

# A year in the life: a Best Practice Guide to annual publications

By Kay Parris

“Our annual report reflects the knowledge,  
experience and passion that drives us.”

*Deana Selby, publications manager, Dogs Trust*

# WELCOME



Charity annual reports and reviews have become a very diverse breed. Anything goes, it seems, from non-designed, statutory-minimum documents (supplemented by other media through the year), to beautiful glossy brochures, videos and interactive online products.



Faced with a burgeoning array of options and imperatives, communications professionals have a lot to consider when planning how to let others know what their charity has been up to all year. So it's not surprising that the prompt for this guide came from CharityComms members wanting to compare notes.

We've collected numerous samples of work to contribute to your deliberations, alongside testimonials, tips and advice from professionals in the sector.

But you know how it goes - the more information we tried to gather in, be it about formats, production, editorial or audiences, the more related areas seemed to open up. Whole organisational cultures, pressures and strategies may be bound into the decisions you take on how to approach your charity's reporting responsibilities and opportunities.

The bigger picture influences not only how much staff time you can devote to an annual publication, but the extent to which different departments will help you find stories for your report, and whether an annual publication (beyond a mandatory minimum) is even suitable in your context. It will influence the extent to which you embrace digital technology; how transparency is handled; how the impacts you want to convey are assessed; how annual reporting fits into your comms strategy and how your comms strategy fits into the corporate one.

So we've included a selection of viewpoints on all these issues, alongside some nuts-and-bolts type advice, which will hopefully prove useful to less experienced annual report/review practitioners or those feeling a bit rusty.

If you're only here to grab a quick pile of samples for your brainstorming meeting, no offence taken. Just scroll through for case studies or head straight to page twenty-nine for a samples listing with links.

**Vicky Browning**, director, CharityComms and **Kay Parris**, author

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# CONTENTS

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four	<b>Annual reports, annual reviews, impact reports: what's the difference?</b>
five	<b>Case studies:</b> Oxfam GB, Dogs Trust
six	<b>Case studies:</b> Alcohol Concern, MS Society
seven	<b>The least we can do: statutory minimum reporting obligations</b>
eight	<b>Who is your report for, and why?</b>
nine	<b>Case studies:</b> Cancer Research UK, Alcohol Concern
ten	<b>Case study:</b> NSPCC
eleven	<b>Case study:</b> CAFOD
twelve	<b>Digital or print?</b>
fourteen	<b>Case studies:</b> WWF, Cancer Research UK, British Heart Foundation, Anglia Ruskin Students' Union, Spurgeons, Prostate Cancer UK
sixteen	<b>Getting started: strategy, staff and production</b> <b>Case study:</b> Action on Hearing Loss
seventeen	<b>Case study:</b> Cancer Research UK
nineteen	<b>Editorial content</b>
twenty	<b>Content tips</b>
twenty-one	<b>Let's be honest</b>
twenty-three	<b>Impact</b>
twenty-six	<b>Case studies:</b> Oxfam GB, NSPCC
twenty-seven	<b>Getting noticed</b>
twenty-nine	<b>Sample reports and reviews</b>
thirty-one	<b>References</b>

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# ANNUAL REPORTS, ANNUAL REVIEWS, IMPACT REPORTS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

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Every charity has to produce **a trustees' annual report and accounts**, whether in print or online. It's a document of accountability that, at its simplest, shows the Charity Commission and your funders how the organisation is raising and allocating its income.

The Charity Commission must be satisfied that funds are being generated and spent appropriately in the service of your charity's objectives, structures, activities and achievements.

Some annual reports go much further than required, showcasing a charity's work during the year through great pictures, stories and more. Alternatively, charities may choose to publish these more colourful elements in a separate **annual review** that relates the highlights and challenges of the year.

While an annual review generally includes a snapshot of financial comings and goings, it is free of the legal obligations governing the annual report. This means it can focus on being attractive and accessible to a broader range of readers.

Any decent annual report or review will demonstrate the **impact** a charity's work is having on its intended beneficiaries. As such, impact reporting may sit prominently within the annual report or review – alongside financial reports and news of other valuable, but possibly less impact-evident developments.

*Consider the "so what" factor: This is one of the most important elements to keep in mind when writing any charity publication, including annual reports. Demonstrating impact, showing the human success and getting your messages across should all answer the question "so what"?*

**Amy Lee**, PR and events co-ordinator, The Wallich <sup>(1)</sup>

However, many charities opt to produce a dedicated **impact report** that focuses more or less exclusively on providing evidence of the impacts they have had on different aspects of their mission.

Others prefer to treat the challenge of impact reporting less as a once-a-year activity and more like a process – conveyed not only through annual publications, but, for example, by a tailor-made and ever-changing web page or by ongoing stories put out through all kinds of media from news releases to tweets.

In other words, there are various reporting options. But giving the statutory annual report and accounts a miss this year clearly isn't one of them.

And as far as any communications professional is concerned, neither is hiding the evidence of your impacts and achievements from everyone but the regulator.

So let's get to work.

## CASE STUDIES: WHICH TYPE OF REPORT?

### Annual report: open information and stories

Georgia Best, senior PR manager, Oxfam GB



**Our Annual Report is available on the website each year as well as in printed form.**

It is part of a strong corporate policy on open information, committing us to make a whole range of documents available, most of which can be found on and around this page:

[oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/plans-reports-and-policies](http://oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/plans-reports-and-policies)

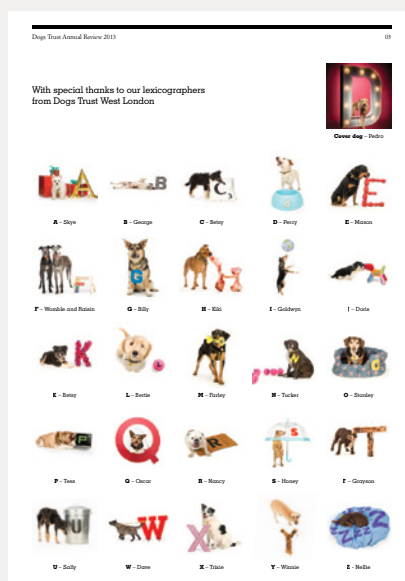
As with all major NGOs, our aim with the annual report is both to fulfil our legal responsibilities and

also to go as far as we can to bring our achievements in the year to life through story-telling and so on, while trying to keep the content relatively concise.

There is a steady demand for print copies, for example for presentation to donors when we meet them. We keep the print run to a minimum and make the pdf available on the Oxfam website so that it can be easily accessed by everyone.

### Annual review: sharing a passion

Deana Selby, publications manager, Dogs Trust



**The thinking behind the approach was that we want people to actually read the report, and be drawn into each page and really get a strong feeling for the work and beliefs of Dogs Trust.**

The report has to look interesting so that people will want to read it; I know what I like to read and it always has strong images! The approach is image led, and the dictionary design lends itself well to covering many different subjects in just enough detail.

I hope the effect will be for existing supporters to get a strong sense that their donation, no matter how large or small, has been well spent on a variety of worthwhile projects,

in addition to our core rescue and rehoming work. I hope that anyone new to Dogs Trust will get a clear sense of what the organisation does every day, and what we stand for – and above all that we love dogs! I'd hope that the report reflects the knowledge, experience and the passion that drives Dogs Trust.

[dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf](http://dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf)

Dogs' Trust annual review designed by Anthony Oram

## CASE STUDIES: WHICH TYPE OF REPORT?

### Impact report: clear and simple

**Emily Robinson**, director of fundraising and campaigns, Alcohol Concern

**We wanted to keep our report simple, to show our very clear impact and the difference we're making on what sometimes seems like an impossible problem – it's not! That's also why we used lots of simple graphics.**

Many people think we're a lot bigger than we are because we have a big media presence, so I also wanted to show that we're good value for money with only a small staff – hence the staff photos at the back. I think this is also a nice pat on the back for staff members for their hard work over the year.

We've still produced an annual report and accounts for the Charity Commission and for funders, but this isn't a designed piece of work and we have no plans to produce a designed annual report as well.

For now, our Impact Report is only available as a PDF to save money. We'll review it shortly to see if we should produce a hard copy, but this can be expensive.

[alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report](http://alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report)

### LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST CHEAP ALCOHOL

We have been leading the fight against cheap alcohol and pressing the UK Government to take action through different policies such as a minimum price for alcohol and tougher licensing laws. We are an Executive Committee Member of the Alcohol Health Alliance, working alongside a wide range of colleagues in different public health bodies.

In April 2012, we launched the findings of a survey of 600 pub landlords in Wales. This found that 94% of landlords felt that supermarket alcohol promotions were undermining the pub trade, and that 77% supported a minimum price of 50p per unit.

We successfully persuaded the UK Government to consult on minimum pricing for England and Wales, and at the time of writing our Policy Officer, Liz Ainsworth, awaits the result of that consultation. We have made a big leap forward in persuading many politicians and public bodies of the need to implement controls on cheap strong alcohol.

**77% of pub landlords surveyed supported a minimum price of 50p per unit**



### Achievements report

**Ian Fannon**, head of communications, MS Society

**Earlier this year, we produced an "achievements report" covering our work in 2012, which was the first time we've reported on our work separately from our formal annual report and accounts.**

We did this mainly because we're unable to produce our annual report for any given year until the autumn of the following year, while we wait for all our branches to finalise their accounts – and we felt this was waiting too long to tell our key stakeholders what we'd done.

As a result, the report was shorter (without all the legal/financial info that is obligatory in a full annual report) and we could therefore afford to produce more copies and send them to our members as an insert in our member magazine. We also created an interactive pdf, which you can find online.

**OUR AIMS** ▶ 02  
OUR YEAR ▶ 04  
JO ▶ 06  
CAT ▶ 09  
LIZ ▶ 12  
LYNSEY ▶ 15  
JACK ▶ 18  
MS LIFE ▶ 20  
YOUR IMPACT ▶ 23

**MS**  
Multiple Sclerosis Society

## 2012 MONTH BY MONTH

This was an exciting, rewarding and in some ways a break-through year for the MS Society. Here we round up just some of the highlights.

**JANUARY**

Joining a coalition of over 40 charities, we gave members in Birmingham, Peterborough, Cheshire and the Forth Valley a chance to win a holiday home in the Cotswolds.

**FEBRUARY**

We announced a £1.7 million research project, the largest ever in the UK, to help people with MS live better lives.

**MARCH**

Thousands of supporters from over 40 charities, including the MS Society, gathered in London to support the MS Society's campaign to end the MS stigma.

**APRIL**

Over 1,000 people attended Europe's largest ever MS Live in Manchester, with 45 different workshops, 10 speakers, 10 clubs and a number of other events.

**MAY**

A MS week, we launched a report highlighting a shocking gap in research about MS, and encouraged the community to join the **Research 100** campaign about MS across the UK.

**JUNE**

Jack Robinson's diagnosis, a hand-drawn sign that says "SAY NO TO CHEAP BOOZE", and a survey of 600 pub landlords in Wales.

**JULY**

We launched a partnership with the **Coron Trust** to offer support about bereavement to people who have lost someone to MS.

**AUGUST**

The **MS Register** published its first set of data, and a new set of statistics on MS, and a new set of statistics on MS.

**SEPTEMBER**

Over 1,000 Campaign Community members, including the Minister for Disabled People, met to discuss the MS Society's campaign to end the MS stigma.

**OCTOBER**

A new report published by the **Healthcare Commission**, which found that the MS Society's campaign to end the MS stigma had led to changes to the welfare system.

**NOVEMBER**

We launched our **Biggest** fundraising appeal of the year, to help fund the research into MS.

**DECEMBER**

MS Society's **Christmas** campaign, which raised over £100,000 for MS research.

We're still producing a full annual report, but this will have a much smaller print run.

[mssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Governance%20docs/Our%20achievements%202012.pdf](http://mssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Governance%20docs/Our%20achievements%202012.pdf)

six

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[charitycomms.org.uk](http://charitycomms.org.uk)

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# THE LEAST WE CAN DO

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The minimum your charity can get away with is to prepare a brief annual report and set of accounts for the Charity Commission within 10 months of the end of each accounting year.

Everyone has to send the Commission a copy of their annual return. But the smallest charities need not send their narrative report to the commissioners unless asked.

The size of your charity also governs quite how downright abrupt you can choose to be when writing your narrative report.

Those with incomes under £500,000 can prepare a simple summary of structures, activities, performance and finances, while more is demanded of the bigger-earners.

You can find the requirements set out on the Charity Commission's website at [charitycommission.gov.uk/running-a-charity/managing-your-charity/trustees-annual-report-how-to-prepare/how-to-write-the-report/](http://charitycommission.gov.uk/running-a-charity/managing-your-charity/trustees-annual-report-how-to-prepare/how-to-write-the-report/)

## Good practice

The Charity Commission interprets the legal reporting criteria for charities through its statement of recommended practice (SORP).

Last updated in 2005 (but with consultation now underway on a new version), the SORP is downloadable here: [charitycommission.gov.uk/media/90634/sorp05textcolour.pdf](http://charitycommission.gov.uk/media/90634/sorp05textcolour.pdf)

For more details about the consultation and how to comment, visit the microsite [charitycorp.org](http://charitycorp.org)

## Basic requirements: compliance survey

A survey of 50 of the UK's biggest charities, published by Deloitte in September 2013 (its fourth such survey) suggests it is not unheard-of for charities to ignore elements of the guidance set out by the SORP, or to comply with it only by the skin of their teeth.

For example, there is a requirement for charities to show their work for the public benefit. However 33 per cent of respondents to this year's survey were found "either not to discuss how they provide public benefit, or assume that this is obvious from the rest of the report." <sup>(2)</sup>

The survey also found that 34 per cent of charities had either not given details of their objectives or not explained how their future plans would set out to meet their objectives.

For charities who want an at-a-glance measure of what full compliance entails, Deloitte provides a helpful checklist as an index to its survey, which can be downloaded at [deloitte.com/view/en\\_GB/uk/industries/charities-not-for-profit/739dcbce609e0410VgnVCM1000003256f70aRCRD.htm](http://deloitte.com/view/en_GB/uk/industries/charities-not-for-profit/739dcbce609e0410VgnVCM1000003256f70aRCRD.htm)

While it is not mandatory to make your report beautiful, Deloitte's surveys have identified a growing, if not overwhelming, tendency for charities to aim for good looks – 44 per cent the charity reports surveyed in 2013 were judged to be "visually interesting".



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# WHO IS YOUR REPORT FOR, AND WHY?

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*Charities tell us the annual report is in effect their brochure – the way they tell stakeholders what they are doing, and present themselves to potential new supporters and donors.*

**Stephen Cook**, editor, Third Sector

## DO YOU ACTUALLY NEED AN ANNUAL REVIEW?

*Charities don't have to publish an annual review, only the formal annual report. Would your effort, time and budget be better spent creating a few more targeted and specific marketing materials than one big, all-singing, all-dancing annual review? Annual reviews often try to do and be everything and can sometimes end up doing and being nothing. Don't just publish an annual review because that's what charities do.*

**Gideon Burrows**, [ngomedia.org.uk](http://ngomedia.org.uk) <sup>(3)</sup>

Every serious communicator knows the two first rules for publications:

- 1 Know your audience
- 2 Know your purpose

But let's be honest – the annual report/review is the annual report/review, right? We know who it's for: the stakeholders. And its purpose? Twofold, obviously – accountability and marketing.

