



Autumn 2020

Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours' Scheme CIO

Working with and for older people



Call 0113 260 6565

www.crossgatesgns.org.uk

A word from the office...



We really are working in uncertain times at the moment, and being responsive to our members' needs is a priority, especially with restrictions easing and then being reintroduced!

Planning for the week ahead is challenging enough, never mind the longer term...

Going forward

For this reason our Trustees have made the decision not to re-open any of our main groups until January 2021 at the earliest. However, we will be piloting and introducing smaller groups and one-to-one sessions, wherever possible, when venue availability and government guidelines allow.

How we're making it safe

Thanks to funding received from the **Housing Advisory Panel**, our office is now safe and in use. We have installed a protective screen in the reception area, sanitising stations throughout and staff are wearing PPE. Staff are starting to return to working in the office on a rota system, adhering to social distancing and hygiene protocols to deal with phone calls, taking 100 Club payments and dealing with any enquiries.



Our beautiful front cover is a big thank you to our member, Eileen Pawson who has been keeping busy with her wonderful weekly knitted creations for us all to enjoy!

Staying Positive

As always we will be focusing on what we can do rather than what we can't. We are trying to stay positive and have a few ideas to keep you all active, but we would really value any ideas or input that you may have to support us going forward.

A massive thank you to **Home Bargains** and the local community for their shopping trolley donations. We have received 10 full trolleys to help fill our hampers.

Some ideas that we are risk assessing and looking at:

- Organising bubbles with two people who are both isolating and living locally.
- Short social distance walks with volunteers or members living locally to each other.
- Single point of contact for members with volunteers and a buddying scheme to build confidence and ensure members feel included and are kept up to date.
- Extra support for carers, especially those living with Dementia.

Annual General Meeting

Our 18th AGM will be held via Zoom this year - please see page 19 for details.

Stay Safe

We have almost completed the third round of calls to all our members, and will be continuing to stay in touch through the winter months to ensure you can access any support you require. Stay safe and do keep well!

Jo Horsfall, Scheme Manager

Reducing Loneliness & Isolation



Sandra, Dee and Marion, pictured left, continue to work on the **Building Connections Living La Vida Local** and **Leeds City Council Supporting Wellbeing SWIFt** projects to support older people in our community to feel less lonely and isolated.

Loneliness can be challenging at the best of times, but even more so at the moment. During lockdown there has been an explosion of the telephone befriending service, especially as lockdown has continued longer than any of us thought it would and people are feeling the need for more contact with different people. We currently have 42 volunteer telephone befrienders, providing weekly social calls to over 300 members.

Telephone Befriending

The telephone befriending calls are enjoyed by both the volunteers and those they are ringing. A couple of our volunteer befrienders have also been able to provide social distance visits in members' gardens, where appropriate, following government guidelines and protocols.

Both the volunteers and the person they befriend have very much enjoyed these face to face visits and we hope to do more in the future. Garden visits are weather dependent, and home visits won't be possible until protocols allow, but carrying out social distance home visits is something we are working towards.



Catching up with friends

Our members regularly tell us that as well as missing coming to groups and activities, they are missing seeing and catching up with the friends they have made there. To help groups of friends to stay connected we have, with permission from the members concerned, given them each other's phone numbers and they have been able to ring each other direct.

We are happy to facilitate more of this 'peer support' if people would like us to. Just ring the office and tell us who you would like to be able to ring from time to time and we will contact them to check it's okay for us to give you their phone number.

Home activities

We have a stock of books and jigsaws in the Centre available to borrow. Please call the office to organise a time to come down and select your choice. Once you've finished, you can return your item and choose something else.



Amanda, our Art Tutor, has kindly put together some activity packs which we can deliver to anyone who would like one. It includes things like crosswords, word searches, colouring pages and activities to do.

Supporting Independence



Say 'Hello' to Claire Wall, the newest member of our team. Some of you may have already met Claire or spoken to her on the phone.

Claire has been co-ordinating all the work that has been happening through our role as volunteer lead for Leeds City Council and Voluntary Action Leeds Community Hub for Cross Gates and Whinmoor Ward.

Introducing Claire...

Claire worked on a voluntary basis, to support the hub when lockdown first started, as getting essential items such as food and prescriptions was vital to people who were shielding.

