



Review of 2020

Caritas in a time of Covid-19

*Caritas Social Action Network is a member of
Caritas Internationalis within the Caritas Europa group*

“Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other.”

Pope Francis, March 2020

06

Introduction

08

Developing the network

12

Advancing education,
training, practice and formation

14

Offering a coherent Catholic
voice in the public arena

16

Operating for the public benefit

Foreword by Bishop Terry Drainey, Chair of Caritas Social Action Network

As we reflect on the year that has gone, we cannot help but give full acknowledgement to the impact of Covid-19 on all of us and all our endeavours. There is no doubt that it has felt like the dark clouds have truly enveloped us. However, there have always been at least glimmers of light for those who look. Pope Francis speaks of this in his encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, On Fraternity and Social Friendship:

“True, a worldwide tragedy like the Covid-19 pandemic momentarily revived the sense that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person’s problems are the problems of all.”

There is no doubt that all of us are looking for a “new normal”. However, whatever that might be, it cannot just be the “old normal” slightly tweaked. Here is a God-given opportunity to look at things afresh and to right the wrongs that history has recorded. So many of the members of CSAN have been part of the picture of hope that has been and is still being built despite the darkness and difficulty of the present situation. I pray that



as we face the future, CSAN will contribute wholeheartedly to bring light and hope to all we meet and with whom we work. Again quoting from *Fratelli Tutti*:

“Hope is bold; it can look beyond personal convenience, the petty securities and compensations which limit our horizon, and it can open us up to grand ideals that make life more beautiful and worthwhile. Let us continue, then, to advance along the paths of hope.”

In blessed hope.

+ Terence Drainey

Message from Phil McCarthy, CEO 2015-2021, Caritas Social Action Network

This year has been like no other and Caritas Social Action Network has been affected as we all have. The suddenness of the pandemic, our national unpreparedness, and the way that Covid-19 has reached into every corner of our lives will stay with us. It has affected the poor and vulnerable most of all and I have been moved by the hope, compassion, and commitment which people in CSAN's member agencies have demonstrated. I am filled with admiration.

As a national team our contribution has been to highlight and encourage positive responses from the Network, and to address the impact of the pandemic and related policy changes on those in need and on our charities. We have learned to deliver our meetings and programmes in new ways. The report will record and highlight these achievements. Further information is available on our website.

I retire from this role at the end of March 2021 and I want to express my gratitude to our trustees, staff team, volunteers, supporters, funders and donors, and to the many colleagues who contribute so much to the Network. I have every confidence that my



successor Raymond Friel will take the Network on to great things.

In his book *Let Us Dream* Pope Francis writes:

"We need a movement of people who know we need each other, who have a sense of responsibility to others and to the world. We need to proclaim that being kind, having faith and working for the common good are great life goals that need courage and vigour..."

Over the last five years I have experienced our Network as such a movement.

I wish you well and assure you that we will remain together in prayer.

Phil McCarthy,
CEO December 2015 - March 2021



Message from Raymond Friel, CEO of Caritas Social Action Network from April 2021

"I took over the role of CEO of CSAN from Dr Phil McCarthy in April 2021. I'd like to thank Phil for his outstanding work as CEO over the last five years. I hope to build on his legacy and further extend the network, look at how we can develop formation and training programmes and consider how best to contribute to a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena in an era of challenge, but also hope."

Our vision

We want England & Wales to be places where every person can flourish in their families and communities, living with peace and human dignity. We strive especially for the voices of the poor and wounded to be heard and acted upon.

With Christian social action at its heart, CSAN will be an inclusive, effective and cohesive network of charities grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and Caritas dioceses in England & Wales.

Our mission

Caritas Social Action Network shares in the mission of the Catholic Church in England & Wales. We support and facilitate our network of social action charities and dioceses, working in partnership with them to help poor, vulnerable and marginalised people find their voice and to enable them to improve their lives.

6



Caritas Salford: feeding the hungry

Team members

During 2020 we were delighted to welcome Sean Ryan, Caritas Community Sponsorship Co-ordinator to the team. Sean is seconded from Caritas Salford and his post is funded by a grant from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales.

- Phil McCarthy: Chief Executive Officer
- Clive Chapman: Senior Officer for Mission and Advocacy
- Elize Sakamoto: Officer for Education and Learning (part time)
- Ged Edwards: Officer for Network Development
- Sean Ryan: Caritas Community Sponsorship Co-ordinator
- Isabella George: Office Manager
- Mary Gandy: Board Minutes Secretary

We benefitted from the contribution of our volunteer Andrew Haines who represents CSAN on *Your Catholic Legacy*.



Developing the network

During 2020 we welcomed three new members:

- **Caritas Arundel and Brighton** exists to open new possibilities for social action within the Diocese and to link with the wider social concerns of the Church. An early focus is on work with victims of human trafficking.
- **Caritas Hexham and Newcastle** is the umbrella organisation for all works of mercy and outreach across the Diocese, providing vision, support, encouragement, and a voice for change.
- **Million Minutes** works to create a world where all young people enjoy a life of dignity and are accompanied to discover and fulfil their purpose through social action. We exist to spread the treasure of Catholic social teaching which we believe can inspire and resource young people's participation in the world.

Caritas diocesan journey

In 2012, Pope Benedict XVI asked diocesan Bishops to establish in the Church entrusted to his care an Office to direct and coordinate the service of charity in his name. CSAN supports this work through our Caritas Diocesan Journey programme. During 2020 the number of dioceses with Caritas agencies increased by two to fifteen.

Thanks to funding from the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation, CSAN was able to offer grants to support the development of Caritas diocesan agencies in seven dioceses. By the end of 2020 there were 20 dioceses engaged in our Caritas Diocesan Journey programme. Our aspiration is for Caritas to be established in all 22 dioceses of England & Wales by 2022, ten years after Pope Benedict's call.

