

Nick Hurd MP

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Thank you for your letter and enclosed report dated 3 May. The report raised some important issues in relation to the use of Official Statistics by the voluntary sector and the adequacy of published statistics on the sector. I am pleased to confirm that the Cabinet Office is supporting progress in many of the areas covered by the report.

Closer engagement between producers of data and the sector is vital, especially at a time when organisations are required to make a more robust case for their work. We are aware that there are inherent difficulties in capturing data on the sector; however there are encouraging developments in this area. We in the Office for Civil Society are helping to facilitate closer engagement through our Strategic Partners, which are providing insight into data requirements and availability in the sector. This includes work with Volunteer England in assessing levels of volunteering and with NCVO in the production of statistics on charities.

We understand that more data is needed, and as a result we are commissioning a new survey: 'Community Life: a national survey of social action and community engagement' (yet to be announced publically). This survey will gather data on issues key to civil society organisations – including volunteering, charitable giving, community engagement and well-being – and was developed in conjunction with other government departments and stakeholders to deliver maximum value to all audiences. We will continue to actively engage with stakeholders throughout this work to ensure that resulting statistics are accessible and used effectively by the sector.



Once again, thank you for your correspondence, we welcome your recommendations and will continue to support the use of Official Statistics by the voluntary sector.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Hurd', positioned above the printed name.

NICK HURD