



## Reflections on 2020 and hopes for 2021

None of us could have imagined this time last year what 2020 would bring and I think it is safe to say this has probably been the strangest year that any of us has lived through. Life changed drastically for all of us in March and for Caring Together it meant a major shift from much of our work being about helping people to get out of the house and meet up with others in the community to supporting our members to stay home when they needed to.

We are in the midst of the 4 week national lockdown at the time of writing and while we don't know what the rules will be at the end of this, it is likely that we will be living with some restrictions throughout the winter. There is still support available if you need it, both from Caring Together and other organisations across the city, You can call us on all the usual numbers and we will try and help or direct you to the right place for help (there's also a useful numbers insert that may help)

We want to thank you all for your support over this year—in numerous ways, volunteers giving up their time to help us, donations, both financial and gifts of things we have been able to share with our members and for all the kind words and messages of support. And, to all our members, thank you for the many, many telephone conversations that have been at times, funny, moving, sad, uplifting, thought provoking—sometimes all of these in the same conversation! They have been as beneficial to us as we hope they have been to you.

Looking forward to 2021, the recent vaccine news gives some hope that we will eventually be able to start to return to some normality. Caring Together should be settled into our new premises at Charing Cross in the new year and we look forward to the time when we will be able to open our doors for members to come and spend some time there with us. We will put the kettle on!!

In the meantime keep on doing all you can to keep yourself and others safe.

### Festive Gifts from Caring Together and some special prizes



We won't be able to do all the usual seasonal get-togethers this year so instead we will be sending out a little festive pack to all our members We do hope you will enjoy this selection of goodies, it is our way of saying that we are thinking of you over the winter and the festive season. And we look forward to seeing you as we make our safe doorstep deliveries

Many thanks to the volunteers, funders and friends of Caring Together who have help to make this happen

We will also be holding a special raffle in December. All of our members will be in the draw and we will draw some names at random, these members will receive an extra gift in the run up to Christmas

## Would you like to join our Trustees?

We are looking for new members for our Trustee Board. The Trustees oversee the running of the organisation and make decisions about what Caring Together does. We particularly need to fill the positions of Treasurer and Deputy Chair but we also welcome new members on the board generally and particularly local older people.

The Trustees meet monthly, usually in the afternoon on the third Thursday of the month and, at the moment, we are having to hold those meetings on Zoom. However, we do plan to resume in person meetings when we can so don't let that put you off.

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a Trustee for Caring Together, please call John O'Dwyer for an informal chat—07458303015 or 0113 2430298 or email [john@caringtogether.org.uk](mailto:john@caringtogether.org.uk)

## Getting a Covid Test

If you have any Covid symptoms you need to get a test as soon possible. There are a number of places in Leeds you can go for a test or you can get a home testing kit sent out if you are not able to go for one. You can find out all the information and either book a test or order a home test by going online at <https://www.leedsccg.nhs.uk/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-where-to-go-for-testing/> or by calling 119.

Caring Together have been in contact with Public Health Leeds about us having a small supply of the home testing kits for members who have any difficulty in accessing the tests. So if you need a test (only if you have symptoms) and find it hard to get one please call us and we will try to help.

## Keeping Warm and Well over Winter

Winter is on it's way and the cold weather can make us more vulnerable to illness so keeping warm both inside and outside the house can help reduce the risk of serious health problems. Looking after yourself and keeping warm is more important than ever this year.



You should try and keep your home heated to at least 18 degrees and make sure it is well insulated so you are not losing heat. This is especially important if you have a health condition or are less mobile. If you think you will find it difficult to keep warm and pay your energy bills there may be practical and financial help available for you—call Valerie for advice on 04783333115.

Make sure you have adequate supplies of any medication you need and that you are able to have hot meals and drinks. If you are struggling with any of these things there is help available for this too so please call and ask.

We are sending you a copy of 'Keep Well at Home' from Public Health Leeds which has lots of good advice and tips for keeping well and active at this time

And finally, Caring Together has a small stock of thermal underwear, 'snuggies' and socks, etc. If you are in need of these please call and let us know.

## 'Online Elevenses'

We are unable to meet as we would usually at the moment but we are meeting online once a week so why not join us each Thursday at 11am.

A warm welcome awaits but sadly you do have to make your own cuppa.



