



MANCHESTER CARES

Younger Neighbour Handbook



(Content warning: this document includes material which references racism and discrimination, and examples of microaggressions)

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Intro: why we exist

Manchester Cares is a local organisation that works across the City of Manchester. We connect younger neighbours (normally in their twenties, thirties and forties) to older neighbours so they can share time, skills and stories and feel better connected to their community. We do this because Manchester can be an isolating place for younger and older neighbours alike. Our city is constantly changing, and our neighbourhoods and communities are continually transforming. We want to make sure everyone feels part of this brilliant city, not left behind by it.

We do this by bringing younger and older neighbours together to share their stories, knowledge and skills and to make new friends in our local areas. We hope you'll enjoy our free activities and programmes and you'll have the chance to meet people who you might have never crossed paths with. What we especially hope you'll get out of our programmes is great conversation, lots of laughter, and brilliant new friendships. We'd love you to share your stories, jokes, skills and experiences with your new friends – it really is people like you that make the events the fun that they are.

As a nationwide organisation, The Cares Family have three key objectives that we hope to meet through our programmes:

- Reduce isolation and loneliness amongst older and young neighbours alike.
- Improve the connection, confidence, skills, resilience and power of all participants so neighbours can feel part of our changing city rather than left behind by it
- Bring people together to reduce the gaps across social, generational, digital, cultural and attitudinal divides.

The Cares Family

The Cares Family started as a tiny idea in North London and over nine years we've grown into a national leader with charities all across the UK. We have North London Cares, South London Cares, Manchester Cares, Liverpool Cares and East London Cares. 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.

Our Values

At **Manchester Cares** we have five key values that are very important to all of us here at Cares. These values guide and shape everything we do and we strive for them to be shared by all those in our communities and networks.

- **Kindness:** we are empathic, respectful and optimistic, putting people at the heart of everything we do.
- **Community:** we are rooted in place, representing the needs, stories and language of local people authentically, and are passionate about the power of collective agency to advance justice and togetherness.
- **Trust:** we are dedicated, responsive, reliable and accountable to people in their neighbourhoods as well as our valued partners.
- **Bravery:** we are ambitious for our neighbours and for our model, and aware of the power of openness and honesty in leadership.
- **Learning:** we constantly appraise and innovate in our work, developing the most relevant, creative and adaptable approaches.



Anti-Racism Policy

(Content warning: this section includes material which references racism and discrimination, and examples of microaggressions)

Manchester Cares are committed to tackling racism, and to supporting the end of systemic racism in our communities and wider society. We understand that we cannot achieve our objectives – reducing loneliness, improving connection and resilience, and bridging divides in our community – without being an anti-racist organisation.

We strive to create a welcoming and enjoyable environment that is safe for everyone to be themselves. We want to make sure everyone feels valued on our programmes – no matter their race, sexuality, gender, age, ability, or religion/beliefs.

We do not, therefore, tolerate discrimination of any kind on our programmes. If any discriminatory behaviour occurs during a Manchester Cares activity, our staff team will address it swiftly and directly with those involved.

Calling in

Manchester Cares believes in “calling in” rather than calling out racism and other acts of discrimination. This means challenging acts of discrimination as they occur – so long as it is safe to do so – and giving members of our network the opportunity to recognise, apologise for and learn from shortfalls in their conduct.

We encourage all our neighbours to call in acts of discrimination, and even more so in support of one another. In any case, a staff member will address the incident as quickly as possible once they have been alerted to it.

What will happen if a neighbour says or does something racist or discriminatory?

If you witness, are made uncomfortable or are upset by any behaviour during a Manchester Cares activity, we encourage you to let a member of the Manchester Cares team know. A staff member will then swiftly address the incident by calling in the neighbour involved. We will update you on the outcome of this and discuss if you require any further support for the hurt you may have experienced.

If a neighbour says or does something racist or discriminatory, a member of staff from Manchester Cares will talk to them about what happened, either in person or over the

phone. The member of staff will share learning to explain why what happened is hurtful and offensive. This conversation will be followed by a letter or email confirming the outcome of the conversation and how the incident will be resolved, accompanied with further resources to aid their learning.