We are very pleased to say that Claire has now joined our staff team on a temporary contract after the extension of the Leeds City Council Hub, so she can continue the work on prescriptions, food hamper collections and deliveries over the winter months, as an added benefit alongside our usual winter support scheme to ensure that you, our members, get the support you need.

Claire has done a brilliant job in working closely with other members of the team and volunteers, in setting up and coordinating this service and always goes that extra mile. She's a real asset to the organisation and we're very happy to have her on board.



As lead for the **Cross Gates and Whinmoor Community Hub**, we had access to a wider pool of volunteers which has been a huge benefit. The new volunteers helped us to deliver 890 food hampers; collect more than 250 prescriptions; and carry out 88 paid for shops.

Also, alongside our own volunteers, they helped deliver six fortnightly issues of Shine magazines to 1,350 households, as well as delivering our Summer newsletter to all our members. A few of the volunteers have applied to become Good Neighbours' volunteers, which is great news.

The response from our members contributing articles to be included in the Shine Magazine was overwhelming and it's such a shame there wasn't enough space, or enough issues for all the articles submitted to be featured. We did however have articles from our members in five of the six issues. Well done Team!

Short Walk Buddies

We have recently also introduced **Short Walk Buddies**. These are volunteers who provide companionship to someone who is able to go out for a short walk but has no-one living locally to walk with. If you would be interested in having a Short Walk Buddy, please contact the office.

Supporting Independence



Rita Dawson, Chair of the Older People's Engagement Group at **Age UK Leeds**, tells us how she started volunteering.

"While I was in Leeds shopping one miserable day, I called into Age UK's Arch Cafe and saw a poster advertising the Older People's Engagement Group.

"At the time I was looking for an interesting and worthwhile volunteering opportunity, and this seemed ideal. The group was new and the idea was to link members into Age UK Leeds services to involve older people in the organisation's development and delivery. I joined the Supporting Wellbeing team and have since attended team meetings, shadowed staff, been on interview panels and gathered client feedback.

"Our members are linked up with Hospital to Home, information and advice, and two members, who are Befrienders, support the Ageing Well team. We also support local and national campaigns, such as bus passes and free TV licences for over 75s.

"It is a real privilege and pleasure to be part of this group. Staff and volunteers are so passionate about helping older people and their enthusiasm and commitment is catching!"

Age UK Leeds is always looking for new members - to find out more call 0113 389 3000 or email opegroup@ageukleeds.org.uk





Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police. They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you'll let your guard down for just a moment.

If you have been scammed, it's important to remember it isn't your fault and you have nothing to feel ashamed of.

Be vigilant in looking out for online, doorstep, postal or telephone scammers.

Remember:

1. Guard your personal and banking details carefully. Never give out security details, such as your PIN or internet banking password.
2. Don't assume a communication is genuine. Don't worry about seeming rude – if you have any doubts at all you can always hang up the phone, or close the door on a doorstep caller.
3. Don't sign up to anything on the spot or let anyone rush or pressure you.
4. Trust your instincts – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
5. Remember, you are in control

If you have been the victim of a scam, call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or visit www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

Digital Health Hub



Our **Digital Health Hub** launched in October 2019 with funding received from **100% Digital Leeds** and **Good Things Foundation**.

The funding enabled us to recruit Samantha our Digital worker, who alongside our team of volunteers, has helped to train 40 members to book GP appointments and order prescriptions online. We also showed 60 members how to use their phones to find their next bus times, read free books and magazines from the library, make video calls, and do lots more with their phone or computers.

First steps into finding out more...

We know many of our members, as a result of the lockdown, want to improve their IT skills or are taking their first steps into using IT and have bought their own tablet. This has helped them connect with friends, family, church and order their shopping online.

The team has continued its digital work during lockdown by training members to join in video calls and running our virtual programme. Our Trustees realise the importance of our digital offer and so, alongside funding recently secured through **BT Skills** and the **Better Health Outcomes through Digital Inclusion** programme, from **Good Things Foundation**, we will invest some of our reserves to ensure that the Digital Health Hub can continue for another year.

We will be running more one-to-one '**Beginners**' and '**Improvers**' IT classes from October, as well as providing support to improve members' health and wellbeing using the Internet with our new four-week course called **Keeping Healthy at Home**. Details of this course are included on page 17 of the newsletter.



