

Building connection in disconnecting times

Annual Report

2020



THE **CARES** FAMILY

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1. A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

“This is what we came here to do.”

When we set up The Cares Family in 2011, we knew that pervasive loneliness, isolation and disconnection were not only fundamentally damaging individuals' lives, but that those issues were also damaging wider British society. We could see face-to-face interactions disappearing as high streets and neighbourhoods transformed, globalisation and transience kicked up roots, and technology started to play a dominant role in how people share time.

What we didn't know then is that after a nearly a decade of growth in The Cares Family, and having successfully shown not only the insidiousness of loneliness but also the power of connection across generations and other perceived differences, we would face a pandemic that would challenge our very model at the exact time it was needed most.

2020 was an extraordinary and painful year for everyone. We all missed the closeness of loved ones and indeed many of the freedoms that we have taken for granted.

For The Cares Family, which seeks to bring older and younger people together to build community amongst the two loneliest age groups in society, it was also a defining year – one in which we did everything in our

power to help keep the generations together even as they were forced apart.

We have made a real difference. Over 6,500 older and younger people have shared solace and solidarity, connection and community, perspective and patience – through our re-invented programmes that brought the generations together even from afar. And in those interactions, which neighbours say have been 'a lifesaver', we have found a deep, latent hunger for society to change – to be more connected, more cohesive, and to focus anew on the power of community.

More than just a name, this truly is a family. It is a place of shared kindness, community, learning, bravery and trust – qualities embedded in our work through our values. It is also a place for innovation: for finding new ways to bring people together. That's why, even as we continue to face down a pandemic, I'm excited about what this family can do together in 2021, through new projects to build connection and community beyond our traditional programmes.

And after that pandemic has passed – and it will pass – it will still be a place that embodies those values. Because this is what we came here to do.

ALEX SMITH

FOUNDER/ CEO, THE CARES FAMILY

2. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CARES FAMILY

The Cares Family is a group of community networks of younger and older neighbours hanging out and helping one another in a rapidly changing world. Our mission is **to build connection in a disconnected age** and our objectives are to:

- Reduce loneliness and isolation amongst younger and older people alike;
- Improve all participants' connection, belonging, purpose and power;
- Bridge social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides.

Over nine years, our model has **grown from a tiny idea in a single place into a national leader.**

Combined, our five local, independent charities – North London Cares (founded in 2011), South London Cares (2014), Manchester Cares (2017), Liverpool Cares (2018) and East London Cares (2019) – have connected 22,000 younger and older neighbours to share over 550,000 interactions and 120,000 hours at 5,000 social clubs and through 50,000 hours of one-to-one time. **Those relationships have had a dramatic impact.**

73% of older neighbours involved say their isolation is reduced as a result; 86% are better able to appreciate the changing world; and 77% say their relations with

young people have improved. Meanwhile, 98% of young people involved say they have a stronger connection to the community, 97% feel a greater appreciation of older people and 98% say they are able to contribute in ways they otherwise could not. Younger and older neighbours alike say they feel **reduced loneliness, improved understanding across generations, a deeper sense of belonging, and “part of something bigger”** as a result of being part of The Cares Family.

In our age of disconnection, this matters deeply. Because while loneliness is a **personal crisis** for those who experience it, it is also a **public health crisis** that causes depression, anxiety, strokes, heart attacks and dementia, and is shown to be as bad for people's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day; and it is a **political crisis**, because in a world in which people are increasingly withdrawing from one another and spending less time with people who are not 'like them' – not just across generational lines but across other divides too – it is contributing to wider polarisation, stereotyping and othering.

This cannot stand. That's why The Cares Family brings people together in local communities, and it's why we are expanding our work to try to change the systems and cultures that cause our disconnection crisis.

3. OUR FIVE LOCAL CHARITIES

The Cares Family's model is unique.

Five local sibling charities are each rooted in their changing urban landscapes and run by wonderful local teams. Together, those teams create exciting activities and meaningful one-to-one friendships for older and younger neighbours to enjoy, so that they can feel **part of their changing world, rather than left behind by it.**

These communities are based in urban locations because that's where loneliness amongst younger and older people is most prevalent. Under the forces of

globalisation, gentrification, digitisation, transience, housing bubbles and now the pandemic, these proud cities are **transforming faster than ever**, and that can leave people feeling **anonymous, isolated and lonely.**

That's why The Cares Family's local charities being older and younger people together so that the generations can **share time, new experiences and ultimately friendship.** The Cares Family is proud of this local-national approach. The relationships work because they're local, rooted in places of meaning; but we also derive national influence from being more than the sum of those parts – 'part of something bigger'.



SOUTH LONDON CARES



NORTH LONDON CARES



EAST LONDON CARES



LIVERPOOL CARES



MANCHESTER CARES

4. A YEAR OF ISOLATION

In 2020, the insidiousness of loneliness was brought to national and international prominence through the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

On March 13th, The Cares Family **suspended face-to-face programming** bringing older and younger neighbours together, because the health of our neighbours is always our number one priority. However, because we knew that many younger and older people alike were **more fearful of loneliness than the virus itself, we rapidly re-invented programmes and leant into the emergency** – to form and nurture even deeper connections during a doubly disconnecting time.

Immediately, we contacted the thousands of older and younger people in our communities to **reassure**, to **ask what people needed**, to **connect people to local services**, and to **communicate about our remote programmes** – our Virtual Social Clubs, Phone a Friend programme, Check-in Calls and #AloneTogether activities. In the course of the year, we connected **6,787 younger and older people**.

We are proud of our response.

But we now know that the effects of this pandemic are going to last long into the future. And we know that – with lockdowns across the country, social distancing keeping us apart, working and studying from home

now the norm, and group celebrations, gathering and ritual lost almost entirely – there will be a **long tail of consequence for society at large from the loneliness pandemic**.

Since March 2020, young people have become almost three times more likely to have experienced loneliness, with 44% admitting feeling this way and 28% feeling lonely 'most or all of the time.' They are being locked up in university halls, forced to work from home indefinitely and isolated from the economy and social lives they were promised. Meanwhile, many older people are 'shielding' from society in order to protect their physical health. This dual crisis has consequences for mental and physical health – and for our society's togetherness.

