

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 design digital skills training to meet your needs

During the pandemic and as we enter recovery, we've seen a greater need to work remotely, as well as demand for services to move online, making the need for digital skills and the drive for organisations to be more agile and adapt at pace more critical.

We know this is a real challenge for VCSE sector organisations and the need for relevant training is crucial. With this aim, VONNE is working with North East Local Infrastructure Organisations, New College Durham and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) to develop free or low cost digital skills training for the sector.

To inform this work, we've launched two surveys – one for individuals to share their needs, and the other for VCSE leaders to give an overview of the needs within their organisations. Both surveys take around 10 minutes and are mainly multiple choice. We want to hear from as many individuals and organisations as possible to get a comprehensive picture across the VCSE sector locally, so please do respond on behalf of your organisation and ask your teams to complete the survey for individuals.

Responses will be aggregated anonymously and both surveys close at 12 noon on September 14th. The digital skills survey on organisational need can be completed at surveymonkey.co.uk/r/F2WRVHZ, while the survey for individuals is at surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NN8FW5G.

The new normal: How closing the digital divide impacts and levels up society

As we told you in the last VONNE News, we're now part of [Better ConNEcted](#), and with permission, we'd like to share with you this [blog post](#), which examines 'the new normal', three words now commonly used to make sense of the chaos caused by Covid-19.

To get involved in helping close the digital divide in the North East, email betterconnectedne@gmail.com.

[Read the blog post](#)

Event to help you manage staff as they return to work

VONNE is working with Peter Earley of Ethical HR to bring you this essential Zoom session on September 3rd, which will consider many of the employment issues you may face as you reopen your services following lockdown.

It will cover issues and considerations around staff returning to the office after working from home or following furlough, changes to hours of work and working practices, ongoing working from home, the possibility of redundancies, and looking after employee health and wellbeing.

[Register to take part](#)

Accessibility changes to our funding directory coming soon

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we made our online [Funding Directory](#) available to all, to help the VCSE sector in the North East access support.

We've also been sending our [Funding Information North East \(FINE\) ebulletin](#) to all VONNE subscribers since the onset of the coronavirus crisis. But from September 1st, the directory, which contains details of more than 100 charitable trusts and foundations, will revert once again to being a benefit for our Silver and Gold

Membership+ supporters, and also from September, the FINE bulletin will only be sent to Membership+ supporters that subscribe.

We rely on our Membership+ subscriptions as a significant contributor to our core costs and have seen a marked drop in this income over the last five months. We hope you've found receiving the FINE bulletin and accessing the directory useful and we are sorry we can't extend access to these benefits for any longer. Should you wish to continue to access them, please consider joining our Membership+ supporter scheme.

National news

The challenges faced by VCSE leaders – between a rock and a hard place

Lockdown easing presents four difficulties for VCSE leaders according to the latest Covid-19 briefing paper from the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR):

- a high sense of responsibility for decision-making
- re-introducing face-to-face provision, but with marked differences
- the additional resource required for Covid-19 provisions, and
- diverging views from staff and service users about returning to usual working spaces and practices.

Between a rock and a hard place covers what's on VCSE leaders' minds, and what support they need, along with questions and opportunities for funders.

IVAR is also offering VCSE leaders 90-minute Covid-19 peer support webinars through to the end of September. Find out more at ivar.org.uk/covid-19-peer-support-webinars-for-vcse-leaders.

New report into the rise of mutual aid

A new report from the New Local Government Network argues that the recent Mutual Aid response is a powerful demonstration of what's possible when communities come together. Yet for community collaboration to outlast the coronavirus crisis and make us more resilient in future, lessons must be learnt.

The report, which has an accompanying podcast discussion, offers a series of recommendations and lessons that can be used to help make this possible.

[Download the report](#)

A perspective from the Carnegie UK Trust on futureproofing our recovery

A new paper from the Carnegie UK Trust outlines six propositions for the medium term recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic as society embarks on the process of recovery.

Building Back for the Better: A perspective from CUKT argues there's a collective responsibility to use what we've learned not just to repair the immediate damage, but to consider how to make our economic, social and democratic structures fit for the future.

