

VONNE is the regional support body for the voluntary community and social enterprise sector in the North East. If you have any content you'd like to share in future editions of VONNE News, please contact us at [VONNE](#).



## VONNE news and opinion

### Help us understand the ongoing impact of Covid-19

Earlier this year, hundreds of you helped us and our local infrastructure partners understand the initial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and that insight has shaped our focus over the challenges of the last few months.

Now, we'd like you to take a second survey so we can ensure we can keep supporting you in the areas that matter most to you and your beneficiaries. The survey takes no more than 15 minutes. Thanks in advance for your valuable input.

[Take our survey](#)

### We're recruiting! VCSE Health and Wellbeing Partnerships Officer

Are you an experienced project coordinator, self-motivated with significant community engagement and partnership working experience? Could you communicate effectively with a variety of audiences to promote collaboration within the health and wellbeing field? You could be who we're looking for!

### Join us! North East & North Cumbria VCSE Programme Manager

Are you an experienced and motivated project manager with significant partnership experience and an understanding of the VCSE sector, ideally in the context of improving health and wellbeing outcomes? Do you have an awareness of the drivers of the health and care agenda with an ability to build relationships at a strategic level?

[Apply now](#)

[Apply here](#)

## Just two weeks till our AGM+

Join VONNE and its trustees and members for our AGM+, an online forum entitled, *Return, Reflect, Rebuild: Enabling the VCSE sector through local action and innovation*.

Our thanks go to the Engagement Team at [Newcastle University](#), to [Brewin Dolphin](#) and to [Wrigleys Solicitors](#) for their support for this event, which will be on Zoom between 9.30am and 12.30pm on November 19th.

[Book your place](#)

## VONNE writes joint letter urging action on child poverty

VONNE is among three North East organisations that have written a joint letter to government demanding action on child poverty levels in the region, including wider access to free school meals.

Together with the North East England Chamber of Commerce and the North East Child Poverty Commission, VONNE has stated there is an urgent need to address growing levels of child poverty: "If government is serious about its levelling up agenda, this requires concerted action to make sure children and young people in our region can access opportunities and have the same life chances as anyone else."

[Read the letter](#)

## Why the time is now for the Community Wealth Fund

In this blog post, used with kind permission from Civil Society, where it was originally published, VONNE's Deputy Chief Executive Anne Fry sets out the case for a Community Wealth Fund, and urges charities to join the coalition campaigning for it.

[Read the blog post](#)

## Strategically thinking the unthinkable: A reminder

This event, on November 25th, will look at how strategic planning should include thinking boldly about the unthinkable – including why and how organisations shrink, collaboration, mergers, and closures – and why these are important topics to consider.

[Book now](#)

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National news

## PM promises VCSE sector more support over the winter

The Prime Minister has promised to do “much more to support the voluntary sector” over the winter as coronavirus pandemic continues.

Boris Johnson was responding to a question in the House of Commons this week from Rachael Maskell, the shadow charities minister. She said: "Charities have been never more needed. As fundraising opportunities have dried up and retail stores have been closing down, charities are predicted to have a £10bn deficit and yet are providing more and more services."

She added: "It is time the Prime Minister recognised the considerable contribution of the sector – which has stepped in like never before during this pandemic."

[Read the full story](#)

## Funders pledge renewed support to charities ahead of second lockdown

One hundred funders have signed a renewed pledge to support the charity sector ahead of the lockdown starting today in England. They are committing to listen to the needs of communities and civil society, learning about ways in which charities and funders can better work together, and making sure funding supports charities and communities for the long-term.

The pledge is called 'still standing with the sector', and follows the original 'we stand with the sector' pledge, which was launched by London Funders in March and went on to gather more than 400 signatures from funders across the UK.

[Read on](#)

## NCVO's Covid-19 impact barometer findings summarised

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations' (NCVO) first monthly Voluntary Sector Impact Barometer, developed in partnership with Nottingham Trent University, Sheffield Hallam University and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council has revealed:

- The financial position of two in five (39 per cent) of voluntary organisations has deteriorated in the last month
- 56 per cent expect demand for their services to increase over the next month
- 60 per cent said Covid-19 safety measures have increased operating costs
- 80 per cent anticipate Covid-19 to negatively impact the delivery of planned

objectives over the next 12 months

- 10 per cent expect they are likely to have stopped operating by this time next year
- 92 per cent report an increase in online service delivery delivering their services online.

Share your thoughts using #VolSeclmpact and read the full report and [press release](#) for more information.

