



**DURHAM
COMMUNITY
ACTION**

COMMUNITY NEWS

Welcome to the June 2020 Edition



Life after Lockdown - Getting back to business as usual

As we enter the next phase of the COVID-19 crisis many of you will be making plans and putting things in place, in order to continue to adapt and reopen your services, when it is permitted and safe to do so.

With so much change and disruption it can seem like a daunting task to ensure everything is done before you can welcome your service users back into your building or to a newly adapted environment. For many this will include writing new risks assessments, deciding what services can be offered safely, implementing the rules on social distancing; in addition to financial planning and looking at the resilience of your organisation in the 'new normal'.

As Community Buildings work through the many questions they face at this time, we are here to offer information, advice, and support.

A new [guide](#) has been produced to help you to work through some of these questions and support you to prepare for the future of your organisation.

We have also been working alongside our umbrella body ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) as part of a national steering group to produce guidance for the reopening of community buildings post COVID-19 closure including an information sheet and sample risk assessments.

Deborah Clarke, ACRE's Rural Evidence and Village Halls Manager said, "Over the past couple of months we have been contacted by numerous volunteers who manage village halls wanting to know how and when they can reopen and help their community recover from Covid19. That's why we've been working with relevant government departments to make sense of the emerging regulations and produce this guidance which is tailored to village halls."

ACRE's guidance looks at how village halls can prepare risk assessments, ensure social distancing once open and introduce effective cleaning regimes. There are some practical resources too including checklists, notices for display in halls and sample terms of hire.

You can access these documents [here](#) or if you would prefer to discuss your personal circumstances with us then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

We would encourage you to get in touch with our team to talk through any questions or concerns. If you have been working directly with one of our Community Support Team, you can contact them in the usual ways or email info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk



Helping Spennymoor through the COVID-19 crisis

A group established in Spennymoor to help those most in need during the COVID-19 crisis has received funding from our County Durham Community Foundation/DCA COVID-19 Response Volunteering Micro-Grant programme to purchase t-shirts for their volunteers so that they are easily identifiable to the people they are supporting. The group has been responding to the impact of COVID-19 in their communities by delivering care packages to vulnerable people throughout Spennymoor. They have helped over 500 people so far which is an incredible achievement. Read

more about the Micro-Grant programme [here](#)



Free Online Training Sessions in June

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are offering free, short online training sessions to volunteer led organisations and community groups: Volunteers and the Law on 23rd June and Understanding Safeguarding for Voluntary and Community Organisations on 30th June. For full details and to book your place, visit our Training [page](#)

We are also updating our training programme to support you through the pandemic and in preparation for life after lockdown.

In response to an emerging need for organisation resilience, we will be running short online workshops on Strategic Planning, Consultation and Engagement and Financial Management. Please keep an eye on our website for updates and new training dates.



New County Durham Volunteer platform - register your volunteering opportunities

The new County Durham Volunteer Platform website is nearing the end of its testing phase and the live site is planned to be launched in July. This will be an excellent resource for individuals seeking volunteering opportunities and for organisations looking to recruit volunteers. For organisations, if you haven't already done so and you wish to be on the system for the launch of the website, please complete this form and send your volunteer opportunities to charlotte.linton@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk by **25th June**. Read more about the platform [here](#)



Community Homes on the Map Update

The Community Homes on the Map enabler hub, which provides support to local groups who want to provide community led housing, has moved into phase 2 with full hub funding until March 2021. The hub provides support on community led housing across Sunderland, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Co. Durham. Read [more](#)

Congratulations also to our Training Specialist Tara Hallimond who has successfully completed the Supporting Community led housing training and accreditation, and is now recognised as a Community led Homes Accredited Advisor. Well done!



The County Durham Environment and Climate Change Partnership signs letter of support for Food Partnerships

The letter, titled 'Tackling food-related challenges in current and future crises' was written by Sustainable Food Places as part of a day of action on 10th June and supported by over 40 public health, food and farming organisations, including Fareshare, Royal Society for Public Health, Councillors and Directors of Public Health, as well as academics and campaigners including Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Professor Tim Lang and Jeanette Orrey MBE. Jim Cokill, Chair of the County Durham Environment and Climate Change Partnership and Steve Bhowmick, Strategic Manager (Environment and Design) for Durham County Council both signed the letter.

It drew attention to the role that Food Partnerships like Food Durham can play in facilitating cross-sector partnership working and developing resilient food systems that are better equipped to cope in



emergencies. You can read the full letter [here](#) and find out more about Food Durham, the County Durham Food Partnership [here](#)

Small Charity Week North East 2020

We are nearing the end of Small Charity Week 2020 which celebrates and raises awareness of the essential work of the UK's smallest charities.