[Read the paper](#)

Free decision-making tool for charities in financial difficulty

Charities facing financial difficulty due to Covid-19 can make use of a free new decision-making tool created by a law firm in consultation with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).

The tool, set up by Bates Wells, aims to guide charities and social enterprises through difficult decisions based on individual need. Users are asked up to six questions to receive a detailed report on their options, such as insolvency, merger, collaboration, cost-cutting and raising finance.

[Use the tool](#)

Develop confidence in campaigning by learning to speak with local politicians

Just Fair is a human rights charity that monitors and campaigns for economic and social rights in the UK, and in this blog post, published with permission, it looks at how all of us can bring about change through effective campaigning.

As we begin to emerge from the Covid-19 lockdown, the question on many people's minds is how do we bring about a 'new normal'? What does this 'new normal' even look like? One thing is certain, no matter what 'normal' is in place, there are many challenges ahead that individuals or communities will face. If you're not a policy maker, but you want to bring about change, you often need to campaign.

[Read the blog post](#)

How to support staff wellbeing during coronavirus - an NCVO blog

During the coronavirus pandemic, leaders and managers of voluntary organisations have had to think about how they best support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers. As Simon Jones, Head of Policy and Influencing at Mind Cymru said: "The pandemic is as much a mental health crisis as it is a physical one."

To better understand how leaders and managers have risen to the challenge, members of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations' mental health and wellbeing working group and practical support team spoke to charities across the sector about how they've approached this. In this resulting blog post, they share practical tips and signpost to some useful resources.

[Read the tips](#)

Regional news

Third Sector Trends shows confidence evaporate among VCSE leaders

The Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland and St Chad's College, Durham University have released the results of a survey showing that confidence among 400+ leaders of charities and community organisations across England and Wales is evaporating following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, whilst pessimistic about the future, comments in the survey also reflect the resilience organisations in the third sector have shown since the banking crisis remains.

[Read more](#)

The Girls' Network seeks Tees Valley mentors

The Girls' Network is a national charity that connects girls from the least advantaged communities to a female mentor for a year, and a network of professional female role models for life.

It expanded into the North East three years ago and has been working with young women and mentors in and around Newcastle, but this autumn sees it launch in the Tees Valley.

[Become a mentor](#)

Training from Catalyst returns

Following the postponement of the summer term of its training and development programme at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, Catalyst Stockton-on-Tees has announced the dates for its 2020/21 academic year.

A range of training and development opportunities is on offer to the VCSE sector in Stockton-on-Tees, primarily focused on governance and capacity building, as well as specialist and generic options.

[About the programme](#)

Youth Focus North East to help run second national pilot programme

Youth Focus North East is to work alongside Youth Focus North West and the Regional Youth Work Unit, Yorkshire and Humber in running the second year pilot of the National Young Inspectors programme on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Working in partnership with the British Youth Council, this will strengthen the role young people play through influencing policy within central government, helping ensure young people are directly and meaningfully involved in the commissioning, monitoring and evaluation of national programmes affecting them.

The scheme launches this week. To find out more, email kevin@youthfocusne.org.uk.

New North East and North Cumbria Suicide Prevention Network website

The North East and North Cumbria's Suicide Prevention Network website is now live, providing resources for people seeking help about suicide and mental wellbeing, and those working in suicide prevention.

It also includes guidance for those who have been bereaved by suicide, making good information easily accessible to those that need it.

[Visit the site](#)

Take part in #InspiringHope this autumn

September 10th is World Suicide Prevention Day and October 10th is World Mental Health Day. Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust wants to mark these two important days by having a month of inspiring messages in between.

It would like to hear from people about what has helped them out of dark places, in particular while socially isolating during lockdown.

All contributions will be kept anonymous but messages will be shared across social media and online with the hashtag #InspiringHope.

To contribute, contact involvement@cntw.nhs.uk.

North East and Cumbria Learning Disability Network update

The Learning Disability Network has updated the Learning Disability Matters for Families website with a range of resources to support family resilience and the health and wellbeing of children and young people with a learning disability.