Some of us have written annual publications with little more than these criteria in mind. Yet, with a more exacting response to the obvious advice, we can better figure what kind of report, review or mix of both is best for our needs – indeed whether our needs are even best served by an annual publication outside of the statutory basics – and how to approach the content and format of the product we are creating.

## Your audience

Who are these stakeholders our charities bang on about?

They might be donors, other funders, volunteers, beneficiaries, trustees, members, affiliates, staff, visitors or people with the potential to be any of these things. They may be partner organisations, local or national government bodies or collaborating NGOs.

The problem with annual publications is that, with the money spent on them and the time invested, we generally need them to engage a wide audience. There is no point pretending we can afford, or would wish for, a differently-tailored report for every stakeholder group.



Besides, a target readership can genuinely be very broad. Take Cancer Research UK. Its recently published review [cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/](https://cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/) includes a slogan: "For you, Because of you, Thanks to you". Who is the "you" potentially? Most of us, surely, when you think about it.

Nonetheless, we can often identify which of our audiences are the most crucial. We can group some together as key prospective readers of a review, or an impact report, or a series of impact stories. Having got that far, we can begin to orientate the language and look of the report to best resonate with its key stakeholder groups; these must include our beneficiaries, with whom all other supporters and potential supporters will have an affinity. (See also Content Tips, page twenty.)

## CASE STUDIES: AUDIENCES

### Details for donors and thanks to supporters

**Carolyn Davidge**, director of communications,  
Cancer Research UK

**Our annual report and accounts is used by senior staff and teams who meet major donors and trusts who are considering funding Cancer Research UK and need a full picture of our finances, our objectives and achievements.**

Our annual review showcases the impact of our research with highlights from the past year:

the stories are all told through case studies, cancer patients and survivors whose lives have been touched by our work or interviews with our researchers and supporters. It also acts as a thank you to everyone who has supported us in the past year.

[cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/](https://cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/)



### Addressing new funders, raising awareness

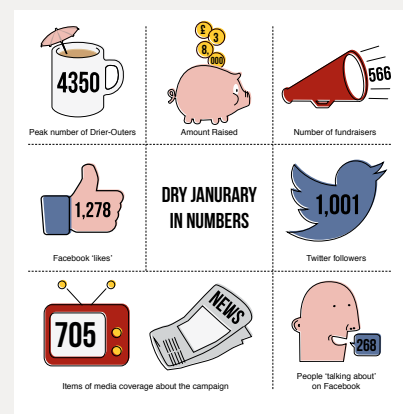
**Emily Robinson**, director of fundraising and campaigns,  
Alcohol Concern

**We've changed a lot as a charity recently, moving from significant core funding from the government to relying more on individual donors, corporate and trusts.**

We've also been doing more public-facing work in the media

and through campaigns such as Dry January. We wanted an exciting document to let funders know all the different things we're doing with their money to help our cause.

[alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report](https://alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report)



## Your purpose

**1 Accountability.** Your stakeholders need to understand clearly what has (and has not) happened to progress the mission in which they are engaged, in their different ways.

You, on the other hand, need your stakeholders – be they beneficiaries, donors, members or volunteers – to have confidence in continuing (or beginning) their involvement with your charity.

Your communications must meet both these needs, and many charities get their annual reviews or impact reports to shoulder a large chunk of the job. Without stakeholder confidence, things fall apart. So you need to focus very clearly on who the stakeholders reading this publication are, and ask yourself how your report, review or impact story is going to contribute to their understanding and engagement with your work.

**2 Marketing/fundraising.** Beyond accountability, your report or review can be used as a key marketing tool in every approach to contacts old and new. It will almost certainly accompany (or be referenced online with) every fundraising initiative or activity.

**3 Thanks.** This publication may give you a chance to thank many of your stakeholders – your fundraisers, staff, volunteers, members and supporters, who should feel genuinely appreciated.

**4 Learning.** The process of gathering, analysing and presenting data in order to do the things above (and possibly more), could just help your organisation in the process of learning lessons and developing new strategies.

## CASE STUDY: PURPOSE

### Meeting broad objectives

**John Townsend**, senior internal communications officer, NSPCC

**We see our formal annual report as a great opportunity both to outline the year's work to key audiences and to provide transparent information about our work to anyone who seeks it.**

Clearly the financial information, numbers and formal notices are integral to the report and are necessary for compliance and accountability. The report is also a means for us to communicate our key narratives from the year and we try hard to document our work in a very accessible and readable manner.

The content of the report aims to:

- Tell a story of achievement rather than provide a list of outputs
- Outline future direction
- Demonstrate the role supporters have had in achieving tangible change in protecting children
- Demonstrate the need for support/increased support.

[nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf\\_wdf92210.pdf](https://nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf_wdf92210.pdf)



**5 Eliciting responses.** How will you want your readers to respond to your publication? By joining or donating to your organisation, perhaps. Stepping forward as a volunteer. Feeling motivated to continue supporting/donating/volunteering/raising funds for you rather than not. Or at the very least, recognising your name next time they encounter it.

Many charities find all these objectives are substantially met by their annual publication, usually as part of a rich communications mix. Others rely on different methods.

### Imperative?

It is important to recognise that the case for not producing any kind of report or review, beyond the statutory minimum, may be compelling for some organisations or in certain circumstances.

For example, some who are funded entirely by organisational or individual membership fees may have less of a fundraising imperative to set against the resources needed to produce a review. Some will achieve all the marketing they need through multiple, smaller, targeted media.

"It depends on how big the organisation is – what other communications tools they have," says marketing consultant Ranila Ravi-Burslem. "And on how the organisation is funded – what purpose the annual report serves. If the organisation is just a service provider, say for government, with no need to fundraise, the annual report may be there just to tick the Charity Commission boxes."

Many organisations will be asking themselves challenging questions about whether a review will be a worthwhile investment given their particular priorities and resource realities.

## CASE STUDY: FORMATS

### Alternative approaches

**Sarah Hagger Holt**, corporate communications manager, CAFOD

**The decision not to produce a full printed annual review came as part of a process of reviewing all our communications in 2010, both to reduce costs and time but also to clarify messages, give supporters a more rounded picture of our work and produce better-quality and more effective publications.**

As a result, many different newsletters aimed at different audiences were brought together into one magazine – *Side by Side* – which is now mailed to donors, campaigners and other supporters three times a year, with supporting

online and multimedia content. The annual review occupies a double page spread in one issue of *Side by Side*.

In 2012 we used a photocaption film format; this year we are using a graphics-based approach. But whatever format we use has to bring information to life in a way that is brief, engaging, shows the scope of our work and works across print and online.

We try to focus all our communications on the stories and experiences of the people we work with, and photography



is a good way to personalise the work we do. We received good feedback from supporters about the review and it reached a wider audience than the printed annual review would have done.

Those who are interested in the detail can also access the full annual report and accounts online and specific evaluation reports on appeals and projects:

[cafod.org.uk/About-Us/  
Open-information-resources](http://cafod.org.uk/About-Us/Open-information-resources)

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# DIGITAL OR PRINT?

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More and more charities are abandoning full print-runs of paper-led annual publications in favour of cheaper, more versatile online options which can prompt instant online commitments – donations, membership and so on – from web readers.

