

The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Isle of Wight's Voluntary Sector



Acknowledgements

Community Action Isle of Wight (CAIW) would like to thank everyone who took part in this research, either through the online survey, or during follow up telephone conversations. Your time is very much appreciated.

Quotes from individual respondents are shared anonymously but their honesty and candour are much appreciated.

Executive Summary

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant detrimental impact on Isle of Wight's voluntary and community sector (VCS), but has also revealed some positive developments that can be carried forwards once the pandemic has passed.

Most Isle of Wight VCS organisations are confident that they can endure the crisis, but one in three are not confident about their long term sustainability. 75% of organisations expect a loss of income due to the short-term crisis, with sustained pressures from a resulting recession. Many hold reserves, but may not be able to rely on them in the medium term. Most charities rely on public fundraising such as events which have been hardest hit by the pandemic.

Charities are concerned that fundraising for NHS charities is taking income from other work and while support from Government and other sources is welcome, it is not enough, and organisations are concerned that the public may feel it is "job done" when it isn't.

Up to a third of VCS staff have been placed on furlough, but many roles are ineligible due to the way they are funded. Charities are keen to retain staff so most are using reserves to retain ineligible staff, but some have had to cut hours, wages or jobs.

The VCS also faces HR challenges around illness and self-isolation, poor mental health, bereavement, management of remote staff and new training needs. Whilst most of the sector is adapting well to virtual and home working, some are not due to not having the right equipment, and the fact that many VCS services do not lend themselves to remote delivery.

Volunteer levels have fallen, risen and fallen again and this has placed extra pressure on the VCS in terms of running recruitment programmes

while trying to deliver to increased demand while having less staff capacity.

The VCS has introduced new ways of delivering services, but many can't be delivered or accessed remotely, or serve beneficiaries without physical or intellectual means to access them, including being unable to afford the necessary equipment and connectivity.

The Covid-19 crisis has seen a radical shift in how sectors are working together, coalescing around Covid-19 needs and working at a very rapid pace. VCS partners are being engaged at a strategic and operational level in a way that it is hoped will continue post-Covid-19.

While VCS organisations are focused on the current crisis, they expect a long and deep recession afterwards, with resulting increases in demand and long term reduction in income and capacity that will be a challenge for the organisations, statutory partners and those who rely on their services. It will important to check in with these organisations again in the near future to ensure that they are supported to survive in the long term.

We are not unique in facing these challenges. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) have summed up the future concerns for the sector as follows:

- Shrinking sector in the short term
- Different sized charities may face slightly different challenges
- Financial impact will differ depending on income profiles
- Nationally 23% of charities have no reserves
- Recovery is possible but will take time
- The number of employees in the voluntary sector is likely to decrease
- The way in which volunteering takes place will have changed



Introduction

This report is the result of research undertaken by Isle of Wight Community Action to measure/evaluate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the voluntary sector in Isle of Wight. By voluntary sector, we mean any of a range of organisations running not-for-profit business models and providing a social or charitable benefit to clients, beneficiaries and service users. Collectively, this embraces diverse structures such as companies limited by guarantee, registered charities, charitable incorporated organisations and volunteer led community groups. There are many acronyms used to group this diverse range of organisations, but across Isle of Wight historic use has been made of Voluntary and Community Sector, or VCS, and this is the term that will be used throughout.

Community Action Isle of Wight carried out this work under its strategic objective of:

We exist to support the 1500 or more voluntary and community organisations that work so hard for the benefit of the Island and it's residents. We aim to support the maintenance and development of community amenities and services, to help have thriving communities where people get involved, help each other and have access to the services they need.

To meet these objectives, this research, "Part One", aims to paint a clear picture of the short and medium term impact of Covid-19 on the VCS, to inform discussion of what factors will influence the recovery of the sector, identify improvements to how the sector carries its critical services and what asks there are of funders, statutory partners and others.

BACKGROUND



The VCS of the Isle of Wight pre-Covid-19

There are around 1500 registered not-for-profit organisations in Isle of Wight. This includes national and international organisations with a postcode in Isle of Wight, but not necessarily delivering services in Isle of Wight. It does not include national charities based elsewhere but providing services in Isle of Wight.

