

Newsletter

Summer 2020

MAECare Responds to COVID-19

What an extraordinary 2 months it's been! On 16th March the Government announced that the country would go into 'Lockdown' for 12 weeks by the end of the week in order to protect public health during the Covid 19 pandemic.

We hastily put plans in place to ensure this could happen: made sure all staff had the equipment they needed to be able to work from home; that all active service users and volunteers would be contacted by a member of staff to cancel all activities until the end of June, and to check what support they had to help them during the crisis.

Since then we have:

- Phoned over 800 service users and volunteers
- Provided ongoing telephone support to nearly 300 people
- Made 133 deliveries of shopping and 4 emergency food parcels
- Collected and delivered 10 prescriptions
- Had 23 new referrals to MAECare

Moving forward, and as uncertainty continues about how long Lockdown will last for older people, we are exploring what other ways we can support our service users e.g. setting up virtual groups and coffee mornings using Zoom; loaning out jigsaws and providing games.

Lottery

MAECare is launching its new lottery this Summer.

We had planned to do so, and with so much uncertainty about the future, in particular funding for charities, this is an opportunity for us to encourage people, both service users, their family and friends, and any other supporters, to support us. Playing the MAECare Lottery provides us with unrestricted income and also gives players a 1 in 63 chance of winning! The enclosed leaflet provides more details.

MAECare's Doorstep Delivery Service

When 'lockdown' was first announced the greatest concern for many people was how they were going to get food and essential items (and it wasn't making a toilet roll mountain out of a mole hill!).

In an immediate response to this, MAECare set up a delivery service of basics with help from volunteers to pack orders, and deliveries made by the Access Bus and volunteers. The supermarkets are now catching up with the need for a reliable shopping service, or you may be able to get shopping support through the Hub (see separate article), but, if you find yourself without anything, we have a supply of non-perishable goods and can order fresh fruit, vegetables and dairy produce.

Doorstep Delivery has expanded to include a Lockdown Library of films, jigsaws, games and activity packs, as well as a few luxuries.

Deliveries are made on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and orders can be placed any weekday 9-4pm on 266 0371



Just A Reminder....

The MAECare offices are closed to callers until further notice due to the government's guidelines on social distancing.

If you need to speak to one of the MAECare team in person, please call us on 0113 266 0371 and arrange an appointment. Thank you!

Your Local Neighbourhood Network Scheme supported by



**Office Telephone:
0113 266 0371
www.maecare.org.uk**

Physical & Mental Health During The Covid Crisis

In a very short space of time, our world has changed beyond recognition and lots of MAECare members who were very active, physically and socially, have had to isolate themselves, many completely alone.

MAECare members who might have once been able to pop into our coffee morning for tea, biscuits and chat, followed by a quick Zumba class or relaxing Yoga session later in the week, have lost the opportunity to connect socially and let off steam physically, both so important to mental wellbeing. Others who were already isolated are even more so, and frightened about the future.

What can you do to help yourself?

Perhaps the two most important things you can do, for both physical and mental health are: **STAY ACTIVE AND STAY CONNECTED!**

STAY ACTIVE: Activity can mean anything which means you're not sitting still for periods longer than an hour at a time – even if you just get up and walk around your house or garden (if you have one) every so often. Better still, look up some easy exercises online (YouTube has a good selection), or ask staff at MAECare to send you out our printed easy exercise sheets if you can't get online. At MAECare, we have other online physical activity resources we can point you towards, just contact the office for more info. Keeping up some level of physical activity is especially important if you have any chronic health conditions which are made worse by inactivity, but this doesn't have to be 'exercises' either: housework, gardening, a walk round the block if you are able, are all better than nothing – stay on top of your pain relief medication too, if you use any.