There is a huge range of online possibilities, from pdfs to videos, a mix of both, or a fully-integrated web presence for your annual reporting. Pdf reports generally have printed counterparts – often in small print-runs or on demand. It is rare these days for a charity to produce a print-only report, but many still find value in print copies for specific uses.

*The traditional chunky, clunky annual report doesn't work so well as people use print less and go online more. Charities are looking at different ways of doing things – doing a "review" as well as or instead of a report, reducing the print run but making it more interesting and accessible, producing DVDs – and, of course, making it accessible online. It's a time of changes and challenges for the annual report.*

**Stephen Cook**, editor, Third Sector

## KEEP PRINT IN THE MIX

*There's no replacement for a hardcopy report: although a digital version is crucial and, depending on resources available, can deepen and extend the stories that you want to tell, we always return to the impact of the printed version.*

*Our trustees, chief executive, directors and fundraising team feed back that they appreciate taking something tangible with them to meetings, and to send to potential funders etc. Assess what your audience needs, how best they will respond to your messages, where they are most likely to engage with your content, and plan from the outset to respond accordingly.*

**Isabel Potter**, head of marketing, Media Trust <sup>(4)</sup>

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## THE POWER OF DIGITAL

There are an array of digital tools that can enhance charity reporting options and effects while also generating instant supporter feedback, commitment and more.

We believe that digital documents such as websites, email newsletters and social media updates are a great way to keep charity supporters informed and engaged all year round. Apart from the obvious cost benefits of not producing and distributing printed annual reports, online equivalents can be dynamically updated if connected to an organisation's databases, or to online collaboration tools such as Google Apps, meaning that instead of a one-off, annual snapshot, an organisation can deliver an up-to-the-minute report of its performance at any one time.

Connected data and constantly-updating visualisations can bring opportunities not just to impact reporting, but to charity communications in general.

Donors are increasingly seeing themselves as social investors and want to know what difference a charity is making in the world before they commit to supporting it.

We also believe that every piece of content should have a purpose and should ideally drive the reader (or listener, or viewer, in terms of multimedia) towards performing some action, whether it's reading a related article, signing up to a newsletter or tweeting a relevant fact.

Digital reporting offers a fantastic opportunity for readers and supporters to interact directly with your charity, whether it's filtering a data visualisation to find the information most relevant to them, or responding to a "call to action" such as a donate or volunteer button from within the relevant parts of a report dealing with how donations are spent, or how volunteers made a difference last year.

Such devices can elicit an instant response from a supporter when they're at their most open to an organisation's message. This helps a charity capture a new supporter much more easily than making them print off a form, complete it and return it in the post, significantly reducing the barriers to converting casual readers into supporters.

**Ed Cox**, *managing director, Reason Digital*

### Online interactive, with some printed copies

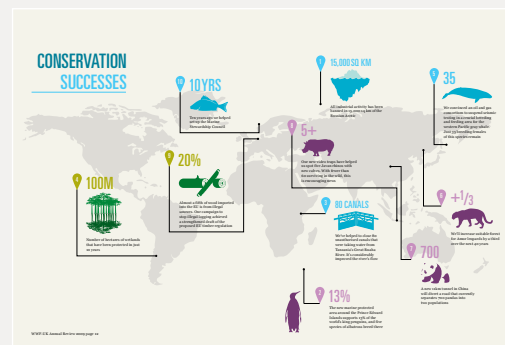
**Guy Jowett**, senior editor, WWF

**I wanted something that would grab readers with eye contact and colour the moment they turned the first page. It's great that the online version of our review has steadily incorporated more rich media.**

I'm pleased we now embed films and feature photo galleries, and even offer simple things like links you can click to read staff blogs, which offer more of that first-hand experience.

It all adds up to an online version that offers more than – or certainly

something different from – the print one. That said, I'm also heartened to hear that since the printed review shrunk to a smaller format than it was a few years ago, our chief executive and other senior staff are using it more frequently as a leave-behind. It's pretty rare that positive feedback makes its way to me, but it's won a couple of awards (Design Week award winner 2011; 100 Best Annual Reports 2011, Graphis), and the general noise from within the organisation has been positive.



[assets.wwf.org.uk/annual\\_review/2012/](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/annual_review/2012/)

### Pdf and print

**Carolyn Davidge**, director of communications, Cancer Research UK

**Both report and review are printed documents and pdfs on the website.**

Our fundraisers, who use the review in greatest quantities, told us they still need hard copies – either to leave with people or to use in face-to-face meetings with

supporters to talk through selected stories. We also produce a much smaller highlights document that can be given out cheaply in larger numbers at events.

[cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/](http://cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/)

#### FUNDING RESEARCH ACROSS THE UK

**4,000**

Thanks to supporters like you we fund over 4,000 researchers, nurses and doctors across the UK.

**Want to know more?**  
Download a copy of our Annual Review, where we share some amazing stories from the year.  
[cruk.org/about-us/annual-review](http://cruk.org/about-us/annual-review)



#### ADAPTING CURRENT TREATMENTS

Thanks to your support, we're building on our knowledge to find better treatments for children and adults with cancer. But these don't always need to be new – sometimes existing approaches can be used in different ways.

**Tackling rare cancers**  
Over 70% of people survive the rare cancer rhabdomyosarcoma, but few respond to treatment if their cancer returns. We're investigating whether a drug we originally developed to treat brain tumours could help beat the disease if it comes back.  
Susan Hey's four-year-old son Hamish had rhabdomyosarcoma. 'We need better treatments and more of them', she says. 'Every day we have with Hamish is precious. Cancer Research UK is doing amazing work to help more people beat cancer.'

**Combining treatments to save lives**  
Professor Richard Marais and his team discovered that adding a lung cancer drug to an existing treatment could provide new options for people with malignant melanoma. Next they plan to try this combination with patients who have this type of skin cancer. 'We hope this research will speed up progress', says Richard, 'and help more people survive melanoma for longer.'

Thank you to everyone who features in our Annual Review. (Registered charity no. 10304)

### Photography and animation

**Tamara Bennett**, media manager, British Heart Foundation

**This year, for the first time, we used stop motion photography and animated transitions to bring our annual review to life online, transforming it into an engaging and innovative online experience using both 2D and 3D transitions. The effect draws the user into the journey to discover more about Team BHF.**

With a focus on people, it tells the story of Team BHF and the work happening in labs, schools, shops and communities across the UK;

showing how people come together to fight for every heartbeat. Our photographer took a range of still photographs which were then brought to life using a stop motion technique, transforming static photos into ones that move and change as the user navigates through the microsite. The site then puts the emphasis on donating and sharing when the user completes the journey.

[bhf.org.uk/teambhf](http://bhf.org.uk/teambhf)





## Impact though infographics

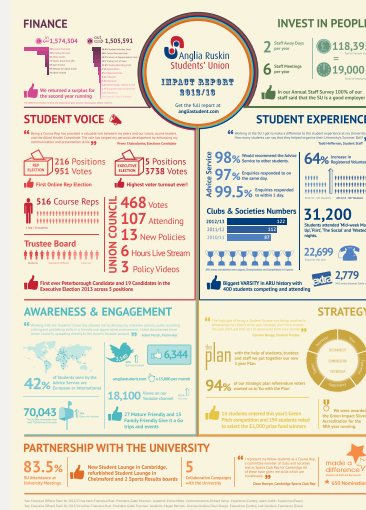
**Elisavet Christou**, marketing co-ordinator,  
Anglia Ruskin Students' Union

**Instead of producing a text-heavy annual/impact report booklet, we decided to go with an infographics poster.**

We put large size copies of the poster all around our four campuses and we produce a prezi video for our website as well

as having a full text document format available there for everyone else who wants to get a bit more information.