There is excellent data from the Charity Commission and other sources on the number, size and shape of registered not-for-profit organisations such as charities, charitable incorporated organisations, etc, but there is far less data on the number of unincorporated organisations who do not have to register with the Charity Commission or Companies House, including small neighbourhood groups with income of less than £5,000 per year. Best estimates from national and international research indicates between three and four unregistered organisations per registered organisation.

The VCS in Isle of Wight employs around 3000 people, in organisations spread across Isle of Wight broadly in line with population distribution. In addition, there are an estimated 37,000 unpaid workers (mainly volunteers, but also work placements etc).

Volunteering is an important component of the VCS, which benefits from volunteers supporting the direct delivery of their work and providing governance and oversight. Around twelve million people nationally volunteer each year, with 22% doing so regularly. People aged 65–74 are the age group most likely to volunteer on a regular basis, at least once a month. (ncvo-uk-civil-society-almanac-2020)

Trustees are volunteers who hold a special status. These are the people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run. They may be called trustees, the board, the management committee, governors, directors or something else. Whatever they are called, they make decisions that will impact on people's lives.

Covid-19

Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus that emerged in China in December 2019. It spreads quickly, primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Whilst most people infected with the Covid-19 virus experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment, more vulnerable people are more likely to develop serious illness.

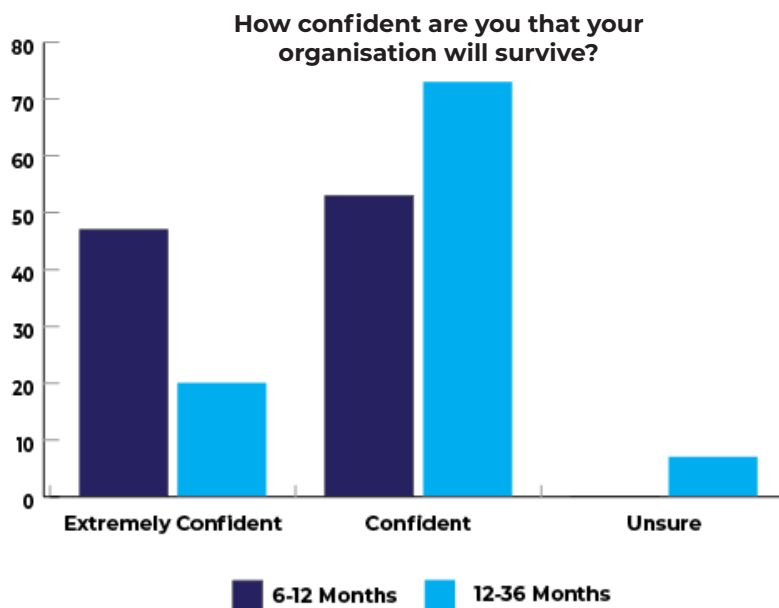
As of 1st July 2020	UK	Isle of Wight
Confirmed cases of Covid-19	288,000	421
Confirmed deaths from Covid-19	44,000	79

The UK response to Covid-19 has centred around social distancing and shielding of vulnerable people to slow the spread of the virus to prevent health structures becoming overwhelmed. The restrictions, which included closure of non-essential businesses, staying at home as much as possible, have had a negative impact on people in terms of mental health, unaddressed physical health problems, disparity of education and job losses leading to financial challenges.



Covid-19 – Short Term Impact, Risks and Resilience: Confidence of Survival

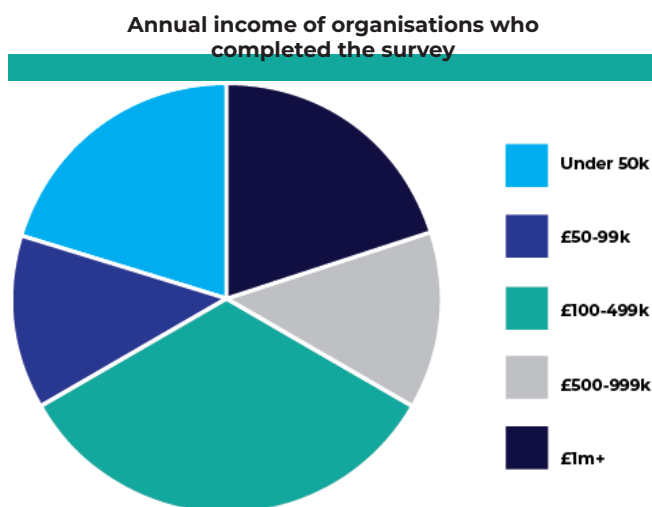
Covid-19 has created many challenges for the VCS, although not all organisations are being challenged in the same way. Some organisations involved in health and care work have seen demand for their services rise sharply, by up to 48%, whilst others have seen demand fall equally sharply, as much as 66% reduction. However, when asked about their confidence of surviving the current crisis, all were confident of survival in the next 6 -12 months but 30% were unsure about their long-term future.



