



**WINTER WELLBEING
2018/19 EVALUATION REPORT**

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1.0 Introduction

Our home city of Liverpool is amazing. It's full of music, culture, laughter, personality and the friendliest people. But despite this, it can also feel isolating. Trends including globalisation, gentrification, digitisation, transience and housing bubbles are transforming some of our communities faster than ever before. Many of our older neighbours face complex challenges that can make navigating the city and its services even tougher. This can be exacerbated in the colder, darker months. When the winter weather is at its worst, some have to choose between heating and eating, and icy conditions can lead to a rise in trips, slips and falls, or stop people leaving their homes at all. All of this can leave people feeling left alone, left out or left behind.

With increasing pressures on health and social services, especially during the winter months, the role of community is more important than ever in helping ensure our neighbours stay in touch with the people, places and provisions around them.

That's why Liverpool Cares, which opened in October 2018, launched its first Winter Wellbeing project just a few weeks later. The project is part of Liverpool Cares' vision to help reduce loneliness and isolation amongst older and younger Scousers alike; to improve neighbours' confidence, connection, belonging, purpose and power; and to reduce the gaps across social, generational, digital and attitudinal divides.

Alongside Liverpool Cares' [Social Clubs](#), [Love Your Neighbour](#) one-to-one friendship programme and [Community Fundraising](#) work – which all bring older and younger people together – our proactive outreach identifies older people at risk of isolation, and connects them to new experiences and relationships year-round.

During the winter months, we intensify our outreach to connect with people aged over 65 who are most at risk of being left behind as the days get shorter and nights get colder. Through various interactions and interventions – on people's doorsteps, in chemists, GP surgeries, in sheltered housing units and supermarkets, and across a broad and varied programme of social events – between November and March we supported our older neighbours to stay warm, active, healthy and connected. At the heart of the project is a preventative approach, identifying individuals who may be at risk of isolation or housing and health issues, and supporting them to find solutions early on, before problems become emergencies.



As part of our Winter Wellbeing 2018/19 project we:

- **Delivered warm items** including blankets, hats, gloves, socks, scarves, snoods and thermos flasks, so that older neighbours who may be struggling with the cold can stay warm;
- **Gave out small grants** of up to £100 to individuals whose circumstances were particularly difficult. These grants could be used for fuel bills, winter coats or other warm items to help make difficult situations a little easier;
- **Referred people** to organisations and services that offered advice about changing energy providers, including LECCY who are a not-for-profit energy supplier based in Liverpool;
- **Signed up older neighbours** to our Social Clubs and Love Your Neighbour programmes for fun, friendship, connection and activities year-round;
- **Referred neighbours** to other local community groups, including exercise classes, dance groups and art clubs;
- **Signposted older neighbours** to organisations that offer advice and support with health and wellbeing issues, including Talk Liverpool.

1.1 Approach

As a foundation for Liverpool Cares' first Winter Wellbeing project, we identified seven neighbourhood areas for reaching out to older neighbours: Belle Vale (L25), Wavertree (L15), Mossley Hill (L17), City Centre (L1 & L8), Kensington (L7), Everton and Anfield (L6) and Old Swan (L13). Leaflets and posters were distributed in a variety of places, including pharmacies, supermarkets, church notice boards, cafes and local corner shops.

Following the initial poster and leaflet distribution, face-to-face outreach took place in each of the initial target areas, including through:

- **Connecting with housing associations**, and door-knocking at sheltered housing and independent living accommodation for people aged over 65;
- **Giving talks at local community group meetings**, including lunch clubs, coffee mornings, resident meetings and existing social activity groups;
- **Striking up one-to-one conversations** with people aged over 65 at bus stops and in supermarkets.

We also gave a series of presentations for local authority professionals and other organisations, including occupational therapists, foodbanks, and GP surgeries, and connected with other groups working with older people in Liverpool, including the Happy Older People network, and National Museums Liverpool, to help disseminate information about Winter Wellbeing and build strong relationships for the project and beyond.



