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# Meet Up Family Newsletter

November 2020



## Hello from Meet Up....

Welcome to the first newsletter from all the staff at Meet Up. We hope you are keeping safe and well. The past six months have been extremely difficult for us all but we hope the work of Meet Up has given you some comfort and reassurance in these trying times.

We are continuing to offer support and services to young people and families across Thetford in a Covid secure way. Read on for more information and, as ever if you have any comments or feedback, please get in touch on 01842 820871, [mike.towndrow@benjaminfoundation.co.uk](mailto:mike.towndrow@benjaminfoundation.co.uk) or contact us Via facebook messenger @tbftthetfordmeetup

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## Social Outreach

Since lockdown in March we have had to adapt the services we provide and the way they are delivered. Initially, staff were furloughed and the centre closed until we received guidelines and could work out a safe way to provide support for our members within the community

During this challenging time, we wanted Meet Up members to feel connected and that they had not been forgotten, so Becky and Sofi organised socially distanced doorstep welfare checks and created Meet Up's Bags of Love for young people, families and the older members of Meet Up. Over a 100 bags were given out.



## Social Outreach, cont...

While visiting members and chatting it became clear that the senior members of the centre were struggling with social isolation and loneliness and they really were missing the weekly lunch club that they were used to attending at the centre. As it was unsafe to bring them together in the centre we adapted the meal so it could be delivered individually to them at their homes.

This has been a great success with the meals enjoyed and appreciated by all who have received them.

To date we have delivered 211 meals and have begun to work with 'It's Good Ere' a local catering business that have provided some scrummy desserts that are enjoyed as a part of our meals.



**211**  
**meals**  
**delivered**

## Youth Club



In July, we began the process of making Meet Up Covid secure so that we could welcome young people back in to the centre within the new government guidelines. A programme was created for delivery during the summer and once we had welcomed Hannah back from maternity leave in September all staff were back at the centre.

The Youth Club sessions were of a totally different nature from anything we had previously delivered. All activities had to be of a sedentary nature and booked in advance something the young people and parents were not used to at Meet Up, it having been such a vibrant and open access venue.

Although the change in delivery didn't suit everyone, we did however work with 35 young people and families over the summer in 18 sessions covering subjects such as mental health and wellbeing, fear and anxieties, resilience using arts and crafts and discussion to express their feelings and emotions.

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## Ongoing and Future Delivery

Since the beginning of September we have run weekly youth club sessions for individual year groups from 4 through to 8. These sessions have seen smaller numbers of young people attending but this has allowed us to really get to know the young people and work with them individually.

Presently we are working with 22 young people a week in our youth sessions and we have also continued our outreach work delivering hot meals every Thursday to our senior members plus regular visits and telephone calls to those feeling socially isolated and in need of additional support.

We have also continued to offer a counselling service for those requiring mental health support.

As we head towards Christmas we would normally be organising large community parties to celebrate these events. Sadly due to the restrictions regarding large groups and gatherings we have had to rethink ways to celebrate safely with our members.

With that in mind we re-designed the successful 'Bags of Love' from the summer into Halloween 'Bags of Fright' which we delivered to our members over half term.

It is anticipated that despite the second lockdown Meet Up will continue with our community outreach and meals provision.

We also hope to be able to continue our groups for young people offering them wellbeing support during this challenging and uncertain time.

We are also looking at the possibility of holding a socially distanced pantomime in the centre if Covid restrictions allow. We feel it is important for the community to be able to celebrate this holiday after such a difficult year.

**Stay safe! From The Meet Up team, Mike, Elaine, Becky, Hannah and Sofi**

**STAY  
SAFE**



The **Benjamin** Foundation