## **£1.4m fund launched to boost access to services and activities during Covid-19**

Charities have been invited to apply to a £1.4m fund that will enable them to make key services more accessible through the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The [Increasing Access Fund](#), created by the Peter Sowerby Foundation, is intended to benefit people that have struggled to access key services and activities during Covid-19, due to lockdown measures or the organisations' inability to deliver services in a Covid-secure way.

Funds will support charities to develop digital services, or adapt their delivery of existing services, to comply with social distancing or other Covid-19 response measures.

## **DCMS guidance for volunteers during lockdown**

The tougher restrictions to help control the spread of Covid-19 in England come in today, and some voluntary and charitable activities are exempt. The implications for volunteering are outlined in full on [our website](#) and the rules in full are outlined [here](#).

## **IVAR's latest briefing says it's difficult to lead from your sofa**

In its latest Covid-19 briefing, the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) says three things remain front of mind for VCSE leaders: risk management, balancing face-to-face vs online delivery of services, and planning in uncertainty.

[The certainty of uncertainty](#) shares more about the challenges VCSE leaders are facing, and the practical ways that funders can support them. It's a 12-15 minute read.

## **Survey results reveal village halls are vital to our social fabric**

Earlier this year, more than 2,000 village halls took part in the National Village Halls Survey 2020, which provides a detailed snapshot of the operations and management of community buildings across the country and is taken every 10 years.

An astonishing 60 per cent of respondents stated that their halls are the only meeting place for their community, with activities such as coffee mornings and luncheon clubs helping to address loneliness among vulnerable groups. The 2020 survey results clearly confirm village halls occupy a special place in the social fabric of local communities and make a significant contribution to the economy.

[See the results](#)

### Get the most from Giving Tuesday next month

Giving Tuesday 2020 takes place on December 1st and a [new report](#) from Third Sector and Salesforce offers tips to help you get the most for your charity from this national fundraising day.

### National VCSE sector conference focused on Covid-19 recovery next week

The [Voluntary Sector Response and Recovery Conference](#) is the first national meeting of sector leaders, coming together to assess practical solutions to help charities following Covid-19.

Taking place online across two mornings next Tuesday and Wednesday, plus a follow-up workshop on November 23rd, attend to hear the latest advice on employment law, job support, and support for staff wellbeing.

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## Regional news



This week is Trustees' Week

Trustees' Week 2020 is almost over, but there are still some events taking place. Don't forget we also offer a [Trustee Finder service](#) to help you find individuals with the right expertise and lived experience for your board.

The Charity Commission has also launched [five short guides](#), designed to make it quicker and easier for trustees to find the information they need on key topics, while Getting On Board has produced this [free guide to charity trusteeship](#).

[See the events](#)

## The Community Anchors' Fund has reopened

The Virgin Money Foundation is reopening its Community Anchors' Fund.

Community Anchors are those vital community organisations working in local neighbourhoods that have been at the heart of the local response to the pandemic, ensuring vulnerable people received essential supplies of food, fuel, data and human contact.

The relaunched Community Anchors' Fund will provide flexible grants of between £10,000 and £30,000 to organisations in the North East, to cover core costs, to continue to pay for existing work, or to design and launch a new activity. The award can be spread over one, two or three years.

Applications will be assessed as part of a rolling grants programme. The foundation wants to encourage applications from organisations working in Middlesbrough, Stockton and Darlington.

[Find out more](#)

## Hear more about the Good Work Pledge

Join the North of Tyne Cabinet Member for Employability and Inclusion, Councillor Joyce McCarty and North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll at the launch of the Good Work Pledge [on Monday](#) (November 9th).

'Good Work' provides security, skills, progression opportunities, a decent standard of living, promotes health and wellbeing and this is a key element of the North of Tyne Combined Authority's ambitions for an inclusive economy.

[#ThisIsTheNorth People's Powerhouse Convention later this month](#)

This year's #ThisIsTheNorth People's Powerhouse Convention is taking place online on November 24th and 25th. Book your place to ensure you are central to the conversations around social, economic and racial justice in the north.

[Register to attend](#)

### Northern Powergrid's community energy newsletter

The latest issue of Northern Powergrid's regular [community energy update](#) is out now.

### Local programme open to women who volunteer

Make It Happen is a new, fully-funded programme from PNE, supporting ambitious unemployed women from Newcastle and North Tyneside to explore starting a business and gaining an accredited management qualification.

The deadline to apply is November 13th.

[Apply now](#)

### Good luck to all in the North East Charity Awards

The North East Charity Awards have gone virtual for 2020, and will be held online next month.

Entries closed this week and a shortlist will be announced soon, so lots of luck to all our members that have entered. The winners of all categories will be announced on social media and online during a virtual awards evening on December 3rd.

