



One year in Charing Cross

This month marks one year since we moved into our own premises at Charing Cross shopping centre on Woodhouse Street in March 2021. And it has been quite a year!

In March 2021 we were still in the last lockdown and so that put limits on what we could do, but as things have opened up we have been able to welcome more of our members into the building, both individually for advice and support and to our events and activities as we began to open these up once more. We have been proceeding quite cautiously, to try and make sure everyone is safe, but as the year has progressed we have been able to make more and more use of the building. We've had coffee and chat get-togethers, support groups, pop up creative groups sharing skills and stories, one to one digital support and lots more.

Our members and volunteers have helped us to make this place our own, from adorning with walls with artwork and banners produced by members, to lovely 'housewarming' gifts that we can use in the office and volunteers working hard to help get things 'ship-shape'



In the weeks leading up to Christmas 2020 it became our "gift bag control centre" as we acquired more and more items to fill up the bags we made up to give all our members. The place was like a grotto of chocolates, socks and more (but we had to find ways to keep all this hidden when our members visited). And as the bags were packed we had a stream of volunteers who assisted our staff team to get them out to all our members along with the winter newsletter

At the same time the 'skill sharing' group were busy with festive crafts and we were able to use some of these to decorate our office—along with items saved from previous Caring Together homemade Christmases bringing back lots of memories. Just in time for our first Christmas event, a festive musical get-together with Leeds University Union Music Impact in the Community (LUUMIC) choir singing in the square and hot chocolate with home made mince pies and cake to keep us warm.



As we move into our second year here, we hope to be able to welcome more and more of you into our premises, and you can see inside details of some of the new things coming up

See you soon!!

Meet your local councillors

Face to face councillor surgeries were suspended at the start of the Covid pandemic but they are now back so if there is any issue you would like to speak to your council representatives about you can go along to one of these advice surgeries.

Caring Together's geographical boundaries span part of two council wards:

<p>Headingley and Hyde Park (includes part of Woodhouse)</p> <p>Cllrs: Al Garthwaite, Jonathan Pryor, Neil Walshaw:</p> <p>Woodhouse Surgery: Caring Together premises Charing Cross, 127 Woodhouse Street, LS6 2PY 2nd Tuesday of each month 5pm—6pm</p>	<p>Little London and Woodhouse</p> <p>Cllrs: Abigail Marshall-Katung, Kayleigh Brooks, Javaid Akhtar</p> <p>Little London Surgery: Little London Community Centre, Oatland Lane, LS7 1SR 1st Saturday of each month 10.30—11.30am 3rd Friday of each month 2-3pm</p>
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You don't need to have an appointment, you can just turn up during these times. We would advise that you allow enough time before the end of the surgery times to talk about your issue.

Cost of Living Crisis—fuel, food and other bills

The rising cost of energy and other bills is a worry for everyone at the moment, .

It is worth checking that you are receiving all the money you are entitled to. You can do an online check at turn2us.org.uk and they also have lots of useful information about other support. If you are not able to do this yourself call Caring Together for help.

The price cap on household fuel bills is set to rise again in April and because of this the government is putting in place some measures to help with this. In October 2022 a £200 discount on fuel bills that will be repaid via your fuel bill from 2023 onwards. In April 2022 a £150 rebate on all band A-D Council Tax bills that does not have to be repaid. There is some money being made available to local authorities to help people who need it but don't pay council tax, we don't have too much detail on this just yet.

Everyone over pension age should have received a winter fuel payment this winter and many will have qualified for Warm Home Discount. If you haven't received either of these and think you should have please ask us to help chase it up for you.

Organisations like Green Doctor can offer lots of help and advice around fuel bills and energy saving. They will be visiting Caring Together soon (see below) or you can contact them on 0113 238 0601.

Leeds Welfare Scheme may be able to help if you need urgent help with food or bills —contact them on 0113 376 0330 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). There are also lots of organisations in Leeds who will provide food support if needed as well as support and advice to deal with debt.

If you are struggling please reach out. Contact us and we will help you to look at all your options and put you in touch with the people who can help.

Green Doctor will be joining us on the below dates, They offer impartial support and advice and help residents stay warm, stay well and save money on household bills including tariff comparison/ switching, energy bills and debt. They will also talk about their service and how they can help. It is free to pop along to, refreshments will be provided, we would love to see you. Open to all.

