



# VOLUNTARY ACTION DONCASTER

## Newsletter No. 4 – 22 May 2020

### **We're back on track**

After setting up the Volunteering Hub, you will be pleased to know that we are back on track with establishing a Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) Sector Cooperative for Doncaster. Phase 2 of the VCF Project is building on the report and recommendations from the Voices of Doncaster work completed in Phase 1. [You can read that report here.](#)

The purpose of the FairShares cooperative is to provide a strong voice and representation, infrastructure support and access for commissioning and partnerships. Voluntary Action Doncaster welcome your input in developing the model and the organisation. Together we have the opportunity to work meaningfully with statutory and community sector bodies to deliver shared outcomes for our town.

The vision for Voluntary Action Doncaster is to develop a sector that is strong, resilient and sustainable, with the capacity to take on additional responsibilities for the local VCF Sector. With your input we can nurture and support the great work that individual organisations, existing groups and alliances are already doing.

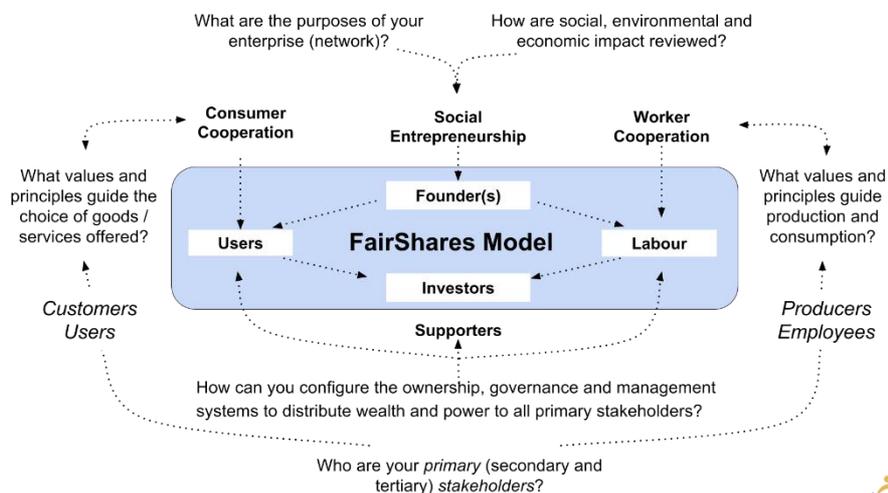
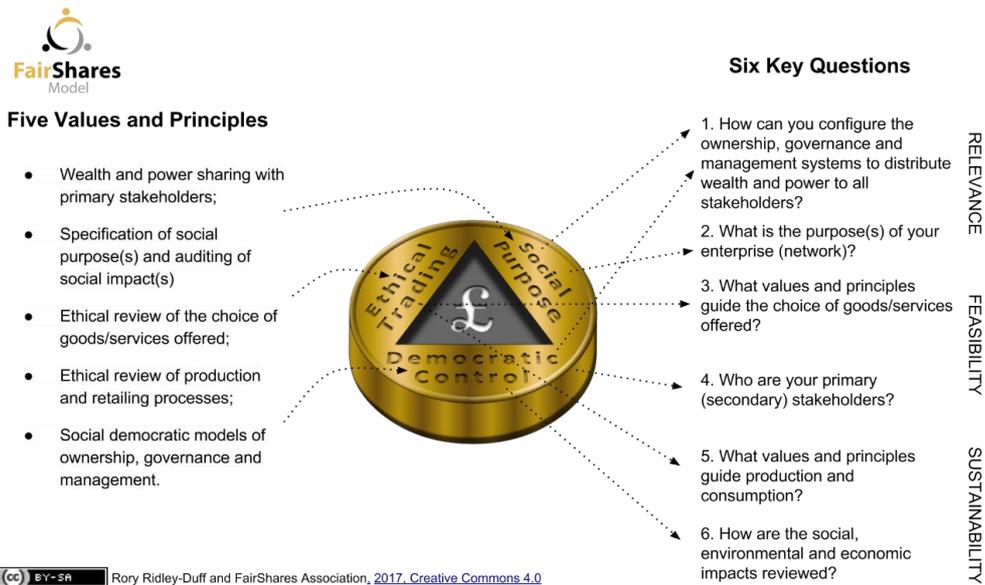
We are delighted by the level of engagement so far, considering the amount of additional work we have all faced during the Covid-19 epidemic. As a founding member, we ask that you get involved, as best you can, in the next stage which is to shape of the new cooperative. To move things forward, we welcome your views and comments on the FairShares model highlights below. Tell us what you think by emailing us [voluntaryactiondoncaster@gmail.com](mailto:voluntaryactiondoncaster@gmail.com)

### **FairShares Model**

FairShares is about finding ways to share power and wealth equitably amongst the stakeholders that make the enterprise successful. The FairShares Model helps to recognise, manage and reward each member's contribution in an ethical and just way.

- In the FairShares model, everyone who makes the enterprise successful is treated as a member
- Giving recognition to each member is essential; credit must be gained by those that make the enterprise successful
- Operating as a cooperative, members can organise their contribution according to FairShares values and principles
- Everyone can become involved according to their interests and they will receive rewards for their contributions

- FairShares companies, cooperatives, associations and partnerships, as far as possible, integrate their interests and skillsets across the membership. They allow all parties to negotiate terms for working, supplying, using, lending and borrowing, and are helped by constitutions that encourage democratic control by all interested parties



Developing the FairShares model for Voluntary Action Doncaster needs members and interested parties to agree on a set of operating principles that are welcomed by all.

As a member of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Doncaster, we welcome your views and thoughts about developing the key principles.

Voluntary Action Doncaster are committed to engaging and involving you in discussions about building the organisation and developing its principles. We will plan a series of engagement opportunities to gather your views and feedback.