Keep your mind active too – read, do crafts, jigsaws, art, bake, if you enjoy it; plan what you will do when this is all over – a visit to your favourite shop, café or pub. Having a routine and purpose to your day is really important, even if it is just planning to conquer the mountain of your stairs or explore the biscuit tin (again!). Many of you now have very tidy cupboards and the neatest gardens

around! Limit how much you watch the news, it's dominated by COVID, which can be depressing. Keep a diary - we are living through history!

STAY CONNECTED: With friends and family, if you can. We understand, however, that not everyone has that network of people; loneliness can be a huge issue at any time, and even more so now.

MAECare can provide telephone befrienders to chat to: not just about COVID, but about anything you like (see separate item). There are many ways to stay in touch with people: telephone being the obvious way, but also email, WhatsApp, Zoom and other social media – you could even write a good old-fashioned letter to a friend and start a new trend for pen and paper again (then get some exercise walking to the post box!) We know from our chats with you all, that many of you are already finding ways to stay connected and positive.

Sometimes, though, you will have bad days, when you think it will never be over. You may already have depression or anxiety or another mental health condition, which makes this situation extra difficult for you. We all react differently to stress; some of us might learn 10 new skills and master several languages, for others, just getting through each day is a triumph in itself. That's *just* as admirable. Please be kind to yourself! There is no need to pressure yourself with how you think you **should** be coping. This is a situation like no other.

If you do feel you are becoming desperate, can't shake off a feeling of depression or anxiety, or that you might harm yourself, **please speak to someone** – it might be a trusted friend, family, your GP or staff at MAECare who can direct to the right service, if necessary. Here are some contact details for organisations:

Samaritans is open 24/7 to talk about whatever you're going through. Tel: 116 123 (free).

The Silver Line Helpline – 0800 4 70 80 90 the Silver Line is the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year.

Call **NHS 111** 24 hours a day.

www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/help – is a Leeds-based mental health support website, with many resources on it to support mental health.

Dial House is a Leeds service that offers one-to-one support for people in crisis. It's currently open for telephone and Zoom crisis support only, Friday-Monday and Wednesday, 6pm–2am. Staff are picking up the telephone all night on 0113 260 9328. Alternatively, text them on 07922 249 452.

www.lslcs.org.uk/dial-house

An important note: please **DO NOT** hold back from contacting your GP or using health services – in particular, A & E departments have been quieter than usual and doctors are worried that people are not going when they should, either because of fear of COVID, or because of worry of creating more burden on the NHS. You still have a right to be seen, and it could stop a niggling health issue, whether physical or mental, become bigger and worse than it should be.

Life may have changed, but us humans are nothing if not adaptable, and we will get through this. All of us at MAECare miss all of you, our wonderful, resilient MAECare members.



MAECare – Still here for you

Getting creative

Many of you will have developed and discovered new skills and talents during this period. One Making A Match client Denise has discovered her love of art.

It's lovely to see people using their extra time to enjoy creating.



Resilience

Mary Baillie, our Making A Match Project Worker writes:

“One of the things I have noticed during my calls to MAECare clients is your resilience and cheerfulness in these testing times. We have shared laughter and jokes which has brought joy to me. I am sure our resilience has been tested in the weeks and months that have passed but what always astonishes me is the strength of the MAECare community to remain calm and cheerful as you have. You have on my bad days inspired me and kept me going too.”

MAECare supports the wider community in Leeds 17

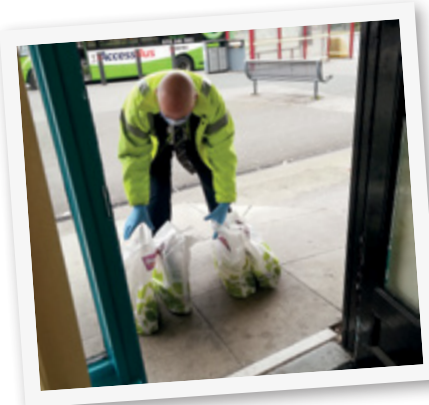
As part of its response to the Covid Crisis, Leeds City Council set up 33 ward based Volunteer Hubs across the city. MAECare were asked to be the Hub for Alwoodley.

