

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



VONNE news and opinion

Introducing our new Workspace Finder!

We're always looking at ways to support and strengthen the region's VCSE sector. As part of that, we've developed our new [Workspace Finder](#) in response to feedback from VONNE members.

For a limited time, the [Workspace Finder](#), which works in a similar way to VONNE Job Finder, our new name for VONNE Jobs, is free to all [Membership+](#) supporters wishing to advertise (who'll find some credits in their account).

The service, through which organisations can offer a variety of workspaces for use by members of the region's VCSE community, including event spaces, meeting rooms, hot-desking facilities and offices large and small, is easy to use and offers people a great opportunity to collaborate, diversify and be more enterprising in a changed operating landscape following the emergence of Covid-19.

We've also made improvements to our website to make it easier and clearer to find information on our [recruitment support](#) and [salary benchmarking](#) services, our [Trustee Finder](#) and of course our newly rebranded [Job Finder](#). Let us know [what you think](#).

Covid-19 has changed the way we work – so we've created the [Workspace Finder](#) to help make one of these changes really work for you.

[Find or advertise a workspace](#)

Tackling digital poverty: Lessons learned

In this blog post from our Deputy CEO Anne Fry, she reflects on the publication of a [new report](#) following the last 12 months spent living our professional and personal lives online, during which we've found ourselves increasingly talking about who was being excluded from the online world.

[Read Anne's blog post](#)



An update and an ask from the VONNE Climate Action Alliance

The VONNE Climate Action Alliance (VCAA) exists to help the North East VCSE sector collectively address the climate crisis, ecological collapse and the need for a just transition to a green economy.

Representing the VCSE community as part of the cross-sector North East England Climate Coalition (NEECCo) VCAA is working to deliver a programme of actions that will support the North East in 'Becoming England's greenest region'.

Although progress has been slower than we'd have liked due to the pandemic, we're seeking your support and input to help us in our next stage of development. A prototype website has been created and comments are welcome.

If you haven't got the time to take a look at the site but are interested in getting involved in the work of the VCAA, sign up to the mailing list by completing a [five-minute survey](#) on your organisation. Climate action and environmental organisations are asked to use an [alternative survey link](#).

[Support the VCAA](#)

Inspiring Impact: session two

The second in our Inspiring Impact online series of events, which started last month looking at using data for decision-making, will cover how to assess and gather all the accessible data available, both qualitative and quantitative.

The session on April 22nd will also suggest some acceptable sources to ensure data compliance.

[Sign up](#)

Inspiring Impact: session three

The final session in the series, on May 20th, will have a strategic focus, encouraging participants to look beyond their organisation and into the wider regional eco-system.

There'll be a panel and an open discussion about what we can do to encourage connectivity, collaboration and support, both now and in the future.

[Register your place](#)

National news

Calls to support our emergency response as we enter 'long Covid shadow'


Calls to recognise and continue the Covid-19 emergency response achieved by the voluntary and community sector as the pandemic passes its one year anniversary are gaining pace.


The VCS Emergencies Partnership, for which VONNE is the regional liaison lead, brings together organisations to improve coordination at national and local levels before, during and after emergencies. This week, it released figures highlighting the crucial role of VCSE organisations in supporting Britain's most vulnerable in times of crisis and beyond.


The chancellor is also being urged by the chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Philanthropy and Social Investment to give charities a [Gift Aid emergency relief package](#) to help struggling organisations.


[Read on](#)

THE FOUR TESTS

 **TEST 1**
The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.

 **TEST 2**
Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.

 **TEST 3**
Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

 **TEST 4**
Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

What's the next step on England's Covid-19 roadmap?

Next week, we may see restrictions put in place to prevent further spread of Covid-19 begin to lift.

If the science, as evidenced against the four tests depicted above, support our progression out of lockdown, then from Monday (March 29th), outdoor gatherings of either six people or two households will be allowed, including in private gardens, and outdoor sports will once again take place.

After Monday, people should continue to work from home and minimise journeys where possible, with the next planned step on the roadmap expected on April 12th.

[Download roadmap resources](#)

Government agrees reforms on charity spending and investment

Charity trustees will have more freedom over how to use surplus fundraising and permanent endowments under legal changes announced this week.

The reforms are among changes promised by government in response to recommendations made by the Law Commission in 2017.

[About the reforms](#)

Small and micro charities given a fee-free chance to gain national recognition

Small and micro charities make up most of the VCSE community, and most local charities and those led by people of colour fall within this group. Over the last year

these organisations have carried out crucial work to support the people and communities they serve through the Covid-19 pandemic, often working with those hardest hit.

