OSCR

Scottish Charity Regulator

OSCR's Digital Future
2019-2023

Contents

Introduction

Introduction

Our entire lives are touched by the digital age, there are few things which cannot be said to be connected to digital in some way. These radical changes on most aspects of our daily lives affects us at home and at work.

OSCR has, since its formation in 2005, looked to take advantage of innovations in technology to guide its work. Charities have the ability to submit annual accounts online and to manage their contact information. OSCR has embraced 'Open Data' sharing a variety of data with partners and other bodies such as the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Scottish Government and the Social value Lab.

Our website provides access to all types of information related to charities, including access to the Scottish Charity Register. We provide a range of guidance on accounts, running and managing a charity, and most recently the ability to apply to become a charity online.

Behind the scenes we have a cloud based network, our servers are housed in a remote data centre accessed using SWAN (Scottish Wide area network) in partnership with SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency) which allows access without the additional costs of full membership. SWAN regularly upgrade their Value Added Services and with more organisations coming on board security is enhanced to levels approaching central government requirements. Our cloud based servers have resulted in reduced costs and in particular reducing our overall carbon footprint by taking advantage of the shared infrastructure and the efficiencies of larger data centres.

We are always looking for ways to increase connectivity between our systems to maximise the benefits of available technology. Going forward we will seek opportunities for integration looking at a holistic approach to our digital vision. We will look to reduce the number of separate systems to a more efficient and connected system, we will seek to increase the opportunities for our customers and our colleagues to work with us in a smooth and intuitive way. Our Digital Strategy is developed in line with the relevant priorities identified in OSCR's Business Plan for 2019-20.