[angliastudent.com/pageassets/about/annualreport/impact\\_report\\_poster\\_for\\_prezi.pdf](http://angliastudent.com/pageassets/about/annualreport/impact_report_poster_for_prezi.pdf)

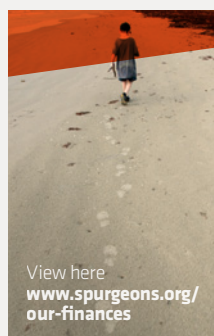


## Online report – with business card

**Fiona Furman**, corporate communications manager, Spurgeons

**This year, to save money and avoid wastage, we decided not to produce any hard copies and will instead issue the annual report with its own “business card”.**

That way, when staff are with a commissioner or supporter who would usually like a copy, they can be given the business card – which will include the URL of its online location.



[spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual\\_Report\\_201112.pdf](http://spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual_Report_201112.pdf)

Spurgeons online annual report designed by [creatiscope.co.uk](http://creatiscope.co.uk)

## Graphics-led DVD

**Vivienne Francis**, director of communications, Prostate Cancer UK

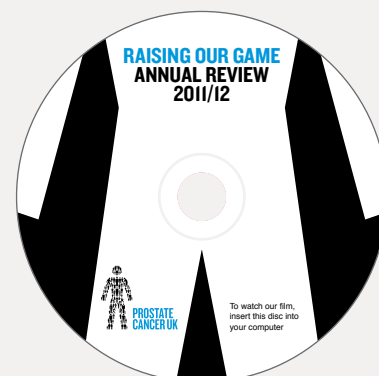
**The annual review set out to be straight-talking and to reflect Prostate Cancer UK's identity as a bold, dynamic force, eager to innovate and be agile in engaging people through the best channels.**

This direct approach defines all our activity; by 2030, prostate cancer will be the most common cancer in the UK and the clarity and challenge of our comms must match the urgency of the cause.

The DVD strips back information to what supporters or potential

supporters need or want to know. The resulting snapshot outlines key achievements and organisational ambitions, but it also rewards viewers with a rich experience.

The feedback has been very positive, with many supporters preferring to see the impact of our work in a creative, punchy way rather than in a traditional printed format. We find this encouraging and will continue to be bold with our communications to help increase the responsiveness of our audience.



[prostatecanceruk.org/about-us/annual-review-201112](http://prostatecanceruk.org/about-us/annual-review-201112)



# GETTING STARTED

## Strategy and staff

The process of putting your annual publication together will hinge on several factors: budget; the genre concerned; the format you have chosen; staff or freelance resources; and, perhaps most important, the level of strategic importance your charity places on impact reporting (in all its forms).

Communications teams can be influential in ensuring systems are in place so that every part of the organisation keeps tabs on, and provides evidence for, the value, impact and development of what it is doing throughout the year.

Clearly this is about stories – stories of the people who benefit from or contribute to your work, and stories about challenges and learning. It is also about verifiable facts and figures.

Organisation-wide data-gathering systems make the communicators' job much easier in gathering material for reports, reviews and ongoing stories. They also mean that the information required to back up grant applications, fundraising drives and answers to various enquiries are accessible – and help ensure staff have the confidence to act as ambassadors for the organisation.

## CASE STUDY: STRATEGY

### Strategic communication and proof of impact

**Ranila Ravi-Burslem**, marketing consultant, recalling her work on impact reporting for Action on Hearing Loss in 2011

**Impact reporting was more than just reporting; it was part of the whole strategic planning process.**

I had responsibility for coordinating the strategic plan and for documenting the over-arching aims and objectives. Three to seven broadly-agreed aims

would be sent to each division and they would have to come up with specific aims and objectives to support the aim.

They all had to come back with numbers: "This year 1,800 people will stay in employment" etc. And at the end of the year, we

would go back to them and say: "This is what you said you would do – where are the objectives you have met, or failed to meet? How can you prove it?" It was completely transparent.

Part of the strategic approach involves understanding how much staff time can be allocated to output/impact reporting in your organisation. If your communications team is tiny and appears to be shouldering the entire reporting burden, you may not be able to justify spending endless months on research, so forward planning may become more important than ever.

At Cancer Research UK, annual reporting is afforded a great deal of staff time. However, organisations with a smaller staff resource may still benefit from reflecting on Cancer Research's thorough approach:

## CASE STUDY: PLANNING

### Leaving nothing to chance

**Carolyn Davidge**, director of communications,  
Cancer Research UK

**We have a member of staff working on these reports for nine months of the year, to project-manage gathering of content, interviews, writing and sign-off, case studies, design, photography, print, dissemination and online/ social media.**

They liaise with all the internal stakeholders from the CEO, chairman and finance department for the annual report and accounts, to all the teams who contribute stories to the annual review, which covers research, health, policy and fundraising. Being in-house means they know all the teams, who contribute personally and

understand how the publications are used and their value – they help make sure we always have the end user in mind at all stages of the process.

The finance department contributes most of the material for the report; other information comes from research funding, strategy and policy teams. We start thinking about stories for the review in November or December and agree a short-list in January, but we have the flexibility to add anything major from the end of the financial year. Stories are sourced from around the charity, but, as the publications are managed by the comms



department, we already have a clear idea of what the major achievements have been and so put forward ideas ourselves.

[cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/](http://cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/)

### Production

It's obvious, but sometimes we overlook obvious things: write a schedule.

A surprising number of organisations don't. Seriously: determine your desired date for distribution and work backwards from there – print day to first concepts/ research and all the stages in between. You will have less, not more time than you anticipated. And without a schedule, your chances of getting your report out at a strategically opportune, convenient, or even respectable time will be slim.

## WHO IS GOING TO BE INVOLVED, AND AT WHAT STAGE?

*Too many people demanding too big a say too many times is a recipe for going over deadline and producing a dog's dinner that no-one is happy with. Consider holding a big "annual review lunch" at the beginning of the process and welcome all comers, but then tightly restrict who gets to see and change copy as the process develops. Don't edit by committee. Never send round the designed review "just for any final thoughts" the day before it is due to print. You won't make that deadline.*

**Gideon Burrows,** [ngomedia.org.uk](http://ngomedia.org.uk) <sup>(5)</sup>

Information comes from different parts of the organisation. But writing and editing the report is a job for the comms team – or at least, for the comms team to commission and manage.

While other departments can and must contribute their stories, it is crucial for comms staff to keep a proper reign on write-ups if a tight, consistent and timely editorial is to be achieved. While "copy approval" protocols are a fact of life in many charities, most department heads accept that communicators must be allowed to manage the approval process according to strict schedules and criteria.

## Outsourcing

Where copy or design is outsourced to an external agency or individual, it is essential to be clear about who on the inside is project manager for the report, so that proper communication channels can be established between the agency/freelance and the organisation. It's also essential to write a clear brief which includes elements such as your design style, tone of voice, brand guidelines etc. <sup>(16)</sup>

## Evaluation

Evaluation can look like a tedious and eminently forgettable step in the production cycle – but go on, do it anyway. You can keep it simple and still reap real insights and benefits to help you with your next report/review.

It can be as basic as a brief meeting with a few members of staff (who, after all, are some of your consumers) plus a group email to a representative sample of your target audience. In these days of rapidly-changing communication preferences and available formats, it is more important than ever to keep abreast of what your punters want/don't want from you.

