

The 2025 Charity Fraud Survey

Together against charity fraud

2025 marks the fifth year that BDO and Fraud Advisory Panel have worked together in partnership to combat charity fraud, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of Charity Fraud Awareness Week. Together, we have worked diligently to raise the profile of fraud affecting charities, focusing on key trends and offering insights into how charities can better protect themselves.

This year, we achieved the highest survey response rate in five years, with 164 participants - an increase of 18% from last year. This reflects a strong commitment from charities to share their experience of fraud, enabling us to compile a comprehensive annual review of the charity fraud landscape.

Building on last year's results, we've observed further growth and development among the charities we surveyed as they continue to address the evolving threat of fraud both internally and externally. We recognise that resources are limited and the fraud landscape changes daily, yet the results offer hope, showing a steady reduction in the amount of fraud reported by charities over the past five years.

We have prepared this snapshot of the key highlights from this year's survey findings ahead of the publication of the full report.

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Who did we survey?*

67% of respondents are charitable companies

55% of respondents have annual income > £10m	15% of respondents have annual income < £1m
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87% of charities had 5+ trustees. 3 charities had below the required number of Trustees

35% of responses were completed by finance directors

45% of respondents are national charities	19% of respondents are international charities
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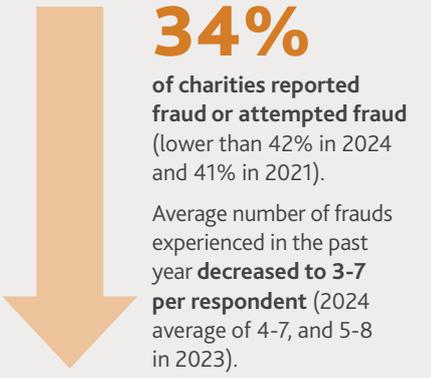
Scan this QR code to ensure that you are the first to receive the full Charity Fraud Survey report.

**Note on the data: This data is a snapshot of the UK charity sector and is to be interpreted only as a general overview of the views and experiences of the sample base. This report is drawn from 164 respondents from UK-based charities. The survey included a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions. Comparison data was derived from research conducted by BDO and Fraud Advisory Panel in 2024, 2023, 2022 and 2021. Percentages included in the charts have been rounded, and therefore there may be small rounding errors.*

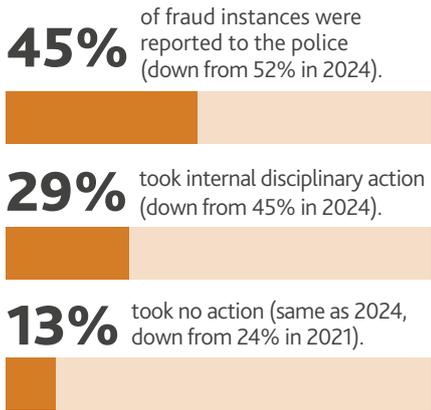
Looking back at the past year



Have charities suffered fraud?



Response



Type of fraud



Perpetrators



Detection



Financial impact

- 73%** suffered financial loss (2024: 84% and 2023: 92%).
- Total losses due to fraud between **£614k and £6.2m**
- Average loss per fraud between **£11k and £110k**
- 32%** recovered losses (2024: 40%).

What other consequences did charities experience?



Remedial measures

57% made control changes (compared to 61% in 2024). | **23%** made policy changes (compared to 33% in 2024). | **11%** upgraded IT systems (compared to 14% in 2023).

32% reviewed their fraud awareness training requirements and **32%** implemented an enhanced fraud awareness training program in the last year (compared to 32% and 19% respectively in 2024).

Proactive measures

43% and **17%**, respectively, conducted a fraud risk assessment and fraud awareness training in the last year (compared to **36%** and **50%** in 2024).

Looking forward to the future

Barriers to fraud prevention

Over-reliance on trust was reported as an obstacle to fraud prevention by **45%** of charities (2024: 37%). **28%** reported a lack of fraud awareness (2024: 18%) and **24%** reported a lack of effective fraud awareness training. **48%** said that they lacked the internal resources necessary to effectively prevent fraud (2024: 45%).



Investment

77% said their financial investment in fraud increased or stayed the same (compared to 80% in 2024), but **20%** said they do not financially invest in fraud prevention (compared to 18% in 2024).

42% of respondents think that their financial investment in fraud prevention is enough to address their fraud risks (compared to 53% in 2024).

19% disagreed and therefore do not consider that their financial investment is enough (compared to 15% in 2024).

Prevention

Most charities reported having key policies such as:

- ▶ anti-fraud (75%)
- ▶ conflicts of interest (86%)
- ▶ whistleblowing (89%).

Additionally, **87%** said they had risk registers that included consideration of fraud risk.

Only **45%** had a fraud response plan (2024: 44%) and **49%** had a cyber response plan (2024: 53%).

The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act (ECCTA)

63% are aware of ECCTA (2024: 53%)

48% believe that ECCTA will apply to them (2024: 45%)

79% have taken action in preparation for ECCTA

60% feel prepared for ECCTA.

Future risk

52%

of respondents expect fraud risk to increase in the next 12 months (in line with 50% in 2024); the most frequently cited concern in the next 12 months was cyber-related fraud, including phishing, ransomware and issues caused by AI.

Economic challenges

62%

of respondents agreed that economic challenges have increased the risk of fraud to their charity. Only 7% of respondents disagreed, while 31% were impartial.

High profile cyber frauds

42%

said they had taken action in light of recent high profile cyber attacks, including 19% who said that they had implemented IT or cyber security updates. 40% said they had not taken any action.



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