



Summer 2020

# Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours' Scheme CIO

Working with and for older people



Call 0113 260 6565

[www.crossgatesgns.org.uk](http://www.crossgatesgns.org.uk)

# A word from the office...



At Cross Gates Good Neighbours our priority is the wellbeing and safety of older people in our community. We are constantly adapting the way we work to enable us to provide a service to meet the needs of everyone.

## What's been happening?

We are now on the second round of re-contacting our 1,178 members for a welfare check. Many members' situations have changed and some are requiring less, more or different support.

Over 300 members are receiving weekly one-to-one befriending phone calls.

A dedicated volunteer or staff member is providing regular one-to-one support calls to those living with dementia and those caring for them.

We are working closely with Leeds City Council, GPs and carers to co-ordinate the care and support of our members. **Carers Leeds** can also offer additional advice and support on **0113 380 4300**.

## Our volunteers

As the volunteer lead for **Leeds City Council and Voluntary Action Leeds Community Hub for Cross Gates and Whinmoor Ward**, a large part of our work is co-ordinating Hub volunteers. To use this service call **0113 378 1877**.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have co-ordinated Hub volunteers in person and via telephone support to:

- collect 182 prescriptions
- deliver 620 free food hampers
- provide 32 people with a shop using the shopping voucher
- collect five people's click and collect shop
- provide 32 people with a shop through the new pay for scheme
- organise three Hub volunteers to regularly walk dogs
- distribute over 700 Shine magazines for Leeds Older People's Forum - **see page 5**

Be vigilant in looking out for online, doorstep, postal or telephone **scammers**. Please get in touch if you think someone may be trying to scam you.

## Partnership working

We are working closely with two adjoining Neighbourhood Network Schemes, **Swarcliffe Good Neighbours** and **HOPE**, who are the Leeds City Council volunteer hub for the Temple Newsam Ward. However, we are still supporting over 60s in the Temple Newsam Ward as this falls within our Neighbourhood Network boundary.

At Cross Gates many new friendships and support networks have been formed over the phone or through online groups which will hopefully continue once the lockdown is lifted. Also, many older people living in the local area who hadn't heard about the Scheme, are really impressed to hear about the support and activities on offer and can't wait to get involved. In the meantime, we have to dig deep and keep on supporting each other the best we can. Keep positive and stay well.

**Jo Horsfall, Scheme Manager**

# Reducing Loneliness & Isolation



We continue to work and adapt our Building Connections **Living La Vida Local** and Leeds City Council supported wellbeing **SWIFt** projects, to help older people in our community to feel less lonely, isolated, and to support them to look after their health and wellbeing.

## Home Working

Staff are now working from home and coordinating teams of volunteers. We are fortunate to be able to do this as we have the IT equipment and resources to work remotely.

All phone contact concerns are recorded onto our database which each staff member is able to access. This means our members receive a more bespoke joined up service with us, and external organisations and agencies for any specialist support they may require,

## Befriending Service

Through our welfare calls over 300 members are receiving weekly one-to-one befriending phone calls. People who were previously receiving weekly home visits are now keeping in touch with their befrienders via telephone.

Positive feedback is not just coming from the members. Several of our volunteer befrienders have said they get as much out of the phone calls as the people they are calling. They really look forward to and enjoy the weekly chats.

***“I can’t tell you how much your call has lifted me.”*** Cross Gates member

For those living alone with no, or very few family and friends ringing regularly, and who don’t have access to the internet to join any online groups, this is a real lifeline and they greatly appreciate and value the regular contact.

Many are desperate to meet in person those who are calling them each week and cheering them up. We are going to need to have a HUGE celebration when this is finally over so everyone can meet up face to face! Please call the office if you would like to be matched with a telephone befriender.

## **New Members**

Previously, once we’d received a referral we would have visited the person’s home to carry out an initial face to face assessment. We are now carrying out initial assessments over the phone so we can put any support required in place as soon as possible. Once we are able to visit people’s homes again, we will do so and carry out a full home assessment.

## **Shine Magazine**

The new **Shine Magazine** has been produced by **Leeds Older People’s Forum** to help older people in Leeds feel connected during the lockdown. One of our volunteers may have delivered a copy to you. Issue two of Shine has an article by our Trustee David Smith about his befriending with Wilfred Walker in our **Living La Vida Local** programme.



# Keeping Healthy



Joanna Quigley (pictured left), a nurse from the **Live Well Café** would like to remind everyone that the NHS is still here for you.

Joanna says, *“As clinicians we worry that someone may be unwell with COVID symptoms or something else.*

*GPs and nurses are still at work. We’re just working in a different way. Please contact your GP as you usually would, if you feel you need assistance or treatment. We are still here to help.”*

## Keeping Active

Walking and gardening are great outdoor activities if you’re able to go outside. For those who are having to stay indoors, just moving about your house, or doing simple chair based exercises are all activities you can do to stay healthy while staying in. Keeping your mind active is also vital. Could you try a new activity such as crosswords, painting, jigsaws, reading, word searches, origami or wood carving?

## Caring for Someone with Dementia at Home

We now have a resource pack produced by Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust containing information and suggestions that could help carers and those they are caring for to cope through this difficult time. You can view the document on our website <https://crossgatesgns.org.uk/what-we-do/carers-support/>

## Dementia Connect Talking Point

For any support and advice you need, especially in relation to Coronavirus, carers can contact the Alzheimer's Society online community free day or night at <https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk/> or ring their support line on **0333 150 3456** (open every day).

## Hearing and Sight Loss Service

Hearing Aid batteries can now be posted out direct from the NHS. Please ring **0113 288 5750**.

