

## Steps Towards Survival

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**SURREY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSORTIUM**  
*Strengthening the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Surrey*

## The Surrey Infrastructure Consortium

- Funded through Capacitybuilders
- Strengthening support services for front-line organisations in Surrey
- Representatives from
  - Third Sector infrastructure providers
  - Boroughs and Districts
  - Surrey County Council
  - NHS Surrey
  - Surrey Police



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## The Surrey Infrastructure Consortium

- Disseminating information
- Producing toolkits
- Hosting events
- The Surrey Assembly
  - Representation on Surrey Strategic Partnership



# What should we do now?



## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

- Strategy – Opportunities and Risk
- Financial health
- Governance
- Making best use of resources



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

What effect is the economic downturn having on our charity and its activities?

- Environment
- Risk
- Are we sure that keeping going is the right thing to do?

*Managing in a Downturn – Charity Finance Directors Group –  
[www.cfdg.org.uk](http://www.cfdg.org.uk)*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Are we financially strong enough to sustain our operations?

- Do we know where we are and where we're going?
- Do we have all the information we need?
- Can we meet our obligations?

*Charity Commission : Managing Financial Difficulties and Insolvency in Charities*



## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Do we know what impact the economic climate is having on our donors and support for our charity?

- Statutory funding, contracts
- Grant-making Trusts
- Re-think fundraising strategy?

*Introductory Pack on Funding and Finances – NCVO*

*[www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)*

*Institute of Fundraising – [www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk)*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Do we have any reserves?

- Reserves policy?
- How much?
- Is now the time to use them?

*Charities' Reserves – Charity Commission*



## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

- Have we reviewed our banking arrangements and, where relevant, our investments?

*Understanding Charitable Investments – [www.cafonline.org](http://www.cafonline.org)*

- Have we reviewed our contractual commitments, eg office leases, rental agreements, equipment hire?

*Charities and Risk Management – Charity Commission*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Have we reviewed any contracts to deliver public services?

- Do we know our obligations
- What happens at the end of the contract?
- Financial and reputational risks

*Charities and Public Service Delivery – Charity Commission*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

- If we have a pension scheme, have we reviewed it recently?  
*Various publications – Charity Commission*  
*Alert to the Risks in the Downturn – The Pensions Regulator*  
*[www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk)*
- How can we make best use of any permanent endowment investments we hold?  
Greater flexibility allowed by Charities Act 2006  
*Various publications – Charity Commission*



## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Do we have an effective Trustee body and strong management?

- Right mix of skills, knowledge and experience?
- Ready to make unpopular decisions?
- Communicating well?

*Hallmarks of an Effective Charity – Charity Commission*

*The Essential Trustee – Charity Commission*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

- Do we have adequate safeguards in place to prevent fraud?

*Internal Financial Controls – Charity Commission*

*Fraud Advisory Panel – [www.fraudadvisorypanel.org](http://www.fraudadvisorypanel.org)*

- Are we making the best use of financial benefits we have as a charity?

*Gift Aid – HMRC*

*Charities and Tax/Trading – HMRC*

*Trustees, Trading and Tax – Charity Commission*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

Are we making the best use of our staff and volunteers?

- Right mix of skills and experience for today?
- Flexible working to focus resources where needed?

*Good Employment Guide – UK Workforce Hub*

*[www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk](http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk)*

*Volunteering England – [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)*



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## Charity Commission – Big Board Talk

### 15 Questions Trustees need to ask...

- Have we considered collaborating with other charities?

*Various publications – Charity Commission*

*NCVO – [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/collaborativeworking](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/collaborativeworking)*

- Are we making the best use of our property?
  - Share with others?
  - Renegotiate terms?

*Disposing of Charity Land – Charity Commission*



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## National resources available

- **Advice about merger or collaboration from:**
  - Charity Commission
  - Bassac
  - NCVO
  - Futurebuilders Merger-Maker
  - Charity Finance Directors Group
  - NAVCA



## National resources available cont...

### Help on organisational development from:

- Cass Business School
- Business in the Community Pro-Help Network
- Institute of Fundraising
- Development Trusts Association : Early Warning Guide
- Recession Support website (ACEVO)
- Charity Finance Directors Group
- Charity Buyers Group
- NCVO



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## Local resources

- **Local CVS** – [www.surreycvsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.surreycvsnetwork.org.uk)
- **Surrey Community Action** – [www.surreyca.org.uk](http://www.surreyca.org.uk)
- **Surrey Infrastructure Consortium**

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