

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY - MARCH 2022



*'Pocket hugs' created
for Ukrainian refugees
arriving in Norfolk*

Welcome

Welcome to our latest quarterly Better Together Newsletter. In it you will find 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](#).

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Welcome Gifts for Ukrainian refugees

Flowers knitted in the colours of the Ukrainian flag are to be given to Ukrainian refugees arriving in Norfolk.

A member of the 'Art for All' group, based in Burston, near Diss, in Norfolk has created the first set of flowers and many more have been made by members of the local community, mainly living in South Norfolk.

Named 'Pocket Hugs,' the flowers will be added to the boxes that are being distributed to Ukrainian refugees by the local Ukraine Support UK group, which was set up to coordinate efforts across Norfolk.

200 have been created along with a message that has been translated into Ukrainian, which reads 'Keep me close, I'm your pocket hug.'

Pam Spicer, who helped promote the project said:

'Their small size is ideal as they don't take up precious space needed for essential supplies. Hopefully they will give some comfort and will relay a message of hope.'



Communities Connecting Again

Now that the government restrictions have eased, BTN has started to offer face to face groups again. All the groups are made as Covid-safe as possible, and our life connectors and volunteers are on hand to support people attending the groups.

We have listened to our service users and organized the activities around their expressed needs. This has allowed people to form new friendships and connect with old friends once again, and to bring their own skills, interests and life experiences to the groups to share with others.



Bringing communities together



The All Together Cafe in Harleston is helping lift spirits and tackle social isolation in the local community

All Together Café

This group meets at St. Johns Church Harleston every Tuesday between 2pm-3.30 pm

On the 1st March we held our own pancake race. It was raining outside but we didn't let that dampen our spirits and stop play. We moved inside and held our race to be enjoyed. We went on to enjoy lots of lovely pancakes after the race. At other times, we regularly have mixture of activities for people to enjoy and people are welcome to bring along their knitting or crafts if that's something they enjoy. It's a great way of getting to know people in the community and what's happening in the local area.

In March, we moved to a new venue and joined up with the Waveney Foodbank to deliver an even better community café and welcomed over 30 people to our first joint cafe. Every week there is a selection of cakes, deserts and tea and coffee.

If you have any ideas of community groups in your area, we would love to hear from you.

Brockdish Social Café

This social group meets on the first Thursday of each month at the Waveney Heritage Centre Brockdish between 10.30-12 noon. The venue has good access and parking on site.

The group welcomes people of all ages and gives them the opportunity to meet familiar faces and new friends once a month. People are encouraged to bring along something they enjoy doing such as knitting, sewing, puzzles, cards, arts and crafts or just pop along to meet people

Bringing communities together (cont.)

and enjoy a cuppa and good conversation. In April we offered a selection of free books for people to take home and enjoy.

For more information contact:
pam.spicer@bettertogethernorfolk.org.uk

Support groups continue their important work around Norfolk

'Different Day' group

This group meets in the Shoebox Community Hub, Norwich. It offers a safe and supportive environment for people experiencing depression, bipolar or both. The group is facilitated by one of our experienced life connectors, Will Dowe, and peer support and experience sharing is encouraged. There is a designated quiet space for people to meet providing a nice calm atmosphere.

'Different Day' meets every Friday from 3pm-4pm. In addition to this group, we run a group for people experiencing bipolar which runs between 4pm-5pm.

For more information email:
will.dowe@bettertogethernorfolk.org.uk or call Will 07436183998

'Different Day' group meeting in March 2022



Support groups continue their important work (cont.)

Let's Talk M.E

This group meets in the Shoebox Community Hub Norwich every second and fourth Wednesday of each month between 1pm-3pm.

This friendly and supportive group facilitated by one of our life connectors for people who live with M.E., Chronic Fatigue, Fibromyalgia and chronic pain.

This is a great way to connect with others and to share lived experience and exchange tips on what has worked to manage these conditions.

For more information contact:
Katie.snazell@bettertogethernorfolk.org.uk

Community Jigsaw Project Launched

Our community jigsaw project was launched during this quarter. It is a Community art/craft project. The aim is to create a large work of art to be displayed online and in the community, made up from individually designed jigsaw pieces that all fit together. The theme for decoration is 'community.'

To take part, we ask people to decorate the template piece using any medium or, if they prefer, to add words or a verse.

We invite both individuals and groups to take part in this project. The jigsaw template and all the information you need to take part is on [**the BTN website**](#).

Here are a few of the completed pieces we have received already.



Queens Platinum Jubilee Plans

Our volunteers are busy knitting red white and blue hearts for local children to mark the occasion.

The Art for All group is busy working on a commemoration book that people in their local community will be invited to sign and add their message of congratulations to the Queen.



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 us on:

Phone 07765471002

Email: pam.spicer@bettertogethernorfolk.org.uk

Please post your creations to:

Better Together Norfolk
C/O Harleston information Plus
8 Exchange Street
Harleston
IP20 9AB



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](#).



Find us at our future events

- Art postcard exchange
- Cooking on a budget community workshop
- Community Jigsaw workshop Diss library
- We will be supporting Loneliness awareness week in June.
- Details of these initiatives will be posted on [the Better Together Facebook page](#) over the next few months if you would like to be involved.

Diss Library staff supporting our Community Jigsaw project



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.