**Factsheet 4: Checklist for Covid-19 Volunteer Groups**

1. **What is the structure of your organisation?**

* Mutual aid groups that have no formal management structure, insurance, screening checks or cash-handling processes can work well for a small group of people such as a street but are likely to struggle over a larger area. It may be easier and safer to redeploy these volunteers via an established organisation.
* Established community and voluntary organisations can use their policies and procedures (including volunteer recruitment, safeguarding, risk assessments, data protection, insurance) to good effect to support people across larger areas.
* Town and parish councils can have a role to play, perhaps as a centralised point of contact and for handling card payments for shopping over the phone or online. They might deploy volunteers directly or work in conjunction with local community organisations or mutual aid groups.

Regardless of your size and structure, make sure volunteers are acting in a safe way (see Factsheet 12)

1. **What are you asking your volunteers to do?**

* It is imperative volunteers are told what they are expected to do. The clearer you can be, the less chance there is for confusion and disagreements later. If possible, a volunteer role description/agreement should be created and given to each volunteer (see factsheet 6).

1. **What support are you giving your volunteers?**

* Volunteers should have a named person as their main point of contact, plus a second contact should the named person become ill.
* Consider giving the volunteers guidance on what to do if they have a problem i.e. how to report a safeguarding concern or if they have concerns about a person’s health.
* Keep things simple for them – create a single document with everything they need to know to carry out their specific role.

1. **How are you protecting your volunteers?**

* The health and safety of the volunteers are paramount. Make sure that your volunteers are aware of the guidance given on the government website; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>
* Don’t ask volunteers to do anything that puts them at an unnecessary risk, such as receiving cash from someone who is infected.
* The volunteers may be volunteering alone, consider having a lone working policy (see Factsheet 8). Make sure they are aware of it.
* Make sure the volunteer doesn’t take too much on. The current situation is overwhelming for us all and some may feel the need to take more on than they can deal with. Have a team of volunteers supporting groups of people in need, so there’s no one volunteer who feels solely responsible for a particular person.

1. **How are you protecting the people you want to help?**

* The people you are helping may be vulnerable. You may want to consider completing a risk assessment, particularly with consideration to reducing the risk of cross-contamination when handling shopping, delivering it and paying for goods.
* There are already examples of people using this opportunity to commit fraud. What measures can you put in place to protect your scheme from dishonest behaviour?

1. **Are you looking after people’s information correctly?**

* Confidentiality of people’s information is a legal requirement under GDPR legislation. Seek express permission before gathering it, store it securely and only share it when necessary.
* Remember that you are responsible for the data you hold of both volunteers and clients.

1. **Are you ensuring that your organisation stays healthy through this crisis?**

* Many parts of our economy are closed for business. If this is directly or indirectly impacting your organisation, make sure you’re taking the necessary steps to stay financially solvent. (see factsheets 1 and 13)
* Think about what measures you need to keep operating efficiently from home (see factsheet 14)

For further support and advice please contact your local Cambridge CVS.

**Cambridge CVS** - [www.cambridgecvs.org.uk](https://www.cambridgecvs.org.uk/) Telephone 01223 464696

**Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations** – [www.huntsforum.org.uk](http://www.huntsforum.org.uk) Telephone 01480 420604

**Peterborough CVS** - [www.pcvs.co.uk](https://www.pcvs.co.uk/)