Any overtly discriminatory behaviour – for example, the intentional use of slurs and derogatory remarks – will automatically result in a temporary or permanent ban from all Manchester Cares programmes. The type of ban will depend on the neighbour's response to being called in, and whether they apologise and acknowledge the hurt their behaviour has (or can) caused.

Any discriminatory act that is 'subtle' will result in a formal warning, dependent on an apology from the neighbour and a demonstrable commitment to learn and change as a result of the incident. Refusing to apologise or multiple formal warnings may result in a temporary or permanent ban from all Manchester Cares programmes.

What is a 'subtle' act of discrimination?

Subtle acts of discrimination – also called microaggressions – are remarks, questions or actions that communicate negative or stereotyped attitudes towards people who belong to marginalised groups based on their race, sexuality, gender, ability, age or religion/beliefs. They may be intentional or accidental, but either way, they can be very harmful to people who experience them, and perpetuate systemic discrimination of these groups.

Often people may not realise they are making a microaggressive comment or act. For example, during a conversation at a Social Club, a neighbour may ask another neighbour who is black, "where are you from?" It may be that the neighbour asking the question is interested in where the neighbour grew up or what their heritage is. But asking the question in this way suggests that the black neighbour cannot be from the UK because of their race, and so communicates the harmful – and incorrect – attitude that people who are not white do not belong in the UK.

It may be that the neighbour in this example didn't mean to cause any offence. However, it is important to remember that the impact of what is said or done is more important than the intent. If you accidentally trod on someone's foot, you'd apologise, even though you didn't mean to. Microaggressions are no different.

Other examples of microaggressions include:

- Sexual objectification of women, such as commenting on, looking at or touching a woman's body.
- Suggesting that LGBTQIA+ people and their personalities, interests or experiences are all the same, such as remarking that all lesbians are 'butch'.
- Expecting LGBTQIA+ people to behave in ways that are perceived to be 'normal', such as assuming that all people are heterosexual, or believing that people should dress in a certain way based on their gender.
- Denying that racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination exist, for example by claiming someone is being oversensitive if they are offended by a remark.

Covid-19

How did you respond to COVID-19 pandemic?

Manchester Cares suspended our face-to-face programmes on 13th March 2020, before the first lockdown, to protect our community.

After a few weeks, we had established a new programme of Virtual Social Clubs and accompanying support for neighbours to access the online world remotely; set up a telephone friendship programme, Phone a Friend, so younger and older neighbours could continue to connect one-to-one; and called hundreds of older neighbours to check on their wellbeing and connect them to vital support, working in partnership with various organisations in Manchester.

The pandemic has been a challenging time for all our neighbours. However, our response taught us the value of providing younger and older neighbours with opportunities to connect online or over the phone, which we will continue to offer through our new mix of in-person and virtual programmes.

How are you ensuring your programmes are safe?

The safety, comfort and wellbeing of our neighbours is our first priority at Manchester Cares. We will have COVID-19 safety measures – in line with government guidance and scientific advice – in place at our Social Clubs and on our other programmes. These include wearing a mask or visor when appropriate and washing your hands regularly with hand sanitiser provided.

Since guidelines are subject to change and all our programmes are a bit different, each programme will provide you with more specific guidance when you take part. If you ever have any questions about this guidance, please get in touch.

We also ask you to follow current NHS Test & Trace protocols and update us if you test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms after coming to a Social Club, completing a Love Your Neighbour visit or attending an Outreach event, so we can alert other neighbours and members of the team.

Who are our older neighbours?

We meet our older neighbours in all sorts of ways. They may refer themselves through our website, we might receive their details from their GP or social worker who thinks they need a little extra company, or it could be that we've met them out and about through our outreach work. We speak to all the neighbours who are referred to our programmes to check that it's right for them.

Our older neighbours are usually in their 60s, 70s or 80s and have lived in our city for a long time. They've got deep roots but it can look a little different after changing rapidly over the last few years. This can feel alienating and usually people want to take part in our programmes because they're looking for that connection to their city again.

