

### How are you doing? A simple question but we really mean it.

**It has been an unprecedented 12 weeks since we had to quickly respond to the COVID crisis. Back in March our priority was making sure that people in our community were looked after, able to get food deliveries without putting themselves at risk and able to stay connected, even in lockdown.**

We knew we were well-placed to support you, our community at this time. For many people in Holbeck, especially the older community, we have been here for support, advice and friendship for over 27 years. Our experience and knowledge equipped us to adapt our services quickly. We have been delighted to be able to extend our meals on wheels services in terms of numbers of beneficiaries, scope of the service (now includes people of all ages), and meals provided (now includes evening meals and weekends).

We have been able to provide families and individuals with essential supply packages; pick up prescriptions; circulate activity and well-being packs to keep you occupied and active and also reach out with a friendly 'check-in' and hello via phone to people who have been feeling isolated.

The full community response at this time has been a phenomenal team effort so far and the outpouring of support from people living and working locally has been incredible. We now have volunteers calling people daily who may feel lonely or isolated to say hi and check in – for many we know it can be the only voice you will hear all day or week.

The value of working with partners and the wider social care sector across Holbeck to signpost and connect up the services and support available has made a significant impact. We want to thank those organisations for partnering with us during this difficult time and the focus to build on opportunities that have



come our way during this past three months is paramount to continue to develop these relationships for the benefit of the community.

COVID has given us a unique opportunity to build new relationships with people - to connect with people in our community that want to be part of something bigger.

So, as we start to move towards a new normal, a very different world from the start of this year, I want to say a huge thank you to our staff and volunteers without whom none of our services, deliveries, or catch up calls would have happened. Words do not do justice to you, your selflessness and commitment at this time and to the generosity and kindness of our funders and donors.

We will constantly review our services as we emerge from this period and look forward to better times ahead – when we can all meet together again.

Elissa Newman  
Chief Officer





# Help from the Hunslet Fire Service

Holbeck Together are continuing to deliver an emergency response to Covid-19 in Holbeck with help from West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and Leeds City Council.

Leeds City Council are providing 50 food parcels every week for Holbeck Together to support those who are shielding or unable to get out themselves. The packs include vital food supplies and are a lifeline for many living locally.

So it seemed like perfect timing when the crew at Hunslet Fire Station offered to help out delivering the parcels. The team at Hunslet Fire Station were eager to lend a hand and have delivered 50 parcels to families and older members of the community in style for many weeks – distributing the parcels in their fire engines!



# YourSpace supporting your Wellbeing

Anne Mansfield the Community Wellbeing Development worker on our joint project with Your Space at Touchstone produced a well-being activity pack bursting with resources for older people. These were hugely popular with some service users commenting that the packs are “a smashing idea, it’s really good. It’s really helpful. The exercises are excellent and help people stay in touch. Thank you so much. We will enjoy reading them and doing some of the activities.”

Anne, who developed the pack has said “It was great working with the team to create and distribute the wellbeing packs – it was something we worked hard on even before lockdown! We knew how important coming together for meals and events are to everyone and that we might not be able to see one another like that for a long time, so we wanted to make sure people felt connected in some way.

I tried to include lots of resources to help people enjoy their time inside, keep their bodies and minds active and generally take care of themselves. I think it’s fair to say everyone’s experienced some difficulties over the past few months to varying degrees, and I hope the wellbeing packs have helped to make things easier in some small way.”



“It was one of the lads’ ideas and it just took off from there. As firefighters, we’re here to help people and it seemed like something straightforward that we could do that would make a difference. It was great to say hi to people and see how they’re doing” Mike Ferries, Watch Commander, Hunslet Fire Station

As well as dropping off the essential items, they stop to check-in with people and see how they were, whilst observing social distancing measures. For many of the recipients, the volunteers are the only people they see in a day.

“I just want to say thank you to the lovely firefighters who dropped off my package. It was just so nice to see someone. I only wish I could have invited them in” Janet Armstrong, Holbeck Together client.

The firefighters have supported the response for seven weeks and have committed to continue wherever capacity allows.

# Pop up Designer Clothes Sale

It seems like a long time ago now when social distancing wasn’t on the horizon that we held our first designer clothes sale at St. Matthews on a Sunday morning and provided a pop up café too.

This was very well supported, welcomed by the local community and we raised over £1000. We intend to hold another sale in the near future as soon as we can – we will let you know.



# Shopping Buddies

The shopping service is an essential element of our weekly activities enabling members of the community to continue to shop independently.

We couldn’t however, under the circumstances continue to take people to the supermarket in our mini buses, so we did the shopping on their behalf.

