



**THE GREAT GET
TOGETHER.**

INSPIRED BY JO COX

THE GREAT WINTER GET TOGETHER 2023

Organiser Resource Pack

Welcome

While we all experience loneliness at some point, the UK faces an epidemic of loneliness; over 9 million people, and 15% of young people, face chronic loneliness which has a hugely detrimental effect on their mental and physical health.



As someone who had been lonely as a young person Jo Cox recognised this and was determined to combat it. The Jo Cox Foundation continues this work through the Great Winter Get Together (16 – 29 January), our flagship winter event which brings people together to demonstrate the power of connection to alleviate loneliness.

With the cost of living crisis making it difficult for people to afford to attend their usual social activities, this year the Great Winter Get Together is more important than ever.

"I will not live in a country where thousands of people are living lonely lives, forgotten by the rest of us."

Jo Cox

We want there to be places for connection in communities across the UK which people can attend to alleviate loneliness. This may be a special Great Winter Get Together event, a regular community café or coffee morning.

Thank you for taking part in the Great Winter Get Together.

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What is the Great Winter Get Together?

The **Great Winter Get Together (16 – 29 January)** is the Jo Cox Foundation's flagship winter campaign. Timed to begin on Blue Monday, the loneliest day of the year, it focuses on loneliness. It aims to:

- Develop and advertise places to connect in communities across the UK, providing people with local spaces they can make meaningful connections in during the Great Winter Get Together period.
- Encourage people who are feeling lonely to attend places of connection this winter.
- To highlight the scale and impact of loneliness in the UK, in particular youth loneliness, and what can be done to address it at local and national levels.

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Who was Jo Cox?

Jo Cox was a passionate campaigner, activist and humanitarian; a proud Yorkshire lass and internationalist; and a devoted mum, daughter, sister, wife, friend and MP.



- She lived by the words she expressed in her first speech in Parliament: “We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us”.
- On 16th June 2016, on her way to a constituency surgery to meet with local residents of Batley and Spen, Jo Cox MP was murdered because of her beliefs.
- The Jo Cox Foundation was established in 2016 by the friends and family of the late Jo Cox MP, and exists to build a positive legacy for Jo and to create something positive from the tragedy that was her murder.

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What are the aims of this pack?

Whether it is your first time organising a Great Winter Get Together/Great Get Together or you're an experienced organiser this pack is here to support you.

As well as basic guidance on how to organise your Great Winter Get Together it also contains top tips on reaching out to diverse communities, advice on how to market your event and keys to encourage meaningful connection.

If you have any questions or want further support we're here to help! Feel free to drop us an email at hello@greatgettogether.org or feel free to attend one of our [Great Plan Together webinars](#).



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Event Support[Event Planning checklist](#)[Event top tips](#)[Inclusion and reaching out factsheet](#)[Guidance on running online events](#)[Keys for Unlocking Connection](#)[Talking about loneliness toolkit](#)[Spirit of 2012 Guide to Evaluating events](#) and [Evaluation template](#)[Great Winter Get Together M + E guidance](#) and [M + E FAQs](#)[Great Winter Get Together M + E leaflet](#)[Warm Welcome's](#) guidance on [setting up a warm space](#)[Camerados'](#) guidance on [setting up a public living room](#)**Marketing Support**[Marketing factsheet](#)[Template press release](#)[Template invites](#)[#PlacesForConnection badge](#)
(Can be added to websites, posters, etc)**Template social media posts:**- Event promo post ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)) -**[*All customisable materials can be found here*](#)****Tips for encouraging young people to connect**

1 Publicise your event on social media and with local colleges or universities if appropriate.

2 Encouraging swapping numbers and Instagram handles at the end so young people can stay in touch.

3 If there is any embarrassment and awkwardness, sometimes the best thing to do is to acknowledge this and own it - almost taking responsibility for that embarrassment - so younger participants are freed from having to worry about it.

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Keys to meaningful connection

1. Consider your space

The right event space is needed to ensure people can feel safe and relaxed. This doesn't mean high end buildings, but it does mean a space selected to be accessible and facilitate connection

2. Consider your activities

Including an activity helps people feel more at ease by giving them something to focus on. This creates space for conversations and connections to emerge naturally. Ideas may include walking, preparing food or arts and crafts

3. Remember we can achieve more together - organisations

As organisers we benefit from making connections and collaborating with others. Working with other organisations helps to develop constructive feedback, opportunities and new ideas. This can be particularly vital when you're trying to reach new audiences.

4. Remember we can achieve more together - community

Involving communities in planning and delivering activities improves outcomes for everyone. It helps communities to feel invested, empowered, heard and involved in an activity and is a great way to create new ideas and solutions.

5. Pay attention to small things

Connections aren't automatically created when you bring people together. It requires intention and attention. Paying attention to details can help give people reassurance and the tools they need to navigate new connections or experiences.

6. Allow enough time

Building trust, relationships and creating meaningful connections takes time. It requires long term thinking and is built when we are vulnerable with each other and feel valued and safe. Allowing enough time to allow individuals to build trust and relationships will pay off.

7. Identify barriers to participation and how you might overcome them

Anyone can benefit from increasing the number and quality of their social connections – but we know that certain groups are at more risk of loneliness and disconnection. Doing what you can to identify and minimise barriers to those who would benefit most will help increase your positive impact and change lives.



Contact us

If you have any questions or would like to know anything else about this year's Great Winter Get Together, please visit our website at greatgettogether.org/winter or get in touch with us at hello@greatgettogether.org

The Great Get Together is funded by [Spirit of 2012](#)



Get in touch

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