

Shopping and Payment

It's not always easy to work out how best to arrange payment when you've offered to shop for someone else – particularly when people aren't already used to using internet shopping and banking services.

We've heard about a number of different ways people have found to arrange this, depending on what's available locally, and how well they know the person they are shopping for.

These are summarised below so that you can think about what might work for you or your community organisation.

This update is focussed on paying for shopping – you can find broader advice, including around infection control, here:

- [Supporting others in your community during COVID-19 - Shopping guidance for volunteers \(PDF\)](#)

Paying in cash

Under normal circumstances, we would advise community groups and individual volunteers to avoid handling cash where possible, and to consider DBS checks where it's unavoidable.

But we know that's not always going to be possible during Coronavirus, and groups might have to simply take reasonable steps to reduce the chance of any problems – using alternative payment methods where available, keeping the amounts of cash handled as low as reasonably possible, and keeping a record (for example, a photograph of receipts) of money spent.

The government has issued some advice around safeguarding for community volunteers during the covid-19 outbreak that provides reassurance that handling money does not automatically mean a DBS check is required for volunteers helping in their local community.

The full factsheet can be found by following the link, and the relevant paragraph is included below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-factsheet-community-volunteers-during-covid-19-outbreak/safeguarding-and-dbs-factsheet-faqs>

I'm organising a group of volunteers. I understand that there isn't a legal requirement for me to have my volunteers DBS checked, but should I do so anyway?

Many of the roles that volunteers will carry out in their local communities do not raise safeguarding issues and do not need a DBS check. You can have a look at the [DBS eligibility guidance](#) to confirm whether the activities your group propose to do are captured.

If your group's activities are captured, under normal circumstances we would advise that having volunteers DBS checked is a prudent safeguarding step. There is, however, no legal requirement for you to have a DBS check. Regardless of whether you choose to have volunteers DBS checked, you should ensure your group follow simple, practical precautions such as working safely in pairs, keeping records of money spent and providing shopping receipts to safeguard all involved.

In general, we'd suggest trying to keep the amounts of money involved as low as possible, for example, taking money for a single shopping trip at a time.

We're aware that many people are now running out of cash, and alternative payment methods are becoming increasingly important.

Paying by Cheque

Many people who don't use internet banking services are used to using cheques, so this might be a good option to pay for food.

- where food has been pre-ordered over the phone, the cost will be known, and people can write a cheque directly payable to the shop
- friends and neighbours may be willing to shop and pay for the food, collect receipts, and then take payment by cheque from the person they've shopped for. We'd suggest you keep copies (for example, photographs on your phone) of the receipts in case of any questions later

Many banks are still open (often on reduced hours) to pay in cheques, and some internet banking systems will allow you to submit a photograph of a cheque to bank it.

For example: <https://www.barclays.co.uk/ways-to-bank/mobile-banking-services/paying-in-a-cheque/>.

Again, payment by cheque may become harder over the coming weeks, although people may automatically receive new chequebooks through the post as they reach the end of their current cheque book.

Post Office Ask-A-Friend Scheme

Some banks are participating in a scheme that allows an individual to write a cheque, that a trusted friend or neighbour can then use to withdraw cash at the Post Office on their behalf.

There's an explanation of the scheme in this news article; people will need to contact their bank to find out if they can use the scheme.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52229698>

Payment by Bank Transfer

Similarly, there may be circumstances where online bank transfers are useful - for example, a relative outside Cumbria may be able to make a bank transfer to cover the cost of shopping done for an older person by a neighbour if emailed a photograph of the receipt.

Advice given to national NHS volunteers

You might also find some useful tips in the information that has been provided by RVS to volunteers who have registered on the national NHS Volunteer Scheme.

See – [Getting you started as a Community Response Volunteer \(PDF\)](#)

Local Shops

Many smaller local shops have a set up methods of taking payment over the phone. These include shops such as local butchers, bakeries and convenience stores.

This might be by ordering and paying in advance over the phone, or by the shop phoning someone else for payment details when you reach the checkout. Payment could be made direct from the person you're shopping for, or from a relative.

Some of these shops have also set up new delivery arrangements too, meaning friends, neighbours and community groups might not need to be directly involved in the shopping or payment at all.

