

17 September 2020

Hello everyone,

Welcome 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 normally 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.





For Funders

Esmee Fairbairn have published a [brief report](#) reflecting on their response to the Covid crisis, and what they have learned. They explain how they decided to close their grants programme to new applicants, and instead offer emergency funding to their existing grantees. Rather than ask them to make competing applications, EF themselves decided on priorities, and offered grants accordingly.

A focus on known partners allowed them to move more quickly, and they note that several larger funders did the same, but that if this continues, it could cause significant problems.

EF also devoted a smaller sum to some pooled grants pots, in collaboration with other funders, specifically with a focus on migration, women, and especially BME women.

The report looks at the areas of EF's strategic focus and assesses the varying risks to each.

As a result of the crisis, a planned revision of strategic intent was put on hold, initially to enable the organisation to focus on emergency response. It was recognised however that so much has changed in the last few months that the new strategy needs to reflect this.

I highly recommend dipping into [No Going Back](#), a collection of 22 short articles by VCSE leaders in Manchester, published by the local CVS, Manchester Community Central (MACC). This collection provides a lively and varied set of examples of what the MACC CEO sees as a shift towards the VCSE sector being 'partners in the community response, rather than suppliers of services', as a result of the Covid crisis.



For Everyone

What's nice about these – very individual and characterful – personal reflections, is that many of them focus on the organisational side of things. So we learn about how organisations reconfigured services, and how they established new relationships with commissioners, sourced new funding streams, and generally kept themselves afloat and operating. There are some thoughtful reflections on the limits of remote working, for example, as well as plenty on new forms of partnership with the public sector.

Also recently published is [The State of our Social Fabric](#), the result of a two-year enquiry by centre-right think tank Onward, with a broad-based steering group from Parliament and the third sector. Exploring the politics of belonging, it has developed an index of what they term social fabric, which ranks local authorities in terms of a wide range of indicators along five themes: Relationships, Physical Infrastructure, Civic Institutions, Economic Value and Positive Social Norms. The aim is to enable more granular social policy' at ground level. Here are Devon's stats (out of 380 local authorities). A lower number means Better Social Fabric:



East Devon - 35
South Hams - 58
Teignbridge - 93
Mid Devon - 121
North Devon - 156
Exeter - 161
West Devon - 162
Torridge - 207
Torbay - 256
Plymouth - 292



Spotlight on ... Learning Disability

If someone has a learning disability, they may have a reduced ability to understand new or complex information and may struggle to manage the tasks of daily living independently. Because of these difficulties the pandemic has posed a particular challenge to this group and their families. The constant changing of recommendations and restrictions along with a reduction in face-to-face services have been especially difficult.

The Scottish Commission for Learning Disability has carried out their own [research](#) into the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on this group. They have found that those with learning disabilities have been most concerned about the reduction of support services, digital exclusion and mental health. There is also great concern for the families and carers of this group who have had to take on more of the caring responsibility alongside dealing with their own challenges related to the pandemic. It has been found that those with learning difficulties often exhibit challenging behaviour when communicating their needs. For families and carers, the loss of face-to-face services has meant there has been an increased reliance on digital support and many organisations have had to quickly adapt to make sure they are able to offer guidance online.

At the height of the pandemic there were many young people and adults living in residential care who were unable to see their families due to quarantine rules. Many of these families felt they were forgotten and have experienced significant emotional distress as a result. The lack of government support for disabled adults and their loved ones has not gone unrecognised and Sense have launched their [#ForgottenFamilies](#) campaign. They are gaining signatures for a letter calling on the government to reintroduce the community support that disabled adults and their families need.

Despite the challenges faced by this group and the organisations that support them there are many useful resources and adapted services available. Beyond Words have produced a series of [learning aids](#) which cover topics such as beating the virus, lockdown and grief. The Challenging Behaviour Foundation have produced a [guide](#) to supporting children and adults with learning disabilities at home.

In Devon

Across Devon organisations have been adapting and continuing to support those with learning disabilities in the best ways possible. They have always been busy making sure opportunities are available as we move out of lockdown and try to return to our normal lives.

- [Devon Link Up](#) have made sure that those they support have been able to keep in [contact](#) with each other digitally via Telephone, WhatsApp or Skype.

- Learning Disability Devon have a huge number of coronavirus [information pages and resources](#) designed by people with learning disabilities for people with learning disabilities.
- [Made-Well CIC](#) provide meaningful opportunities, work experience and life skills training for those with learning disabilities as well as physical disabilities and mental health difficulties. Their farm based location makes it the perfect escape following the lockdown period and the team have been pleased to restart many of their services with social distancing in mind.
- [Improving Lives Plymouth](#) better futures service supports adults with learning difficulties, providing information and advice on day to day issues and help individuals to develop the skills to further independence through a range of groups, workshops and activities. IPL have also been pleased to welcome back their participants and have been making the most of their outside space running outdoor healthy living sessions.
- [CEDA](#) works with adults and children with many disabilities including physical, learning and sensory. Throughout the lockdown they have been running lots of online activities to keep those they support and their [BISnet](#) facebook page has been kept updated with plenty of resources and QandA sessions for carers and parents. They have been pleased to restart their community support provision and reopen their Exeter based activity hub with social distancing in mind.

DCF Funding Update



Coronavirus | 
Click for our help & support

Click to donate to the
Devon Coronavirus Response & Recovery Fund | 

Click to donate to the national appeal | 
#shouldertoshoulder #GiveLoveDevon

Another briefing, another fund launched. DCF's new [Advice and Support Programme](#) uses DCMS funds to provide grants of up to £10,000 to organisations across Devon that are already providing support to individuals facing financial hardship or unemployment as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. These grants will support established organisations to add additional capacity to projects already running or support the growth of new projects in areas where support does not yet exist. Much more information via the link above, but the deadline for applications is noon on 23rd September, so spread the word quickly!

Response and Recovery Fund

Tavistock Area Support Service - £800

Tavistock

Additional costs: ensuring safe social distancing measures in providing transport to medical appointments and social activities for older members of the community

Exeter Community Energy Greater - £360

Exeter

Providing PPE to enable home visits and support for residents affected by fuel poverty as we prepare to enter the Winter months

CASSPLUS - £1350

Plymouth

Providing additional support to offenders and those at risk of offending as court hearings resume.

Core Cost Support Fund

Plymouth Youth Sailing Club
Plymouth - £3,000

Ford Youth and Community Centre
Plymouth - £2,000

Far Flung Dance Theatre C.I.C
Plymouth - £2,000

Youth Genesis Trust Ltd
Torbay - £4,000

City of Exeter YMCA
Exeter - £5,000

Torrington Police Amateur Boxing Club
North Devon - £446

North Devon Forum for Autistic Spectrum
Conditions and ADHD
Torridge - £1,753