



WINTER NEWSLETTER

2022



Welcome to our winter newsletter

With the colder weather and shorter days we've been focusing on keeping cosy and providing lots of online activities for our guests to enjoy from the comfort of their own homes.

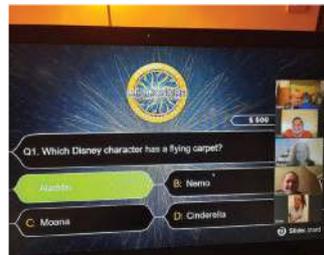
Coming up for guests we have a winter crafting session in which we will be making these adorable Gonks.

We are also looking forward to our Christmas party, as well as all of our regular features.

In our Facebook group we've been talking about Hygge and how to manage the winter months, which can be difficult for some. It is claimed that Hygge is one of the reasons Denmark is renowned for being one of the happiest countries in the world. Hygge is rooted in simple pleasures, meaningful connections with loved ones and enjoying nature.

We've also been sharing money saving tips to cope with the cost of living concerns many people are experiencing.

Read on to find out more about our new activities and what we've been up to.





YCT NEWS



HOW WE ARE MAKING OUR ONLINE SERVICES MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR GUESTS

Our online service was set up during the first lockdown to support guests during this difficult time.

One of our key objectives at Youth Cancer Trust is to prevent social isolation amongst young cancer patients during and after treatment. Our online service is an extension of the work we do in bringing young people together for holidays. Guests can now connect with many more young people in a safe and supportive environment, they can receive support and attend activities all year round. It also provides an opportunity for those too unwell to come on holiday to still be part of our community.

We are constantly evolving our online service and responding to the needs and suggestions of the young people we support.

We are aware that coming on a Zoom activity can be daunting for some people so we are seeking new ways to make our work interactive and accessible for everyone.

Here's what we have put in place to make our services accessible:

- Interactive Facebook Group for guests to chat, share their news and photos or ask a question / raise a topic to discuss with other guests.
- Weekly e-newsletter summarising news / events / photos / discussions in our online community the previous week. Links to support services and all of the information for our upcoming weekly activities.
- Watch again option for many of our Zoom activities that guests can access in their own time.
- Interactive quiz and games guests can participate in through their mobile to join live activities without attending the Zoom.
- Competitions, recipes, craft ideas, quizzes, articles and other activities guests can enjoy in their own time.
- Option to attend live activities on Zoom with video / audio off.
- Responding to suggestions from guests led to the introduction of our Gaming Society and Book Club. This has encouraged small group participation.



GUESTS

EILIDH'S STORY

It was in the lead up to Christmas when I got my diagnosis, 20th of December 2021. I did not expect to be told I had cancer. On Christmas Eve I went to my local hospital for a CT scan, which did take the excitement away from Christmas. It was a bleak Christmas, even worse with my birthday on the 31st December.

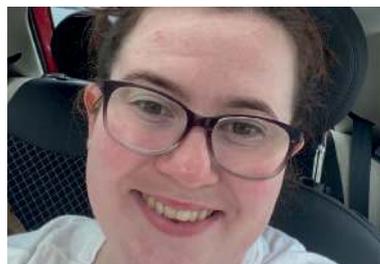
I had my surgery on the 14th of January. Saying goodbye to my mum at the doors of the ward, knowing I'd have to go in alone, was a feeling I cannot describe. It was a major surgery, I spent 10 days recovering in hospital.

During that time my parents unfortunately caught covid, since I was vulnerable, I had to stay with my uncle and aunt in Ayr. Around an hour and a half away from home. It felt alien and all I longed for was my own bed and home comforts.

I eventually got home and started recovery. I felt an intense loneliness and also that I was majorly missing out. When my friends would be out in clubs, I would be at home, unable to join in due to still being fairly unwell.

In March 2022 I found Youth Cancer Trust on Facebook and decided to show my interest in the services they provide. Laura got in touch with me and I was able to join the Facebook group and connect with numerous young people all over the UK, it was a great feeling.

In April, I had my Radioactive Iodine Treatment which meant having to be an inpatient again at the Beatson Cancer Centre in Glasgow. This was extremely daunting but knowing I would have the support group that I could join in with over Zoom made it seem slightly easier.



After my treatment, I continued to recover and in July I went down to Bournemouth to the house for my holiday. I thoroughly enjoyed going down and meeting other people my age, knowing we all had something in common. The different activities on offer were different to anything I've done before.

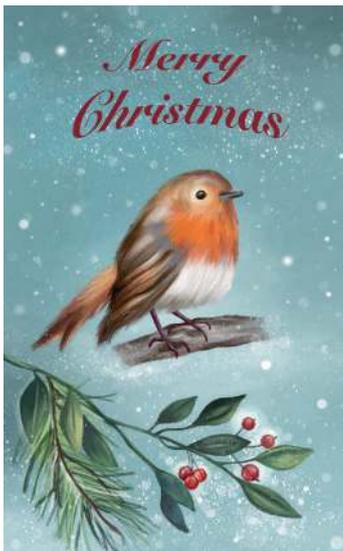
Merry Christmas

YCT CREATIVES

CHRISTMAS CARD DESIGN COMPETITION

We hosted a Christmas Card design competition for our guests. We received many beautiful designs and it was hard to pick a winner.

Congratulations to Gemma for the winning design. Second place goes to William. These 2 designs have been made into a Christmas card. available to purchase [here](#).



First place: Gemma



Second place: William



Third place: Kirsty

All proceeds to Youth Cancer Trust.

