

The Editor
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Sir

The Charity Commission's removal or suspension of 30 Trustees grossly under-estimates the problem ['the number of sex offenders working as charity trustees trebles', Times, 20 October]. But one other significant area of weakness in the checking system also needs to be highlighted.

CCPAS is one of the largest umbrella organisations providing criminal record (CRB) checks for faith and non-faith organisations. Sometimes, the results of pre-appointment CRB checks lead potential trustees of such organisations to withdraw their nominations before their applications reach the Commission.

The Commission has already indicated that it, too, has serious concerns in this area, and CCPAS is urging that all those serving 'vulnerable beneficiaries', including at places of worship, should complete CRB checks on potential trustees before making appointments. It is unfortunate that this approach is not shared by some of the larger church denominations.

It is surely anomalous that, whilst those wanting to become trustees of children's charities are legally required to undergo CRB checks, requirements regarding potential trustees of places of worship, who have very similar responsibilities, are less clear.

It is therefore good to see that the government's new Vetting and Barring Scheme guidance, issued last week, states that all charities who carry out work targeted at children are considered to be children's trustees, that all trustees are deemed to be engaging in regulated activity, and that it will be an offence for a barred person to hold such a position.

Yours, etc

David Pearson
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CCPAS