But there is hope. With loneliness now universal, empathy levels for people suffering it has increased. Through the pandemic, community has been shown to be the answer.

5. OUR IMPACT IN 2020

2020 in numbers

In a year of isolation, we're so proud of this community. Together, **6,787 older and younger neighbours shared time, new experiences and trust – 75% more people than in 2019.** Here are just some of the ways in which neighbours have built connection in disconnecting times through The Cares Family:

- 1,639 older and younger friends shared 929 social clubs in person, online and by phone – a total of 9,369 times.
- Another 614 friends shared 4,834 chats on the phone and 1,042 in person – a total of 5,876 one-to-one connections lasting 4,026 hours.
- 15,830 calls were made to an additional 2,000 older neighbours, including through our Community Callers project.
- Young people made 3,067 practical interventions in total, including delivering food and medical supplies and making referrals to vital local partners who helped connect neighbours even more.
- 76,823 individually distributed #AloneTogether activity packs were sent to 8,536 older neighbours, 12,640 younger neighbours and hundreds of other community groups across the UK, with 169 activities to help neighbours connect from afar.



Stories of change

Charles, 69, Alice, 24 and Hannah, 27 – Manchester Cares

Charles attended his first Manchester Cares social club in 2018. Over the past two years he has attended 123 clubs and become known with the community for his impromptu poetry recitals.

As an active member of the Manchester Cares community, we knew that shielding from the pandemic could tip Charles into isolation, so through nine one-to-one training sessions, we helped up-skill Charles on Zoom and matched him with Alice, 24, and later Hannah, 27, through our Phone a Friend initiative, for weekly chats with new friends.

The result has been transformative. Charles now joins Manchester Cares' virtual social clubs, and has even started online creative writing workshops with the



Royal Exchange. He told us: "I've been round and round and round, and now I'm not going round anymore. I can get on Zoom, I have an email address I can use, and I can attend Desert Island Discs – my favourite at Manchester Cares!"

Manchester Cares in focus

In 2020 Manchester faced some of the tightest, most sustained pandemic restrictions in the country. As coffee mornings, community organisations and businesses were forced to close from Ancoats to Ardwick, Longsight to Levenshulme, older and younger neighbours who were previously actively engaged in civic life started feeling more isolated.

Despite the distance and the loss, Manchester Cares can look back on the year and celebrate countless examples of togetherness, community, kindness, and friendship. As older and younger neighbours supported one another and shared new connections online (with devices donated by The Good Things Foundation and Hubbub), on the phone and by post, the charity led with famous Mancunian values: resilience, innovation and togetherness.

In 2020, 1,032 people were involved in these activities across the generations – 87% more than in 2019. Manchester Cares brought people together one-to-one and in groups, including in shared social clubs with Liverpool Cares and North London Cares, East London Cares and South London Cares – clubs which put Mancunian talent to work to bring people together everywhere.

Eileen, 83, and Sophia, 19 – Liverpool Cares

Eileen and Sophia were introduced by Liverpool Cares in autumn 2019 in Wavertree. They quickly struck up a beautiful friendship. Eileen is registered blind and hadn't seen her own photos for years – so Sophia sat with her, describing each photo in her album, to help Eileen reconnect with precious memories, and helping Sophia to feel more connected too.

Up until March 2020, the two friends shared dinner together every week and Sophia said she felt 'part of Eileen's family'.

When the pandemic struck, the friends stayed in regular contact – offering one another friendship during lockdown. In October 2020, they were able to meet face to face again, albeit at a distance, as they



spoke to Channel 4 News about the difference that intergenerational connections had made in disconnecting times.

Liverpool Cares in focus

Liverpool has long been known for its fierce spirit and civic pride. This was felt acutely during 2020. As people in the city rallied around their communities, found new ways to connect and grew closer to their neighbours, we're proud of the difference Liverpool Cares made with its local partners.

Through the year, the charity helped older and younger neighbours to find solace and laughter in virtual social clubs and their one-to-one friendships on

the phone. Neighbours also accessed practical help via Liverpool Cares' signposting and tech support offer. Working with partners like GoodGym and The Little Shoe Cafe, older and younger neighbours were able to offer one another food, medicine and the warmth of social connection in a disconnecting time.

In 2020, Liverpool Cares worked with 855 older and younger Scousers – 134% more than in 2019.

John, 82, and Jemma, 34 – South London Cares

John has been to over 200 social clubs in the five years that he's been part of South London Cares. From creative writing to history workshops, quizzes to pub clubs, he's attended them all.

In November 2019, we connected John to Jemma, 34. The new friends had plenty in common: both had served in the army, though decades apart; both enjoyed travelling abroad; and both love going on walks. Covid-19 put distance between the friends as Jemma went back to Cyprus, but it also brought them closer than ever as the pair shared Skype sessions, calls and even letters.

John said: "South London Cares has been a big part of my life, it's really helped me a lot. It makes a difference."



South London Cares in focus

Like other parts of London, Lambeth and Southwark had high numbers of Covid-19 cases as the pandemic took hold in March 2020, with both boroughs ranking amongst the worst affected. As South London Cares paused face-to-face programmes, it made 3,809 calls to older neighbours while also planning how to connect them to the broader intergenerational community over the longer-term.

The next few months were a collective effort from South London Cares' network and partners: corporate volunteers helped dozens of older south Londoners to

access the online world; local partners from Age UK Lambeth to GoodGym helped identify older people who would benefit from Phone a Friend. Meanwhile, South London Cares hosted 211 social clubs, helping older and younger people to sing together, dance together and share perspective on a difficult year.

1,803 older and younger people were actively involved in those activities in 2020, compared with 1,541 in 2019, demonstrating the value of connection in disconnecting times.

Emilia, 25, and Sid, 92 – East London Cares

Emilia joined East London Cares in December 2019 as a way to connect with her community. At one of her first social clubs, Sid helped Emilia to feel welcome over a game of dominoes. Sid impressed Emilia with his stories so much that she asked to be matched with him through Love Your Neighbour.

