
CGAP Briefing Note 11

A decade of donations in the UK: household gifts to charity, 2001-11

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This note serves primarily to update figures and charts presented in previous briefing notes in the CGAP series using pooled data from over 68,700 households in the Office for National Statistics Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF) from April 2001 to December 2011. It offers:

- **estimates of participation in charitable giving and amounts donated over time;**
- **a regional analysis over time and by income group;**
- **a comparison of donations with other gifts within and between households.**

Participation in charitable giving and amounts donated over time

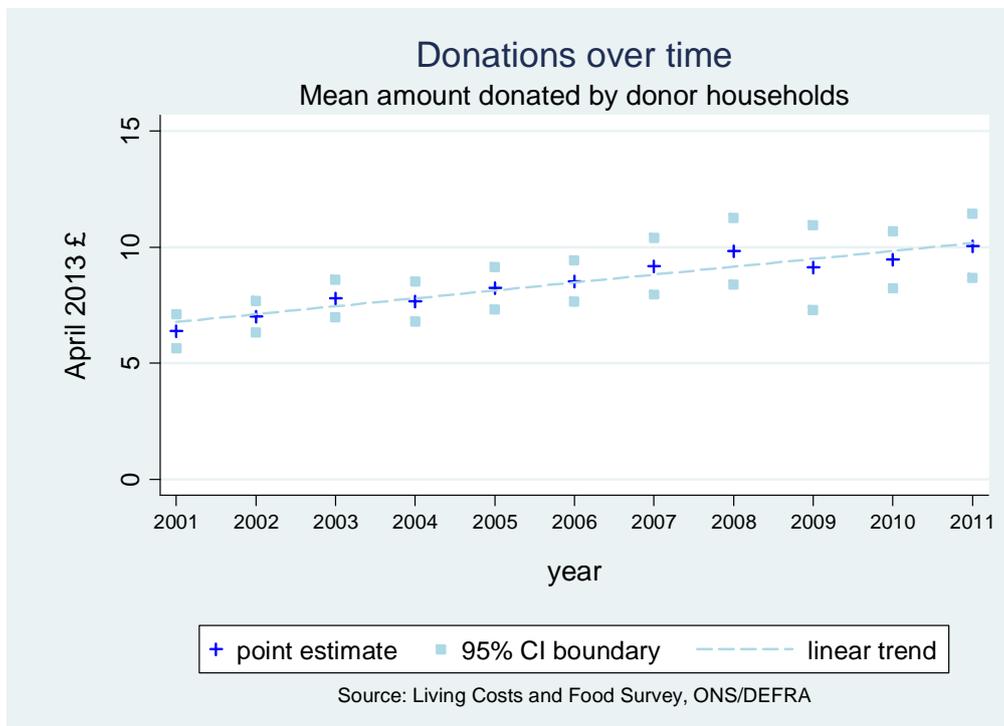
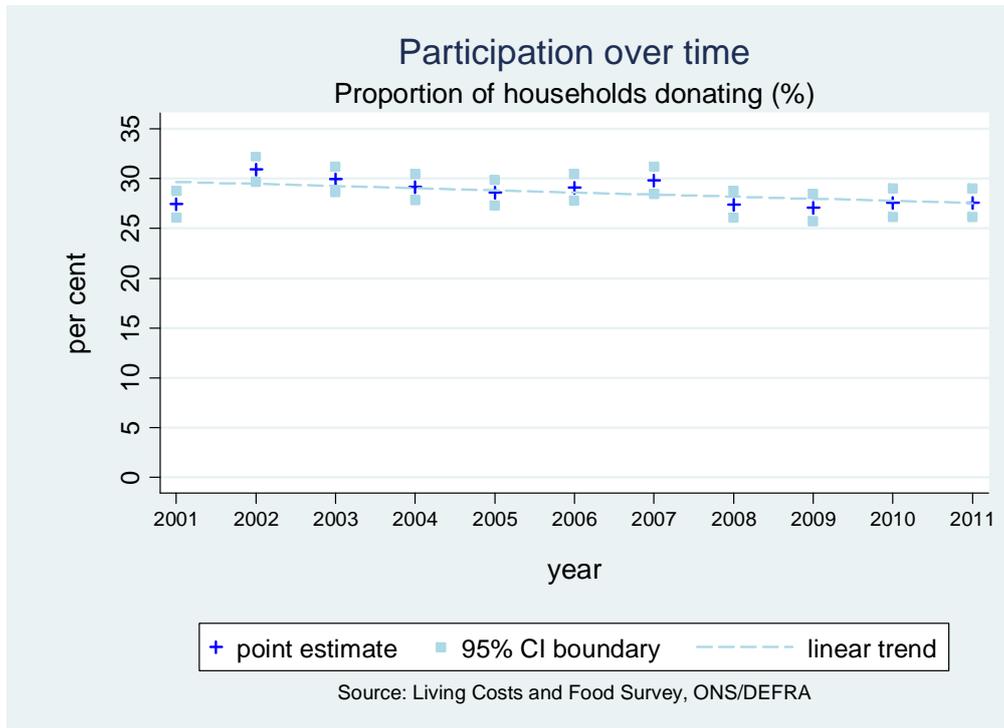
Over the decade to December 2011 the proportion of households donating to charity was relatively stable at between 27% and 31%.¹ Participation was highest between 2002 and 2007. It then fell back in 2008 and remained at a similar level until 2011. The linear trend for the period as a whole is therefore slightly negative.

