



Covid-19 Community Local
Outbreak & Recovery Helpline
From Devon Communities
Together

Supporting Village Halls, Community
Buildings, Parish and Town Councils
into the recovery phase

Call 0808 1963390



COVID-19 SURVEY RESULTS JULY-SEPTEMBER 2020



DCT carried out 4 surveys/polls, generating 64 responses, to gather community feedback and information on topics including enterprise support and Devon's Local Outbreak Management Plan. What follows is an extract from our full Covid-19 support report from July-September 2020, which can be read in full here: www.devoncommunities.org.uk/coronavirus-information

1. LOCAL OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT PLAN SURVEY

In order to foster effective reach of our recovery support provision to our cohort across Devon, DCT rolled out a **Local Outbreak Management Planning Support survey** to contact communities that had not yet engaged in our themed online focus group meetings. Results of the survey are as outlined below.

When asked why they have not yet booked to attend any session on Devon LOMP for communities, the majority of respondents identified issues around poor internet connection as the main influencing factor. Subsequent reasons included inconvenient timing and existing knowledge of the Devon LOMP and its relevance to their communities. This is depicted in the bar chart below.



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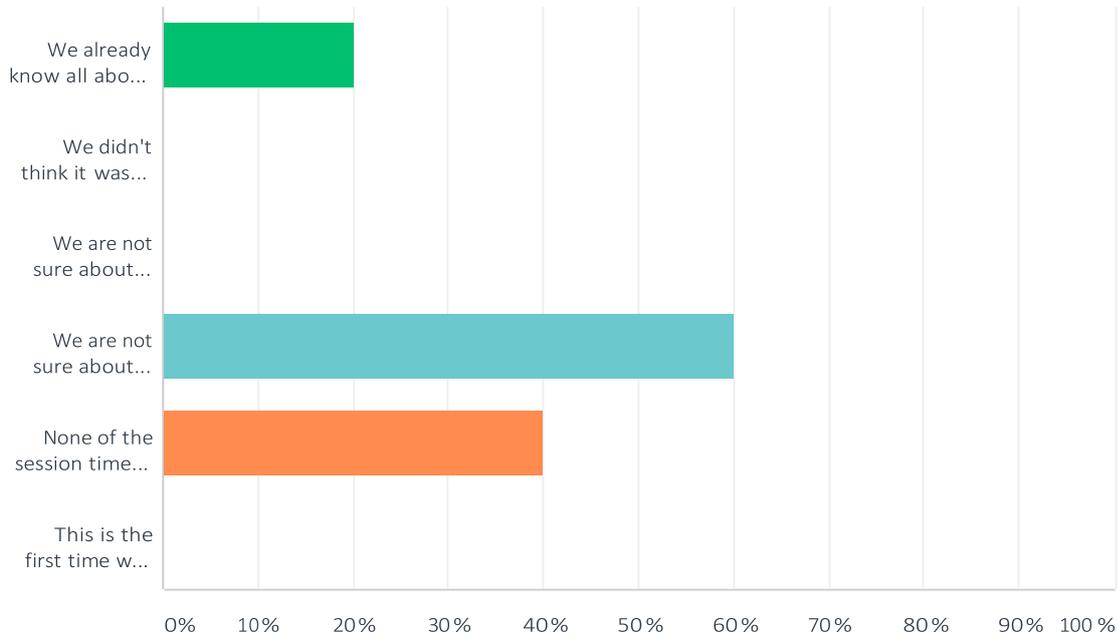


Figure 1: Bar chart responses from local communities re engagement in Devon LOMP session for communities.

60% of respondents additionally reported having a moderate capacity to respond locally in case of a local outbreak and lockdown. The rest of the 40% (20% each) identified having adequate and limited capacity respectively, in responding locally.



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2. COMMUNITY BUSINESS/SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SUPPORT SURVEYS

During the second phase of our Covid-19 project, DCT has delivered 1 rural business online focus group meeting and scheduled 2 workshops for small/rural businesses and social enterprises (Customer Journey Mapping and Digital Transformation workshops). The online focus group provided the platform for businesses to share their experiences during the lockdown, create awareness of the Devon LOMP; and discuss plans in case of a local outbreak or lockdown, and its implications on the recovery and resilience of their businesses.