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How we will approach our digital future
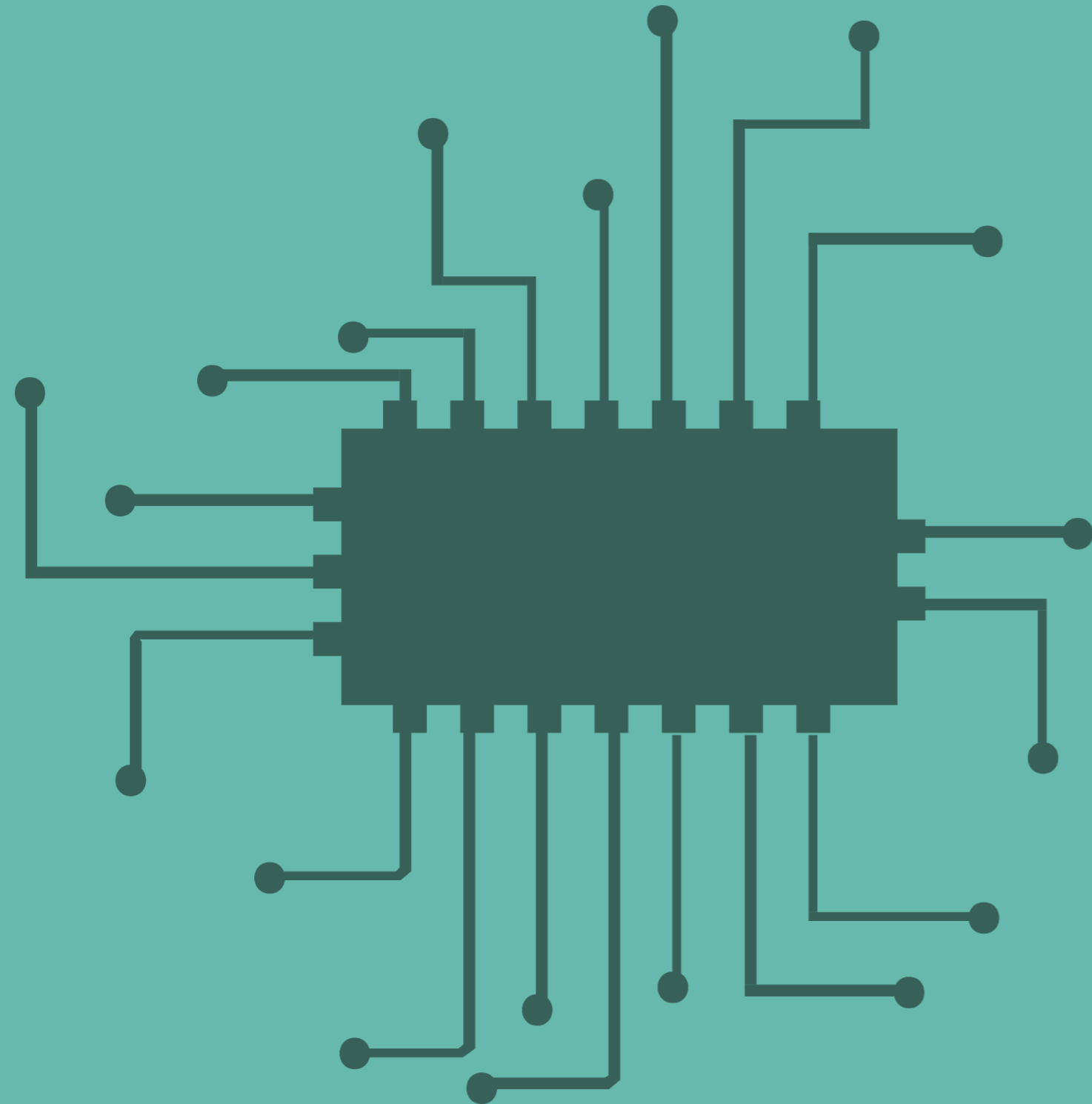
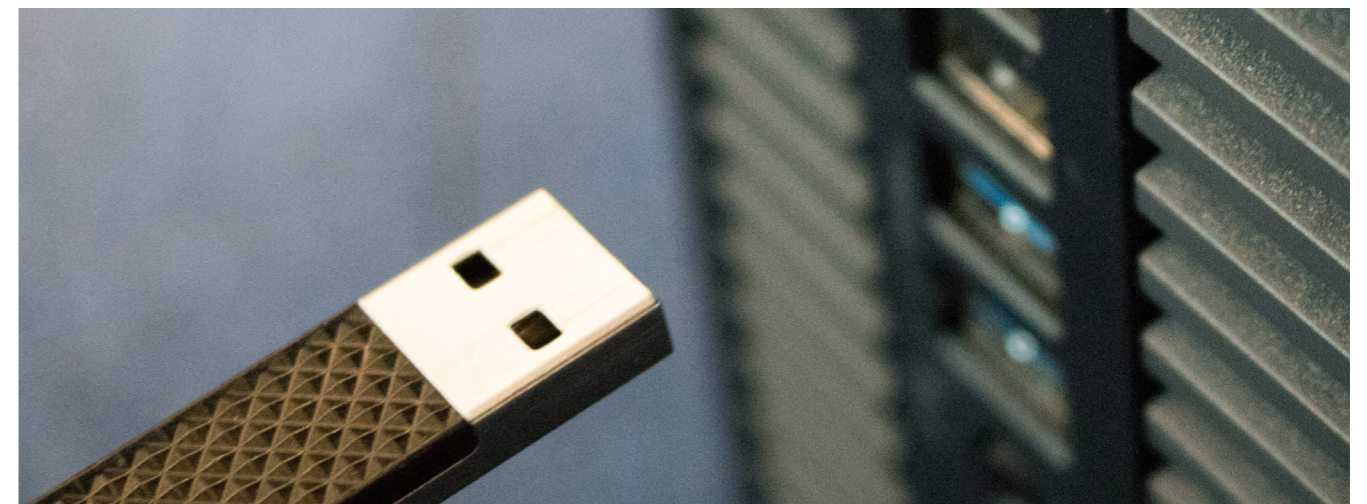**Digital technology will continue to be the catalyst to:**

Streamline our systems

Enhance our public engagement and improve accessibility to our information

Deliver all of our services through a single, easy to use website

Four steps to a thematic approach

The Themes

Totally OSCR online
- Deliver our services digitally first involving our users to ensure the design fits all using service design consultants
- Develop systems which will enable simpler, more informed reporting to us.

Open data and insights
- Continue to improve our provision of easy, accessible access to high quality data by intelligent design and data capture
- Generate insights to increase public trust in the charitable sector
- Seek feedback to check the validity and relevance of the data.

Engaging effectively
- Continue to enhance our website to meet the needs of our users
- Use digital channels to communicate with our audience in the right way
- Use digital tools, such as the Trustee Guidance pack, to support our engagement.

Building excellence in our business
- Train and enable a digitally skilled workforce who understand and embrace OSCR's digital culture
- Improve our data management and build a more efficient and relevant ICT infrastructure.

How will we get there?