[See more info](#)

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## Health and wellbeing news

### Thriving Communities programme to launch next week

Join the National Academy for Social Prescribing, for which VONNE is the regional lead, to launch its new *Thriving Communities* programme, which will celebrate and

champion voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups supporting communities most impacted by Covid-19.

Find out more about the initiative and the launch event in this blog post by our Health and Wellbeing Associate Jane Hartley.

[Read Jane's post](#)

## New report highlights Covid-19's impact on the region's most vulnerable

VONNE has been working with Public Health England and North Cumbria and the North East Applied Research Collaborative (ARC) to look at the direct and indirect impact of Covid-19 on our most vulnerable groups.

The rapid research found that funding is the most critical issue facing the VCSE sector, and the threats with the greatest potential to increase health inequalities are digital exclusion, funding bodies prioritising Covid-19 at the expense of other areas of need, and the withdrawal of services that are often the only source of support for the most vulnerable people.

However, positive outcomes included finding new ways of using technology to deliver services and increased partnership working and new collaborations.

[Download the report](#)

## Health and care charities coalition reacts to lockdown

National Voices has released a statement in response to the English lockdown beginning today, using insight gathered during the first lockdown.

*Let's learn the lessons from the first lockdown and address the issues we know matter* looks at how we can minimise harms this time around.

[Read the statement](#)

#DoYourBit on flu - think pharmacy, GP and 111 first



Health leaders across the North East are asking people to do their bit this winter by thinking pharmacy, GP and 111 first, and not just to turn up to A&E.

The plea is part of the region's #DoYourBit campaign, aimed at raising awareness of the first routes people should take for urgent medical advice and treatment.

A&E departments are under more pressure than usual due to social distancing and infection control precautions, minimising the space available to care for people and work safely. So with the number of Covid infections rising and winter fast approaching, the NHS is asking people to use services sensibly and keep A&E for those who need it most.

[#DoYourBit](#)

## North East winter gathering to focus on building resilience to support loss and loneliness

The North East winter gathering for culture, creativity and health on November 17th will explore themes of wellbeing and resilience to address combatting loneliness, coping with loss and caring for mental health.

[Book a place](#)

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## Equity, diversity and inclusion

### Final call for moving from non-racist to anti-racist workshop

There is an increasing understanding of the distinction between being non-racist and becoming actively anti-racist, and VONNE, together with GLT Partners, is hosting an event on November 26th to provide a space for the North East VCSE sector to have these conversations.

This follows the publication of *Home Truths: Undoing racism and delivering real diversity in the charity sector* by Acevo and Voice4Change England, the final report in the year-long *Making Diversity Count* project.

[Attend the event](#)

## Do you work with 'seldom heard' people? Join a new panel to get their voices heard

Northern Powergrid, the electricity distribution company for the North East, is seeking organisations working with 'seldom heard' people to join its Future Fairness Panel.

Participants will need to be willing to take part in three panels of up to two-and-a-half hours between December 2020 and June 2021. The first will take place at 2pm on December 15th.

[About the panel](#)

## Read a new manifesto for better disability support

A manifesto for better disability support throughout the Covid crisis and beyond has been published by a group of not for profit organisations in the region with the project coordinated by [VONNE Membership+](#) Supporter [Difference North East](#).

Read the '[Manifesto for a better normal](#)'.

## Report demands reform to close gaps in society

People who face discrimination are at the sharp end of inequality and poverty and the pandemic has brought these inequalities into sharp focus. Our colleagues at Connected Voice Advocacy supported the development of a survey of 435 advocates working across England and Wales that was carried out in June 2020.

The resulting [Valuing Voices](#) report brings together findings from the survey, which expose systemic flaws in health and social care, and demands a rethink in our approach.

## New report into diversity and inclusion in VCSE leadership

A new joint report by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) and the Runnymede Trust calls on the government to take urgent action to prevent Covid-19 running along racial lines again.

The report says that despite the inequalities exposed earlier this year, there has been little effort to stop Covid-19 hitting minority ethnic communities hardest as we enter the second national lockdown.

[See the report](#)

### **New research into tackling racism at the grassroots of community sport**

Spoted enlisted support from volunteers and conducted a range of online focus groups and one to one conversations to better understand from its network the experiences of racism in the community sports sector.

The resulting report, Tackling racism at the grassroots, touches upon systemic racism current approaches to tackling racism, the Black Lives Matters agenda, representation in sport and funding.

### **How a new approach to diversity helped meet the needs of women in prison**

Naima Sakande, Vice Chair of national charity Women in Prison, overhauled its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, and in this article on the Association of Chairs website, explains why this was fundamental to meeting the needs of the women it supports.