Other things our neighbours may be experiencing:

- Living alone
- Dealing with declining health and mobility
- Dealing with bereavement
- Experiencing a loss of confidence
- Struggling with their mental health

Safeguarding

Manchester Cares has a responsibility to keep everyone in our community safe, and to prevent abuse and neglect.

Anyone can be a victim of abuse or neglect. However, due to certain personal circumstances – such as living with an illness or disability, living alone or being in receipt of care – some members of our network are more at risk than others. It is important, therefore, that you keep an eye out for your neighbours and report any concerns you have.

What is abuse or neglect?

There are several types of abuse:

- **Financial or material** – for example, someone taking money or valuables without permission; pressuring a person to change their will or use their money in a way they don't wish to; and scams, theft or fraud.
- **Physical** – including hitting, pushing or slapping; not giving a person the correct medication; restraining someone in an inappropriate way; or making a room too hot or cold.
- **Psychological** – verbal or emotional abuse, for example calling someone names or threatening them with abandonment or harm; humiliating, blaming or controlling someone; or unjustified withdrawal of support.
- **Organisational or institutional** – one-off or ongoing inadequate care in a hospital or care home setting, resulting from insufficient staff or poor leadership and practices.
- **Discriminatory** – unequal treatment, including harassment or deliberate exclusion, based on age, disability, gender, sexuality, race or religion.
- **Domestic** – controlling and threatening behaviour, or violence and abuse between intimate partners or family members age 16 or over. The abuse can be, but not limited to psychological; sexual; financial and emotional.
- **Sexual** – touching or looking at someone inappropriately; rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment; or forcing someone to undress or look at sexual images
- **Neglect** – when a care-giver fails to meet someone's medical, emotional or physical care needs, such as washing, food and drink, medication and heating.
- **Self-neglect** – when a person neglects to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings, including hoarding.

People responsible for abuse are often known to the victim – it could be a friend or family member, or a paid care worker – and take advantage of their relationship. Abuse may be a single or repeated act, and it may be deliberate or unintentional, for example if a person doesn't have the right skills to care for someone. Whatever the circumstances, abuse is never acceptable – no one should have to suffer it.

What should I do if someone shares information about their circumstances which worries me?

It can be very challenging to have a conversation with a neighbour who is a victim of abuse or neglect. However, it is important to listen, provide reassurance and not pass judgement, as it may be the first time they have felt prepared to disclose this information and do something about the situation they are in.

Rather than being told something directly by a neighbour, you may also notice something, such as an injury or poor hygiene.

Friendships at Manchester Cares are built on trust. However, it is crucial that you never promise to keep something worrying a neighbour has shared with you confidential. You must report your concerns, however small, to Manchester Cares staff as soon as possible. You should not seek to investigate anything shared with you, or to gather additional details, your role is to share what has been disclosed with you with a Manchester Cares member of staff, so that the appropriate support can be provided. Although it is important for a victim of abuse to have control over decisions that affect them, it is also paramount that any concerns are reported promptly so the necessary steps can be taken to protect the neighbour and prevent further potential abuse or neglect.

Our role at Manchester Cares is to report safeguarding concerns to the social services at the relevant local authority so they can investigate, and to the police if the neighbour is in imminent danger or a crime has been committed. It is not our role to intervene – for example, by challenging the abuser or by investigating the claims – but to support the neighbour throughout this process.

Storytelling



Manchester Cares loves to share some of the amazing stories about friendship and connection in our network. These include posting the lovely things people have said at our social clubs on social media, or sharing a story of a friendship made on our Love Your Neighbour programme on our website.

We share these stories through our social media, our website and sometimes in the press. From time to time, our development team may also use stories from the community to help us get funding from trusts and foundations, or to inspire corporate partners and fundraisers to support our work.

How do I consent to storytelling?

When you sign up and attend an induction, we will ask you to consent to having your photograph taken or being filmed. We will only use photos and video recordings of you in our storytelling if you consent to us doing so.

If you initially consent but change your mind later, that is absolutely fine. Please let a member of staff know.