In support of our Strategy and in achieving the goals for our digital services OSCR will deliver projects to be:

- Convenient - by enshrining easy to understand, fast, multi format and platform accessibility
- Consistent - with all OSCR's strategies and also in support of our Business Plan
- Resilient - designed to be able to move and develop with our changing circumstances
- Cost conscious - delivering good value for money
- Green - supporting our greenhouse gas emissions targets
- Safe - embracing the 'Secure by Design' principle and cyber security assurance in line with Data Protection requirements.
- Inclusive - providing assisted digital support designed into our online presence for those needing it.
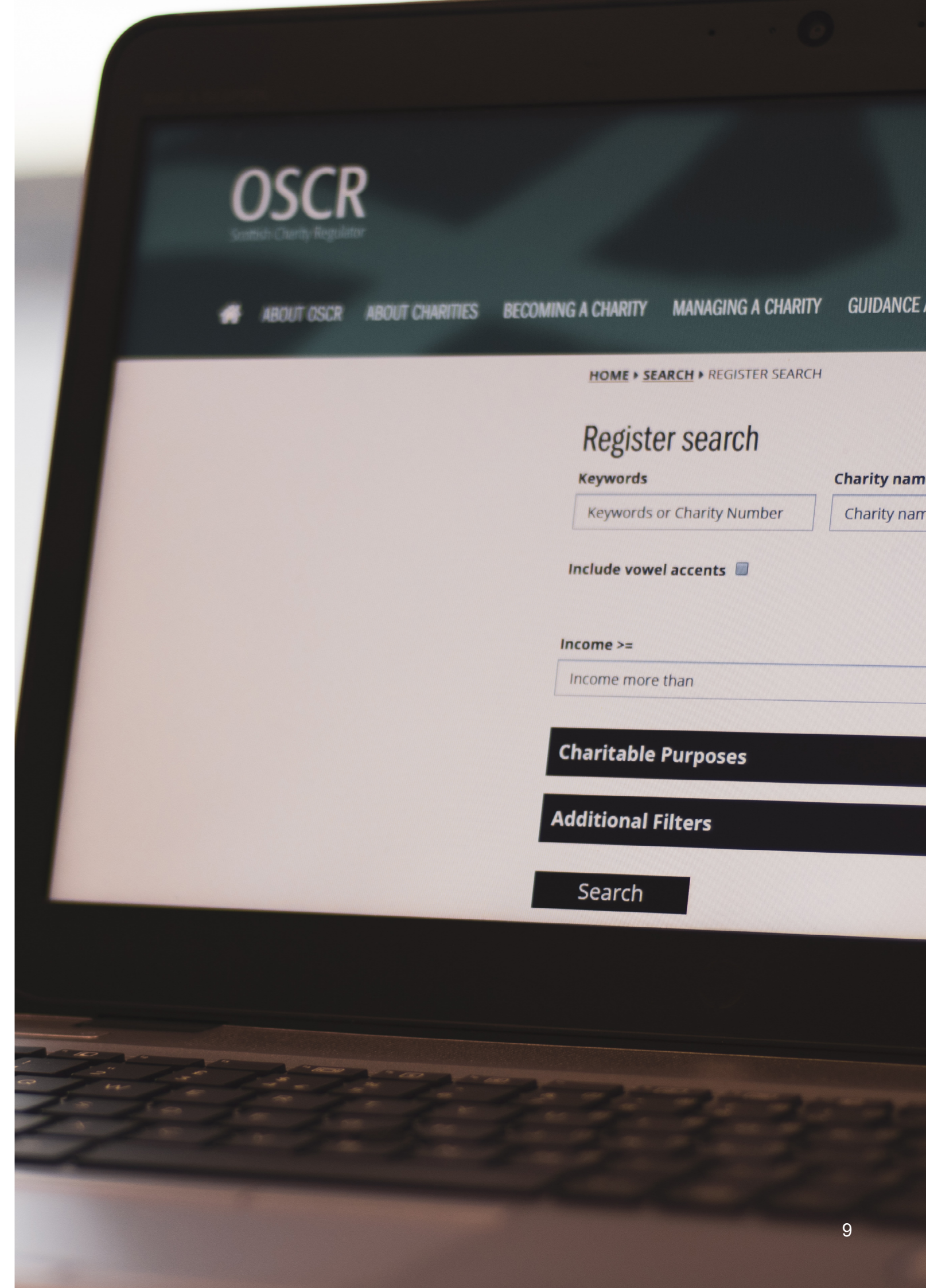
1.

