Covid-19 Support Toolkit
for Badenoch and Strathspey Communities

Here To Help

For each of the 12 community council areas in Badenoch and Strathspey, we have been working to put together software and documentation which I hope will be helpful/useful for you in your efforts to put volunteer plans in place, in order to support your residents and businesses through the challenging times we are currently all facing and which may last for quite a few months.

We are aware that a few of the B&S communities have already got plans in place and may well feel that these are robust and working fine. That's great and well done to you and all your volunteers! ☺ If that is the case, still have a look, as there may be some information or documentation outlined below, that you feel could provide additional effectiveness to the framework you have already set up.

For those communities who are still getting sorted with their plans, you can either choose to adopt the whole of the toolkit, or just parts of it that you feel are most relevant to your residents' and businesses' needs and circumstances.

In any of these scenarios, the VABS team (Karen, Ann, Mairi) will work alongside your working committees and volunteers to ensure you are well supported and can get advice: from VABS; Highland Council; other key organisations; as well as from the other communities in the strath who may be experiencing a similar problem to yours.

<u>What is important to emphasise with everyone we are all working/volunteering with, is that the central aim is to keep everyone safe and protected from the spread of the virus, as much as we possibly can. This means adhering to guidelines and regulations as they continue to come out from the Scottish and UK Governments and adopting best practice wherever we can on social distancing, self-isolation and hygiene.</u>

There are also issues of safeguarding, particularly concerning GDPR, handling money and working with vulnerable people, that need to be considered. There are clear rules, particularly applicable in the current scenario for volunteers and the voluntary sector, which state that **volunteers should not handle any cash** and so we need to find workarounds for this, which minimises any risk to all of the parties involved. This is not as easy as it seems, but we are trying to find and develop routes through, which will enable us to carry out the community service, within a framework that works for everybody.

What will be of greatest importance is keeping in regular contact (remotely) with each other through the wide variety of networks that are established and also growing up in response to this health, social and economic crisis.

To that end, make good use of your websites and social media platforms to let people know what is happening and keep them up to date as far as you can, with the latest local information.

And keep in touch with VABS – through technology only at the moment I'm afraid – to let us know what's happening and how we can continue to assist and support you. We are available through email, on the phone and by virtual meeting apps, which will allow us to chat as if we are in the same room. Have to make your own coffee though!

Here To Help

Toolkit Contents

Acknowledgements
VABS wishes to acknowledge the support role of The Highland Council and the Cairngorms National Park Authority for their administrative and financial assistance to the Badenoch and Strathspey communities in helping to deliver various elements of this Covid-19 support toolkit.
It is much appreciated.

Here To Help

1. **Overview**

   The toolkit consists of a mix of software and documentation which includes templates that can be adapted to the needs of each community and badged with the community name, so it is content specific and works for you.

   A suggested order for the process to be worked through is as follows. One of the VABS team will be happy to help you with any of these steps:

   a) Set up a small working committee of approximately **6** people in your community who are willing to oversee the toolkit setting up process and take on specific management tasks as outlined further on.

   b) Put up posters in local places and on your community's FB page or website to call for volunteers to help (*see section 2 and Call for Volunteers Poster Template Appendix 8i*). Assign 2 or 3 people from the committee willing to offer their contact details on the poster to collate responses from volunteers.

   c) Receive and collate all volunteer names on the spreadsheet (*see section 2 and Volunteer Organiser Template Appendix 8ii*) according to what is appropriate for their age and capability, as well as what service/s they are willing to sign up for. These details will need to be (broadly) agreed at point of first contact. Update throughout the process with additional volunteers or those being removed.

   d) Set up Google Docs or equivalent, so that committee can update information and relevant others such as Call Handlers (*see section 4*) can log details in real time.

   e) Contact the Telephone Management System (TMS) for activating the software for your community and receipt of instructions for installation and management (*see section 3*).

   f) Contact (remotely) your local businesses, pharmacy and health centre to inform them of the community response set up, engage their cooperation and obtain any localised details, knowledge and support that will assist in making the process as effective as possible. This information can then be used to compile the documents in g) and h) below.

   g) Create Household leaflet with relevant information to your community (*see section 6 and Household Leaflet Appendix 8iii*) on volunteer community services being provided and appropriate health information.

h) Create Business Flyer with relevant information to your community (*see section 7 and Business Flyer Appendix 8iv*) to promote and support the local businesses in your area.

i) Set up training session with Call Handlers (remotely) on how the TMS works, using the Call Handlers process chart (*see section 4 and Call Handlers Process Chart Appendix 8v*).

j) Set up training session with Service Deliverers (remotely) on how the process works, using:
   - Volunteer Guidance (*see section 5 and Volunteer Guidance Appendix 8vi*).
   - Service Delivery Forms (*see Section 5 and Service Delivery Forms Appendix 8vii*)

k) Print Household Leaflet and Business Flyer on good quality white paper (100gm weight if possible so that it lasts longer) and arrange distribution (*see section 6*) via community volunteer network. This should be done in conjunction with the address spreadsheet provided for each community council area, to ensure all properties are leafleted.

l) Make sure everyone on the team knows that the system has gone live and what part they are playing in it.