### **Survey into homelessness among LGBTQ+ young people**

If you identify as LGBTQ+ and have experienced any form of homelessness while aged 16-25 within the last five years, akt wants to hear about your experiences. Findings from the survey will be used to help support vulnerable LGBTQ+ young people that are facing or experiencing homelessness.

[Go to the survey](#)

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## VONNE round up

Over the past few weeks VONNE has:

- Supported the VONNE Climate Action Alliance to take part in the Catalyst Discovery Programme to explore how digital tools can engage more broadly and support regional VCSE organisations with climate action.

- Met with the North East LEP and North of Tyne Combined Authority to discuss the need for regional leadership and a joined up strategy to address digital exclusion as part of Covid-19 recovery plans.
- Held a roundtable discussion with 15 VCSE organisations to help shape a potential digital skills training programme for the sector.
- Represented the sector at weekly meetings of the LA7 Covid-19 Strategic Coordination Group of the Local Resilience Forum, feeding back intelligence to a range of statutory organisations.
- Brought together social prescribing & green agenda partners across the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) to collaborate on an expression of interest to the national green social prescribing programme on behalf of our NENC Integrated Care System.
- Delivered a training session to Newcastle University staff on how to work with the North East voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

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## Digital and innovation

### Blog post - Helping you adopt digital with confidence

Our Deputy Chief Executive Anne Fry leads VONNE's work on all things digital, encouraging and supporting the development and use of digital technology in the VCSE sector across the North East.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an explosion in the use of digital technology as the sector adjusts to remote delivery. And VONNE's delivery on digital has also evolved to fit, as Anne explains in this blog post.

[Read Anne's post](#)

### New North East centre to address the challenges of digital citizenship

A new £9m research centre that will allow citizens across the country to grasp the possibilities of the digital revolution has been announced for our region.

The Centre for Digital Citizens (CDC), led by Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, will explore how digital technologies can support areas such as public health and wellbeing, community engagement, citizen safety and technology-enhanced lifelong learning.

[About the initiative](#)

## Broadband voucher scheme for our digital borderlands

The Gigabit Voucher scheme offers business and residents in some of the hardest to reach places in the UK additional funding towards the cost of installing gigabit-capable broadband to their premises when part of a group project via the Government's Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme.

This scheme provides between £500 and £3,500 per small and medium-sized businesses (SME) and between £500 and £1,500 per resident to support the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections.

Digital Borderlands funding is a 'top-up' to the Government's Rural Gigabit Connectivity Voucher Scheme. Subject to criteria, this scheme has the potential to double the value of the voucher awarded.

Rural premises in Cumbria and Northumberland experiencing speeds below 30 megabits per second (Mbps) are eligible.

Funding is time-limited and must be committed under the schemes before they close on March 31st next year. Suppliers are becoming very busy as a result of interest, so communities must have an agreed plan in place with their chosen supplier by this date to be considered.

[Get more info](#)

## Innovation event next week

Many organisations are taking an opportunity to re-think their service provision, so this free VONNE workshop, with innovation expert Michael Coates, MD of Protostar, will help them shape their 'new normal' in an innovative way.

[Sign up](#)

## Digital fundraising forum next month

The Third Sector Digital Fundraising Forum is a free, exclusive event taking place over two half days on December 15th and 16th

A Third Sector forum consists of two elements: dedicated one to one meetings with suppliers and providers to create the contacts and gather the tools necessary to make your plan a reality, and content sessions designed to inspire and encourage you to make the next step in your organisation's growth and development.

A packed programme of educational and motivational content sessions will take place, with networking opportunities with like-minded individuals, and potential avenues to expand your digital fundraising capabilities.

[Apply to attend](#)

## Why charities need to understand the impact of technology on the planet

If our digital evolution is to be sustainable, we need to understand the impact that our technology use is having on the planet, says Zoe Amar, one of the charity sector's leading digital experts.

Speaking in Third Sector, she explains why VCSE organisations need to take a sustainable approach to technology, establish a baseline for their technological carbon footprint, and get the issue on their board's agenda.

[Read the article](#)

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## Safer Culture North East



## Our safeguarding events continue

There are plenty of events from Safer Culture North East to come this year, with these and more on [our website](#):

- Safeguarding – the responsibilities of Designated Persons on [November 10th](#).
- Safer recruitment of staff and volunteers on [November 12th](#).
- Training for Designated Persons for safeguarding on [November 21st](#).
- Introduction to safeguarding on [November 27th](#) and [December 10th](#).

- Understanding safeguarding for trustees within the voluntary sector on November 30th.