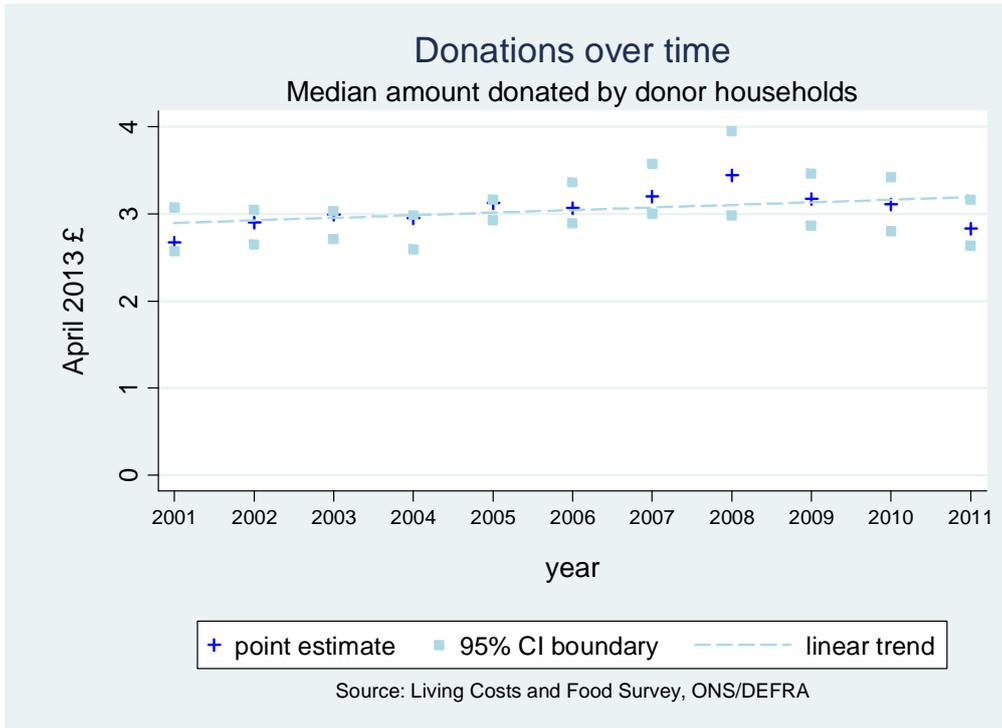
While participation has been roughly constant, amounts donated to charity by donor households rose in real terms from a mean average of around £7 per week in 2001/02 to £10 per week in 2011.² However, this upward trend in the mean has been driven by larger donations towards the top end of the scale: the median amount donated by donor

¹ Households in the LCF keep a diary of their spending for two weeks; participation rates are based on this time period.

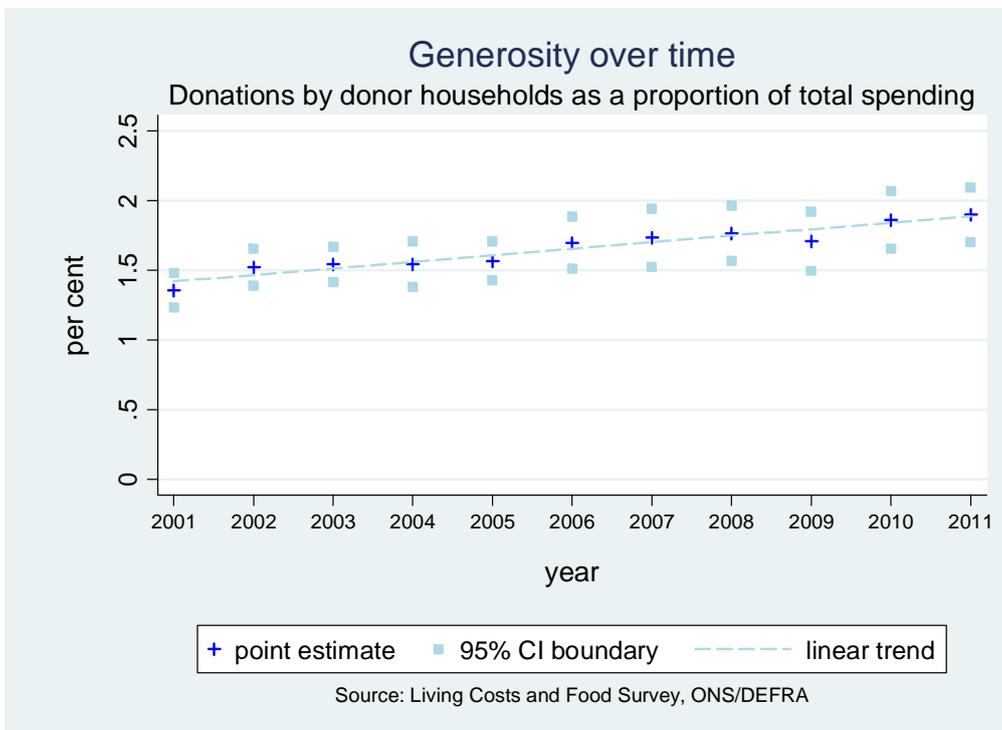
² All amounts are expressed in April 2013 money.

households in 2011, at £2.84 per week, was about the same as it was in 2001/02. While the trend in the median for the decade as a whole was still positive, it peaked at £3.45 in 2008 and fell in consecutive years until 2011.





