

Dear Colleagues,

CTSI is working rapidly to form our response to COVID-19 and are in contact with our local partners to ensure that the needs of the third sector and local community are taken into account in considering ways to mitigate the impact of this unprecedented situation. This will be a difficult time for local charities and voluntary organisations as they struggle to meet the needs of vulnerable beneficiaries, and services will need to adapt, reduce or even halt. Our social enterprise community, and organisations that rely on trading and funding will be under increased financial pressure as more people self-isolate to reduce the spread of the virus.

We have issued **a survey to the third sector** to help us better understand the challenges that organisations are experiencing. We would encourage organisations to respond as soon as possible to ensure that our work to support the sector through the provision of information and external influencing direct to Scottish Government via the TSI Scotland Network is directed towards the right issues. Take the survey [here](#). The TSI Scotland Network has also sent a letter to ministers asking for emergency support to be provided for the third sector.

We have taken the decision to postpone all our current training at the Connect Centre and other venues including our forums and the Community Breakfasts **up until the end of April**. We are also planning to adapt our ways of working to continue to offer support to the third sector, and keep our staff and employees safe. From **Wednesday 18th March** we will be conducting meetings online by telephone, and restricting all staff attendance at external events. However, the office will remain open with only myself manning it until further notice in case. Please feel free to contact us on 01259 213840 or email at admin@ctsi.org.uk for any guidance or support. We will review the service we provide as the situation develops and as the needs of local organisations become clear.

For more information on Covid-19 and the third sector please visit <https://scvo.org.uk/support/covid-19>. If you are a charity you may wish to view OSCR's guidance on Charity governance and regulation during this unprecedented situation <https://www.oscr.org.uk/news/charities-and-coronavirus-an-update-from-the-regulator/>

There has also been an announcement of Covid-19: **Business Helpline 0300 303 0660** providing advice and guidance on COVID-19 announced by Economy Secretary Fiona Hyslop. The helpline, which is now live, will be open Monday to Friday, between 8.30am to 5.30pm. Callers should select option one to speak to the COVID-19 team.

Full information is on our website at www.ctsi.org.uk including for example our Community Health Guides and the Community Assistance Card, and we will keep you updated with any further information as it is announced.

Best regards

Anthea Coulter
Chief Officer & Business Manager
Twitter @AntheaCTSI