2. Volunteer Management

In the first instance there will need to be a callout for people in the community to volunteer to help in a variety of roles. These may include:

- Working Committee members

- Call Handlers

- Service Delivery Volunteers
  - Range of roles eg helping with shopping, dog walking

- Businesses Liaison Volunteer/s
  - Working with your local businesses to see what they can offer eg take away food or delivery of other items. Business services can be put onto the Business Flyer (*see Appendix 8iv*) – these will be those specific to your community but may also include other businesses in neighbouring communities, who are offering an additional service in these abnormal times.

This volunteer callout can be done via a post on the community Facebook page or website, or through posters displayed in prominent local places eg noticeboards and shop windows (see *Call for Volunteers Poster Template Appendix 8i*). There will need to be

a number of working committee members involved in collating volunteer response to the callout as it is likely to be a considerable number and otherwise could be overwhelming. Volunteers can register with the committee via phoning the numbers given on the poster or through the community FB page. In the latter case, the committee should respond to them via private message to take their details.

As volunteers come forward, they will need to be assigned roles (as per list above) that are appropriate to their circumstances. This will involve talking through with each volunteer to establish their age, capacity in terms of being on call, as well as any specific area they prefer to volunteer for eg dog walking or having a befriending chat.

NOTE In line with Government guidelines, **70+ year-old volunteers should NOT be assigned to service delivery**, but can be allocated to call handling or befriending calls, as this can be done whilst in self-isolation.

It is highly advisable for one of the committee to take on the specific role as Volunteer Organiser Manager. This involves:
- managing the Volunteer Organiser once it is initially established (*see Volunteer Organiser Appendix 8ii*)
- adding and removing volunteers from the Volunteer Organiser as the situation evolves
- issuing the Volunteer Guidance (*see section 5 and Volunteer Guidance Appendix 8vi*) and Service Delivery Forms (*see Section 5 and Service Delivery Forms Appendix 8vii*) with appropriate training.

3. Community Telephone System

Because each community knows its whole community council area, streets, residents and volunteers better than anyone else, it has been determined that each community – if they choose to – should have their own dedicated phone number for those residents in need to call in to. This avoids having a centralised number for the whole of Badenoch and Strathspey, which could potentially create delays and slow delivery down at point of need.

VABS has procured the services of 3CX Telephone Management System (TMS) for the purposes of rolling out this support toolkit in Badenoch and Strathspey. For any community wishing to take up this option, the VABS team will issue the information for contacting 3CX and will also provide any necessary help for getting it set up, although the instructions from 3CX are simple and easy to follow.

It is highly advisable for one of the committee to take on the specific role as Telephone System Manager. This involves:
- managing the App and working with the designated Call Handlers (*see section 4)*

- adding volunteers to and removing them from the App as the situation evolves
- issuing the Call Handlers Process Chart (see *section 4 and Call Handlers Process Chart Appendix 8v*) with appropriate training.

How it works

- The TMS works through an App on the mobile and requires a WiFi connection to work (not a phone signal).
- Once contact has been made by a committee member/agreed Telephone System Manager with 3CX and it is confirmed how many Call Handlers are required (between 6 and 10 per community size), instructions can be issued to all designated Call Handlers (*see section 4*) who then download the App onto their mobile.
- Call Handlers can sign themselves as available/unavailable via the App dashboard on their mobile.
- Call Handlers can always receive calls (from residents in need or from each other) as long as they have a WiFi connection on their mobile.

Where to get it

- Contact VABS via email and one of the team will issue the relevant information to you. You will need to quote 'VABS' when speaking with 3CX, so they can add your community to the correct charging process their end.

How to run it

- When a call from a resident in need comes in, one of the Call Handlers who is registered available at that time will answer it and follow the procedure in the Call Handlers Process Chart (*see Appendix 8v*)
- There are options within the initial set up for different settings, so all registered available Call Handler phones will ring at once and stop when one of them answers, or it can be worked through a rota/shift system
- It is recommended that there are fixed hours for the TMS mobile App to work eg 8am to 10pm, so volunteers are not called at all hours.

