



BOLSTER COMMUNITY

Newsletter

100'S OF LOCAL PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY #EATHEATTHRIVE APPEAL

Thanks to the overwhelming support of our local community we have been able to help so many over the festive season. 1 in 4 children in Northern Ireland were already living in poverty but the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified the need to a level we have never witnessed before. A huge thanks to Ernie Campbell, The Church Restaurant Rostrevor, Mayobridge Christmas Appeal, Northstone Materials, Cooperative Housing, Norbrook, DFC, Community Advice NM&D, Deli-lites Ireland, BOI Crossmaglen and Newry, Iveagh Branch of the Pony Club and all those generous individuals and families who donated toys, vouchers, meals, food hampers and cash to our appeal.



Requests for help came from many different sources this year despite many people facing a bleak Christmas due to the impact of Covid 19 including Furlough, redundancy and unemployment. Thankfully, in partnership with a range of partner organisations including Newry Foodbank, Surestart and Advice Newry Mourne and Down, we were able to respond with meat parcels, food vouchers and toys.

We were busy right up to Christmas Day and appreciate the help provided by Delilites Ireland on Christmas Eve to ensure 10 local families and those in housing distress had a nutritious meal and presents to open on Christmas Day!



WHAT WE HAVE BEEN UPTO IN 2020

For the children, parents and seniors we support at Bolster Community, it has been a particularly difficult time. Families that were already just about holding it together have been put under even greater pressure and, because of the impact of Covid 19, more families are joining them. Referrals to our service have risen steadily since March 2020 and as I write this Christmas message, we are drawing up rotas and pathways to ensure that over Christmas and into the early New year, Bolster staff will still be able to provide support to the most vulnerable. We are extremely proud of what Bolster Community has achieved in terms of maintaining our everyday work and the absolute epic response to the COVID-19 Crisis. This would not have been possible without the help and support of The National Lottery Fund, the Department of Communities, The Southern Trust and a whole team of communities and individuals who came together to support those in need. During this year we faced many challenges and still managed to rebrand, relocate and restart our

social enterprise with renewed vigour. Since last Christmas Bolster Community has supported 1521 children, parents and seniors, without public donations. Losing income from the closure of our two shops between April and December, the fuel required for organisational efficiency was at times a little short in supply. That said and despite many setbacks, we have witnessed an increase in referrals of 70% and have already provided ten times the amount of food, electric and oil vouchers than the last two years of giving. The Bolster team have worked incredibly hard to rise to the challenges of this rapid increase in scale since and throughout the Pandemic. Staff board and volunteers pivoted regularly to ensure that the most vulnerable got the best support at the time of need and our regular beneficiaries were kept in the loop and connected throughout this difficult time. We simply could not have made such a difference without the help of our funders, the support of our local health Trust and the NIHE. The amazing generosity of local business, volunteers and donors has helped us support ordinary people facing extraordinary challenge. Our fundraising and eCommerce efforts along with the generosity and quick response of our supporters ensured that we would leave 2020 behind with a sense of achievement at having given everything we could to help people get through and get ahead!

YOUNG WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

In Spring 2021 Bolster Community will roll out our new Young Women's Program. The program was created to give every girl an opportunity to become more self-aware and recognise their own strengths and abilities, make better informed choices, learn the importance of effective communication and build resilience. As we know, young women face everyday pressures such as self-esteem issues, unhealthy friendships, peer pressure and often bullying. This results in the development of poor body image and low self-confidence which can take root at a young age and affect women throughout their lives. 70% of young women believe that the way they look may prevent them from becoming a leader. With this in mind, each unit in the Programme aims to build and restore self-confidence and support young women, so that they believe in themselves. Once girls have a clearer understanding about who they are, they are better equipped to navigate their own life journey. The Young Women's Programme will help

- Develop emotional intelligence and self-regulation techniques.
- Support girls to recognise their own identity and uniqueness.
- Have a greater insight to their own strengths and capability, through self-awareness
- Be aware of what a healthy friendship/relationship is.
- Develop healthy ways to communicate and explore what communication style they lean towards
- Develop decision making and problem-solving skills
- Build a framework for their own future, identifying goals, dreams.

The program is designed for year 8,9 & 10 students and can be run as an after school or evening program. The program is composed of 5 group sessions offering a variety of topical themes and exercises each week and ends with one overnight outdoor pursuit residential.

Contact Tracy on trainingdevelopment@bolstercommunity.org

Tracy



WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING AT BOLSTER COMMUNITY IN 2021?

FRIENDS RESILIENCE

	START DATE
• FUN FRIENDS - AGES 4-7	01/03/2021
• FRIENDS FOR LIFE - AGES 7-14	20/01/2021
• MY YOUTH FRIENDS - AGES 12-15	TBC
• ADULT RESILIENCE - AGE 16+	06/04/2021

PARENTING PROGRAMMES

	START DATE
• PARENTS PLUS ADOLESCENTS	18/01/2021
• INCREDIBLE YEARS	TBC
• PARENTING WORKSHOPS - TALK, LEARN DO	02/02/2021
MANAGING BEHAVIOURS	09/02/2021

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REGISTER
FOR ANY OF THE ABOVE
PROGRAMMES PLEASE CONTACT US
ON 028 3083 5764**

FAMILY

**The BEST
Club**



On-Line Afterschool activities for school age children with a disability and their siblings aged 4-16. Join us for a mix of virtual fun and games.