Totally OSCR Online

OSCR has had an online presence since its formation in 2006 and we have been developing this presence over the years. It began with our website in 2006 followed later by 'OSCR Online', which allowed Charities to at first manage their information online and for OSCR to maintain the Scottish Charity Register and also inform charities of significant dates or events. OSCR Online has since developed into a portal to upload annual reports and accounts and more. We recently developed an online application to become a charity. Our website currently provides information on charity management, access to the Scottish Charity Register and access to our services.

We want to enhance our current online presence as far as possible to a place where most of our business can be self-service. Where we can, we will integrate our applications to make transactions with OSCR simpler, using a single OSCR account rather than one for each business area.

We will embrace change and take an agile approach to our digital services, being informed and shaped by what our users, both internal and external, are saying.

Key Drivers

Scottish Governments plan for public services as presented in Scotland's Digital Future is a vision as to how digital services will be used to improve accessibility to public services. By adopting a 'digital first' approach to service design, we will ensure that online delivery is available for everything that can be delivered that way.

Customer and citizen focussed
The public expect that access to services is available online at all times. Ensuring easy to use and comprehensive services are available using any type of device at any time of the day or night.

Improving our staff's working lives
We will deliver easy to use, fast systems with enhanced system interconnectivity providing an effective, skilled and empowered workforce.

We will embrace change and take an agile approach to our digital services

Priorities

We will:

Create an enhanced online gateway to OSCR that:
- Allows prospective and existing charities to manage applications, submissions and consents seamlessly online
- Helps the public to better understand and engage with charity regulation by providing a simple, informative and open platform to communicate what we do and how we do it
- Adopts cross platform technology to allow easy and consistent access to our gateway from any type of device
- Involves all our users in shaping the development of our services to ensure they are inclusive and relevant
- Allows OSCR colleagues to access and manage all their work streams from a single interface, saving time and increasing efficiencies.

OSCR's online presence will be used to:
- Enhance and modernise our digital applications to benefit from advances in technology
- Enhance integration of systems for maximum efficiency of work and usability.

Make best use of our existing connectivity to:
- Take advantage of new technology to improve services to colleagues and the public, saving time and money for us and for users
- Review and streamline our work processes by taking full advantage of new technology
- Find efficiencies and savings to provide a best value service to our users and colleagues.

Safe and Secure:
- OSCR was awarded Cyber Essentials Plus certification in 2018 and we will work to ensure that this certification is retained
- OSCR will adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR keeping any personal data safe and secure
- Ensuring our data is relevant, accurate and conforms to legal requirements and standards.