Confidence is also affected by how much an organisation can look forward to recovery. While organisations are in crisis management and survival mode, they are less likely to be carrying out long term planning or focusing on long term sustainability: What if an organisation burns itself out surviving the crisis but is then unable to carry out its work post-Covid-19?

Income

A significant impact of Coronavirus on the VCS has been a reduction in income across the sector with 75% reporting a predicted loss of at least 20%. Before considering loss of income, it is useful to understand where VCS income comes from. These figures show the income across the 24 organisations who responded to the survey.



Source of income	Estimated % of income
Commissioned Funding e.g Health and social care	30
Project Grants e.g Lottery	10
Fundraising	12
Paid for services income	18
Other income : general trading, endowment funds, interest on reserves	16

60% of income is self-generated through fundraising, paid for services or other and these income streams are most at risk during Covid due to lockdown, ongoing social restrictions and the general downturn in the economy.

Ironically, some organisations that have been most successful in diversifying their income away from statutory sources have been most affected by the Covid-19 crisis with the massive reduction in public fundraising and trading opportunities.

While some paid for services are restarting with limited activity, others have already taken the decision to close or have no confirmed restart date.

Conversely, commitments made by many statutory funders, including Isle of Wight Council, have meant that income from statutory grants and contracts (40% of voluntary sector income) has been relatively unaffected, at least in the short term. However, the predicted recession and debt incurred by the statutory sector during Covid points at an overall reduction in grant funding likely from March 2021.

Covid-19 restrictions have meant that many sources of public fundraising are not currently available to VCS organisations, with fundraising events being cancelled or postponed indefinitely.

It is worth noting that, voluntary sector organisations have long been encouraged to diversify their income streams to reduce their reliance on a diminishing public purse.

While most organisations are reporting a significant loss of income, this does not mean that most organisations are expecting to close their doors. Those reporting a shortfall are mitigating their losses by:

Actions taken to reduce expenditure	Now	In the next 6 months
Spending reserves	28%	28%
Reducing overheads e.g. cancel service contracts and close offices	14%	9%
Furlough staff	64%	18%
Reduce working hours	7%	9%
Make roles redundant	14% (100% in health & social care charities)	18%
Homeworking	100%	36%
Reduce support available to clients		28%

The Charity Commission expects voluntary sector organisations to hold reserves to protect themselves against drops in income or allow them to take advantage of new opportunities. The amount held in reserves should be at least sufficient to allow the organisation to close in good order. Most charities will hold around 6 months unrestricted running costs in reserve, which also implies that many may fail to survive if the Covid-19 crisis extends much beyond six months. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-financial-reserves>

The impact of other savings will have a knock on effect to the Island's economy contributing to reduction of spend with other service sector companies, unemployment and reduction in capacity to deliver services to vulnerable groups.

Overall 10% of voluntary sector income comes from grant making trusts. Many have responded to Covid-19 by providing funding dedicated to organisations affected by Covid-19, for example:

- The Big Lottery Community Fund is honouring all current commitments and being flexible with outputs of existing grants. Funding decisions for the next six months will prioritise getting funding to groups best placed to support their communities in their Covid-19 response, including recovery. This will be necessitate reducing the amount of funding available to other community groups that deliver important services, but not related to Covid-19.
- The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation has set up a Coronavirus Response Fund offering grants to local organisations who are supporting the most vulnerable and isolated during the

crisis, as well as recognising local groups who are facing significant uncertainty due to loss of funding arising from this current situation.