Third Sector wants to celebrate the vital work of these organisations and individuals, and recognises that awards entry fees can be a barrier to access. So ahead of the 2021 Third Sector Awards, it is offering a batch of 30 free Talent Awards entries to charities with an annual income of less than £100k.

The early bird deadline for entries is May 20th.

[Register your interest](#)

Take part in the State of Social Enterprise Survey 2021

Social Enterprise UK is asking for organisations to take part in its 20-minute survey to understand the landscape of social enterprise across the county.

Participation in the research will help create a more supportive environment for the sector.

Report into poverty in the UK makes stark reading

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's UK Poverty 2020/21 report shows that despite many people feeling insecurity and instability as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, too many people were already at risk of being cast into poverty at its outset, often lacking secure housing, a reliable income or adequate support.

Benefiting from powerful insights from members of the foundation's Grassroots Poverty Action Group, who have direct experience of living on a low income, the report makes a number of recommendations.

Views of all households sought for study into climate action

The Centre for Energy Policy, School of Government and Public Policy at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, is asking all households in the UK to take part in its five-minute survey into climate action.

The aim of the research: Households response and attitudes to net zero actions for transition to a low carbon society, is to investigate the public's attitudes towards some of the actions that may enable the UK's transition to net zero.

[Share your views](#)

Regional news

Share your views on the Covid-19 vaccine

Healthwatch in Newcastle and Gateshead is asking for people to share their views about the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

Feedback through a short survey will be confidential but can help services to spot issues that affect care for you and your loved ones.

Those unable to access the internet can call Beth on 07946 137 433 and she can take you through the survey over the phone.

[Take the survey](#)

North of Tyne Community Renewal Fund briefing this week

The North of Tyne Combined Authority's Community Renewal Fund (CRF) will provide the opportunity to bring forward projects to improve skills, support our communities, assist business growth and recovery, and help residents into employment.

The authority is the lead bidding authority for Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, and funding will be awarded through a competitive national process, with the authority selecting projects of up to £9m to submit to government.

Projects are required to be completed by March 2022 and a webinar with further details is taking place this Friday (March 26th).

[Attend the webinar](#)

Support for youth-led social action in the region

Having fully distributed an initial £1.7m through the #iwill Take Action Fund, the Virgin Money Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund are making a further £500k available to support youth-led social action projects in the North East.

Designed in consultation with the foundation's Youth Advisors, grants of between £10k and £50k will be provided under three themes for periods of up to 18 months:

- Crisis, poverty and isolation
- Arts and heritage
- Community justice.

The foundation is looking for projects working with young people aged 10 to 20, or up to 25 for young people with disabilities. Applicants must provide evidence that young people are involved in project planning and delivery, and activities must include volunteering, campaigning or fundraising. This is a rolling programme for 2021 and will close when all funds are allocated.

[Get more details](#)

Measure your community's carbon footprint

A new tool has been developed to give small communities data on their carbon emissions that is easy to interpret and share, giving them a clear idea where local community-based action could really make a dent in emissions.

The [Impact tool](#) for community carbon footprinting has been developed by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), as part of its Climate Emergency Support Programme.

[Use the tool](#)

Support to help small organisations step into enterprise

[Equally Ours](#), the national infrastructure body for the equality sector and the North East Law Centre's partner for Stronger Voices, is opening recruitment for its [Enterprise Development Programme](#), which runs between April and May this year.

The programme offers a mixture of grant (up to the value of £30k) and learning support to enable grassroots equality organisations to develop trading/profit generating activities as a way to build financial resilience and flexibility.

Supporting introductory workshops starting next week cover [business planning](#), [pitching and communicating impact](#), and [practising and pitching](#).

Survey into the household impact of Covid-19

Public health officials across the North East are asking for every household in the region to tell them about how Covid-19 has impacted them.

The [survey](#), hosted by Gateshead Council but intended to capture experiences from the whole region, capturing views on vaccination, the economy and the easing of

lockdown restrictions and social distancing, closes at midnight on Sunday (March 28th).

Health and wellbeing news

Join the [North East and North Cumbria \(NENC\) Health and Wellbeing Network mailing list](#) for the opportunity to receive information on health and care system developments relevant to our region and the VCSE sector working within it.



Social prescribing projects awarded funds to help local communities thrive

Last week marked International [#SocialPrescribingDay](#), and health secretary Matt Hancock visited the region to announce that seven charities across the north have been awarded funding to advance social prescribing and support communities as they recover from Covid-19.