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# EDITORIAL CONTENT

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The editorial structure of your annual publication will vary according to its key audiences and type (whether simple statutory annual report, fuller annual report with review, annual review or impact report). It will also depend greatly on your key chosen medium – printed report/pdf (with online/interactive version), integrated web pages, YouTube film or whatever.

The Charity Commission website ([www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)) is the place to go to remind yourself of requirements for the statutory annual report narrative, which must accompany your accounts. It also offers links to sample charity reports that meet the content criteria at:

[charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/money-and-accounts/example-trustees-annual-reports-and-accounts/#sthash.ETiU5rzi.dpuf](http://charitycommission.gov.uk/detailed-guidance/money-and-accounts/example-trustees-annual-reports-and-accounts/#sthash.ETiU5rzi.dpuf)

## Basic structure

For those tackling an annual publication for the first time, or those in need of a prompt to get them started, here is a generic contents skeleton.

The model you actually adopt will be influenced by various factors, as mentioned above. Nonetheless, a scan through various guidelines, and numerous samples of all types of report, suggests your skeleton will include some or all of the following bones, inter-connecting in the order and manner that suits your product:

### ANNUAL PUBLICATION GENERIC CONTENTS

- Trustees' message
- Details of your charity and its mission
- Structure/governance
- Goals and objectives for the year
- Risks and challenges
- How the goals were met/failed to be met
- Detail of activities
- Detail of impact:
  - a) How did your activities meet the goals of your charity?
  - b) How specifically did they create change for your beneficiaries (include testimonials)
  - c) Figures: How many beneficiaries felt the impact? How can you measure that impact in objective terms?
- Other notable achievements, performance
- Report on involvement of volunteers (testimonials a good idea)
- Goals for next year/longer term
- Finance report
- Vote of thanks (supporters, donors, volunteers)
- Call to action – how to donate, join, support, volunteer

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# CONTENT TIPS

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Here are some pointers for sharpening your editorial approach:

**1 Be selective.** You may well have a vast amount of pertinent material to hand, but use too much and you will overwhelm, or bore, your readers. Pick out stories that illustrate key themes and tell them concisely.

**2 Use real people** where possible: their pictures, with their stories, in their own words, or brought to life by choice quotes. This is the kind of thing: [sendmyfriend.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GCE-annual-review-2012.pdf](http://sendmyfriend.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GCE-annual-review-2012.pdf)

**3 Beautiful pictures**, especially of human faces, animals and natural wonders (depending on your areas of work) have impact. What's this face worth would you say – 1,000 words? 2,000?: ([scribd.com/doc/137895363/2012-Trustees-report-and-accounts](http://scribd.com/doc/137895363/2012-Trustees-report-and-accounts), see p17)

**4 Good graphics** can convey complex information simply and memorably. Most reports make decent use of these in their finance pages – but there will be other pages where they can help. An awful lot gets conveyed here, for example: [targettb.org.uk/about-us/accounts](http://targettb.org.uk/about-us/accounts)

**5 Intersperse your pages with pull-outs and boxes** for key nuggets of material – quotes, statistics, goals, achievements – as the NSPCC has done in this report: [nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf\\_wdf92210.pdf](http://nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf_wdf92210.pdf)

These nuggets are what people will remember from your report. At the same time, they provide access to more detailed information by varying the pace, and keep people pushing through the report.

**6 White space** is your friend. Both endless flowing prose and clutter (riots of colours, stories and pictures squeezed into every square centimetre) are turn-offs.

**7 Careful with your chair's report and your donor lists.** They are pretty much obligatory for the annual report and may be politically so in an annual review. But be brave. Find ways to keep the chair's introduction brief and punchy (check out the end of Centrepoin't's punchy, contemporary, beneficiary-led annual review film for the briefest chair/CEO address in the history of chair/CEO addresses [youtube.com/watch?v=U-MloOvlh8I](http://youtube.com/watch?v=U-MloOvlh8I)). And find a compact and unobtrusive way to present the donor list, particularly if it is long.

**8 Ensure language and visual presentation are relevant/appealing** to your key supporter groups (see also Your Audience, page eight). I'd say the briefest glance at this highly engaging treatment tells you a fair bit about its key audiences, their interests and affinities: [dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf](http://dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf)

**9 Be transparent.** There may be an element of celebration in your report, but be honest about the things that haven't gone so well and the things you are less keen to publicise (like your fundraising expenditure?). It's a sure-fire way to earn credibility – and what is accountability without transparency?

**10 Focus on impact** – in most commentators' books, this is the golden word.

In the next few pages, we are going to look at transparency and impact in a bit more detail.

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# LET'S BE HONEST

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*Transparency and accountability are “no longer key principles to aspire to, but essentials for every charity's survival pack”.*

**Alistair MacLean**, chief executive, Fundraising Standards Board <sup>(6)</sup>

*In our reviews of annual reports in the magazine, transparency is a mixture of things: clarity, making the key facts and figures highly visible, and producing an honest assessment of what is going on at the charity. It can be quite a subtle thing – some reports leave you with an impression that the full story is not being told.*

**Stephen Cook**, Third Sector

There is a lot of talk at the moment about the need for more transparency in charity reporting. It's not that the concept of honesty is anything new. Besides, your supporters are probably not yet demanding you itemise every lacklustre local jumble sale to counterpoint your achievement reports. Indeed nfpSynergy's latest annual survey of public trust (see box below) suggests charities are still trusted more than almost every other institution. Still, the pressure for more openness appears to be growing.

## TRIED AND TRUSTED?

*Two thirds of people trust charities and it's increasing year on year. This is great news because trust is so important, but we don't know why it goes up or down. Until the sector does a lot more to manage public trust, we can feel neither complacent nor content.*

*Charities need to capitalise on their high levels of trust. They should communicate their impact better and address key public concerns like chief executives' salaries and overhead costs. It's time the sector abandoned its laissez-faire approach and started tackling some issues head on.*

**Joe Saxton**, driver of ideas, nfpSynergy, launching the results of the annual nfpSynergy survey on levels of trust, June 2013 <sup>(7)</sup>

The still-recent coming of age of the ethical consumer may have been helpful to charities, which have a head start, perhaps, in being seen as founded on ethics. But will that last? As a number of commentators have pointed out, there is a growing trend towards transparency in the public sector. This feeds expectations elsewhere, coming hand-in-hand with growing public awareness of the dodgy practices that have taken place in so many institutions behind closed doors.



Many charities demonstrate their commitment to transparency in their communications. Charity reports often convey progress on their objectives by indicating the extent to which these objectives have been achieved. Children's charity Spurgeons does this in very clear and open terms using "Yes", "No" and "Partially" buttons to show whether organisational objectives were achieved. [spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual\\_Report\\_201112.pdf](http://spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual_Report_201112.pdf) (see page 11)

Of course, transparency is not only about admitting fault or failure. It is about reporting facts, without spin or partial disclosure. If it isn't clear to people how much you are spending on admin, they will suspect you are spending more than you should be. If you would rather not explain your fundraising activities, lest supporters think you are lavishing money on gimmicky events or products – or are more interested in making money than spending it on the cause – they will be more inclined to resent the fundraising slice shown on your pie chart. In reality, your supporters need to know you are taking seriously the vital business of generating more income for your charity.

*Let's champion transparency in our charities. Show that we are making a difference by reporting on the impact we are having. We must also admit when things go wrong, and explain how we have learned from the mistakes made. There are good practice examples of where this has worked, and supporters have really appreciated the honesty.*

Charities need to get better at demonstrating that they are using donors' money wisely and carefully. This includes taking a proactive approach to publicising where work is done in collaboration to counter donor fears about duplication. Finally, charities should develop effective communications strategies to ensure that these messages are heard by our supporters.