If you would like to find out more about FairShares then you can email the team – [voluntaryactiondoncaster@gmail.com](mailto:voluntaryactiondoncaster@gmail.com) or visit [www.fairshares.coop](http://www.fairshares.coop)

## **Good News stories from the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector in Doncaster**

### **b:friend – [www.letsbfriend.org.uk](http://www.letsbfriend.org.uk)**

We've transferred all existing befriending over to the telephone with check-in calls being made twice weekly. Plus, we've recruited and paired an additional 160 volunteers since mid-March. Eight of our Social Clubs now take place on conference call each week with quizzes, sing-alongs and poetry recitals are the order of the day.

We're also hosting three Facebook Live sessions each week with activities including gentle yoga, bird watching tips, dance tutorials and art workshops. We're also distributing monthly Social Bundles to the most isolated older people that include all sorts to stay connected and engaged with others.



### **South Yorkshire Good Credit Project – [www.goodcreditindex.co.uk](http://www.goodcreditindex.co.uk)**

Now more than ever, people might be finding their finances stretched and need support to get back on track.

Whether you're facing a sudden drop in income, unplanned expenses or benefit delays, it can be tempting to borrow money, at any cost, to make ends meet. But if you sign up for more than you can afford to repay, under terms that aren't fair, you could easily end up worse off than before.

Luckily, there are services across Doncaster and South Yorkshire to help you find fair credit or other practical help.

Demos, the cross-party think tank and educational charity, is delivering the South Yorkshire Good Credit Project to help reduce the need for high-cost borrowing and raise awareness of more affordable options.

The Good Credit Project is highlighting some of the free advice available to help you manage your money or deal with debt. While face-to-face contact is restricted during Covid-19, providers are generally offering other ways to get in touch so support is still accessible even if premises might not be.

### **Smile Packs for local people - Aspiring2 working with Edlington Hilltop Helping Hands Centre**

The initiative was put in place by the Helping Hands staff and we saw the huge benefit of this and asked if we could co deliver the project as a match funding opportunity. Thanks to the funding we already have in place to host Healthy Roadshows throughout Doncaster this seemed a perfect diversity to allow us to still check on our local residents and offer information to match local need as well as making Smiles along the way – Healthy Futures funding is allocated to us by Doncaster Council.

Over 100 packs have gone out which includes a plant, chocolate, cakes, activity book, a candle or room diffuser along with a greeting card make by local kids. The Smile Pack recipients are nominated by local people for local people and have currently been distributed to some of the most vulnerable and isolated individuals in our community covering Edlington, Conisbrough, Denaby, Mexbrough and Swinton with the odd couple out at Tickhill and Bessacarr.

Here is one of our very happy recipients



### **Support for the local Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector through Covid-19 – [www.sycf.org.uk/survey/](http://www.sycf.org.uk/survey/)**

A group of infrastructure groups and regional bodies, dedicated to ensuring the resilience and development of community and voluntary organisations, have come together to strengthen their support for the sector during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Community and voluntary groups have long been a vital resource for communities and are needed now more than ever. Food banks, shelters, crisis support groups, mental

health services and many more organisations are responding to huge demand for their services and are working tirelessly to ensure people are supported.

The sector has adapted quickly and effectively but is also facing new issues, financial pressures, and an uncertain future.

In response, eight infrastructure charities and regional bodies have joined forces to ensure that the support available is meeting demand. South Yorkshire's Community Foundation, Barnsley CVS, Voluntary Action Doncaster, Voluntary Action Rotherham, Voluntary Action Sheffield, South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau, the Sheffield City Region and South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System are working together in partnership with the University of Sheffield.

As a first step, they have launched a survey for community sector groups to complete about how they have adapted during Covid-19 and to detail the problems they currently face.

Ruth Willis, Chief Executive of South Yorkshire's Community Foundation said: "The purpose of this survey is to ensure that we can continue to do our best to help our essential community organisations. Every response we get means we can better advocate for community sector interests and to adapt ourselves to meet local needs. Thank you to everyone who takes the time to fill the survey in. The more responses we get the better we are able to help."

To complete the survey, go to: [www.sycf.org.uk/survey/](http://www.sycf.org.uk/survey/)

### **Volunteer Hub Update for the VAD Newsletter**

Since Voluntary Action Doncaster launched the Volunteer Hub in May 2020, we have been talking with lots of Doncaster residents who would like to give their time to support local causes. Many of them are furloughed and have time, skills and knowledge to share with others to help their communities.

So far, we have matched 88 people with 30 local Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector organisations. These organisations are providing a range of essential services including collecting and delivering shopping and prescriptions and providing regular telephone calls to offer a listening ear and support those who are shielding and self-isolating.

If you are a community group in need of volunteer help to deliver your services you can register with Voluntary Action Doncaster on our website:

<http://www.voluntaryactiondoncaster.org.uk/volunteering/>

### **Voluntary Action Doncaster are recruiting for a Chief Officer**

This is a new and exciting time for the Voluntary Community and Faith (VCF) Sector in Doncaster. We are establishing a new Cooperative organisation that will provide a strong voice, infrastructure support and a point of access for commissioning and partnership working to a diverse group of organisations serving the needs of local residents. We are looking for a Chief Officer to be instrumental in its success.

We are looking for a dynamic individual that can work effectively with stakeholders from all sectors to maximise opportunities and help its members achieve their full potential. The postholder will work with a Board of Directors elected from the VCF sector in Doncaster; chosen for their skills, knowledge and experience. They will provide vital strategic support and direction.

You can find out more about this opportunity here:

<http://www.voluntaryactiondoncaster.org.uk/we-are-recruiting-for-a-chief-officer/>