TSI SCOTLAND NETWORK

Manifesto for Change

Third Sector Interface Scotland Network - Creating a Fairer Future for Scotland

Introduction

As Scotland slowly emerges from lockdown, every section of society is beginning to take stock of how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all. Scotland's third sector*, as one of the most important players in this unparalleled people-crisis, has also begun the process of reflecting on the impact that both human tragedy and enforced changes have had on communities across the country. This manifesto outlines the sector's role in supporting a recovery - to create a fairer, wellbeing society which also tackles the climate emergency.

As the third sector continues to support communities to pick up the pieces – some with residents left destitute by the effects of the pandemic - its central role has never been more important.

Given that the crisis is by no means over, the third sector must continue to be at the heart of recovery planning, just as it was at its peak, working alongside the very brightest and best of Scotland's diverse communities. The Third Sector Interface (TSI) Scotland Network*, working together across Scotland, is proud to have played a vital role in this nationwide lifeline work. We believe that the crisis demonstrated what we already knew – Scotland depends upon a thriving third sector in every local area. We also believe that the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis presents an unparalleled opportunity for the third sector to cement its role as a critical player as we work towards becoming a fairer, more equal Scotland. Indeed the achievement of many of the ambitions of the National Performance Framework* depends on third sector involvement.

In this document the TSI Scotland Network sets out its manifesto to drive forward positive change for greater equality, under four main headings:-

1. An enhanced role for the third sector

Despite the ever-shifting, complex nature of the Covid-19 crisis, the third sector stepped up rapidly to address immediate needs. Our sector is highly experienced when it comes to lifeline support, meeting the prevention and early intervention needs of the most vulnerable and promoting equalities and sustainability.

The third sector has had representation by national organisations for some time, but if the pandemic has proven anything at all, it's that a post-Covid Scotland also needs the representation and presence of grassroots third sector organisations as central critical partners at the top table, ensuring decisions made reflect on-the-ground realities. Without deep localised knowledge of what's actually happening in communities across the length and breadth of Scotland, there can be no fairer, more equal society for our country. The TSI Scotland Network see this partnership as a win-win relationship - our local presence helping to implement national and local government policy on the ground and government benefitting from our insight, knowledge, experience and expertise.

2. Implementation of place-based approaches

Despite the wonderful efforts of individuals, families, workers and volunteers, the pandemic has come at a huge cost to Scotland. The impact of the disease itself plus the ongoing socio-economic ripples have spread into every corner of communities across the country, affecting them in many ways. It is crucial that the third sector – which works collaboratively with statutory and business partners and understands local context is helped to implement place-based approaches for a fair and green recovery which supports wellbeing and sustainability. This strategy must be deeply embedded in all levels of planning for Scotland's future recovery.

The TSI Scotland Network supports the national ambition to adopt the Place Principle* and devolving more power to local levels. We also fully support the need to take a more collaborative and ambitious approach to harnessing a place's assets – the people, the capital and environmental assets, to achieve the best outcomes for communities.

3. Volunteering and the empowerment of people

As the crisis unfolded, a new wave of neighbourhood volunteers stepped up to the numerous and complex challenges of Covid-19, and they did so at pace. That demonstrable willingness to rally together, to contribute time, skills and experience to support others during the crisis chimes with TSI Scotland Network's vision of a Scotland where individuals are empowered to participate in the creation of a fairer, sustainable society that promotes wellbeing.

These volunteering* responses have been outstanding and have served to illustrate the fundamental importance of people's unpaid contributions to communities and the wider economy not just during the emergency, but always. Our vision is of a Scotland where each of us is empowered to participate and contribute in different ways: through properly rewarded paid work but also through a variety of appropriate, unpaid roles - that are often undervalued – including the distinct roles of unpaid family care and volunteering.

80% of all volunteering is local. The TSI Scotland Network is therefore uniquely placed to build on our decades of experience of nurturing volunteering policy and programmes across Scotland. There are clear opportunities to further develop our partnerships to deliver the Government's vision of a Scotland "where everyone can volunteer, more often, and throughout their lives" [Volunteering for All (2019)].

The TSI Scotland Network is ambitious to maximise the social and economic benefits of people's volunteering responses and specifically empower more people to volunteer more often by further developing successful digital services, recognition and awards programmes, employer-supported volunteering, inclusion support activities, and volunteer management training.

4. A fairer wellbeing society

The pandemic has laid bare the fragility of our health and social care systems - and the extent of poverty and digital exclusion has been exposed like never before. The lengthy suspension of our normal daily lives has resulted in a huge increase in isolation, stress and mental health problems. Already we are seeing warning signs of tremendously challenging economic hardship to come, with unemployment already rising rapidly and prospects for young people looking particularly bleak.

