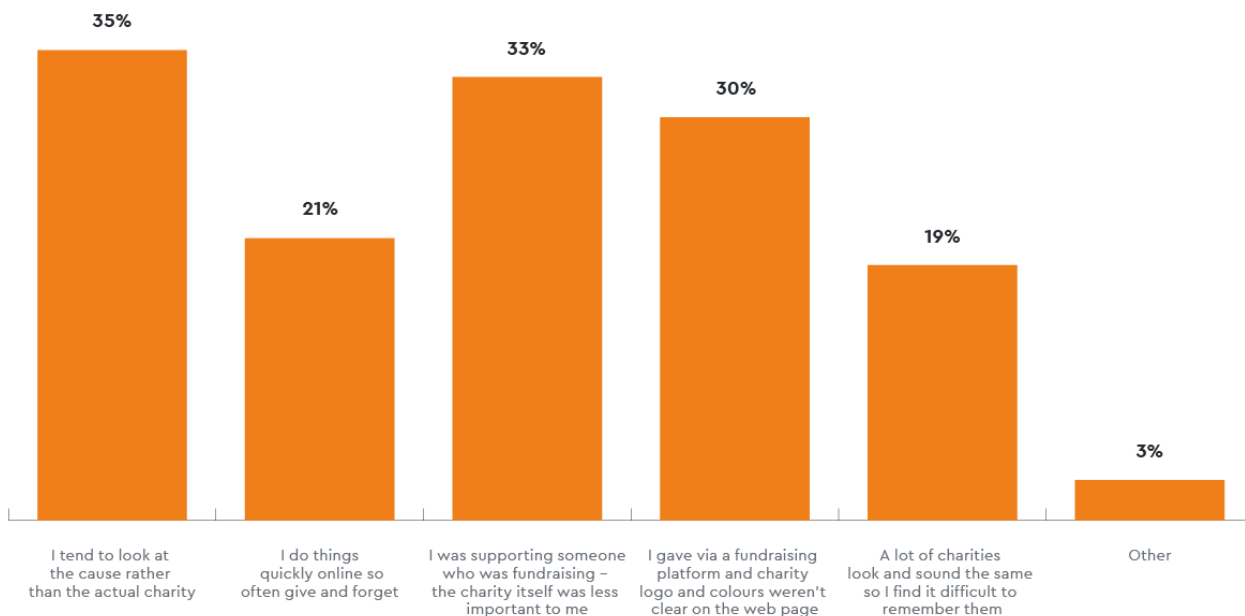


Donating directly through a charity's website is also the best option for brand recall. This is key for avoiding the 'give and forget' trap that's been covered in previous editions of this report. This is the term used to describe people's inability to recall the name of the charity they last donated to.

Figure 22 shows us that half (50%) of people who can't remember the name of the last charity they gave to say they 'give and forget', citing that they're either focusing on the wider cause or they're just giving too quickly. A third said they were focused on supporting the fundraiser rather than the charity itself while importantly 30% said they gave via a fundraising platform where the charity logos and colours weren't clear.

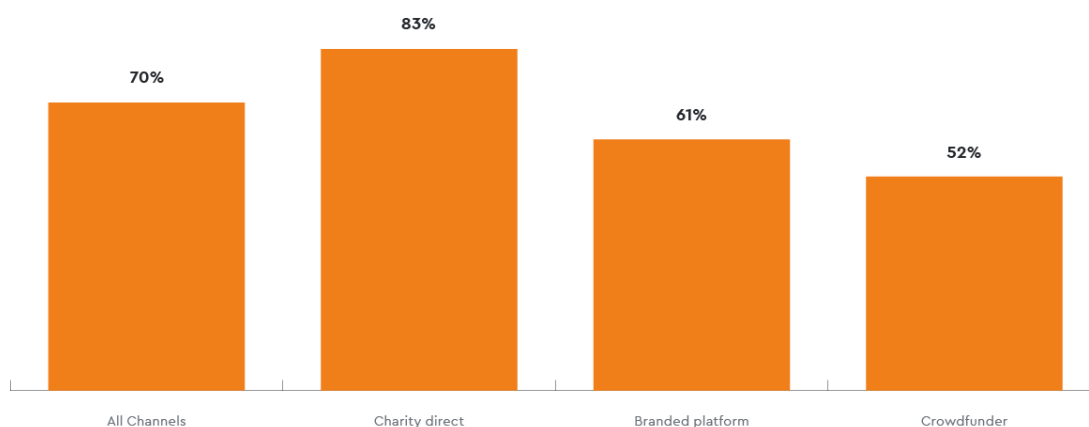
How do people want to give?