[See the update](#)

New food poverty fund made available

The Coalfields Food Insecurity Response Fund is a new fund to tackle food poverty.

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust is the only organisation dedicated to supporting the UK's former coal mining communities. It has joined forces with commercial food redistributor Company Shop, which has a store in Washington, Tyne and Wear, to award fast-track funds to projects responding to this growing challenge.

Projects can apply for up to £2,500 and if successful, will be granted a Company Shop membership to maximise their purchasing power. The discounts offered means for every £10 spent, a project will typically get £30 in goods (if they purchased these goods directly from the retailer). So for a £2,500 award a project could receive goods up to the value of £7,500. And Company Shop will also value-match any applications that deliver food provision for families and children.

Grants are awarded to projects in the top 30 per cent most deprived former coalfield areas. Find out more about how to apply at coalfields-regen.org.uk/england/the-coalfield-food-insecurity-response-fund.

Health and wellbeing news

Regional VCSE Partnership Forum meeting due to take place

In the last edition of VONNE News, we told you we'd held the inaugural Regional VCSE Partnership Forum meeting to ensure our voice is heard in a range of existing, emerging and new structures related to health, care and our ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The forum is part of NHS England's VCSE Leadership Programme, which enables the VCSE sector to have stronger representation within Integrated Care Systems – and the establishment of a North East VCS response network, led by VONNE.

The next virtual meeting of the forum is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 30th from 9.30am until 11.30am.

By registering, you agree to join our VCSE Health & Wellbeing Network and the VCSE Partnership Forum. Your details will be held on our CRM database and used to email you with information relating to health and wellbeing and the forum. If you don't want to be added to these lists, want to be added to one but not the other, or aren't able to attend the next meeting but wish to join the network and/or the forum, email jane.hartley@vonne.org.uk.

[Attend the meeting](#)

Regional Covid-19 health inequalities impact assessment launched

As part of our role in supporting VCSE engagement in regional health and care planning and commissioning, we're working with our North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, health researchers, and public health colleagues to support an impact assessment into Covid-19 health inequalities in the North East.

Many of you will have received an initial scoping document, but we need more in-depth data on the impact of Covid-19 upon vulnerable and at risk groups and the

VCSE organisations that support them. With this in mind, we have two asks of VCSE organisations with direct contact with key at risk and vulnerable groups:

1) Please forward links or copies of any surveys or reports you're aware of that will help us understand both the direct and indirect impact of Covid-19 on these groups and/or their VCSE sector support to michelle.mancini@phe.gov.uk by September 2nd.

2) Consider being involved in supporting further consultation work with your beneficiaries and staff in the form of focus group listening exercises or one to one telephone calls within Covid-19 restrictions. Contact jane.hartley@vonne.org.uk to discuss this, or to receive the initial scoping document mentioned above.

Phase three response to Covid-19 outlined

Sir Simon Stevens, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) chief executive, and chief operating officer Amanda Pritchard have written to NHS organisations to outline the third phase of the NHS response to Covid-19 and priorities from this point forward.

[Read the letter](#)

Printable tools launched for those exempt from wearing face coverings

A new toolkit is now available for those who, for reasons regarding health or disability, are unable to wear face coverings.

The kit, which has also been translated into 11 different languages, contains posters, imagery and animations for social media, badges and cards for mobile phone display or for printing, all carrying a message that the individual is exempt from wearing face coverings. It can be downloaded for free at coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/stay-alert-to-stay-safe-/resources/face-coverings-exemptions-toolkit.

Other items promoting messaging to promote drive-through testing and self-isolation, also available in 11 languages, can be downloaded from coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/Test-and-Trace/resources, while posters promoting 'cough' and 'loss of taste' symptoms are available at coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/Symptoms, and a kit promoting the use of face coverings on public transport and safe distancing for young people is at coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/stay-alert-to-stay-safe-/resources.

Your chance to advise the government on public health issues

Charities are being urged to consider applying to take part in an advisory body on public health.

