

Omagh Forum for Rural Associations

Analysis Covid 19 Survey, July 2020

Introduction

This survey was carried out by Omagh Forum for Rural Associations as part of a larger piece of work by the Rural Support Networks and contract holders/partners of the DAERA Local Rural Community Development Service in June and July 2020. The aim of the survey was to gauge the needs of our member groups in the midst of the global pandemic of COVID-19 and to see how we could support our rural community groups and organisations. The survey was carried out over a 3-4 week period using the Microsoft Teams Platform and was sent by email with a follow up phone call to those who hadn't completed it. Omagh Forum received 106 responses to the survey, the results of which are shown below.

1 Group name

We received responses from a wide range of organisations, outlined in **Appendix 1**. **Appendix 2** categorises them loosely into types of groups to demonstrate the range of groups we work with.

2 We asked the area served.

The bulk of respondents were from the BT79 area, 35 responses, closely followed by BT92 with 29 responses. BT93, BT94 and BT98 were equally represented at 23 each with BT74 at 17. The lowest area covered was BT75, the reason for this is we only cover a small part of this area, the remaining postcode element is in the neighbouring Council area which we do not cover. General areas outlined as follows and see **table 1** overleaf:

BT79 Carrickmore, Greencastle, Gortin, Beragh, Killyclogher, Sixmilecross; Garvaghey;

BT92 Bellanaleck; Teemore; Roslea, Kinawley; Derylin; Newtownbutler, Lisnaskea

BT93 Ederney; Kesh; Belleek; Belcoo; Derrygonnelly, Garrison

BT94 Irvinestown; Ballinamallard; Maguiresbridge; Tempo, Brookeborough, Lisbellaw

BT78 West Tyrone – Trillick, Eskra, Seskinore, Fintona, Dromore, Drumquin, Clanabogan

BT74 Enniskillen, Monea, Letterbreen, Tamlaght

BT75 Clabby, Cooneen

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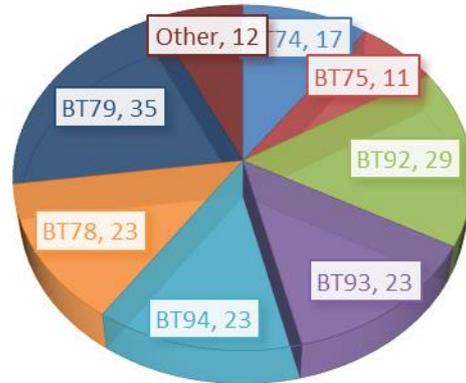
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**TABLE 1
AREA SERVICED BY RESPONDENT**



3 Sector

We had 101 responses from community and voluntary groups, and 5 others. We did not target statutory organisations with the survey which explains why we have no responses from the statutory sector.

4 Staff employed.

The majority of respondents, 71%, (n75 – 75 responses) did not have any staff employed. 19% (n20) had between 1-5 staff; 8% (n9) had between 11-20 members of staff and 2 organisations had between 11-20 staff

5 Annual turnover

Half of respondents (n53) had under £10,000 annual turnover, 42 groups had under £100,000 and 11 had over £100,000. This would be our experience as we tend to work with groups in the lower income bracket.

6 Member of Omagh Forum

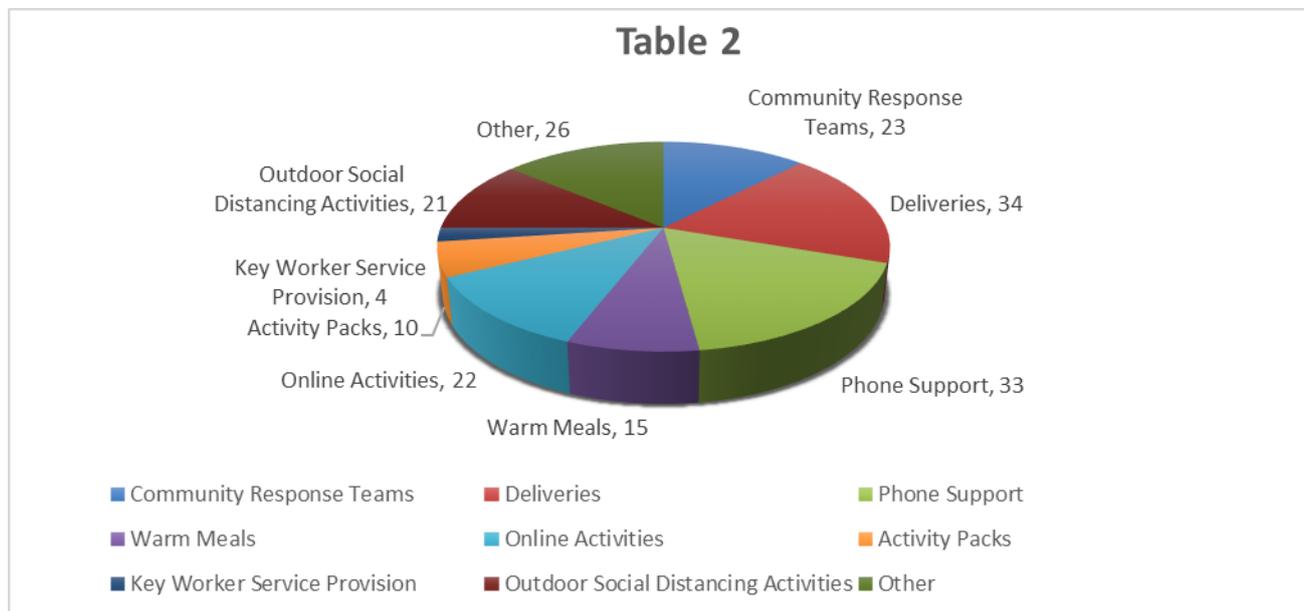
73% of groups who responded were members of Omagh Forum. We gathered some contact details for groups in question 7 who wished to join.

8 Is your group currently active?

We were pleasantly surprised to see that 60% of groups (n64) were active during the COVID 19-time period.

9 For those groups active what type of service is being provided?

Table 2 shows the wide variety of activities that groups were involved in, the main one being deliveries – 34 groups were doing this. Very closely followed by phone support being provided by 33 groups. Other support ranged from community response teams (n23) and online activities (n22)



10 Is your group receiving all the necessary information around COVID -19?

90% of groups said they were receiving necessary information. From speaking to groups at the time we know that there was uncertainty around the reopening of community venues so this part explained the remaining 10% saying no

11 Is your committee or members connecting remotely at the minute?

Again 90% of groups were in regular contact with their committee and /or members.