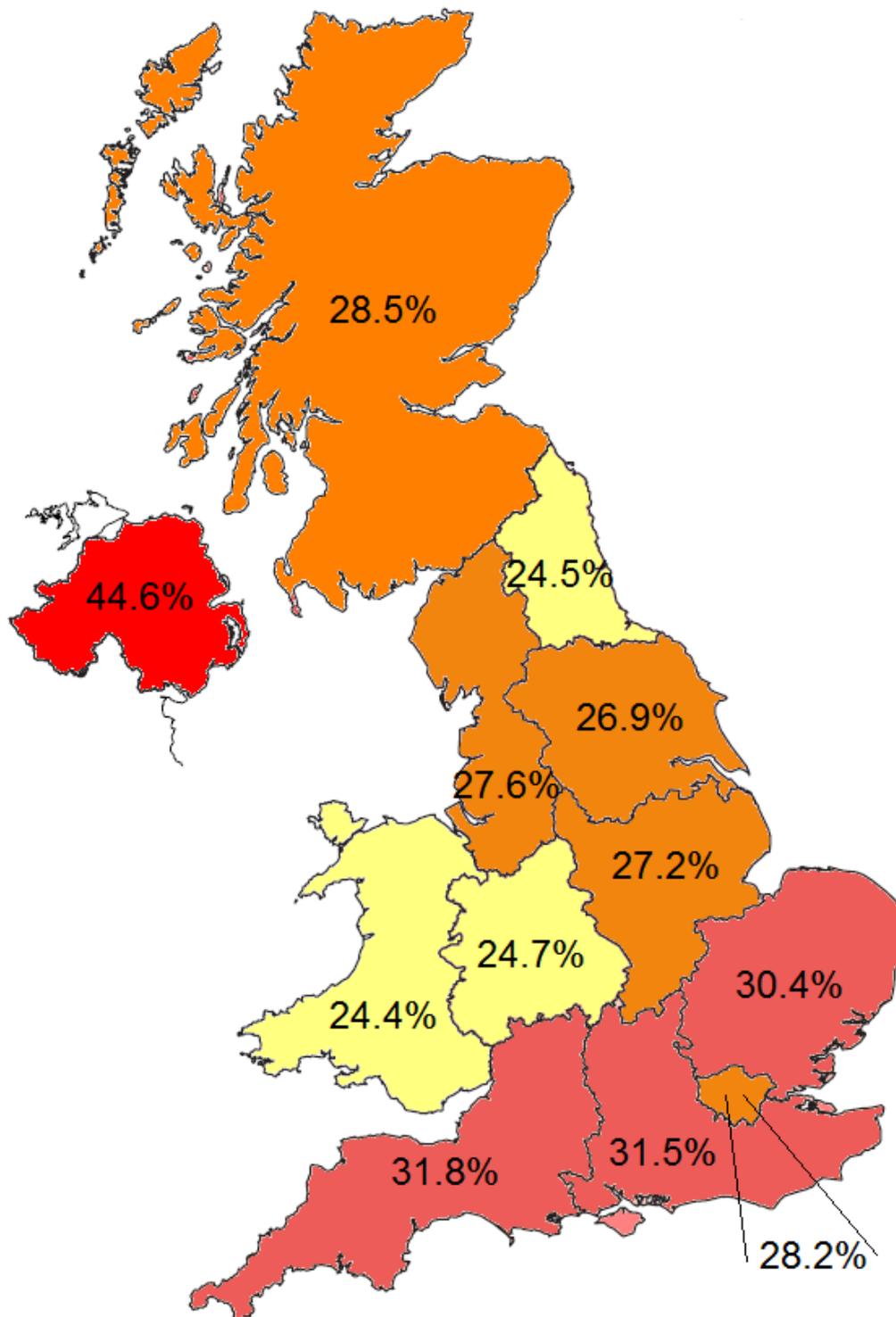
The decade also saw a rise in the generosity of donor households, measured by donations as a proportion of their budgets. In 2001/02 donations represented about 1.5% of a donor household's spending. This had risen to an average of 1.9% in 2010 and 2011.³



³ This represents the same level as the "millennium peak" documented by Cowley *et al.* (2011).

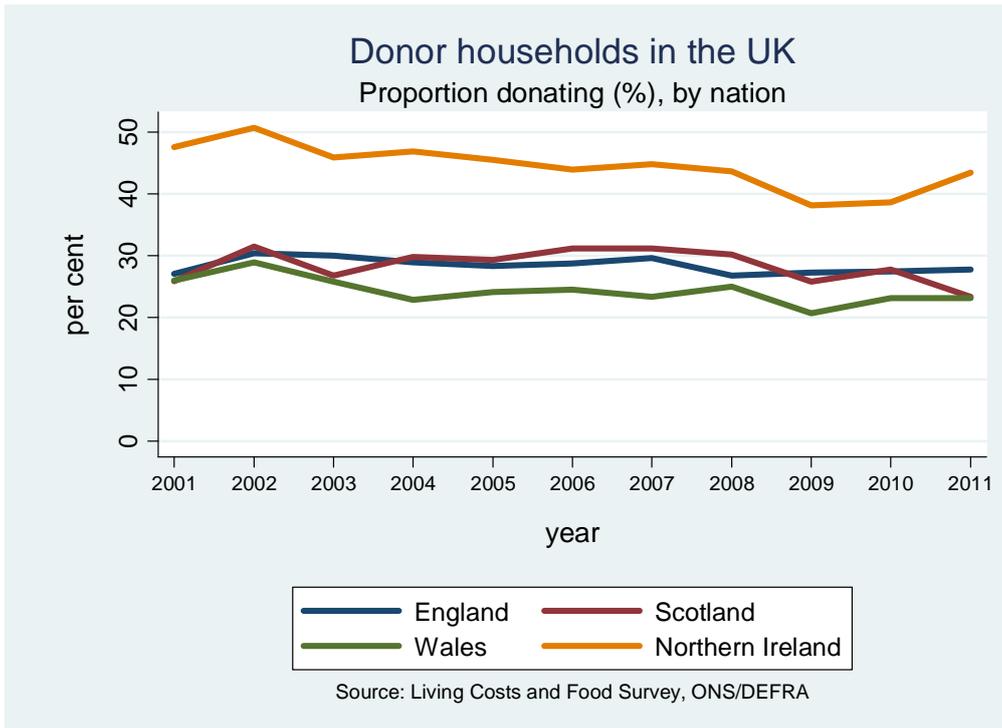
Regional analysis over time⁴

The most generous region in the UK, in terms of the proportion of households donating to charity, remains Northern Ireland, as shown in the following map.⁵