The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Health and Wellbeing Alliance, which consists of about 20 voluntary sector and other partners, aims to ensure the lived experiences of the people they represent are reflected in the development of health policy.

The alliance is a key element of the government's health and wellbeing programme, which aims to promote health equalities and reduce health inequalities across the UK.

[Apply to take part](#)

New regional newsletter for those interested in child health and wellbeing

The North East and North Cumbria Child Health and Wellbeing Network has published its first newsletter full of resources, training offers and network information.

[Read the newsletter](#)

New Covid-19 testing site in Newcastle

A new centre to provide rapid access to Covid-19 tests is being opened in Newcastle's West End.

The Test and Track Centre on the former Newcastle General Hospital site will offer residents tests for coronavirus by appointment. As part of a national network, the centre will be linked to the national test booking system and will feed results into the NHS Test & Trace system to help control the spread of the virus.

It's the third such testing facility in the city, with a drive-through centre at Newcastle's Great Park and a walk-through centre at Byker.

[Find out more](#)

Social Prescribing - new insights and recommendations from the VCSE sector

An event is being held next month to mark the publication of two new reports into social prescribing, following February's regional Social Prescribing Network workshop, facilitated by National Voices.

The event, 'Social Prescribing - new insights and recommendations from the VCSE sector', will launch both, 'Rolling Out Social Prescribing - understanding the experience of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector', and The Conservation Volunteers' report, 'Social Prescribing - How do we sustain social prescribing in the wake of Covid-19?'

The 90-minute webinar takes place on September 9th from 10am. Register on [Eventbrite](#).

Illustrated guide to PPE for community and social care settings

Those most at risk of contracting Covid-19 within the UK are professionals working in health and social care sectors, so a new illustrated guide has been created.

The resource outlines personal protective equipment (PPE) advice for those working in the community carrying out health and social care roles.

[Download the guide](#)

The doctor will Zoom you now

The pandemic has led to a huge increase in telephone and online consultations from health and care professionals. So, Healthwatch has produced some useful guidance on how patients can be effectively supported to access and best use these virtual healthcare appointments.

[Read the guidance](#)

#DoYourBit to protect the NHS - new campaign

Health leaders across Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle and Gateshead are asking people to do their bit by thinking pharmacy, GP and 111 first, and not just to turn up to A&E.

The plea is the first part of a new #DoYourBit campaign aimed at raising awareness of the first routes people should take for urgent medical advice and treatment, following the disruption caused by Covid-19.

[Find out more](#)

Digital and innovation

New £5m digital fund opens for applications

Charities are being invited to apply for a share of a £5m fund designed to help them improve their digital capabilities.

The funding, which is being provided by the National Lottery Community Fund in partnership with the technology charity Cast, will be provided in a mix of grants and support worth up to a maximum of £60,000 per successful organisation.

The fund is expected to prioritise organisations that work with groups that have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, including older people, people who experience health inequalities or social isolation, and disabled people.

Applications are particularly welcome from user-led organisations and those representing ethnic minority communities, LGBT+, disabled and other marginalised communities.

The first deadline for applications is September 7th.

[Find out more](#)

Dynamo North East announces #CyberFest 2020

The North East's largest cyber security festival is now in its third year, with 10 events due to take place across the region throughout September to help organisations protect themselves and their beneficiaries.

Events begin on September 4th.

[See the event schedule](#)

New regional cluster being formed for technology-focused healthcare

Dynamo's Health Tech cluster kick-off meeting will take place on September 4th at 10.30am.

If your organisation is working in the healthcare arena with a focus on technology and you're interested in being part of the conversation, please register your interest by emailing emma.whitenstall@dynamonortheast.co.uk.

chase.livestream 2020 due to return for its 27th year

chase.live, a free three-day event for non-profit leaders, managers and decision-makers, is returning for its 27th year in a totally virtual format.

The event, from September 8th, will be chaired by Emilie Oldknow OBE, Chief Operating Officer of UNISON and keynote sessions will be delivered by Sacha Romanovitch from Fair4All Finance and Olympic Gold medalist, Kriss Akabusi MBE.