Helix Arts, Sunderland Culture, and Northern Heartlands in the North East, Tuille House Museum and Art gallery in North Cumbria, and Space2, Heeley Development Trust and The Artworks in Yorkshire – are among a range of partnership projects by voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups across England selected to receive grants of up to £50k from the £1.8m Thriving Communities Fund.

Watch the [video above](#), which is featured on the NHS England website, to hear our region's social prescribing lead facilitator Jane Hartley's views on primary care and the voluntary sector.

[Read more](#)

Sign up for the next Healthcare Innovation Readiness Programme

The NENC Academic Health Science Network (AHSN), Health Network North and Supply Chain North East have joined forces to deliver a series of workshops to provide awareness and help businesses better understand customers and create value propositions that help them sell more effectively into the healthcare sector.

The next Healthcare Innovation Readiness Programme will take place on the afternoon of May 25th, and the morning of June 9th.

[Get ready](#)

Help to understand our region's research infrastructure

An event in May will be hosted by Professor Eileen Kaner, Director of the ARC (Applied Research Collaboration) for the North East and North Cumbria (NENC), to help people to understand the region's research infrastructure.

The online session on May 17th is open to anyone with an interest in research or those who would like to find out how to get involved, particularly as a public advisor or community member.

It will offer an overview of the different organisations and bodies, including National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) bodies carrying out research in the region. It will aim to explain each organisation's individual focus and priorities, as well as how we work together collaboratively.

[Register for the session](#)

New report into the state of health and care

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has published its first annual State of Health and Care report.

The landmark report reveals the extent of the pandemic's impact upon the NHS Long Term Plan and puts forward a £12 billion blueprint to 'build back better' health and care. It warns that without bold action, the impact of the pandemic will cause a decade of disruption and the NHS will fall further down international rankings.

Our research finds the pandemic has caused:

- More than 30 million fewer GP appointments
- A fall in the number of cancers diagnosed while still highly curable, leading to up to 4,500 extra cancer deaths
- Sharp declines in children's mental health, including double the numbers referred for eating disorders, with waiting lists hitting a five year high
- The highest cardiovascular mortality rate in a decade, with a further 12,000 extra heart attacks and strokes estimated in the next five years.

[Read the report](#)

New online experience for patient involvement in the North East

Multiverse Lab is an interactive, online experience by NIHR Biomedical Research Centre that will shape the future of health research in North East England.

Created by the award-winning Unfolding Theatre, Multiverse Lab will gather the opinions of 2,000 local people to find out what matters to them when it comes to their health.

[Enter the Multiverse Lab](#)

Equity, diversity and inclusion

The Covid-19 vaccination: recorded information for communities of colour

Recently, Connected Voice's Haref project held a Covid-19 vaccine information session to help alleviate health inequalities and vaccine uptake concerns among local communities of colour.

This session was recorded and is available to watch on [YouTube](#).

Bridging the access gap while learning new skills

An initiative to encourage more people to take up sign language as an extra language and skill has launched.

Available to Tyne and Wear residents, the free Signs4Life scheme, which is due to begin next month, helps people communicate and engage with children and adults with hearing impairments.

For more details, email Radiyya at community@signs4life.org and mark your email as 'Tyne'.

Vaccine resources for those supporting people with learning disabilities

A [range of resources](#) has been developed by the North East and North Cumbria Learning Disability Network to support the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine.

How to be an ally: designing boards for racial diversity

Only three per cent of charity trustees are women of colour and 59 per cent of charities are not representative of the communities they serve.

But [Getting on Board](#) is partnering with [Action for Trustee Racial Diversity](#) to work towards a remedy for this, and ahead of a guide it is currently working on, has produced an article with a number of points to consider.

[Read the article](#)

Festival of colour to mark World Autism Awareness Week next week

Tees-Valley-based charity [Daisy Chain](#) is urging people to mark World Autism Awareness Week by throwing packs of coloured powder.

The organisation, which recently launched a specialist independent living training and advice service for local residents with autism and associated neurodiversity needs, has taken inspiration from the Hindu festival of Holi, which also takes place next week, and is traditionally celebrated in this way.

[Take part](#)

VONNE round up

Over the past fortnight VONNE has:

- Participated in an [NCVO](#) workshop to share learning on VCSE alliance structures and accountable representation as part of the VCSE Leadership Programme.
- Led the NENC VCSE Partnership Forum at which the impact and opportunities presented by the government white paper: *[Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all](#)*, were explored and discussed with Integrated Care System leads.
- Met with the North East ambassador for the [Young Trustees Movement](#) to hear about its work to encourage more young people onto boards.
- Provided input into the [Centre for Digital Citizens'](#) workshops on the themes of *Safe Citizen* and *Ageless Citizen*.
- Taken part in the Community Energy in the North East steering group facilitated by the Centre for Sustainable Energy to review initial findings from recent surveys and focus groups to feed into a plan to support community energy in the region.

