



## Online Conversations with the Third Sector: Cost-of-Living Crisis

**Two Online Conversations were held with the third sector on the cost-of-living crisis, currently considered by the sector as the most relevant and important theme for the sector and its beneficiaries across our region.**

Guest speakers discussed how cost-of-living is impacting upon their organisation, beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers.

Key takeaway messages: the third sector was very much the first sector – resourceful, resilient, impactful delivering high quality services and with integrity.

The third sector coped incredibly well

during Covid. It brought a sense of partnership and high impact implementation that could not be matched by the public sector – being well resourced meant the work could hit the ground running, which unfortunately is not the case in the current cost-of-living crisis.

The third sector's strengths are its strong partnership working, sharing resources, and pulling together – linking up networks including volunteers was suggested.

Also raised was the sectors ability to signpost to relevant organisations, yet it was recognised that this could bring an increase in service demand on organisations being signposted.

## Emerging Themes

- Expected increase in service demand due to the cost-of-living crisis.
- Expectation that the third sector would take responsibility for the problems and somehow fix them.
- Third sector is suffering from significant financial pressure, especially funding and specifically core funding, with one organisation even considering taking out loans for staff costs.
- Loss of skilled people - many organisations are unable to retain staff due to not being able to give wage increases, increment increases.
- Anxiety levels have risen amongst staff and volunteers with a reduction in mental health and wellbeing.



## Participation Findings: We listen to understand

### What impact has there been on energy and transport price increases?

On average, respondents had seen an increase in costs by an average of 31 per cent from September-November 2022. Organisations also expect these to rise by a further 60 per cent by April 2023. One hundred per cent of respondents working with volunteers have had a reduction in volunteer hours due to an increase in transport costs – whether this is public transport or fuel costs. All respondents felt there was some impact on staff with some requiring to find second jobs and asking for extra hours due to struggles with bills. Also highlighted was increased sickness due to anxiety and stress - related to the cost-of-living crisis.

### What impact has the cost-of-living crisis had on your beneficiaries?

Beneficiaries are finding that the cost-of-living crisis is creating additional pressure on sometimes an already difficult and challenging life. A common theme in this question was that beneficiaries are experiencing increased stress, anxiety, worry and additional health issues due to reduced food and heating in the home. All respondents highlighted that an increase in funding is needed to support the organisation with rising costs in utility bills, vehicle costs, staff and volunteer expenses.

### Do you feel that there is enough funding available to support your organisation with the cost-of-living crisis?

Organisations are using their reserves to survive. One respondent mentioned that some organisations can't afford to put in the new linked smoke alarms that legislation requires due to a lack of funding. One respondent highlighted that they were applying for funding for individual's teams and projects so that the money can go to the most critical areas of their services. 60% of respondents felt that there was not enough funding available to organisations and they are struggling to find any funding that supports directly with the cost-of-living crisis.

## Event Feedback

I have found it all very thought provoking and interesting.

This will help me reflect and contribute to board thinking.

I will use the information supporting team members and the people we support in my role to point them in the direction of other services.



THIRD SECTOR  
Dumfries and Galloway

# Takeaway Fact Sheet

## Bitesize Workshops – Funding Focus

**Two bite-sized workshops were delivered on reshaping your services for the cost-of-living crisis and writing outcomes for funding. Top two tips to take away:**

**1. Remember you can speak directly to the funder about your organisational objectives.**

**2. Pause, gather what you know, reflect:**

- Give your reflection a purpose.
- Look at all your sources of evidence.
- Involve others.
- Choose an evaluation method that works best for your organisation and the people you involve.
- Have you achieved the aim?

## Useful Information

### Funding:

[www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/cost-of-living-support-fund](http://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/cost-of-living-support-fund)

### Workshop: Evaluation Support Scotland Model:

<https://evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk>

### DGLocator:

Download the free DGLocator mobile app for Apple at <https://apple.co/3BbTNs8> and Android at <https://bit.ly/dglocatorandroid>  
Website: <https://dglocator.org.uk/> or access using the QR code.



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