Well done also to our 3rd place design by Kirsty. Thanks to everyone else that entered, we enjoyed seeing all of your beautiful art work.

YCT PET CLUB

We often talk with our guests about pets and the comfort and joy they bring us. In this edition of YCT pet club, meet Sadruz and Teri.

"This is Teri, my beautiful turtle, aged 11 months. She puts a smile on my face everyday as she walks to the edge of her tank as soon as I wake up!"

She is my little angel."





ACTIVITIES

GAMING SOCIETY



We've had lots of fun over the last few weeks on our online Gaming Society, including a group games night playing the popular game 'Among Us' and a Video Game themed Quiz Night! The group is proving to be very popular and we have more gaming events being planned.

BOOK CLUB

Following a request for a book club, we are pleased to say we now have our very own Youth Cancer Trust book club and Facebook group for our guests.



To keep in with our October theme, our first book was Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone which we discussed at our inaugural meeting last month.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

We had a Harry Potter theme for our (virtual) Halloween party this year. Guests were treated to a memorable evening, including a challenging quiz for super fans, taking the sorting quiz test and the chance to dress up and show off their Halloween displays. In a popular new addition to this year's event, guests submitted their ideas for dares that were then picked at random on the night for staff to carry out. Dares included:

The Mummy Challenge (1 minute to make yourself into a Mummy using a roll of toilet paper)

Howl like a WereWolf - Apologies to our neighbours for this one!

Drink a Magic Potion - Well done to Hal and Laura who each made ghastly concoctions including garlic, vinegar, ketchup, chilli and a raw egg to drink. Gruesome!!



In the run up to the event, our guests and staff shared their spooky decorations, costumes and pumpkin carvings in our Facebook group chat. We also enjoyed chatting about all things Harry Potter as we have a number of fans amongst our guests.

Here's what our guests thought of the party:

" It was a brill night, I had fun, thank you Wendy, Laura and Hal"

" Was a great evening, thank you all!"

" Thanks, it was good fun"



ACTIVITIES (CONT'D)

WORLD CUP SWEEPSTAKE

Guests had the opportunity to participate in a World Cup Sweepstake at Youth Cancer Trust.

All 32 countries were drawn from a hat and assigned at random to participants. Guests then had to back their country all the way. The team also set some fun challenges for guests such as cooking a meal from your selected country, sharing a favourite song or piece of trivia.

(The sweepstake was just for fun, with no money / betting involved)



MINDFUL MONDAYS

We've added a weekly mindfulness session to our online programme. Guests can join our team each week to practise a meditation together. They can also watch again later in their own time. In the New Year we are hoping to expand on this session including mindfulness and mental health support tools and techniques.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

HYDRATION STATION

Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers who helped us at the Hydration Station for the Bournemouth half marathon. We were lucky to have another beautiful sunny day again this year. It is always a fun day with many of our volunteers returning year after year.

If you'd like to volunteer for this or any other events please contact wendy@yct.org.uk





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WHAT'S NEXT FOR YCT

Keep an eye on our website and social media for forthcoming activities and events. We will be posting updates and answering your questions.



Look out for our popular Dance Beats Cancer event in the spring.



Join our walking challenge in the New Year - more info to follow.



THANK YOU

Thank you to:

Iona, Kevin, Charles and Natalie - HA1 Cross Fitters for taking part in Battle Cancer and raising £304.

Thank you to Jack Kings Beach Residence for raising £632 by hosting a Blue and White Hawaiian boat party. Unfortunately, due to bad weather, they had a last minute change of plans, switching the boat to an indoor party instead. Jack's excellent event planning skills ensured his guests all still had an amazing time.

Reddam House School Parents and Friends Association for raising £207 at their movie night.

We have so many incredible people helping and supporting us. Apologies we can't give you all a mention but we really appreciate you!





CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR SALE

If you'd like to purchase a Christmas card designed by our guests Gemma and William, please [click here](#). Cards cost £5.99 for a pack of 10 or £0.59 per card.

CHRISTMAS BLUES

The countdown to the big day has officially begun, and across the country, doors are being ripped off advent calendars in a frenzy. The shops are blaring Christmas tunes, houses are draped in fairy lights and tinsel, and there is an abundance of glitter everywhere you turn. For many this is blissful, the festive season bringing that warm fuzzy feeling and a keen anticipation for the magical days ahead. View our [YCT Advent Calender here](#).

However, there are also many that dread the winter months and the impending celebrations. For many reasons this can be a difficult time of year, that heightens the feeling of isolation or is perhaps connected to painful memories or loved ones lost.

At Youth Cancer Trust we recognise that our guests may require additional support and staff are on hand to chat or to refer to any specialist services our guests may require. We also have a list of helplines available as well as lots of information and advice listed on Realshare, our secure resource section of our website for our guests to use.

We've devised a winter programme to include crafts, book club, gaming nights, bingo, tea and chat, yoga, group meditation and a Christmas party so guests can stay connected.

To anyone struggling this Christmas we recommend these services that can help.

Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Samaritans: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

Young Minds: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE TEAM

We'd like to wish all of our guests, friends and supporters a very Merry Christmas from all of us at Youth Cancer Trust. Thank you for your ongoing support and friendship, we couldn't do it without you!

We look forward to seeing you in the New Year and sharing our exciting new adventure with you.



To find out more about our services visit our website at www.youthcancertrust.org or contact our friendly team.

Videos about our services can be found on our [YouTube channel](#):



Facebook: 

Instagram: 