Just as they were organising their first meet-up, the pandemic struck. So, for the last nine months, Sid and Emilia have been calling each other on the phone. For Emilia, the friendship kept her grounded during a challenging time. She said: "I've gained a friend, role model, life coach and I'm given all the free advice a confused 25-year-old could need." Sid has enjoyed being a support to Emilia, saying she comes to him for advice because "She knows I won't tell anyone else!"



Sid and Emilia's story represents the power of intergenerational friendship. They navigated a tough year together by supporting each other through the challenges 2020 brought. As Sid put it: "We respect each other. It doesn't matter who you are or your age."

East London Cares in focus

East London Cares had only been operating for six months when the pandemic hit, but by proactively bringing people together, it has already nurtured the asset we need more now than ever: community. The charity connects older and younger neighbours in Tower Hamlets and Hackney. Rich in history and young at heart, the two boroughs exemplify the rapid change that has informed The Cares Family's work since the start.

Before the pandemic, East London Cares had hosted pizza parties, drag karaoke events, celebrations of Black history and a karate club. And when Covid-19 brought lockdown restrictions, anxiety and uncertainty, East London Cares reached out – trialling a shopping delivery scheme to support vulnerable neighbours during the lockdown and adapting core programmes to be hosted online and over the phone.

Key relationships with local partners like St Margaret's House helped fund local facilitators to host exciting social clubs. Meanwhile, the partnership with Tower Hamlets Homes helped East London Cares' outreach team to identify older neighbours living locally and to connect them to their wider community. In total, in just over a year of operation, East London Cares brought together 639 older and younger people.

East London Cares' first year was rooted in adaptation, bravery and learning that will influence its work in 2021. As it looks to years two and three, the charity will deepen outreach in the community, focussing particularly on meeting more Bengali and Somali neighbours, engage more local facilitators who can offer skills at social clubs, and establish relationships with more local partners who share The Cares Family vision of breaking down barriers to social connection.

Deslyn, 87 and Lea, 33 – North London Cares

Deslyn and Lea were connected through Love Your Neighbour in December 2019. Lea signed up because she wanted to learn more about British culture after moving to the UK from abroad.

The friends bonded over their love of cooking, and in the last year have spent 83 hours chatting, sharing stories and laughing together.

The pair cited each other as sources of vital support through the pandemic. Lea said: “Between carrot cake deliveries and takeaway fish and chips, we’ve been having catch-ups on the phone, which were special moments of sharing delicious recipes! Deslyn’s cheerful spirit has been really precious to me throughout this tough period.”



North London Cares in focus

The oldest of The Cares Family’s charities, North London Cares has been building friendship across the generations for nearly a decade. But when the pandemic hit, the community had to listen to people’s changing needs and adapt quickly, highlighting the power of a small, local approach.

North London Cares pioneered The Cares Family’s #AloneTogether activity packs, helping over 2,600 older and younger people in Camden and Islington to stay connected even from afar. The charity also piloted ‘Cosy Clubs’ – intimate spaces for just a

handful of neighbours who were feeling a little anxious about joining bigger groups on the phone or online. Many Cosy Club graduates went on to participate regularly in those larger groups.

As the charity brought together 2,154 older and younger people (compared with 1,295 in 2019) it also contributed to Camden and Islington Councils’ shared Covid-19 working group on isolation and co-authored with Ageing Better in Camden a paper on tackling the digital divide, helping to amplify the experiences of people across the generations.

6. THE CARES FAMILY'S PROGRAMMES

Historically, The Cares Family has run four face-to-face programmes in each of our city locations: Social Clubs, Love Your Neighbour, Outreach and Community Fundraising.

In 2020, each of those programmes were re-invented to meet the challenges of the pandemic and social distancing – and moved largely to building connections from afar.

Faced with the pandemic we also introduced new programmes – Alone Together and What The Tech? –

to help older and younger people to connect across the digital divide.

And we started our new 3G Social Clubs project, an innovative new way to bring older people together with new parents and their very young children.

This chapter shows how, as the pandemic shifted, so we shifted our approach, beginning to blend those vital face-to-face activities, where it was safe to do so, with necessary and important remote connections that enabled magical new interactions across the generations.