12 How?

The bulk of respondents (n70) were connecting by telephone, closely followed by 55 connecting via WhatsApp. Many respondents were using more than one means of communication. For a technology that was rarely heard of previously Zoom has grown in use, 32 groups were using it to keep in touch with committee or members. In addition, 14 groups were using messenger; 9 using Microsoft Teams and 12 using a variety of other methods.

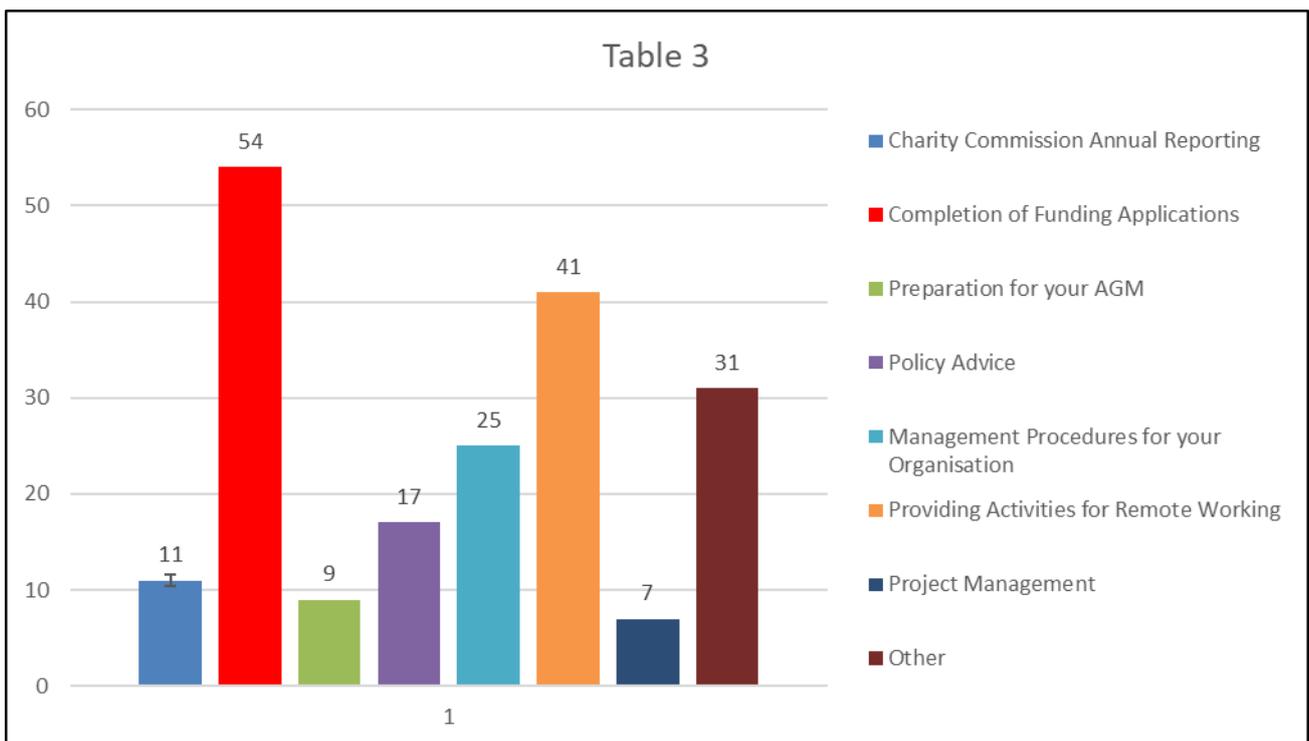
Just a few months ago this response would have been totally different. The very clear growth of virtual meetings and means of communication can be seen. Groups are now actively using the Phone, WhatsApp, Messenger and Zoom to communicate and operate.

13 Does your group have access to Wi-Fi and technology?

83% of those who responded said they had access to Wi-Fi and technology. We should bear in mind that this may refer to one or two people in the group and not necessarily all committee members. However, we were surprised at the high number. Whilst our survey was initially sent out by email we also telephoned group representatives to ensure a wide range of coverage. However, it could be argued that a lot of the respondents to the survey already had access to Wi-Fi and technology therefore our sample was not truly representative of the whole geography and this finding should be viewed alongside other findings on access to Wi-Fi and technology

14 What support and guidance can OFRA provide at this time

Table 3 shows the variety of responses to this question and it is clear that groups still need help for their work at this time, COVID-19 or not. As we would expect the main support required at this time is help completing application forms which 54 groups asked for help with (51%). Providing ideas for remote activities was requested by 41 people (39%); and management procedures for your organisation was a popular request by 25 people.