We set up within a week to coincide with the launch of the Council's Covid helpline: 3781877. With a little extra funding but no extra staffing, we now provide this service 5 days a week to the wider community. Most people want help with shopping/food. Until the council set up it's paid for e-voucher shopping service, the only way we could help people was by extending our Doorstep Delivery service to anyone who called the helpline.

In the period 24 March – 28 April we

- Processed 187 referrals (compared to an average of 170 across all Hubs) of which
- 135 were requests for help with shopping
- 21 wanted help with collecting prescriptions
- 23 wanted telephone support

To support the hubs, Leeds Council and Voluntary Action Leeds recruited over 4000 local volunteers. Over 160 people have signed up to volunteer in Alwoodley. All are under the age of 70 and in good health. They have been DBS checked and many of them also drive so they are particularly helpful for shopping and collecting prescriptions.



Walking Football carries on virtually!

The Covid -19 pandemic may have stopped social gatherings, but the creativity of the Walking Football group AKA 'MAECare Extra Timers' has enabled it to continue by using Facebook and WhatsApp.



David Wynick, who coordinates the group, has used Facebook Video to keep the group active and ongoing. While it could be some time before the 'Extra Timers' are back on the turf, weekly exercise classes are keeping the team in good condition for next season! Footballs were delivered to members' doorsteps (see picture). As well as the classes, a quiz night and constant banter and camaraderie on WhatsApp, are providing connection and laughter amongst the group.

Whilst people are not meeting up and continuing to socially distance there is still incredible camaraderie and friendship continuing. Many thanks David and all the members for continuing to keep the group thriving.

The Lighter Side

Lockdown Poetry

This first poem is from Betty Bennison of our Creative Writing Group.

Growing Old – Never

It's not really age as I don't feel old,
It's the steps that are much steeper
And my feet do feel the cold.

It's not really age when
I miss my bus,
It's the stop they moved along a bit
And my legs can't stand the rush.

It's not really age
when my knees won't bend,
It's standing up and sitting down
And my legs so need a friend.

It's not really age
when I want to dance,
It's the music is much faster
So my legs go in a trance.

It's not really age
when sight and hearing fade,
It's that people talk so softly
And I've lost my hearing aid.

It's not really age
as inside I feel the same,
My spirit keeps me moving,
And my heart was never tame.

Betty Bennison, 2020

The next poem went viral on social media and must have struck a chord with many older people.

Written by Jan Beaumont from New Zealand, we felt our service users would enjoy it too.

When we asked Jan for permission to include it, we had this lovely reply:

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.
You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s –
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs
and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full

"Hello Caroline. It would be my pleasure for you to use the poem. Very best wishes to all in Leeds. Stay safe, Jan. P.S. I lived in Huddersfield for a while many years ago so I have a fondness for Yorkshire! X"

But to bury us before we're dead
Is like red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this bloody virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

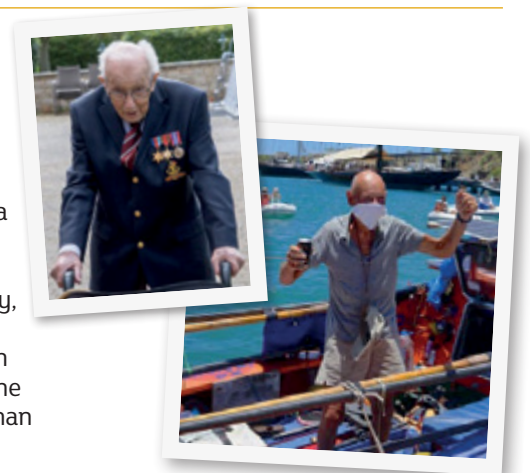
Jan Beaumont, 2020

Inspirational people

During this time of bad news headlines, there are some uplifting stories which have raised all our spirits:

Captain Tom Moore, 100 years old, has raised an incredible £32 million for NHS Charities by walking up and down his garden 100 times. On his 100th birthday on 30th April, he received over 150,000 cards, and was made an honorary colonel of the Army Foundation College.