Volunteer Emma and service user Christine have formed quite the bond throughout this period, with Emma continuing to collect Christine’s shopping on a weekly basis.



Emma commented “I have really enjoyed getting to know Christine. It’s been nice to stop and have a chat when I’ve dropped off the shopping. I know it’s been really difficult not to be able to go out.

She has a beautiful garden and I’ve loved chatting to her about it and all that she is doing with it. I’ve even learned more about gardening. One week we talked about Red Acer trees and she told me she wanted another. The following week when I was at the shops they happened to be selling them so I was able to pick one up for her as a surprise when I took her shopping!”

Christine says “Emma is a real star, she has always been so kind and helpful. Without the support that Emma has given me, I wouldn’t have been able to get through lockdown. After a few weeks I surprised her myself and gave Emma a box of chocolates to say thank you for all the help!”

# HT proud to support hospital discharge during the Pandemic



As the Covid-19 pandemic increased pressure on hospitals, Age UK Leeds reached out to Holbeck Together for our support with transporting patients from hospital to home.

We were truly humbled for our minibuses to be based at both Leeds General Infirmary and St James Hospital to support the NHS with Age UK Leeds. Ensuring that patients who have been discharged from hospital had a swift and safe journey home.







Our meal provision service is an essential part of Holbeck Together's daily service delivery and when we anticipated a lock down on the horizon we very quickly knew that it was essential with whatever we were facing, we had to continue in one way or another to provide hot nutritious meals to our service users.

This did not faze our amazing chef Julie, whom had to literally re-invent our model of service delivery over a three week period and was personally faced with having to self-isolate at home, she still continued to oversee this development.

With Julie's creative and flexible approach, St Matthews Community Centre was turned into the catering hub for the community. Whilst ensuring the safety of staff and volunteers an impressive operational set up enabled us to provide a daily hot meal and supper service, manage an influx of tonnes of ambient food and serve the community with essential food parcels.



Visit [holbecktogether.org](http://holbecktogether.org)

4,994 hot meals and sandwich suppers



933 food parcels

In addition to this Julie has worked with the Healthy Holidays grant and supported 36 families on a 12 week programme by providing them with food, meals, recipe ingredients and packs to encourage children and their parents to cook during the challenging lock down period.

During this unprecedented time it's been overwhelming for HT that Julie has been able to take opportunities and continue to develop lasting partnerships that will benefit the community in the future.

A huge thank you to the staff team for coordinating the daily meal delivery service. They have delivered an astonishing amount of meals to members of the community whom have been effected by the COVID crisis.



### COVID-19 did not stop our celebrations

We were determined to celebrate VE Day. Under normal circumstances we had planned to have a large community celebration at St Matthews..... So what did we do? We took VE Day to everyone's door step to ensure that community members continued to feel socially included and celebrate.



### Celebrity chef supports Holbeck Together

Matt Healy, celebrity chef finalist, owner of local famous restaurant, The Foundry has been supporting the NHS by providing them with hundreds of meals and when we approached him to provide a Sunday lunch for our regular service users Matt overwhelmed us with his culinary skills and provided 50 fabulous meals.



50 fabulous meals

We couldn't have achieved our goal to continue to not only provide a meals service but to increase the outreach of the provision without the support of the following organisations.



LUFC for providing meat pies, chocolate puddings, 50 Yorkshire puddings, soup and 3000 bags of crisps.



Greggs for providing sandwich fillings, salad, pasties and sweet desserts.



Fresh Fayre for providing sliced meats, tray bakes, biscuits, drinks and bacon.



Costco for providing scones, clotted cream and jam.



Wetherspoon's for providing fruit and vegetables.



Troy Foods for providing potatoes and pasta



SlungLow for providing community support.

Jonathan Morgan for purchasing us a new fridge freezer.



Engie for providing Easter Eggs.



Mecca Bingo for providing hot meals on a Saturday.



Morrison's for providing food parcels and Easter eggs.

St Vincent's and Makro for providing food.

Fareshare for providing a pallets of a variety of food to be used for our meals and food parcels.



Yorkshire crisps for providing 48 tins of crisps.



Real junk food project for providing various food supplies.



Fazenda for donating the funds to enable us to buy food from their suppliers.

Healthy Holiday Grant for providing the means to provide families with food and activities.



# Holbeck Together Heroes



1,500  
volunteering  
hours

This has culminated in a total of 1,500 volunteering hours being undertaken by 45 individual volunteers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you all for your unwavering and incredible support.

## Volunteer HT Heroes – keeping the wheels in motion during the pandemic

When faced with the reality that members of the community could go without contact or hot food for a considerable period of time, we wanted to provide people with reassurance and a lifeline they could rely on.