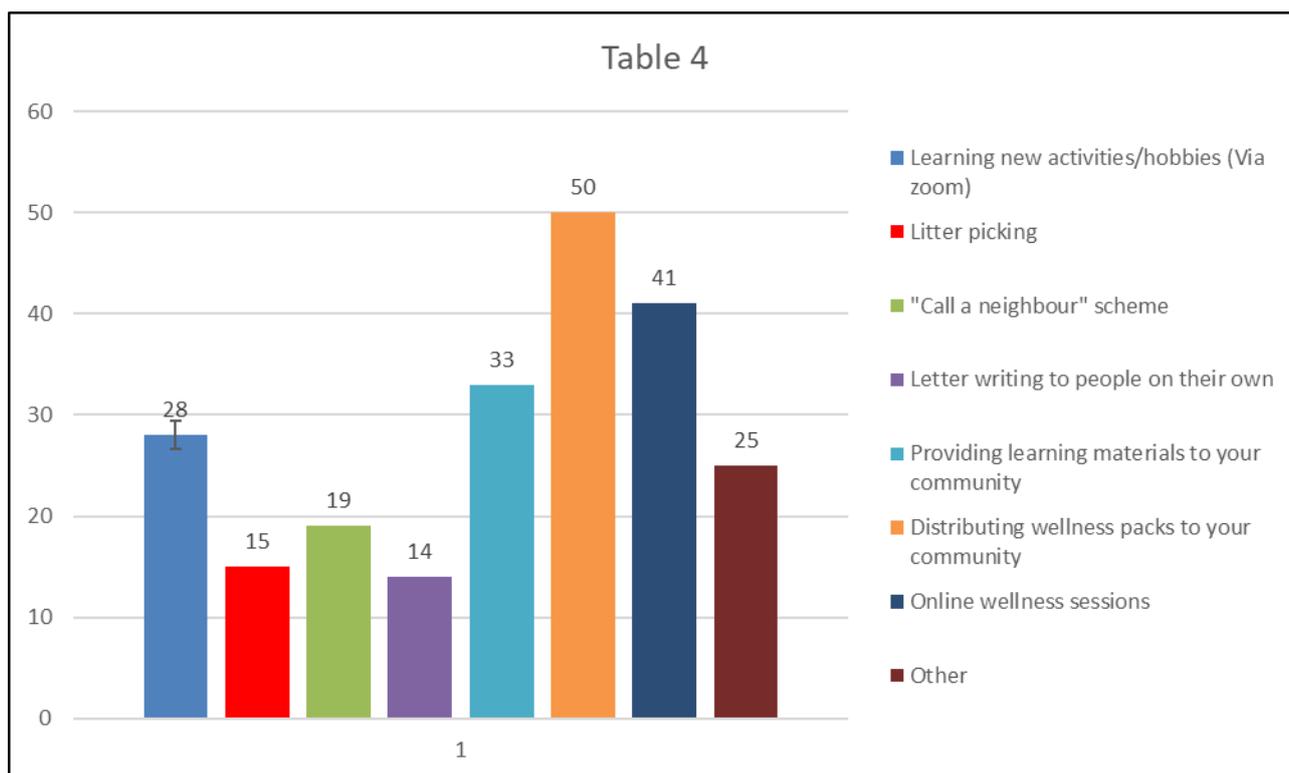


15 How can Omagh Forum do this?

An equal response to this question with hard copy training materials edging into the lead with 36 requests; online tutorials via zoom with 32 requests; 29 for online networking/ theme based and the remaining 43 asking for other methods. Many people out there, especially older generations still like actual paper as opposed to everything becoming virtual.

16 Are there any projects your group might be interested in doing during the pandemic that we could help deliver within your community?

Table 4 shows the wide variety of activities that groups are interested in developing, the main one being distributing wellness packs to those isolated – 50 groups stating this. Omagh Forum was able to distribute 135 well-being packs over the timeframe of the pandemic to households who were socially isolated and vulnerable. This was closely followed by online well-being sessions (n41) and providing learning materials to your community with 33 requests. Other areas of interest were learning new activities/ hobbies via zoom (n28); call a neighbour scheme (n19); litter picking (n15) and letter writing to people on their own (n14). A number of suggestions was also made and these are listed in **Appendix 3**

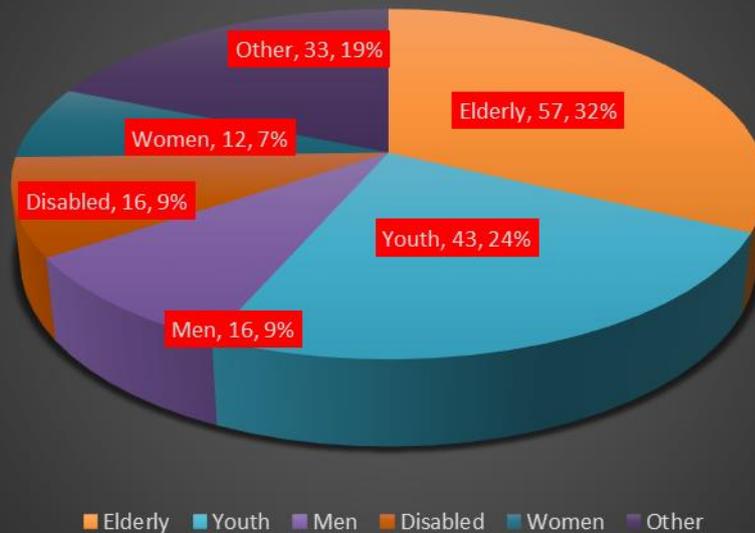


17 Are there any big issues in your community for?

The responses are listed after each sector:

Elderly 57; Youth 43; Men 16; Disabled 16; Women 12; and other 33 and are displayed in the pie chart in **Table 5**

Table 5 Groups with issues



18 What are the issues for these groups?

The full list of responses is contained in **Appendix 4**, but includes issues such as isolation and reduced access to services; lack of social interaction; low confidence in returning to social inclusion. Notably, older people’s groups, sports facilities and youth clubs have been closed and this has raised issues for both these age groups in particular as in many rural areas this means there is little or nothing else around for them to do or to get out to.

Although not statistically significant, there were slightly more men than women who reported being negatively affected, although this could have something to do with being stuck in the house and unable to go to their usual activities.

19 Has COVID-19 impacted on the financial position of your group?

68% of respondents said that yes their group was impacted financially (n72)

20 If yes what is your expected loss this year?

Table 6 shows the loss clearly with the bulk of groups, 37% (n39) experiencing less than £5,000 drop in income and a further 23 groups (22%) expecting to lose between £5,001 and £15,000. Seven groups thought they might lose over £25,000. This is clearly an issue for groups and a major loss of income leads to an uncertain future for the viability of groups. In the current crisis nearly 40 groups will lose less than £5,000 but this is very serious as the vast majority of local groups will fall into this category as many groups are on a low income. Additionally, many of these groups may not be registered charities or may not be eligible or capable or may simply not make applications for grant assistance which has been available. Our survey was carried out before the launch of the DfC funding for charities directed through TNL, so Omagh Forum was able to direct groups to this source as well as others through our regular ebulletin.



21 If you have a community facility, what issues do you face during lockdown?

Fifty-three respondents (50%) were concerned about covering the cost of overheads; Most of these costs are fixed and in addition groups have few if any ways to now raise the necessary funds to cover these costs. 10 had issues of employment of staff and 9 with maintaining tenants. A further 23 groups had a variety of other issues which are listed in **Appendix 5**. Not all respondents owned or were responsible for a community building and some groups had more than one concern.

22 Is your group thinking or planning what to do in recovery, adhering to social distance how many could the hall hold for activities.