Graham Walters, a 72 year old man from Leicester, has achieved the world record for the oldest person to row across the Atlantic solo, after rowing 3,000 miles from Gran Canaria to Antigua. He arrived in Antigua on 30th April, after 3 months at sea. He made the journey in the George Geary, a 22-year-old rowboat named after his late grandfather, a cricketer, which he plans to leave at a museum on the island. His efforts have raised more than £2,500 for Help for Heroes.



Getting together while staying home

MAECare presents Film Friday, Sunday or any day!

While we've had to close the doors to 57a's mini-picture house you can still enjoy films to watch at your leisure and take the best seat in the (your) house for the latest releases or old favourites.

We have these new releases available as well as classics, comedies and dramas – all you need is a DVD player at home. The DVDs will be delivered to your doorstep and there's a free bag of popcorn for the first few bookings!

Little Women

This latest telling of Louisa M. Alcott's classic story provides a fascinating contemporary perspective on the work and the role of women in society during the time of the American Civil War.

Knives Out

A suspenseful, twist-filled whodunnit where everyone is a suspect in homage to a classic Agatha Christie. A renowned crime novelist (Christopher Plummer) is found dead and the inquisitive and debonair Detective Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig) investigates, sifting through a web of red herrings and self-serving lies to uncover the truth behind the untimely death.

Jojo Rabbit

This World War II satire follows a lonely German boy, Jojo, whose world view is turned upside down when he discovers his mother is hiding a young Jewish girl in their attic. Aided only by his idiotic imaginary friend, Adolf Hitler, Jojo must confront his blind nationalism.

1917

In Sam Mende's acclaimed film, two young soldiers, are given a seemingly impossible mission; in a race against time, they must cross enemy territory and deliver a message that will stop a deadly attack on hundreds of troops.

Harriet

Based on the inspirational life of an iconic American freedom fighter, this is the extraordinary story of Harriet Tubman, whose courage, ingenuity and tenacity freed hundreds of slaves and changed the course of history.

Andre Rieu – Shall We Dance?

Enjoy Andre's 100th concert on Maastricht Town Square with old favourites as well as a few surprises.



Tell us your tale as MAECare turns 25!

It's hard to believe but MAECare turns 25 this year. Normally MAECare would get together with all out members, volunteers and supporters at the annual celebration in June but this will have to be postponed until it's safe to get together again. Instead we would like to mark the occasion by hearing your stories of MAECare from over the years. We will be creating a special 25th Anniversary newsletter edition and hope to share our history online too. So if you have a story, favourite memory or even just a photo please share this with us by writing to **MAECare, 57 Cranmer Bank, Leeds, LS17 5JD** or emailing in to **info@maecare.org.uk**



MAECare virtual sessions – Let's Zoom!

We know that many of you will be missing coming along to MAECare so over the coming months we will be trying out different ways of getting people together using the internet and virtual groups.

ZOOM is already being used successfully to help people meet up and stay connected using activities like quizzes, coffee mornings and talks. It's easy to use and we can give you training how to join in with ZOOM calls.

To get things started we have set up a weekly ZOOM session on Wednesday afternoons between 2.00 and 3.00pm. If you are interested and would like us to send you an invitation please ring the office on **0113.266 0371** or email us on **info@maecare.org.uk**

Leeds based 'Lippy People' are running a video-storytelling project for older men, called '4Ls - Life, Loss, Learning and Legacy' and are looking for men to tell and share stories of experiences which have shaped their lives. The project is delivered online using the internet and Zoom and involves weekly group sessions, with a chance to learn new digital skills - including how to make a video-story. If you would like to take part call Maria 266 0371 for more details and if you don't yet have online access, get in touch as that's something we can help with!

