

## South Manchester Network

# WELCOME TO OUR SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

By Jenny Cooper, Lead Volunteer

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter.

The last 12 months since we last shared an update has been challenging for us all, especially as so many of the plans we had made for social, fundraising and awareness events had to be postponed.

But our Network volunteers have still been busy looking at other ways to support those living with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis - such as the Virtual Socials, which have allowed us to meet up once again!

World IBD Day was on 19th May, and whilst we couldn't all get involved in the usual activities there was still plenty to take part in.

My WALK IT will also return in June, with some changes to last year for anyone who wants to take on an extra challenge!

Hopefully it won't be too long until we can get together in person - we are missing our regular café meet ups with you in Stockport! For now we wish you all health and happiness for the rest of 2021.



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## VIRTUAL SOCIALS

One of the things we missed most in 2020 was being able to meet up with other people living with Crohn's and Colitis, where we could speak freely with others who understand what we are going through. We know it makes a massive difference, and so we were thrilled when Crohn's & Colitis UK asked us to be part of their pilot to have Virtual Socials over Zoom.

Emma, Jenny and Dave have taken part in several of these events since they were first launched in November, and it has been great to hear how much everyone who has taken part has enjoyed them.

The events are organised by region, but you can attend any of the Virtual Socials - whether or not you live in that area. You can find out more and sign up to take part [here](#).




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## WORLD IBD DAY



The theme for World IBD Day this year was 'No Going Back'.

While a lot of people are longing for everything to 'go back to normal', we know that when you live with a condition like Crohn's or Colitis that means going back to a world where things are still challenging. We should not have to accept a kind of 'normal' where you have to deal with people who don't understand your condition, in a society not set up to help you.

So, let's not go back to normal. Let's go forward to something better!

There are lots of ways you can still take part in:

- Demand better support in the workplace by adding your name to the email going to from major employers [here](#)
- Email local politicians to call for better IBD care [here](#)
- Register for a Virtual Social [here](#)
- Use the Talking Toolkit [here](#) to find the words to share your experience of what it is like to live with Crohn's or Colitis

## COVID-19 VACCINE

Crohn's & Colitis UK is continuing to offer updated advice and information for people living with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis about the Covid-19 vaccines.

It says: "When weighing up the risk of side effects of the vaccine, it's also important to also consider the risks of complications from COVID-19 if you were to catch the virus.

Complications from the virus can be life-threatening, especially if you are at increased risk, and some people have reported that testing positive for coronavirus has led them to develop a flare-up. It is safer to receive protection from coronavirus rather than risk infection."

The information, which includes our volunteer Emma Greenwood sharing her experience of having Covid-19, can be read in full [here](#).



“

**My experience with coronavirus felt no different to when I have a bad flare up. It started with abdominal pain, nausea, aching followed by a fever and high output from my stoma. I was also very fatigued throughout this and it continued for seven days. On day 6, I was admitted for to hospital and placed on IV antibiotics and fluids.**”

Emma

Living with Colitis

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## MY WALK IT

Sadly we again cannot gather in Manchester together for WALK IT this year, but My WALK IT is back bigger and better for 2021!

As well as the usual 5km and 10km walks, this year we are asking you to take on a half marathon or even marathon! There's no set route, so it could be anywhere in your local area, or even on a treadmill! And why not recruit friends and family to do it with you?!

Registration is open now [here](#).

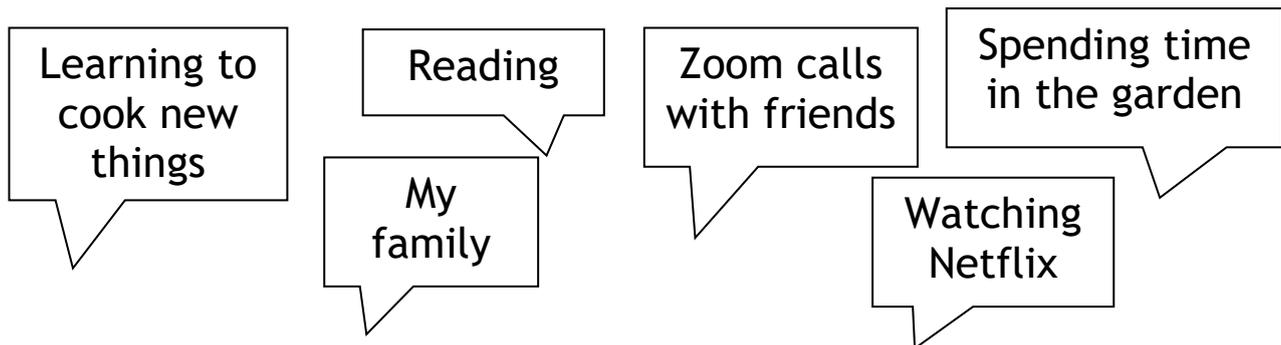
Don't forget to share your photos with us on social media using #MyWALKIT



## WELLBEING

Living with Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis can be challenging for our mental health and wellbeing at the best of times, but add a global pandemic to that and it is fair to say many of us have struggled! Since March 2020 many of us have spent months shielding, unable to socialise.

Here are some of the things our members and supporters have told us has helped them over the last year:



For our volunteer Emma Raynes, exercise has been a real help for her.

“During the pandemic I have given priority to my mental health. I think it is easy to fall through the traps of panic, stress, and worry. All these symptoms can be a trigger to flare ups for me.