IT Lessons

We recognise that a lot of our members are not using the Internet and we want to provide the opportunity for those who want to learn, to be able to access lessons in a supportive environment, at their own pace. Our work has been significantly hampered by Covid 19 and we are working to increase our sessions in line with current Covid 19 measures, which are always subject to change.

New Beginners IT lessons start in October

This is a five-week course for those who are new to IT or are just starting out and want to learn more. The classes are relaxed and so you don't need to worry if you don't understand anything. We will be there to help.

Improvers IT lessons

If you have a device and are using your computer now, but you would like to learn how to do more, we can arrange to set you up on **Learn My Way**, our free to use teaching site for you to access lessons from home. There are a wide range of lessons and you choose which ones you would like to work through and work at your own pace.

Digital Health Hub



Since lockdown began we have established several virtual groups at the Centre for people to keep in touch, but what actually is a virtual group?

A virtual group is a video call you join with by phone, laptop or computer with a camera and you can see everyone else.

Is it easy to join?

Yes, 55 of our members, have joined our virtual groups since lockdown, and they have made new friends and enjoyed having other people to chat to and 'socialise' with.

How can we help?

We provide training for you and arrange a practice call with you first to make sure you understand how to join a call and how it works. You usually join a call by clicking a link we send you in an email.

We have a wide variety of virtual groups running which you can access from your Tablet, Smart phone or computer. As you will see from our virtual programme, we have online social events taking place every day. We also offer virtual computer classes.

What if I don't have a computer or tablet?

Our tablet lending scheme '**Try Before you Buy**' means you can borrow a tablet from us, free for the first four weeks and afterwards for a small monthly fee. We will

show you how to use it and how to join in with our activities online. We can also connect you to the Internet if required for a small monthly fee.

What if I have my own tablet/ computer?

If you have your own device and would like to know how to use Zoom so that you can join in with our social online groups, please contact us to arrange a training session.



Virtual Groups and Classes

Virtual Groups & Classes

Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours' Scheme CIO

Monday 2pm-3pm | Book Chat - Join us for poetry and book reading with an opportunity to share stories together.

Tuesday 11am-12.15pm and 1.30pm-3pm | Keeping Healthy at Home - a four-week course to help keep you well and active this winter. Book in advance

Wednesday 1.30pm-3pm | Bingo and Chat - Join us for a prize bingo and a chat with others.

Thursday | IT classes at the Newman Centre - Learn on a Tablet or Laptop with one of our four-week courses. Book in advance

Friday 10.30am-11.30am | Quiz Friday - Join us for a fun quiz and a chat.

Friday 1.30pm-3pm | Art Class - Please book in advance, limited places available.

On the fourth Wednesday of the month from 3pm-4pm we hold our online Bereavement Group, please contact us for more details.

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Email Samantha@crossgatesgns.org.uk
for more information

Registered Charity Number: 105089 | crossgatesgns.org.uk #stayalert | ControltheVirus | Save Lives

Please contact the office for more details on how to join our virtual groups or to find out how to borrow a tablet from us

Keeping Healthy



Perhaps the three most important things you can do to look after yourself during lockdown are to ***Eat Well, Stay Active, and Stay Connected.***

Eat Well

Make sure you're eating enough. If you're not as active or you're worried and anxious, then you might not feel like eating as much as you used to. But it's really important to keep your energy levels up by eating enough.

For those who are unable to shop for themselves and don't have family or friends who can do it for them, please get in touch. We are continuing our essential food hamper delivery service through the winter months.

We also hope to be able to provide more afternoon teas and hot food deliveries during the winter months.

Stay Active

Any kind of regular physical activity is important to everyone, but especially if you have health conditions which are made worse by inactivity. This doesn't have to be a full exercise workout!

Our ***Walking Group*** is currently piloting a four-week walk programme. Five groups of six people meet in the same group bubble each week at the Centre at different times, as an outdoor activity that can be managed within Covid 19 protocols regarding social distancing and small numbers.

Stay Connected

Do you enjoy writing and receiving letters? A couple of our members are already writing letters to each other.

It's a great way to keep in touch, especially if you find it difficult to hear and speak on the phone. If you would be interested in joining a **Letter Writing Service** please get in touch.