In addition, statutory response to the loss of income to the VCS has included the following:

- Isle of Wight County Council has established a hardship fund to assist local VCS organisations that have suffered financial and other losses as a result of COVID-19, prioritising small charities that provide services to support vulnerable residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the recovery phase as well as those providing broader, strategic services to Isle of Wight residents that IWC considers vital to maintain. Funding will also be prioritised for organisations that will remain viable post-COVID-19.
- On 8th April the UK Government announced a £750 million pot for frontline charities across the UK, aimed at ensuring they can continue their vital work during the coronavirus outbreak, including cash grants to ensure they can meet increased demand as a result of the virus as well as continuing their day-to-day activities supporting those in need. Of this, £360 million was directly allocated by government departments to charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the crisis. An additional £370 million should support local community organisations working directly on Covid-19 response. Many Island charities will have to apply via the National Lottery to receive any of this funding and some four months into the lockdown have not received anything from this fund.
- Previous announcements by the Government included deferring VAT bills,



paying no business rates for charity shops, as well as the Jobs Retention Scheme.

- The Government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme has been recently updated to remove the 50% trading restriction for registered charities, meaning that charities are eligible for a loan if they meet the other eligibility criteria of the Scheme.

Note that much of the support for the VCS is targeted at organisations responding directly to the Covid-19 crisis, whereas much of the impact will actually fall on other types of organisations who will be critical post-Covid-19, for example community buildings which provide space for local community groups and business (eg nurseries, befriending groups) have seen massive income falls, and may not be eligible for much of the above funding, but once social distancing restrictions are lifted, they will be vital for community recovery.

In addition to this, there is a significant risk that the public think, given the government support scheme in particular, that charities needs have all been met and so public donations may go down. Linked to this is another feature of the Covid-19 crisis; the amount of public fundraising directed to the NHS. For example, "Captain Tom" has at the time of writing, raised £33million for the NHS Charities Together. There are some concerns that such fundraising, while being laudable and admirable, may have an unintended consequence of public funding going to address shortfalls in a challenged NHS' at the expense of actual charities. There are further concerns that topping up the NHS via charitable giving becomes a "new normal" over the longer term.



Staffing and Organisational Management

We estimate that there are between three and four community groups in Isle of Wight who do not employ paid staff per registered charity or social enterprise that does. Amongst those VCS organisations employing paid staff, the distribution of staff correlates with income.

The UK's Covid-19 economic support response includes the Coronavirus Jobs Retention Scheme where employers hit by the pandemic who would otherwise have to make staff redundant, have been able to place staff on furlough, with 80% of the staff member's salary being paid by the Government.

Of those organisations who responded from the VCS on the Isle of Wight, around 64% have used furlough. Smaller organisations are less likely to furlough staff, having less capacity to do so and fewer eligible roles.

For larger charities employing more than 10 people, the average furlough rate is 30%, but this figure is skewed, as it includes organisations delivering contracts on behalf of public organisations which have relative security of income.

The Government scheme covers up to 80% of salary, subject to an upper limit. Some employers are having to furlough staff at 80%, whereas some are choosing to make up the difference to 100% of salary.

Where organisations are seeing a reduction in income but are unable to furlough staff for any reason, most intend to retain their staff, mainly using their reserves. Around one in three are reducing the working hours of their staff and one in five will continue to use furlough as long as the scheme operates and may then need to consider redundancies.

Apart from the challenges above, organisations are currently having to manage a multitude of new HR concerns, including:

23%

New training needs for staff (and volunteers) unfamiliar with digital technologies

32%

Acknowledging new demands on staff who no longer have access to childcare for very young children or are having to manage the new need for home-schooling but who still need to work

25%

small organisations that operate on a face-to-face basis are finding it more difficult to adapt to a virtual way of working due, in some cases, to staff and volunteers not having the skills needed to make good use of alternative ways of working. Another concern is that volunteers and clients who do not enjoy interacting remotely may decide to leave in the absence of face-to-face contact.

59%

Managing extended peaks in demand for services and increased complexity of client needs

32%

Dealing with reduced capacity due to staff being ill, having to self-isolate, or belonging in the shielded category. Some may have to deal with the death of a member of staff.

50%

Managing employees' physical and mental health during lockdown, including anxiety, stress and isolation.

A lot of our workers are carers themselves so have had to manage this, childcare, schooling and have still managed their caseloads. We have seen a lot of kindness from others, we have seen a total disregard for carers in the community when it came to discharges from hospital or for those that have been ill at home. Save our NHS was wonderful but at what cost to the community and care homes!

