

Caring Together in Woodhouse & Little London

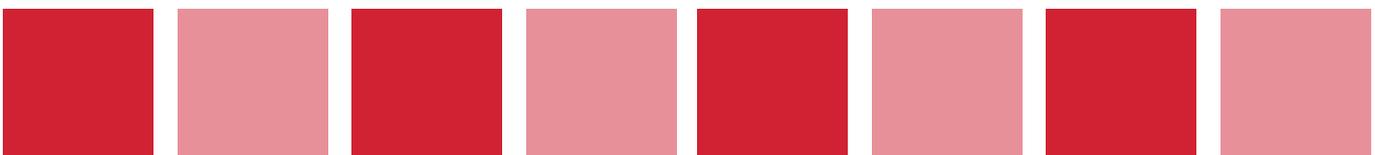
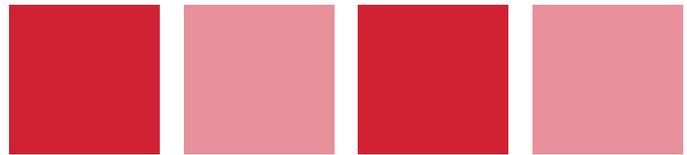
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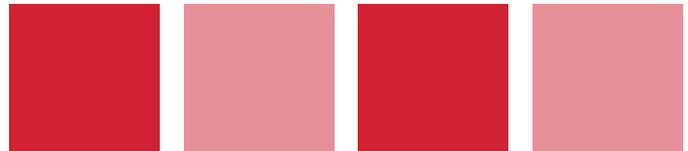
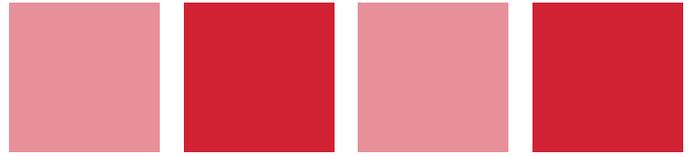


Supporting Older People in our Community since 1995



ANNUAL REPORT 2021





Zoom Meeting

Speaker View

Karen Tobin

Lisa Argyle

'Three Days, Three Homes, Three Zooms and Three Minds' inspired by Mandela to create art in celebration of Nelson Mandela's Birthday

iPad

End Meeting for All

Leave Meeting

Give feedback Cancel

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15/07/2020

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CARING TOGETHER

IN WOODHOUSE AND LITTLE LONDON

OFFICE

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[facebook.com/caringtogetherleeds](https://www.facebook.com/caringtogetherleeds)
Twitter: @caringtogether1

PATRONS

The Lord Mayor of Leeds
Hilary Benn MP

OUR TRUSTEES

Cllr Al Garthwaite	Chair
Ann Shaw	Secretary
David Wigglesworth	
Ben Anson	
Tracey Noble	
Ann Dudzinski	
Myrna Ruttledge	
Cllr Abigail Marshall-Katung	
Cllr Javaid Akhtar	

STAFF

STAFF

John O'Dwyer	Manager
Valerie McGregor	Advice & Support Worker/Deputy Manager
Lisa Argyle	Community Resilience Worker
Ashley Rose	Finance Worker

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little London is established for the following objects:-

- The relief of older people (without distinction of colour, ethnic origin, nationality, political or religious opinion or sex) in any way considered to be charitable in law as the trustees may determine within the geographic area of Woodhouse and Little London and its neighbourhood within the City of Leeds.
- To promote the mental and physical welfare of older people and relieve those with disabilities.
- To advance the education of older people on matters such as finance, health, housing, security and welfare entitlements.
- To further any other charitable purposes as the trustees may determine for the benefit of the residents in the area of benefit.

FOREWORD FROM OUR PATRON

It is a great honour to be asked once again to contribute these words to the Caring Together annual report.

