



East Grinstead & District Lions Club
(International Association of Lions Clubs)
District 105 SE England

WE SERVE

News Release

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SOUTH EAST CALLS FOR CHARITIES TO MAKE THEIR MONEY GO FURTHER

The Message is Clear - Charity Must Begin at Home

South East, 24 March, 2005 – Nearly a quarter of people from the South East would prefer to donate money to charities if 100% of their contribution goes directly to the cause, according to research out today from Lions Clubs International, the world's largest and premier service club organisation.

The study, launched today to mark the start of Lions Awareness Week, shows that the public is calling for charities to become more resourceful and efficient with their administration costs, so that more money reaches the cause it's intended for.

Paul Withers, District Governor for the South East of the Lions Clubs of British Isles and Ireland says, "People are sceptical as to whether every penny they donate actually reaches the intended cause. However as one of a few charitable organisations that does not deduct an administration cost from donations, people who volunteer to become Lions can be assured that all money they raise will always go directly to the cause."

The research also found that over a quarter of respondents are more likely to help a charity closer to home rather than abroad, as they feel they are able to give something back to their local community. Nearly two thirds of all respondents from the South East said that they already support local events in their local communities.

Lions Clubs International estimates that its clubs give back as much as 85-90% of money raised to their local communities, however Paul highlights that, "giving service to the community is not just a matter of raising and disbursing money. As a volunteer service organisation our members give up their time to helping others – for example visiting and helping the elderly, the sick and the lonely, decorating their homes and helping to maintain their gardens".

Psychologist Donna Dawson studied the results of Lions' research and commented "People who volunteer for charity work are viewed by the majority of those surveyed as 'caring' types, with a natural empathy for other people, their environment, and the community that they live in. This is probably an 'ideal', which most people think they cannot fully live up to and this belief may inhibit many people from volunteering. However, the survey also reveals that most people could be persuaded to help with a local cause, especially if they could be sure that all of the funds raised, reached the nominated charitable cause."

As an opportunity to attract new volunteers and to highlight the fantastic results achieved by Lions clubs, Lions Clubs International is launching an awareness campaign, which runs in late March/early April across the British Isles and Ireland.

Paul Withers continues, "Lions Clubs Awareness Week is not only an opportunity to recognise the commitment and achievements of the thousands of men and women who donate their time and effort to giving back to their local and global communities, but it is also an opportunity for us to encourage people to join us and volunteer their help."

Following Lions Awareness Week, Lions Clubs International will be heavily involved with providing support for the 'Kellogg's Cornflakes Great Walk 2005'. Lions Clubs International is the Official Volunteer Partner for the Kellogg's Corn Flakes Great Walk 2005 and is currently responsible for recruiting marshals and administering applications to volunteer at the 54 10K events across the British Isles and Ireland. Since 1917, Lions Clubs International has helped millions of people thanks to the dedication of its members. Lions Awareness Week is a great opportunity to celebrate their achievements and look forward to many more in the future.

Key highlights of the research:

- More women (20%) recognise that charity work adds to the quality of their life, as well as others, compared to men (16%)
- 61% of 24-35's donate money and goods on a regular basis but 90% of this age group say they do not have enough spare time to volunteer
- More 55-65 year olds volunteer than any other age group and 33% are more likely to support local events and charities close to their home, whereas younger people are more likely to take part in sponsored events
- 35% of 25-34's will choose a charity if they can personally identify with the cause
- According to the people David Beckham would make the best volunteer, especially the 18-24's

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Lions Clubs International is the world's largest and premier service club organisation with nearly 1.4 million members in approximately 46,000 clubs in 193 countries and geographical areas around the world. There are almost 1,000 Lions Clubs in the UK and Ireland with 19,000 members.

Founded in 1917, Lions Clubs International — recognized worldwide for its service to the blind and visually impaired — also dedicates itself to helping those less fortunate in communities around the world. Involving members in projects as local as cleaning up an area park or as far-reaching as bringing sight to the world's blind, Lions clubs provide innovative service to their communities. More information can be found online at www.lions.org.uk.

This year has also seen Lions re-launch an exciting UK initiative. 'Message in a Bottle' - is a simple yet effective scheme, where a bottle containing important medical and personal information is stored in one's fridge, sign-posted by a distinctive green cross on the door, and is available to the emergency services if they are called out to one's home. Lions Clubs nationwide recognise this initiative as a means of fulfilling the motto "We Serve" and have organised different events up and down the country in partnership with local councils to launch the free, life- saving scheme.

With two million people in the UK affected by incurable sight loss, this year has seen Lions International British Isles and Ireland launch the Lions Eye Health Programme, a campaign to raise awareness of major eye diseases and the need for people to have regular eye tests. Lions Clubs throughout the British Isles and Ireland are being encouraged to work with eye care professionals to educate their local communities about the risks of eye disease. The organisation is recognised around the world for its commitment to sight. Their work has helped to restore the vision of 4.6 million people through cataract surgery, prevented serious vision loss for 20 million people and improved eye care services for hundreds of millions.

Methodology

ICM interviewed a random sample of 1003 adults aged 18+, by telephone between 7th and 9th March 2005. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Further information at www.icmresearch.co.uk