



Summer 2021

**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...



As we come out of our third lockdown, most people including our staff and volunteer team have had both vaccinations and restrictions are beginning to lift. We are cautiously but positively planning our re-opening strategy in line with government guidelines.

Members will be contacted via phone on an **invitation only** basis as we plan to start with smaller groups and gradually build up the range of activities on offer. This will ensure we manage the introduction of activities in a fair and COVID safe manner.

Our initial aim is to offer as many members as possible the option to attend at least one activity a week. Please be patient if you haven't received an invitation to a particular group.

Please contact the office if you are a new member or would like to be put on the waiting list for a particular group. See what our new **Starting Back Time Table** will look like on page 19.



A big thank you for our beautiful front cover in this edition goes to Jo Koszel from our online Painting and Drawing class.

Farewell and thank you

Last year we said a farewell to our Trustee, Joe Birch as he moved out of the area. We will always be grateful and thankful for all of Joe's IT expertise that laid the foundation for the successful digital support we have been able to continue through our Digital Health Hub.

New Trustee

Most of you will have chuckled at Brian Sugden's poems in previous newsletters and many of you will know him from his past visits to Good Neighbours with his wife Audrey, who sadly died a year ago. We were very pleased to welcome him to the Board in March. We will benefit from his advice and compassion - and we're looking forward to some more poems too.

Staff Restructure

With the increase in our staff team, and the ongoing changes in roles and responsibilities, our Trustees decided it would be a good time to restructure. We now have an outreach team, led by Marion our new Outreach Manager and Charley is our new Office Manager. These changes ensure that I have more time to concentrate on taking the charity forward as CEO with the support of our Trustees, staff and volunteers.

We've even spruced the office up, ready for your arrival – under Charley's direction! A big thank you to **Good Gym** who started the redecoration of the office, and finished and tidied up by all staff in readiness for welcoming everyone back!

Jo Horsfall, Chief Executive Officer

Supporting Independence



If you are feeling anxious about coming back to groups and mixing with people again, or feeling a bit panicky at the thought of venturing out into the ‘big wide world’ after being at home for so long, please give us a call. It’s fair to say that many of us feel that way, and understandably so given the very strange life we’ve been living over the past year.

Dee, Sandra and Ilona are here to support those of you who are feeling particularly nervous, to help restore your confidence through regular phone chats, garden and home visits (once restrictions allow) and short walks and local outings.

We can also provide some transport, or walk with you, and settle you into groups with our friendly staff and volunteers or people you know.

We are here to help you with whatever support we can to enable you all to enjoy your lives to the fullest and get the most pleasure and benefit out of the social activities and opportunities the Scheme offers.

We are really looking forward to seeing you all again and having the place buzzing with activity once more. We have missed you.

Wellbeing Walks

We're sure many of you will have been missing Ilona's smiley face and cheery disposition but never fear she's here ready and waiting for when you all can return to groups again. Ilona says, ***"I can't wait until everyone is back."***

"I love walking with Ilona, getting some fresh air and having some company and a friend."

During the pandemic Ilona has been enjoying a good chat and laugh with many of you during her weekly phone calls. She has also been providing companionship on short local walks, to some of our members with no friends or family living nearby to go with them. They have all enjoyed the chance to have a chat out in the fresh air while enjoying a bit of exercise too.

One of Ilona's walking companions is Mandy. Mandy has been a volunteer with us for 11 years, ***"I love meeting people. Everyone starts off as a member and they become a friend."***

Every Monday, Ilona and Mandy go for a walk and a chat, ***"It's always a pleasure to see Mandy, we have a good laugh."***



Reducing Loneliness & Isolation



Our telephone befriending service brightens up the lives of nearly 400 of our members and volunteers each week. We know this because you tell us!

Talking can make such a huge difference to how you're feeling, and helps us to feel connected, especially during these times of social restrictions. If you are feeling lonely, or would just like someone different to talk to, please contact us and we can arrange a match to one of our trained volunteers.

Getting back 'out there'...

Although we will continue to provide the above services, we are all very excited to be finally planning the re-opening of many of our social activities, subject to government guidelines, in the very near future.



Once we're up and running again, and able to mix, it could be the perfect time to try something new and meet new people, especially if you find you have more time on your hands. Raymond is a member of our creative writing group and here are some of his suggestions...

