

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the fortnightly briefing. We'd like to make this as useful and interactive as possible, so welcome feedback and suggestions about content.

If you know anyone else who'd be interested in receiving the briefing, feel free to forward, and encourage those to whom you forward to email nicola@devoncf.com to be put on the mailing list. Briefings will come out on a Thursday.

Click on the **BOLD COLOURED** links to be redirected to useful resources - Right click on the links if you want to open it in a separate window.



Charities and the crisis

Since the beginning of the crisis, CAF has conducted a number of short surveys with charities to see how the crisis has affected their work. [This new report](#) is an overview of results so far. Here's a summary.

The survey asked charities about the sustainability of their work – their income, their staff, and the demand for their services:

- There has been a clear increase in demand for charities' services, and it has been growing over time.
- However, 'furloughing staff was becoming a financial necessity at the same time as staff were needed more than ever to meet the increase in demand.' A quarter would have had furloughed workers back as volunteers if this had been allowed.
- Half have seen a decrease in charitable donations to their organisation, while a fifth saw an increase. However other CAF research suggests overall levels of giving remain fairly stable. Lack of disposable income or uncertainty about the future is of course a concern, and there has been a shift in people's priorities for giving, which accounts for the changing patterns. Initially, NHS charities experienced very high levels of giving, but that has dropped again more recently. Individuals surveyed suggested a preference for giving to smaller local charities over larger national ones.
- Half of charities say they could not survive beyond a year without further support. Overwhelmingly, they say that unconditional cash grants, providing maximum flexibility about how it is used, are what's needed to weather this storm.

It also asked charities about any operational changes they had seen:

- There was plenty of adaptation. 'When, at the end of April, we asked charities what changes they had made in response to the crisis, 58% told us that, like many across the UK, they had started working remotely. Two fifths (39%) had found an innovative way to work whilst a quarter had found new ways to reach beneficiaries or refocused the charity's activities. Almost one in five (18%) told us they were taking part in new collaborations with other organisations'.
- Reduction in the use of cash has been a concern for some, who rely on cash donations, but others have seen this as an opportunity to accelerate modernisation plans and embrace digital tech further.
- Looking forward, managing social distancing was a concern, as well as how to meet demand under more restrictive conditions.
- More positively, lots of people were pleasantly surprised at the flexibility and resilience of their organisation.

[This page](#) brings together all CAF's coronavirus research.



Spotlight on ... Physical Disability

The Disabled Charities Consortium, which is a partnership between 10 of the UK's leading disabled charities, have released a [statement](#) saying that the government has “forgotten” disabled people in relation to the coronavirus pandemic. It claims that many disabled people have been failed by the social care system: a shortage of guidance, PPE and effective testing have meant that many had to choose between putting their lives at risk and receiving essential care.

This overlooking is perhaps unsurprising in an environment where MPs are now required again to vote in person in the Houses of Parliament, without apparent consideration for those MPs and family members are vulnerable and shielding.

To add to the list, guidance for exceptions to face mask rules on public transport was only released the day before this was to be enforced. There were [reports](#) of disabled people who were unable to use face masks being denied entry onto public transport by the British Transport Police. Benefit sanctions, a system which has discriminated against disabled people for a [decade](#), were reintroduced last week, while the Public and Commercial Services Union has warned that reopening job centres could create a “perfect storm” putting people at risk. And Inclusion London has produced a [report](#) shedding light on some alarming practices relating to Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) notices and disabled people, with one person saying, “I can't access the government scheme for support because apparently I'm not disabled enough, However I'm disabled enough to get suggested to sign DNR.”

In Devon ...

31% of respondents to a Living Options Devon survey said that services they normally rely on are not running during coronavirus. Living Options is worried about people being able to access their own services too: The charity's Time to Talk team provides a free, confidential listening service. over the phone, facetime or text. Although the team are still at the end of the telephone and offer online support, they are aware that a large proportion of disabled people don't have the internet access, technology, or expertise to join in at present.

They say people are struggling with feelings of isolation, difficulty in getting essential food and anxiety about the virus itself. As lockdown measures continue to ease, there is more confusion around what they are and aren't allowed to do (which is not helped by the lack of information available in accessible formats), and increasing reports of hate towards disabled people who are seen to be “rule breaking” when out in public, due to inability to wear a facemask, or difficulty in judging distancing. Access to toilet facilities is also a worry, as many places have opted to only open an accessible toilet – posing a higher risk of infection, and difficulty in accessing a toilet due to long queues, especially for those whose disability may be less visible.

“Isolation is very difficult and if you are someone with a long-term health condition or a physical disability, (which means you can’t get out much) when you’re stuck indoors and not seeing the people and your usual network of people and going places, the condition tends to take over and you end up focusing more on your condition rather than your life.” (Helen - Disability Champion at Living Options Devon).

[TRIP Community Transport Association](#), based in Honiton, have had to pause their day trips and other transport services, except to medical appointments, but have also been involved in helping to coordinate the community response in Honiton with shopping, befriending, meal deliveries, and dog walking.

[The Northam Care Trust](#) have replaced their day centre sessions with virtual activities, and have supported some clients by providing tablets and broadband packages.

[Friends & Families of Special Children](#), based in Plymouth, have been able to adapt to a remote system to support families of disabled children during this time.

[Exmouth and District Community Transport Group](#) has checked in weekly with many of their shielding beneficiaries, and have now started a up a safe socially distant transport service to allow people to visit family, attend appointments and visit attractions such as the beach.

[Moorvision](#), in Ivybridge, are providing remote support to parents of visually impaired children to help them partake in fitness sessions and adapt schoolwork into braille.

[South Molton & District Volunteer Bureau](#) have restarted their transport service to allow people to attend hospital appointments. They are expecting to see a massive rise in demand as appointments that were cancelled at the start of the crisis begin to be rescheduled.

Call for Input : Debt and financial inclusion

Next time we’ll have a focus on the impact of the crisis on need in this area, and on the organisations who work to support those affected. Please do be in touch with any stories, examples, reflections from your own experience, or with details of people and organisations we ought to talk to. Please email: insights@devoncf.com.



DCF Funding Update

organicARTS - £1149.32

Exeter and surrounding villages

To provide taxis and bike hire to enable those experiencing or recovering from poor mental and physical health to attend whilst not feasible or safe to run minibuses

Soul Singers CIC - £568.78

Plymouth

Provision of remote singing sessions for mums with young children and new mums to help improve mental wellbeing

Age Concern Crediton - £365

Crediton & District

Providing PPE to enable delivery of supplies to older isolated residents to be maintained and befriending and cleaning services to restart

The Amber Foundation - £4775

Chawleigh

Installation of wifi to enable faster and more reliable internet connection and access to support and training for residents

Alright Mate? CIC - £810

Areas served by Devon County Council

Providing information and support for men to promoting good mental health

South West Family Values - £4800

Torquay, Brixham, Paignton

Providing additional emotional wellbeing support to children and young people experiencing anxiety and depression using CBT interventions and offering strategies for parents to keep their children safe



Coronavirus
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Devon Coronavirus Response & Recovery Fund



Click to donate to the national appeal



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