- Held discussions on potential approaches and opportunities for the VCSE sector from the Community Renewal Fund announced in the budget with key stakeholders and lead authorities in the region.

- Was part of the assessment panel for Newcastle University's Engagement and Place Awards, reviewing 70 applications for collaborative and internationally impactful projects and initiatives.

Digital and innovation

More organisations to get statistical expertise for free

The income criterion for an initiative linking charitable organisations to volunteer statisticians at no cost has been widened to enable more organisations to secure statistical expertise during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Statisticians for Society now supports organisations with an annual income of up to £1m that want to use data and evidence for decision making by connecting them with statistical experts in its membership.

[Find out more](#)

Free coaching and training for charities and small organisations

VCSE organisations, including grassroots community groups, can access free digital training and coaching from Beyond, to help them overcome challenges, problem solve and adapt services during times of uncertainty.

Courses will also help organisations to connect and share learning with others that may be working on similar issues.

[Join Beyond](#)

Working from home? Digital life hacks including wifi-boosting tips

Charity Digital has compiled a list of straightforward tips to improve the quality of your wifi connection while working from home, and a host of other digital hacks to make life easier.

Reduce your digital skills gap

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has published new step by step digital, data and technology guidance and support on making digital work for your organisation.

[Use the guides](#)

Safer Culture North East



Upcoming safeguarding training

The next *Introduction to Safeguarding* sessions are taking place on May 6th and July 8th, and training around the role of *Designated Person for Safeguarding* is taking place on June 9th.

Sessions on *making recruitment of both staff and volunteers safer* are taking place on April 22nd and June 7th.

Sign up for these and more events on our website, where there's also a series of downloadable fact sheets and other training resources around safeguarding.

[See events](#)

Events

First trusteeship gathering this week

Friday, March 26th - 12noon-1pm
Online

Join Colette Harrison, Development Officer, Sector Support at Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland for an informal

Increasing diversity in public and patient involvement

Tuesday, March 30th - 1pm-2.30pm
Online

Reaching Out – Two years on is a virtual event at which you can find out what has been happening at the NENC NIHR Research Design Service, the

discussion [about the role of a trustee](#) and what to expect as a new trustee.

communities it has worked with and the national guidance this has helped it write.

Employability webinar - interview skills

Monday, March 29th - 10am-11am
Online

This [webinar](#) is designed to help unemployed Northumberland residents to develop their job-seeking skills and find work.

It is suitable for both those who have recently been made redundant and those who have been out of work for some time. The course is delivered by Community Action Northumberland.

Involving young people workshop

Tuesday, March 30th - 1.30pm-3pm
Online

This [free workshop](#), part of the North East Youth Alliance workforce development offer, will explore different ways of involving young people meaningfully within an organisation.

The team will discuss different tools to support young people as they progress as young leaders within an organisation and how they can be an asset.

[See more events](#)

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...

Financial capability trainer

£21,921 pro rata

[Citizens Advice County Durham](#) has secured funding to deliver a range of short training courses. The successful candidate will be responsible for developing innovative and flexible ways of providing this training for young people

Trustee - risk and governance

Voluntary

[Smart Works Newcastle](#) is part of a dynamic, high profile and fast-growing volunteer-led UK charity that styles and coaches unemployed women for success at job interview. It is seeking a trustee with strategic risk and audit experience,

across County Durham, including remote delivery.

and an understanding of charitable governance.

Skills Officer

£18,000 - £20,000

Foundation of Light, the registered charity of Sunderland Football Club, aims to involve, educate and inspire people of all ages from Sunderland, South Tyneside and Durham to improve their life chances, using football as the motivator.

It is looking to add to its passionate and enthusiastic team.

Supported Housing Officer

£20,130 - £21,670

Tyne Housing Association is looking to recruit a Supported Housing Officer to provide practical, hands-on and tailored help and support to its residents to help them develop the skills and confidence to move towards independence.

It prides itself on offering stability, safety and straight-talking personalised guidance.

[Visit VONNE Jobs](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON GOLD MEMBER

Thanks for your support!

The logo for Journey Enterprises, featuring the word "Journey" in a stylized, rounded font. The letters are primarily red, with the 'J' and 'o' having a blue-to-red gradient.

Journey Enterprises is a charity supporting people with a learning disability in the North East.

Its vision is that everyone should have happy, inclusive and fulfilling lives, with good jobs, fitness and health. Its support workers build on individual talents to help people lead an independent life with the freedom to make choices.

[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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