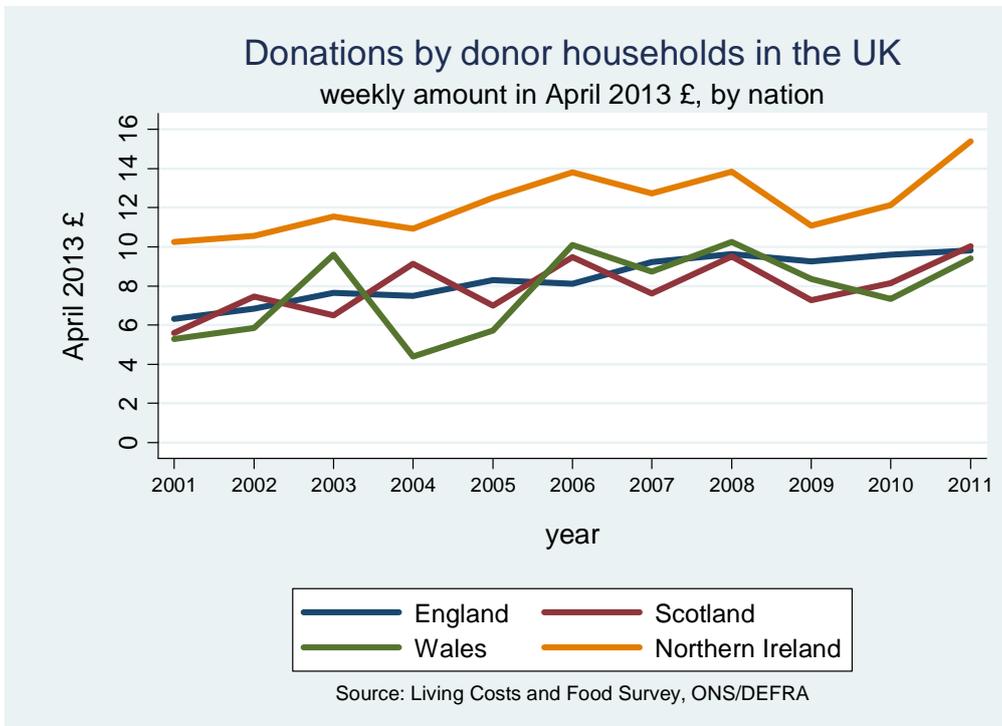


⁴ This and the next section update CGAP (2010).

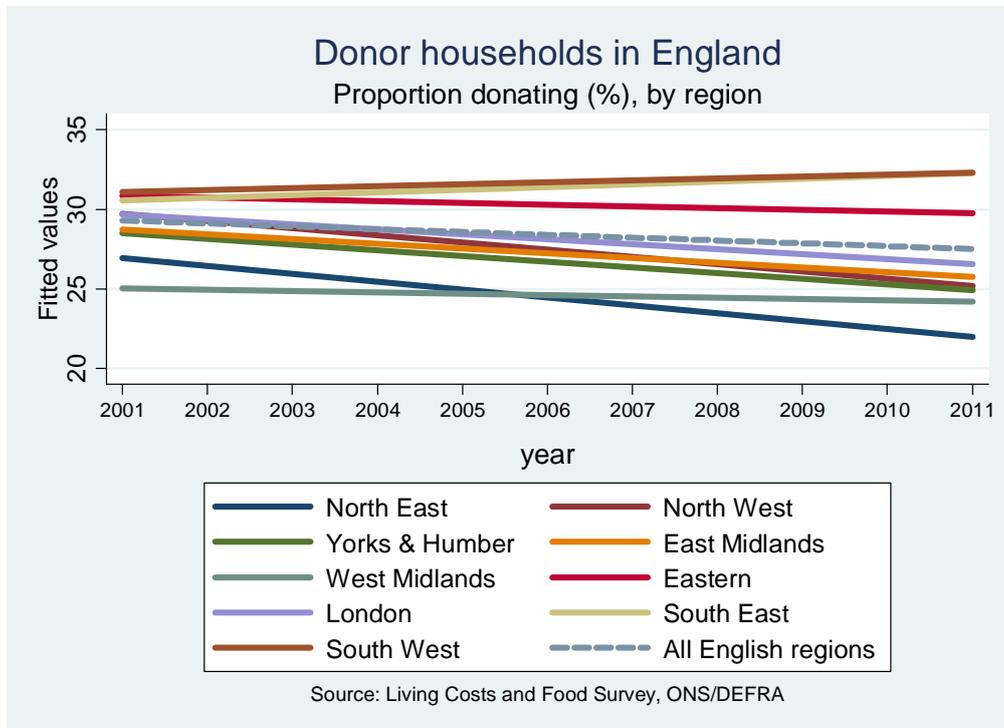
⁵ The map is based on pooled data from all years under study, 2001-2011.



As measured by amounts donated too, households in Northern Ireland gave consistently more to charity in all years of the period studied.