Information and Help

Online Links to Culture, Learning and Fun

1) Digital Inclusion Leeds

Links to pages to access ebooks, Leeds Libraries heritage online, live streamed concerts, theatre and other free cultural events. Also, virtual tours of museums, galleries, aquariums and zoos. You can watch the earth from space or visit Venice from your armchair!

<https://digitalinclusionleeds.com/tools/culture-and-fun/>



2) Chatterpack

A list of free, online, boredom-busting resources- links are listed according to subject: Virtual tours and live webcams; Online learning; Geography, nature and history; Music; Arts and Culture; Literature online (including talking books); Learn a new skill: Miscellaneous and entertainment.



<https://chatterpack.net/blogs/blog/list-of-online-resources-for-anyone-who-is-isolated-at-home>

2) Shine Magazine, by Time to Shine (part of Leeds Older People's Forum)

A new magazine has been launched for older people and is being delivered with food parcels to older, isolated people in Leeds during the coronavirus lockdown. Shine magazine is also available online. Issue 1 is available here:

<https://timetoshineleeds.org/projects/shine-magazine>

'This is your magazine and we want it to be about you'.

Shine magazine would like to hear your stories including experiences of living in Leeds, in the past and the present, what your interests are, or perhaps you could tell them about your family, your travels or your work. Other ideas include: life stories, funny stories, hints of how to cope in this difficult time, memories, opinions, jokes, poems, pictures.

How do I contribute?

By telephone: 0113 2441697 – ring and leave a message and one of the SHINE team will ring you back to type up your story.

By post: SHINE magazine, PO Box, 908, Elland, HX19WF

By email: hello@shinealight.org.uk



Useful numbers if you need help

**Leeds City Council
Coronavirus Helpline
0113 378 1877**

If you need help with shopping, prescription collection, posting mail etc., Leeds City Council will match you with a local vetted Community Care Volunteer, who can help you.

**Mind
0300 123 3393**

For people experiencing or concerned about mental health problems and those that support them.

**Refuge
0808 200 0247**

Domestic Violence Helpline.

**COVID-19 Bereavement Helplines:
St Gemma's Hospice
0113 218 5544;
Wheatfields Hospice
0113 203 3369**

Both of these helplines are staffed by trained bereavement counsellors.

**Leeds Directory
0113 378 4610**

For help finding checked and vetted local services such as gardening and tradespeople.

**Care and Repair
0113 240 6009**

For fitting grab rails & stair rails; repairs to heating and hot water appliances; plumbing and electrical repairs; and advice and support on benefits, fuel debt and switching energy provider.



Community Connections

Carers Leeds are still here for you

Many of those self-isolating due to health conditions rely on unpaid carers, who must also isolate themselves to protect the person they care for.

Carers Leeds want them to know that their team are still here for them and able to provide vital support, information and advice.



Huge thank you to volunteers!

As you may know, MAECare joined Leeds City Council as one of the 33 city wide hubs across Leeds to help support those in need during the Covid-19 outbreak. As such we have welcomed over 100 new volunteers to the MAECare team, all from the local area. It has been an amazing response from our regular MAECare volunteers too, helping to support our members.

We have volunteers making well-being phone calls, supporting with admin work, going shopping for people who are isolated, collecting urgent medication and delivering food parcels. We are supporting over 100 of our members on a regular basis and have had over 200 referrals from the Council. We could not do this without the amazing support from all the volunteers, so a huge THANK YOU and WELL DONE from MAECare.



Please give them a round of applause on the next Thursday night 'Clap for Key Workers'.

Friendly calls

As our worlds have changed with the reduction of social contact, MAECare are offering the chance to interact with a new person, share stories, interest and life histories.

A friendly chat with one of our MAECare volunteers could make a huge difference to your wellbeing and support network. You will need a landline or mobile phone that can accept withheld calls, it may not be suitable for everyone.

If you would be interested in having a confidential friendship call weekly, fortnightly or monthly, please contact us on 01132660371.