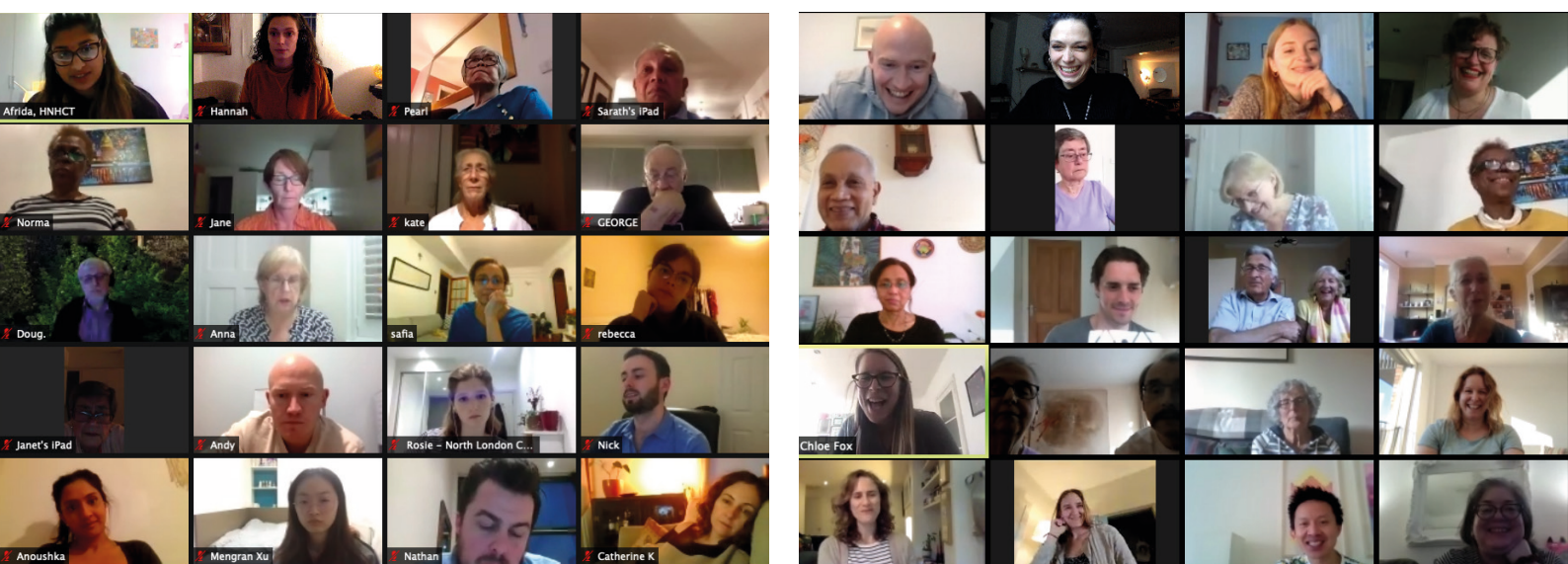
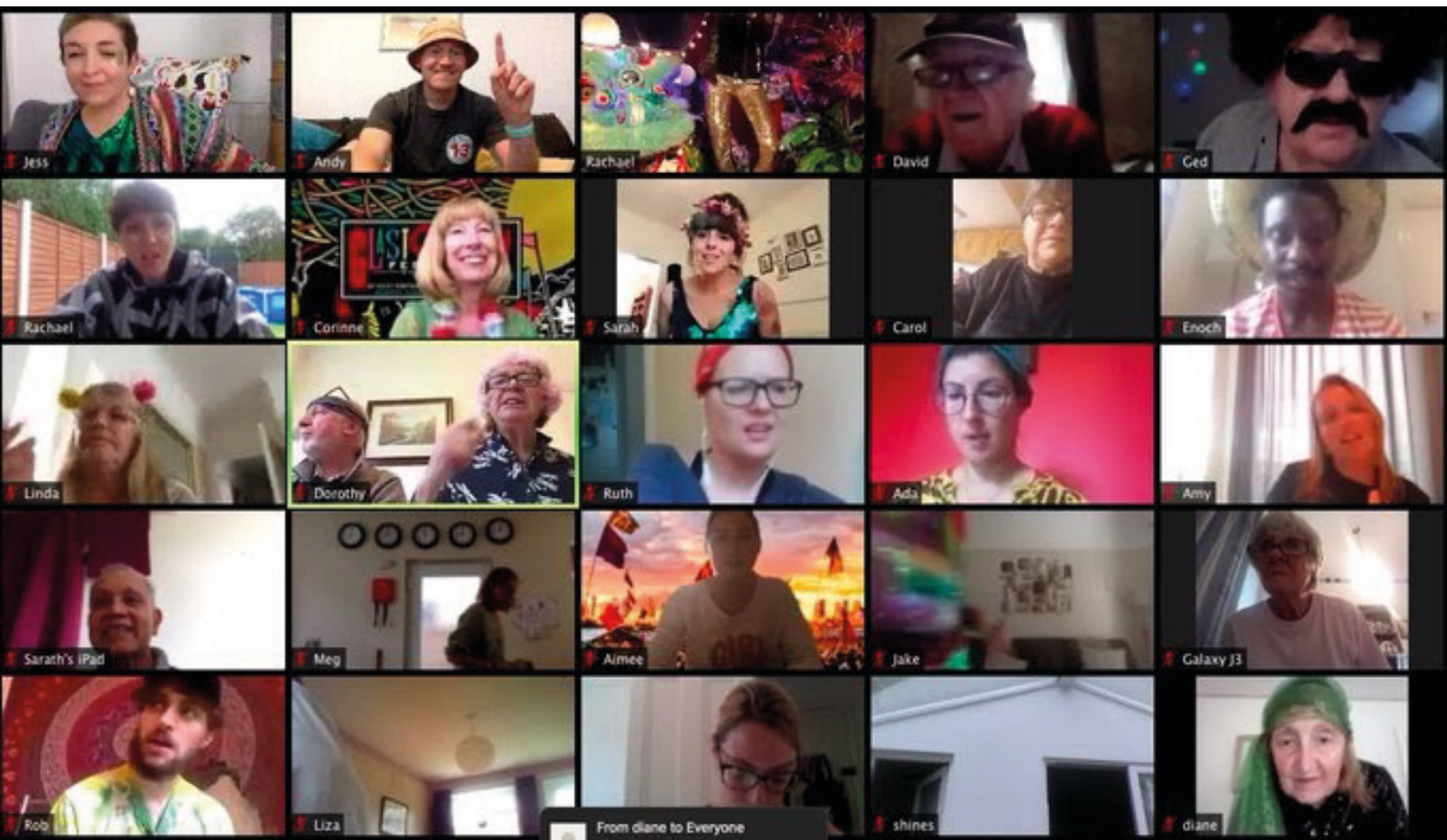


Social Clubs

In regular times, our social clubs are group activities bringing older and younger neighbours together to share time, laughter and new experiences. Sessions include our much-loved dance parties, new technology workshops, choirs, Desert Island Discs nights and so much more.

In 2020, these transformed into Virtual Social Clubs – online discos, quizzes, group yoga sessions, history groups, discussion groups and more.

Because we knew that only about 40% of the older people we work with have smartphones or WiFi at home we also developed ways for people to dial into these clubs from their landlines too; and we ran 'Cosy Clubs' – small dial-in activities for people to discuss their difficulties and to seek out solidarity and solace during the pandemic.



