

# April 2020 Newsletter

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## Cre8's April Newsletter

Small but Mighty | Project Grow | Trip to Macclesfield Fire Station | Cheshire Community Foundation Awards | Betty | Working From Home | Our New Project

Its been a strange month for all of us! Take a look at what we've been doing here at Cre8, and how we're adapting to the ever-changing circumstances.

### Small but Mighty

As we find ourselves in these strange and different times, we have been overwhelmed by the positive responses and offers of support from our funders, individuals, and long-standing donors who give their time, encouragement, and financial help to keep us going.

We are grateful that we also have further funding from the Cheshire Community Foundation and Macclesfield Town Council to specifically target work that we can continue to do during this time. Our focus for this funding is on expanding Project Grow. Our primary aim is to stay safe - "small but mighty" – while still being able to effectively deliver to anybody that needs food from us. We managed 80 deliveries last week, and this week we hope to increase to 100. I now work 4 days a week primarily focusing on the Grocery. Details are on our Facebook pages, but you can directly email [emma.thomas@cre8macclesfield.org](mailto:emma.thomas@cre8macclesfield.org) if you are not using social media.

We want to try and spread hope and let people know we care, and they are cared for even if we cannot see them face to face. When Aldi left us boxes and boxes of flowers we took them round the four largest Estates to share them. We will continue to try and spread joy where we can. We all need a little lift wherever we can find it.

Working at home with an 11 and a 50 year old is difficult and even more so now that it is the Easter holidays. I am focusing on quality rather than quantity; quality work and quality time at home. Talking to each other becomes more important at times like this. Our team meetings have moved onto an online platform, and our youth work team are continuing to deliver challenges to young people and support group chats online. The Music team also continue to deliver through the Easter holidays to maintain a level of support for our young community. I have been overwhelmed by the spirit and determination from the CRE8 team to deliver. We will keep talking and we will continue to adapt.

Although we have had to temporarily closed our Learning Plus programme, we did receive this wonderful piece of feedback from one teacher. Their message reminds us why our provision of alternative education is so important to our community. *"Thank you so much for this. It has made me cry happy tears! It is lovely to see the talent he clearly has for music and this is something we will really try and support. Thank you for all that you are doing for him."*

We will keep in touch and we hope you all keep safe. We have much to do and much to be hopeful for. I look forward to the missed hugs, the shared meals, and the shared laughter.

Stay Safe – **Ameera**

*...faith isn't about having everything figured out ahead of time; faith is about following the quiet voice of God without having everything figured out ahead of time.*  
— **Rachel Held Evans**



Project Grow - Katy's Reflection of the Past 2 Weeks

Fear. Laughter. Joy. Sadness. Desperation. Anxiety. Laughter. Exhaustion.  
Hysteria. Chaos. Panic. Uncertainty. And quite a few tears.

It's hard to know where to start, since the world changed a few weeks ago.

Since late last year we've been running a Surplus Food Grocery at Cre8, but since all this started a couple of weeks ago, the Grocery has really come into its own. We're out 3 days a week now, delivering hampers of donated 'waste' food to as many people as we can. Roughly 60 households a week. The food is all surplus to requirements from supermarkets, shops, restaurants, charities, schools etc. The amount of food we're having donated from all different places is incredible.

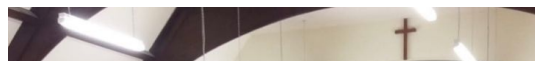
For me, that's been one of the hardest things to get my head around. There is so much food out there - an almost obscene amount - but there is such a disparity and so many people are struggling to get basic food to keep themselves well. The tragic story of a man from Wigan who died after having no one to go out to get food, brings this home.

The response at every household when we turn up with a hamper full of random, delicious food is life-affirming for me. People are always so grateful. They think they don't deserve it. It's such a privilege to be able to tell them that they absolutely do deserve to have food to keep themselves and their families alive, healthy, and happy. The flowers we deliver alongside food are always the thing that brings out the tears. People think a bunch of flowers is such a luxury and it's usually the thing that breaks down the dam that they've been keeping all of their emotions, worries, anxieties, and fears behind. Flowering daffodils have the power to make people know they are blessed. That they are perfectly loved just as they are, and that they're doing a good job.