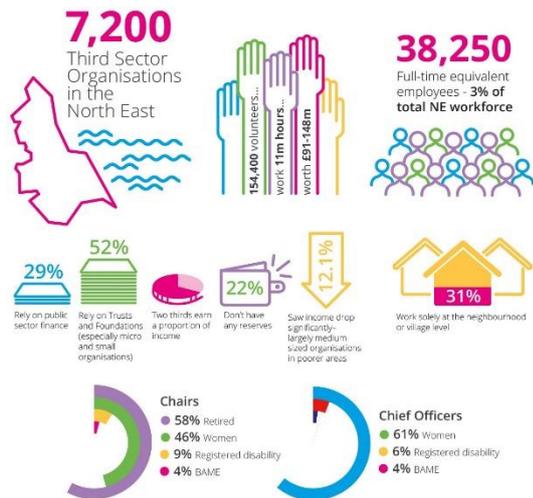
DCA participated in a virtual funding fair as one event during the week by running a telephone advice session alongside colleagues across the region. We received a number of calls from organisations looking for funding advice and support which we are now following up on. You can read more about the week [here](#)

If you require advice about any aspect of running your community group please do not hesitate to contact us info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk



Community Energy Fortnight 2020 and Energy Efficiency Top Tips for Community Buildings

Community Energy Fortnight, which is taking place from 13th - 18th June, has moved online this year with many events taking place for community energy organisations and supporters/. The theme this year is #HarnessOurPower for a better future. Full details can be found on the Community Energy England website [here](#). In conjunction with Durham County Council's Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP), we have produced a guide with tips to help community buildings save energy during lockdown - read it [here](#)



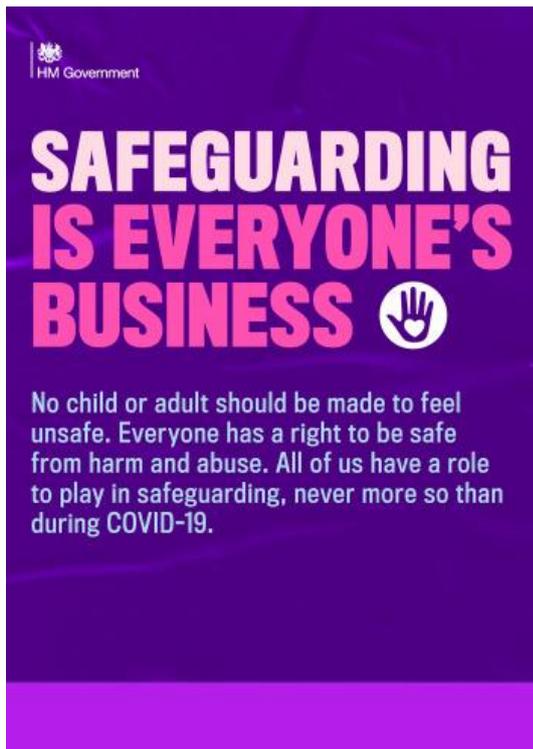
Third Sector Trends in North East England 2020

The Community Foundation (serving Tyne and Wear and Northumberland) has released the latest Third Sector Trends Study. Comprising 7,200 organisations, 38,250 employees and 154,000 volunteers, the sector is a significant part of the North East ecology. Already playing an important role in supporting many in the region, during the Covid-19 crisis, the latest findings give an insight into how the sector in the region may fare after COVID-19. Read [more](#)



Charity Commission - Reporting serious incidents during the coronavirus pandemic

The Charity Commission have produced an updated table of examples to help organisations identify when they need to report a serious incident to the Commission during the Coronavirus crisis. They have confirmed that while significant loss of income is a reportable incident, during the pandemic organisations should focus on the impact of that loss in income. Charities are still expected to report incidents that have caused or may cause significant harm to beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, damage to charity property or harm to the charity's work and reputation. More information can be found [here](#)



Safeguarding Updates

A number of useful safeguarding resources have been produced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Home Office has published a guide: [Safeguarding is Everyone's Business](#) which sets out how to keep people safe from harm and abuse.

Keep Safe have produced a range of easy read posters that are free to print or share online; these include a face covering exemption card, new rules about wearing face masks for England, support bubbles, shielding updates, symptoms and testing. Posters can be accessed [here](#)

News Highlights from across the sector

- Durham County Council Street Space consultation- read [more](#)
- Holiday Activities with Healthy Food: funding available - read [more](#)
- NHS COVID-19 contact tracing message: how can I tell if it's real or a scam - read [more](#)
- Suicide Prevention Grassroots Community funding available - read [more](#)
- NHS Sunderland, South Tyneside & County Durham consultation - Gathering views about using digital technology to speak to a GP - read [more](#)

Contact Us

Email info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk



If you require this email in a different format, would like to contribute towards future issues or provide any feedback about Durham Community News please contact Helen by [email](#) (Mondays to Thursdays).