



What can small voluntary and community organisations do to prepare for Coronavirus?

So here are some quick questions to get your thinking started:

- Is everyone aware of the advice on how to avoid catching and spreading Coronavirus?
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Does everyone know what they should do if they have symptoms that they are worried might be Coronavirus?
- Have you emphasised that it's important that staff or volunteers with Coronavirus symptoms isolate themselves and seek advice, rather than try and come in to work, even if there's no one else who can obviously take on their tasks and responsibilities?
- Are any of your staff and volunteers particularly vulnerable to serious symptoms if they catch Coronavirus (for example, because of pre-existing medical conditions), and if so, can you change the way they work in order to reduce the contact they have with other people?
- Are there any tasks that only one member of staff, or one volunteer knows how to do? Or important information that only one person has access to? Can you spread these skills and knowledge to other people to increase your organisation's resilience?
- Can you avoid having many of your staff and volunteers in the same place at the same time?
- Are any staff or volunteers who can work from home?
- Are staff who can work from home taking their laptop and other equipment home in case they need to self-isolate, look after children, or find they need to work from home for other reasons?
- Could you replace some of your meetings or events with telephone calls or online meetings?
- If your work usually involves supporting people face to face, are there other ways you could do any parts of this in the short term?
- Have you thought about other people and organisations who might be able to help out if many of your staff and usual volunteers become unavailable?



We know that these suggestions are going to feel strange to many small organisations that are used to working closely with people face to face – and that some of them will be impossible to implement for some organisations. Don't worry, they're just designed to get you thinking, and there's no perfect solution.

What can communities do?

Lots of people will want to help others in their own community if Coronavirus becomes widespread, but it's hard to know how to be neighbourly when the advice is to keep your distance from other people, and some people might be self-isolating!

Here are a few suggestions to get you going:

- People who are self-isolating might need help with shopping, or collecting their normal medication – but it's best leave it outside for them to collect than to take it into their house if possible.
- If you normally pop round of a cup of tea with a neighbour, could you have a chat on the phone instead, particularly if one of you is feeling unwell? Maybe it's a good time to learn to use video chat apps on your mobile phone?
- If you already provide support to a neighbour, such as doing their grocery shop, have you thought about who else might be able to do it if you become ill and have to self-isolate?
- Could you set up a community Facebook group, WhatsApp group or telephone tree to help people stay in contact with each other if they're self-isolating? (see over the page)
- Are there people who are likely to be particularly vulnerable to Coronavirus, for example, because they have existing medical conditions, who might be reassured to know someone's keeping an eye out for them? The form over the page is a useful approach and way to offer of support. We are advising this is only used in your street/or at local neighbourhood level with people you know or recognise.



HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

My name is

I live locally at

My phone number is

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:

Picking up shopping Posting mail

A friendly phone call Urgent supplies

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep. **#ViralKindness**

City of Hereford Rotary Club has started a Facebook Group seeking local offers of support :-

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/195399895095561/>

Hereford Rotary Covid-19 Volunteers

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/195399895095561/>

This has received a phenomenal response over the weekend. Rather than starting our own approach, hvoss will be working with City of Hereford Rotary and others to ensure strategic local coordination and support. Further details will be updated this week once we have met. Initial agreed priorities are likely to include:-

1. Encouraging people to donate to local food banks
2. People to contact neighbours and check who may help
3. Give people in need contact details so they know that there is someone locally who can help
4. A need to consider transportation networks, assets and other resources that will address access to services issues including supply chain of goods and services for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.
5. Strategic local co-ordination needs to be agreed.

We are meeting with City of Hereford Rotary and other representatives later this week. We will assess the situation then and discuss the best way for hvoss to be involved. We will be logging all offers of support received. We are encouraging all local communities to do the same.

hvoss is grateful for the support of the NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) and its membership organisations in producing this information and guidance.