[Register your place](#)

Charity Digital's Digital Fundraising Day to return in October

The newly-named #BeMoreDigital Fundraising Day from Charity Digital is to take place on October 15th.

Free to all charity professionals 10 jam-packed sessions will split across two streams, with expert-led discussion covering digital fundraising topics such as donor engagement, virtual events, organisational culture, and digital community fundraising.

[Take part](#)

Safer Culture North East



New factsheets to help you write safeguarding policies

Two new factsheets have been developed by the Safer Culture North East partnership to help organisations write safeguarding policies for children and adults respectively.

[Download the factsheets](#)

Free safeguarding training for 'Designated Persons'

The role of Designated Person for Safeguarding is a challenging one, but is vital in protecting your organisation, its staff and the people you work with.

Northumberland CVA is offering two free training sessions on Zoom, in September and November, as part of its work with Safer Culture North East. To take part, you must have previously completed at least basic safeguarding training in the last three years, and there is around 30 minutes of pre-reading.

The sessions will give you an understanding of:

- the role of Designated Person (DP)
- how to deal with concerns about an individual's welfare
- how to deal with allegations of abuse against a team member
- engaging with your local Safeguarding Board, and
- training and development needs for yourself as DP and those you support.

Book for the September 23rd session by September 16th, and the November 21st session by November 16th by emailing enquire@northumberlandcva.org.uk.

DigiSafe guide to digital safeguarding - a podcast

A recent podcast episode by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) looked at safeguarding online, with guests the creators of its DigiSafe Guide.

[Listen to the episode](#)

Events

Understanding lean/agile ways of working

Monday, August 31st - 2pm-3.30pm
Online

Join this free workshop from [Third Sector Lab](#) for a lightning introduction to lean and agile methodologies, with simple steps your organisation can take to begin working smarter.

The session will be led by Maddie Stark from the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

How to prepare your charity to work remotely long term

Wednesday, September 2nd - 2pm-3pm
Online

After five months of it, is it time for your charity to plan for long term remote working?

In this free webinar, [Platypus Digital](#) will be talking to Emily Casson, digital marketing manager at charity Cats Protection, who ran a fully remote team long before lockdown.

Survivor guilt: Protect wellbeing of staff who avoid redundancy

Wednesday, September 9th - 2pm-3pm
Online

This [free webinar](#), presented by world-renowned mentoring thought leader and author, Professor David Clutterbuck, is part of the Cranfield Trust Learning with Leaders series, and will look at how charity leaders can how look after the emotional, psychological and physical state of those team members who avoid redundancy but may struggle in times such as these.

Changes in grant-making practice following Covid-19

Wednesday, September 9th - 10am
Online

This free webinar from [KEDA Consulting](#) will look at the latest trends in grant-making, with three guests who have unique insights into the practice of UK trusts and grantmakers: Ben Cairns, IVAR's director and co-founder, giving strategy advisor Emma Beeston, and Ciorsdan Brown, Head of Charitable Partnerships and Strategy at The Goldsmiths' Company.

[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 listings since the weekend. 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...

Trainee Lead

£22,746 - £24,952

A subsidiary of Tyne Housing, [Ouseburn Farm Charity Ltd.](#) provides a community-spirited place where learning, enrichment and personal growth are offered to whoever needs it, including to adult trainees with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Operational Manager

£39,317 - £43,142 pro rata

Family Action transforms lives by providing practical, emotional and financial support to those who are experiencing poverty, disadvantage and social isolation. The Operational Manager will provide strategic support to service managers and operational staff.

Outreach Worker

£20,832 pro rata

Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind is seeking a self-motivated, efficient, and hardworking individual to work on an in demand and high paced service to draw on the strengths and personal experiences of people facing hardship crisis, so they can overcome immediate difficulties and be ready for future opportunities and challenges.

Community CAMHS Counsellor

£28,124 pro rata

An opportunity has arisen at Sunderland Counselling Service for an energetic individual with experience of working as a counsellor/therapist with children and young people in an outreach role. The post holder will be engaged in the delivery and development of the counselling, supervision and training components of the service.

[Visit VONNE Jobs](#)



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[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](#)