One of our volunteers Tracey, who was faced with the prospect of being furloughed has supported the delivery of over 4,000 meals to the Holbeck community.

**“It has been a really rewarding experience. Just to have that little chat with the people I have delivered meals to and hopefully made a difference**



Tracey  
Volunteer Hero

**to their experience whilst in lockdown. I've enjoyed meeting new, kind, caring people. The team at Holbeck Together are amazing.”**

Without the heroic effort of people like Tracey we would not have been able to provide the vital support services for those shielding members of the community. **Thank you.**

## Covid-19 companionship

As lockdown dawned and the country was braced for isolation and the ensuing loneliness, we continued to reach out to the community checking in, making contact and ensuring everyone was keeping well.

Our volunteer led befriending helpline provided essential support and companionship to many vulnerable people in one of the most challenging times for a generation. During Covid-19 Sally and other volunteer befrienders have made over 1,300 phone calls to clients, checking on their welfare and providing engaging social interaction.

**“I have really enjoyed doing the befriending calls, I have loved getting to know the women I have been calling, and they are really fun, positive, strong women, who have made me laugh a lot. I'm not sure it should have been that way round!! I have really loved hearing about their lives, families, interests, childhoods, and hearing more about Holbeck & Beeston. I've got to know Holbeck Together more, about what you do, and how fantastic the organisation is.”**



## Knights in shining armour

During Covid-19 Holbeck Together have prepared over 3,300 meals for the community. This simply would not have been possible without the amazing bank of volunteers who sacrificed their personal time to prepare these meals. Part of this heroic team is Dawn, a local Holbeck resident, who was furloughed from her employer who decided to support the community.

**“I have thoroughly enjoyed it. Fantastic atmosphere and wonderful to feel a part of something. The whole experience of making a difference and having a sense of purpose has done wonders for my mental health.”**



140 requests  
for shopping  
totaling over  
1,350 individual  
items.



## Shopping for the essentials

Nick Ramshaw of Thompson Brand Partners and his wife Aisling of CEG offered to help us in supporting the most vulnerable in our community, along with other volunteers they have both supported shielding community members who are most at risk of obtaining the virus, by ensuring they have the most essential items of shopping. Over the course of lockdown Nick, Aisling and other incredible volunteers have completed over 140 requests for shopping totaling over 1,350 individual items.

**“It's been both enjoyable and rewarding. We've enjoyed doing the shopping runs for our 'regulars' and seeing how much it has helped during lockdown. Getting to know real people is always good and being part of the bigger team, even though we didn't see everyone, it has been good.”**





# Leeds Community Foundation Launches Healthy Holidays Grant

→ Leeds Community Foundation launched the Healthy Holidays Grant to fund projects that promote Healthy Holiday activities with a food component for school-aged young people.

We received the Healthy Holidays grant during the covid-19 crisis and the funders were extremely supportive in encouraging HT to use the funds to provide services for local Holbeck families who were facing the effects of children not being able to attend school for many weeks and the increase in demand for meals over the period.



It has been a joy to see families using our recipe packs to make scrumptious meals together and the activity packs that we sent to 65 children have been very well received.

The mums have now formed their own very lively WhatsApp group. The group of families expands weekly and we intend to develop activities that continue to help.

**“Holbeck Together are fantastic working together with other community groups and organisations and helping families at a very difficult time.”**

Tracey Allotey (parent)



“Elissa and her team have been worth their weight in gold and I do not think I would have got through this without them”



## What Holbeck Together means to me by Nikki Hayes



**My two eldest boys were falling behind with their schoolwork as all their learning was being done on paper with no real support as they could not show anyone what they had done. Holbeck Together have given me the use of a Chromebook which has opened up a whole new world to me and my children.**

They can now access Google Classroom where they can contact their teachers and any work which is submitted can be checked. This has given them a lot more confidence than before to complete their work. My little girl who has just started school is now interacting with the learning programmes which are there for her age group.

On a personal basis, the support and help which I have received from Hobeck Together over this Covid-19 period, has gone over and above anything I expected. Being able to speak and interact with the Holbeck Team, has helped me both mentally and physically.

As well the support with having a hot meal. Coping with three very active children was taking its toll on certain days. Elissa and her team have been worth their weight in gold and I do not think I would have got through this without them.

Not only have Holbeck Together supported me and my family, but have worked alongside me in setting up a support group for local families. This has given me the opportunity to enhance my skills in coordinating, arranging meals for them, making up family packs, activity packs and setting up a WhatsApp group.