Every Monday and Thursday at 3.30PM

 Call Jena to register on 028 3083 5764

Youth Leadership Project

YOUTH UPFRONT...

Bolster Community is excited to launch a brand-new Youth Leadership Project in 2021. **Youth Upfront** is a Peace IV-funded project that will see children aged 13-15 across the entire area of Newry, Mourne & Down complete an innovative, cross-community programme between February and July.

Right now, we are seeking girls and boys from Year 10 & 11 to step up to the challenge and join us on this inspirational leadership scheme. We are seeking to recruit diverse, young people from different traditions, cultural backgrounds and opinions to actively engage and to build personal and collective strengths.

The project will consist of 4 workshops and interactive seminars with guest facilitators and experts and will culminate with a community-based event led by the participants themselves, with a focus on helping understand developmental leadership. We'll also go on awesome free residential weekend in Fermanagh where you can meet people from other districts, learn essential leadership skills and challenge yourself with plenty of team-building exercises.

Youth Upfront aims to enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive relationships with those of a different background, to reach their potential and make positive contributions to community development.

The programme will help build bright futures for those with the potential to be leaders in their community, providing them with a support structure to address personal and social challenges in their lives.

The programme will bring about change in the form of clear, meaningful and sustainable "distance travelled" for each participant, in terms of good relations, personal development and citizenship. Each participant will gain or enhance existing leadership skills to enable organisation of an event from start to finish, working together with people from different backgrounds and different areas.

The project will involve both online and in-person workshops (restrictions permitting) and will include themes such as:

- Exploring Leadership - Understanding Traits and Types
- Exploring Differences & Finding Common Ground
- Physical & Mental Wellness
- Exploring Relationships
- Resilience & Mental Toughness
- Building Confidence and Self Esteem.

If you are interested in developing your leadership skills or maybe exploring the leader inside you, why not register for **Youth Upfront** and ensure that your voice is heard in your community and beyond!

Contact Tom@bolstercommunity.org for all enquiries and book your place now!

Bolster Community will ensure that all Covid 19 public guidelines are adhered to in the implementation of this project



WHAT IS IT CALLED?

It's called Youth Upfront

WHAT IS IT?

It's a Youth Leadership Programme made up of 4 interactive workshops with experts and guest speakers, including a weekend residential stay in Fermanagh.

WHO DOES IT INVOLVE?

It involves anyone in year 10 or 11 - 13,14 or 15 yr olds

WHEN IS IT ON?

Youth Upfront Kicks off in February and will finish before July 2021

HOW MUCH OF MY TIME WILL IT TAKE UP?

It won't take up much time - Maybe only 1-2 Hrs a week!

WHAT IS THE CATCH, WHAT'S THE COST?

No Catch and no Cost - Absolutely free for all participants!!!

WHY WOULD I WANT TO SIGN UP IE WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Here's the good part - If you register you will get plenty of perks:

- Engage with the best motivational speakers and leaders - Learn from the best!
- Get the opportunity to organize your own community event from scratch!
- Opportunity to gain a new qualification in Leadership!
- Unlock your potential as a leader and abilities to make a difference!
- Weekend Residential break with peer socializing and activities galore!



Inspiring the leaders
of the future

Peace



Northern Ireland - Ireland

European Regional Development Fund

'This project has been funded by the EU's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)'

Meet the Driver Anne Crawley



As a chef in a local restaurant in South Armagh, my work normally entails working weekends and I have been getting involved in local community groups in my local area on my days off at the start of the week. I contacted Bolster Community, about becoming a volunteer driver. As I am the main carer for my father, I realised how lucky I was that my hours are very flexible and I could "most times", take him to appointments. But I realised other families may not be so lucky to take time off to help with these appointments or maybe people who live on their own need that extra bit of assistance. All of the runs I have completed I have enjoyed immensely. It is so nice to chat to people and swap stories and memories, maybe because of now with our contacts being very limited it is so nice to meet new people and reassure them I am taking every precaution to keep them safe in my car, and will do everything in my power to get them to their appointment and home again as safely as I possibly can. People are delighted with this service they cannot thank you enough, that is what makes me feel good about doing this, the appreciation they show even in their faces because they have enjoyed the company of someone new. So in a way we each have done a bit of good in supporting each other and our community in South Armagh and that is the best reward I could hope for.

Prevent falls by making a few easy changes to your living environment

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of serious injuries for older adults? There are many steps you can take to avoid a fall. Along with doing exercises to improve your balance, follow this room-by-room guide for tips on how to make your home safer. Just a few changes can make a big difference.