The third sector is already playing a major contribution to narrowing Scotland's stubborn inequalities gap - we already know that a fairer sustainable economy and society depends on it - but now it's more crucial than ever that our knowledge and experience is heard, and acted upon. The pandemic has accelerated the appetite to think differently about what we value as a nation. Wealth and economic growth are increasingly being seen as only one measurement of success. Despite the inevitable economic fragility of the coming months and years, the third sector is ideally placed to support local communities to grow and thrive through innovation, local initiatives, employability supports and ethical, sustainable enterprise models.

*Notes

Third Sector - includes charities, community groups, development trusts, social enterprises and the volunteering sector. Its combined annual value is estimated at £6.06 billion employing 108,000 people (SCVO 2018).

TSI Scotland Network - there are 32 TSIs in Scotland one for each local authority areas - some are partnerships working across large urban and geographical areas, some combine all the functions of the TSIs' work under one roof.

National Performance Framework - measures and reports on progress of government in Scotland against a range of economic, social and environmental indicators and targets.

Volunteering - refers to both formal i.e. through a third party (such as a third sector or public sector organisation) and informal i.e. helping someone without the involvement of any organisation. TSIs continue to support and develop volunteering in each local authority area. In 2015, the Bank of England estimated the economic value of volunteering to the UK to be equivalent to the UK education budget.

Place Principle - aims to help overcome organisational and sectoral boundaries, to encourage better collaboration and community involvement, and improve the impact of combined energy, resources and investment.

Our Manifesto for Change

The case for change is strong but we know that every penny has to count now as we move towards recovery. The TSI Scotland Network supports thousands of charities, community organisations and a growing network of social enterprises across Scotland all ambitious to play their role in creating a fairer future for Scotland.

The TSI Scotland Network calls for:

1. Place
A decisive shift of emphasis and resources to help support and ensure community delivery of place-based services – where the wellbeing of people, places and the environment come before profit to protect the communities and most vulnerable in our societies.

2. Community
Increased investment to build capacity and resilience by the TSI Scotland Network to ensure that every community in Scotland maintains robust, representative and resourced community-led organisations or partnerships that serve local needs.

3. Connected
Clear connection between TSI Scotland Network with Scottish Government directorates to inform the necessary policy changes to ensure implementation of localised place-based strategies for economic renewal.

4. Volunteering
Recognition that the TSI Scotland Network can make a unique contribution to empower inclusive volunteering and maximise the social and community action that emerged through Covid-19.

5. Fair work
Employment schemes that are linked to community wealth-building and creating fair, inclusive and sustainable economies, to maximise community benefit, reduce poverty and inequalities and tackle the climate emergency.

How did we arrive at our Manifesto?

This Manifesto for Change has been developed with knowledge, insight, care and compassion at its heart. But more than that, it has been grounded on good information coming straight from our sector – the localities many of you are working in across Scotland. These are our members who we support day-in, day-out and who rely on working in partnership with us to ensure they are successful in the delivery of services and meet their aspirations.

Through Covid-19, the TSI Scotland Network carried out an influential study and that has shaped our 'asks'. The survey was carried out over a two-month period with community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, as well as the people and communities in which they support.

A total of 1,184 organisations took part, from local neighbourhoods to national level organisations across Scotland's 32 Local Authorities. 25% of participants self-defined as community groups, 61% as voluntary organisations and 14% as social enterprises. This report highlights the main survey findings on a national level.

Each TSI has also produced their own local version of this report, please contact your local TSI for more local information – details of which are on the last page.

Key Findings

- A key pinch point in the financial recovery of all organisations will be the cessation of the Job Retention Scheme. 58% of social enterprises and 39% of voluntary organisations with staff have furloughed staff and support will be required to avoid job losses.

- Organisations have been entrepreneurial and adaptive during this period. Half of all organisations have changed what they do, or have modified delivery support to their community/service users. 9% of social enterprises have started online trading during this time.

- Organisations are seeing first-hand the impact of Covid-19 on people's mental health and are very concerned about the impact now and the future. 9 out 10 organisations are concerned about the effect of ongoing social distancing and shielding on mental health.

- It is clear that community has flourished and risen to the challenge of supporting each other. A significant majority of organisations (84%) report that people are looking out for each other and 50% of organisations believe that there has been improved collaboration.

- The financial situation of social enterprises as a consequence of Covid-19 is perilous, and without urgent financial support, many will not recover. 81% of social enterprises are experiencing a reduction in income from trading and 86% of social enterprises expect their financial position to worsen.

- Reduction in income from fundraising is threatening the future of voluntary organisations large and small, with half of these organisations experiencing a reduction in income from fundraising.

Access to the full results of the survey can be found here: www.tsi.scot/surveycovid

Why else is the TSI Scotland Network best placed to drive an agenda of renewal?