How can I be involved in storytelling opportunities?

We feel so lucky that we can share stories from our community. We are always for neighbours to get involved in our storytelling, whether it be your life story in a blog, or talking about your own experiences of loneliness and the connection you've found at Manchester Cares. If you wish to share something, please contact a member of the Manchester Cares team and we can help you share your story.

Sharing stories on social media

We'd love you to shout about our work and your own experience on our programmes on social media. If you do, please tag us so that we can share the love! But please remember not to share photos of other people from social clubs, as you will not have consent from them to do so.

How do I get involved in media opportunities?

From time to time, we receive requests from both local and national press to cover our programmes and speak to neighbours. We will always inform you in advance if a particular activity, for example a social club, will be filmed or recorded for the press. There is no pressure to be involved if you are not comfortable being featured: let a member of staff know and please don't worry about saying no.

This year, we're also trialling a new programme called Community Champions, providing media training, professional photos and storytelling opportunities in the press as well as on our websites and social media channels. If you are interested in taking part, please contact the Head of Programmes, Laura Wilkinson on laura.wilkinson@manchestercares.org.uk

Why else do you collect stories?

Storytelling is also a great way for us to understand what difference our programmes make to our neighbours. From time to time, we will also invite neighbours to take part in evaluations of our programmes, such as interviews. Our evaluation work is a great chance for you to share stories that help us understand whether we're achieving our objectives, so we can be accountable to our neighbours, partners and funders.



Feedback & Complaints

Manchester Cares always welcomes feedback about what we're doing well and what we could improve. You can always contact a member of staff if you have feedback, whether this be a suggestion about how to improve an activity or a compliment about a particular event. We also understand that there may be times when someone is unhappy about the standards of our programmes, actions or lack of action by the organisation or our staff team, and will wish to make a complaint.

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made in person, in writing, by email, by telephone, by social and digital media, or via the contact form on the Manchester Cares website. A complaint should be raised as soon as possible after the event and will usually only be considered if it is about something that took place in the last 12 months. When you make a complaint, it will be acknowledged quickly, sensitively and empathetically. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, it is important that you have their permission to share any information with us.

A complaint can be made informally by speaking to the relevant staff member or by contacting the Head of Programmes at Manchester Cares. The Head of Programmes will acknowledge the complaint within no less than two working days and quickly arrange to speak to you, so we can better understand the situation in order to come to an acceptable resolution. Once we have spoken to everyone involved in the complaint, we will aim to correct the issue as swiftly as possible and update you.

If you are not satisfied with the explanation given or the proposed action, or if we feel that the complaint requires further investigation, then we will start a formal complaints procedure. A complaint will always be handled formally if you request this from the start, or when allegations are serious or an incident has put someone in harm's way. Every formal complaint will be investigated fully and quickly within 10 working days of Manchester Cares receiving the complaint. We will then respond in writing within a further five working days, letting you know whether the complaint has been upheld, and if appropriate, apologising and identifying lessons learnt and actions that have been or will be taken to minimise a similar issue happening again, as well what to do if you are unhappy with our response.

If you have any questions about our complaints procedure, please contact the Head of Programmes, Laura Wilkinson on laura.wilkinson@manchestercares.org.uk or 07596222178.

Social Clubs

What are Social Clubs?

Our Social Clubs are free activities which take place both face-to-face and remotely, and bring older (65+) and younger people from across Manchester together for fun, laughter, friendship and new experiences. Your role at clubs is simple – to be a friendly face, listening ear, and get stuck into the activity.

Our face-to-face Social Clubs take place in different venues such as pubs, cafes, galleries, community centres and community gardens which change every month. Our clubs aim to bust stereotypes that surround older and younger people and are different each month – examples of clubs we've hosted are brunch clubs, seated yoga, pub quizzes and local history clubs. Sometimes clubs are also hosted by a younger or older neighbour, or community partner.

We began hosting Social Clubs remotely (such as over Zoom and telephone) as a response to Covid-19, and these are likewise fun activities with older and younger people, with different activities every month. These can be a great option for older neighbours who would like more social company, but face challenges getting out and about. Our chatty telephone Social Clubs also mean neighbours in our network without digital access can take part too.

