

Pepperells encourages corporate giving after new report highlights regional generosity gap.

A major Northern England law firm is urging UK businesses to take a more active role in supporting charitable causes, as new figures from the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) reveal only one in four businesses donated to charity last year.

Pepperells Solicitors says the findings highlight a concerning drop in corporate generosity at a time when charities across the UK are facing growing financial pressure and rising demand for their services.

With costs increasing and public funding tightening, many organisations are finding it harder to sustain vital community support.

Pepperells is now encouraging other firms to make social responsibility a central part of how they operate. The firm believes charitable engagement should be seen as a consistent, long-term investment in society, not as an optional activity tied to profitability.

According to the CAF data, companies in the North East are 31% more likely to donate than those in the South East, revealing a sharp regional divide in corporate giving. Pepperells, which has grown from its Yorkshire base into a nationwide firm, says this demonstrates that community spirit is still strong in some areas but that there is a need for more uniform action across the country.

Ben Pepperell, Chief Executive of Pepperells, said: "The disparity in this data proves the importance of consistent, nationwide support for communities in need.

"Businesses everywhere have the ability and the responsibility to make a difference, whether through financial donations, volunteering, or in-kind support."

The CAF's latest report found that three-quarters of British businesses currently do not support charities, despite an estimated £4.26 billion being donated by UK companies in 2024. Nearly half of this amount came from the FTSE 100, showing that the majority of contributions are concentrated among the largest firms.

Pepperells believes that smaller and mid-sized companies can have just as consequential an impact by committing to regular giving, partnerships, and employee-led initiatives.

Over the past eight years, Pepperells has donated around £200,000 to a broad mix of charities and community projects across the UK. These have included organisations supporting families in crisis, young people, mental health services, and local food banks.

"Our Corporate Responsibility Group ensures that everyone at Pepperells can play a part in giving back," added Ben.

"We encourage our teams to use their skills and time to support local causes, and every employee has the opportunity to spend a day volunteering in the community."

The CAF report also revealed that cash giving fell by an estimated £300 million in 2024, with many companies shifting towards in-kind donations instead. Among the FTSE 100, cash donations dropped by £100 million year-on-year.

It also revealed that charities would receive an extra £5 billion in funding if just 1% more businesses donated.

Pepperells says this shift shows that while businesses are finding new ways to contribute, there remains a need for clear and measurable commitments to ensure consistent support for the voluntary sector.

“Corporate giving is not only about donations,” added Ben Pepperell. “It is actively contributing to building stronger and more resilient communities and demonstrating leadership in a challenging economic climate.”

The firm hopes the new CAF findings will serve as a wake-up call for businesses across all sectors. By embedding philanthropy and social responsibility into their long-term strategies, Pepperells believes UK companies can play a vital role in creating a more sustainable future for all.

“If every business contributed a little more in time, expertise or funds, the collective impact would be transformational,” Ben concluded.

-ENDS-

About Pepperells:

- Established in 1985 by the Pepperell family
- Now employs 230 after conclusion of the Elmhirst Parker acquisition
- Key practice areas include:
 - Business: agricultural law, corporate and commercial, commercial property, charity law, employment law, debt recovery
 - Personal: wills and trusts, conveyancing, divorce, family law, criminal law, civil litigation, personal injury, domestic abuse.
- Offices in: Hull, Scunthorpe, Grimsby, Lincoln, Beverley, Newcastle, Willerby, Manchester, London, York, Barton, Doncaster, Peterborough, Barnsley, Royston, Sherburn-in-Elmet and Selby.

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