Date: Monday 4th April 2022 at 11.30am to 12.30pm

Venue: Caring Together offices, 127 Woodhouse Street, Leeds LS6 2PY
and

Date: Thursday 28th April at 2.30pm to 3.30pm

Venue: Little London Community Centre, Oatland Lane, Leeds LS7 1SR





'Uplifting Musical times together'



Please join us for some uplifting musical fun with Leeds University Students from Music in the Community (LUUMIC). They will be sharing their musical skills with us, including bringing some musical instruments to have a go on. Maybe you will have an instrument, or vocal talent, to share with them too – although definitely not essential :)

It was great fun when they visited us in December, to sing some carols outside, and we are delighted they are coming back. No need to be musical, just bring yourself for some musical fun and a cuppa. **Open to all, and no experience needed.**

We will be in the main hall of Little London Community Centre, Oatland Lane, Little London, LS7 1SR. To ensure you feel comfortable and safe, we will be spaced out, we will ventilate the room prior, and have masks and hand sanitiser on hand if needed

Time: 1.30pm

**Venue: Little London Community Centre,
Oatland Lane, Little London, LS7 1SR**

Wednesday 9th March 2022

Wednesday 16th March 2022

Wednesday 23rd March 2022

Just turn up, no booking required

Monthly Dementia Friendly Café

Last Friday of the month, our doors are open at our Caring Together offices for you to call in for a 'Cuppa and Chat' from 1.30pm to 2.30pm. We'd love to see you - open to all.

A memory support worker from the Alzheimer's Society will also be there for any information where needed too.

Venue: Caring Together premises, 127 Woodhouse Street, Leeds LS6 2PY

Time: 1.30pm to 2.30pm



Friday 25th March 2022

Friday 29th April 2022

Friday 27th May 2022

Friday 24th June 2022

and so on

Caring Together Monthly Coffee Afternoon

Venue: Little London Community Centre, Oatland Lane, Little London, LS7 1SR

When: Last Thursday of every Month - It will be very informal where you can come and catch up over a cuppa, just pop along There will be refreshments on offer too.

Thursday 31st March 2022 at 2.30pm

Melanie from Presto will be at our monthly coffee afternoon in March to be on hand for any questions about the service. Presto is a Leeds City Council service providing support for people in their homes.

Thursday 28th April 2022 at 2.30pm

Green Doctor will be joining us in April. They offer impartial support and advice and help residents stay warm, stay well and save money on household bills including tariff comparison/switching, energy bills and debt. They will also talk about their service and how they can help.

Open to all.

Next one thereafter will be Thursday 26th May and so on

Community Calling Digital Phones

Thanks to support from 100% Digital Leeds we have been given a small number of reconditioned Apple phones for anyone who does not have a digital phone and would like to trial one.

They come with some instructions on how to use them. They have a touchscreen facility and come with free texts and calling data for a few months too.

If of interest to you, please call Lisa
07436 530073

Help us to stay in touch

We try our best to keep in contact with all our members but to do this we need your help.

If your contact details change, phone number(s) or address, please let us know so that we don't lose touch with you,

Even if you move out of our area, let us know, we might be able to stay in touch if you would like us to. Or we might be able to put you in touch with a similar organisation closer to your new home.

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. The draws take place on the third Monday of each month.

If you join our monthly Prize Draw you will be helping to support our work as well as having a chance to win a small cash prize each month. Each entry costs £1 per month and half of this goes to Caring Together funds while half is paid out in prize money. Please let Valerie know if you would like to take part.

November 2021 Total Prize Fund £23	December 2021 Total Prize Fund £22	January 2022 Total Prize Fund £22
1st Prize £13 No: 058	1st Prize £12 No: 058	1st Prize £12 No: 085
2nd Prize £5 No: 044	2nd Prize £5 No: 033	2nd Prize £5 No: 036
3rd Prize £5 No: 004	3rd Prize £5 No: 106	3rd Prize £5 No: 096

Caring Together Staff—and how to contact us

In order to help us stay Covid safe 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)

Our office address is: 127 Woodhouse Street, Leeds, LS6 2PY.