-Carers IW



Most VCS organisations that were previously office based have made a partial or complete transition to remote working, however 27% of staff have a lack of space to work effectively from home. Many, mainly larger charities and start-up community organisations are already hosting their IT and communications infrastructure and services in the cloud, making a transition to remote working easier. Many others have sought to transition quickly without necessarily having the skills and equipment needed to do so.

Many video conference services are offering free or reduced rates for their services, but still may be unaffordable to some VCS organisations, not to mention the costs of supplying appropriate equipment to staff. Working remotely and providing services in new virtual ways requires new skills that delivery staff may not currently have or wish to develop. It may be that future recruitment post-Covid-19 may have an increased emphasis on IT skills and capability to work remotely. der redundancies.

Apart from the challenges above, organisations are currently having to manage a multitude of new HR concerns, including:

VCS Capacity

Of the existing VCS organisations, an estimated 77% have had to suspend some or all their services, with a further 5% unsure whether they may have to cut services imminently. This comes at a time when half of them are experiencing an increase in demand for their services.

At the same time, capacity has been maintained or increased because:

- Existing VCS organisations have devised new ways of delivering their existing services, for example moving face-to-face mentoring sessions to virtual meetings. Some have broadened their range of beneficiaries to allow more people to access their services during the pandemic.
- Existing VCS organisations have developed new services to replace or augment their usual services, for example voluntary car schemes adding a “check in and chat” service for their usual clients who are shielded and not in need of transport.

Barnardo's Five to Thrive online course feedback

I really enjoyed the course, even though it had to be run online, it was great to be able to chat openly about different experiences and listen to different ideas and ideas of how to connect with my baby. Having a young baby during lockdown has been challenging at times so the course really helped with ideas and great to chat with people going through similar things. I really looked forward to joining the session each week!

Optio voluntary car service

Optio had to stop but we continued to undertake welfare calls to over 450 of our members throughout. At the very start, all members were contacted to ensure that knew the Isle of Wight Council helpline number and that they had enough food and medicines at that time. Not all members required ongoing calls but 50% did and that has reduced slowly over the course of the pandemic.



There have also been many new “community hub ” groups formed to meet Covid-19 needs within their local communities. Many of these groups were formed around existing Town and Parish Council members but others organised around social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Next Door. Community Action IW in partnership with IWC, Age UK IW, CAB IW and many other have worked with the Hubs to ensure an Island wide response to over 5000 requests for help via the IWC Covid helpline and the many more that have come directly to organisations.

The VCS is supported by many volunteers, and the Covid-19 pandemic initially saw a huge drop in the numbers of active volunteers for some organisations upto 76% of volunteers aged 70 and over had to shield. The Island response was fantastic and an appeal for volunteers has led to a massive rise in the number of people wanting to volunteer. Motivations vary, but include wanting to give something back, and looking for something meaningful to do while in lockdown or on furlough.

Reports vary as to the sustainability of these new volunteers as some did not actively engaged from the start once the reality of a two hour queue to collect a prescription was realised and many others have now had to return to work after their furlough. In addition our survey reported similar challenges for volunteers that staff have faced with 29% concerned for volunteer mental health and 38% stating that the complexity of the clients’ needs was a challenge to volunteers.

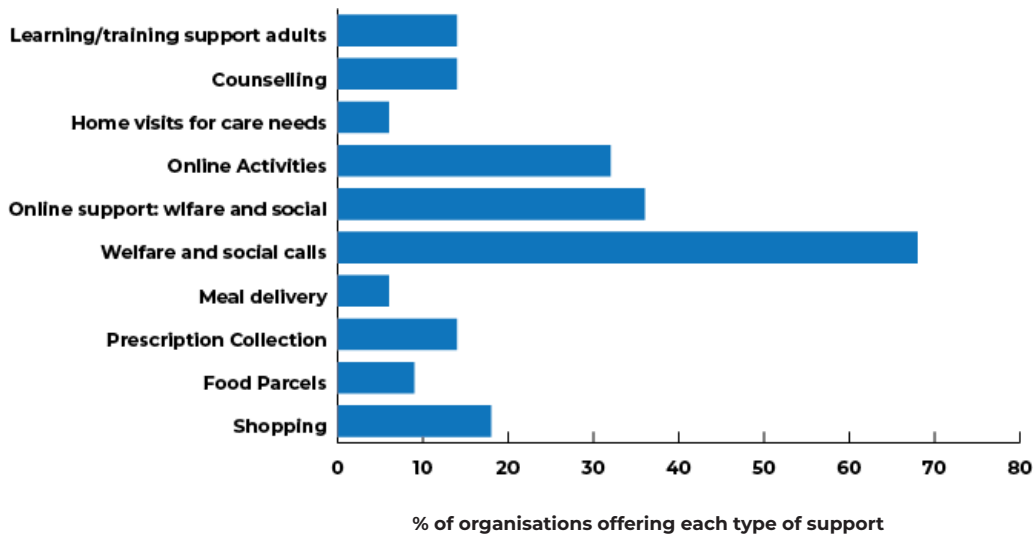
It is believed that in many cases, family and local communities have looked after the needs of many of the more vulnerable members of their communities, meaning that an anticipated demand for additional volunteers has not materialised initially but this may increase as family also return to work.