Those organisations included:

- Age Concern Liverpool
- Ark Housing
- Bridge Chapel Centre
- BBC Radio Merseyside
- Capacity
- Citizens Advice
- Councillor Jeremy Wolfson, Mayoral Lead for Older People (South)
- Everton Football Club
- GoodGym
- Imagine Independence
- Joseph Lappin Centre
- L6 Centre
- Lee Valley Pensioners Club
- Life Rooms Southport and Walton
- Liverpool Citizen Advocacy
- Liverpool City Council
- Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group
- Liverpool Football Club – Red Neighbours
- Liverpool John Moores University
- Local Solutions
- Onward Homes
- Penny Lane Development Trust
- Person Shaped Support (PSS)
- Shelter Aged Veterans
- South Liverpool Foodbank
- South Liverpool Linking Lives

1.2 Door-knocking

We also collaborated with two housing associations in Liverpool, Plus Dane and Riverside. We arranged door knocking at eight Plus Dane units and four Riverside units – knocking on over 210 doors in total. Prior to our visits, a poster was produced for each outreach engagement and sent to the scheme manager to display in all of their units. This not only gave older neighbours information about our visits but also allowed us to clearly liaise with the housing manager about their residents, ensuring we didn't disturb anyone who had said they did not want to engage with us.



LIVERPOOL CARES

Liverpool Cares will be visiting Alman Court on Wednesday 5th December, 10am-1pm.

Liverpool Cares is an organisation that connects people aged 65+, with their younger neighbours for fun and friendship!



Rachael and Abbie from Liverpool Cares will be coming by and knocking on your door to have a chat about their **Winter Wellbeing** project: they can help you to keep warm by providing **free warm items** and **small financial grants**, as well as advising on how to stay healthy, active and connected.

They'll also let you know all about Liverpool Cares' **free social clubs** held every month across Liverpool, including brunches, dances, pub nights, gallery visits, film screenings and technology workshops. You can also find out about their **Love Your Neighbour** programme, where a younger neighbour could visit once a week for a chat and a brew.

Rachael and Abbie look forward to meeting you! For more information, give them a call on:
0151 659 1789



“Liverpool Cares are doing an amazing job, thank you for helping our tenants” – Sue Fairley, Merseyside Health and Wellbeing Coordinator; Retirement Living, Riverside.



2.0 Project in numbers

From November 2018 to March 2019, we:

- Spoke to **566 people aged over 65** about how we could support them through the Winter Wellbeing project;
- Of those, 37% received specific follow up help – **207 people** in total;
- Made **257 deeper interventions in total**, including:
 - **Delivering 59 warm items** including gloves, blankets and hot water bottles to people who felt cold in their homes;
 - Awarding **nine small grants of up to £100** (a total of £670) to people struggling with fuel poverty and rapidly changing circumstances related to winter which might deepen isolation or anxiety;
 - **Identifying 21 older neighbours to be matched through our Love Your Neighbour one-to-one friendship programme** when it starts in spring 2019;
 - **Identifying 151 older neighbours who signed up to receive our programme** of up to 15 free social clubs per month;
- **Hosted 31 social clubs** for older and younger neighbours to attend across Liverpool from November to March – helping people stay connected during the winter;
- **Distributed 530 leaflets** to share seasonal health messages and how Liverpool Cares could support people;
- Gave **talks at 14 community organisations**, and **12 sheltered housing units**, knocking on over 200 doors to speak with older neighbours about Winter Wellbeing and our year-round activities.



3.0 Case Studies

While the numbers are crucial, they don't tell the whole story of the Winter Wellbeing project. Part of the value of the project is its person-centred approach which allowed us to identify older neighbours who needed extra help, ensured appropriate time and effort was spent on each person (with no time limits to follow-ups), led to trust and lasting relationships, and revealed complex problems before they became crises. Below are just a few of the stories of the 207 older neighbours we directly supported:

3.1 Din, 71

We first met Din while out door-knocking at a sheltered housing unit in Kensington. Din lives alone, and he invited us into his home for a chat.

We chatted about his Kenyan roots and about his ability to speak Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi. After building rapport, he explained to us that he had little contact with anyone apart from his carers, and he expressed a keen interest to connect with other people. We are now planning to match Din with a younger neighbour for a weekly visit through our Love Your Neighbour programme, which we are launching in May. Din has signed up to receive our monthly social club listings too, and we have also signposted him to The African Elders Association to connect him up to other community group activities in the Kensington area.