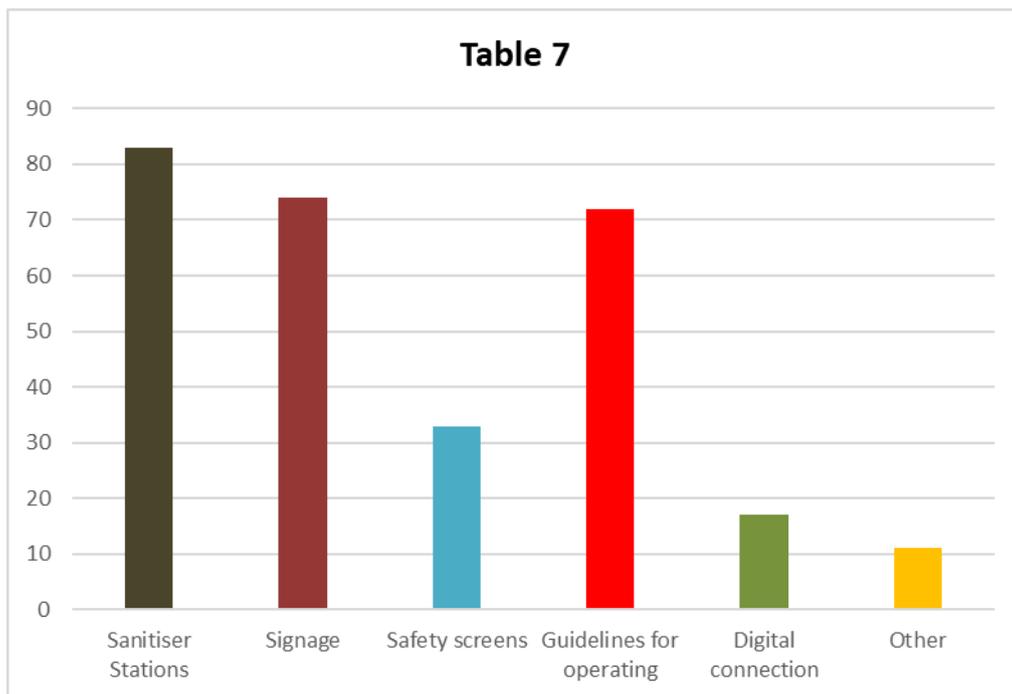
We had 79 responses to this question. Some said they would not reopen until autumn. Quite a few were able to state their numbers permitted based on social distancing requirements. For some groups their activities don't lend themselves to social distancing such as knit and knatter; coffee morning; walking groups where the whole point is social interaction. For some the reduced numbers necessary for social distancing will not cover the cost of overheads. Some were planning outdoor activities but not willing to consider indoors at this stage. Several were awaiting government guidelines including several childcare facilities and those working with learning disability.

It is very clear that the impact of social distancing will be major for the sector. Many venues will not be economically viable or even capable of adaptation to current restrictions. Many community venues are small. There is off course a cost and capacity issue for groups too. **See Appendix 6**

23 What do you need to reopen?

The main resources identified here were sanitiser stations (n83); signage (74); guidelines for operating (n72). Other items were safety screen (n33); digital connection (n170) and 11 other. Other included things like wipe-able mats, weights and individual equipment so it's for one person

and can't be shared; barriers, floor stickers, staff training; need another door out of the hall for one way traffic. One day centre said they just won't open until the virus is gone! **See Table 7**



24 Would you like assistance from Omagh Forum in planning activities for your group to do during recovery stage?

Fifty four replied yes and 48 said no. It is notable that many, particularly very small groups, will struggle to survive over the coming months and some areas could therefore lose vital community facilities, volunteers, and infrastructure if relevant local support cannot be effectively provided. It is assumed that those who answered No to this question already know what their activities will be – Q 23 above nonetheless suggests they still want help with the practical steps to re-open.

25 If yes how?

Fifty five responses were received for this questions and the full list is shown at **Appendix 7**. An example of responses includes: risk assessment and activity guidance; financial assistance; general advice on how other groups are faring and what works for them; advice re safety measures; advice on local suppliers of PPE; suggest some activities that can be done at social distance; no one is telling community halls about how to reopen; zoom session with groups, even just for a chat.

Omagh Forum have addressed some of these areas at the time of survey analysis. Zoom training was offered and well taken up in a total of five successive classes. The regular ebulletin contains lots of funding opportunities; we drew up guidance on how groups might consider returning to their premises safely and we have shared information between groups on what is going well. And there is work for us here as well to help groups moving forward.

26 Any other information?

There were 33 responses to this question and they are listed in full at **Appendix 8**

27 How would you rate our ebulletin?

We got a whopping 4.59 average which is very positive



28 How could we improve?

We had 38 responses, many of them saying it was very good as it was. Other responses included:

Avoid cross sending as information was being received from other sources; hard copy preferred; link contents to the actual item further down the page; send it out on a set day or time; sometimes there is too much information. So there are some suggestions here that we can look into. **Appendix 9** holds the full list

29 Any other comments

We had a variety of responses here from 30 sources. Many were appreciative of our work and continued to share concerns about the way ahead for their group and about financial sustainability of their group. “Good to know that you are there and sending us out information even though we may not contact you”; “we are grateful for the advice and the fact that we are contacted”; “Omagh Forum has been fantastic throughout this whole thing....” See **Appendix 10** for further information

Conclusions & Recommendations

This survey is one of the biggest carried out in the area since the COVID19 pandemic wreaked havoc with the lives of communities around the world. In a short space of time 106 community based groups willingly participated and gave their views openly and honestly.

The subsequent report and the conversations in the community and voluntary (c&v) sector during this lockdown period clearly demonstrates the real concerns for the social, mental and physical well-being of rural residents as we try to recover from lockdown. Groups from every background are stating that while they have successfully created a safety net (with Central and local Government and the c/v sector) for their local community and while they are trying to develop virtual/ online alternatives, there is an overwhelming desire to get back to some level of physical interaction. Not only does the survey show the concerns in the c&v sector and the desire to return to normal activities - it also highlights the vast amount of work being carried out by the sector and how essential their work and support was to their local communities and the speed at which they could react to the diverse needs within their area.

Getting back into community facilities will require community halls and other facilities to reopen safely and in line with current best practice and within Government guidance. The survey clearly shows that Omagh Forum is being asked to help to make this a reality. Groups are asking for practical assistance and resources to save them from financial ruin and to allow them to safely return to face to face meetings and activities.

Omagh Forum will share the results of this survey with partners and Government and will lobby for the resources needed to save the rural infrastructure and to give local rural dwellers hope and confidence that local services, facilities and activities can and will return in the very near future (albeit with strict new safeguards in place).

Omagh Forum for Rural Associations

We are a registered charity NIC 100098 and a Company Limited by guarantee NI 42973. As a Rural Support Network we provide community development support to groups across the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. We are funded by DAERA under the Tackling Poverty and Social Isolation Framework (TRPSI) to deliver the South West Rural Community Development Service. We welcome new members from across Fermanagh and Omagh and can be contacted as below:

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Facebook: Omagh forum for rural associations