The last year and a half has been very difficult because of the Covid pandemic - many people have sadly lost loved ones - but Caring Together has carried on its work in new ways. This shows the strength of the organisation and the dedication of our wonderful staff and volunteers to whom we owe a huge debt of gratitude.

And whatever the circumstances, the fundamental aims of Caring Together remain the same - to help older people lead active and healthy lives.

I look forward to seeing you all again before too long.

Best wishes

**Rt Hon Hilary Benn
MP for Leeds Central
and Patron of Caring Together
in Woodhouse and Little London**



CHAIR'S REPORT

Having been the Chair of Caring Together for over a year now, I am delighted to welcome this annual report with the details of the wonderful work carried out by staff during the pandemic. It's been a very difficult time for everyone, but staff have really risen to the challenge, and learnt many new ways of keeping everyone going, involved and interested as the weeks and months of lockdown rolled on. I am proud to be the chair of an organisation that employs such dynamic people.

Thank you also to all our board members, who oversee the working of the organisation with due diligence and great enthusiasm.

Turning to other matters, the move to new premises has been a great success. It is really good to have a much more accessible and visible presence right in the heart of our area of work. I am delighted to have been able to help make this possible and to see what was a dingy and dilapidated space transform into somewhere so comfortable and welcoming.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you to all the members of Caring Together, without whom the organisation could not exist, and whose participation and determination to keep going during this very difficult time has been a true inspiration. I very much look forward to seeing you all in person once again before too long.

With all best wishes

AI

**Cllr AI Garthwaite
Chair, Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little London
Councillor for Headingley, Hyde Park and part of Woodhouse**



FINANCE REPORT

Caring Together entered 2020/21 confident in our abilities to attract funding for our activities and service provision. As in previous years, we opted for a strategy of spreading the risks widely and applying for smaller funding pots that allowed us to target specific areas of need. It helped that we responded to the changing circumstances necessitated by Covid with speed and were able to articulate to funders our ability to transform our ways of working in ways that were proportionate and targeted and that addressed the individual and collective needs of the community.

Much of what we have achieved would have been made extremely difficult without the funding received from a wide range of sources, not least the local authority. We thank them for the confidence that they have shown in us.

The net income for the year was £14,035, including net income of £13,931 on unrestricted funds and net income of £104 on restricted funds. The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year-end were £96,934.

A major expenditure over this year was the office move and associated improvements to the building which needed to be made. That we managed to fundraise for this on top of our ongoing fundraising was a significant achievement. The move should allow us to reduce our core expenditure over the years ahead.

While our income from group contributions ceased over 2020/21, many members have continued to fundraise for and donate to Caring Together. This has been greatly appreciated by us. We continue to exercise very tight control over expenditure and these individual donations make a significant contribution to group and activities costs. We have not been able to secure a position of volunteer treasurer for the board over the past year. This vacancy still exists. While we have managed to mitigate any issues relating to this through the skills present in our board of trustees and staff team, we will redouble our efforts this year to resolve this issue. If you know of anybody who would be interested in discussing with the trustees what this role entails, please make contact.



STAFF & ACTIVITIES

Reflecting on 2020/21 leaves me with a dilemma. So much took place within that year that it is a case of what to leave out rather than what to put in. The changes to work practices, to provision of services, to identifying the best community responses to the pandemic, were all seismic. We could have become too stretched or alternatively too restricted and rigid in our approach. Instead, none of this happened. We identified our priorities early on and, alongside community partners, developed a wide ranging response to need that was both targeted and innovative.

At the onset, we quickly realised that what many older people needed, particularly those living alone, was reassurance that there was help and advice available should they require this. All of our members were called within a short space of time and through this we gained an idea of the type of initial response that we were going to have to make.

We provided members with food and medicine supplies where needed, either directly through our own efforts or collectively through the various food hubs that emerged. We made tentative doorstep and garden visits to members that were particularly isolated and provided all members with regular current public health advice. We did this via our website, newsletters, regular mail-outs, phone calls and face to face.