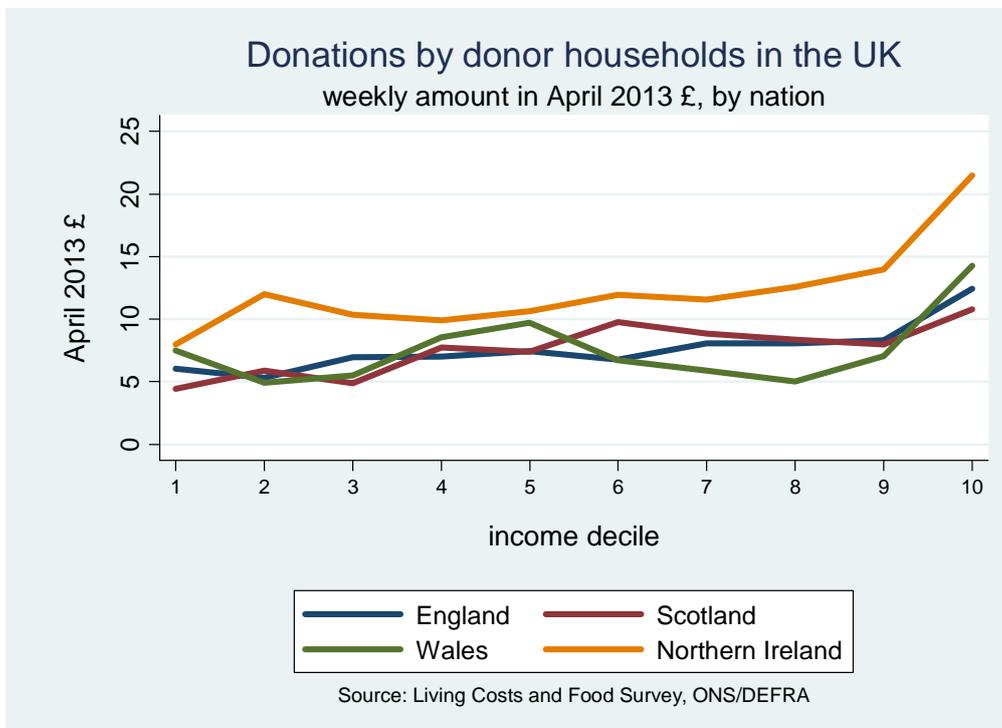
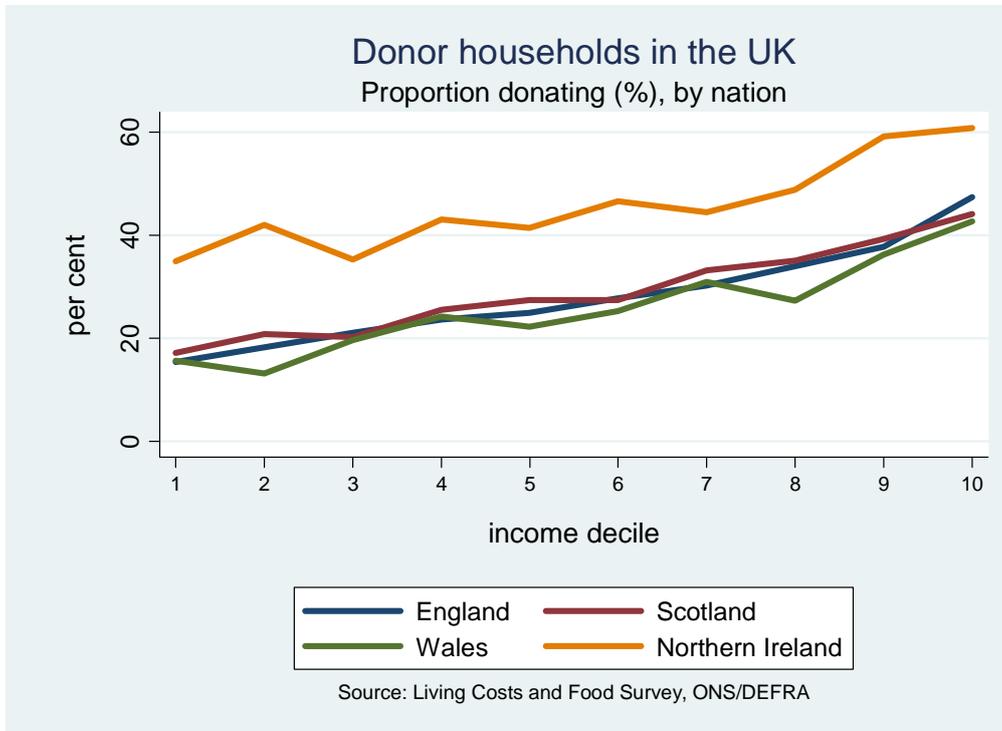


When considering linear trends in participation over the decade by region, there is a clear north-south divide in England: households in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, and the North West became less likely to donate, while proportions donating rose in the more affluent South East (excluding London) and South West regions. Participation in other English regions showed less change, but the overall trend for England was one of gentle decline.



Regional analysis by income group

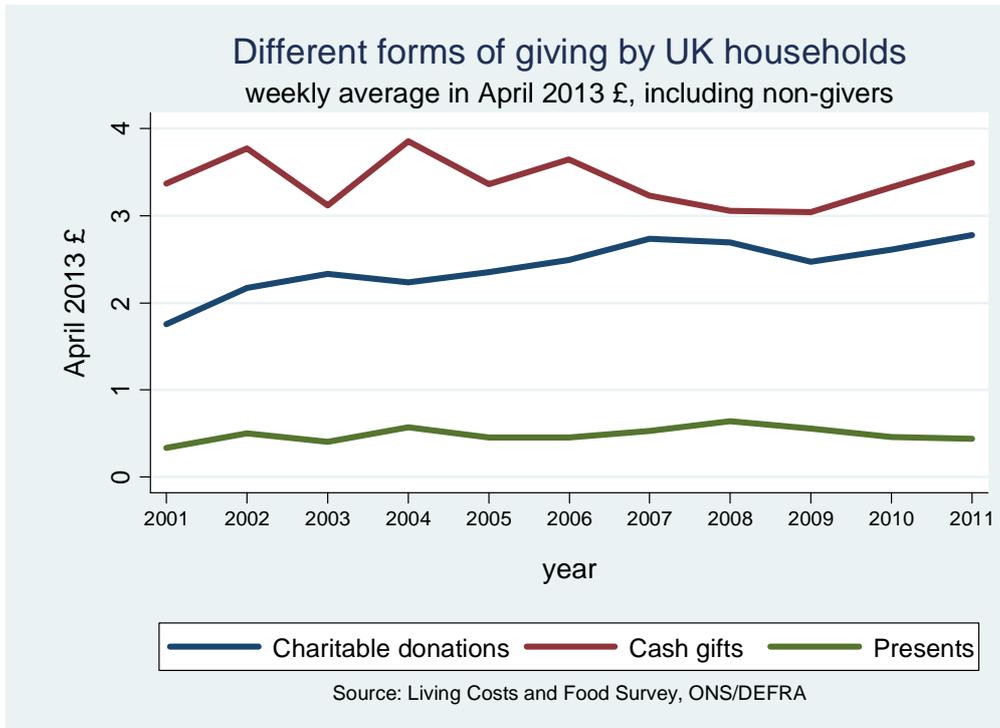
The strong, positive relationship between donating to charity and income is similar across all regions of the UK, both in terms of participation and amounts donated, and the difference between households in Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom persists throughout the income distribution.⁶



⁶ The income variable used here is that of disposable income (after tax and allowances). The 2001-11 sample is sorted by year and income and divided into ten equally sized groups (deciles), 1 (10) representing the lowest (highest) income group.