What to Do by Raymond Tennant

“You’re now retired, or at home with more time on your hands. Now, you’re free to do as you please.

“I have personal experience of Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours’ Scheme CIO where I developed a liking for strumming a ukulele and singing popular songs along with a number of like-minded men and women most of whom were much better than me. No problem as far as I was concerned. Someone had to make the rest of the group look good and I did that job magnificently whilst having such a happy time, and nobody laughed at my lack of talent.

“Another class which gave me joy was creative writing. I had never done any writing since leaving school about 70 years ago. I really surprised myself and looked forward to attending the class every week. I also enjoyed the stories written by the other class members.

“But enough about me and my less than glittering career! Each one of us has to decide on something which can stimulate our interest. At Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours’ Scheme CIO, you will be surrounded by people like yourself in a friendly, warm, sociable atmosphere. I’m sure you’ll find something to improve and brighten your life. There is every chance that you will develop such an interest that you can’t wait for the class the following week.

“If it stimulates your interest then try it - even if it’s something new. Surprise yourself. Go on, give them a call now.”

Reducing Loneliness & Isolation



Ellie joined us in January as part of the Rank Foundation Time to Shine 12-month leadership programme.

“I have absolutely loved getting to know some of our trustees, staff, volunteers, and lovely members. I am really looking forward to welcoming everyone back and having the chance to meet you all and chat face-to-face.”

Part of Ellie’s 60+ project is to create a quilt made up of 60 squares (6x6 inches) knitted or crocheted by our members to make a quilt to display at an end of project showcase event.



If you enjoy sewing and would be interested in sewing all the squares together yourself, or working with someone else to do this, please get in touch. We would love to hear from you – otherwise Ellie and Marion will be enrolling on a ‘quilt sewing’ crash course!

A key part of Ellie’s role is to interview members and volunteers with a story to tell, and for these articles to feature on our website and social media channels, as well as in our newsletter.

If you have a story to tell, or a poem to share, please get in touch email ellie@crossgatesgns.org.uk



A Lifetime of Hobbies

Having hobbies is a great way to keep occupied and mentally stimulated. Here's how John has kept himself busy during lockdown

John Freer, 79, has spent most of his retirement years doing his favourite things – knitting and gardening.

Knitting has been a particular staple in his life from a remarkably young age. John spent part of his early childhood in a child orphanage after his mother sadly passed away, ***“In the orphanage, I’d never worn proper shoes, only pumps or slippers.”***

Amazingly, this is how John got into knitting. He started to get blisters on his heels where they rubbed once he started to wear shoes. To allow his feet to heal, he wasn't able to move around much, which for a five-year-old was a challenge, ***“To stop me running about like any kid would be doing, I was taught how to knit.”***

John carried on knitting throughout his childhood and then took it up again when he got married. John's other favourite pastime is gardening. When he retired, he took on a part-time job teaching gardening.

To read John's full article, please visit the News and Events section of our website:

<https://crossgatesgns.org.uk/whats-on/news-events/>

Keeping Healthy



One of the activities we have been able to start again is the **Monday Walking Group**. In line with COVID-19 restrictions we are running five groups of six people.

Jacki Lawrence (Trustee) and her husband Bob run one of the walking groups, ***“It’s so good to be out again and see people we haven’t seen for a year.”*** Jacki says, ***“the walking group started in June 2005 with eight people. Now we can have up to 30 or 40 people, when we can.”***

They started the walking group to be healthier really. ***“In the early days of the Scheme we were trying to introduce activities that kept people active, out and about and seeing people. After a few weeks, John Best joined us and he’s made the walking group what it is. He organises all the walks.”*** John maps all the walks out, writes the instructions and does the risk assessments.

Exercise classes are back!

Tai Chi, Line Dancing and Flexi-cise classes resumed in May and are running again in line with Covid-19 guidelines. This means that places are limited and times are staggered to allow for cleaning between sessions, but as restrictions ease and numbers allowed to attend increase, you will be contacted when a place is available.

Carers' Support

Carers Leeds provide a weekly catch up, where you can meet for an informal chat over Zoom. Get in touch to find out more about their Dementia Hub and the support provided to people who are looking after a person with memory difficulties or a diagnosis of dementia.