Some group activities remained in place, albeit initially online alongside individual walking support and walking groups as well as support groups in the gardens of local communal establishments. All within public health guidelines. Arranging these groups, particularly the online sessions, took considerable time, effort and patience. It is a credit to staff perseverance in this area, with the support of partners, that so many members were able to access activities and much more and which has since stood them in good stead in so many other ways.

We focussed on a greater level of individualised support, much appreciated by those in receipt of this, and coped with an increased level of service demand as it presented itself. We continued our support in areas that we were heavily invested in pre pandemic such as benefits support and supporting those with mental ill health and dementia. We also recognised and worked to mitigate the emotional distress and physical issues that were made more pronounced as a result of greater levels of isolation and reduced mobility.

Our online presence increased, both in terms of quantity of information, and the numbers of members accessing this. Contributions by individual members in providing reflections and stories were particularly gratifying, and the quality of these has been remarked upon as being excellent.

Throughout all of this the staff team have been generous in their application and dedication to their work and the community. Whether working unsocial hours and weekends and not availing of anything like their full annual leave entitlements, they have embodied the principle of community and solidarity which underpins the ethos of Caring Together. It also goes without saying that our local volunteers were once again pivotal in all that we achieved and our thanks go out to them for this.



Much of what we have achieved would have been made extremely difficult without the funding received from a wide range of sources, not least the local authority. We thank them for the confidence that they have shown in us.

Many people throughout the country have expressed wishes for a return to normality. While this is understandable, I feel that many changes that have taken place will be permanent. Much has been learned from our recent experiences, particularly in recognising the value of local responses to national emergencies and of the inherent value in working side by side with all sections of our communities.

As an organisation, we have always been flexible and adaptable and able to react to changing circumstances. I feel that this has proved invaluable during this crisis. From the very start our focus was clear. We operated in a collegiate manner, between the staff team and volunteers and reacted promptly to observed need and requests for assistance. We reacted in real time to opportunities provided by both the easing of lock-down and the difficult transitions back to tighter restrictions.

The best and most important advocates of our work are our members. We thank them for their patience, their vitality, their stoicism and the faith that they showed in us. We hope that we were able to repay this faith over 2020/21 and as we move forward.

John O'Dwyer
Manager

VOLUNTEERING AKA 'COMMUNITY KINDNESS'

Volunteering at Caring Together can be something formal as well as informal. It is community kindness, in whatever way feels right at the time. We don't measure it or judge it; we just appreciate however it is offered. The Covid-19 pandemic brought about some changes and also challenges in 2020. It was a new experience for everyone yet the kindness did not diminish. And where some volunteers were unable to help in the same way due to the restrictions, we adapted.

Volunteers as always are a vital component in what we do and in our response to Covid this continued. Some of our existing volunteers took on more befriending via the phone, and others switched from meeting in person to the phone. Others joined us with making phone calls to members with others coming back who'd volunteered in the past, to those who were isolated, offering reassurance and sharing official information. This was a constant friendly welcome in the midst of the confusion and uncertainty for our members. Firm friendships and bonds were made throughout, with one continuing on from overseas via zoom.

In addition to the calls, some of the help came from volunteers own gardens or living rooms. This included bringing the newsletter together in their kitchen's or gardens and then delivering them to your door. This was the same when we brought together the festive bags. This was a huge behind the scenes task, with many helpers getting to deliver them to the doorstep too. Our money box counting also continued at volunteers' homes.

We had some also helping with getting food items, making masks, crocheting blankets, making Christmas cards for us to sell, calling round to check neighbours were ok, with others baking and sharing homemade produce and lunches together. Donating also continued, from stamps to money, to hand sanitisers. Some arranged meeting up together, suggesting various walks, helping others get to meeting points. Other acts of community kindness were from those who week in week out wrote articles for our members and community to enjoy, and helped with writing poems and quizzes. Also, sharing photographs too. Our volunteers also helped on the allotment and shared their time, knowledge and produce with us. Support also came from our trustee volunteers who continued to meet monthly to support us as a team and guide our work. Outside help also came from team members of Zurich, Student volunteers at University of Leeds and Notre Dame Sixth Form College.