During the course of our conversations it also became clear that Din's bedding was inadequate, so we gave him a small grant so that he could purchase a new duvet, pillows and sheets. Din was unable to get to the shops himself, so we bought the items and delivered them to him a few days later, along with a number of warm items including a hot water bottle, a warm blanket and a hat. We have also sent an application to Friends of the Elderly for a grant so that Din can buy a new mattress to improve his quality of sleep, as well as a television to replace the broken one he currently has.



3.2 John, 74

"This is the best thing I have done in at least five years. I love being sociable and I have been lonely, until now."

In February 2019 we received a call from Citizens Advice about John, who wanted to take part in social activities and make more friends. John had owned a Portuguese restaurant in Liverpool before retiring 10 years ago.



We called John that same day and encouraged him to come along to his first Liverpool Cares social club. After a few more phone calls to keep him in the loop and to remind him of what was going on, John attended a busy board game evening in Wavertree where he met many younger and older neighbours in the Liverpool Cares network.

Later that week, John attended an International Scouse Day-inspired craft club where he built a rapport with one of our younger neighbours, Rafael, who is from Brazil. John (originally from Cape Verde) and Rafael bonded over their shared Portuguese language and discussed their love of food, wine and music. Both left the club saying they'd love to lead a Portuguese-inspired social club together, which we are helping them to arrange.

Since we first met John in February, he has attended eight social clubs. At a St Patrick's Day social at the Baltic Market in March, John told us: *"I've never been here before, I've been living in a different world and you're showing me all of these amazing new places!"*



3.3 Kathy, 74

“I’ve been trying to get hold of my mum all evening. Then Liverpool Cares popped into my head... Onto Twitter and there she is with you all! Looks like she's having a great time! She loves all the activities with Liverpool Cares. You have completely transformed her life. Thank you.” (Kathy’s daughter on Twitter)



“I got involved in Liverpool Cares because felt like I needed to get out of my comfort zone. My husband passed away four years ago, and my life changed a lot. My life revolved around the TV of an evening, and I didn’t get much chance to meet new people. I’d never been on my own, and I just missed being part of a group. It’s been life-changing. I’m doing things that I wouldn’t normally do and seeing places I wouldn’t normally see. It has really taken me out of my comfort zone. I would never usually go out in the evenings, I was in my pyjamas by six o’clock. I used to find it hard to walk into a room full of people I didn’t know, I would struggle with that. Now I sit and talk to new people every week, it’s great.”

Kathy, 74

We met Kathy in November, during outreach work in Mossley Hill. Kathy told us that she lives alone but enjoys socialising and getting out and about. As we chatted to her about connecting with younger neighbours through our social clubs, it was apparent that she had little contact socially with younger people in Liverpool, and that she didn’t think she would ‘get on’ with them. However, Kathy was curious about the network and was our first older neighbour to sign up to Liverpool Cares’ first ever social club.

Once at the club Kathy connected with one of our volunteers, Sarah, over a mutual love of hair dye, amongst many other things. Sarah recommended her hairdresser, and Kathy is now a regular there. Since November Kathy has attended 16 Liverpool Cares social clubs.



3.4 Verinder, 76

In February Amrita called us on behalf of her mother and father, Verinder and Deyal. Amrita's parents don't speak English and are currently applying for asylum in the UK. Amrita had spotted a Winter Wellbeing flyer on a notice board in the United Sikh Association Church and Community Centre in Wavertree – one of the areas we had identified for outreach in October 2018.

After meeting with Amrita and her family, we identified that Verinder and Deyal needed warm items, so we delivered blankets, thermal gloves and scarves. During the meeting, we discussed how Verinder didn't have a warm winter coat, so we provided him with £80 of high street clothing vouchers as part of a Winter Wellbeing grant.

Verinder and Deyal both signed up to receive Liverpool Cares' monthly social clubs programme so they can stay informed about ongoing activities across the city.

Looking ahead, we will be seeking to build further connections with the United Sikh Association Church and Community Centre, as well as other temples and places of worship, in order to help us identify older neighbours who would be interested in joining the Liverpool Cares network.



3.5 Jennifer, 73

During the winter, we received a call from Jennifer in Gateacre who asked for a delivery of various items to help her to stay warm; she had heard about Liverpool Cares through her local community centre.

Visiting Jennifer in her home a few days later allowed us to speak to her in more depth, and whilst enjoying a cuppa with her we talked about her passion for Liverpool Football Club; Jennifer even told us about receiving a 'wedding telegram' from Bill Shankly in 1966. We spoke to Jennifer about our free social clubs and the range of activities we have every month to make older neighbours feel better connected to the people and places around them. This included an upcoming guided tour of Liverpool Football Club – Jennifer signed up immediately!