Comparing donations with inter and intra-household giving⁷

In addition to charitable donations, the following chart shows gifts of cash to other households in the UK, as well as money spent on presents (which includes presents both for other households and members of the same household). In contrast to the previous charts of amounts presented in this briefing note, the current chart covers all households including those that have not given money, thus also capturing any effects of participation on average amounts given.

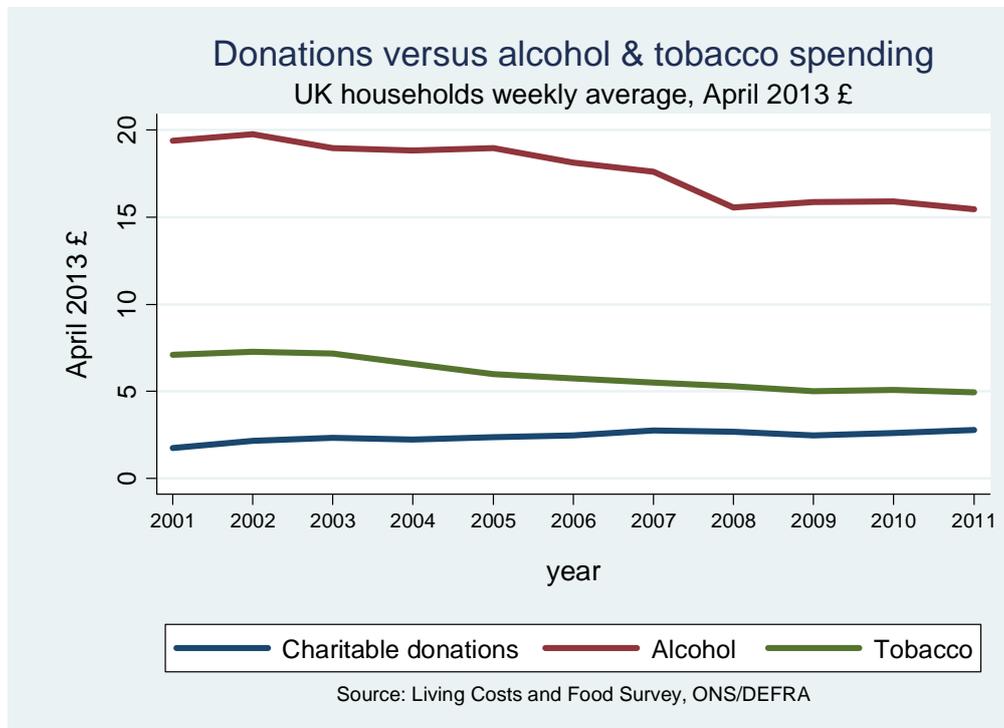


As can be seen here, the upward trend in average donations to charity noted in the first section is not mirrored by trends in these other forms of giving between and within households in the UK. While households tend to give higher amounts of money directly to other households than they do to charity, the average cash gift remained roughly the same in real terms (between £3 and £4) throughout the period 2001-11. The average amount of money spent on presents, while much lower than cash gifts to other households and donations to charity, also remained flat.

⁷ This and the next section extend the analysis in CGAP (2009) to consider patterns over the decade rather than by month.

Is donating to charity good for your health?

The final chart in this briefing note compares the trend in donating to charity with trends in household spending on alcohol and tobacco over the decade. While donations rose steadily in real terms between 2001 and 2008, at first sight it appears that the nation became healthier over the same period, as household spending on both alcohol and tobacco declined.



However, spending does not necessarily equate with consumption, and spending on alcohol and tobacco did not decline any further after 2008. The relationship between alcohol and donations is also different to the link between tobacco and donations. In earlier work, Banks and Tanner (1997, p.15) showed that households spending on alcohol were more likely to give to charity than teetotallers, while those spending on tobacco were less likely to donate to charity than non-smokers. What is clear is that households in the UK still tend to spend a lot more on alcohol and tobacco than they do on donations to charity.

References

Banks, J. and Tanner, S. (1997) *The State of Donation: Household Gifts to Charity, 1974-96*, Commentary No. 62, Institute for Fiscal Studies, London, available at: www.ifs.org.uk/comms/comm62.pdf

CGAP (2009) Briefing Note 2: Charitable giving by UK households at Christmas, available at: www.cgap.org.uk

CGAP (2010) Briefing Note 6: UK household giving – new results on regional trends 2001-08, available at: www.cgap.org.uk

Cowley, E., McKenzie, T., Pharoah, C. and Smith, S. (2011) *The new state of donation: Three decades of household giving to charity 1978–2008*, available at: www.cgap.org.uk

Acknowledgements

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About CGAP

The ESRC Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy (CGAP) is the first academic centre in the UK dedicated to research on charitable giving and philanthropy. Three main research strands focus on individual and business giving, social redistribution and charitable activity, and the institutions of giving. CGAP is a consortium including the Universities of Strathclyde, Southampton and Kent, University of Edinburgh Business School, Cass Business School and NCVO. CGAP's coordinating 'hub' is based at Cass Business School. CGAP is funded by the ESRC, the Office for Civil Society, the Scottish Government and Carnegie UK Trust.

