

I want to assure you of Ward Goodman's continued commitment to support you through this challenging period. These are extraordinary times that require calm and considered action. There are many useful places to look for guidance and support in these unprecedented circumstances and I hope that some of the links below will assist you in your decision making.

The Ward Goodman charities team are all working from home and can be contacted by email. If you would like to speak to me please feel free to call me on 07918 745131. We have put some general guidance for our clients on the Ward Goodman website but you, as charities and not for profit organisations, are likely to be experiencing slightly different concerns and I felt it appropriate to provide further guidance which is relevant to your activities.

<https://www.wardgoodman.co.uk/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19/>

The first thing to think about is your cash position – Cash will be critical and more often than not squeezed over the next few weeks and months. Look at your current cash position. Forecast your worst case scenario incomings and known outgoings over the next thirteen weeks and prioritise your expenditure. There is existing help from HMRC in respect of time to pay agreements for VAT, PAYE and Corporation Tax if these are applicable and these costs are the ones you should be looking at deferring or spreading out in the first instance. There are also daily announcements from the government in terms of support for businesses. This link will give you up to date information. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19> Payments should be prioritised for critical points in your supply chain but talk to your suppliers, if your landlord has a commercial property portfolio they may be in a better position to grant you a

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rent holiday than a small or medium sized local business or charity that is facing the same immediate concerns as you.

You could also look at other options such as selling assets that you may not need or cutting costs but these will form part of a longer term plan once you know your cash position and immediate cash needs over the next three months or so.

Trustees need to update their risk assessment documentation and add new risks to it in respect of this unprecedented global situation. As part of the risk assessment review scenario planning should be undertaken. Identify critical services and concentrate scarce resources on these services. Look at where the biggest impact will be on your operations, for some charities it will be an immediate and significant reduction in incoming resources, others will have a spike in demand for services and others will have a shortage of volunteers, particularly in light of the advice for those over 70 to self-isolate as far as possible. There is help and guidance available for all of these impacts.

The human considerations are obviously also key to your operations and you need to look at a one month forecast for immediate crisis response in terms of scenario planning for staff and volunteer illness, safe working in the workplace for key workers and implementing social distancing for those that can work from home. If you have bigger teams it may be worth looking at splitting those teams into two or three groups and keeping them apart where this is possible. Dorset Community Action is working with the Volunteer Centre Dorset and Age UK to assist local charities, particularly for volunteers. <https://www.dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk/> There are also many local community pages on social media where people are offering help and assistance as they are unable to carry out their normal employment or they want to help those that may be struggling. It is worth joining your local group in addition to following organisations such as DCA, VCD and Community Action Network Bournemouth, Christchurch and

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Poole <http://www.bournemouthcvs.org.uk/>.

On a more national scale I have found the National Council for Voluntary Organisations <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/coronavirus> to be very useful in terms of general advice and specific guidance for charities. They also have updates on, for example, what do we do about board meetings and AGM's, what do we do if we can't report to funders in line with existing expected timelines.

The small charities coalition have been very vocal in lobbying the government with regard to assistance for small charities in terms of providing ongoing financial stability. <https://www.smallcharities.org.uk/corona-virus-advice-information-and-resources/>

ACAS have good advice for employment matters <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus> including sick pay and short time working.

The Charity Commission have said that any charity who is unable to file an annual return should get in touch with them using the contact form. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/filing-charity-annual-returns-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

The National Emergencies Trust is also launching an appeal to help those impacted by the virus and will be collaborating with charities and public bodies <https://nationalemergenciestrust.org.uk/>

I hope this is helpful and useful. Please get in touch if you have any questions. Think about the skills and resources that you have within your charity that could be shared collaboratively to have a positive impact on our local communities and wider society and above all communicate with your stakeholders. Let people know what you are doing, how you can help and if

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you need help. New information is coming out on an hourly basis and I hope that you will all find something positive for your organisation.

Best wishes

Jen

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