## Eating Well

Eating well to nourish and strengthen your body is important to maintain a healthy mind and body. In this time when we are all looking at ways to cheer ourselves up, try to resist having too many 'treats'. Let Kath Sinclair's poem be a warning to you...

### *The chief defect of Mary May by Kath Sinclair*

*The chief defect of Mary May  
Was munching chocolate all the  
day*

*Although she meant to strictly  
diet*

*A little voice would not keep  
quiet*

*"Nibble chocolate at your leisure  
You know it gives you so much  
pleasure"*

\*\*\*\*

*And so she listened to the voice  
Eating chocolate was her choice.  
Slowly she ballooned in size*

*One day she had a big surprise!  
Up she rose into the air  
People watched her floating  
there.*

*A gust of wind blew her away  
We have not seen her to this  
day.*

\*\*\*\*

*So if you want to stay around  
With feet placed firmly on the  
ground.*

*Just heed the fate of Mary May  
And don't munch chocolate all  
the day.*

# Supporting Independence



Would you like to join our new virtual groups and have a chat with others via video call?

## New Virtual Groups

We have set up a weekly programme for you to join and chat to others from your own home. You can join in coffee mornings, historical talks, quizzes, boredom busters, games and activities.

The groups run every weekday from 10.30am -11.30am. You don't need to book in advance, you just choose the days you want to join and come on for a chat.

We also have access to free IT courses for beginners to help you improve your IT skills through '**Learn My Way**' which is a free, easy to use learning website.

You can learn how to set up and use email, search the internet, shop online, book GP appointments online, listen to music and watch videos, digital photos, Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, how to video call your friends and family. It is easy and fun to use and you can go at your own pace.

## Get in touch

All you need is a smart phone, laptop or computer with a camera or a tablet. If you don't have a device, contact the office as we are trying to source more devices to lend to people. **Call 0113 260 6565 or email [samantha@crossgatesgns.org.uk](mailto:samantha@crossgatesgns.org.uk)**





## Embracing social media by Brian Sugden

*Embracing social media  
I never thought I would  
I used to think it rubbish  
But now I think it's good.*

*'Cos we're all stuck in lockdown  
And can't meet up with friends  
This social isolation  
Just drives me round the bend.*


*So I look to social media  
Although it's not the same  
As hugging friends and family  
At least I'm in the game.*

*With Zoom, FaceTime and WhatsApp  
And other applications  
I can meet all sorts of people  
A virtual League of Nations.*

*We virtually get together  
Though we're at home alone  
We sit and chat for hours  
And no one's on the phone.*

*We've quizzes, coffee mornings  
And hints of where to find  
Things of local interest  
To stimulate the mind.*

*So thank you social media  
For waking up my brain  
With virtual get togethers  
We keep each other sane.*



# Thank you



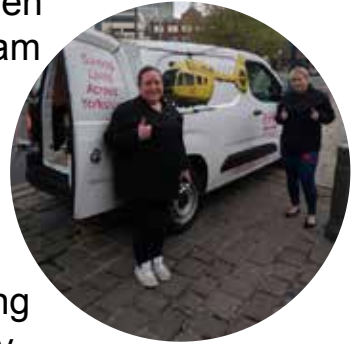
Thank you, thank you, thank you to all our **wonderful volunteers**, old and new! Thank you to:

- **Leeds City Council and local Councillors** for their continued support through COVID-19, through **MICE** and the **Wellbeing** funding.
- **Local community groups and businesses** for fundraising through our Just Giving and Go Fund me page. All monies received are supporting the Hub and distribution of free food hampers.
- **Helping Hands East Leeds** working in partnership to distribute and co-ordinate free food hampers has made this mammoth task manageable, so a BIG thank you to **Claire Wall**.
- **Doug** our volunteer driver and all of the hub volunteers for the distribution and collection of food hampers, activity packs, Shine magazines and hot meals.
- **Tesco Fare Share, The Real Junk Food Project, M&S Neighbourly, Home Bargains, Poundland and Wilko's** who have provided us with food donations for hampers, we have donated any surplus fresh stock to local care homes and St Vincent's Support Centre, so that nothing is wasted.





- **Mecca Bingo Leeds** who have provided more than 50 hot meals each week for us to distribute free to our members. So far over 300 hot meals have been collected and distributed by our team of volunteers and **Clare Deacon** from **Yorkshire Air Ambulance**.



- **B&M** who donated £1,500 in goods for our food hampers.
- Our Art Tutor **Amanda** for producing 80 art activity packs and 25 VE day celebration packs with cupcakes made by **Sadie** for our virtual coffee morning on VE day.
- **Derek and Barbara Grimston** for the wonderful flowers they grew from seed - **see the photo on the front cover.**
- **Martin Lewis Coronavirus Poverty Emergency Fund**
- **100% Digital Leeds** and **BT Skills** who have supported us to train 45 older people to get online and join our virtual coffee mornings, singing groups, and talks - **see page 8 for further information.**



We could not run our services or provide the range of individual and specialist support required by older members of our community during this current pandemic without you.



# Contact us

Please be reassured that we will let all our members know when we are due to reopen.

Our office is currently closed. Please call, email or use social media to get in touch, we will respond as quickly as we can.

**Telephone 0113 260 6565**

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Email [admin@crossgatesgns.org.uk](mailto:admin@crossgatesgns.org.uk)

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## Trips

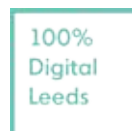
**All our trips have been postponed.** We hope to rearrange them as soon as possible but if this is not feasible we will arrange a refund or transfer the monies to another trip. If you have any concerns please leave a message on the number above and a staff member will get back to you.

## 100 Club

We continue to draw the 100 Club every week and winners are contacted directly. Many of you have contacted us about paying for the 100 Club. Please don't worry. All outstanding payments will be settled when we return.



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