For further information on CGAP, visit www.cgap.org.uk

OVERVIEW STATISTICS FOR THE UK; AMOUNTS IN APRIL 2013 PRICES

year	Participation rate			Mean donation by donor households			Median donation by donor households			Donations as a proportion of spending (donor households only)		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
2001	27.4%	26.1%	28.8%	£6.39	£5.66	£7.13	£2.67	£2.57	£3.07	1.4%	1.2%	1.5%
2002	30.9%	29.7%	32.2%	£7.01	£6.32	£7.70	£2.90	£2.64	£3.04	1.5%	1.4%	1.7%
2003	29.9%	28.6%	31.2%	£7.80	£6.99	£8.61	£3.00	£2.71	£3.03	1.5%	1.4%	1.7%
2004	29.2%	27.9%	30.5%	£7.67	£6.80	£8.53	£2.95	£2.60	£2.99	1.5%	1.4%	1.7%
2005	28.6%	27.3%	29.9%	£8.24	£7.32	£9.16	£3.13	£2.93	£3.17	1.6%	1.4%	1.7%
2006	29.1%	27.8%	30.5%	£8.54	£7.66	£9.43	£3.07	£2.89	£3.36	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%
2007	29.8%	28.5%	31.2%	£9.18	£7.96	£10.39	£3.20	£3.00	£3.58	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%
2008	27.4%	26.1%	28.8%	£9.83	£8.40	£11.26	£3.45	£2.98	£3.95	1.8%	1.6%	2.0%
2009	27.1%	25.7%	28.5%	£9.12	£7.30	£10.94	£3.17	£2.87	£3.46	1.7%	1.5%	1.9%
2010	27.6%	26.2%	29.0%	£9.46	£8.23	£10.69	£3.11	£2.80	£3.42	1.9%	1.7%	2.1%
2011	27.6%	26.2%	29.0%	£10.06	£8.68	£11.44	£2.84	£2.64	£3.17	1.9%	1.7%	2.1%

PARTICIPATION RATES OVER TIME BY NATION

year	England			Scotland			Wales			Northern Ireland		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
2001	27.1%	25.6%	28.6%	25.9%	20.9%	30.8%	26.0%	19.5%	32.4%	47.6%	42.5%	52.7%
2002	30.4%	29.0%	31.8%	31.4%	26.8%	36.0%	28.9%	23.4%	34.4%	50.7%	46.5%	54.8%
2003	30.0%	28.5%	31.5%	26.7%	23.1%	30.4%	25.8%	20.6%	31.1%	45.9%	41.9%	50.0%
2004	28.9%	27.5%	30.4%	29.8%	25.5%	34.0%	22.9%	17.7%	28.1%	46.9%	42.6%	51.1%
2005	28.3%	26.9%	29.7%	29.3%	25.2%	33.4%	24.1%	17.9%	30.3%	45.5%	41.0%	50.1%
2006	28.8%	27.3%	30.2%	31.2%	26.4%	35.9%	24.5%	18.8%	30.1%	44.0%	39.8%	48.1%
2007	29.6%	28.1%	31.1%	31.2%	26.8%	35.6%	23.3%	17.5%	29.1%	44.8%	40.7%	48.9%
2008	26.7%	25.2%	28.2%	30.2%	25.5%	35.0%	25.0%	19.0%	31.0%	43.7%	39.5%	47.8%
2009	27.3%	25.8%	28.8%	25.8%	21.4%	30.2%	20.7%	15.1%	26.3%	38.1%	34.1%	42.1%
2010	27.5%	25.9%	29.1%	27.7%	23.4%	32.0%	23.1%	17.3%	29.0%	38.6%	30.6%	46.6%
2011	27.8%	26.2%	29.3%	23.3%	18.3%	28.3%	23.2%	17.3%	29.1%	43.4%	34.9%	52.0%

DONATIONS BY DONOR HOUSEHOLDS OVER TIME BY NATION, APRIL 2013 PRICES

year	England			Scotland			Wales			Northern Ireland		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
2001	£6.33	£5.46	£7.19	£5.61	£4.47	£6.74	£5.29	£3.20	£7.38	£10.23	£8.40	£12.06
2002	£6.85	£6.07	£7.63	£7.46	£5.27	£9.65	£5.85	£3.05	£8.65	£10.55	£8.50	£12.60
2003	£7.64	£6.76	£8.53	£6.50	£4.82	£8.18	£9.59	£3.00	£16.18	£11.56	£9.15	£13.98
2004	£7.50	£6.58	£8.41	£9.13	£4.70	£13.57	£4.38	£2.00	£6.76	£10.93	£8.60	£13.25
2005	£8.30	£7.22	£9.38	£6.98	£5.35	£8.61	£5.74	£4.70	£6.78	£12.50	£9.33	£15.67
2006	£8.12	£7.13	£9.10	£9.46	£7.30	£11.63	£10.10	£3.70	£16.50	£13.82	£10.17	£17.47
2007	£9.21	£7.79	£10.64	£7.61	£5.08	£10.14	£8.73	£4.50	£12.95	£12.73	£10.65	£14.81
2008	£9.64	£8.10	£11.19	£9.50	£3.28	£15.72	£10.24	£5.56	£14.92	£13.84	£10.59	£17.10
2009	£9.26	£7.11	£11.42	£7.26	£5.68	£8.84	£8.35	£5.59	£11.11	£11.07	£9.17	£12.97
2010	£9.58	£8.15	£11.01	£8.14	£5.42	£10.87	£7.33	£4.05	£10.62	£12.15	£8.54	£15.75
2011	£9.81	£8.26	£11.35	£10.04	£7.57	£12.50	£9.40	£2.12	£16.68	£15.39	£8.33	£22.45