Getting Creative!

Can you knit, crochet or sew? We are looking to make a patchwork quilt made up of sixty squares. The quilt is part of a piece of work we are hoping to do next year focusing on **Sixty Plus**. Watch this space for more information about this project

Also, all you artists and other creative people working with wood, metal and flowers and foliage. Would you be interested in creating something on the theme of Sixty Plus?

These would be projects to think about and work on over the winter months. Keeping you busy and connected to the Scheme even though we can't meet up face to face yet. Next Spring we will have lots of wondrous creative works of art and sculpture to share in an exhibition face to face hopefully – but most definitely on Facebook and in our Spring edition newsletter.

If you are interested in making a square for the quilt, or submitting a creative piece on the theme of Sixty Plus please get in touch.

Keeping Healthy



Having flu can often be much worse than people assume. **Flu vaccination** is available each year to protect those who are at greater risk. With the ongoing Covid pandemic, the flu vaccination is more important than ever this year.

Who should get a flu vaccine?

As well as anyone aged over 65, the flu vaccine will also be offered this year to those living with someone who is at high risk from Covid 19 (people who are shielding) and to people who receive carer's allowance or are the main carer of an older person.

Where can I get the flu vaccine?

Your GP surgery will inform you. Because of Covid 19, GPs may not be operating their usual flu clinics. You may also be able to obtain the flu vaccine at your local chemist.

Winter Tips

Follow hygiene advice such as washing your hands more often than usual. You should do this whenever you come in from outside, blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food. You should also use tissues if you sneeze and make sure you dispose of them quickly. If you can't wash your hands straight away, use hand sanitiser and then wash them as soon as you have access to a sink.



We are launching our new **Keeping Well at Home** programme this October to help members stay well and positive throughout the Covid 19 outbreak, which we know is a difficult time for our members.

The group will meet once a week for four weeks via video call or in the Newman Centre - subject to current Covid 19 guidelines.

Learn My Way

You will receive a pack and resources to join the course and will also be registered on **Learn My Way** where you will complete some short courses during the programme.

You will need basic computer skills to join this programme. We know that not everyone has got IT skills or feels confident using IT. If that is you and you would like to learn, then please look at our section on beginners IT lessons on **page 11** and start there. You can then progress onto this programme.

This programme includes something for everyone and you will improve your IT skills and knowledge of using the internet over the course of the four weeks.

Please contact the office to book. Start dates and times will vary and will be allocated when you are booked onto the programme.

Volunteer Noticeboard

Short Walk Buddies

to provide walking and social companionship to members who are able to walk but have no friends or relatives living nearby to walk with.

Delivery Drivers

Hot Meals,
Afternoon teas and
Activity Packs

Telephone Befrienders

To meet the increased demand for people wanting a friendly weekly or fortnightly telephone chat as we are all much more isolated due to the current crisis. Also, once Winter arrives and people become more housebound due to the weather and other winter illnesses, we may need even more telephone befrienders.

Volunteer Drivers

if we get enough interest for our Letter Writing Service we will need volunteer drivers to collect and deliver these letters within the local area.

A massive thank you to all our amazing volunteers!

Events

Please join us for our 18th

Cross Gates
& District Good
Neighbours'
Scheme CIO
Working with and
for older people

Annual General Meeting via **Zoom**

**Tuesday 8 December
via Zoom**

**1pm • Guest speaker from 100% Digital
Leeds**

followed by **Brian Sugden** reading a
poem about the Scheme

*Come help us celebrate all that we have achieved
over the years*

*All welcome but please email the office
for the Zoom link.*

If you have a question or issue to raise in the
'Any Other Business' part of the meeting please
submit it to the office by the **16 November** in
an envelope marked AGM.

Contact us

Please note: If visiting the office, wait outside and a member of staff will come out to you.

Please call, email or use social media to get in touch, we will respond as quickly as we can.

Telephone 0113 260 6565

Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours' Scheme
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Email admin@crossgatesgns.org.uk

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Trips

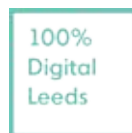
Any members who have paid for trips or pantomime have been called and offered a full refund. We will be repeating our Whitby and Millstones trips so any payments made will be carried over to 2021, unless a refund is requested.

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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