SLCVO REVIEW

Issue 2 September 2020

Skye, Lochalsh, Wester Ross
Third Sector Support

Welcome to Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisation's newsletter. Issued every two months it keeps community groups and volunteers up to date with local groups, funders and best practice. To sign-up for SLCVO's newsletter email info@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921.

Congratulations to Gairloch Community Car Scheme on receiving the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Gairloch Community Car Scheme, a group of volunteers based in the Gairloch District in Wester Ross, have been honoured with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

Starting from small beginnings in November 2000, the Gairloch Community Car Scheme serves a widely dispersed rural coastal community of 2200 people living approximately 70 miles North West of Inverness. The Car Scheme provides a vital service for people without access to a car or unable to drive, enabling them to access health care appointments, go shopping, join in social activities or attend hospital appointments.

Last year alone volunteers operating the Car Scheme made over 2000 journeys including 136 hospital visits to Inverness involving an astonishing 35,000 miles of travel. On hearing news of the award, the Chairperson of the Car Scheme Annette Mackenzie said, 'The Queens Award for Voluntary Service is a tremendous accolade to have bestowed upon the Gairloch Community Car Scheme. We are honoured to receive this award and

Gairloch Community Car Scheme
Proudly Celebrate Our Award
Tuesday 2nd June 2020

accept it on behalf of our dedicated team of volunteers who give their time so freely to drive, answer telephones or help fundraise. With their invaluable support we are continuing to serve our small community, even in difficult times. Congratulations and many, many thanks to you all.'

Gairloch Community Car Scheme is one of 230 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service this year, showing that the voluntary sector is thriving and full of innovative ideas to make life better for those around them. A volunteer so aptly described the scheme as "the silent backbone of the community", and having been in operation for 20 years it is difficult to imagine how this sparsely populated, isolated and remote area would function without this lifeline scheme.

Any group of two or more people that has participated in voluntary work for more than three years can be nominated for the award. Full details on how to nominate are available at https://qavs.culture.gov.uk/ Nominations for the 2021 awards close on 25 September 2020

What's in this Review?

As Scotland continues to move forward with Phase 3 of Covid-19 recovery, many groups are looking at the next steps in their Covid-19 response and when they can resume services. This issue looks at how planning can help groups in their recovery, reviews the Highland third sector survey assessing

the impact of Covid-19 and highlights specialist on-line support initiatives.

If you have any topics you would like to see in future issues please email info@slcvo.org.uk.

The Impact of Covid-19 on the Third Sector

In June the Highland Third Sector Interface (HTSI) carried out a survey to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the Third Sector. SLCVO worked with the HTSI to capture the opinions of groups in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross.

In the survey 55% of respondents identified themselves as a large group with staff, 28% as a small group with no staff, 12% as a social enterprise and 5% as an intermediary body or non-third sector.

Key Results from Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross

- 65% of respondents identified themselves as a small group with no staff and 35% as a large group with staff.

- The main areas of third sector activity include:
    o Community Development 25%
    o Community Facilities and Activities 20%
    o Health and Social Care 15%
    o Sport, Social Activities, Recreation 15%
    o Youth Group 10%
    o Faith Group 5%
    o Peer Support 5%
    o Transport 5%

- 60% of groups expect their financial position to worsen as a result of Covid-19, with reductions in fundraising, membership fees, grant funding and trading income.

- 10% anticipate increased costs.

- 45% of groups ceased activities due to Covid-19, 19% completely changed what they do and 36% modified how they carry-out services, using online and other non-contact methods of delivery.

- 53% of respondents identified six main areas of support SLCVO and the HTSI could help with including:
    o Funding/fundraising
    o Managing volunteers
    o Digital support
    o HR and recruitment
    o Networking and events
    o Capacity building

- The main areas of concern for local communities as a result of Covid-19 include:
    o Loneliness 80%
    o Increased poverty 65%
    o Mental Health 68%
    o Loss of income 60%
    o Challenges accessing employment 50%
    o Physical Health 50%
    o Missing out on opportunities 40%
    o Increased use of alcohol/drugs 35%
    o Access to food 35%
    o Family relationships 30%
    o Safety/abuse/neglect 30%
    o Independence / access to support 15%
    o Access to digital 15%
    o Housing 10%
    o Losing volunteers 5%
    o Other 5%

To support the HTSI survey, SLCVO are compiling Third Sector profiles for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross from extracts from OSCR, Companies House and our own members database. These will be available on our website before the end of the year and will help us to plan future support to the third sector and help develop the co-production of services between the third and public sector. For more information contact SLCVO's Chief Officer Jo Ford at jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk.

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SLCVO Community Calls – helping reduce loneliness

At the start of Covid-19 lock-down SLCVO set-up Community Calls, a daily call service for people across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross. The aim of the service was to keep people connected and make sure they had support to get essential provision such as food, prescriptions and fuel.