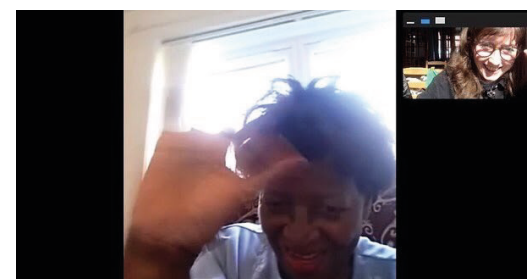
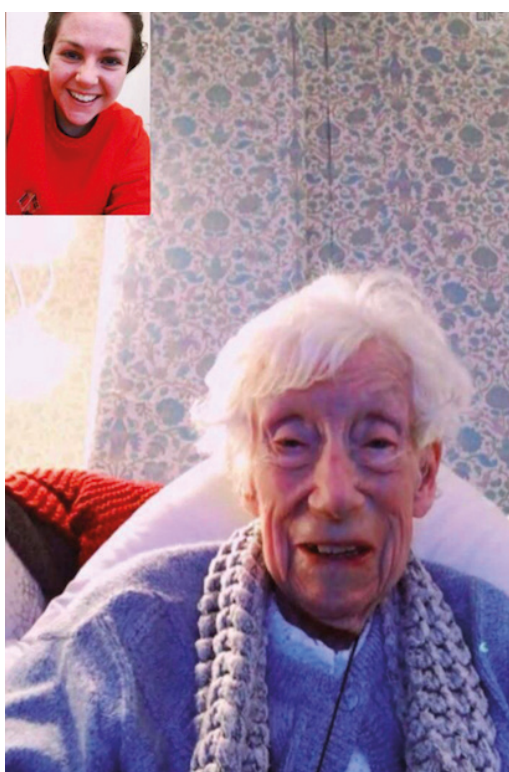
Love Your Neighbour

In regular times, Love Your Neighbour brings together older and younger people to share time and friendship one-to-one, often in people's homes. Friends share meals, games, company and companionship, bringing a little of the outside world in for people who can struggle to get out.

In 2020, these relationships mostly moved onto the phones. Long-standing friends like Lauren and

Florence called one another regularly, including on FaceTime – and occasionally made doorstep visits when it was safe to do so.

During the pandemic, we also adapted Love Your Neighbour to include a special Phone a Friend project, supporting new friendships between younger and older neighbours on the phone.



Outreach

In regular times, Outreach is how we identify and invite older and younger neighbours to be part of the community. We go to where people are, through door-knocking on local estates, stalls at supermarkets, chemists and GP surgeries, and events at faith groups and community centres. We exchange referrals with our partners across our neighbourhoods. And in winter, we ran annual Winter Wellbeing projects to help thousands of older neighbours to stay warm, active and connected during the most isolating time of year.

Our re-invented Outreach in 2020 still focused on those key connections to the local community to help older neighbours get what they needed – but also included weekly check-in calls from our staff to neighbours most likely to be isolated by the lockdowns, and deliveries of food and medical supplies where those were most needed.



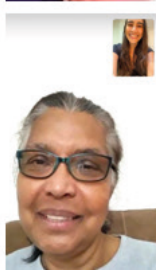
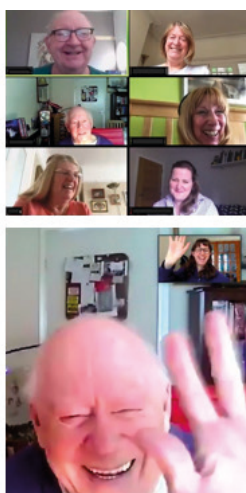
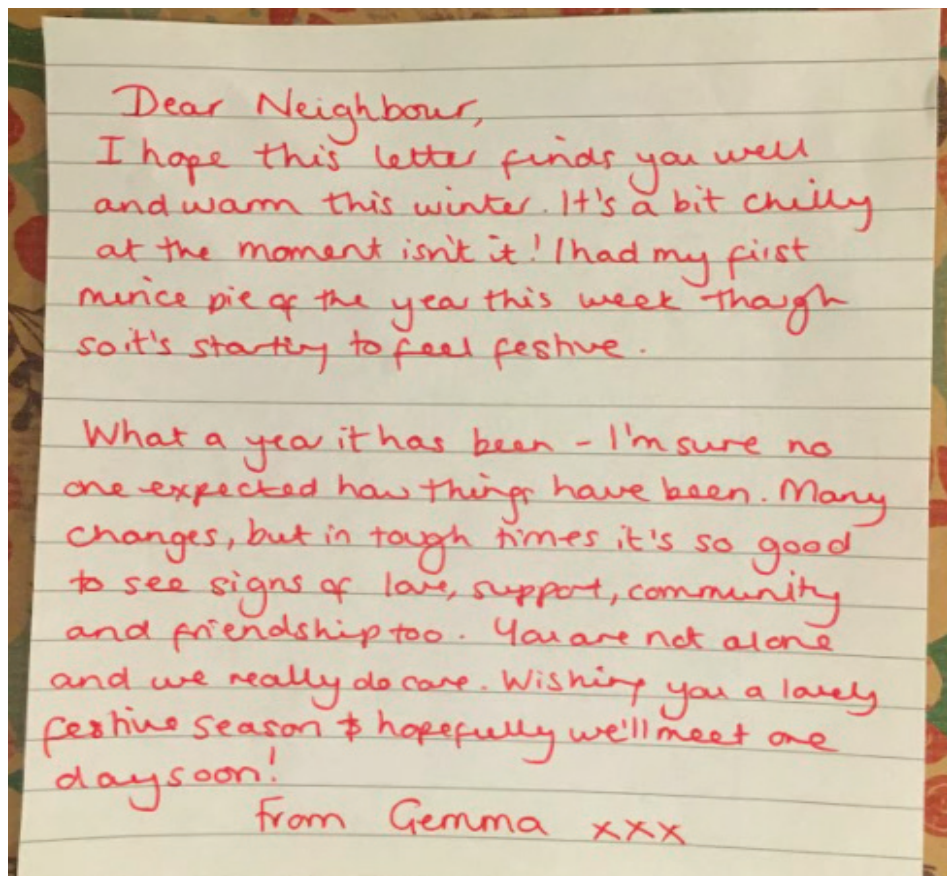
Alone Together

All this reinvented work was facilitated by our brand new #AloneTogether activities which harnessed old and new technologies to help neighbours stay connected in a disconnecting time.