[Download our safeguarding factsheets](#)

## Safeguarding for trustees this Trustees' Week

All charities have safeguarding responsibilities, no matter who you work with, and trustees are ultimately responsible for their organisation. There are six main areas of activity relating to The Charity Commission's 10 principles on safeguarding for trustees:

- 1) Understanding and managing the risks
- 2) Policies and procedures
- 3) Making safeguarding a priority
- 4) Supporting your staff and volunteers
- 5) Handling and reporting concerns
- 6) Your culture and values

If you're a trustee that wants to find out more, visit the [NCVO's safeguarding resources page](#).

## Safeguarding Adults Week 2020 is this month

Safeguarding Adults Week 2020 will take place from November 16th and each day will have a different focus. The Ann Craft Trust has gathered a number of helpful resources for each theme.

[Download the resources](#)

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## Events

### North East Child Poverty Commission Living Wage Week

Thursday, November 12th - 10am  
Online

Join the North East Child Poverty Commission, speakers from the North of Tyne Combined Authority, North East England Chamber of Commerce, Carnegie UK Trust and Tyne and Wear Citizens for a discussion on what more can be done to tackle low paid,

### Supporting financial wellbeing in the voluntary sector

Wednesday, November 11th - 11am  
Online

Often, there's a link between struggling with money and poor mental wellbeing. Delivered by the [Money and Pensions Service](#), this 45-minute webinar next week will provide an insight into how you can help improve the financial wellbeing

precarious work and [reduce child poverty](#).

of your customers, colleagues and communities.

### MoVE webinar - Harnessing informal community action

Thursday, November 12th - 10am-11am  
Online

This [webinar](#) will look at the crucial role informal community groups played in responding to the coronavirus crisis, bringing together a panel of local authorities and VCSE organisations from across the UK, that chose to work with these groups as part of their strategic emergency response.

### North East Together 20: Embracing complexity

Thursday, November 12th - 4pm-6.15pm  
Online

This [event](#) will provide an opportunity to create new collaborative working groups on what's important to you now. It will offer the space to be inspired, explore and share ideas, and take action. Collaboration is how we make change happen, and how we make the difference we want to see in the world.

[See more events](#)

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## New listings with VONNE Jobs

VONNE Jobs advertises job and trustee vacancies from the VCSE sector across the North East, and there have been plenty of new recent listings. Below are a few opportunities that are ending soon, but [check out the rest](#) on our website.

You can also get weekly alerts in your inbox by signing up for our [jobs ebulletin](#), follow us [@VONNEJobs](#) for daily updates, and save time and money with our [recruitment support and salary benchmarking services](#).

## Last chance to apply...

### Family Support Worker

£25,311 pro rata

Nepacs has been awarded a National Lottery Community Fund grant to develop a new project to improve advice and support for prisoners and their families when they first come into custody.

It is seeking to recruit a [prison-based support worker](#) to deliver one to one case

### Christmas Elf - Activity Leader

£10-£13 per hour

Groundwork South and North Tyneside is helping Santa find people to [join his top elf team](#) to bring the magic of Christmas to life.

You will entertain and engage families as they move through the Santa's Winter Woodland (SWW) experience at West



work support, acting as a bridge between people in custody and the community and ensuring that there is additional support provided for those visiting a prison for the first time.

Boldon Lodge. You will deliver an activity, supporting families to complete the activity and making their visit magical and memorable.

### Christmas Elf - Assistant

£9-£10 per hour

You will support the running of the Santa's Winter Woodland (SWW) experience at West Boldon Lodge on behalf of Groundwork South and North Tyneside, performing a customer-facing role at Santa's grotto and a behind-the-scenes role supporting the smooth running of the event to deliver a magical and memorable experience for visiting families.

### Counsellor

£26,716 pro rata

Sunderland Counselling Service works in partnership with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to deliver the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service in North Tyneside, known as North Tyneside Talking Therapies (NTTT). It is looking for a qualified and experienced counsellor to join the team and help deliver Step 2 short term counselling.

[Visit VONNE Jobs](#)



### SPOTLIGHT ON GOLD MEMBER Thanks for your support!

County Durham Sport is one of 43 Active Partnerships nationally, funded by Sport England and other local partners. It is an independent company with charitable status, working closely with national, regional and local organisations to ensure that sport and physical activity are developed in a co-ordinated and effective way across the county.

[Discover more about VONNE Membership+](#)

### Become a VONNE Member

Support from 1,200 strong VONNE members is more crucial than ever in informing and underpinning our work to strengthen the North East voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and the people and communities of the North East.



[Join VONNE](#)



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