VCS organisations therefore face a challenge in making sure that these potential volunteers are not disenfranchised and lost to the sector, especially as many of the pre Covid over 70 volunteers may not return for some time, if ever.

Community Needs during Covid-19

Many organisations have introduced new services or new ways of delivering existing services. Many of these changes revolve around moving from face-to-face delivery to remote delivery via email, telephone and video conference. Many individuals and organisations are responding well to the new ways of working, but not all, and some are struggling to access the tools needed to deliver remotely. Other activity such as shopping, meal delivery and prescription collection required fit and able volunteers and staff to be out and about in the community. confidence of surviving the current crisis, all were confident of survival in the next 6 -12 months but 30% were unsure about their long-term future.

Covid-19 Support Provided



Other activity that continued or developed during lockdown included:

- Welfare benefits assessments by phone and ipad access for older residents
- Postal contact, delivering boxes of sensory based activities, 1:1 exercise and support for people with mental health needs and/or learning disabilities
- Support for those with health needs and living with disabilities included: Travel to mainland medical appointments, delivery of equipment and doorstep training

Even if the VCS can offer services remotely, many beneficiaries might also not have access to the right equipment. Beneficiaries of many VCS services are, on average, less likely to be able to afford PCs, laptops, tablets or smartphones needed to access virtual content, and even if they do have the equipment, they may not be able to afford data costs such as phone data plans or broadband subscriptions. Again, on average, beneficiaries of VCS services are less likely to have the skills need to navigate online safely. Finally, whilst access to reliable broadband and mobile phone signal is good across the majority of Isle of Wight, there are still pockets that are not well served.

The challenges of providing this support included:

- Stress on staff proving the support and changing working methods so quickly
- Access to and cost of PPE
- Isolated clients are leading to longer phonecalls
- Learning ways to work digitally that allow clients to fully participate
- Applications for funds to pay for PPE, digital equipment etc

However there are areas where the flexibility of the VCS has allowed barriers to support to be overcome, in particular when it came to helping those who were shielding to pay for shopping when they did not have access to the bank/post office accounts.

In relation to our support work in Cowes, it became clear that we needed a mechanism to help some people manage their payment for the prescriptions and occasional shopping being done on their behalf, so we set up a system whereby volunteers paid for the shopping and we then reimbursed the volunteers and invoiced people for the shopping once it had happened. To date 133 transactions have been managed in this way and we've helped the NHS Children's Mental health support team with the shopping payments for some of their clients who they have been supporting.



Partnership working

One welcome impact of Covid-19 on the VCS is a significant change in partnership working and agility, both within the VCS and between sectors. 41 % report Partnerships with new organisations to deliver support during Covid, often from the private sector and unexpected groups.

Most VCS organisations agree that there has been a very effective co-ordinated response to Covid-19 across the VCS and statutory

partners including town and parish councils and health. 9% of organisations reported new volunteers from other VCS partners furloughed staff, which in the longer term should lead to better understanding and partnership opportunities.

There is recognition that the VCS, who often feel like a second-class partner, are being treated equally and are being recognised for their skills and experience. There are obviously going to be exceptions, but the direction of travel is very positive.

The Yarbridge Inn Pub worked with a range of local groups and businesses, including Age UK IW, to identify residents in need of support and deliver 6823 free community meals over the lockdown.