3.6 Jeanette, 65

In November, we attended the community lunch at Kensington Methodist Church. Over a cup of tea, we chatted to Jeanette, learning about her love of arts and crafts. We were able to tell her about an upcoming craft social club we were running later that week in Kensington Community Learning Centre. She told us:

“Having things to do and places to go makes life worth it. I can’t wait to meet new people and share some stories and laughter with them!”

Jeanette has since attended four of our monthly craft clubs and has told her son not only how much she is enjoying taking part in new activities, but also how much she’s enjoying getting to know her younger neighbours.



3.7 Betty, 69

“I’m confident with it now! I’m going to go home and practise what I’ve learned today.”

At our first supermarket outreach engagement in Old Swan we struck up conversations with 24 people aged over 65. One of the older neighbours we met was Betty, and we spoke to her about our January social clubs programme. Later that week, Betty booked onto our technology workshop, where she connected with Otilie, a younger neighbour who helped her master her tech. Betty also attended a second social club the next week – a swing dance where she met more younger and older friends.



3.8 Moses, 70

As part of Winter Wellbeing we connected with The African Elders, who formed 19 years ago and now meet fortnightly in Liverpool. Their aim is to help reduce social isolation and loneliness for their members through cultural activities. We attended their community lunch, where we gave a talk about Liverpool Cares. Through the course of the conversation it became clear that many of the members of The African Elders would benefit from additional support, and we made 36 deeper interventions.



At this community lunch we met Moses, who lives alone in sheltered accommodation, as does not have any family in Liverpool. Moses chatted to us about needing a new coat as his current one was old and worn. We were able to award him a grant so that he could purchase a new winter coat, which he was delighted with, particularly as he likes to stay active by walking to social events across the city. Having the new coat allows him to wrap up, keep warm and stay active during the colder months.



4.0 Project strengths

Liverpool Cares' first ever Winter Wellbeing project has been both ambitious in its scope and personal in its approach. This combination of breadth and depth makes it a challenging project to deliver, and one that was successful because:

- At the beginning of the project we had no people aged over 65 in our network: by the end of the project we had 207 older neighbours active in our community;
- Our person-centred approach – taking time to build rapport and trust – worked: 37% of the people we spoke to opened up to ask for support;
- We connected with 12 sheltered housing units who we will now work with year-round. We are having conversations about holding taster social clubs within their communal spaces, building up residents' confidence to then attend our events across the city, where possible;
- Our links with local media, both traditional and social, and support from local organisations – including BBC Radio Merseyside, student newspapers and



Independent Liverpool – heightened the project’s profile and allowed us to reach more people;

- Working with housing associations to conduct door-knocking has been fundamental in getting to know housebound neighbours who we otherwise would not have been able to reach;
- The personal approach and lack of bureaucracy (avoiding confusing forms for our older neighbours to fill out) meant that people could relate to the project on a human level;
- We connected with over 40 local organisations in total, creating two-way referral and signposting routes. We also created an internal signposting document, meaning we could access relevant services more speedily, and we will continue to update this year-round;
- Our outreach has allowed us to have deep conversations with people and communities in areas we want to work with further in the future, giving us an insight into how we can develop more concentrated community engagement;
- By telling the stories of the people we have met over social media, we have raised awareness of winter fuel poverty, social isolation and the importance of neighbourliness and looking out for one another amongst our 1,175 social media followers.

 Liverpool Cares
Published by Rosa Friend · 20 February · 0

We met the fabulous Flo while out in Aigburth. Flo is 95 and registered blind, and told us that she struggles to get out and about to the shops, especially during the winter. Our Winter Wellbeing project helps people like Flo to keep warm, active, healthy and connected during the cold winter months. We can deliver free warm items, like these cosy new slippers, to those aged over 65 who need them. If you know someone who could benefit, get in touch on 0151 659 1789.



2,663 People reached 388 Engagemen Boost Post
2 comments 13 shares

5.0 Recommendations for future projects

As with any start-up project, we have learnt a lot. Below are some of the challenges we encountered and our recommendations for improving Winter Wellbeing and deepening its impact in future.