Twitter: @ofrarsn

Appendix 1 – List of participating groups in OFRA Covid-19 Survey, June 2020

1. Drumquin Community and Youth Centre
2. Action for Children Early Intervention and Family support service
3. Anonymous
4. NAS West Branch Omagh
5. Community Advice Fermanagh
6. Dromore GFC
7. Sunflower early years playgroup
8. Parish of Aghalurcher Network Group
9. Gortin Presbyterian Church
10. Creggan Community Association
11. Magheraveely community development association
12. Rouskey Community And Development Association
13. Clogher Valley RFC
14. The Erne District Chinese Families' And Friends' Association
15. Kesh Development Association
16. Kinawley GFC
17. Newtownbutler First Fermanagh's GFC
18. Brookeborough Market House Group
19. Bannagh Community Project
20. Tattyreagh youth and Community Group
21. Fermanagh Film Club.
22. Cappagh Young Farmers Club
23. Enniskillen Ladies Hockey Club
24. Feaugh Pipe Band
25. Cooley Primary School & Nursery PTA
26. Drumduff Drumnakilly Community Association
27. Home-Start Omagh District
28. Kindertee Community Playgroup
29. Loughmacrory 50+ Community Group
30. Belleek Men's Shed
31. Trillick Arts & Cultural Society
32. Sillees River Social & Cultural Society
33. Omagh Independent Advice Services
34. The Erne District Chinese Families' and Friends' Association
35. Teemore Women's Group
36. Fintona Senior Citizens club
37. Fermanagh Sports & Cultural Awareness Association
38. St Ronan's PTFA
39. Oak Healthy Living Centre
40. Trillick Enterprise Leisure Limited
41. St. Molaise Hall Community Association
42. Lisnarick FC
43. Little Treasures Playgroup Kinawley
44. Beragh Swifts Community Group
45. Anonymous
46. Seskinore Chapel of Ease (Church of Ireland)

47. DDCA
48. W F Marshall friends club
49. Nippers Alley Playgroup
50. Home-Start Erne
51. Eskra Community Association
52. Enniskillen Macular Support Group
53. Aghadrumsee GAA
54. 1st Ballinamallard Scout Group
55. Belcoo GFC
56. 1st Mountjoy Boys Brigade
57. Cashel Community Association
58. Ederney Community Development Trust
59. Altamuskin Com Assoc
60. Barr Jubilee Pipe Band
61. St. Josephs YC
62. Trillick Arts & Cultural Society
63. St. Molaise GFC
64. Trory Bowling Club
65. Tiny Tots Mother & Toddler Group
66. Trillick Senior Citizens
67. Owenkillew Dev Co Ltd
68. Teemore Regeneration
69. 1st Magheraculmoney Scouts
70. Cavanleck LOL 623
71. Maguiresbridge Friday Club
72. Mucat
73. Termon Community Responders
74. Greencastle Community Association
75. Knockmoyle Youth Club
76. Ecclesville Centre
77. Roslea Shamrocks GFC
78. DSG 2010
79. Magheraveely Sunshine Club
80. Mountfield ADA
81. Friends Of Clachan Court
82. Loughmacrory Community Dev Assoc
83. 6th Fermanagh
84. Ederney Masonic Lodge No. 819
85. Rural Housing Association
86. Knocks Com Association
87. Bunnahone Bunnies Cross Community Playgroup
88. Camowen Outreach
89. Gortin St Patrick's and Badoney Ladies
90. Lisnarick Community Development Association
91. Erne Boxing Club
92. Lisbellaw Parish Centre
93. Newtownbutler Community Development Association
94. Derrygonnelly GFC
95. Ballinamallard Support Group

96. Fermanagh Sports & Cultural Awareness Association
97. Drumquin Development Association
98. Irvinestown Masonic Lodge
99. Fermanagh GAA
100. Devenish Bowling Club
101. Dun Uladh
102. Garvaghey Area Community Association
103. Cloughfin Community Association
104. Lisbellaw South Fermanagh World War Society
105. Lisnaskea Historical Society
106. Sixmilecross Pipe Band

Appendix 2 – Categorisation of participating groups

Type of Organisations	Omagh Forum
Community Development Generic groups	9
Community halls group	10
Social Enterprises	8
Sports groups	
• GAA	10
• Rugby	1
• Soccer	3
• Other (Tennis, Angling, Coastal Rowers, etc.)	4
Orange Halls/ PUL community	5
Arts based groups (e.g. drama, painting, crafts)	3
Cultural groups (e.g. Orange bands, Hibernians, CCE)	5
Historical Societies/Groups	2
Irish Language/Ulster Scots Group	
Womens group	1
Men's group/ men's sheds	2
Youth group	8
Pre-school/ Play groups	8
Schools Support/PTA Group	2
Older people	5
BAME group	2
LGBTQ groups	
Farming support group	3
Issue based e.g. mental health support,	2
Environmental groups e.g. beekeepers, anti- mining, In Bloom etc.	
Health based groups e.g. walking group, yoga, First aid	2
Voluntary sector groups	4
Reminiscence groups	
Lifesaving & Search & Rescue (SAR) groups	1
Church/Faith Based Groups	4
Anonymous	2
RSN Total	106

Appendix 3

Question 16 Are there any projects your group might be interested in doing during the pandemic that we could help deliver within your community?

Table 4 (main body of document) shows the wide variety of activities that groups are interested in developing, the main one being distributing wellness packs to those isolated – 50 groups stating this. Omagh Forum was able to distribute 135 well-being packs over the timeframe of the pandemic to households who were socially isolated and vulnerable. This was closely followed by online well-being sessions (n41) and providing learning materials to your community with 33 requests. Other areas of interest were learning new activities/ hobbies via zoom (n28); call a neighbour scheme (n19); litter picking (n15) and letter writing to people on their own (n14).

Other suggestions were:

- IT Training e.g. Zoom, WhatsApp, Messenger
- Church activities
- Database work e.g. Reminiscing, local history etc.
- Local needs survey e.g. broadband coverage, food poverty etc.
- Outdoor socially distanced activities e.g. Walking, Social events, Tea party, Drive-in Bingo etc.

Appendix 4

Question 18 What are the issues for these groups? Follows the question

17 Are there any big issues in your community for?

The responses are listed after each sector:

Elderly 57; Youth 43; Men 16; Disabled 16; Women 12; and other 33

The full list of responses is listed below. Notably, older peoples groups, sports facilities and youth clubs have been closed and this has raised issues for both these age groups in particular as in many rural areas this means there is little or nothing else around for them to do or to get out to.

Although not statistically significant, there were slightly more men than women who reported being negatively affected, although this could have something to do with being stuck in the house and unable to go to their usual activities.