Both before and through the pandemic, we have worked together as a Network but also with our partners within communities including our local authority colleagues, NHS, health and social care partnerships and friends within the business communities.
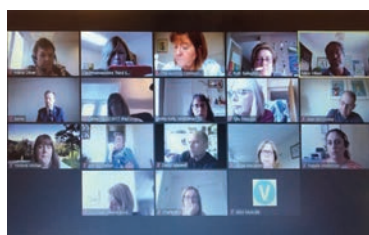
The third sector is in an enviable position to enable collaborations and development of social economy partnerships. We also have the ear of funders – they know we understand and have the knowledge of our local areas, but more than that, we also can help resolve sometimes complex and difficult governance issues and help them achieve their outcomes.

Here are some of the important pieces of work currently lead by this Network:

The TSI Scotland Network has the National Performance Framework at the heart of its work both nationally and locally. TSIs are working with local partners on recovery planning and are well-placed within wider networks linked to community, business and health and social care planning to inform and advise on steps to renewal.

TSI Scotland Network Chief Officers have met weekly through the crisis period both at a national and regional level and continue to meet monthly. The leaders have been organised, resourceful and shaped responses collectively.

@TSIScotNet Spotlight twitter feature through Covid-19 ensured that best practice from across the Network was shared – now @TSIScotNet SpotlightRecovery is again ensuring critical information is being viewed by national partners.

A new online training system is being developed with partners the Robertson Trust to provide skills development of TSI staff and aims to cascade training to the wider third sector workforce and voluntary management throughout Scotland.

TSI Scotland Network continues to take an active role in the Scottish Volunteering Forum to work with partners on developing an effective 'Volunteering for All' delivery plan.

The Network is using innovative digitally-assisted ways to share information and knowledge across the Network and externally with funders and partners to ensure the most effective, impactful distribution of funding.

Who are your TSI Scotland Network contacts - please find below:

Aberdeen
Aberdeen Council of Voluntary
Organisations (ACVO)
www.acvo.org.uk

Aberdeenshire
Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action
www.avashire.org.uk

Angus
Voluntary Action Angus
www.voluntaryactionangus.org.uk

Argyll and Bute
Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface
www.argylltsi.org

Clackmannanshire
Clackmannanshire Third Sector
Interface
www.ctsi.org.uk

Dumfries and Galloway
Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway
www.thirdsectordumgal.org.uk

Dundee
Dundee Volunteer and Voluntary Action
www.dvva.scot

Dundee Social Enterprise Network
(DSEN)
www.dundeesen.org

East Ayrshire
CVO East Ayrshire
www.cvoea.co.uk

Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire
www.volunteer@eav.org.uk

East Dunbartonshire
East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action
www.edva.org

East Lothian
Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL)
www.volunteereastlothian.org.uk

East Renfrewshire
Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire
www.va-er.org.uk

Edinburgh
Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations'
Council (EVOC)
www.evoc.org.uk

Volunteer Edinburgh
www.volunteeredinburgh.org.uk

Edinburgh Social Enterprise
www.edinburghsocialenterprise.co.uk

Falkirk
Council for Voluntary Sector (CVS)
Falkirk
www.cvsfalkirk.org.uk

Fife
Fife Voluntary Action
www.fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk

Glasgow
Glasgow Council for the Voluntary
Sector (GCVS)
www.gcvs.org.uk

Glasgow Social Enterprise Network
(GSEN)
www.gsen.org.uk

Volunteer Glasgow
www.volunteerglasgow.org

Highland
Highland Third Sector Interface
Partnership
www.highlandtsi.org.uk

Inverclyde
CVS Inverclyde
www.cvsinverclyde.org.uk

Midlothian
Midlothian Voluntary Action
Volunteer Midlothian
www.thirdsectormidlothian.org.uk

Moray
TSI Moray
www.tsimoray.org.uk

North Ayrshire
Arran Community and Voluntary
Service (CVS)
www.arrancvs.org.uk

Ayrshire Community Trust
www.theayrshirecommunitytrust.co.uk

North Lanarkshire
Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org

Orkney
Voluntary Action Orkney
www.vaorkney.org.uk

Perth and Kinross
Perth and Kinross Association of
Voluntary Services
www.thirdsectorpk.org.uk

Renfrewshire
Engage Renfrewshire
www.engagerenfrewshire.org

Scottish Borders
The Bridge
onlineborders.org.uk/community/thebridge

Berwickshire Association for Voluntary
Service (BAVS)
www.bavs.org.uk

Volunteer Centre Borders
www.vcborders.org.uk

Scottish Borders Social Enterprise
Chamber
www.sbsec.org.uk

Shetland
Voluntary Action Shetland
www.shetland-communities.org.uk/vas

South Ayrshire
Voluntary Action South Ayrshire
www.voluntaryactionsouthayrshire.org.uk

South Lanarkshire
Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire
www.vaslan.org.uk

Stirlingshire
Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise
www.sventerprise.org.uk

West Dunbartonshire
West Dunbartonshire CVS
www.wdcvs.com

Western Isles
Third Sector Interface - Western Isles
www.tsiwi.org

West Lothian
Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian
www.voluntarysectorgateway.org

For more information, please go to: www.gov.scot/policies/third-sector/third-sector-interfaces