Every month, we invited younger and older neighbours to share poems, games, jokes, recipes, quizzes and

creative arts projects via email and by post – to offer a little reflection, distraction and connection.

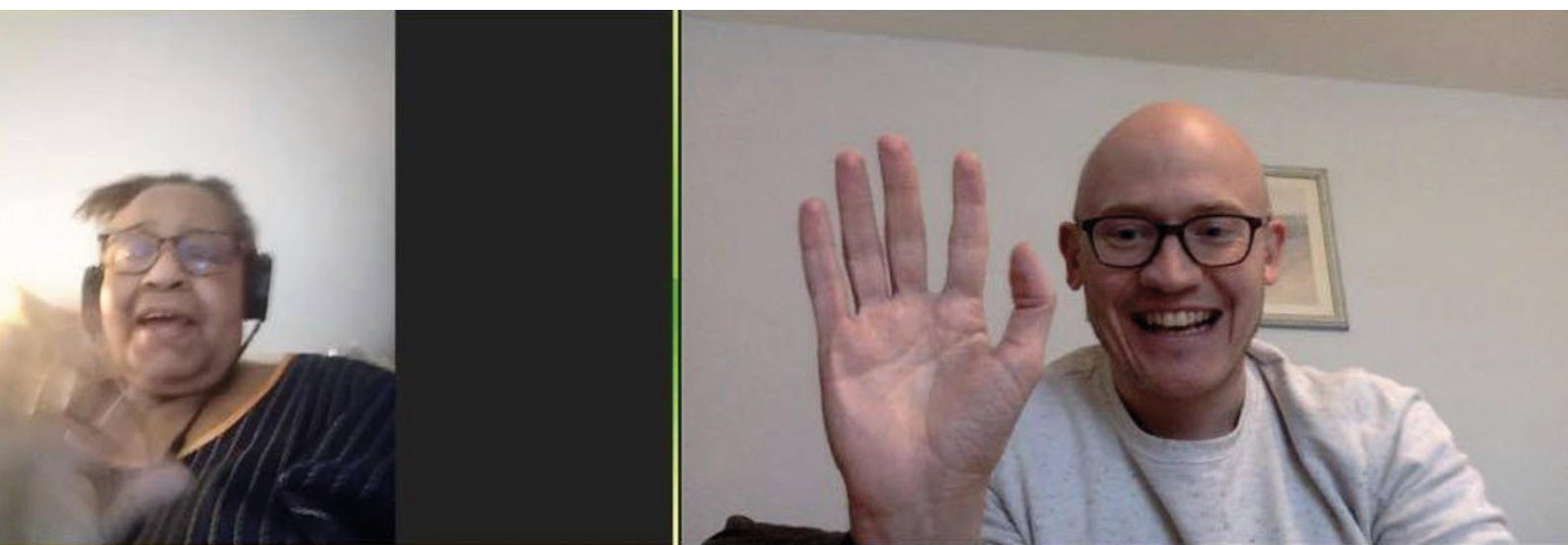
The themes were then discussed at special #AloneTogether virtual social clubs.



What The Tech?

Digital inequalities existed before the pandemic: in 2019, 11.9 million people in the UK lacked the digital skills for everyday life and 52% of those people were aged over 60. But the rapid changes in how we connected with our communities in 2020 left millions of people more disconnected than ever. In March 2020, The Cares Family estimated that 60% of the older people we worked with had no online access.

That's why we turned to our community to help our neighbours bridge the digital divide through our What The Tech? initiative. In the first seven months of the pandemic, we mobilised 85 volunteers from Bank of America, Marsh, Goldman Sachs and Coutts to spend 128 hours giving one-to-one support to 78 neighbours – helping people like Mei, 69 to use Zoom, join our Virtual Social Clubs and better navigate the changing world.



3G Social Clubs

Over nine years, The Cares Family has learned so much about the power of intergenerational relationships, particularly in times of challenge and change. That's why, in 2020, we launched our brand new project – '3G Social Clubs'.

The 3G clubs built on The Cares Family's work to bring together older people, new parents (some of whom were home-schooling) and their very young children. Together, they enjoyed singalongs, puppet shows, dances and book parties.



Face-to-face Connection

In summer 2020, as the pandemic momentarily receded, The Cares Family trialled small face-to-face social clubs again – in groups of six, outdoors, at a social distance, and with facemasks providing an extra blanket of security for older and younger neighbours who attended.

The clubs were targeted in particular at neighbours who hadn't been able to join our remote activities, and to some who hadn't been out of doors at all for months.

Older neighbour Pat said:

"I really needed this. I felt absolutely awful this morning and have done for a while. Things are very depressing at the moment. Just being outside and being able to speak to someone else today has lifted my mood completely."



Community Fundraising

Our community came out in force to support their neighbours in 2020, proving that powerful things happen when people come together for a common cause.

Over 1,000 younger and older people donated to our March emergency crowdfunding appeal, and while planned events in spring 2020 were cancelled, our community devised new ways to support their neighbours – with a Remote Relay challenge raising £13,000 and our Big Give online campaign raising another £54,000.

Their support meant that we could deliver our Covid-19 response programmes over the rest of the year. We're proud that in a year where events and challenges were cancelled, our community came up with new and innovative ways to continue to support us.



7. MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES

Crises have a tendency to reveal things that we long knew were there, but which we'd been too timid to do anything about. In 2020, what was revealed was the depth and breadth of our individual, collective and national loneliness, and the insidiousness of the broader social, economic and discriminatory disconnections that underpin it.

In the pandemic age, we all know what it is to feel isolated.