**Alan Gosschalk**, director of fundraising, Scope and **Ceri Edwards**, director of policy and communications, Institute of Fundraising <sup>(8)</sup>



### INVITING VALIDATION

*People need to justify why giving money to society as a whole is a good investment. Surely they will only think so if the organisation's processes are transparent – if what they say is demonstrably real.*

*In international development, where the Department for International Development (DFID) is funding a project, people use external validation on a project basis to see whether target outcomes have been achieved. I don't know if any organisation is bold enough to say to an external validator – come in and look not just at this year or this project, but at the impact we have achieved over 20 years. The utopia for any NGO is to be able to shut their doors. They should be able to say: this is where we started; this is what we have achieved; this is what we have left to achieve.*

**Ranila Ravi-Burslem**, marketing consultant

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## IMPACT

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*Things can go wrong when charities or funders start to forget the basic reasons for assessing their impact. These can be summed up as to “prove” and “improve” your impact.*

**David Pritchard**, head of measurement and evaluation,  
New Philanthropy Capital <sup>(9)</sup>

This isn't a section about impact reports: it's about impact reporting, which every charity's annual publications need to do, as do all manner of other internal and external communications.

Charities tend to consider their impacts in terms of the difference specific projects make to the lives of the individuals, groups and communities they exist to help; and also in terms of what progress they have made towards realising the “big picture” of their mission – something that can be harder to quantify.

## DEFINING IMPACT

- *the overall difference you make to those you're trying to help*
- *the long term, big picture, general change you make*

**From Principles of Good Impact Reporting, NPC <sup>(10)</sup>**

Annual publications aside, most comms teams convey impact periodically through many different means – web stories, press releases, fundraising materials, social media and more – all year round.

Indeed, some would say annual publications (beyond a brief, statutory annual report) are unnecessary, so long as other communication channels are dynamically in use.

## GIVE ME SOUNDBITES

*I asked a room of 90 delegates a simple question – could they give me a stat or figure or an example of how their charity had impact? Three people put up their hands. Nothing scientific in that, but it mirrors dozens of sessions where I have asked people from charities to give me a factoid, a stat or a soundbite for how their charity does a great job. The vast majority of charity staff, even finance staff, struggle to give one.*

*My plea is for charities to focus on simplicity and clarity in their impact communications. I want charities to use a whole breadth of ways to communicate impact and I want charities to boil down their achievements and their amazing work into bite size chunks.*

*And I want charities to act on the certainty that in people's busy lives, 140 characters of tweet is a lot more likely to be read and remembered than 40 pages of report.*

**Joe Saxton**, driver of ideas, nfpSynergy <sup>(11)</sup>

## Analysing impact

The tools and methods of impact measurement and reporting can be viewed as something of a science, well beyond the remit of this publication. There are resources available to help your charity learn more about approaches that can be taken. For example, the Inspiring Impact coalition of NGOs has recently published *The Code of Good Impact Practice* [inspiringimpact.org/resources/are-you-leading-for-impact/#code](https://inspiringimpact.org/resources/are-you-leading-for-impact/#code)

There are various watchwords comms teams will want to keep in mind in their reporting:

## COMMUNICATING IMPACT

There are six general principles that define how organisations should communicate their impact:

- 1 Clarity
- 2 Accessibility
- 3 Transparency
- 4 Accountability
- 5 Verifiability
- 6 Proportionality

What should they communicate about impact?

- 1 Clear purpose
- 2 Defined aims
- 3 Coherent activities
- 4 Demonstrated results
- 5 Evidence
- 6 Lessons learned

Edited extract from *Principles of Good Impact Reporting*, NPC <sup>(12)</sup> – in the original each principle and point is fully explained.

On the other hand there are protest voices arguing that charities must be free to express impact in the manner they choose rather than be stifled by too many guidelines or regulations. A recent report by the Institute for Voluntary Action Research about the experiences of social welfare charities in a climate of ongoing austerity also warns funders against valuing a “race for impact” above other evidence of a charity’s dynamic commitment to its beneficiaries and mission<sup>(13)</sup>.

## CASE STUDIES: IMPACT

### Evoking response

**Georgia Best**, senior PR manager,  
Oxfam GB

**Oxfam now includes on its website a dedicated “impact of our work” page and a “how we spend your money” page.**

Extensive user research when we redesigned our website revealed that our supporters were better disposed to give when they could see proof of their contribution. This involves an emotional response (the “impact of our work” page – [oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/the-impact-of-our-work](http://oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/the-impact-of-our-work)) and/or a rational response (primarily evidenced through our “how we spend your money” page – [oxfam.org.uk/donate/how-we-spend-your-money](http://oxfam.org.uk/donate/how-we-spend-your-money)). Supporters react in varying degrees more strongly to one or the other.

In terms of page visits, “Impact of our work” gets about 3,000 a month, which we are



happy with. Its prominent position within the navigation is a strong influence on this. Bounce rates and dwell times for the impact page are average. We haven't done any qualitative surveys as yet about how it has affected attitudes directly.

### Progress reports

**John Townsend**, senior internal  
communications officer, NSPCC

**While our annual report is the NSPCC's flagship impact document, over the year we also produce other reports specific to distinct areas of our work. Due to the breadth and scope of the work we do it is otherwise impossible to reach a sufficient level of detail over other aspects.**

For example, ChildLine produces a more in-depth report into its key findings each year, while our adult helplines produce various “helpline highlight” documents and our Safe Network service also produces a report. We highlight key findings and impact through press releases and one-off reports, for example our *How Safe are our Children* report earlier this year, which followed a flagship conference pulling together new child protection data across each of the four nations.



[nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/how-safe/how-safe-2013-report\\_wdf95435.pdf](http://nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/how-safe/how-safe-2013-report_wdf95435.pdf)

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# GETTING NOTICED

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A few perspectives on how and why annual reports might get picked up by the world outside your charity.

## MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR REPORT

How do charities manage to create interest in their reports? And how can they ensure media interest translates into the real action and change they're looking for?

**1 Get your timing right:** Find the most compelling and timely subject in your report – something that can create a media hook or make the most of an existing one. This could be crucial to getting coverage.

**2 Get real voices out there:** Most reports have an introduction from a CEO, chairperson or trustee but you will get twice as much value out of that person if you also place them as a media spokesperson. This gives your campaign a human perspective that the public can more easily engage with. And the holy grail? Get a well-known independent voice to advocate your message.

**3 Say something memorable:** If you want people to pick up key elements from your report, give them soundbites, and use them consistently through your media messaging so they get repeated by others.

**4 Have a call to action:** Ensure your call to action is not hidden on the back page. It needs to be clearly highlighted and repeated in all your communications. Make it easy for people to take that action.

**5 Connect back to your campaign:** Ensure that any mention of the report, where possible, refers to your wider campaign or objective and point people directly to the places where they can read the full version and register to support the organisation – usually on your website.

**6 Use your own channels effectively:** On top of your website, press contacts and social media, don't forget to publicise the key stories from your report through your retail outlets if you have them, your member communications and your corporate supporters and campaign ambassadors.