Benefits

1. One single, easy to use access point to all our services.
2. OSCR and our users will save time and money.
3. Accessing our information will be simpler for all users.
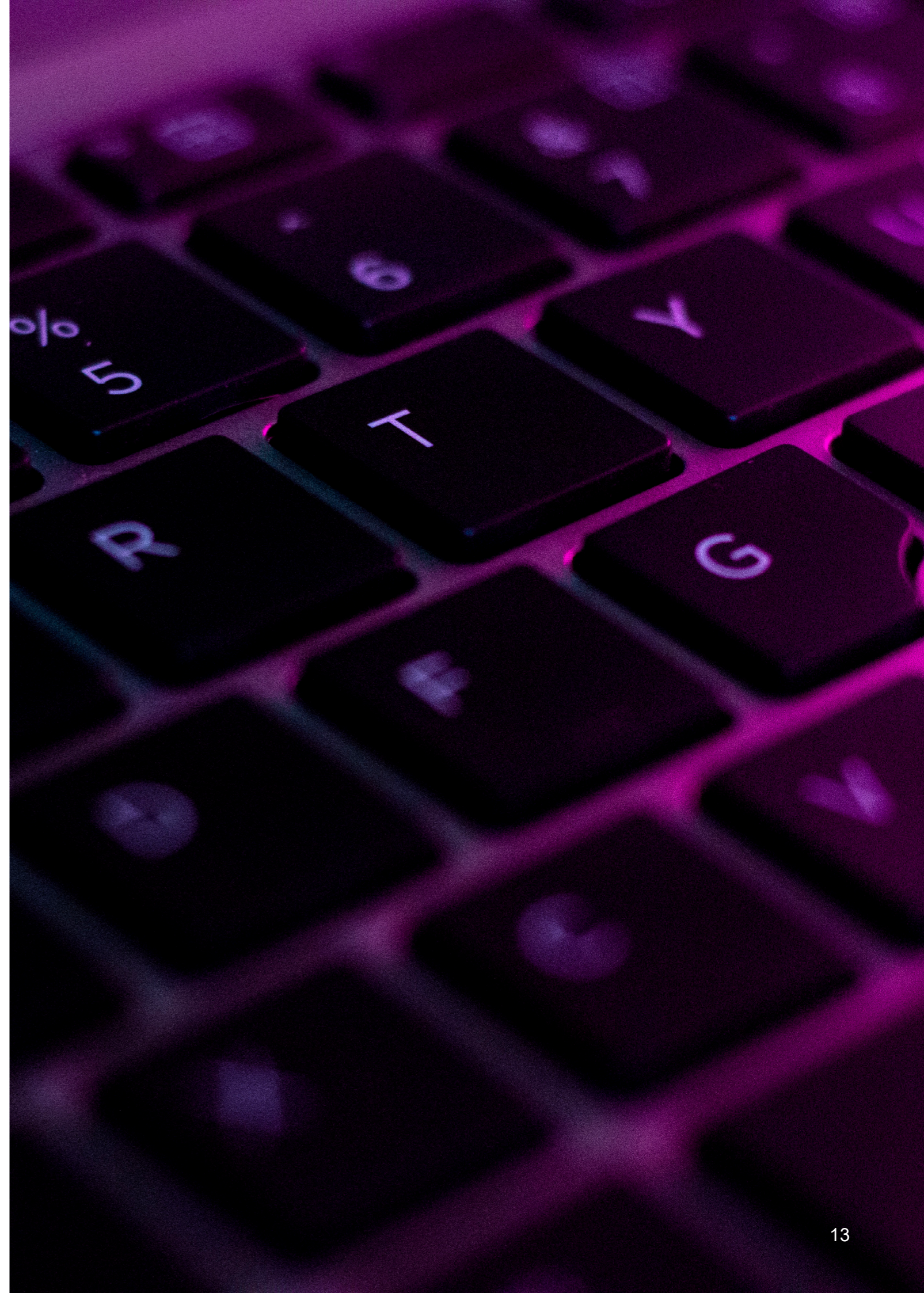
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Data-Driven Insights and Open Data: Sharing Information about charity regulation
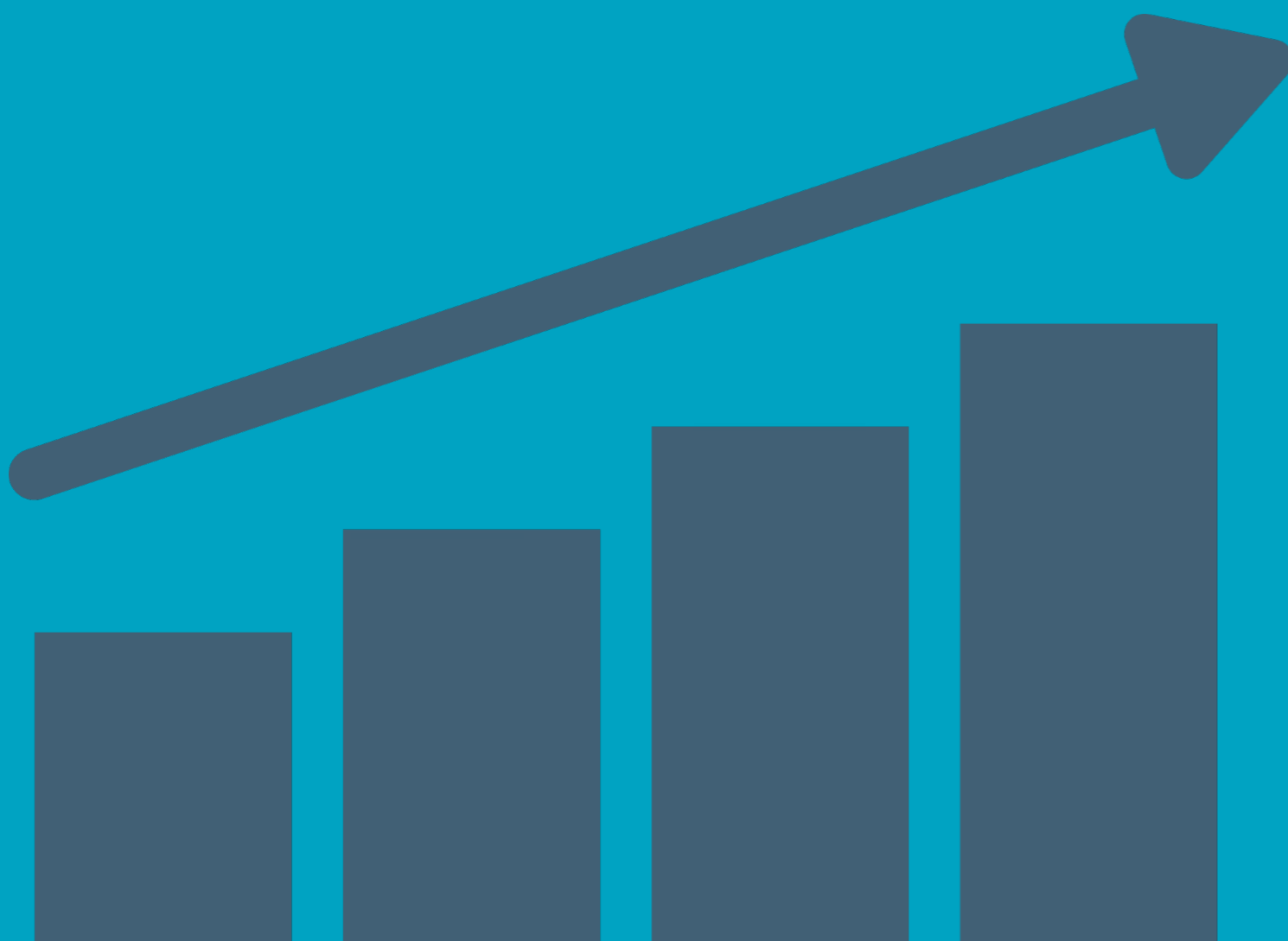
As part of our digital approach we want to make best use of the data we gather in the course of our business to generate intelligence that promotes a wider understanding of the Scottish charity sector and helps inform our regulatory activities. We want our data to be open and accessible so we can share it with those who will benefit to help add value and create knowledge. In making use of data and the intelligence we draw from it and by acting upon that intelligence where appropriate we can provide up to the minute insight and assurance about Scottish charities.