Figure 22: Reasons why people forget who they last donated to



A noteworthy 83% of people who made their last donation directly on a charity's website remembered the name of the cause they last gave to. This drops significantly to 61% for consumer giving platforms and 52% for crowdfunders.

Figure 23: Brand recall based on how the last donation was made

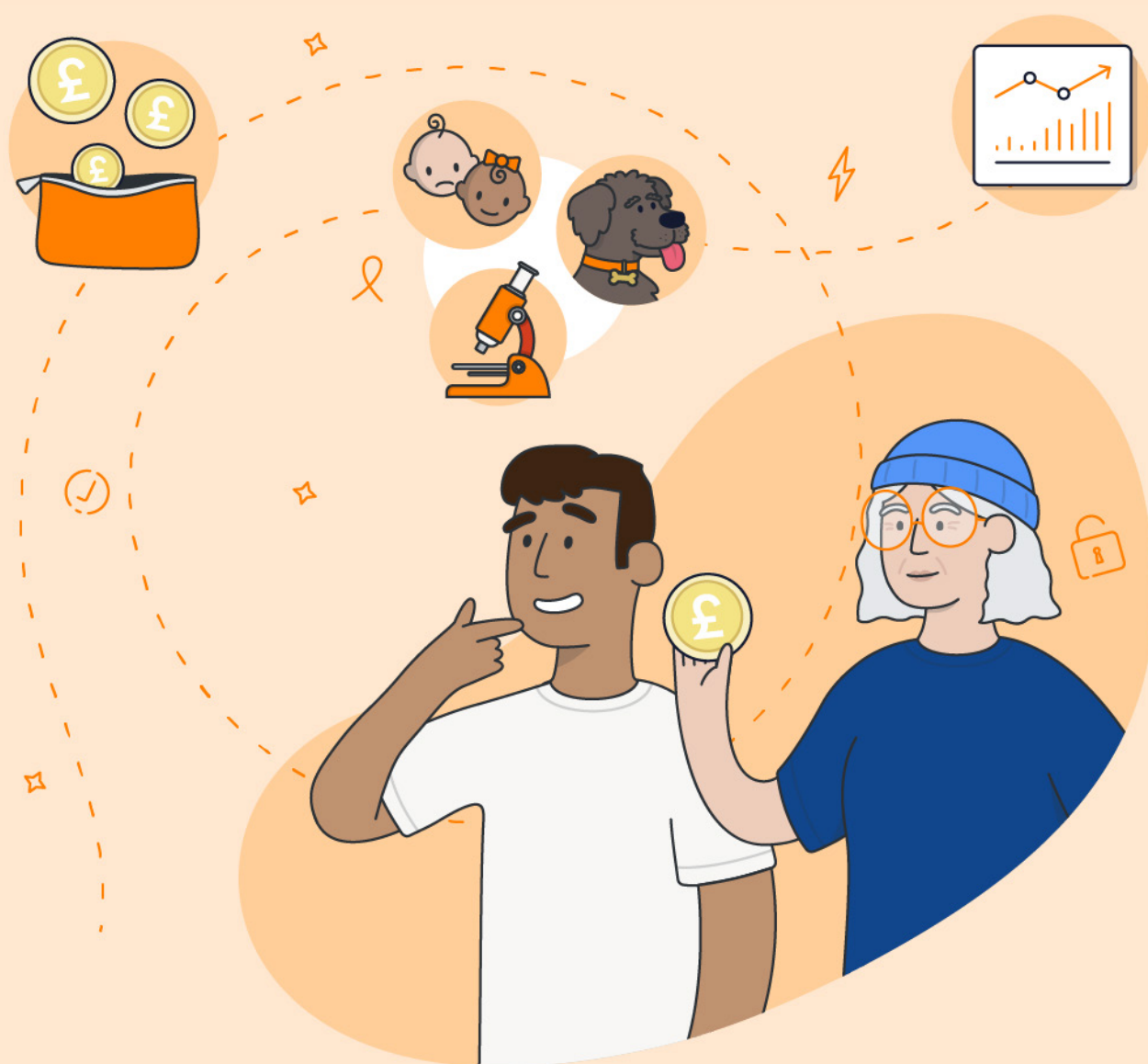


Not only are direct donations best for recall but they're best for donation amounts too. For charities, it's important to drive supporters to their own websites as direct donations are 21% higher than those through consumer giving platforms. Investing in fundraising technology that is charity branded and can slot into the website will help good causes to build longer term relationships with supporters and ultimately raise more.

How do people want to give?

Online donations have consistently been the preferred way for the public to give over the past four years - and while this is particularly true for younger age groups – there's still a significant number of those 65 and above who would rather give online. An important takeaway for good causes is that donating directly through a charity's website is unanimously the preferred option. Having the ability to accommodate donations through the website is not a nice-to-have or something for the future; it's vital for accommodating donors' preferences in the here and now.

Opportunities for good causes



Opportunities for good causes

Charities are having to contend with a number of obstacles in 2025. The financial and geopolitical backdrop at large is difficult to navigate; the public is having to make difficult financial decisions and at the same time, demand for services is high. There are reasons to be optimistic though. For one, people are feeling better off than you might think and secondly, despite the economic climate, giving remains stable. Around three quarters of people have given in the last three months and the same amount intend to give in the upcoming quarter. This is a consistent trend over the last four years. People will give if they can and more than that, they trust charities. More than any other British institution. They greatly value their role in society too. The challenge for charities is ensuring that they're memorable when people make a donation so they can build their supporter base and increase their number of repeat donors.