Many communities have set up a directory of local shops who can take telephone payments and/or deliver - for example:

<https://cockermonthonline.co.uk/home-delivery-directory/>

Buying from these local shops is also a great way to support them as they struggle to continue to run their businesses during "lockdown"

The Cumbria County Council teams supporting the Welfare Hubs and local Community Resilience Groups have produced a directory of community support for each area, including information both independent shops and local supermarkets (as well as information on local support groups).

These can be found online at: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/communities.asp> under the "Local area updates" section.

Supermarkets

The supermarkets have tended to rely on their existing online shopping options, although a huge increase in demand means that it has not always been possible for people to book a slot.

In many cases, home delivery has been expanded, and priority slots may be available for those in the “shielding” or vulnerable groups.

Some other options are beginning to emerge, including telephone payment options and volunteer payment cards; the information we’re aware of is summarise below.

Aldi

Expanded home delivery (but this doesn’t include grocery items), but not currently any known options for remote/volunteer payment.

<https://www.aldi.co.uk/covid19>

Asda

Asda have introduced a volunteer payment card for those shopping on behalf of others; details on the link below:

<https://cards.asda.com/volunteer>

Booths

A telephone payment checkout is available in each store – more details in the paragraph below.

Helping Our Vulnerable Customers

In order to support some of our more vulnerable customers, from 24th March we are introducing the ability to take payment over the telephone. This will allow those who are sending friends, neighbours or relatives to shop for them to pay for the shopping remotely.

Please make your way to the clearly marked checkout in store, where an assistant will scan through the shopping then place a call for the shopping to be paid for over the telephone.

Please note, there is a £100 spend limit in place on this service.

<https://www.booths.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-statement/>

It is also possible to arrange delivery of “essentials bundles” within a few miles of a store, these need to be ordered by phone via central team; full details on the link:

<https://www.booths.co.uk/home-delivery/>

Coop

Dedicated shopping hour for vulnerable customers and those who are shopping for vulnerable people.

All our stores have a dedicated shopping hour for our vulnerable customers, those that care for them and NHS workers.

This takes place from 8am to 9am Monday to Saturday and from 10am to 11am on Sundays in all our stores.

<https://www.coop.co.uk/coronavirus>

Some local arrangements may in place for telephone payment (Aspatria)

Coop are also looking at how they can use their own Pioneer volunteers scheme to support vulnerable people who need help shopping for others.

Lakes and Dales Coop (part of the larger ScotMid Group)

Some of the Coop stores in Cumbria (Keswick, Lazonby & Shap) are part of the Lakes and Dales/ScotMid Coop, rather than main Coop group.

Keswick Store can take telephone payment at till (but please inform staff before they start putting items through) – not known if Lazonby & Shap can do this.

<https://www.lakesanddales.coop/store-locator/>

Morrisons

Morrisons are expanding their online shopping, but not currently any known options for remote/volunteer payment.

<https://www.morrisons.com/help/online-shopping/coronavirus/>

Tesco

Not currently any Coronavirus information on the website; not currently any known options for remote/volunteer payment.

<https://www.tesco.com/>

Lidl

Not currently any known options for remote/volunteer payment.

<https://www.lidl.co.uk/about-us/customer-update>

Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's are planning to introduce a volunteer gift card scheme in the next week or two.

<https://www.sainsburys.co.uk/shop/gb/groceries/working-to-feed-the-nation-/latest-information-->

We are giving our customers who are vulnerable priority access to our online home delivery service. So far we've been able to identify and prioritise hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people across the UK. The government have identified and shared with us the customers who they consider the most vulnerable, and we're in the process of contacting these customers to offer them priority access to home delivery slots.

To help people shop for others easily, we will be introducing a new volunteer gift card and online voucher in the next week or two and will share more information on this soon.

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, all our supermarkets will dedicate 08.00 to 09.00 to serving elderly customers, disabled customers and their carers.

Catering Suppliers

Caterite

Caterite (Embolton) have introduced a “Click and Collect” service for individuals, meaning it is possible to order and pay online, and for a volunteer to collect.

<https://www.caterite.co.uk/customer/request/personal/>

Community Finance Options

Gloucestershire have produced this useful leaflet on different payment options, including some options for communities.

<https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/4268/payment-options-ccbc-v2.pdf>