Largely linked to our Covid-19 activities, **3 surveys on Enterprise support** were rolled out as part of DCT's PCF business project activities, to reach out to community shops and small/rural businesses respectively. This was mainly to gather further intelligence on their resilience and recovery needs to inform targeted support provision.

Also, an online toolkit (<https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/advice-southwest-businesses-around-covid-19>) has been developed and is consistently populated with key business related resources and information around the areas of funding, technical support, volunteer assistance, marketing support, training resources. This was made accessible to our contacts through consistent dissemination of information via our weekly business focused e-bulletins. Resources and information displayed on the business online toolkit was strongly informed by feedback received from the surveys which were rolled out.

Below is a summary of results from the three enterprise support surveys.

Enterprise Support Surveys

Covid-19 Support for Rural Businesses and Social Enterprises

These surveys were rolled out in August and September to ascertain the impact of Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown on businesses (including challenges, support needs, etc.), and how DCT can support them effectively. 49 Respondents identified issues around managing increased demand for home deliveries with few frontline workers; Health and Safety; consistent availability of PPEs; Social distancing; and increase of product prices by some suppliers, when asked about the main social/ economic challenges they were facing post lockdown.



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Respondents noted adherence to the national Covid-19 guidance but were concerned about the implications (financial ones especially) of an unforeseen case of a local outbreak and lockdown on the survival of their business. Despite the tough climate as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many rural businesses have been able to maintain a satisfactory position through dedication and collaborative work from staff, customers and community members.

The survey data was collected to build understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on rural businesses and social enterprises across Devon, as well as key areas of need or further assistance to inform targeted support provision via our online business toolkit.

The second survey outlined potential areas relevant for business resilience and recovery for respondents to vote on.