Users, partners in the third and public sector, academics and other interested parties should be able to access and re-use our data for a wide range of purposes such as informing services, developing policies and generating insights. Sharing our data will improve its quality and help ensure it is relevant, robust and fit for purpose.

When we embark on new technology projects we will always consider how we build in monitoring and data analysis capability to allow us to best identify issues and trends and to assess the impact of developments to guide future practices.

Drivers for sharing information

Making best use of up to date and accurate information
In order to be a successful regulator OSCR needs to have effective data management practices and intelligence systems. Making sure we can access, analyse and review information to answer questions and easily share insights is important if we are to be effective.

Embracing new technology and taking advantage of new opportunities as they become available will allow us to:
• Improve the monitoring of charities using pre-determined factors and triggers
• Use modelling tools to gain insight into regulatory issues such as non-compliance.

Open Data
The Scottish Government Open Data strategy for Scotland identifies a Scotland which recognises non-sensitive public service data as a valuable resource for all areas of society. Providing access to the dynamic data on the Scottish Charity Register in real time by technical means will improve the opportunities for others to make use of this information and potentially reduce multiple reporting demands placed on charities.

Supporting the third sector through our data
The third sector in Scotland and beyond can benefit from our data, allowing better understanding of the needs of the charity sector. Analysis of our information will help ensure resources are directed effectively to support charities by highlighting areas where improvements can be made.

Our third sector partners can have access to more accurate and relevant data which they can use to assist and inform their own work at no additional cost to them.

Priorities

We will:

- Share data with other sectors and partners and collaborate with them to increase the value of the data
- Provide insights by using analytics to gather meaningful information which can be used to inform decisions
- Use data to increase public trust in our work and the charity sector in Scotland.

In achieving this we will:

Continue to participate in the Model Publication Scheme by -
- Promoting the accessibility of our open data through this plan
- Ensuring we keep the published plan up to date and review it regularly.

Use data to add value by -
- Generating insights on the shape and size of the charity sector in in Scotland using charity sector data on 24,000 charities on the Scottish Charity Register
- Using administrative data generated when a charity interacts with our services to provide intelligence on regulatory risks and issues for charities and the public
- Turning data in to useful, meaningful information that we can use to add value to our work by informing decisions, improving the way we operate and deliver services.