The interaction now between families has also helped them through this period, and the thanks which has been received shows there was a need for this service.





# HT stays connected – your wellbeing is important to us



**1370 CALLS**

Under the restrictions of lockdown our methods of supporting the community have had to adapt to enable us to continue and step up our support in these unprecedented times. Your safety and wellbeing are very important to us and we will do what we can to alleviate the pressures of the life changing times that we are currently facing.

I hope that we have managed to achieve that support as we continue to respond to the changing circumstances and develop services. Please contact us at any time to let us know if there is more that we can do. As a team our commitment is to connect with at least 50 individuals a day via telephone or in person with door step visits and deliveries. We have been able to achieve this with a fantastic team of volunteers.

The increase in volunteers has enabled the befriending service to expand. This has given us the opportunity to reach out to more people, more frequently in a safe way - to be able to be at the end of the phone and have a friendly chat.

At the beginning of lockdown we consulted 200 members of the community via telephone to let you know that we are here under whatever circumstances. We asked you what you thought you may need, to enable you to remain safe and independent with all of the restrictions in place and most importantly we wanted to alleviate your fears of the unknown.



## As we emerge from the recent restrictions, an ever changing landscape, we are focusing on the next steps to the “new normal”.

HT will be introducing door step befrienders, who can chat to people face to face whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines. For many who don't have family, friends or neighbours visiting, a door step call is vital to support wellbeing.

If you think that a friendly chat would be of benefit to you, please call Claire to discuss further.

As Government Guidelines are changing on a daily basis. We understand how difficult it can be to adapt to the everyday guidelines, we are here to help you.

**If you have any queries on how this may affect your personal circumstances please call me on 0113 245 5553 and I can talk to you about it. We would love to hear from you. Please don't hesitate to contact us.**

Claire Holmes  
Operations and Service Officer



## Teamwork makes the dream work

Young helpers from the Skill Mill have been on hand during the crisis to step in and help out where needed, whether it be delivering wellbeing packs to those shielding or helping to dig out the planters at St. Matthews for community growing projects.

Skill Mill are a fantastic organisation providing employment opportunities for young people with criminal records aged between sixteen and eighteen, working to reduce reoffending by creating opportunities for engagement, participation and education. It's great to be working together, thank you!



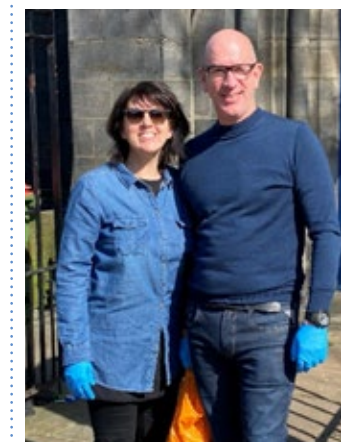
**The Leeds Benevolent Society**, whom very kindly have been donating to HT on an annual basis were on the doorstep at the beginning of lockdown offering additional support. Thank you for your generosity.

## What does friendship look like?

There've been many people who have gone above and beyond in the last few months to keep the wheels turning at Holbeck Together and we'll be talking more about these incredible people as we move forward.

One such individual is Jonathan Morgan who was one of the first to come along and ask how he could be of help. Whether it's helping out in the kitchen, delivering meals and shopping to those shielding, buying us a new freezer, getting his whole family to help out, connecting us to other fantastic organisations locally or telling anyone who'll listen about how great the Holbeck community is – no task was too big.

Jonathan, Rachel, Daisy and Evie have been active supporters in every possible way, turning their hand to whatever the moment demanded. Thank you to the Morgan's!! And keep your eyes peeled for more stories about our fantastic volunteers.



## Digital Futures

Working safely during CV19 has required the team to work in new and interesting ways. We were delighted to receive three Chrome Books from the Leeds City Council City Digital Partnerships Team to enable staff and volunteers to continue to deliver crucial services remotely. We were delighted to give one of the laptops to a volunteer and her family: to help connect Nikki to her volunteer work at Holbeck Together and for her children to use for their home education during lockdown.



**Nikki's son Harvey wrote: “the laptop has made it easier for me to do my homework and I can now talk to the teacher if I need any help. It has changed my life. I was worried that I would be behind but not anymore”.**

Special thanks to Daniel Hardy and the whole team for helping us to work towards bridging the digital divide.



**White Rose Rotary Club** The Rotary Club of Leeds White Rose so generously offered to host a ‘not in the pub’ quiz, which was a great success, they then went on to host another. So kind to give up so much of their time in preparing these great events.