How to sign up:

After you've attended a volunteer induction, you will receive an email from the Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator around the 3rd week of the month, with a link to input your date of birth and sign up to our upcoming Social Clubs. There is no minimum or maximum number of Social Clubs you have to attend, meaning you can volunteer flexibly around your schedule. At every club, there will always be a member of the Manchester Cares team there who is First Aid trained, and on-hand to answer any questions you may have. We tend to take photos at our Social Clubs, so please do let a member of the team know if you would prefer not to have your photo taken.

A few things to remember:

There are a few things we ask of volunteers at Social Clubs:

- Please don't take photos while at a Social Club
- Please don't swap contact details at a Social Club
- If you see anything that makes you concerned for a neighbour at a Social Club, please let a member of the team know
- Treat everyone you meet with kindness and respect
- Please only sign up for clubs you can definitely come to, and be on time for.

If you like to meet up with an older neighbour outside of Social Clubs, please read about our Love Your Neighbour programme below.



Love Your Neighbour

What is it?

This is where we make a friendship match between an older and younger neighbour. Friendships are based on personality and mutual interests - if you love cups of tea and crime documentaries, we want to match you with someone who you'll be able to natter away with!

This programme is particularly for older neighbours who find it harder to leave their homes or otherwise socially isolated. A friendship through Love Your Neighbour provides a new opportunity for a little company and companionship each week.

What is required of me?

This programme requires more commitment from volunteers, it's not a one-off in the same way as a Social Club, you will be required to visit or speak to an older neighbour regularly each week. You can decide how this looks, whether it's a few 20 minute phone calls each week, or a one hour visit to sit at home with them, whatever works for you and we'll match you with someone looking for a similar thing.

Other requirements:

- Further 1-hour training, that covers safeguarding and looking out for your neighbour
- A DBS check (paid for by us)
- Recording your visits through your unique Visit Log link

Friendships are mutually beneficial so the younger neighbour doesn't help with any practical tasks; your main role is to be a friend and enjoy connecting with an older neighbour. As staff we follow up on any support needs the older neighbour may have and make referrals/signpost to other organisations.

How do I apply?

We have a separate application form for you to fill in. Contact your branch following your induction and they'll send it through. This is just an opportunity for us to get to know you more and make a great friendship match.

Outreach

Our Outreach programme is how we get the word out to older neighbours, and build up our network of people involved in our programmes. This includes striking up conversations in pharmacies, GP waiting rooms and community centres, and also building relationships with community partners who can refer to us. As well as welcoming older neighbours into our programmes to meet their younger neighbours, we also help neighbours overcome barriers to social connection they may face. This includes:

- Making referrals to other organisations, such as health and exercise clubs, bereavement support and occupational therapists.
- Signposting to free advice, such as housing or financial.
- Helping with one-to-one tech advice, such as using Zoom, email and WhatsApp.
- Applying for large monetary grants to help with things like new cookers and fridges.

We also build up our network of volunteers through our Outreach programme, spreading the word about our programmes, encouraging people to get involved, and running regular inductions.



Fundraising

Fundraising for Manchester Cares is a great way to make a difference to your older neighbours. With all of our events – from runs, to bake sales, to gigs, to pub quizzes, to dinners – there is a fun and vibrant atmosphere. And together, we can tackle isolation and loneliness in Manchester.

How can I get involved?

There are three main ways to help us to make our older neighbours feel valued, vibrant and visible in this rapidly changing city:

- 1. Make a donation:** By giving a one-off donation or regular donation to Manchester Cares, you will be helping older and younger people and neighbours to share time, laughter and conversation. This is especially great if you are struggling to get along to a social club, and makes a massive difference to keep our activities going. Head to our [donate page](#) on our website to see how a little amount can make a big difference.
- 2. Take on a challenge or join an event:** We have a bunch of exciting events and challenges each and every month for you to get involved in. Check out our list of [upcoming challenges in our website](#); there's everything from half marathons, fun 5K runs and walks. By taking on a challenge for Manchester Cares, you'll get:
 - A reduced registration fee for most events
 - All of the admin is taken care of - so you can focus on training!
 - Support from our friendly team every step of the way, and tips and resources to reach your fundraising goal
 - A free Manchester Cares t-shirt and pin badge
 - The opportunity to meet and train with other fundraisers taking on the challenge for us
 - Personalised updates on the difference you've made to older and younger neighbours across Manchester

You can also join us at an event, like our pub quizzes, clothes swaps or comedy nights. Check out our social media to see what's on.