Monarchs of the World crossword

Across

- 3 Prince Andrew is the Duke of _ (4)
- 5 Kate Middleton's title is Duchess of _ (9)
- 7 The last King of Greece (11)
- 8 The only country in Africa having absolute monarchy
- 9 Egyptian queen known as 'The Queen of the Nile' (9)
- 12 Haile Selassie was Emperor of which country? (8)
- 14 In what country was William the Conqueror born? (6)
- 15 When King George VI died, Queen Elizabeth was in _ (6)
- 18 Christian name of current reigning monarch of Monaco (6)
- 19 The word 'King' in German (5)
- 20 Nationality of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France (8)
- 21 Caroline of Monaco's husband is Prince Ernst of _ (7)

Down

- 1 Surname of fateful 2nd wife of Henry the VIII (6)
- 2 Mrs Simpson, upon marrying Prince Edward became the _ of Windsor (7)
- 4 Balmoral Castle is situated here (8)
- 6 The ruling house of the British monarchy is _ (7)
- 10 What is the Crown Prince of Denmark's first name? (8)
- 11 Roman General Marc Anthony & his lover, Egyptian Queen _ (9)
- 13 The ruling house of Iran's monarchy, before the revolution (7)
- 15 King known for 'The Knights of the Round Table' (6)
- 16 Preferred dog breed of Queen Elizabeth II (5)
- 17 What foreign language does Queen Elizabeth II speak fluently? (6)

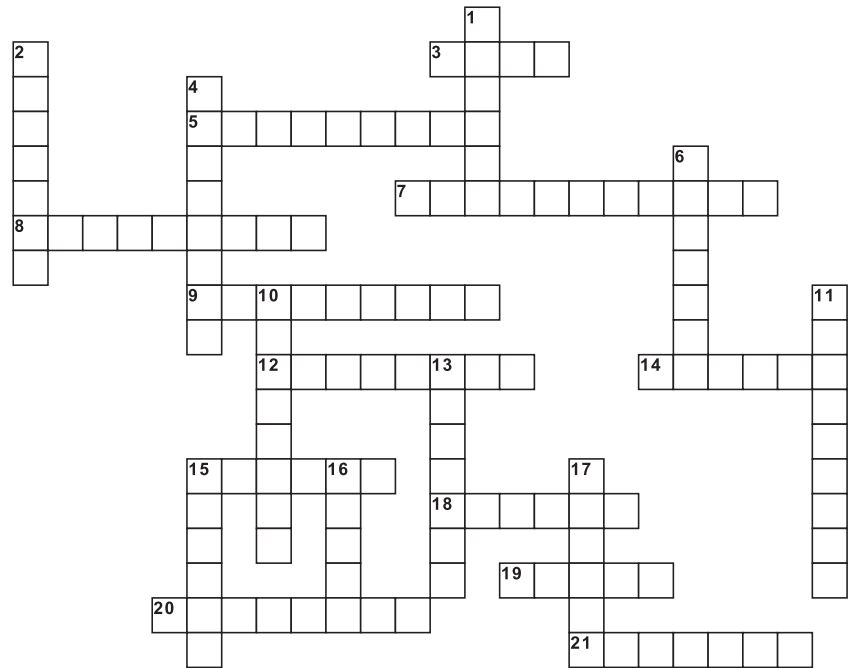
Answers in the next Newsletter!



57 Cranmer Bank Leeds LS17 5JD
Tel: 0113 266 0371

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Are you feeling isolated
and vulnerable at this time?
In need of extra support?
Let us take care of you

Short-term stays, starting from one week. With 24/7 on site care and support. Call our experienced and friendly team to see how we can help **0113 331 4830**

Southlands Apartments Wetherby Rd, Roundhay, Leeds LS8 2JU
Headingley Hall 5 Shire Oak Rd, Headingley, Leeds LS6 2DD

www.westwardcare.co.uk