



# NEWSLETTER

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2021



## Welcome

Welcome to our second quarterly Better Together Newsletter.

We have prepared an overview of just some of the events and initiatives we organised and took part in to help reduce loneliness and social isolation in Norwich, Broadland, Great Yarmouth and South Norfolk. Happy reading!

**To learn more about how we are able to support clients, visit our [website](#).**

## Articles in this Issue

- Holding Hands on Tour
- Art for All Exhibition in Diss
- The Better Together Show
- Art Group Starting in Great Yarmouth
- Enjoying the Great Outdoors
- Brockdish Social Café
- National Fitness Day
- Supporting the Norfolk Men's Sheds
- Random Acts of Creative Kindness

# Holding Hands Community Art Project on Tour

The Holding Hands Community Art project was launched at an event taking place in Harleston during August. The aim of the project is to create a piece of community artwork marking the gradual ending of lockdown and the start of people connecting with each other again.

On a large roll of paper, people are invited to draw around their own hands with each hand touching the last. People decorate the image of their hand or write inside it with an inspirational message; whatever they feel is right for them. This project was formed to create a community record which marks the gradual end of Covid restrictions.

Why hands? At the start of the pandemic we were told that we must wash our hands, not shake or hold hands, and in some senses to fear hands. This means that hands have played an important part during the last 18 or so months. Now that things are starting to ease, the image of hands touching each other in this way is very symbolic of us all starting to come together again. As each piece is created, the plan is to take photos of the work as it evolves so that it will represent a permanent memory of the time when restrictions began to be eased.

If you would like to be a part of this project, please contact Pam Spicer either by phone on 07765471002 or by [email](mailto:pam@pamsart.com).

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# Art for All Exhibition working with Morrisons

One of our key goals as an organisation is to continually raise the profile of Better Together and the work we do within our communities. One project that helped us achieve this during August was an art exhibition at Morrisons supermarket in Diss.

Working with Morrisons' Community Champions at the store, our 'Art for All' community art group displayed artwork created during lockdown, while continuing to hold their meetings on Zoom.

Each artwork was professionally framed and displayed, resulting in an exhibition of 45 original paintings that drew a great deal of interest from customers as they were leaving the check-out area and making their way to the carpark.

The exhibition gave us the opportunity to increase awareness of the work of Better Together Norfolk, of our projects and the community work we undertake.

Since the end of August, the exhibition has been moved to the Waveney Heritage Centre in Brockdish and was enjoyed by members of the public at their recent Open Day on Saturday 11th September.



## The Better Together Show

The show is broadcast online on Future Radio at 6pm on the first Saturday of each month. It raises community awareness and is also a great place to find out about the many Better Together projects, Zoom Groups and community groups.

You can catch up on previous shows on [Future Radio's website](#).



# Art Space - New Art Group Starting in Great Yarmouth

**Art Space** is getting ready to open the curtain and start drop-in sessions. This will be a space where people can come and work on any creative projects they may already be working on or wish to start. We hope in the future to provide a limited amount of art resources for people who attend as well.

To find out more about Art Space, please email **Paul Eardley**.



## Enjoying the Great Outdoors

**Fishing group:** We have now purchased most of the required equipment for our fishing group. We are currently looking at free fishing spots that are accessible by public transport and that have public toilets in situ.

The group, supported by the Angling Trust, is for people supported by Better Together Norfolk or other services. Volunteers will provide support and instruction to anyone who has not fished before. A fishing licence has been gained for the group as well as tackle and bait.

**Walking group:** Great Yarmouth Better Together Norfolk held its first walking group in August. The walk was around the old city wall in Great Yarmouth with some interesting facts being shared by the walk leader. A great and relaxed way to spend time on a sunny morning.

For more information, please contact **Paul Eardley**.

# Brockdish Social Café

Another new Community Group for people living in our local rural towns and villages is the Brockdish Social Café. The social café meets on the first Thursday of each month between 10.30am and 12noon.

The group is user led, and people choose what they would like to happen each week. So far, we have had people who like to bring along knitting, sewing projects, or play cards, scrabble and crosswords. Leading up to Christmas, we hope to introduce a few fun activities, such as a card making workshop.

The building is fully accessible for those in wheelchairs and has parking at the rear of the building. We would dearly love to welcome younger members of the community to the group.

## National Fitness Day

Better Together ran a co-ordinated social media campaign in partnership with CANConnect, Lily and Active Norfolk in support of the the National Fitness Day on Wednesday 22nd September.

On National Fitness Day our social media channels were alive with messages spreading awareness of the positive effects physical activity has on reducing loneliness and social isolation.

We were also encouraging our followers to go out with their friends and family members and make use of the beautiful paths, parks and beaches of Norfolk.

A page with resources was created on [Active Norfolk's website](#) to help people find the right activity for them.

**GET OUTDOORS WITH A FRIEND  
ON NATIONAL FITNESS DAY**



[activenorfolk.org/national-fitness-day](http://activenorfolk.org/national-fitness-day)

**NATIONAL  
FITNESS  
DAY**



b better  
together

CO  
CAN  
Connect

active  
norfolk

#FITNESSDAY

# Supporting the Norfolk Men's Shed during Covid

It has been a busy year for Jonny Wood, the Men's Shed Network Facilitator for the Better Together service. In recognition, the network has received a generous £10,000 donation from the Norfolk Recovery Fund.

Like most community venues, Men's Sheds were forced to close because of Covid. During this time Jonny has been busy behind the scenes, providing ongoing support, advice and guidance and keeping the Shedders across Norfolk connected.

One of his first tasks was to increase access to the benefits of online communications, as many of Shed's leadership team were previously unfamiliar with Zoom and email.

Norfolk County Council generously donated a batch of 60 reconditioned laptops for use by Shed leaders. Jonny has supported Shed leaders to develop and embed their skills through training and by hosting regular Zoom meetings, where leaders can share concerns about the running of sheds, engage with and support each other. Issues covered included COVID-safe reopening, health and safety, safeguarding matters, funding issues and dealing with referrals.



Jonny is also helping the development of new Sheds and helping others, such as Cromer and Acle, find a suitable home.

In recognition of his successful work developing the Norfolk Men's Sheds network, Jonny has been asked by Community Action Suffolk to develop a similar network in Suffolk. He also now co-ordinates the meetings of UK Men's Sheds Association's ambassadors for Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.



# Random Acts of Creative Kindness Norfolk

The Random Acts of Creative Kindness Norfolk project was launched on World Suicide Awareness Day on Friday 10th September. The theme this year is 'Creating Hope Through Action.'

We have very busy volunteers who are making flowers and hearts, either crochet, knitted or sewn. The items represent small tokens of kindness that are being shared out in the community as an act of kindness to help to lift peoples' spirits and encouraging local connections.

This is an ongoing community project that we hope will grow across Norfolk.



## How you can get involved:

If you would like to make flowers and hearts, or if you would like to share them in your community, contact Pam Spicer either by phone on 07765471002 or by [email](mailto:pam.spicer@btconnect.com).

Please post your creations to:  
Better Together Norfolk  
C/O Harleston Information Plus  
8 Exchange Street  
Harleston  
IP20 9AB

## Other ways that you can find out more about what BTN has to offer include:

- Follow Better Together Norfolk on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- Phone: 0300 303 3920

If you would like to be part of this great movement, we are always looking for volunteers to support us with our community projects.