



The Ridings
AT THE HEART OF WAKEFIELD

CUPPA CLUB

REDUCING LONELINESS A BREW AT A TIME



34% OF
THE RIDINGS' SHOPPERS ARE
AGED OVER 65

SETTING THE SCENE

Loneliness and social isolation is an increasingly pressing issue for the UK's older population, culminating in the recent appointment of a Minister for Loneliness in Parliament. Since 34% of The Ridings' shoppers are aged over 65, many risk suffering from loneliness. It was therefore essential to create a campaign that helped tackle these issues whilst enhancing the customer experience at the Ridings, particularly for older shoppers.

Linking up with AgeUK and raising awareness among the population can only go so far – The Ridings team wanted to expand further than that and create a series of events which would encourage older people to visit, interact with others and enjoy free entertainment and refreshments.



THE FIRST EVENT

A 'Find Friends' afternoon tea event for Valentine's Day 2017 saw the Centre partner with AgeUK Wakefield District, to highlight the issue of loneliness. The event experienced significant attendance (100+ guests) along with regional TV coverage highlighting that it was the first time that AgeUK had partnered with a shopping centre to deliver an event of this nature.

Demand for further events was clear, so a longer-term campaign was developed, which included a series of monthly events, under a new brand called 'Cuppa Club'. Building on the solid foundation set by the Valentine's Day event, Cuppa Club launched in June 2017. Many customers had already written in to the Centre after seeing the initial Valentine's Day event in the news and the customer service desk had numerous enquiries about similar events in the future. It was clearly evident that there was demand for this campaign by visitors to the Centre and that The Ridings had a perfect platform to ensure it continued to be a success month-on-month.

Cuppa Club provided a welcoming environment; giving guests a chance to enjoy a cup of tea and a chat, live entertainment like music and dance workshops, plus the opportunity to speak to AgeUK and partners including West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue about their services and how they could help them.



HELP TO REDUCE LONELINESS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



100+ GUESTS ATTENDED THE EVENT



PARTNERSHIPS

The Ridings linked up with retailers to create a Cuppa Club loyalty scheme, giving members a 10% discount with tenants including Esquires and Grind Cafés. This is to incentivise guests to visit the Centre more frequently and promote the retailer offering too.

The Ridings has linked up with other service providers, such as West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (WYFR) and Wakefield Girls High School. WYFR educated guests about staying safe in the home and the High School's Junior choir visited the Christmas Cuppa Club to sing for guests and hand out mince pies. The Ridings also visited the school to talk to students about loneliness to help raise awareness.



CUPPA CLUB MEMBERSHIP CARD -
10% DISCOUNT

**RAISING AWARENESS
OF LONELINESS**





First Thursday of the month
11am – 3pm

Middle Mall Events Space (outside M&S Foodhall)

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A FREE monthly meet-up, promoting friendship and community in Wakefield. Events include afternoon tea, plus live music, dancing, craft activities and more.



ridingscentre.com



Supported by
Wakefield District
ageUK

PROMOTING THE CAMPAIGN

Building on the solid foundation secured from the TV press coverage from the initial event, the Centre looked at marketing techniques that were more likely to reach the right demographic. Using traditional media, such as distributing leaflets to local residences and sheltered accommodation villages ensured it targeted large local populations of older people – along with press advertising and in-Centre promotion.



First Thursday
of the month
11am – 3pm

Middle Mall Events Space

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ageUK



TEA'S UP: Betty Chappell, Denise Geddes (Age UK) and May Kaye at The Ridings.

Enjoy a brew with the Cuppa Club

HUNDREDS OF people enjoyed a brew as part of a new 'Cuppa Club' launched at The Ridings to help tackle loneliness in the community among pensioners.

The Ridings teamed up with Age UK Wakefield District for the regular gathering, the next which will be between 11am and 3pm on August 3 outside M&S Foodhall. Helen

Morris, from Age UK, said: "It was a brilliant social event. I spoke to many there who come to The Ridings alone, some every day, to be among people."



PAT LITTLEWOOD
BBC LOOK NORTH



Ridings tackles loneliness with a cuppa

The Ridings and Age UK organised a 'Find Friends' event on Valentine's Day to highlight loneliness amongst the elderly. They held a drop in tea and cake event for people, with games and bingo at the shopping centre. Ridings marketing manager Sara Hassan said: "One lady remarked it was the first time she had been out to socialise in three years. It was lovely to see so many people making future friends"

This is how we have already been addressing these key issues!

Round Two
Coming 2018

How is Wakefield District Community Foundation our Growing Elderly Population

Having identified this as a major ongoing problem for the District the Foundation recently launched it's Elderly Persons Social Isolation Fund and gave out grants to two local groups with the aim of identifying those most socially isolated. The groups were The Wakefield District Sight Aid and the local branch of Age UK.

People are more likely to suffer from sight loss as they age and this can cause them to become very withdrawn. Thanks to our funding Wakefield Sight aid have been able to expand their outreach project, originally being piloted in the South of Wakefield to the Whole of the District. They anticipate the project will benefit approximately 500 local people.

Age UK with the help of our funding and co-operation with The Ridings Wakefield have started "Cuppa Club" events attracting passing older solo people to enoase, enjoy free refreshments and join the club. By promoting these events



within the shopping centre and getting the shopping centre staff to help identify the lonely and vulnerable by directly engaging with people the project will increase the awareness of shopping centre staff, enable action to be taken and encourage elderly people to participate.

Further grant funding rounds will begin early 2018, view our website for the application criteria www.wakefieldcf.org.uk/grants.



Surviving Winter

Imagine what it must be like to be homeless or be unable to have adequate warm clothing for you or your children as the recent wintry weather starts to bite!

Working in partnership with local company Double Two, the Community Foundation of Wakefield has been able to secure a considerable amount of brand new clothing which has been passed to voluntary groups across the District for distribution to those in need.

The Wakefield Community Foundation would like to thank Double Two for its kind generosity. If any other local business would like

to know how they can help us please email us today,

But this is only half the story of how The Wakefield Community Foundation are trying to help the District's most vulnerable people. Many people in the Wakefield District face the dilemma where they have to choose between 'heating or eating. There are over 14,000 households throughout our District facing this exact challenge. Our Fuel Poverty

campaign has already given out £6,000 but the need is great.

As the cold weather starts to bite pensioners over 65 have started to receive their winter fuel payments and these are sent automatically, regardless of income. So, if you receive a winter payment, due for payment between November and January and don't need it for heating costs, please give all or part of it to our fund. See our website for details.

Thank you to
Double 2

ENGAGING THE PRESS

A mix of TV and press coverage, as well as using mediums used by AgeUK, The Ridings secured significant levels of coverage for the Cuppa Club.



MAKING THE CAMPAIGN DIFFERENT

Tackling a nationally-recognised issue and working collaboratively with community organisations has created a more loyal customer base which continues to return to the shopping centre, ultimately benefitting retailers, many of whom have praised the results that it has yielded in loyalty card redemptions and overall perception of the centre. Cuppa Club shows the depth and ability a shopping centre team has to immerse itself in the community which it serves, going above and beyond their focus on driving sales to retailers, yet still achieving this through the work it is completing.

This campaign goes beyond inviting a charitable organisation into the Centre from a commercialisation perspective – The Ridings has aligned itself with the aims of its partners to achieve a common goal, which in turn has helped to achieve others.

Further partnership work with AgeUK Wakefield District has included staff workshops and development of an awareness campaign for both retailer staff and the public called 'Just Say Hello'. This also includes awards which will recognise Ridings retailers and staff who deliver exceptional customer service to older shoppers.