## Funding in a time of crisis

Responding to CV19 required us to completely change how we support the community – in some cases pausing the things that had been the bedrock of our work, in others trying things that are totally new. We were heartened to hear that all of our funders supported the changes ‘on the ground’ and are incredibly grateful to have their ongoing support during this uncertain time.

In addition to our existing network of supporters, we would like to thank the new partners and funders who wanted to be a part of our community response to the CV19 crisis: LCF Healthy Holidays Fund, LCC South Leeds Area Committee COVID Crisis Fund, Leeds Benevolent Society for Single Ladies, 100% Digital Leeds, SC Johnson, Carla Marshall, Sir George Martin, The White Rose Rotary Club, DWF Law LLP, Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, Leeds United, Fazenda- Leeds, Park Fisheries, Karen Wint, Jonathan Morgan and all of the fantastic people who continue to donate to our ‘United Together’ fund.

Every contributor, however big or small, understands that our response has to be equal to the needs of the community and we can only do that with the help of others. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. United Together – Holbeck Together!

# Activities



We look forward to getting together again as soon as it is safe to do so.

During the Covid-19 crisis people have been using Zoom, Skype and social media channels as a way of connecting, be it socially, on the television or with family and friends. This has been a successful way of communication for some people and we will therefore be developing opportunities to continue to connect this way.

We assure you that as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic the staff team are working towards opening the doors of St Matthews when government legislation permits us to do so. Giving opportunities for clients to book, meet face to face and enjoy a lunch together once again.

## Entertainment Library

Would you like to donate and share your jigsaws, DVD's and books with others?

We are creating an 'entertainment library' full of resources. If you would like to join in, call the office to donate your items in exchange for others. Equally, if you would just like to contribute and donate towards the library without exchanging then we are accepting donations.

Visit [holbecktogether.org](http://holbecktogether.org)

## Take a break from cooking

Try one of our freshly cooked 2-course hot lunch meals delivered to your door.

**Tuesday – Thursday**  
£4.00 per meal  
**Friday Fish & Chips**  
£3.50 small  
£5.50 large

Add £2 for a light supper of sandwiches and snacks.

## Online Activities

During the Covid-19 pandemic charitable organisations have built an engaging portfolio of resources which can be accessed online. With a variety of quizzes, craft activities, mindfulness sessions, dances to learn for all abilities and new table tennis skills, there really is something for everyone.

Follow the links below to get started:

PingPong4U YouTube channel: [search Youtube for PingPong4U](#)

Leeds Jewish Welfare Board YouTube channel: [search YouTube for Leeds Jewish Welfare Board](#)

Yorkshire Dance- 'Dance on' website: [www.yorkshiredance.com/project/dance-on](http://www.yorkshiredance.com/project/dance-on)

## Yorkshire Day themed lunch – Tues 11th August

Celebrate all things Yorkshire by enjoying a freshly prepared lunch with accompanying treats.

**£4 per lunch.**  
**Please order by 6th August**

## Online Zoom Socials



Some of you may already be familiar with Zoom over the last few months in lockdown. Zoom is an online video calling platform, where family members and friends can connect, chat away and catch up from the comfort of their own living room.

From the **21st July** we are launching weekly Zoom socials where people can enjoy conversation, quizzes, bingo and exercises at home.

These online socials are **every Tuesday from 2:00pm – 3:00pm, Thursday from 11:00am – 12:00pm and Friday from 2:00pm – 3:00pm** and can be accessed via laptop, computer, tablet, smart phone or iPad.

Call the office for further information including a meeting ID and password.



## Socially distant Shopping

Independent shopping outings are back. From **3rd August** we have socially distant shopping slots available to book on **Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays** with a variety of times available.

To increase the availability to more shops, shopping outings are to Morley Morrison's or Asda. These shopping spaces are limited so please call the office to book in advance.

## Summer Songbook

Since our singers have been unable to meet our singing tutor Jess has had an idea on how everyone can enjoy a sing-a-long this summer. Jess has created a **Yellow Birds Summer Song Book** with accompanying CD. Featuring a mixture of uplifting summer classics from over the years.

The songbooks are available to order for collection or delivery from **20th July** onwards and are available to everyone. If you would like a copy to enjoy please call the office to book.



## Accessibility Online with 100% Digital Inclusion

If you would like to join us online and take part in some of the new activities but are unsure how to or would like some extra support. Then we are here to help. With the support of Leeds City Council and 100% Digital Inclusion, we are working towards having a device loan scheme.

Where you will be able to loan a device, free of charge, including data to search the internet. We will also guide you with instructions and tips on how to use it.

If you would like further information on how to loan a device please call the office for support.



**Don't forget to call**  
**Matthew**  
**0113 245 5553**