But while we're all in this together, some of us are in it more than others. That's why, as The Cares Family expands its mission to tackle the systemic and cultural drivers of loneliness as well as its consequences, we are proud of the broader work we have done to help tackle disconnection. In 2020, that work included:

- **Committing to anti-racist action** including through staff and trustee training and mentoring, and improving our inclusion policies and practices – to ensure our programmes are welcoming and safe for everyone in our communities and that we tackle racism where it occurs.
- **Furloughing no staff and increasing our 2020 capacity** by 10% to ensure we met the crisis of disconnection during the pandemic.
- **Providing working from home payments to staff** so they could continue to work comfortably at home.
- **Honouring all bookings** with charity partners and freelancers as we suspended face-to-face programmes in March.
- The development of an **Environmental Policy** and **Good Fundraising Policy** – to ensure we live our values in operations and fundraising.
- **Working in ever-closer partnership with other charities** and refusing to hoard reserves to the potential detriment of other organisations.
- **Focusing on operational excellence** through regular programme reviews to ensure our work was targeted where it is most needed.
- **Sharing our learning** of adapting to the pandemic with the wider charity sector.

8. THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

In 2020 more than ever, The Cares Family felt it was important to highlight the individual and collective impact of loneliness – and to help promote a wider narrative of community, connection and cohesion across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides through our national and international thought leadership.

Here are some of the media outlets in which The Cares Family gained coverage in 2020:



We were also grateful to receive Tweets of support from Barack Obama, Chelsea Clinton, Leader of the Opposition Keir Starmer, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Shadow Secretary of State for Justice David Lammy, and Danny Kruger MP whose report 'Levelling Up Our Communities', commissioned by the Prime Minister, featured our proposal for a Neighbour Day Bank Holiday to help sustain the spirit of community and togetherness which rose in the first half of 2020.

9. OUR SUPPORTERS

The Cares Family communities are supported by many wonderful trusts, foundations, corporate partners, local businesses and individuals whose commitment and investment make our work possible. We are so grateful for their commitment to reducing loneliness, and their belief in the power of better connected communities.

Those national partners include Nesta, The National Lottery Community Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The Tudor Trust, The Mercers Company, Garfield Weston Foundation, Scheinberg Relief Fund, Generation Foundation, Bank of America Meryll Lynch, Pernod Ricard UK, Goldman Sachs, Prudential, Marsh and CVC.

We are also grateful to the hundreds of wonderful businesses in London, Liverpool and Manchester who donate their time, products, skills and love to help The Cares Family to raise money and to deliver our programmes in ways that include the heritage of local people and places that matter most. All those supporters are part of the community, and benefit in return from that connection.



"EQ Foundation is proud to support The Cares Family because it is doing such a brilliant job at bridging the generational divide." **John, EQ Foundation**

"I'm inspired to take on the Santa Run for South London Cares after seeing first-hand the incredible work the charity does to tackle loneliness and isolation, something that's needed this year more than ever. Meeting my wonderful friend Delcene has been a real highlight." **Challenge fundraiser**

"This is by far the best charity I have ever donated my time to. This is simply because you can evidently see how much impact the charity has on a daily basis. People are what matters and The Cares Family get that. Older and younger neighbours all over the country are connected. There is nothing more important, especially in this current climate of isolation and loneliness. I am proud to be a part of it." **Maria Patsalos, Development Board**

"Supporting our older neighbours to get started on Zoom, so that they can continue to connect with others and join virtual social activities, is incredibly important, especially during these disconnected times. Volunteering with The Cares Family to help bridge the digital gap was a great experience. The older neighbour I spoke to was an absolute delight, we had a wonderful connection and laughed a lot, a good dose of caring medicine for us both during this period." **Andrea Sullivan, Bank of America Meryll Lynch**

10. OUR FINANCES

The Cares Family is made up of six independently registered charities, all run by the same board of seven trustees. The published annual accounts of each of The Cares Family charities can be found on the Companies House and Charity Commission websites. A summary of our income and expenditure figures for 2019/20 is below:

- **North London Cares**
 - Income £463,714
 - Expenditure £462,287
 - Reserves £149,721 (£104,242 restricted, £45,479 unrestricted)
- **South London Cares**
 - Income £426,316
 - Expenditure £422,251
 - Reserves £169,784 (£118,078 restricted, £51,706 unrestricted)
- **Manchester Cares**
 - Income £267,372
 - Expenditure £243,634
 - Reserves £39,576 (£28,894 restricted, £10,682 unrestricted)
- **Liverpool Cares**
 - Income £199,311
 - Expenditure £188,245
 - Reserves £19,173 (£16,162 restricted, £3,011 unrestricted)
- **East London Cares**
 - Income £179,920
 - Expenditure £151,347
 - Reserves £28,573 (restricted £26,614, unrestricted £1,959)
- **The Cares Family (parent charity)**
 - Income £330,353
 - Expenditure £283,901
 - Reserves £114,290 (restricted £79,173, £35,117 unrestricted)
- **Group totals**
 - Income £1,866,986
 - Expenditure £1,751,665
 - Reserves £521,117 (restricted £373,163, unrestricted £147,954)

11. OUR BOARD AND SENIOR TEAM

Board

Ben Wilson is the Acting Chair of The Cares Family. Ben's career has focussed on banking and industry, including for Nomura International, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Noble Group and Liberty House Group. Ben has been a Trustee of The Cares Family since 2014 and led the strategic development of financial management before becoming Acting Chair.

Seema Kennedy is a former MP for South Ribble, Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care and co-chair of the Jo Cox Loneliness Commission which led on the creation of the UK's first government-level loneliness strategy. Before entering Parliament, Seema was a lawyer. She was awarded an OBE in 2019.

Nas Morley is an accomplished senior leader with experience across fundraising, partnership management and communications. She has served as Director of Partnerships and Influence at UnLtd, Director of Fundraising and Communications at Microloan Foundation, and as Assistant Director of Fundraising at Breast Cancer Now.

Polly Balsom is Head of Communications and Marketing at Royal Trinity Hospice where she leads on messaging and campaign delivery. She was previously responsible for communications and partnership campaigns at Missing People, and helped to establish HIV support charity Body & Soul's social enterprise 'Brave'.

Vix Anderton is a former Royal Air Force Officer who spent three years working in international development, and is now leading a portfolio career working to improve the lives of women and girls, with a focus on wellbeing.

James Lee has had a long career in local government, where his responsibilities now include leading on safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation at Lewisham Council. He has been a Trustee at The Cares Family since 2013.

David Hayman is Campaign Director at Make My Money Matter, helping people to invest in more environmentally sustainable ways. He was formerly a Special Adviser to the Executive Director at the ONE Campaign, having worked on strategy for Ark, at Educate Girls and The Prince's Trust.

We're indebted to the leadership of **David Easton**, who stepped down as a Trustee of The Cares Family after seven years in autumn 2020.

Executive leadership team

Alex Smith is Founder and CEO of The Cares Family. In 2018, Alex was appointed one of 20 inaugural Obama Foundation Fellows, selected from 21,000 applicants from around the world, and in 2019 he became an Encore Public Voices Fellow in recognition of his work on generational unity. Alex was formerly an adviser to Ed Miliband when he was Leader of the Labour Party.

Jane East is Managing Director of The Cares Family, having joined in 2020. She was formerly at Christian Aid and Amnesty International and practised as a family social worker. Jane leads our policy, processes, systems and culture and also manages our teams across the UK.

Charlie Jamieson is Director of Programmes and ensures quality and sustainability across The Cares Family's five local charities. She has been with The Cares Family since 2015, first leading social clubs and then managing corporate partnerships.

Rosa Friend is Director of Projects, leading on new initiatives that bring people together across the UK. She has been at The Cares Family for five years, previously as Head of Programmes at East London Cares, Manchester Cares, Liverpool Cares and South London Cares.

Ellenor Baron is Acting Director of Development and drives partnerships, individual donations and fundraising strategy at The Cares Family. Ellenor previously worked as Head of Major Gifts at The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women.

Jo Heldreich is Director of Finance at The Cares Family, leading on financial planning and management with her team at Beehive Accountants.

We're grateful for the leadership of **Emily Quilter**, who stepped down as Director of Development in winter 2020 after nearly six years with The Cares Family.



12. LOOKING AHEAD

While we are at a moment of crisis in the nation and the world, we are also at a moment of opportunity for The Cares Family to make a lasting difference on the issues that have always mattered to us. Research shows that more people feel empathy for those experiencing loneliness than before the pandemic – and that they believe local action can make a difference.

That's why we have developed a **new vision for change, starting in 2021**. The vision is of communities that are more neighbourly, better connected, and where people know one another. It's a vision where neighbours can feel part of something bigger than their own lives through new and deeper connections; in which people learn, work and play together; and in which those local relationships coalesce into a **groundswell of culture change and then systems change** – with institutions enabling, rather than oppressing, connection and community in local places.

Our **Action, Voice, Power** strategy will enable us to harness our learning and networks to make that bigger difference, enabling The Cares Family to operate at the intersection between bottom-up community power and top-down systems power over five years:

- **ACTION:** we will build capacity in the nascent loneliness sector by supporting 50 new initiatives tackling disconnection through The Multiplier – our programme to share our learning with people building bridges in their own communities in their own ways.
- **VOICE:** we will shift narratives and stereotypes which pervade into the national consciousness about the value of younger people, older people and other groups most susceptible to loneliness by raising up real stories that motivate people to change their behaviours and connect where they are.
- **POWER:** we will work with partners on public campaigns to influence national government, local authorities, politicians, businesses and philanthropy to secure policy change and shifts in working practices, to reduce loneliness at work, in education and in broader society.



13. A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

2020 was the most unpredictable and troubled year in living memory. Society fundamentally changed in ways bringing with it health, economic and major social challenges.

The UK lost tens of thousands of beloved older people, and intergenerational separation widened, as the pandemic tore through communities. Meanwhile, the charitable sector ended the year in crisis, with many organisations scaling back or shutting entirely.

As the pandemic surged, and the population at large finally woke up to the extent and dangers of our national loneliness crisis, The Cares Family Board of Trustees made a choice. We were prepared to spend down on our reserves, carefully built up over the past nine years, in order to make the biggest difference we possibly could in a moment of national tumult in which we knew our issues would come to the fore.

I would like to place on record my pride at how our teams, and our communities of older and younger neighbours, responded to these multiple crises. Throughout a traumatic year, working together, they ceased, re-designed and restarted core programmes. They raised the necessary funds to enable us to make the biggest difference we possibly could. They did so while coping with extraordinary personal and professional challenges.

The Cares Family has always been an ambitious organisation but the last year has shown that we are also resilient, able to adapt to volatility and challenges which are unlike anything that any of us have seen before – or hopefully will ever again.

We began the year with plans for growth in long-established programmes, stabilisation of our newer charities and further developments of our consolidation, growth and sustainability strategies. In March, those plans got thrown out of the window; The Cares Family has been on a journey of perpetual adaptation ever since.

Looking forward, it is hard to talk with a degree of confidence about almost any aspects of 2021. But what we can be sure of is that the issues relating to isolation, loneliness and broader disconnection will never have been more relevant than they will be as we emerge from a period of enforced human segregation, and that our teams will be there working hard with the care and compassion they always have to play a significant role in meeting these challenges.

BEN WILSON

ACTING CHAIR, THE CARES FAMILY

14. BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY IN 2021

The Cares Family is at a real moment of potential. As the UK's loneliness crisis deepens with the pandemic, so does our passion to tackle disconnection in a connected age by bringing neighbours together to share time, company and conversation.

There is still so much more to do and we invite you to join our growing network of like-minded and passionate individuals, businesses and partners who share in our vision to build a more connected society.

Our work is powered by people and you can join the movement today. By supporting our work across London, Manchester and Liverpool, you will play a vital role in allowing us to deepen and broaden our impact.

- **To take on a fundraising challenge**, make The Cares Family your charity of the year, set up a regular donation or leave a gift in your will, please contact Ellenor Baron at ellenor.baron@thecaresfamily.org.uk
- **To offer your skills** to help support The Cares Family professionally, please contact Jane East at jane.east@thecaresfamily.org.uk
- **To connect with older and younger neighbours** in London, Manchester or Liverpool, please contact Charlie Jamieson at charlie.jamison@thecaresfamily.org.uk





THE **CARES** FAMILY

www.thecaresfamily.org.uk

The Cares Family is a UK registered company (10236615) and
registered charity (no. 1180638)