

TOGETHER

thistle
Foundation

For Thistle Supporters • Spring 2021

Dear Thistle Supporters,

Thank you for all your wonderful, ongoing support. You have the heartfelt gratitude of the Thistle team.

As we await the benefits that will surely come with the Covid vaccination programme, we very much hope that you and your loved ones are keeping well.

Thanks to your generosity and an amazing response to Callum's Christmas Appeal, I'm delighted to say that we are able to continue supporting people who are struggling with the debilitating effects of Long Covid.

With your support, we're helping people who can't get help anywhere else and who would be left to struggle alone. You help us keep our virtual doors open for everyone, and together we're supporting people to regain control of their wellbeing – and their lives.

Your continuing support is more valuable than ever this year. It gives me and the Thistle team confidence that, despite the ongoing challenges created by Covid, we will be able to support those who need us most and together we can look ahead to better times.

With best wishes from all at Thistle for a safe and healthy 2021.

Mark Hoolahan
CEO



Callum's Appeal



Thank you so much to everyone who so generously donated to our Christmas Appeal. Callum's story about the struggles of living with Long Covid clearly resonated with many of you, as you raised an incredible

£6079

to help continue supporting people living with long-term health conditions across Scotland.



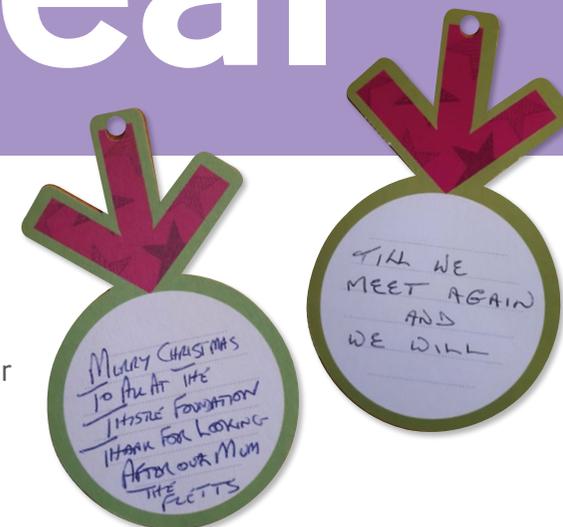
The amount raised is enough to provide

303

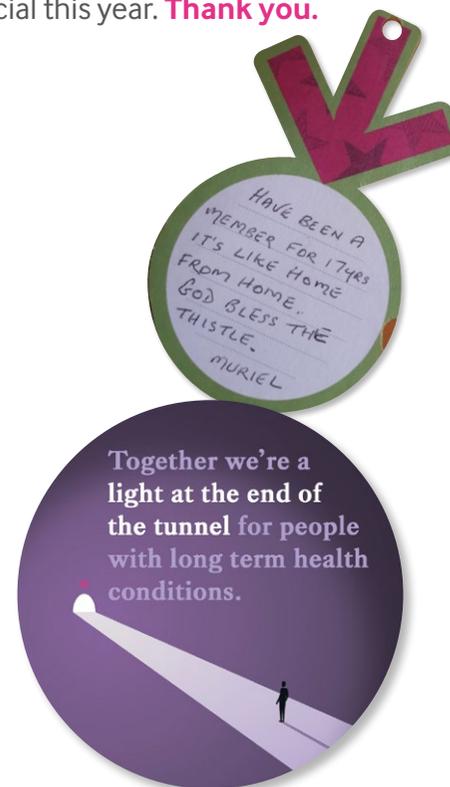
one-to-one consultations with a Health and Wellbeing Practitioner, or the equivalent of 607 individual sessions in our supported exercise classes, like the Moving Well course.



It was great to receive so many messages in response to Callum's story: clearly many of you feel as strongly as we do that people suffering from Long Covid and other long-term conditions need to be able to access support. We also had some lovely messages of support on your Christmas baubles, which made our Christmas tree extra special this year. **Thank you.**



More and more people are coming to Thistle for support with Long Covid, as well as other conditions exacerbated by the pandemic. If you would like to donate to help ensure they can access the support they need, you can do so at thistle.org.uk/donate. Thank you.



A Day in the Life of Thistle

Things look very different at Thistle now compared to a year ago. Things look different to even four months ago, when we were able to partially reopen the Centre for gym users. We wanted to show you what a 'typical' day in the life of Thistle looks like now, when things are anything but typical. With the latest lockdown some of these activities have been put on hold again, but we hope we'll be able to restart them soon. We hope this gives you a sense of how wide an impact your support has.



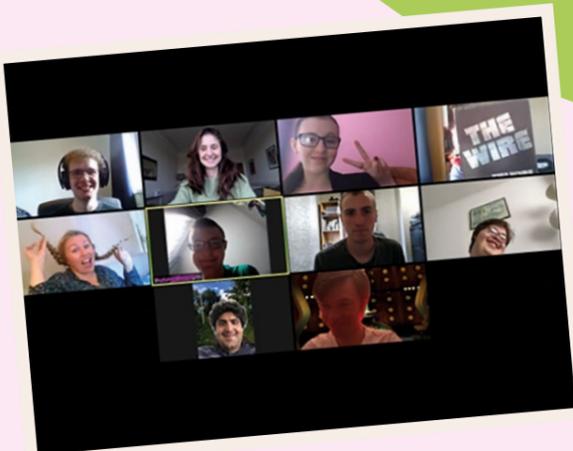
11am: Margaret leads an outdoor Tai Chi session



9am: gym members attend our accessible gym for a supervised exercise session



7pm: the Young People's group meets online for their regular catch up and activity sessions



5pm: members of Connecting Craigmillar, a community development project for local residents of all ages and backgrounds, get together to distribute food packages around the community

1pm: Barbara, our social media volunteer, engages with our supporters on Instagram



2pm: Callum and his Personal Assistant go for a walk by the beach



3pm: Wellbeing Practitioner Sylvia delivers a 1:1 wellbeing consultation over Zoom



A (Kilt)Walk to remember

Last year, our Community Fundraiser Gail did a virtual Kiltwalk in memory of her brother Jeff, who was a well-loved member of Thistle's community. Her story of how she planned her route around many of Jeff's favourite places around Edinburgh caught the attention of the Hunter Foundation, who invited her to a video call with other #KiltwalkHeroes.

To Gail's amazement, the fundraisers were surprised by Sir Tom Hunter who awarded them all

£1000

for their charity! This will make such a difference to the lives of so many people like Jeff.

"I did the Kiltwalk for Thistle in memory of Jeff. Thistle was so important to him, and he was so important to me. Coming to Thistle changed his life – the only thing he talked about more was Hibs!

Jeff was someone who always had time for people. He worked as a peer supporter for Thistle after being

supported himself with ME/CFS and he was always in motion, going from meeting to meeting with Thistle volunteers, colleagues and the people we support. He'd talk to anyone, and every time we went somewhere, he'd always spot someone he knew and stop for a chat.

At the end of the Kiltwalk, I went to Jeff's grave and laid a Thistle t-shirt on it to let him know that he is still part of Thistle. It was a very emotional day.

Thistle changed Jeff's life for the better but I don't feel he ever really knew how much Thistle benefitted from knowing him; keeping his memory alive is my way of keeping him a part of Thistle's life and mine."



Gail and Jeff



Sir Tom surprising the #KiltwalkHeroes

Until our next newsletter you can keep up to date with all things Thistle by following us on our social media platforms.

www.thistle.org

 @thistlefoundation

 @thistlecharity

 @thistle_foundation