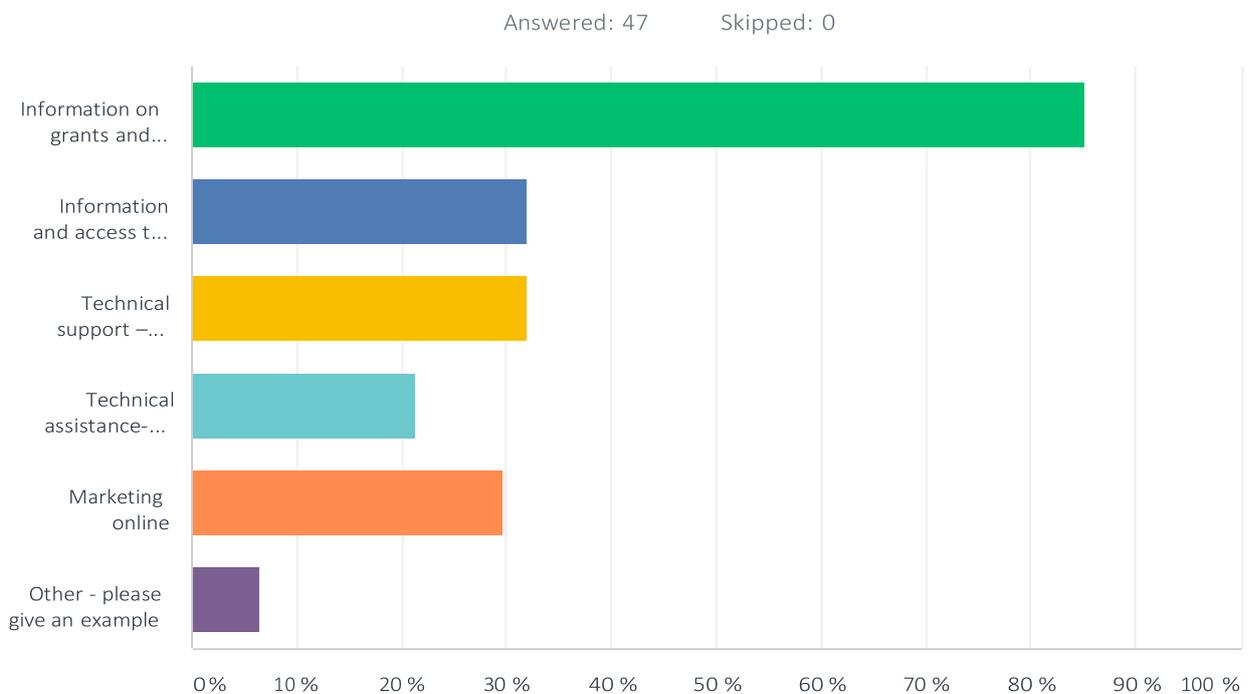


Figure 2: Bar chart showing poll results on key areas for further assistance.

Data depicted on the bar chart above shows a high percentage (85.11%) of need in the area of Information on grants and funding. This is clearly evident in the observed and reported impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown on the finances of most businesses. Additionally, this has been further emphasised as an area of concern through engagement with rural businesses and social enterprises via our themed online focus group meetings.

DCT has used all intelligence gathered from our Covid-19 activities (including surveys) to provide tailored support to our cohort. In this specific area, rural businesses and social



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enterprises have been provided with updated information and resources especially on funding and grants, in tandem with other key areas via our online business toolkit.

Below is an outline of the survey data outcome in descending order.

- Information on grants and funding - 85.11%
- Information and access to digital training - 31.91%
- Technical support (digital platforms) - 31.91%
- Technical assistance (building websites) - 21.28%
- Marketing online - 29.79%
- Other (please give an example) - 6.38%

From the survey, respondents also identified business coaching and support, and digital transformation to improve productivity and client engagement as other key areas for support. Resultantly, DCT in addition to our online focus group meetings, has developed business related trainings (on Customer Journey Mapping and Digital transformation for businesses) to be delivered via our Devon Community Learning Academy (<https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/courses>). This shows our proactive response to the needs of our business cohort towards improving their overall resilience and recovery post Covid-19 lockdown.

Community Shop Survey

A total number of **10 participants** representing community shops from 10 communities trading in diverse commodities, responded to the survey.

Out of the 10 respondents, 71.43% continued to trade with modifications during the lockdown period with the rest of the 28.57% continuing with normal trading at the same level during lockdown. None of the community shops ceased trading for a period of at least three weeks or more.

The majority were able to maintain levels of essential goods during this period, with support from staff and volunteers. According to the data, 57.14% had sufficient staff/ volunteers to run the community shop despite the challenging circumstances posed by the Covid-19 lockdown. Some (42.86%) did not have sufficient staff but were able to employ certain modifications such as home deliveries, online shopping, phone and collect services, etc., to achieve continued operation of their shops to meet increased demands.



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The majority of the community shops identified the tremendous assistance via communal support as one of the main influencing factors of their ability to continue operating within their respective communities. This includes, community members volunteering to help with delivering on foot within the community; assisting with assembling orders; sorting and delivery of orders, etc. The quick response from volunteers aged below 50 to replace the gap left by existing volunteers mostly aged 50+ was particularly very helpful. These community volunteers enhanced the effective delivery of emergency response by community shops and organisations in various communities.

During this recovery phase, most community shops are considering diverse ways to improve their businesses and return to business as usual. This includes consideration of maintenance or modification of working hours; Rearrangement of shop layout to meet changing covid-19 guidance and weather conditions; Continued recruitment of new volunteers and Covid secure ways of reinstating elderly volunteers who had to shield during the lockdown, etc. All these alongside ensuring adherence to all Covid-19 national and local guidance (especially around social distancing and use of face coverings), where applicable for community shops.

Out of the 10 respondents, 57.14% do not have a plan in place in case of a local lockdown, with the rest of them (42.86%) having a plan in place. This depicts the need for further engagement of communities in understanding the Devon LOMP, and how it can inform their community emergency planning for effective actions in case of a local outbreak and lockdown.