- 3. Host your own event:** Be creative and get fundraising for Manchester Cares! You could join us for Sweet Mondays and hold a bake sale in your office. Or you could host a clothes swap with some friends to raise funds. Or – if you're already signed up to a challenge – consider fundraising for Manchester Cares. Whatever you choose, it's a fun way to ensure friendships can flourish across our patch.

Email **Isabel Rivera**, our Development Coordinator, on isabel.rivera@manchestercares.org.uk for more information.

My company has a charitable arm. Can I get Manchester Cares involved?

Of course! We'd love to work with your business. If they have a charity of the year, please consider nominating Manchester Cares. Or maybe you've heard of a Payroll Giving scheme, and can donate to us through this? Your company could also put together a team for a challenge event, or have their own charitable foundation to which we could apply for funding.

With any of these, you could help tackle isolation and loneliness across Manchester by introducing us to your workplace. And in return, there'd be plenty of ways for your colleagues to involved with us. From team volunteering days, to supporting us with skills in-kind, your company would really see the difference they are making. Please email **Laura Wilkinson** laura.wilkinson@manchestercares.org.uk for more information on how your business could partner with Manchester.



How else can I get involved?

What's a Social Club Volunteer Organiser / Facilitator?

We train a handful of our most committed volunteers to become Volunteer Organisers: they take on extra responsibility and run their own social clubs, without BRANCH Cares' staff present. This plays a big part in tackling isolation and loneliness: reaching new areas, supporting older neighbours we've not yet met, and adding more variety to our programme of events.

In return, our Volunteer Organisers have the opportunity to form deeper relationships with their older neighbours and fellow volunteers, and we give them all of the training, tools and support they need to run activities they're really proud of.

I have skills to offer at a Social Club! Who should I contact?

Whether you're a yoga teacher, musician, photographer, jive expert or craft extraordinaire, we'd love to hear from you if you have skills you'd like to share at a social club. Our volunteers' skills and generosity help us to keep our programme diverse. You can email our Social Clubs Coordinator **Heather Madden** (heather.madden@manchestercares.org.uk) if you'd like to lead a session. If you have any other questions about Social Clubs, we'd love to hear from you, so just drop us a line.

Outreach volunteering: Helping older neighbours with technology

We know that some of our older neighbours can sometimes find it difficult to access the digital world - something that has been highlighted even more during the COVID 19 outbreak. As a way of tackling this, we're looking for volunteers to help out older neighbours navigate through the digital world to help bridge this divide.

We would welcome volunteers who have an 1 to 2 hours a week or fortnightly who can help older neighbours with tasks like setting up an email account, downloading Zoom, and general upskilling online.

If you want to find out how the project works get in touch with our Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, **Amy Saunders** on amy.saunders@manchestercares.org.uk – we'd love to chat with you!

First Aid Guidance

Whilst we would like to provide all first aid training to all neighbours within the Manchester Cares' network, the cost of the training and the number of neighbours involved in our programmes means that we are not able to do so.

All Manchester Cares' core staff are emergency first aid trained. If you are in a situation where there is a member of staff present and first aid is required, then please inform them immediately.

Should you find yourself in a situation requiring first aid and Manchester Cares' staff are not present, call 999 and they will advise you accordingly.

If you are keen to learn more about emergency first aid then the British Red Cross provide a [variety of training options](#). You can also download the [British Red Cross First Aid App](#). The app provides simple first aid skills and step-by-step instructions to help you provide emergency first aid. Once downloaded, you do not need internet connection to be able to access the content.