These are the six key takeaways from this edition of the research:

- 1 Giving is stable:** 73% of people have donated to a good cause in the past three months and the same amount are somewhat or very likely to give in the upcoming quarter.
- 2 Charities impact is valued:** Four out of five (79%) members of the public view the work of charities as 'very important' or 'essential'. A ringing endorsement for the sector.
- 3 Support for overseas aid:** Over half (55%) of adults say the government should maintain or increase overseas aid and 68% believe charities are better or equally as good at delivering aid overseas as the government.
- 4 Britain's most trusted:** Charities are the most trusted British institution with three quarters of the public scoring trust in them as moderate to high. This is more than double the government (36%).
- 5 Donors prefer online:** 60% of all charitable donations were made online in the past quarter. This is a preference that tracks across the vast majority of age groups and income levels.
- 6 Make it your own:** The vast majority of donors (54%) prefer to give directly through a charity's website – over four times the amount that prefer to give via a consumer giving platform. The average donation value is also 21% higher through a charity's website. A charity-branded donation solution that can be embedded into the website is the way to go.

This is the seventeenth edition of the Donor Pulse research project from the Enthuse Intelligence team, looking at how the public's opinions on supporting charities and donating are changing over time.

About Enthuse



Enthuse is a fundraising, donations and events registration technology provider that has helped thousands of charities raise millions. Enthuse's solutions are customised under a cause's own brand and put the organisation in control of the data. This allows charities to build and nurture a loyal supporter base, raise more and ultimately have more impact. Enthuse was founded in 2012 and is headquartered in London, with operations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Enthuse is also the official online fundraising partner for London Marathon Events and Great Run.



enthuse

t: +44 (0) 20 3872 2090

e: info@enthuse.com

enthuse.com