Provide insights and intelligence by -
- Developing tools that help us consider our work in a consistent, risk-based way to help us be a more preventative and proactive regulator
- Ensuring data is at the heart of managing performance, reviewing our policies and evaluating effectiveness to guide how we operate

- Using analytics to identify patterns,
- trends and associations to help us understand how charities, the public and our staff interact with our processes
- Seeking user-views to help build a clear vision of how we can improve our work in an evidence-based and user-centered way
- Improve and enhance data skills and tools
- Building capacity in our workforce to embed the skills to use and present data in our work
- Working collaboratively with others or seek external expertise where necessary to fulfil our analytical goals
- Considering the best tools and systems to bridge the divide between our raw data sources and generating insights to inform our work

Provide data for public trust by -
- Continuing to ensure our data collection is a balance of what is in the interests of charities, our regulatory needs and the wider benefits to society
- Ensuring the data we collect supports accountability and trustworthiness in Scottish charities, without over-burdening charity trustees.

Focus on accessibility by -
- Continuing to make the Scottish Charity Register data accessible and available for re-use in line with the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015
- Using open data standards including the W3C Data on the Web Best Practices and our own re-use policy to build on the accessibility of our data, including the current Scottish Charity Register download
- Sharing our data with others, including charities, academic partners, the

Scottish Government and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations to ensure that there is robust, easy to access information on the Scottish charity sector.

Benefits

1. Improving our capabilities to monitor and regulate charities.
2. Open access wherever possible to our data.
3. Adding value to our datasets.
4. Supporting and informing new developments.
5. Collaboration with partners to maximize data usability.

3.
Engaging effectively

OSCR has a long history of effective engagement with our users, taking full advantage of our website and other channels as tools of engagement.

We would like to develop a digital service which enables our users, either OSCR staff, charity users or members of the public to be able to engage with us in a closer and more meaningful way.

As part of our digital strategy we will continue to review our digital channels, using feedback and analytics to form the basis for any changes to our current offering in keeping with our standards of service. This engagement with our users will ensure that the information and the way in which it is presented works for everyone.

Our website and sources of information should always be fit for purpose and user testing any developments will help us deliver the easy and intuitive experience we want to provide.

Drivers for effective engagement

**Help charity trustees to understand and comply with their legal duties**
In order to meet one of OSCR's key objectives, charity trustees must be able to easily find out what their responsibilities are. We want to make sure that users can find the information they need to know themselves, and our digital channels need to inform our stakeholders of news which may interest them.

Improving public knowledge of OSCR's work
Our public surveys showed that the public are more likely to trust a charity if they know it is regulated. OSCR has seen a 50% increase in awareness of its work since 2016. Although the greater awareness is welcome, we still feel that there is more work to be done in this area. As an organisation we need to use digital tools to improve this further.

Reaching the widest possible audience
In recent years, technology in live streaming and recording events has significantly improved. Using these tools will make our events and meetings more accessible, saving on travel time and accessibility costs when they are not required.
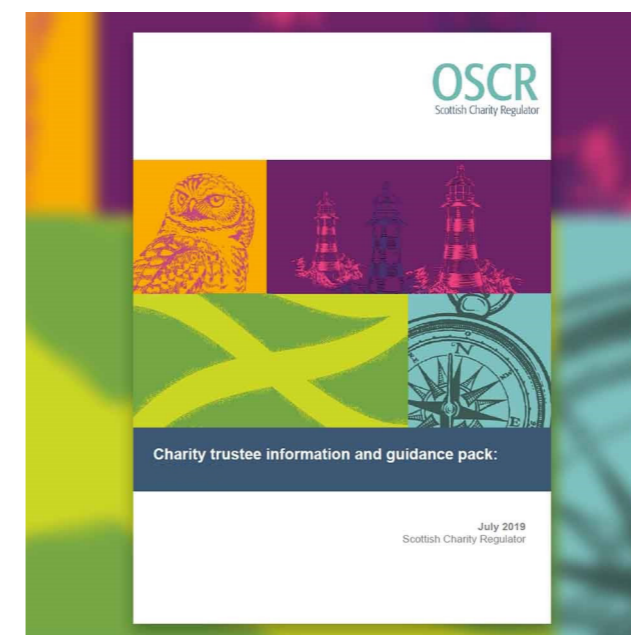
Delivering the easy and intuitive experience we want to provide

Priorities

We will:

Continue to enhance our website to meet the needs of our users:
- Change the high level navigation of the website so inexperienced users can find the most important information first
- Develop our trustee information pack so charity trustees can find guidance most appropriate to their charity
- Continue to review our online guidance offering, using plain English language and accessible formats
- Review how the Scottish Charity Register displays information on charities
- Use website analytics and user feedback to make other changes when appropriate.