SENIORS

HOME 2 HOSPITAL

- Are you, or a family member, over 60 and live in the Slieve Gullion area?
- Are there times when you struggle to get to your hospital appointments?

- If so, please contact Bolster Community, we are currently offering a Free Home2Hospital driver service in this area.
- All our drivers are Access NI checked and trained. They will be compliant with government regulations on PPE and only one passenger will travel in each vehicle (unless a carer is needed).
- Our driver will pick you up at home and accompany you to your appointment, ensuring you arrive safely and on time.

To register, contact Aine
028 3083 5764

bolstercommunity.org

**BOLSTER
COMMUNITY**

Comhairle Coastair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Kindness kits

In November we delivered 100 Kindness Kits to rurally isolated older people in Warrenpoint and The Mournes.



These kits were delivered to give those in need a little pick me up and a reminder for all that we are here to help and support the local community.

**WE ALL
MUST DO IT
TO GET
THROUGH IT**



STAY SAFE



SAVE LIVES

Taking the test could save your life #BeCancerAware



Bowel cancer is a significant cause of ill health and premature death. Over 1,000 people every year in Northern Ireland are diagnosed with the disease and over 400 will die. Symptoms often develop late in the disease, leaving limited scope for treatment and potential cure. If detected at a very early stage bowel cancer treatment can be 90% successful. The bowel cancer screening programme, which allows early detection and treatment, significantly improves outcomes for those with the disease which will save approximately 60 lives a year. For more information go to:

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/bowel-cancer-screening-how-take-test-english-and-10-translations>

Produced in
Partnership with:



Southern Health
and Social Care Trust



Watch Collette O'Brien, Cook it Team Dietitian explain how our eating habits can affect our mood and how by making small changes to what we eat can positively affect our mental health.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7YLnwcefPQ&feature=youtu.be>

PHONE FIRST

Make sure you PHONE FIRST before going to Craigavon Area or Daisy Hill Hospital Emergency Departments, or South Tyrone Hospital Minor Injuries Unit.

0300 123 3 111

TEXT RELAY: 18001 0300 123 3 111

Operating Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm

PHONE FIRST is a new telephone service for patients who are feeling unwell and are considering travelling to an Emergency Department for urgent care.

Get directed to the right care

Avoid busy waiting rooms

Stay safe

Save time



FOR EMERGENCIES - 999

Including: stroke, heart attack, loss of consciousness, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding or major trauma

ALWAYS CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY



Health and
Social Care



DoH

www.health-ni.gov.uk

A HUGE THANKS TO ALL WHO BOUGHT LOCAL



2020 was the year no-one could have predicted with retail being hit by one body blow after another. Planning for what way Christmas was going to look was almost impossible, but thanks to hard work, creativity, quick decision making alongside the good will of so many and the #supportlocal message hitting home, we had a bumper festive period! From September we worked hard behind the scenes developing our hamper boxes which proved hugely popular. We also developed a range of luxury vegan friendly and cruelty free soaps which complimented our Acorn candles. The sales landscape had totally changed and knowing we wouldn't be able to trade at various Twilight and Xmas markets etc, we revamped and updated our website to make online sales simple and straightforward.

Some clever marketing, quirky imagery (and a lot of crossed fingers behind backs), we were able to breathe a sigh of relief to see orders come flying in.

We reached out to employers and organisations encouraging them to embrace our corporate and staff gift options, and so many thankfully got behind us!



If you would like information on any of our products contact me, Kathy on 0283 0835 764, email Kathy@bolstercommunity.org or call in and see me at 24 Monaghan Street Newry.

Kathy



Word spread on social media and the hundreds of likes, shares and retweets most certainly helped to increase sales.

We were able to work with corporates and employers adding personalised messages to their gifts, and of course we were able to post directly to the valued staff member.

Amidst all the doom and gloom, our little workshop was a hive of activity and buzz. Our moods were lifted with every order that came in and we feel we rose to the challenge in very difficult circumstances.

There was lots to learn in relation to online sales and postage etc but must do is a wonderful thing! We took encouragement from the reaction of the public and made sure every parcel going out was absolutely perfect..... quality control was definitely being reinforced.

!Our amazing volunteers loved every minute of the craziness and knowing their fab candles and soaps were being posted all over the UK and worldwide made them feel so good!

Feedback has been great and overall we learned so much in a short space of time. Moving forward we are encouraged and excited to continue developing and extending our range... and staying in touch with our customers!

2021 will no doubt also have its challenges but we are ready to tackle whatever it may throw at us. As one of our lovely volunteers told us recently, "Once you choose hope, anything is possible."

BOLSTER COMMUNITY

028 3083 5764
info@bolstercommunity.org
www.bolstercommunity.org

info@bolstercommunity.org
24 Monaghan Street
Newry, BT35 6AA

5-7 Marcus Street
Newry, BT34 1ET

18 Newcastle Street
Kilkeel, BT34 4AF