It's really hard going in these unusual times. Worrying if you're doing the right thing by keeping going. Worrying about people you can't see; the kids from Cre8, the families, our volunteers, the rest of the team, your family and friends, and all our awesome supporters. Worrying about the forgotten people. But the kindness and thoughts, prayers and messages from all different places has been incredible. And the rainbows in windows make us smile on our deliveries.

We love them!

We can't do everything, we can't really do much, but we can do this little bit.  
Small but mighty!





## Trip to Macclesfield Fire Station

At the start of March, Amy and some of our young people from club went on a trip to Macclesfield fire station. Everyone had a great time, especially spraying the powerful hose!

A big thank you to Macclesfield Fire Station for having us!







## Cheshire Community Foundation Awards

In March, we received the President's Innovation award from the Cheshire Community Foundation, for our joint project with Just Drop in and Wilmslow Youth. We'd like to say a big thank you to everyone at these organisations!



## Betty

We were blessed in March with the long awaited arrival of Betty! This is our new refrigerated van which will be helping out with our Project Grow surplus food project. She could not have arrived at a more poignant moment! Betty has been out all over Macclesfield over the past couple of weeks, collecting 'waste' food from supermarkets and helping to deliver food hampers to those struggling to get supplies. We're looking forward to all the new possibilities Betty opens up for us!



## Working From Home

Here at Cre8 we have been working from home over the past few weeks, and have been doing our very best to deliver our services in new, innovative ways!

Here's how our team have been finding it.

It's like an exciting experiment!!! so far it's working really well for me. I have a little home/office set up and I am enjoying 'Zooming' with the rest of the Cre8 team. My favorite part is seeing my family doing all the cleaning while I work!!!! a lovely change!!!!

- Mrs P

It's definitely been an adjustment moving to working at home but we're all set up with it now and having team zoom meetings is helping us all keep connected, we're having lots of phone conversations with everyone as well to keep the communication going. It's funny how quickly you start and

settle into new routines and already we have developed a new rhythm to our days at home - It's definitely a different style of working but I think we're settling into things now! Hopefully before long we'll all be back together in the House!

**- Emma**

Working from home has certainly been an adjustment, but I'm starting to get used to it. Its nice to be able to do my work whilst my cat sits on my lap! We've been keeping in touch through Zoom and Skype, so in some ways it feels like a normal week at Cre8, even though we're all at home!

**-Welly**

Who knew youthwork could work over the phone and computer. For a technophobe like me this has been a challenging time! But the young people have risen to the challenge and helped me into the 21st Century. With regular Skype calls to discuss daily meals and what group song to sing (build me up buttercup seems to be the fave!) it's been a blast. The daily youthwork challenge seems to be taking off and we have had some amazing responses, showcasing our very talented young people.

**- Amy**



I've been working hard to move our offerings online. Although we've lost the collaboration that makes drop-ins so interesting, I've learned that you can have a music lesson online and people are willing to fill their time doing creative and productive things when you give them the opportunity.

- Ollie

## Our New Project

Our new project began on the 1st April led by **Jonathan Aiken** and funded by Cheshire Community Foundation - Social Enterprise Development Manager

*"It is with a sense of adventure that I take on the new role of Social Enterprise Development Manager at Cre8. This feeling is heightened by the crazy times we find ourselves in. The determined aim is that we can purposefully engage hard to reach young people in work opportunities. Work is a fundamental part of who we are, and the outcomes cannot be underestimated: purpose, change, hope. We want to bring this to those in our community who may not otherwise get the opportunity. We don't know what this will look like, but Cre8 has always been about taking steps into the unknown."*

If social enterprise is something you are interested in, please feel free to get in touch: [jonathan.aiken@cre8macclesfield.org](mailto:jonathan.aiken@cre8macclesfield.org).



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