CAIW have been part of the Community Cell group set up by the local authority to assess and respond to the crisis and we set up a website of useful information to support the Isle of Wight Council Helpline Staff, local support hubs and the public generally: <https://www.iowcoronavirus.co.uk/>

We supported the development of a string network of 26 local hubs covering the whole Island, providing them with up to date information on emerging policies and requirements and sharing good practice around community activity, volunteer responses and other issues. These hubs have continued to provide prescription collection, shopping and in some cases hot meals, welfare calls and more.

We worked with the hubs and the IW Coronavirus Community Help group to help recruit volunteers for the hubs and also the public sector and care homes and the total number of volunteers from around the geographic hubs got to over 1400 at its peak.

It is apparent that the VCS is now more involved in strategic conversations and actions, such as Local Resilience Forum Cells and similar groups, in which they are helping set the agendas and not just following them. The VCS has long maintained that early involvement will lead to better services based on their in-depth knowledge of the beneficiaries they serve and challenges they face, which may or may not be the ones that are visible on the surface. VCS partners also have different but complementary

skills sets to their statutory partners, which often lead to new and effective ways of working.

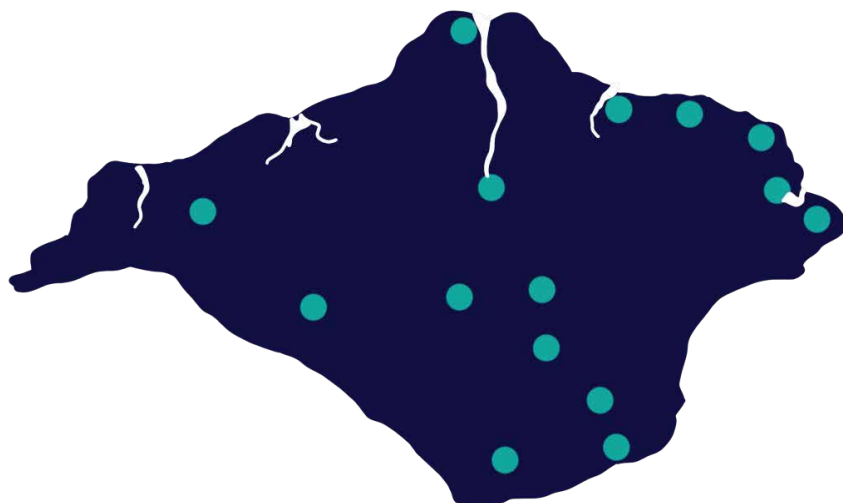
Some VCS partners are concerned that, post-Covid-19, these relationships will revert to the previous status-quo, so it is beholden on VCS leaders and partners to prevent this from happening if we are to re-vision what support to the people of Isle of Wight looks like in the future.

Support from Hubs

Across the Isle of Wight people were supported by town and parish councils and community hubs, in partnership with VCS organisations.

When individuals called the Isle of Wight Council helpline, they were often directed to their local hubs who were then able to provide them with the support they required.

The right map shows the location of these Hubs across the Island.



The Hubs are responsible for:



Prescriptions delivered



Shopping deliveries



Meal deliveries



Food parcels delivered



Telephone support calls made

The West Wight Hub is a partnership of many West Wight organisations, including churches, who have come together under one umbrella to pool resources and combine efforts. This has led to even greater community cohesion boding well for the future. Individual partnerships between volunteers and requestors have led to real friendships being formed in many cases. The current situation has also brought to light 'hidden' cases of loneliness and emotional despair - we will be able to put longer term support in for these individuals.

How have the VCS coped and what support would they value moving forward?

During the first phase of Emergency Response and lockdown Health and safety and communications advice were challenges for 50% of the organisations Trustees. As a volunteer Trustees take on a great deal of responsibility and accountability for the decisions made for each organisation and this was felt keenly by many in that role