The service also helped to identify gaps and barriers to support which we worked with local groups and statutory organisations overcome.

By the end of August 2020 our Community Call volunteers will have made around 1,700 calls. Many of these calls have been much more than a simple check in and signposting to Covid-19 emergency response service.

As highlighted in the HTSI Third Sector Survey a main effect of lockdown was increased isolation and loneliness. This was compounded by the fact that many third sector social care services were suspended, and many social outlets became inaccessible to people. Although the Community Calls service originally began as a response to Covid-19, it has provided companionship to both clients and volunteers and mitigated the impact of social isolation and loneliness for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

One volunteer connected with a client over a love of books. When the volunteer discovered how upset our client was that the library was closed and she didn't have access to her usual supply of books, our volunteer went out of her way to source second hand books and had them sent from where she lives with the fish van. Another of our clients connected with one of our volunteers over a love of the Gaelic language, both native Gaelic speakers, they spend time once a week chatting with each other in Gaelic.

*"It good to have someone new to talk to". "It helps to know that there is someone keeping an eye on you ""*Community Calls client feedback

Amazing Volunteers
When we put a call out for volunteers we were astounded by the response. 55 people volunteered with the service, supporting 57 clients 7 days a week between April and July then 5 days a week until the end of Septemebr.

"As I discovered during the weeks of the call service, being a befriender has two-way benefits, because as a caller I have found it particularly rewarding to be able to develop new relationships during the lockdown."
Volunteer feedback August 2020

Volunteers made it possible for us to run a daily service for six months, and funding from the Skye Ward Discretionary Budget, the HTSI and National Lottery enabled us to not only provide a Covid-19 emergency response service but ensure its sustainability.

A new service
In October 2020, 18 community Calls Volunteers will join our existing befrienders to support our new telephone befriending service and 16 Community Call clients will move to have a weekly befriending call.

This service ensures that as we move out of lock-down volunteers and clients who want to keep the connections made during lock-down can, in a secure and supported service run by SLCVO.

Thank you gifts for our Community Calls volunteers

It also takes my mind off the fact of how much I am missing my own family and grandchildren and how hard it is for the vulnerable and shielding group who are feeling exactly the same
Volunteer feedback June 2020

To see what our volunteers though of the service visit our Facebook page and watch our video from June.
https://www.facebook.com/SLCVO/videos/178044506943303

Getting Ready To Resume Services

As Phase 3 of Covid-19 recovery moves forward groups are starting to look at when and how they can resume services. However, as the third sector is made up of many different types of groups from sports clubs to Trusts there is no 'one size fits all' guidance for groups.

Carrying out a Covid-19 back to operations check can help you decide when it is right for your group to resume services again.

SLCVO's 'Back to Operations' check list can be download from our website www.slcvo.org.uk. This document gives groups a structure to the key considerations when starting services again, including:

- Is there a demand for your service/activity to resume?
- Can you delivery your services/activities in compliance with social distance measures.
- Can you meet all Covid-19 prevention measures of your venue and are these sufficient to ensure the safety of your volunteers and service users?

To help you through this check process SLCVO can arrange and faciliate an online meeting for your group. This service is free to all third sector groups in our area as part of our core funding from the Highland Third Sector Interface. If you would like to chat about how we can help you email Jo Ford at jo.ford@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921 to arrange a meeting.

Village and Community Halls

Many village and community halls across Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross are run by volunteer committees. They may employ a couple of people part-time however, many rely on volunteers to keep the hall open and running.

Re-opening a village or community hall depends on a number of considerations. SLCVO staff are working with the Highland Third Sector Interface to host an online Village Halls question and answer session in September however, to help you start to look at re-opening, Caithness Voluntary Group have produced a comprehensive document 'Reopening village and

community halls Guidance issue 3 August 2020' to support the opening of village and community halls. This guidance includes Risk Assessment templates, Sample Special Conditions of Hire during COVID-19 and COVID-19 Guidance Premises Poster. You can download the guide from our website www.slcvo.org.uk

Your Premises
If your premises have been closed, you will need to carry out a routine health and safety risk assessment including:

- Electrical inspection and, if required, PAT testing
- Heating and hot water system check- Flush through the water system to remove any risk of legionella or other bacterial build up.
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment and routine fire safety checks e.g. fire exit doors are clear, not sticking, fire extinguishers serviced, emergency lighting system and any alarm system are working.

You should also check with your insurance company to see if there are any requirements they need you to have in place as a result of Covid-19?

Social Distancing
To ensure you have the space to meet social distancing guidelines you will need to measure the size and detail the layout of your building/room to determine the maximum number of people that can be accommodated.