Lack of communication and activities.
Anxiety for children and their parents
no clubs
Mainly routines are affected and all services like respite and any other services are suspended leaving families to deal with it all by themselves. No support
They are our main client group and currently are more affected by lockdown than usual.
Biggest issue is keeping those that are unable to leave their homes active and informed of help available. Also our youth members need a boost which isolated at home like donating a new football to each of them or something
They have now nowhere to go and need different activities to keep them learning and developing even whole at home
Mental Health and loneliness
"Knowing how to be safe when church services can commence Older members may not be able to attend."
Social isolation and the lack of local community activities
"Centre is two small rooms Before Covid 19 many our classes were self-sustainable. Our numbers covered the self-sustainable classes however we not be able to do that when Centre open. Will people come back to any our classes or support groups until there is a vaccine or they know is gone. Uncertainty of everything will be open this year again. The person mainly runs the centre has a lung condition does she want be around people. This person has more time than other committee members due to other commitments. Groups will need funding mental health and to cover classes self-sustainable and running costs. Groups will need guidance how to set up the community centre. With small committee, centre will open this again. Will"
Spread of Covid-19

Sustainability
Lack of social cohesion due to inability to participate in sporting activities. Sport in Kinawley is a unifying and linking activity. It is especially important for kids who have had all their school interactions cut out. Adults are better placed to adjust and accept lack of personal interaction. Kids find that loss a lot harder.
"That they May not be internet friendly, and lose out on information/guidance available to them."
Isolation
Retired members, widows or widowers, disabled or long term illnesses, all have the problem of living in rural, sometimes isolated areas. As a result are inclined to not socialise which can lead to anxiety and depression. There is often family around but they cannot be there all the time. Also if services, meetings, or entertainment are put on locally individuals can attend independent of family, which is good for moral. We as a group try to provide some activities to help these individuals.
Isolation, lack of activities.
Meetings
Waiting on guidance from governing body
isolation as all living in rural area
Rural isolation and lack of IT facilities locally and poor speed of broadband
"Mental health of parents and children. Educational disadvantage of children following closure of schools Poverty due to job losses and business closures"
Lack of support
Loneliness and isolation as individuals have to cope with everyday life in a remote rural community with very limited support.
Nothing major but we need to plan ahead for the Winter months. We have recording equipment ready to go and this will help those who cannot or are not yet comfortable about sharing enclosed space.
Lack of social contact
In the context of our work the main issues faced are employment rights, Debt and benefits.
Not applicable.
Day Care Centres & Services are closed and this has a big
"The premises we had been using for our club get together, is no longer suitable with socially distancing. Kitchen and toilet areas too small."
Young people congregating near their homes in play parks.
Vulnerability
Mental among young people and the wider community , loneliness and isolation rural
Lack of safe walking space is a big one. there is no off road walking track or safe spaces/ grass parks etc.
Loneliness and isolation can and has been affecting many people's mental health
"Isolation Boredom No facilities open "

Social isolation, very little communication with the outside world. Education and isolation for children. Women isolated and frustrated with trying to home school and keep young children amused.
Problems associated with childcare, working from home, home schooling, shortage of/sharing hardware, poor broadband access
Our service is for the older community so we have not met since 10th March I have spoken on phone to a few people whom I feel will be anxious if and when they come back. I do hope we can get up and going again later in year.
Mental health of parents and young children. Social isolation. Unemployment and impact on family finances. Provision of food for families during summer months.
Social isolation due to lack of activities
"Rural isolation and lack of transport. Need for digital training set at slow elementary level to facilitate elderly and visually impaired to acquire skills which will help them avoid total social isolation"
Isolation
Lack of activities locally
unsure what is going to happen and considered about elderly
Very isolated area and lack of activity
People frustrated at this stage
Bad broadband in area - waiting on a grant to purchase computers
social isolation,
Nobody has anything to do
A lot of our participants are senior members and we need to keep in touch regularly with this section of our community to avoid anyone feeling vulnerable and isolated.
Loneliness
Fear of the unknown
Proximity to services for both older people and children. no walking, outdoor grass facility, not accessible for everyone
The youth such as Scouts and Guides currently unable to have face to face meetings. Awaiting additional guidance etc. from Headquarters
12th July has been cancelled and a lot of people look forward to it every year
Our members are very old, (many over 80) and very few are computer literate, so they are extremely isolated.
"We want to look after older people, be sure when they come out they are safe; access - connectivity of internet limits their online engagement Disabled groups - vulnerable how we make our space available to them Ceol Carmen - young people and disco - how to maintain social distancing Have had some zoom activities such as Pilates; ceol carmen Young people: rock disco - Is revenue generating but it is also the socialising aspect, spend too much time on internet and don't interact so don't have social skills, disco helps them mingle"
Isolated
The isolation issue and the concern about the economic impact and potential

Lack of social integration
Indoor Exercise
Lack of things to do
Isolation affecting mental health and wellbeing
All our 60+members are Senior citizens & my Wife & I feel responsible for their wellbeing so wouldn't dream of arranging an outing for them in the present climate as we done before Covid -19 ,so we are left in Limbo & are helpless .We can only hope that their local services will look after their needs .
"There is no Day Care Centre so the elderly are a home in isolation and nowhere to go. The young have nowhere to go either as there are no facilities open for them."
There was very little constructive activity for youngsters but this is improving with the GAA opening up again. We are hoping to get up and going soon ourselves.
People are very afraid of the future
Many of our tenants and service users have been hugely impacted by social isolation as a result of COVID-19. Many of our older service users find digital technology challenging, therefore they find it difficult to participate in online projects. Social isolation can have a huge impact on their mental health and wellbeing, and COVID-19 has also exacerbated the feeling of loneliness that affects many people living on their own in rural communities
Very isolated in this area
We can't open currently which has a negative impact on the parents of our children.
Getting venue ready for access. need to get guidance to prepare to open facility
Social isolation
Elderly people shielding and people self-isolating need support i.e. deliveries, meals etc.
Boxing is a great outlet for youngsters but with the lockdown they have no outlet for their frustrations
Feel isolated and lonely
Has been a lack of activity locally
Lockdown restrictions
Work a lot with older men and they have not been going to doctors and hospital for fear of catching Covid
Lack of supports, lots for older people
We have been closed since March. Nobody is getting to meet their friends.
"Isolation lack of access to services"
Working with teenagers around social media & parenting children.
Isolation
Confidence in returning to social inclusion. Mental health due to isolation.
lack of Social interaction
Isolation and reduced access to services

Appendix 5

Question 21 If you have a community facility, what issues do you face during lockdown?

Fifty-three respondents (50%) were concerned about covering the cost of overheads; Most of these costs are fixed and in addition groups have few if any ways to now raise the necessary funds to cover these costs. 10 had issues of employment of staff and 9 with maintaining tenants. A further 23 groups had a variety of other issues listed below. Not all respondents owned or were responsible for a community building and some groups had more than one concern.

- Insurance uncertainty
- Lack of suitable facility/venue to continue activities
- Upkeep of sports fields
- Inability to fundraise
- Lack of income generation
- Gym facilities closed
- Getting ready for reopening

Appendix 6

22 Is your group thinking or planning what to do in recovery, adhering to social distance how many could the hall hold for activities.