**Gillian Daines**, head of creative, Forster Communications

*This is an edited extract of an article written for CharityComms <sup>(14)</sup>*

### GENERATING A BUZZ

*Our annual report is made public at our annual council meeting in October, where trustees, key stakeholders, supporters and volunteers meet to discuss our work. This formal occasion provides the chance for our chief executive to talk through some of the key narratives and numbers from the year and to present the report to several hundred key supporters. From this date we also share our report online via our website, signposting other supporters to it via correspondence and social media, as well as posting hard copies to other key audiences.*

**John Townsend**, senior internal communications officer, NSPCC

### TWEETING INNOVATION

*We promoted the report via social networking sites such as Twitter, which created quite a buzz, and put the entire report on our website via the free online 'Issuu' service. So far, over 13,500 people have viewed our report online.*

*[issuu.com/thewallich/docs/adams-story](http://issuu.com/thewallich/docs/adams-story)*

**The Wallich** <sup>(15)</sup>

### THE MEDIA AGENDA

*To get coverage, charities need to send the report to the right media – local, specialist, even national in some cases. Local radio is always neglected. It is a good idea to draw journalists' attention to the notable things in the report: the trouble is, of course, the media will be more interested in the sort of thing charities themselves might want to avoid emphasising, such as a fall in income or staffing.*

*We don't count on charities sending us their reports or alerting us to them – we check independently when the reports of the big charities are coming out and scan them for news and feature ideas.*

**Stephen Cook**, editor, Third Sector

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# LINKS TO SAMPLE REPORTS AND REVIEWS

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The following list comprises links to reports and reviews that have been featured in this publication, have recently been honoured in awards (marked with an asterix), or have kindly been suggested by CharityComms members. If you have a great example of an annual publication produced by your organisation, do let us know at [vicky@charitycomms.org.uk](mailto:vicky@charitycomms.org.uk)

## **Acorns**

[acorns.org.uk/publications](http://acorns.org.uk/publications)

## **Alcohol Concern**

[alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report](http://alcoholconcern.org.uk/about-us/impact-report)

## **Anglia Ruskin Students' Union**

[angliastudent.com/about/annualreport/](http://angliastudent.com/about/annualreport/)

**Breakthrough Breast Cancer\*** (Winner: Charities Online Financial Reporting and Accounts Awards 2012, £5m to £30m category)

[breakthrough.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/About%20Us/Our%20Work/Break-through-Breast-Cancer-2011-2012-Annual-Report.pdf](http://breakthrough.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/About%20Us/Our%20Work/Break-through-Breast-Cancer-2011-2012-Annual-Report.pdf)

## **British Red Cross**

[scribd.com/doc/137895363/2012-Trustees-report-and-accounts](http://scribd.com/doc/137895363/2012-Trustees-report-and-accounts)

**British Heart Foundation\*** (Third Sector Excellence Awards Shortlist 2013)

[bhf.org.uk/publications/view-publication.aspx?ps=1002318](http://bhf.org.uk/publications/view-publication.aspx?ps=1002318)

## **Brunelcare**

[brunelcare.org.uk/files/ART154\\_Brunel%20Care%20Calendar\\_Web.pdf](http://brunelcare.org.uk/files/ART154_Brunel%20Care%20Calendar_Web.pdf)

## **CAFOD**

[cafod.org.uk/About-Us/Open-information-resources](http://cafod.org.uk/About-Us/Open-information-resources)

## **Cancer Research**

[cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/](http://cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/what-we-do/annual-review/)

**Cardboard Citizens\*** (Winner, Best Annual Report, Third Sector Excellence Awards 2012)

[cardboardcitizens.org.uk/p155.html](http://cardboardcitizens.org.uk/p155.html)

**Centrepoin\*** (Third Sector Excellence Awards Shortlist 2013)

[youtube.com/watch?v=U-MloOvlh8I](http://youtube.com/watch?v=U-MloOvlh8I)

**City Bridge Trust\*** (Winner: Best annual report – not for profit/public sector Corpcomms Magazine Awards 2012)

[citybridgetrust.org.uk/CBT/Publications/AnnualReviewAndReport.htm](http://citybridgetrust.org.uk/CBT/Publications/AnnualReviewAndReport.htm)

**Dogs Trust\*** (Third Sector Excellence Awards Shortlist 2013)

[dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf](http://dogstrust.org.uk/about/annualreview/2013annualrev.pdf)

## **Fire Fighters' Charity**

[firefighterscharity.org.uk/media/110589/final\\_annual\\_review\\_2011-12.pdf](http://firefighterscharity.org.uk/media/110589/final_annual_review_2011-12.pdf)

## **Global Campaign for Education**

[sendmyfriend.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GCE-annual-review-2012.pdf](http://sendmyfriend.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GCE-annual-review-2012.pdf)



**Macmillan Cancer Support**

[macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/HowWeRaiseAndSpendOurMoney/Annual\\_reports\\_and\\_reviews.aspx](http://macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/HowWeRaiseAndSpendOurMoney/Annual_reports_and_reviews.aspx)

**MS Society**

[mssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Governance%20docs/Our%20achievements%202012.pdf](http://mssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Governance%20docs/Our%20achievements%202012.pdf)

**NSPCC**

[nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf\\_wdf92210.pdf](http://nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/about-the-nspcc/annual-report/annual-report-2012/annual-report-2012-pdf_wdf92210.pdf)

**Oxfam GB**

[oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/plans-reports-and-policies](http://oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/plans-reports-and-policies)

**RNIB\*** (Winner: Charities Online Financial Reporting and Accounts Awards 2012, over £30m category)

[rnib.org.uk/aboutus/Documents/rnib\\_annual\\_report\\_accounts\\_11\\_12.pdf](http://rnib.org.uk/aboutus/Documents/rnib_annual_report_accounts_11_12.pdf)

**RNLI**

[rnli.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/2012%20Annual%20Report%20and%20Accounts.pdf](http://rnli.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/2012%20Annual%20Report%20and%20Accounts.pdf)

**SSAFA** (Lifelong Support for our Forces and their Families)

[ssafa.org.uk/about-us/media-publications/our-reports/](http://ssafa.org.uk/about-us/media-publications/our-reports/)

**Spurgeons**

[spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual\\_Report\\_201112.pdf](http://spurgeons.org/pdfs/Annual_Report_201112.pdf)

**Together for Short Lives**

[togetherforshortlives.org.uk/assets/0000/4332/TfSL\\_Annual\\_Review\\_2012-13\\_24pp\\_Landscape\\_A5\\_\\_WEB\\_\\_UPDATE\\_.pdf](http://togetherforshortlives.org.uk/assets/0000/4332/TfSL_Annual_Review_2012-13_24pp_Landscape_A5__WEB__UPDATE_.pdf)

**Target TB**

[targettb.org.uk/about-us/accounts](http://targettb.org.uk/about-us/accounts)

**The Wallich**

[issuu.com/thewallich/docs/adams-story](http://issuu.com/thewallich/docs/adams-story)

**Wooden Spoon**

[mmediadesign.co.uk/woodenspoon/ws-impact-report-apr12-march13.pdf](http://mmediadesign.co.uk/woodenspoon/ws-impact-report-apr12-march13.pdf)

**WWF\*** (Design Week Awards, 2011)

[assets.wwf.org.uk/annual\\_review/2012/](http://assets.wwf.org.uk/annual_review/2012/)

Design agency Nim Design has produced a guide, *Annual Report Made Easy*, to help facilitate commissioning the design of your annual report to an outside agency. You can download it from [nimdesign.com](http://nimdesign.com)

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## About the author

Kay Parris is a freelance writer, journalist and editor with a particular interest in the voluntary sector. She has worked in editorial and communications roles for many non-profit organisations, including ActionAid, The Big Issue, the International Transport Workers' Federation, the United Reformed Church and the World Development Movement – as well as serving a stint as internal communications manager for the London Borough of Camden.

She has also contributed to a wide range of consumer magazines and leads workshops in writing and communication skills.

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## About CharityComms

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