We came together as a community to help together, which has been truly remarkable. Huge gratitude to you all, you are amazing!

Lisa Argyle, Community Resilience Worker

If you would like to get involved then please email:

lisa@caringtogether.org.uk or call 07436 530073



CARING TOGETHER IN WOODHOUSE & LITTLE LONDON IS GRATEFUL FOR THE FOLLOWING GRANTS AND DONATIONS IN 2020/21

Leeds City Council (Adult Social Care)	£54,828
Leeds Benevolent Society for Single Ladies	£20,000
Leeds City Council (Additional Covid Funding)	£12,162
Leeds Resilience Fund	£8,893
Charities Aid Foundation	£8,198
Independent Age	£7,898
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	£6,769
Leeds City Council (INW/HAP)	£5,155
Leeds City Council/Leeds Older People's Forum (Covid Funds)	£5,500
Member & Supporter Donations	£5,297
Lottery Community Fund	£4,145
Leeds Older People's Forum	£4,100
Harrison & Potter Trust	£4,000
Sir George Martin Trust	£2,500
Leeds Community Foundation (Stay Well)	£2,500
Leeds City Council (Wellbeing)	£1,500
Gateway Church	£1,000
Leeds City Council (Digital)	£770
Sylvia & Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust	£500
Morrisons Foundation	£359
Leeds City Council (MICE Money)	£300
Charles Brotherton Trust	£150

THANKS TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS & FRIENDS

Caring Together is deeply grateful to many individuals and supporters.

Patrons, Trustees and all our volunteers and helpers

All our funders and those individuals who generously donate to us

The other agencies and organisations and local businesses who support us and our members in so many ways

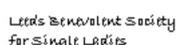
Last, but very definitely not least, to the local community for supporting our project in so many different ways.

IN MEMORIAM

We, sadly, lost a number of members during the period covered by this report (01/04/2020 – 31/03/21)

Irene Dyson	Dorothy Ball	Douglas Peacock	Diane Rainey
Alistair Simpson	Julie Meredith	Hugh Thorne	Brian Thompson
John Sproule	Royston Crockford	Francis Dempsey	Priscilla Storey
Susan Lister	Nancy McHale	Rosa Tyson	

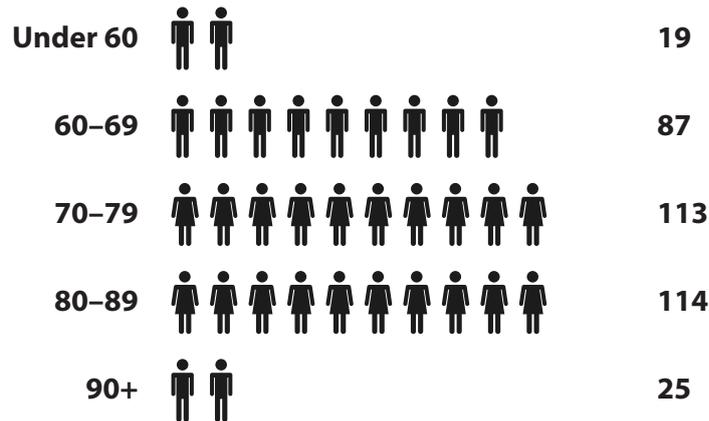
If we have inadvertently omitted anyone from this list, please accept our sincere apologies and please let us know.