- **Area for improvement:** While working with sheltered housing units has helped us to connect with people aged over 65 who would like more social activity, these residents already have access to a communal lounge and social activities. Next year we would like to do more to reach individuals in private housing and beyond.
- **Recommendation:** Work with the Liverpool Clinic Commissioning Group Neighbourhood Team to identify key areas and neighbourhoods where there are people aged 65 and over, and to further connect with Primary Care. Next

year we would like to have a presence at flu jab clinics too, and to connect with patients in waiting rooms before their appointments.

- **Recommendation:** Next year we will more closely with local media to increase our audience reach. This could include free papers (for example The Link) or the Liverpool Echo, and local radio stations such as BBC Radio Merseyside, to reach audiences over 65.
- **Recommendation:** Our outreach in supermarkets during this year's project was successful, helping us to reach people not connected to other community groups and services. Next year, we will aim for a clear and frequent presence at supermarkets across Liverpool.
- **Recommendation:** Next year we will organise engaging one-off social clubs in community venues and at GP surgeries across the city as a means of reaching more older neighbours.
- **Area for improvement:** Ensuring the people we reach reflect the diversity of Liverpool's community.
- **Recommendation:** In future we will work with the Liverpool Social Inclusion Team and other local organisations to connect with and support more people from minority backgrounds.
- **Area for improvement:** Complementing other organisations' winter work. There are some brilliant initiatives taking place across Liverpool, and with a greater lead-in time we'd like to better connect with them next year.
- **Recommendation:** We will connect with teams doing complementary work in summer 2019, to ensure there's no duplication of effort, and that we have a presence at the annual **Healthy Homes Winter Survival (2019)** event to access new older audiences about keeping warm and staying healthy.
- **Area for improvement:** Bringing planning forward. Liverpool Cares only started in October 2018, and our project began at the beginning of November 2018.
- **Recommendation:** For our next project, we will begin project planning in summer, reaching out to potential partners well before the project begins, to ensure we can spend more time out and about, speaking to older neighbours, while the project is running.

6.0 Conclusion

At our sibling charities North London Cares, South London Cares and Manchester Cares, the Winter Wellbeing project has become a mainstay: supporting people aged over 65 to stay warm, active, healthy and connected as the weather gets colder and the days shorter. In the planning stages of Liverpool Cares' first ever Winter Wellbeing project, we hoped that we would get the buy-in of our older neighbours, other grassroots organisations, housing associations and local businesses but recognised that as a new organisation this would take time. It is a testament to the warm and collaborative nature of the people of this city that we were able to make so many connections so quickly. As a result, over the course of winter we were able to support older neighbours with 257 deeper interventions.

Part of this success is the result of those meaningful partnerships with multiple organisations, and the important referral pathways they enabled. Success also stems from our proactive outreach methods – connecting with older neighbours on the doorstep, at bus stops, and in supermarkets. The evidence suggests our person-centred approach allowed us to reach people who may be unwilling to accept formal support.

Next year, our ambition is to build on what we have learnt. Our preparation will be stronger in 2019, with a greater lead-in time for the project. We will work with more housing associations across Liverpool and explore opportunities to meet older neighbours who live in private housing, enabling us to access people who are harder to reach. And as our referral routes with healthcare providers and professionals – including GP surgeries and neighbourhood teams – deepen, we will be able to identify even more older neighbours who would benefit from our core programmes, or some financial, practical or emotional support during the most isolating time of the year.

We will also continue to articulate the socially and culturally rich stories from older and younger neighbours in Liverpool, further illustrating and promoting the value of connecting, of authentic friendship and of why supporting our neighbours is deeply enriching for both sides. As Sandra, 71, who we met through the Winter Wellbeing project told us: ***“I’m so glad that this has come along. Lately I haven’t been going out as much and I hardly see anybody or meet new people, so it can be quite lonely. I’m looking forward to getting out of the routine of sitting in.”***

An astounding nine million of us in the UK are always or often lonely. This is why proactively striking up conversations, listening and problem-solving together – rather than waiting for people to call us up in desperate circumstances, or worse, never getting in contact – is crucial in building connections and resilience in our communities. Next year we look forward to connecting with even more people through our Winter Wellbeing project. Through a combination of interactions, interventions, referrals and new friendships, we will once again support people to enjoy, rather than endure, the coldest months of the year.

April 2019