10, possibly 12
yes
30
Very difficult with special need children to maintain social distance. At the moment no activities are planned
Yes
Yes but have been given no guidelines on what staff to children ratio will be or how we are meant to socially distance from 3 year old who need our help!!
reduced numbers will be able to attend if 2m rule continues to apply
Planning outdoor activities but unsure if indoor risks
10 to 12
60
Yes, we are in active planning for how to progress through the loosening phases.
400-500
We hope to plan to communicate to our group as best we can
40 people safely
we are planning socially distanced activities to re engage with community
We are hoping to screen in the Ardhowen with social distancing in place. We could probably hold 50 people which is fine for our small group
60
about 4 to 5 people
No plans yet
Await government guidelines for schools
20
04-Jun
Yes, less than 15
30 - 40
Depends if people are interested.
Yes we would like to reconvene whenever safe to do so.
Thinking of what we need to prepare our Office for a return.
Yes
We are currently working on this. Main problem is not having groups able to attend - ie surestart, 2 x disability groups, youth clubs etc. adhering to social distance rules and re-opening with less able to enter premises will be difficult to cover the overheads with less people. would mean max of 12 in sports hall and 6 people in fitness suite
Waiting for guidance from Education Authority, Social Services
15
10

We have discussed the possibility but don't expect any activity before end of September but we are awaiting further guidance - with current social distancing measures we could house approx 40 in our hall
we couldn't adhere to social distancing in our small classroom where one of our objectives was to provide a hot dinner which was cooked for us in the local school, no school no dinners. It will be difficult to get accurate numbers when schools do open again. we will need to have a committee meeting when we are allowed to.
No
Trying to accommodate re-opened childcare and possibly provide classroom space for adjacent primary school
meeting tonight
50
20
unsure at moment what numbers will attend
hall big enough social distance is possible
20
We can envisage a lot of our work being recorded and made available to our residents.
15
Leisure Centre - dont expect anything in Autumn. Could do 1m distance in Sports Hall - 20 people no bother. Small room beside reception 8-10. Gym 8 people at any one time
unsure, large sports hall; can hold 400 in normal times. going to measure it shortly
15
10-20 depends on the social distance amount
Our hall is plenty big, but i don't think that our members would get much benefit from a socially distanced meeting - coffee morning?? knit and natter?? walking group?? how could we socially distance preparation of our monthly lunch?
lack external space; wont open till end of August so we can see what other businesses are doing. will have to measure then
Approx 50-60
Yes we are hoping to restart around late Sept/Oct all being well
Yes
100
We have not looked at this yet
N/A.
Social distancing up to 50 unsure about toilet use
approximately 15
20
20
15
Depends on regulations
40 approx
Thinking and planning
Not applicable

8
20 approximately
30
10
15
Not at this time
15
20 or less
We do not foresee the centre opening to the public until at least the winter
not at present
We have not made a decision on this as the future is so uncertain.
Planning more sessions using social bubbles to visit places of historical interest, set up more zoom sessions.
50

Appendix 7

Question 25 How? which followed Would you like assistance from Omagh Forum in planning activities for your group to do during recovery stage?

- "Our bingo is cancelled during this period. How and when can it be opened safely?"
- "there is no organisation giving guidance on how com halls open up. Need this. Also to see what other groups are doing. Rota of volunteers - cascade info to others; we are left to our own devices in c/v sector. Our work crosses into other businesses so lack of clear guidance for c/v sector All user groups have different needs to be met so its time consuming to ensure each group is safely catered for "
- "risk assessments; where to source large quantities of bleach/ materials etc. needed to reopen"
- Activities for youth and elderly
- Activities that the older members could do to help in the community see below
- Advice and support
- Advice on funding etc.
- Advice on local providers of PPE equipment at a reasonable price
- advice on procedures for activities
- Advice on the best way to deal with it all
- advice re safety measures for activities planned (treasure hunt and drive in bingo)
- Advice would be appreciated.
- Advice, support and guidance.
- Advice, Guidance and Finance.
- Any help in terms of what is being done in other places.
- Any information that you could supply would be greatly appreciated.
- As indicated in Point 23
- As our tenants are located across Fermanagh and Omagh council area, it is very difficult for us to provide support activities for all our tenants during this time. It would be extremely beneficial if we could inform tenants of initiatives taking place in their areas and connect them with local resources.
- Email resources
- Emergency Funding
- Funding opportunities
- Funding sources
- funds
- General advice and experience on how other groups are faring and what they are finding works for them.
- GLOI is providing Halls with help
- guidance
- Guidance on how we can open safely when we are allowed to open again
- Guidance set out and funding
- guidelines for opening the facility
- Having management committee meetings
- Help with funding for hall improvements
- Ideas for activities
- If possible we would like guidance on how to safely reopen.
- I'm not sure yet
- Information

- Information on legal requirements
- is there anyone doing a reasonable sanitisation stations at a reasonable cost
- Keeping us informed what resources are available for reopening
- Looking for small grants; not sure what to do about classes - may not come back in for next term. Unsure what groups are coming back Over 60's? Disabled group? Sure start? Unsure what to do - new ideas for classes? Sports hall is good size - income for rental is necessary so cant displace them also. Yoga Pilates don't want big hall as sound doesn't work well. Outgoings tam aren't very big but will increase
- Risk assessment and activity guidance
- Second opinion/advice -financial assistance guidance.
- Up to date information
- we are currently looking at new risk assessments for re-opening and guidance on things like that would be great
- We are unsure how to prepare, design or oversee an online lecture style event as a lot of our usual members do not have access to social media
- We need information on funding as we have been unable to raise money for running costs.
- We rent room in Fermanagh house but when we do return would appreciate provision of masks hand sanitiser etc.
- We will need to use the main hall for all of our activities, which means we will be spending much more money on heating. Please suggest some activities which can be done whilst socially distanced. Every aspect of our present activities involves distributing this and that. I just can't imagine how it will be done.
- We would welcome any advice or guidance to enable us to open up safely
- What help is available?
- Where we can access funding for putting in place safety measures, resources for the children that assist with social distancing
- While we have been supporting people shielding or self-isolating due to Covid 19 the demand for our services is decreasing. It would be good to share ideas on how best to support our local residents as other communities are doing.
- Zoom session with group or option to chat about stuff

Appendix 8

Question 26 – Any other comments

"Internal communication - we need to cascade info down to committee level; health and safety - what do we need based on our target groups? I'm concerned that funders put more admin on us and are more focused on preventing mis-spending money instead of getting the money out there. Don't want laborious form filling. Acknowledge some funders were very quick in getting money out with COVID response, can this be maintained going forward? We are all volunteers, now need additional training; re how building needs to be used - existing struggle to maintain pool of volunteers now new struggles. This impacts on ability of organisation to have physical/ mental ability to complete application forms"

"Tourism NI webinars are very helpful; I think 20th July is date for reopening halls? Looking at guidance in England on village halls re-opening. Trying to gather all info I can and touch base with user groups. Fitness classes - we need to be satisfied they user groups have contact trace, social distancing, can manage their equipment Council com buildings aren't open yet. Also spoke to neighbouring groups like 2000 Centre, they are feeling their way also. Tourism NI have a good to go certificate"

"We are a small community group who hold a weekly coffee morning where the older members of the community would come and enjoy the chat! And the monies gathered would subsidize outings for lunch. Will some funding we have held Armchair Exercises which they enjoyed immensely. Now with Covid 19 some are now sheltering and some are weary of going out again. "

Church HQ has provided us with a lot of information on reopening

Continue providing information to groups

Covid has resulted in zero opportunities for our organisation to carry out its normal fundraising to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of our facility. With the uncertain economic future ahead the capacity to raise funds locally will remain restricted. Whilst we have applied to communities NI charities fund there is no guarantee we will be successful. The concern is once we can open up our facility will we be able to continue to keep it open and pay for overheads and maintenance in the absence of any income. This will not be sustainable.