Contact Lisa 07436 530073 or email: [lisa@caringtogether.org.uk](mailto:lisa@caringtogether.org.uk) if you would like an invite to join us.

## 'Online Festive Get Together' - Thursday 10th December @11am

We are delighted to be able to host another music session in partnership with the University of Leeds Music society again this year.

This time it will have to be online, yet we hope it will still be as musically entertaining. We hope you will come along and enjoy us for an hour of festive cheer and even some musical bingo and prizes.



If you would like to join us then please email:  
lisa@caringtogether.org.uk or call: 07436 530073 and I can send an invite .



## Online Music and Wellbeing Workshops commencing Tuesday 26th January 2021@11am

Caring Together will be working in collaboration with Leeds University Union Music Impact in the Community (LUU) for a series of music and wellbeing workshops! In previous years we have done similar projects with them, bringing music into people's lives in a fun and accessible way. So if you have a love for music in any form, join us for fortnightly workshops from Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 11am!

These will be presumably online for now, and will include musical activities such as singing, active music listening and discussion, musical bingo, percussion games and music and mindfulness with art.

Community music builds confidence, skills and breaks down loneliness and isolation which is more important now than ever before. We hope to see you joining us!

Please call Lisa: 07436 530073, or email: lisa@caringtogether.org.uk



## 'Monday Mind Workout'

Caring Together has been hosting an online quiz each Monday since the lockdown began.

If you have an email address and would like to be added to the list so you get it each week then please do get in contact with me on the details below. You can also find it on our website: [www.caringtogether.org.uk](http://www.caringtogether.org.uk).

**And if you don't have an email account but you would still like to get a copy of the quizzes then just call me and I will get a copy directly to you.** Also, if anyone would like to have a go at setting a quiz then just get in touch.



Contact Lisa 07436 530073 or email: [lisa@caringtogether.org.uk](mailto:lisa@caringtogether.org.uk).

## 'Poetry Corner'

Since the lockdown began we have also been posting on our website and emailing out a poem each week. These have been favourites of members, some written by others and some from our members too.

If you have an email address and would like to be added to the list so you get this each week then please do get in contact with me on the details below.

**And if you don't have an email account but you would still like to get a copy of the poems then just call me and I will deliver them to you once a month.** Also, if anyone would like to write a poem or share your favourite with others then just get in touch.

Contact Lisa 07436 530073 or email: [lisa@caringtogether.org.uk](mailto:lisa@caringtogether.org.uk).

## Christmas Opening Hours at Caring Together

The Caring Together offices will be closed between Thursday 24th December 2020 and Monday 4th January 2021, however staff will be available at times over the holidays so if you need to contact us please ring one of the mobile numbers below (leave a message if you don't get an immediate answer and we will get back to you)

If you need urgent help over this time, there are also lots of numbers on the enclosed 'Useful Numbers' list that may be helpful.

*We hope everyone has a safe and peaceful Christmas and look forward to a happy and healthy 2021*

### Caring Together Staff—and how to contact us

In order to maintain social distancing our office is not occupied as much as normal but there will be a member of staff there most days so we can still be contacted on 0113 2430298— or if you leave a message we will get back to you.



Alternatively you can call us on these mobile numbers or email us:

**John O'Dwyer** - Manager - john@caringtogether.org.uk - 07458303015

**Valerie McGregor** - Advice & Support Worker/Administrator (Deputy Manager) - Valerie@caringtogether.org.uk - 07483333115

**Lisa Argyle** - Community Resilience Worker -lisa@caringtogether.org.uk—07436530073

**Ashley Rose** - Finance Worker—ashley@caringtogether.org.uk—or on the office landline on Tuesday mornings (0113 2430298)

### Caring Together Prize Draw

Thank you to everyone who takes part in our monthly Prize Draw, it helps raise much needed funds to support our work. If you would like to join in future draws, please let Valerie know. It's a good way to support our work and you may win a small cash prize.

August 2020 Total Prize Fund £27	September 2020 Total Prize Fund £26	October 2020 Total Prize Fund £26
1st Prize £13 - Number 084	1st Prize £14 - Number 016	1st Prize £14 - Number 054
2nd Prize £7 - Number 019	2nd Prize £6 - Number 076	2nd Prize £6 - Number 027
3rd Prize £7 - Number 076	3rd Prize £6 - Number 058	3rd Prize £6- Number 098

The draws are taking place at our monthly Zoom Trustee Meetings