“Exercise has been a huge part of my life and I have enjoyed keeping focused on my running goals. I really miss taking part in events and unfortunately had to set a new date to trek to Mount Everest Basecamp which was planned for 2020.



“But travelling and events certainly don't stop us from keeping active and training within our own area. I am so very fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the country in Cheshire.

“For me exercise is an amazing way to keep focused and stress free, whether that be walking running or even yoga at home.

“I found that it boosts confidence, clears the mind, and keeps you grounded throughout the day. I am lucky to have such an active circle too and have been supported with workout tips from social media colleagues to my own PT.

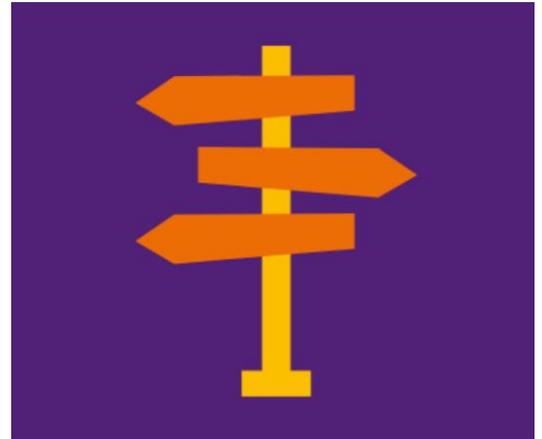
“Having a stoma has also had such a positive impact to my life. I can now complete distances further than the 10k, and I currently have planned a 50mile Ultra in the summer. It is something for me to focus on and actively train towards. And the medal of course!

“I would recommend keeping active to anyone. There are amazing people to help within your community, and great apps to download such as 0 to 5k to help you.”

## WELLBEING

Support available from Crohn's & Colitis UK includes:

- Helpline - a confidential service providing information and support for anyone affected by Crohn's or Colitis. Call 0300 222 5700 9am-5pm Monday to Friday
- Crohn's and Colitis Support - putting you in touch with a trained support volunteer who has a personal experience of Crohn's or Colitis and understands what you are going through
- Facebook forum - connect with people online through our forum [www.facebook.com/groups/CCUKforum](https://www.facebook.com/groups/CCUKforum)



There is also an information page on mental wellbeing [here](#).

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## WELL DONE DEAN



Well done to Dean, husband to our volunteer Helen, who took on the Manchester Marathon for us in October.

He raised a fantastic £1,300!

If you fancy taking on a running challenge for Crohn's & Colitis UK the Great Manchester Run takes place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May - there is more information on that [here](#).

If running isn't your thing, there are plenty of ideas [here](#) for fundraising you can do from the comfort of your own home!

## AWARENESS WEEK - DECEMBER 2020

We normally love to go all out for Awareness Week, with awareness stands in our local hospitals, bake sales, and lots of fun activities - but like a lot of other things Covid-19 put a stop to that in 2020!

Undeterred, we decided to try something new that everyone could get involved in - whether they were quarantined, shielding, or not straying too far from home! And so Purple Bingo was born! The idea was to tick off as many items from the bingo sheet as possible, recruiting friends and family to help as well. Thank you for everyone who got involved, and who donated for taking part and helped us raise £101. We loved looking out for purple flowers, doors and sweets, and might just do it again for Awareness Week 2021!



We were again supported by Stockport Town Council and Manchester Royal Infirmary who illuminated their buildings for Purple Friday!  
(Photos courtesy of Cllr Jude Wells and Consultant Nurse IBD Karen Kemp)



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### VIRTUAL SOCIAL EVENTS

Check the [website](#) for the latest dates

### MY WALK IT

June 2021

### CROHN'S AND COLITIS AWARENESS WEEK

1-7 December 2021

*The South Manchester Network has made every reasonable effort to ensure the content of this newsletter is accurate, but accepts no responsibility for any errors or omission.*

*The views of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Crohn's & Colitis UK and no reference in this newsletter to any product or service is intended as a recommendation.*

## CONTACT US

**CROHN'S & COLITIS UK**

### SOUTH MANCHESTER NETWORK

Lead Volunteer: Jenny Cooper

Email: [networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk](mailto:networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk)

Website: [www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/sm](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/sm)



[Crohn's & Colitis UK South Manchester Network](#)



[@CrohnsColitisSM](#)



[@crohnscolitisuksouthmanchester](#)

### GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Crohn's & Colitis UK

1 Bishops Square, Hatfield Business Park, AL10 9NE

[www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/contact](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/contact)

**Volunteer Enquires: 01727 734 475**

Charity registered in England Number 1117148 Charity registered in Scotland Number SC038632

A company limited by guarantee in England: company number 5973370

### HELPLINE

Our helpline is a confidential service providing information and support for anyone affected by Crohn's or Colitis.

Our team can:

- help you understand more about Crohn's or Colitis, diagnosis and treatment options
- provide information to help you to live well with your condition
- help you understand and access disability benefits
- be there to listen if you need someone to talk to
- put you in touch with a trained support volunteer who has a personal experience of Crohn's or Colitis and understands what you are going through

### CONTACT US BY:

Telephone: 0300 222 5700\*

Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

Email: [helpline@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk](mailto:helpline@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk)

Live Chat: [www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/livechat](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/livechat)

\*Calls to this number are charged at a standard landline rate or may be free if you have an inclusive minutes' package.

Calls may be recorded for monitoring and evaluation purposes.