PARTICIPATION RATES BY INCOME DECILE BY NATION

income decile	England			Scotland			Wales			Northern Ireland		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
1	15.7%	14.7%	16.8%	18.0%	14.7%	21.4%	15.5%	11.3%	19.7%	34.6%	29.9%	39.4%
2	18.0%	16.9%	19.1%	19.1%	15.9%	22.3%	13.0%	9.9%	16.0%	41.6%	36.8%	46.4%
3	20.7%	19.4%	21.9%	21.3%	17.6%	24.9%	20.1%	15.9%	24.2%	37.8%	33.0%	42.6%
4	24.0%	22.9%	25.2%	25.0%	21.5%	28.6%	25.3%	21.4%	29.2%	41.1%	36.4%	45.8%
5	24.8%	23.6%	26.0%	26.9%	22.7%	31.2%	21.4%	16.7%	26.1%	41.6%	37.0%	46.2%
6	27.7%	26.5%	28.9%	29.1%	25.1%	33.0%	25.6%	20.9%	30.3%	46.7%	42.0%	51.4%
7	30.5%	29.2%	31.8%	31.1%	27.0%	35.1%	29.2%	23.3%	35.1%	44.0%	39.2%	48.8%
8	33.9%	32.5%	35.2%	35.1%	30.4%	39.9%	30.6%	24.1%	37.0%	51.3%	46.3%	56.2%
9	37.2%	36.0%	38.5%	41.1%	36.8%	45.5%	33.9%	28.4%	39.4%	56.9%	51.5%	62.3%
10	47.8%	46.3%	49.3%	43.6%	38.9%	48.2%	42.1%	36.7%	47.5%	60.8%	55.0%	66.6%

DONATIONS BY DONOR HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME DECILE BY NATION, APRIL 2013 PRICES

income decile	England			Scotland			Wales			Northern Ireland		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
1	£5.80	£4.56	£7.05	£4.39	£3.33	£5.45	£7.31	£2.92	£11.70	£8.24	£6.77	£9.71
2	£5.67	£4.98	£6.37	£5.99	£4.63	£7.35	£5.72	£2.57	£8.87	£10.88	£8.31	£13.44
3	£6.72	£4.69	£8.75	£4.75	£3.63	£5.87	£5.67	£4.26	£7.09	£11.18	£8.86	£13.50
4	£7.05	£6.35	£7.75	£7.73	£5.96	£9.50	£8.06	£2.74	£13.39	£10.22	£8.24	£12.21
5	£7.54	£6.55	£8.52	£8.05	£5.11	£10.99	£9.85	£3.36	£16.35	£10.10	£7.81	£12.40
6	£6.59	£5.88	£7.31	£8.94	£4.63	£13.24	£6.32	£4.68	£7.96	£12.09	£9.95	£14.23
7	£8.10	£7.07	£9.13	£9.39	£6.96	£11.81	£6.02	£4.62	£7.42	£10.90	£8.18	£13.62
8	£8.31	£7.36	£9.26	£6.36	£5.38	£7.34	£5.62	£4.35	£6.89	£13.96	£11.10	£16.83
9	£8.05	£7.16	£8.95	£9.53	£5.25	£13.82	£6.79	£1.59	£11.98	£12.79	£9.99	£15.58
10	£12.47	£11.24	£13.71	£10.63	£8.51	£12.75	£14.45	£8.61	£20.29	£21.64	£14.79	£28.48

CHARITABLE DONATIONS, CASH GIFTS TO OTHER HOUSEHOLDS, AND SPENDING ON PRESENTS, APRIL 2013 PRICES

year	donations			cash gifts			presents		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
2001	£1.75	£1.53	£1.97	£3.37	£2.85	£3.89	£0.34	£0.25	£0.42
2002	£2.17	£1.93	£2.41	£3.77	£3.23	£4.31	£0.50	£0.28	£0.73
2003	£2.33	£2.06	£2.61	£3.12	£2.73	£3.51	£0.40	£0.31	£0.50
2004	£2.24	£1.97	£2.51	£3.86	£3.28	£4.43	£0.57	£0.42	£0.73
2005	£2.36	£2.07	£2.64	£3.36	£2.95	£3.77	£0.45	£0.33	£0.57
2006	£2.49	£2.20	£2.78	£3.65	£3.07	£4.23	£0.45	£0.33	£0.57
2007	£2.74	£2.34	£3.13	£3.23	£2.67	£3.79	£0.53	£0.37	£0.70
2008	£2.70	£2.27	£3.12	£3.06	£2.57	£3.54	£0.64	£0.46	£0.82
2009	£2.47	£1.96	£2.98	£3.04	£2.58	£3.50	£0.56	£0.43	£0.69
2010	£2.61	£2.24	£2.98	£3.33	£2.73	£3.92	£0.46	£0.33	£0.59
2011	£2.78	£2.36	£3.19	£3.61	£2.89	£4.33	£0.44	£0.26	£0.61

CHARITABLE DONATIONS VS SPENDING ON ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO, APRIL 2013 PRICES

year	donations			alcohol			tobacco		
	estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval		estimate	95% confidence interval	
2001	£1.75	£1.53	£1.97	£19.39	£18.54	£20.24	£7.10	£6.59	£7.61
2002	£2.17	£1.93	£2.41	£19.75	£18.84	£20.67	£7.29	£6.88	£7.70
2003	£2.33	£2.06	£2.61	£18.97	£18.21	£19.73	£7.16	£6.72	£7.60
2004	£2.24	£1.97	£2.51	£18.84	£17.98	£19.70	£6.57	£6.09	£7.04
2005	£2.36	£2.07	£2.64	£18.98	£18.23	£19.73	£5.98	£5.58	£6.39
2006	£2.49	£2.20	£2.78	£18.12	£17.29	£18.95	£5.74	£5.33	£6.14
2007	£2.74	£2.34	£3.13	£17.62	£16.78	£18.46	£5.49	£5.09	£5.89
2008	£2.70	£2.27	£3.12	£15.56	£14.81	£16.32	£5.31	£4.94	£5.68
2009	£2.47	£1.97	£2.98	£15.88	£15.13	£16.63	£5.00	£4.62	£5.38
2010	£2.61	£2.24	£2.98	£15.91	£15.08	£16.74	£5.08	£4.66	£5.49
2011	£2.78	£2.36	£3.19	£15.45	£14.65	£16.26	£4.96	£4.59	£5.32