What it costs

- The TMS will be free to the community for the duration of the crisis (courtesy of funding from Highland Council locally in the Ward)

4. **Call Handling**

Once identified and listed on the Call Handlers section of the Volunteer Organiser spreadsheet (*see Volunteer Organiser Appendix 8ii*), Call Handlers will need to:

- register their mobile on the App (*see section 3*)
- receive the Call Handlers Process Chart (*see Call Handlers Process Chart Appendix 8v*)

- receive the Volunteer Organiser (*see Volunteer Organiser Appendix 8ii*) to identify the appropriate volunteer list from which they chose who they can call to deliver the requested service from resident in need
- receive training (before leafletting happens!) from the committee Telephone System Manager. VABS can support on this if needed.
- get access to the Google Docs folder/s that have been set up by the committee, so Call Handlers can record call details in real time and to confirm service has been delivered
- let the committee Telephone System Manager know if their personal situation changes at all and affects their capacity.

Once the phone system goes live, the Call Handlers will be able to receive calls from residents in need and will then use the Call Handlers Process Chart, Call Handling Log and Volunteer Organiser documents to carry out their role.

5. **Service Delivery**

Service delivery is the part of the process where a resident in need, who has already contacted the helpline and spoken to a Call Handler, is then phoned back by a Service Delivery volunteer, to get help with one of the services being offered by the community response team. This will probably include:
- Food / Grocery Shopping
- Prescription / Medicine Collection
- Befriending phone call – just to have a blether
- Foodbank Enquiry
- Dog Walking for those who are unwell

But there may be something else that your community volunteers can offer that is specific to your needs, such as collection of free school meals or something similar.

How it works
- The first contact for the resident in need will be with one of the Call Handlers, if your community has taken up this approach.
- The Call Handler following the instructions as per section 4, will take/record basic details on the Call Log and then contact a volunteer to be assigned to this call and deliver the requested service.
- The Service Delivery Volunteer will then contact the resident in need and take further details of the service being requested eg shopping list, prescription requirements, details of dog etc.
- They can refer to the Call Handlers Process Chart for the guide-through steps that can be taken for the service being requested and the variations that may

apply within that service request eg whether shopping has been paid for or not (*see Volunteer Guidance Appendix 8vi*).

- Documents to record details of some services (*see Service Delivery Forms Appendix 8vii*) should be used by Service Delivery Volunteers especially when recording shopping requirements for a resident in need, or when carrying out the dog walking service

Volunteer Guidance

<u>Keeping volunteers safe is a priority</u> and so guidance is available (*see Volunteer Guidance Appendix 8vi*) in order to minimise risks to those who are delivering services especially with regard to:

- Social Distancing
- Hygiene
- Money
- Personal Safety
- GDPR

6. **Household Identification and Leaflets (Household Leaflet and Business Flyer)**
   In order to ensure that all households in your community council area are included in a leaflet drop, you will need to have access to an Excel list of the properties that exist in that area. These lists will not have any names on them, but will help volunteers doing batches of leaflet drops to manage the coverage of each area and safeguard against possible exclusion of some of the more remote dwellings.

   Leaflet templates are available (*see Household Leaflet Appendix 8iii*) (*see Business Flyer Appendix 8iv*) for each community to adapt to reflect what is relevant for them.

   Printing of both of these leaflets are advised as double-sided A5 where possible and on good quality white paper (100gm weight if possible so that it lasts longer). Numbers of leaflets will need to be at least as many as the number of households listed on your supplied Excel list of properties for your community council area.

   NOTE The Cairngorms National Park Authority has offered to undertake all printing of leaflets as required for each community and this can be coordinated through the VABS team.

7. **Businesses**
   Our much valued businesses and high streets in the strath are undergoing phenomenal degrees of stress at this time and so whatever we can do to support them and keep them trading is vital.

Engaging with the businesses that are operating in your community to find out what they can offer, through collection by Service Delivery Volunteers or direct delivery themselves, will help to add to the support network that residents can access. Sharing that information with your neighbouring communities will also help to create a bigger and better picture of what is available throughout the strath.

Once this information is collated, it can be incorporated into a Business Flyer (*see Business Flyer Appendix 8iv*) that can be distributed to all households with the Household Leaflet. This will alert residents who are self-isolating as to other products and services they can purchase locally, which they might not otherwise have been aware of.

8. **Appendices** (Example templates attached – adaptable for each community as required)
   i.   Call for Volunteers Poster
   ii.   Volunteer Organiser
   iii.   Household Leaflet
   iv.   Business Flyer
   v.   Call Handlers Process Chart
   vi.   Volunteer Guidance
   vii.   Service Delivery Form
          - Shopping
          - Dog Walking