Everything seems to have been for older people but very little for younger people.

I believe the majority of our members will be afraid to meet up with others. But they are saying how much they miss our club and miss getting out of the house. They are very lonesome.

I think Issues for Community Groups should be brought to the attention of the Media. Charity Shops will face big problems with regard to trading after this Pandemic. The Volunteers are mostly in the vulnerable age group and they will not want to expose themselves to risk. Sorting goods etc. will be the problem. The Shop we had was really a hubbub great social interaction and I feel it provided support to many who suffered depression and loneliness.

It's impossible to plan at the moment

Our main interest is in getting childcare going again to help people return to work. Covid-19 regulations make it impossible to cover basic costs. Childcare will use all our spaces and with regular cleaning required, it's not suitable to consider other activities at present

Scouting is about helping in the community and when we are allowed to meet it would be the intention to have the older scouts involved in the wider community activities.

Sportni had a grant but unless you applied that day you had no chance of being successful
Supports needed to keep groups functioning afterwards will be needed

Thank you for keeping in touch -more than what we have received from church authorities.

There is still so much uncertainty out there especially for our older community which we try to bring together.

Our Leisure Centre is in good position atm. if we open and have to pay full time hrs - electric; maintenance; staff; we will eat into resources. So we need to think carefully what scale our opening is. Need grant Nov-Dec to meet shortfall rather than now

We are a group that brings displays and talks to the community, the issues in the oncoming months will be how to maintain interest and membership while we are not meeting. We have set up a garden project which has been carrying out outdoors and we plan to do a bbq event at the end of the harvesting season. We do not have toilet facilities at present so that is a challenge for us to put in place, in order to carry on. We have not yet registered with the charity commission and this is perhaps something we would welcome support with.

Appendix 9

Question 28 How could we improve the ebulletin?

- + Doing brilliant work 🐭
- + you could not improve it
- + It is good. Yours and council one well done.
- + Dates of some events are over before we receive it.
- + Perhaps ensure that there is no cross sending. Have had multiple copies of same information from multiple sources. Council, family support hub, CYSP..all sending same information
- +
- + I feel hard copies make more of an impact and create greater awareness of Activities. Copies distributed in Waiting Areas etc. focus the mind more.
- + Council one is better
- + you couldn't improve - you are actively involved within the rural communities in Tyrone and Fermanagh
- + You have been a great help with our charitable status application. We are still trying to answer some queries which were needing answers. 2 of our committee have just replied to an email from them. If we need your help we will contact you thank you
- + Could the list of contents be links to the articles further down the bulletin for easier/quicker access to the items
- + Lots of info
- + Maybe too much at times
- + 100 percent
- + Excellent production
- + Sometimes it can be hard to find what you are looking for
- + "Its fine as it is. each person takes from it what they will Prog activity doesn't suit us tam - as its only me as staff, saw the grants focussed more one programme costs"
- + good to get this info
- + Excellent means of keeping in touch
- + guidance & support
- + Very good bulletin
- + Excellent publication
- + Could it come out at a set time on a set day like other news bulletins
- + Great information in it
- + No improvements needed
- + Sometimes there's too much information in it and you miss things.
- + Perfect
- + Brilliant production
- + Lots of information
- + You send out a lot of very good information. I liked a lot the one with a list of people who are granting at the minute.
- + Email communication directly to group about specific funding for their area.

Appendix 10

Question 20 – any other comments

- As part of National Autistic Society we have to go with the guidelines set out as said by head office. We can't open or do activities until we get the go ahead. We look forward to when this can happen and with all your support.
- "It is good to make contact with groups. We know you are based in Omagh but it will be helpful to keep in contact. Thanks very much. "
- Omagh Forum is very helpful especially Mary T
- Keep in touch. News coming soon.
- it is very comprehensive
- Thanks for information so far.
- Even though we haven't contacted OMFRA much during this lockdown, it's still nice to know that the advice is still available should we need it.

- We are grateful for the advice and the fact we are contacted.
- Generally, we are ok at the moment. It's just knowing what the next steps should be. We are more worried about September- December if we are open again to public and can't run enough stuff or cover costs to keep building open
- OFRA offer an invaluable service and have gave us great guidance over the years.
- "Point of sale service - we need contactless service for payments our own bank - Ulster Bank - don't have any dealings with contactless payment. Totally independent, they suggest world pay? Think its £21pm plus vat and 0.7% per transaction the other option is a device (needs internet) which is linked to online banking? However can't do this for different members of staff. "
- "I have done lot of work on cash flow and am content that we are reasonably ok all groups have cancelled holiday accommodation bookings but staff are furloughed. Can reassign finance from lottery and we will apply to bank for interest free loan Great to have Omagh forum as source of support that can go and check things out rather than us having to chase everything "
- Keep up all the good work- much appreciated
- Omagh Forum has been fantastic throughout this whole thing. Also thank you for your help with the rural grant.

- "Worry about financial aspect. Lottery funding will help short term but long term viability worries us. Need the numbers to support monthly running costs. How can we adapt for future. Need turnover to maintain the hall and make improvements on ongoing basis E.g. disco brings in £2,500 which means we can charge other groups less, this maintains our service to vulnerable members of the community Positive aspects of COVID: Innovative and creative ideas- we had Treasure Hunt with 70 cars. Use of Facebook live to pick winner of Treasure Hunt and other activities, helped engage others Great to see how communities came together - Termon COVID response in this area was brilliant. People forced to think about things differently and has been very positive, hope we can maintain this"
- keep up the good work
- Thanks for reaching out
- Good to hear from you regularly
- Keep up the good work!
- Doing a very good job with lots of helpful advice
- All good!

- Thank you for all your help
- doing a first class job under difficult circumstances
- I look forward to working with you soon
- Appreciate us contacting the group
- Welcome the E'bulletin