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# Hello Neighbour boxes spread joy and connectivity across Sheffield

Challenging times call for kindness and creativity!

**Age Better in Sheffield have teamed up with a number of individuals and organisations to create a free box full of activities, information, and gifts for people aged 50 and over.**

The aim of the boxes is to bring joy and connection, help people stay well, and share information about the support available across Sheffield.

The boxes include postcards with Pete McKee's distinctive 'Perfect Day' image on, envelopes and stamps to send the postcards, Move More's booklet on keeping active at home, a page from Josephine Dellow's famous Sheffield Colouring Book, a booklet full of activities (including puzzles, jokes, and Warda Yassin's Sheffield poem), information on Age Better's befriending service, a summary of the support available through Voluntary Action Sheffield's Support Map, tips on mindfulness, a Yorkshire Tea bag, and information about Ignite Imaginations' creative packs which can also be sent to people at home.

1,500 of the boxes are already being distributed amongst Age Better's partner organisations such as Sheffield Mind, Age UK, Soar, Reach South Sheffield, Lai Yin Association, and South Yorkshire Housing Association, as well as other community organisations based in the programme's target wards.

There are still approximately 800 boxes ready to be gifted to those in the community who are aged 50 and over, living alone, or shielding. If that is you, Age Better in Sheffield would love to hear from you so they can arrange to have a box safely delivered to you. Please call 0114 2900 294 and ask to speak to a member of the Age Better in Sheffield team, or email [agebettersheff@syha.co.uk](mailto:agebettersheff@syha.co.uk) to request a box.

Cilli Cliff (61) a Programme Coordinator for Age Better in Sheffield, lives alone and like many

Gilli Gilli (OT), a Programme Coordinator for Age Better in Sheffield, lives alone and like many has struggled with the challenges this is bringing during the outbreak of Coronavirus. As a passionate creative writer and lover of Sheffield culture, Gilli has shared some writing inspiration in the box to encourage people to see how exploring your imagination can help you find connection at this time. You can join in online using #InMyMindsEye.

Hannah Thornton, Communications and Toolkit Office for Age Better in Sheffield said, *“These are really tough times for many people, and especially for those who live alone, are shielding, or who aren’t online. All of our work at Age Better in Sheffield focuses on growing and nurturing connections and communities to help reduce loneliness – this feels more important now than ever before, though of course has new challenges as all we maintain physical distancing.*

*Although everyone’s idea of joy is different we hope that at least some of the items in these boxes spark creativity, remind people of the wonderful city we live in, help connections thrive, and reassure people that we (and many other organisations) are here for them if they need us. We’d like to say another big thank you to all the wonderful people in Sheffield who have generously contributed their work for this – it has been a hugely collaborative effort and there’s a lot of love being sent in every box. A final thank you to The National Lottery Community Fund whose support has enabled us to create these boxes.”*

And Age Better in Sheffield’s sharing of joy doesn’t stop there! The team are also working with South Yorkshire Housing Association to create a special menu of activities for this year’s The Big Lunch. The Big Lunch is an annual event that encourages people to share lunch with their neighbours – across the UK, there are usually tea parties, street parties, and get-togethers of all shapes and sizes!

The Big Lunch is on hold this year, which will help to keep people safe by meeting social distancing requirements. However, Age Better in Sheffield are encouraging people to take their pick from a menu of lunch time activities. From volunteering, to sharing recipes, to sharing a lunch over a video call, the menu is full of ways people of all ages can be kind, neighbourly and connected.

Keep an eye on the Age Better in Sheffield and South Yorkshire Housing Association social media for more information.

## **ENDS**

For any media enquiries information or images please contact Hannah Thornton, Communications and Toolkit Officer, Age Better in Sheffield.

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## Age Better in Sheffield

Age Better in Sheffield was set up in 2015 with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund with a remit to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst people aged over 50 in Sheffield. In the 7th year of the programme, we are taking the learning, resources, partnerships and projects forward with a renewed focus and passion towards building an Age-friendly Sheffield.

## What we do

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