To book a place call Carers Leeds on 0113 380 4300 or email dawn.perkins@carersleeds.org.uk

Dementia Support

We have been continuing our work with Cross Gates Local Care Partnership (LCP) around making Cross Gates and the surrounding area more dementia friendly. The LCP Dementia Friendly working group ran two Dementia Awareness Information sessions in May to raise the profile of this work within the local business community.

Are you over 65 and taking five or more different medicines?



NIHR Yorkshire and Humber Patient Safety Translational Research Centre

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Are you aged 65 years or older and taking 5 or more different medicines?

- We would like to have a conversation with you on how unnecessary medicines can be safely stopped in the community
 - We will be doing group interviews with patients or individual one-to-one interviews
 - You will be compensated with a £20 Amazon voucher for your time
 - Email Daniel Okeowo at umdao@leeds.ac.uk for more details!

Please retweet and share!



Keeping Healthy



At the risk of repeating ourselves, it is important to look after yourselves by eating and sleeping well, drinking regularly and keeping active both physically and mentally.

Amanda Brown, our Arts & Crafts Tutor, moved to Leeds from Scotland in 1987, and dedicated her time to community arts and craft classes. Working as an Activity Co-ordinator in the NHS, and being part of the Learning Support Team at Leeds City College, before she started at the Scheme in September 2018. At that time, the craft classes would often focus on fun things they could create to sell and help with funding, like seasonal gifts.

As her classes became so popular, Amanda agreed to take over the painting class too, when the previous tutor left, ***“I was more a cutter and sticker than a painter, but I thought let’s go for it.”***

Keeping the ‘arts and crafters’ entertained!

From making cards, and Easter and Christmas gifts together, activity packs to puzzles, colouring, painting, and quizzes over Zoom, Amanda has kept the ‘arts and crafters’ of Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours’ Scheme CIO entertained during lockdown.

Following lockdown last year, ***“The only thing I could continue was the activity packs, starting with an Easter theme.”***



After a few months, the members of the painting group ended up setting up their own WhatsApp group and decided they would like more structure to the activities. So **Friday's From Home** was born! Zoom classes

it was! Amanda began putting together themes every four weeks; watercolour paintings, acrylic, and pencil drawings too.

It's not only the members' motivation it's helped, Amanda says, ***"I think I get as much out of it as they do, it gives structure to my week. It's not just the activities, but it's an excuse for everyone to have a chat."***

More Information

To read the full article about Amanda, please visit the News and Events section of our website:

<https://crossgatesgns.org.uk/whats-on/news-events/>

Going from strength to strength

By raising our profile during the last year through increased online partnership working and wider promotion of our Scheme through our newsletter and social media channels, we have received requests from other arts and crafts projects. These include Lily Craig working with Leeds Older People's Forum and Sandy Holden from Love Arts Leeds, to take part in their activities which means we can offer further opportunities to our members.

Digital Health Hub



The lockdown has created an influx of interest from members wanting to learn how to use computers for the first time and from those wanting to do more.

We are in the process of planning new groups and sessions for members to learn. Once we re-open and restrictions allow, we will be running more sessions for members who want to improve their IT skills as well as groups for beginners.

Day / Time	Online Group	Activity
Monday 2pm	Words for Wellbeing	Poetry, book readings and discussions
Tuesday 1.30pm	Book Group	Read a book over four weeks and chat about it every week
Wednesday 1.30pm	Bingo	Join us for online Bingo fun!
Thursday 3pm	Men's Group	TV and Film Group
Friday 10.30am	Weekly Quiz	Flex your quizzing muscles!
Friday 1.30pm	Art Class	Express your artistic side!

Video Course on YouTube

To help members learn and practice at home we have created over 50 videos which are available on our YouTube Channel. Video courses are available on the following subjects:

- How to use Google
- How to use Gmail
- Complete Facebook course
- How to use BBC iPlayer
- How to listen to BBC sounds
- How to use the Bus Apps
- Settings and updating your device, plus more coming soon.



If you would like to know how to learn how to watch the videos please contact the office and we will book you an appointment to come and see us. You can then learn from home in your own time and improve your IT skills. The lessons are suitable for members who have a tablet or smart phone and want to learn how to do more with them.