CARING TOGETHER IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 20 MARCH 21

We have worked with 370 older people this year



1,786
visits



10,200
phone
calls

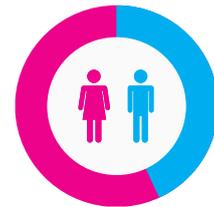


2,150
letters/
emails



1,502
website/social
media posts

229
women



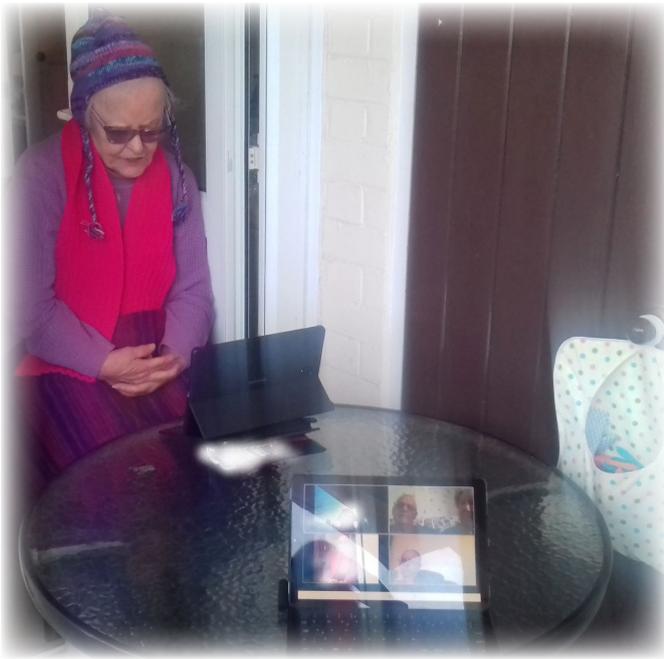
141
men



APRIL 20 MARCH 21

CARING TOGETHER IMPACT REPORT

- Regular phone support/well-being calls
- Volunteer telephone befriending
- Shopping for members and help with getting medicine and other essential items
- Supporting members to access other ways of getting food and medicines
- Meals and some groceries delivered with the help of Gateway Church
- Food parcels with the help of the local food hub and 'Soup&More Foodbank'
- Doorstep and Garden visits – moving to occasional indoor visits only when necessary
- Advice around finances and benefits and help to claim State Pension, Pension Credit and other benefits, bringing in significant extra income for some
- Support around disability benefits through the whole process from claiming to appeals tribunals
- Individual support advice and advocacy on a wide range of issues including, energy suppliers and fuel bills, equipment or adaptations, accessing support with care or cleaning, disabled parking badges and bus passes and many, many other issues
- Lots of IT support to help members access online services and social support
- Loaned IT equipment – from 100% Digital – to members to help them stay connected
- Walking with individual members
- Group walks
- Outdoor groups/get-togethers
- Weekly Zoom get-togethers – moving to a hybrid of online and in-person (outdoors)
- Online Afternoon Tea event
- Online film evenings
- Online Bingo
- Online Awareness sessions
- Distribution of plants, homemade jams, cakes, masks and other items given by our members to share
- Supporting Clinically Extremely Vulnerable members and others who were shielding or isolating to access local authority and government support
- Working with many other agencies, eg ASC, GPS, Dementia services, Mental Health services to provide extra support where needed
- Referrals on to other agencies
- Arranged doorstep PCSO support visits for some
- Took part in Nature Writing – a project with Nature England and University of Leeds
- Part of an art project/online celebration on Nelson Mandela's birthday
- Weekly quizzes, poems, stories from members – both on our website and facebook pages and also paper copies for some who could not access them online
- Keeping members informed about Covid 19 health messages and government rules and/or guidelines
- Promoting and informing vaccine take-up and community testing when relevant as well as supporting members to access vaccine appointments and testing when needed.
- Increased online/social media presence as an additional way to keep connected with members and to distribute important information
- 'Seasonal' gift bags for all members distributed in December
- Christmas gifts from Zurich given out
- Festive Prize Draw – all our members entered
- Winter Warmth boxes given out – donated by Seagulls ReUse
- Penpal Project – letter writing across the city with Armley Helping Hands and Seagulls ReUse
- Online musical celebration event and music and wellbeing workshops with LUUMIC
- Held our first Virtual AGM



Promoting the Welfare of Older People in the Community