Use digital channels to communicate with our audience in the right way:
- Tailor our social media channels and content to meet the needs of our audience
- Make our digital channels visible on all of our materials
- Produce accessible video content on key subjects
- Allow users to find answers to their queries quickly through our website
- Produce digital newsletter every two months.

Use digital tools to complement our engagement work:
- Invite delegates to our events and manage our event audience using online tools
- Offer live streaming or video conferencing options to our potential audience when it is appropriate
- Have an accessible video version of our major presentations available online for anyone to view.

Benefits

1. Charity trustees have the ability to find out their responsibilities easier.
2. Guidance is easier to identify on the website.
3. A larger audience for OSCR's outreach work.
4. Communicating on a variety of platforms allows OSCR to speak to someone in the way that suits them.
5. Enhanced digital delivery of our messages is in the long term more cost-effective, opens up more possibilities and provides better evaluation of its effectiveness.

4.
Building excellence in our business

OSCR understands that giving the right skills to our staff to enable them to take advantage of all the opportunities the digital age has to offer is key to ensuring the work they do is recognised and appreciated as the world embraces digital technology.

In building new services, and developing new ways to approach services, we will ensure that they are secure by design and that the data gathered and held is relevant and proportionate to our work. Innovative design will allow us to make best use of our systems with integration designed to use staff time in a more time effective way, increasing productivity and spending more time on value added tasks. Less time spent on routine work will allow our staff to be flexible and create an informed and motivated team with the skills to work across a range of areas.

The pursuit of excellence in our business cannot be understated and we need to be informed by all our users, continually reviewing our practices to ensure we maintain that excellence.

Drivers for Excellence

Agile
Our digital backbone will be designed to be flexible and able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances. Products we can readily adapt and update without expensive support costs allowing the freedom to continue to develop.

Value for Money
Cost effectiveness will guide our projects and ensure that OSCR gets the right fit at the right cost. We will find the correct balance within projects to ensure that OSCR gets the product needed while ensuring value for the public purse.

Collaborative working
With access to high quality network connections via the SWAN network, itself an example of collaborative working with SEPA, OSCR now can take advantage of the developments in telephony over the internet, commonly called VOIP (voice over IP) this is much more than simple telephony and includes the potential for video and data. To that end OSCR is working with two other agencies to determine the feasibility of a joint procurement of a new telephony system using the latest digital technology. Such an approach should provide a best value solution meeting the diverse needs of all three agencies going into the future.

Innovative design will allow us to make best use of our systems

Priorities

- **We will create a digitally skilled workforce within an overall corporate digital culture.**
- **Manage our data efficiently and effectively making best use of available technology.**
- **Maintain an up to date, efficient and modern IT infrastructure.**

To do this we will:

- Create agile business solutions which can be easily adapted to changing circumstances
- Have a digital option available for each of our services whenever possible
- Develop and train our staff giving them the right skills to make best use of our systems
- Create an easy to access internal learning portal for all known training needs
- Continuous review of our ICT infrastructure to improve energy efficiency and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions
- Make best use of our connectivity with SWAN to find savings in new technology
- Encourage use of communications technology, video conferencing by investing in improved facilities
- Manage our data efficiently and effectively, maximise the potential. for improved use of metadata.

Benefits

1. Continue to develop further the digital culture within OSCR.
2. Value for money in our digital investment through informed developments and collaborative working.
3. Improving the quality and control of our data.
4. Making best use of digital technology to transform our services.

Delivering the future by making digital happen

This document outlines the first steps to achieving OSCR's digital future. Our ambition is to take OSCR forward and use this opportunity to transform how we conduct our business of regulating and engaging with charities registered in Scotland. To achieve this successfully we will need to have a system of governance involving a cross discipline team and an implementation plan and take advantage of partnership working to increase the potential for success.

Governance

Delivery Group
We need a group which can take a high level, overarching view of available options.

Digital Working Party
A group of staff from our various teams who can inform and co-ordinate projects as they are identified.

Digital Action Plan

We will produce and update our Digital Action Plan which will provide more detail on our plans to transform OSCR's digital future. Beyond that this will be used to record our progress towards the end result. Having identified the Strategy and the Action Plan OSCR should be in a position to respond easily to changes in technologies and be in a position to move forward to take advantage of available funds for digital projects.

Opportunity to transform how we conduct our business of regulating and engaging with the charity sector in Scotland