More information

If you are interested in receiving the weekly links or you would like to add your name to this computer waiting list, contact Samantha our Digital Coordinator on **0113 260 6565** or email **Samantha@crossgatesgns.org.uk** who will arrange a telephone appointment or video call with you.

Digital Health Hub



Did you see our online bingo group on Look North recently?

Weekly Bingo

Val Abbott is our weekly bingo caller. Every Wednesday at 1.30pm the group plays two games then a quiz. The sessions run for five weeks and points are given out each week to the winners. At the end of the five weeks prizes are delivered to the winners.

Val says, ***“I enjoy the banter between us and the laughs we have doing the extra games like the mini quiz and for the first time this week we are going to try Play Your Cards Right with a twist to see how that goes.”***

“We have up to 15 places on bingo and it is £5 to join in. We play over Zoom video call and if you have a laptop or tablet, we can help you with joining the call.”

Book club started in February.

The group has grown each month, and like many of our Zoom activities, has created new friendships. Here's what some of the members had to say:

“It's a real morale booster in these difficult times.” - Marie

“You find a different approach to the book when reading it as part of a group.” - Dot



Scam/Nuisance phone calls

We are aware of a rise in scam phone calls amongst our members and the anxiety this is causing people.

Remember, if you do get a call from anyone asking for your details, always pause and consider if it is genuine. No genuine caller will ever ask you for passwords or your bank details over the phone. Always say you will ring them back but don't use the number they give you, use the number you have for your bank or utility provider and you can check if the call is genuine then.

We can help with the following:

- Research what support your current telephone provider can offer to prevent scam calls including call screening.
- Support to register with the Telephone preference service to reduce nuisance calls.
- Refer you to Trading Standards for support from them if you have been a victim of scam calls. They can provide free call blockers for your phones if they are compatible.
- Give advice on buying a phone which will screen your calls to prevent nearly all scam calls getting through, set this up for you and show you how to use it.

More information

Contact Samantha our Digital Coordinator on **0113 260 6565** or email Samantha@crossgatesgns.org.uk who will arrange a telephone appointment or video call with you.

Events

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

Summer Fayre

Wednesday 18 August

1pm-3pm | Free Entry

Browse our stalls and chat with members,
staff and volunteers.

*Bun Stall, Cream Teas, Tombola,
Bric- a- Brac and donations
to be received no earlier than
Monday 9 August - thank you.*

Subject to Covid-19 restrictions

The Shell by Kathy Sinclair

I found the shell on holiday
Large and curved and coloured grey
Held to your ear you could hear the sea.
It brings such memories back to me.
The sand as warm as the shell in my hand
The sky so blue in an azure band
Buckets and spades, castles built high
Ice creams and donkey rides. Sand in my eye.
So precious these memories are to me
Kept in a shell since I was three.

Volunteer Noticeboard



Our **Start Back Time Table** is now prepared and staff will be in contact with volunteers over the next few weeks to have a catch up and see who is available to support us.

Do you enjoy getting out and about?

We also need **Short Walk Buddy volunteers** to provide social companionship to members who enjoy walking but have no friends or relatives living nearby. We are also looking to support members who live close to each other and would like to walk around their local area, to set up small walking groups of four people.

Start Back Time Table

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	Walking Group Newman Centre	No Group
Tuesday	Drop-In Newman Centre	Tai Chi Newman Centre
Wednesday	Activity Group Newman Centre	Flexi-cise Newman Centre
Thursday	No Group	Line Dancing Newman Centre
Friday	Drop-In St Mary's	No Group

Please note all attendances will be by invitation only and a member of staff will contact you to offer you a place.

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
CIO, Station Road, Leeds LS15 7JY

Email admin@crossgatesgns.org.uk

Visit www.crossgatesgns.org.uk

'Like' us at www.facebook.com/crossgatesgns

Follow us @CrossGatesGNS on Twitter and Instagram

Have you moved?

Have you **moved or changed phone numbers**? Please let us know. It is important that the contact information we have for you is up to date.

Slow & steady wins the race

Please be patient as we gradually return with our groups and activities. All groups are currently running on an **invitation only** basis and a member of staff will contact you as soon as possible. As always your safety is paramount - this is new to all of us and we need to get it right.



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visit website



Good Things
Foundation

The Rank Foundation
a pebble in the pond



Registered Charity Number: 1160095