

What will we do in the Winter?

October 2020



The information and ideas in this learning briefing is gathered from the staff of eight organisations working with older people in Leeds. Many of them run Time to Shine funded projects and between them they support younger older people, the very old and frail, older people in local communities, older people with learning disabilities, those with mental health needs and LGBTQ people. Some ideas they had in common, others not everyone had tried or considered and the discussion provided food for thought.

At the time of writing, Leeds is a tier 2 local authority area, which means people are not allowed to meet in each others' homes or indoor public places. They are allowed to meet in private gardens and public outdoor spaces, and to undertake sports activities (walking, football) if organised by a business or charity. The different activities planned depend very much on each organisation, their priorities and the level of risk they have an appetite for. There is sometimes, as has been noted previously in a learning briefing, some tension between management, frontline workers and participants around the risks they are prepared to take. We can offer no answers.

Bramley Elderly Action (BEA) is running a range of activities:

- Face to face coffee mornings, with 6 participants and a member of staff are planned and will take place in a range of community venues - like the community rooms in sheltered housing complexes - to enable a good geographical spread. BEA had to encourage the council to ensure they were reopened.
 - Online meetings for those who are feeling very anxious will go from fortnightly to weekly, with a strong creative focus. The group have formed a little bond with their qualitea mugs, so although they can't be together they can drink tea together.
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- Walking Football has been taking place since July and will continue over the winter.
 - Two walks a week with a staff member
 - They are able to use a carer to help people start conference calls on the phone or tablet
 - Telephone support - and interestingly the commitment to telephone every member once a month now means some members are contacted more frequently than previously.

TCV Great Outdoors Project is also running a variety of activities:

- Socially distanced walks in local parks - this means the citywide project doesn't have to ask people to use public transport, people are encouraged to attend locally. They need to send instructions and maps in the post as many members don't have a phone.
- Walks are up to 10 people with 2 staff - they could invite more people but this feels like the right number. They were able to use an IDOP grant to buy a flask for each individual for drinks.
- Training courses have now resumed at Hollybush and Woodsquad should also start again soon. They are able to use the barn to run well spaced activity for groups of 6.

Richmond Hill Elderly Action currently have a cautious approach:

- They will continue to undertake telephone befriending over the winter. They are recruiting new volunteers to help with this.
- They will continue to provide well being packs - these are now customised with books and DVDs to suit individuals as they have now got to know each members preferences.

Sunshine in Leeds: As their participants are almost all housebound either for reasons of frailty or anxiety they will confine their activities over the winter to telephone calls which are much appreciated.

- Some members are receiving art packs from the Southbank as it is a specific interest.

Sage, with their slightly younger, fitter client base, will continue to use their good zoom offering.

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- As another citywide project they had hoped to move to meetups in cafes as the safest way of enabling those who don't want to or are unable to use Zoom. This is currently unable to happen because of the meeting people indoors rules, but will continue to be an option if things change again. Their own venue is small and people have to travel across the city to it.

People in Action is a member organisation for people with a learning disability. They had moved their activity online pretty rapidly and that is working for their younger members. There are issues with the online offer for older members. It is not accessible to everyone.

- They are planning more training with 100% Digital Leeds to help some older people
- They are continuing to deliver monthly activity packs to those who want them
- They are planning to start some Check in and Chat sessions at the Old Fire Station Cafe

Little London Arts had managed to run two successful trips over the summer using a coach but are now struggling to organise activities. People need to catch public transport to their meeting point which is currently discouraged. This means it may be a hard winter for participants unable to get out of Leeds because they don't have their own cars.

Carers Leeds will continue to have a no face to face contacts policy over winter. They are planning more online activity though, looking at ways to play more boardgames online.

MAEcare are planning NLP (Neurolinguistic programming) and meditation sessions face to face with a group of MAECare and OPAL clients - at OPAL's centre.

- Fish and chip doorstep deliveries (doorstep) once a week using the Access Bus.
- Dance on, and Tai Chi are online and Walking Football is back in real life.
- There are weekly walks, and local walks for people who don't have transport.
- The craft group is back in small numbers, 3 or 4 people only (at MAEcare's centre).

Additional sources of information

This is only a quick selection of ideas trawled from the web. Apart from **Your Backyard** we don't know anything more about them.

Walking Football is happening at MAEcare and BEA, run by [Your Backyard CIC](#)

Bulb Planting

Bulb lasagne for pots - lots of information on Youtube or here on iplayer

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000mh7w>

For those who want colour but who can't get out - indoor hyacinths

http://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/basics/techniques/houseplants_hyacinth1.shtml

Board Games This article offers a useful rundown of different sites where board games can be played, with friends, and with strangers (who might become friends) [here](#)

Arts and Crafts If you are working with people who love to keep themselves occupied but can't get out there are lots of craft packs available online. This article is a recent review of some of these which gives you an idea of costs. [21 best UK craft subscription boxes](#)

Wellbeing - this is the website of a Kirklees-based independent mental health charity called S2R Create Space, they have some [fantastic printables in several community languages](#).

In addition, although this briefing has mostly been about mental wellbeing as you keep in touch here are some links to Public Health's Winter Friends information, for frontline workers and friends and neighbours:

Help from LCC Public Health

- Workforce Winter Friends – short animation highlighting 9 evidence based high impact interventions to support anyone working with the most vulnerable over winter <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/phrc/covid-19-campaigns> scroll down to the section called seasonal planning and you will find lots of helpful links.
- Public Facing Winter Friends – campaign to promote neighbourliness and looking out for others in the community during winter [Winter Friends - Homepage](#)

