

Keeping your members connected whilst social distancing

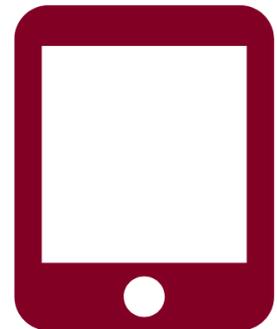


Tip 1 – The Buddy System

Collate a list of volunteers who are willing to contact members and check in over the next few weeks. Provide each of these volunteers with a small list of members to contact during the time period. Volunteers could be checking on member's welfare or asking if they require any assistance.

Tip 2 – Utilise Social Media

Public or private groups can be created on Facebook for use by members. Once created members can interact with each other in the group. To facilitate this interaction share relevant content to your group from other sources such as Indigo Shire Council, Department of Health or the groups area of interest. To further encourage conversation you can pose questions or challenges to the group.



Visit the [Facebook Help Centre](#) for support in setting up a group.

Tip 3 – Group Text Messages

iPhone and Android devices have the ability to send a text message to multiple people at one time. A number of free apps that have this function are available to download such as [WhatsApp](#).

How to send a group text using WhatsApp:

1. Open WhatsApp
2. Tap Chats.
3. Tap the new message icon.
4. Tap New Group.
5. Select contacts and tap Next.
6. Enter a subject and tap Create.
7. Type your message.
8. Tap the send icon.

How to make an e-newsletter template

If you are developing an email newsletter you can pick a theme for your newsletter using

Outlook:

1. In Outlook, select the New Email option.
2. Go to File > Options > Mail
3. Choose Stationery and Fonts.
4. Go to the Personal Stationery tab and choose the Theme option.
5. Pick from a variety of themes for your newsletter template.

Tip 4 – Newsletters

A regular newsletter send by post or email can provide detailed information on what your members are up to. Newsletters can also include:

- A member profile or a host editor
- Articles about your clubs' interests
- Jokes, quizzes or short stories
- Important contact details for services e.g. delivered meals, library services
- Links to Coronavirus Information in other languages

Tip 5 – Group Video Calls

A range of group video call applications are available including [Zoom](#), [Google hangouts](#), [Houseparty](#) or [Skype](#). Each program allows for a different number of participants and enables groups to catch up virtually for meetings, a cup of tea, celebration or just a chat.



Contact Indigo Shire Ageing Well officer on 0428 662 412 to ask about a free host account or for help getting started.

Tip 6 – Indigo Calling

Indigo Calling utilised volunteers to call community members who are vulnerable or living alone once a week. If you would like to volunteer as a caller or have a concern for a vulnerable community member please contact your local service.

Beechworth Health Service - (03) 5728 0200 - EMAIL: bhs_reception@bhs.org.au

Yackandandah Community Centre - (02) 6027 1743 - EMAIL: manager@ycc.org.au

Indigo North Health - Neighbourhood House - 03 5726 1405 - EMAIL: m.murphy@inh.org.au

Tip 7 – Using a telephone tree

A phone tree can provide your members with a system to keep connected. The system can take many forms, the key is to ensure it suits your group.



**INDIGO
CALLING**

A fillable phone tree is available from our [website](#).

- **Gather a contact** list of every member that would like to be included. Ideally members will provide their mobile and landline with a message bank.
- **Delegate coordinators** who become the second tier on the tree.
- **Divide** the larger group up into smaller ones, ideally no more than 8. This can be decided by the coordinators, or done as a group effort.
- **Create a structure** to fit your group by draw up an organisational chart that suits your group. The aim of this is to make sure that everyone in the group receives a call regularly – the simpler the better!
- **Set some boundaries** to know the purpose of your group and why you are communicating. Decide what you will do if you can't get onto someone, or if someone needs help. You may like to make up a guidance note of things you want to ask or updates from your group.
- **Share the information** ensure all the coordinators have a copy of your organisational structure and members contact details. You may also like to share the details with the whole group.



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