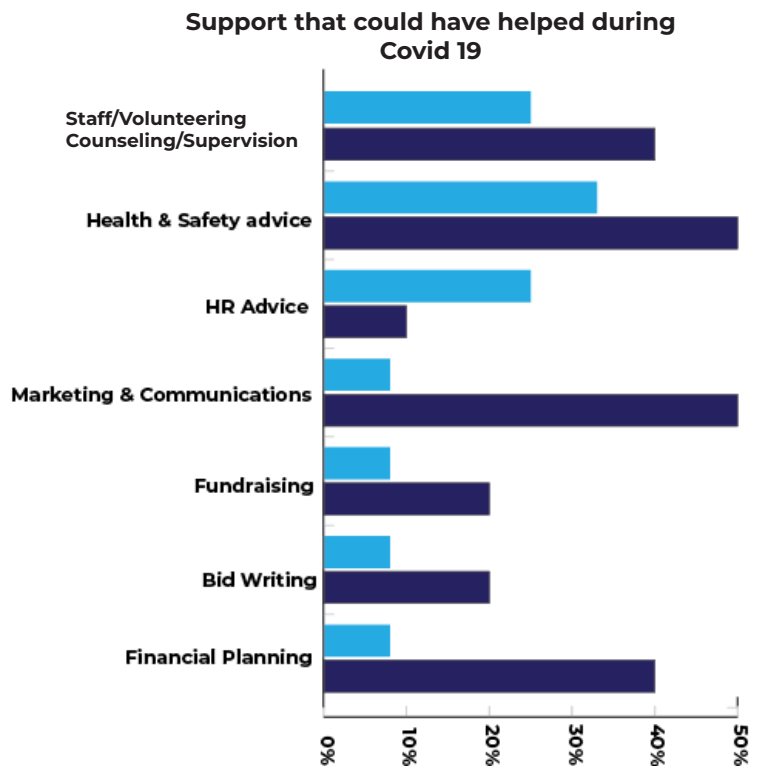


Primary concern above all others has to be financial planning and being concerned not just about finances and cash flow in the short term but the longer term financial well-being for the charity so that it "survives and thrives". This has consumed a lot of Trustees thinking and discussion time.

How we plan to deploy staff and what the legal and financial implications of the government's schemes has been something regularly discussed at our weekly Zoom sessions, and we had to determine what financial parameters we were willing to accept. So although we were not required to make decisions about individuals or who could be furloughed or for how long, we were aware of what was happening, the sorts of issues and stresses that staff were having to manage in their daily work, and generally how all staff were coping with this. Next we will no doubt discuss how we plan to get back into the main office, including concerns over health and safety.

What challenges have your Trustees/ management groups and CEO/Senior Managers faced due to Covid 19 and what, if any support, would have been helpful?

With hindsight VCS organisations identified the areas on the right as ones where they could have benefited from support and professional advice but acknowledged that they didn't always ask for the help that was available. Planning for future events especially if there is a second wave of the pandemic could include lists of supportive contacts in these areas.



Is there any support/training that your organisation would like to access in the next 6-12 months?

- Bid writing – 5%
- Marketing & Communications -10%
- HR advice- 15%
- Shared resources e.g. office space, facilities management-20%
- Staff/volunteer counselling/ supervision -55%



The next challenge is trying to re-start the Riverside, the Active Living Service and the Optio voluntary car service both safely and as cost effectively as possible. New limits on numbers allowed to use our different rooms and one way systems through the building are being put in place and for Optio plastic screens have been installed in some of our drivers' cars and new rules and procedures on how the car service works introduced. The challenges will continue to evolve but we will endeavour to keep coming up with the best solutions we can in the circumstances, to enable us to continue to provide as many useful services to Island residents as possible.

-Citizens Advice IW



The positive notes...

Support has come to VCS organisations from many quarters in the form of Covid 19 specific funding (50%), Donations of goods and PPE (36%) and 27% have received Support from national 'parent' organisation.

However, all report some positives or opportunities that have emerged in the last four months:

- Shows how voluntary sector can respond effectively in any situation
- Making things we had talked about a reality e.g. online resources and flexible working
- Embraced flexible working
- New ways of working digitally
- Sharing national resources
- Co-operation with ferry companies so patients can travel cheaper
- Younger volunteers helping
- Closer staff team
- New partnerships and response to call for volunteers
- Using this period to research the impact of the different types of delivery how we can move forward in the future
- Improved use of software such as Teams

If you could ask for anything from local, regional, and national bodies what would it be?

- Continued support beyond COVID Collaboration
- More information on what is next and continued support beyond COVID
- Faster and more access to PPE
- A plan for mid and long term funding
- Plans to support second or third spikes of Covid- how we can learn from what we did this time