

Attitudes to Giving Executive Summary 2011

Background

- In Spring 2011, ActionPoint Marketing Solutions, an independent research agency based in Hertfordshire, conducted research with the general public on giving to charity. The research, conducted in Hertfordshire and West Yorkshire, aims to give local charities a greater understanding of their public's attitude to charity giving.
- ActionPoint conducted a total of 420 face-to-face interviews with the general public in town/city centre locations¹ in Hertfordshire and West Yorkshire. The interviews were equally split between the two regions, 203 completed in West Yorkshire and 217 in Hertfordshire.
- The following key areas were covered in the research;
 - Awareness of local charities (in both regions)
 - Characteristics and preferences for giving to charity
 - Changes in giving to charities 2009 -'11
 - Awareness and usage of Gift Aid
 - Charity giving via a will
 - Suggested ways for charities to get noticed
 - Awareness of the Big Society and Government changes to charity funding
- A snapshot of the findings is given below:

Key findings

- Awareness of local charities is low in both areas, in terms of being able to recall any charity and also recalling charities that are genuinely local rather than national. Overall just over half - 51% of residents - were able to name a charity, but there were significant differences between regions. West Yorkshire people showed significantly higher awareness of charities than those in Hertfordshire, 58% and 45% respectively. Hospices were the most likely type of charity to be recalled - hospices topped the list in both areas, although in Hertfordshire, people were able to name more genuinely local charities compared to West Yorkshire. Here, apart from one local charity which had overwhelmingly high awareness, national charities were more top of mind (Oxfam and Cancer Research UK).
- When it comes to giving (by any method) in the previous 12 months i.e. since March 2010, 85% of people had given to at least one type of charity. More people (72%) say they gave to national than local and/or overseas charities. A much lower 56% had given to local charities and even fewer to overseas charities, with Hertfordshire stronger on local giving than West Yorkshire. Those most likely to give to local charities are the 65+ years and the least likely, the under 25s.
- People who do give to charity in Hertfordshire and West Yorkshire are more likely to class themselves as occasional (64%) rather than regular givers (36%). However, there are differences between regions; in Hertfordshire around half those surveyed say they are regular givers² compared to only 22% in West Yorkshire. In the north 78% say they are occasional givers. Medical charities were the most likely type of organisation to receive donations with 36% of people having donated to medical research related charities in the last year. Also on a healthcare theme, 29% had donated to hospices or directly to hospitals.
- Has the level of giving changed over the last 2 years? It seems not according to our survey figures. Two-thirds say their level of giving has stayed the same over the past 2 years with only 18% saying they had given less in '09-'10 compared to last year ('10-'11). Findings were similar in both regions.

¹ Locations where interviewing took place – Herts - Letchworth/Baldock, Hertford, Watford, Bishop's Stortford. West Yorks – Leeds & Bradford.

² Regular giver – gives every week or month either by cash, cheque or direct debit.

- ActionPoint also reviewed the typical amount given by those who had donated (excluding street donations) in the 4 weeks prior to the survey. In a typical month the average donation was £19 donated, however this masks significant differences between regions – in Hertfordshire an average of £25 compared with an average in West Yorkshire of £14. It seems the amount given goes up by age – in Hertfordshire the young 16-24s gave an average of £18 /month compared to 65+ of over £31 per month. In the south there is no doubt that those who volunteer with their time are also the highest givers.
- People donate by a wide range of methods, the main one by giving cash. On street donations were second in line with buying items a clear third. Monthly direct debits were cited by one quarter of givers – this being a much more popular method in Hertfordshire than West Yorkshire, a third of givers giving by this method compared to less than half this in West Yorkshire.
- When it comes to making a commitment to donate to charity in a will, only two fifths of people (44%) who have made a will, have done this. Those living in West Yorkshire appear to be happier to give to charity in their wills compared to those in Hertfordshire; 70% and 30% respectively.
- Local charities which ensure they have a strong online presence will help improve their visibility to prospective givers. In our survey 36% of people said they would search on the internet if they or a family member needed help from a charity-this was similar across our two regions. Equally important were local papers with 37% saying they would look in their local paper to find information on charities. In West Yorkshire local papers are in fact a much more significant source of information with 45% turning to this media compared to only 31% in Hertfordshire.

These findings form a snap shot of our findings on Attitudes to Giving with a focus on Hertfordshire and West Yorkshire. For the complete findings the full report can be purchased from ActionPoint at the cost of £100+ vat on tel: 01462 681187 or email to info@actionpointms.co.uk.