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**Sent:** 09 August 2004 10:08  
**To:** charitybill  
**Subject:** Aberdeen Cyrenians - Consultation comments

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Please find attached our comments on the draft Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Bill.

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9 August 2004

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Dear Scottish Executive

## CONSULTATION - DRAFT CHARITIES & TRUSTEE INVESTMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above.

Aberdeen Cyrenians is a large local charity that opens doors for homeless people by alleviating homelessness through the provision of accommodation and support services and by raising awareness of the issues which lead to and perpetuate homelessness, thus influencing strategies to prevent homelessness. Aberdeen Cyrenians has been operating since 1968 and employs 140 staff. In addition, there are 50 volunteers involved in the delivery of services. Our annual income and expenditure for 2004/2005 is estimated to be around £4m. Around 2,500 homeless or those at risk of homelessness benefit from the direct services provided by Aberdeen Cyrenians giving them help to move forward in their lives. The organisation is constituted as a Company Limited by Guarantee (Reg. No. SC070903) and is managed by a Council of Management elected from Aberdeen Cyrenians' membership. It is registered with the Inland Revenue for Charitable Purpose (SC014849).

In general terms, Aberdeen Cyrenians welcomes a modern framework for the operation of charities in Scotland which would help set good standards for such organisations and ensure that they retain the confidence of the public. Aberdeen Cyrenians is committed to ensuring good standards of governance in all aspects of its operations.

We would agree with the definitions of charitable purposes as set out in s7 and agree that there should be a public benefit test which the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) would provide guidance on. However, we are concerned about the issue of public benefit and feel that this needs to be more specifically defined as we would not see providing education through a fee paying school as a charitable purpose or other similar situations.

We would agree that there would be benefits from the establishing of a charity regulator in Scotland. The proposed functions of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator are acceptable to us. The arguments for establishing the OSCR as a Non-Ministerial Department are convincing.

We are not convinced that the term "charity steward" will be widely accepted or understood and simply calling them "charity board members" would be better.

The duties of "charity stewards" could benefit from being laid out in greater detail and the OSCR should have the power to provide wider definitions of the duties of "charity stewards". We believe that the sector would benefit from regulating charity fundraising and the proposal to stick with self-regulation meanwhile leaves the door open to abuses. The non introduction of regulation immediately should be reconsidered.

Yours

Paul Hannan  
Chief Executive