**TO DELIVER AN EVENT EVERY MONTH
THAT HELPS TO REDUCE LONELINESS
AMONGST SHOPPERS**

An event has been held every month,
with different partners each time.



TO PROMOTE THE EVENT AND ENGAGE GUESTS WITH THE ATTENDANCE GROWING BY MORE THAN 50% IN A 6 MONTH PERIOD (FROM AN AVERAGE OF 100 GUESTS TO 150)

Guest numbers have risen by over 50% over 6 months, with each event welcoming around 175 guests (the Christmas event attracted 200+). This has grown through word of mouth and staff proactively inviting shoppers. 67% of guests are regular attendees.

"It's made such a difference to me as I have very few friends that I see in person and it gets me out of the house and really cheers me up."

Shopper Sheila Marsh, pictured, who lives alone



TO ENGAGE TWO SERVICE PROVIDERS TO PARTNER WITH THE RIDINGS ON THE CAMPAIGN, WITH A VIEW TO ADDING FURTHER VALUE TO VISITORS



The Centre has engaged multiple partners including West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue, West Yorkshire Police and two service areas within Wakefield Council Health & Wellbeing.

Following the successful launch of Cuppa Club, AgeUK Wakefield District were awarded a grant to help sustain the campaign by the Community Foundation Wakefield District, which now supports through assisting in partnership development and teams promoting and volunteering at events.



TO ENGAGE AT LEAST TWO TENANTS FOR THE CAMPAIGN TO BENEFIT BOTH GUESTS AND TENANTS

Numerous tenants have supported the campaign through offering discounts via the Cuppa Club loyalty scheme and attending events. The Perfume Shop has interacted with guests, given out goody bags and special offers and has seen several new customers as a result.

Grind Café sees 20-25 customers redeeming Cuppa Club discounts each week. Grind has a similar demographic to The Ridings and after seeing the success of Cuppa Club, has pledged to support the campaign through staff training and the implementation of 'chatty tables' whereby tables will be allocated for guests who are alone to sit at together.



NEXT STEPS

Cuppa Club is now being implemented nationally in all NewRiver Centres where applicable, with the Ridings team at the forefront of the planning and providing support to other Centres to help ensure the same impact is achieved.

The Ridings is also developing the Just Say Hello campaign, as well as working with retailer teams to make them more aware of and capable of making a difference to visitors who suffer from loneliness.



Age brings physical challenges we can all see, but older people tell us that the hidden challenge of loneliness is what really hurts.

We want your best examples of 'saying hello' with an act of sensitive kindness so we can share the joy of reducing loneliness in older people across the centre, the city, the world!

To enter send us your store's best examples of saying "hello" with an act of sensitive kindness to an older visitor on their own. It can be something you, or a colleague, has done or said. Entries can be up to 500 words long. The best will be publicised and you will be helping us to reduce loneliness in older people across the centre, the city, the world!

Closing date: Friday 23 March 2018

Award Ceremony: Thursday 3 May 2018 (at the Cuppa Club)

Simply email your entry to helen.morris@ageukwd.org.uk

Judging by an independent panel of older people who live alone or care for a partner

Supported by The Ridings

Funded by Community Foundation Wakefield District

Age UK Wakefield District Registered - Charity No. 1096511 - Registered in England and Wales - www.ageukwd.org.uk





AgeUK Wakefield District has also received additional funding to sustain the campaign and further enhance the activity – the fact that this was the first time AgeUK had been involved with a shopping centre in this type of initiative has helped to further establish its campaign in local communities.

“Finding a partner organisation with the will, the opportunity and the resources to create a regular event for older people who are on their own allows the Charity to focus on engaging and supporting participants using our deep knowledge of their concerns. The Cuppa Club works at every level and especially as a highly visible reminder to everyone that companionship is the key to tackling isolation and loneliness and this can be free and easy and enjoyable.”



Paula Bee
Executive Officer, AgeUK Wakefield District