
THE CHARITY LAW & PRACTICE REVIEW

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Contents of Volume 4, Issue 1

CONTENTS

	Page No
Editorial	v
What's in a Name? The Cost to a Charity of Protecting its Name Debra Morris	1
Common Investment Funds Rupert Marlow	21
Charities and Governance: A Study in Evolution Lawrence Holden	27
Charity Accounting under the Charities Act 1993 Robert Vincent	43
The Oxford Colleges and their College Contributions Scheme David Palfreyman	51
Book Review <i>Investing Charity Funds</i> , Michael Harbottle	65

From the Managing Editor

EDITORIAL

Lord Wilberforce once observed that "Charity as a branch of the law touches life at many points". This truth is vividly illustrated by the interplay of charity law and the law relating to passing off which forms the first article in this issue by Debra Morris, "What's in a Name? The Cost to a Charity of Protecting its Name". Investment and accounting continue to dominate the scene largely because of reforms recently made or in the offing. Rupert Marlow of Kleinwort Benson discusses a specialised area of investment in his article on "Common Investment Funds" and Robert Vincent of Buzzacott & Co, an expert and author on charity accounts, has produced the first authoritative short summary of the changes effected by Part VI of the 1993 Act and the new accounting regulations in his article "Charity Accounts under the Charities Act 1993".

Sandwiched between these two accounts is Lawrence Holden's "Charities and Governments - A Study in Evolution". This topic draws together a number of essential threads and surveys the role and function of charity trustees, particularly their strategic function, how they preserve the core values of a charity and how they plan ahead. Not the least interesting part of his survey is the account he gives of the *Hancock Enquiry* into Housing Associations and the eight specific essential functions identified by the panel in regard to the board of a charitable housing association. The relevance of membership was also considered by *Hancock* and this question also surfaces in the article.

The last article in this issue concerns "The Oxford Colleges and their College Contribution Scheme". David Palfreyman, Bursar and Fellow of New College, Oxford, canvasses the controversial view that the scheme is voluntary and not mandatory not least because it does not promote a University purpose.

On the Charity Commission front there are several items to note. First, the Commissioners are revising their guidelines on income reserves. These, in amended form, are likely to be published later this summer. Secondly, as part of their computerisation initiatives, the Charity Commission has since April had its own web site on the Internet. Its "address" is:

<http://www.open.gov.uk/charity/hccintro.htm>.

It aims to provide up to date information on available publications, exposure drafts, conferences, roadshows and an array of other information judged of interest and value to the sector. Thirdly, the new Registration and Information Pack is highlighted in the Annual Report for 1995 published in May.

From the Managing Editor

Readers will also keep their eyes open this summer for the publication of Volume 5 of the Decisions of the Commissioners, as well as for the enactment of the Trusts of Land and Apointment of Trustees Act 1996, and the parliamentary Order repealing the Trustee Investments Act 1961 and putting wider powers of investment in place.

Finally, I should repeat that articles, long or short, on charity law or practice are most welcome for consideration, as are suggestions for areas of charity law or practice to be covered.

June 1996

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