You will need to consider what social distancing arrangements you should implement in corridors and at entrance and exits, for example:

- Using tape to mark out a 2m distance outside and inside the entrance to encourage people to wait their turn to enter and exit
- Implementing a one-way system or staggered use.
- Providing hand sanitizer at every entrance/exit and in each room
- Putting notices up advising of your premises Covid-19 measures

Shared Toilets and Kitchens
In toilets and kitchen areas you will need to provide hand wash facilities and paper towels as hand dryers are not recommended for use because they could disperse droplets. Hand sanitiser needs to be provided at entrance and exit routes. Tissues, soap, toilet rolls and

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cleaning products, including disposable cloths, should also be provided.

If food and drink are made on your premises you will need added infection control procedures and may want to consider asking groups to bring their own.

Cleaning
A thorough clean of the hall or community building should be undertaken before it reopens and a stringent cleaning regime implemented. If you have a caretaker/cleaner ensure they have appropriate PPE such as overalls and plastic gloves. You will also need to ensure groups/volunteers have guidance and understand what is expected of them.

Hiring your Premises
You will need to update your hiring conditions documentation with Covid-19 infection control requirements. This should include a copy of your risk assessment for the premises. You may also want to request a copy of the groups risk assessment and limit the number of people that can attend activities to meet social distancing measures.

Further Information

Health and Safety Executive website has information and guidance about working safely
https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm

Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) has a dedicated Covid-19 'Supporting Communities Safely' website https://www.scdc.org.uk/supporting-communities-safely

Scottish Government website has information about current measures and guidance
https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/

NHS Inform website has the latest Covid-19 advice from NHS Scotland
https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19

SLCVO support to groups

As the rural delivery partner for the HTSI in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross, SLCVO provide third sector support services to help groups:
- Become a charity
- Find the most appropriate legal structure and apply to the relevant regulator
- Develop policies and procedures
- Find and apply for funding
- Develop volunteering best practice
- Connect to local planning structures

We also help groups move forward from Covid-19 by:
- Helping groups carry-out risk assessments and back to operations checks
- Hosting online meetings/AGMs
- Identifying Covid-19 recovery funding
- Supporting the development of contingency plans and community emergency plans in case of another lock-down situation.

If you would like to chat to us about how we can support your groups or community Covid-19 response initiative email info@slcvo.org.uk or call 01478 612921

Find Funding

Foundation Scotland provide funding to community led projects and individuals across Scotland.
https://www.foundationscotland.org.uk/

Funding Scotland is an online funding directory by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations. It provides information on funding opportunities and funders in Scotland. https://fundingscotland.com/

Grants online helps you to keep up to date with the latest news about grants and funding in Scotland.
https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/region-news/scotland/

Institute of Fundraising provides groups with guidance and information for fundraising, as well as information on rules and regulations.
https://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/guidance/

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Support for Community Groups

HTSI Covid-19 Helpline and website https://www.covidhelp4highland.org
HTSI's website 'Highland Community Covid-19 Response' provides information to assist individuals and community groups undertaking work to support people experiencing the impacts of Covid-19.It includes fact sheets for groups to reference as they develop and sustain their activities, volunteering opportunities and the Highland Covid-19 Community Response Directory. The Helpline is open 10am - 4pm, Tuesday - Thursday 01349 808022

SLCVO Website and Community Toolkit www.slcvo.org.uk
The new Skye and Lochalsh CVO website includes SLCVO's Community Toolkit guides to help groups in their set-up and running, information about community planning and volunteering in Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross and essential information about Covid-19.

Scottish Community Development Centre https://www.scdc.org.uk/supporting-communities-safely
SCDC is the lead body for community development in Scotland, their online resource 'Supporting Communities Safely' provides advice on how to virus proof the fantastic things communities are doing and reduce the risk of indirect spread.

Volunteer Scotland https://www.volunteerscotland.net/covid-19
Volunteer Scotland's website provides clear and accurate information that will help volunteers and volunteer involving organisations during Covid-19. It also provides advice and guidance on volunteer management, PVGs and volunteering opportunities.

Youth Scotland Covid-19 Online Resource https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/covid-19/
Youth Scotland's online resource has comprehensive advice and guidance for your groups from funding to Post lockdown Readiness Guide.

Sports Scotland Covid-19 Online Resource https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/
Sports Scotland online resource has specific Covid-19 guidance on how to undertake sports safely, information on support for community sports organisations and advice on how to get facilities fit for opening.

Creative Scotland Covid-19 Online Resource https://www.creativescotland.com/
Creative Scotland have developed a dedicate funding and resource directory for those in the creative community who have been affected by Covid-19. It provides up to date information and news, as well as a Covid-19 focused Support for Scotland's screen sector.

Skye and Lochalsh CVO working in partnership and supported by:

SLCVO working with Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership: