

Well Together Service

Newsletter

AUTUMN 2025



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Welcome

Hello, and a very warm welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter.

The nights are drawing in fast, the days are turning a little cooler and the leaves on the trees are starting to turn wonderful shades of orange, brown and red.. Autumn is most certainly here. What a wonderful time it is to join one of our Well Together walking groups and take in all the amazing sights, sounds and smells of Autumn. We have 26 walks across the Bradford District led by our amazing volunteer walk leaders that can help you to feel healthier, meet new friends or help with your recovery journey.

In July, Well Together were delighted to be part of the Bradford 2025 City of Culture Walk at Hewenden viaduct in Cullingworth. Our wonderful Wilsden walkers group carried the baton, during their walk, and passed it across to Bingley Women's institute group, on the viaduct. This was a special walk that brought communities together from 30 wards of the Bradford District and was organised by Bradford Council. Huge thanks go out to all the volunteers and walkers who were involved.

In other news, Well Together is continuing to flourish and grow, with new volunteers and groups adding to our list of walks and activities, which includes Forest bathing, an early morning walking group and a drumming group which supports mental health. We have lots of exciting new projects in the pipeline, so watch this space 😊

Take care
Sarah Wimpenny

You're A Star Awards 2025

We were so pleased that two of our fantastic volunteers were finalists in Bradford District Care Trust's You're A Star awards this year! These awards celebrate the excellent work of individual staff members and volunteers in the Trust. Our finalists were Helen Brackenbury, Relaxations Leader who has also led a peer support group for people with fibromyalgia; and Sue Stewart, Singing Group Leader for the Sing for Joy group. The third, also very deserving finalist, was Jacqueline Campbell, who leads singing sessions at Bracken Ward, Airedale Centre for Mental Health, with the Volunteer Service.

The awards ceremony took place in the glamorous Midland Hotel where we were treated to a welcome drink and canapes! It was nice to chat to other finalists and to have a chance to dress up, there was an atmosphere of excitement and the possibility of winning some excellent prizes too as Better Lives charity were there selling raffle tickets.

Compere 'Big Ian' (as he likes to be known) did a phenomenal job of building the tension and keeping everyone entertained as well as reinforcing how fundamental the work we do is, the lives we touch, from cradle to grave! It was a tense moment when the 'Service User, Care/Volunteer Contributions Award' category came up, we all held our breath!

We can now share that Sue Stewart, Singing Leader, won the award! We are so pleased for Sue! Sue is endlessly thoughtful of everyone's needs at the Sing for Joy Singing Group which she has run for the last seven years, she ensures the music books are accessible for people with visual impairments and marks milestone birthdays with cake, helping people to feel special and part of a community.

Sue said: "Thank you to Well Together for putting me in for this award, I have never really won much, in my life, So really it is quite special, to win this, thank you, as without you, we would not have our Sing For Joy "

Massive congratulations to Sue! We are so proud of what you do and the amazing difference you make to the people who attend the Sing for Joy group, thank you!



Sue Boerrigter

Reminiscence Writing



July saw the end of an era; Sue retired from running the Reminiscence Writing Group. We were sad to say goodbye to Sue after just shy of fifteen years of her volunteering with, initially Seniors Show the Way, then Champions Show the Way, and recently the Well Together Service. Sue was one of our longest serving volunteers and has been running the Reminiscence Writing Group in Ilkley since the early days of our service.

By leading a group as a volunteer in something she was passionate about, Sue was instrumental in helping to evolve Seniors Show the Way into the service we know today. There have been many changes to the service since she first volunteered, starting as Seniors Show the Way in 2008, funded by the Big Lottery. Since 2011 it has been funded by the NHS and has gone through two more name changes, Champions Show the Way, and Well Together since 2021.

The year 2020 will live long in most people's memory, the lockdowns meant that all face-to-face community groups were suspended. This included Reminiscence Writing, and although a virtual group was considered it was decided that this would not be suitable for those current members, however Sue's commitment was unwavering.

As soon as the situation allowed Sue restarted the Reminiscence Writing Group and returned to the original venue at the Clarke Foley Centre in Ilkley. Since then, she has been running the group every week, with only an occasional break for holidays. Reminiscences and writing about them can be very therapeutic and capture important memories for posterity, so the many participants who have benefitted from attending Sue's group, and all our team at the Well Together Service, are very grateful for the volunteering that Sue has been involved with over many years, and we wish her all the best for the future.

Feel Good Group



Our face-to-face Feelgood group have been busy creative bees. This is just a snippet of what they have been making in the last 3 months



The Feelgood Group every Thursday at 10.30am -12.30pm, Bingley Methodist Church.

If you are interested in attending, please call or email Well Together and we will place you on the waiting list.



City Of Culture Baton of Hope walk

I was surprised and honored to be given the Baton to hand over on the City of Culture Hewendon Viaduct walk, but I got a bit flustered as couldn't remember what I was told to say! I look a mess in the photos too! I wish I'd taken the yellow T shirt I was offered but said "no I'm not with the Baton group" I've loved attending the walking groups with Wilsden /Cullingworth walkers, it must be about 20yrs! Unfortunately due to health issues I'm not able to walk with them at the moment, but hoping health will improve in the next few weeks. Thanks to all the Admin/ office people too.

Rae Harvey - walk leader wilsden walkers

Bingley Bereavement Support Group



Volunteers Linda Metcalfe, Mary Oxtoby, Dorothy Pearce and Carole Short were nominated for the Trust You're a Star award in the Service User, Carer and Volunteer Contribution category for their commitment, hard work and dedication.

Bingley bereavement group was set up 7 years ago by Margaret Thornber and Linda Metcalfe who had both lost loved ones, and found that there was limited support for people who were grieving and needed support sooner. They approached the Well Together Service and set up the Bingley Bereavement Group. This is an informal support group for anyone over 18 who has lost a loved one, to learn from others and create friendships.

The group provides a listening ear and a platform to talk openly in confidence, during the sessions. In their own time the Volunteers coordinate day trips, holidays and meals out for participants of the group and also check in with people who may have not joined the group for a week or two, offering support or simply a chat. Anyone who feels apprehensive about going to the group are often met and accompanied by the volunteers to ensure they feel safe and not alone.

They have helped others to realise that you can get through grief with friends who understand, and those who have been through it themselves.



Settle Cancer Support Group



My name is Molly.

When I was diagnosed with primary breast cancer in 2015 there was no designated support group that I can remember other than the Breast Cancer Nurses and the team at the hospital.

I got through surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy with the help of family and friends. Many do and will never need the help of a third party. When my cancer returned in 2020 in lockdown, we didn't have the luxury of seeking help other than online. Because my cancer was now secondary and had moved to my bones sharing my feelings with those closest to me felt like a burden and that's the last thing I wanted.

The internet and the various groups became my lifeline but to have actual face to face contact was something I often sought. When we were allowed, I used the services of Maggie's at St James in Leeds, but this can be a long journey, especially when treatment makes you fatigued. To find out last year that Settle was having its own Cancer Support group at The Place, supported by Bradford District care NHS

Foundation Trust's Well Together Service, seemed like a godsend. Since they were held on different days, I could attend both when I felt well but not feel as though I was missing out if I did only one.

But I needed to know was it suitable for me?

The definition of Secondary Cancer is that it has spread from the original site and moved to another part of the body. It is not curable. Treatment focuses on controlling the cancer and managing the symptoms. Could I manage being in a support group with people who had been given the all clear? Did other people want to be with me when I showed them the worst-case scenario- it could come back?

To start with it was a small group of people with varying types of cancer. I always say knowledge is a virtue and what we take from each other helps make the road much easier. Over a cuppa and biscuits, it's the time to join in or sit and listen, take what you want or give as much as you can. A relaxing hand massage? That's there as well, they have thought of everything and as the saying goes 'What happens in Settle stays in Settle'

The answer to my question is it suitable for me? A resounding yes, having something in the area fully funded should be supported

Where? The Place, Commercial Courtyard Settle BD24 9RH (Opposite the Ruchee Restaurant - Nr Ashfield Car Park When? The 4th Monday of the month except for Bank Holiday's. Time? 10.30am to 11.45am

The group is fully funded by Bradford District NHS Foundation Trust's Well Together Service and, therefore, free for anyone to attend.

A Brand new gentle Walking Group for Women

Walk Leader Shahina Patel has started a brand new walking group for women. Round the Block welcomes women from the Wibsey community and beyond to kickstart their week by getting in some exercise and wellbeing at the start of their day, it has an early start of 8.15am and we hope it will appeal to early risers and to people who work from home and are looking to get more active. Mums with children in pushchairs or a baby in a sling are also welcome. The pace is relaxed and the direction of travel is towards beautiful Harold Park, Low Moor. As Shahina says “a lot of residents know about Wibsey Park, but they might not venture to Harold Park, so this gives them an opportunity to do something different.” The walk lasts up to 40 minutes.

The walk takes place every other Monday at 8.15am outside St Winefride's church, (next to St Paul's C of E Primary School) 54 St Paul's Avenue Wibsey BD6 1ST October dates are: 6th and 20th October.



Creativity In The Aire

All year Bradford 2025 has set a different drawing theme each month, encouraging people to get creative. Every theme has been suggested by an artist or celebrity with local links. And the Creativity In The Aire group has taken up the challenge, using the ideas at one of our weekly sessions each month.

We've enjoyed experimenting with the variety of themes, interpreting them as we like, with chat and laughter along the way! Among our favourites have been “draw your favourite thing” (set by digital artist Jason Wilsher-Mills) “get inspired by the view from a window” (suggested by illustrator Rose Blake) and “draw a typical Sunday morning” (set by none other than the comedy legend Harry Hill).

Even themes I, for one, would usually avoid, such as landscape, proved fun in the end. Why not have a look at the ideas on the Bradford 2025 site – <https://bradford2025.co.uk/programme/draw> and have a go yourself. Or even better, come along to the **Creativity In The Aire group on Wednesday afternoons (1.30-3) on Microsoft Teams** – you won't even have to leave your house! We'll be experimenting with more Bradford 2025 themes on 15 October, 12 November and 10 December (or join us any week for other creative ideas). Get in touch with the Well Together office for the link!



Cable Cars and Kingfishers on this Riverside Walk

I was lucky to join the Addingham Walkers on a beautiful day in July, led by Walk Leaders Brenda Jones, Marina Davies and Stephanie Morris.

The Walk Leaders took us on a lovely route via the duck pond to join the River Wharfe at High Mill, on the Dales Way.

As a first timer to Addingham I was impressed by how leafy it was and how well kept the houses and gardens are.

I was treated to local history, especially regarding local mills, with aspects of mill history incorporated into housing developments, preserving the industrial heritage of the area.

It was a very pretty route with spectacular views of the river. We even got a taste of 'Switzerland' as the walk took us into an area of chalets (used as holiday lets) complete with mock up cable cars! The cable cars doubled as novel seating for the popular café there. They looked out on to a stunning riverside view to which the squirrel sculpture, in the photo, resides.

I was in good company, with lots of good banter, there's a reason why one of the group members has affectionately called the group 'the walkie talkies!'

As luck would have it, on the day I visited, not one but two kingfishers were spotted flying downstream by some of the Walkers!

After the walk several walkers went to the 'Hub', which is located on the upper floor of the Community Library, on the main street, for free refreshments!

This is a lovely, welcoming group, meeting at 10am on a Tuesday morning, from Addingham War Memorial, come along and try it!

Sarah Name!



Thank you so much to Brenda Jones who has recently stepped down after leading this successful walk for the past 2 years.

The walk is now set to relaunch as Addingham Riverside Walking Group, the meeting details remain the same. We are looking for an additional volunteer to join experienced Walk Leaders Marina and Stephanie, full training will be given. Please let us know if you are interested.

National Turner Prize Preview for our volunteers!



We were very excited to be offered some preview tickets for the National Turner prize, taking place at Cartwright Hall, Lister Park, as part of Bradford UK City of Culture 2025!!

Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Bayles, and a group of volunteers were able to experience this ahead of the tickets being released to the general public.

It is one of the world's best known and most prestigious prizes for the visual arts and it is the first ever time that a venue in West Yorkshire has hosted it!! Some of our volunteers had not been to Cartwright Hall before and were suitably impressed. The venue is a perfect fit for it and the artists' work so interesting, thought-provoking and inspiring!



The winner of the Turner prize will be announced on 9th December. The exhibition runs until 22nd February 2026 and is free to attend – but you must book your free tickets in advance.



Volunteers Needed

We are always on the look out for people to become Volunteers with the Well Together Service. Whether you can give an hour a week, every fortnight or every month, your time, knowledge and enthusiasm would be greatly appreciated to help others within your community. Whether you have a skill that you would like to share, or lived experience of a long term health condition that you would like to offer support and a chance to chat and share tips with others, we can help to create a group that is suitable for you. We also offer bespoke walk leader training for those who prefer the outdoors and may like to lead a Well Together health walk for other walkers in the Community. These can range from short health walks, to a longer walk which can take between 1- 2 hours.

We offer mileage expenses to and from your group, and reimburse any refreshments provided. You will also get great support from the Well Together team from starting and setting up your group, to regular supervisions and celebration events for Volunteers.

Volunteers can make a big difference to people's lives

For more information, please contact Well Together on 01274 259190, or email at welltogether@bdct.nhs.uk

September Sunset

September's equinox brings the summers end.
For the squirrel nut collecting. little time left to spend.
The changing tree colours fill the woodland glade.
Fruits are a plenty, under falling leaves they shade.

The great stags' antlers silhouette; under the setting sun.
Alone his rutting done, he's casting velvet braids for anyone.
His fine antlers will only last till the new year draws near.
Though the autumn they warn all, do not come to near.

Fox cubs fend now alone, though they are not fully grown.
Autumn, tuff times ahead, after leaving mothers warm bed.
Lying hidden in the autumn leaves, they are hard to see.
As the barn owl silently passes, by the old oak tree.

Badgers' family come out to play, soon ends a summers day.,
They have turned the old fox den, it into a new winter set.
Theres still time left to forage, autumns fine bounty yet.
Autumn is a sight to behold, then will cometh in winters cold,

By Roland Powell
Autumn 2025