We have continued to provide opportunities for the Caritas diocesan agencies to share good practice and to engage with each other and other CSAN members. The Caritas South

Million Minutes: a new way of being together



West and East Hubs have begun to flourish in 2020 and the Northern group of CSAN agencies meet on specific topics.

At the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic we produced a toolkit with the Diocese of Nottingham and the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) to assist parishes and SVP conferences to respond to local needs safely. This was distributed in 17 of the 22 Dioceses of England & Wales and adapted by Caritas agencies internationally and by other Churches in the UK. We are indebted to Professor Jim McManus (Public Health: Hertfordshire County Council) for his advice on this.

Seven member agencies met to develop work placements for unemployed young people through the Government's *Kickstart Scheme*. This resulted in successful applications by some members and the SVP generously offering to incorporate three of the group in its application so that more young people could benefit.

CSAN members and CAFOD staff are working together locally. Caritas Hallam and CAFOD in Hallam have supported each other in encouraging take-up of the Pandemic Toolkit and CAFOD's petition for support for people overseas struggling with the impact of COVID-19. Caritas Plymouth and CAFOD have cooperated on the production of a week of activities to mark the five-year anniversary of the launch of *Laudato Si'*. It has been good to work with Justice & Peace Commissions in an increasing number of dioceses.

Directors' Forum

Since the start of the pandemic we have maintained and built new links within the network, encouraging members to share good practice and opportunities. Twenty-one well-attended events were delivered by the team on topics largely chosen by the Directors' Forum. These events focussed on the needs of most affected by the pandemic such as homeless people or those from minority ethnic backgrounds. There were sessions on how to work safely during the pandemic from Professor Jim McManus (see above). Members shared their concerns and strengthened the sustainability of their charities. They explored the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of their staff and on the people with whom they work. Directors discussed how to use discernment to make good decisions in sessions led by the Jesuits. We express our thanks to all contributors and especially to the Forum Chair, Carol Hill of Catholic Care (Diocese of Leeds).

Community Sponsorship of Refugees

Community Sponsorship continues to inspire and galvanise Catholic communities to help refugee families rebuild their lives here in the UK. The scheme inevitably lost momentum due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All inbound refugee flights were suspended between March 2020 and February 2021, with parish life being severely impacted by measures introduced to limit the spread of the virus.

Despite the pandemic, twelve Catholic applications were approved, and nine new projects commenced during 2020. Families and the groups supporting them showed resilience and creativity in meeting the challenges of lockdown, with regular 'window' meetings taking place in families' gardens, technology helping to support children's learning, play and fitness and online ESOL and other forms of support being offered to parents.

Pandemic restrictions helped catalyse shared ways of working across the network, including adoption by members of a new national safeguarding policy for the scheme and new national Handbook materials for parish volunteers. The scheme's national Steering Group has seen a deepening spirit of fellowship, solidarity and collaboration, with members sharing their expertise, learning and good practice.

As pandemic measures begin to ease, members and others will plan a national

communications strategy aimed at increasing the number, geographical spread and diversity of sponsors. Now that future resettlement numbers will be a matter for Local Authorities and communities to determine, opportunities may lie ahead for partnerships of trust and equity to emerge between local government and civic society, acting as an exemplar of the common good. Let us *dare to dream*.

Domestic Abuse Forum

In 2020 Caritas Social Action Network held our first annual Domestic Abuse Forum. Representatives from across the country met to hear the latest developments on a problem which has been made far worse by the pandemic. We heard about the high incidence of abuse inflicted on women with health concerns, communication, physical or learning disabilities. The Bishops' Conference domestic abuse working group (DAWG) was wound up in 2019.



Catholics for AIDS Prevention and Support: outreach to the isolated

Criminal Justice

Our Criminal Justice Forum is chaired by Bishop Richard Moth who has responsibility for prison chaplaincy within the Bishops' Conference. Due to the pandemic, prisoners had to spend more than 23 hours a day in isolation with the consequent impacts on their mental health and families. This year's Forum, which took place online, had increased attendance from Caritas Diocesan agencies. Our national prison charity, Pact, is modifying its Criminal Justice Roadshow model so that it can be used online as a way of engaging Catholics in supporting both prisoners and their families.

Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Europa

CSAN and our sister Caritas agency CAFOD are members of the Caritas Internationalis confederation within the Caritas Europa group. Through CSAN's membership of

Caritas Europa the Diocese of Nottingham and Caritas Westminster, have taken part in the two-year Caritas Europa Grassroots Participation Learning Path Programme to develop skills and insights into working with parishioners and people in need.

COMECE Social Affairs Commission

COMECE brings together Bishops' and representatives of the Catholic Church in the European Union. There are several committees of which the Social Affairs Commission is relevant to the issues covered by our members. Now the UK has left the EU the Bishops of England & Wales and their representatives have observer status on COMECE. The challenge will be to contribute to practical and constructive relationships with our European neighbours through COMECE and its commissions.



Caritas Westminster: Trafalgar Square Refreshment Hub



Advancing education, training, practice and formation

Communications and Fundraising Forum

We have been convening this Forum since 2009. It has become a place where members can improve skills and knowledge through expert input and sharing best practices.

A meeting was held in October. We are grateful to Ken Madine of the SVP who chairs the Forum.

leadership. The first meeting took place in December 2020. CSAN is grateful to Elize Sakamoto for her work on this initiative.

Webinar on *Fratelli tutti*

CSAN and CAFOD delivered a joint public webinar on *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis' most recent encyclical, with theological reflection from Dr Anna Rowlands, of the University of Durham. This was the first public event the agencies have delivered together and a welcome collaboration.

Supporting Formation in Catholic Social Teaching

2020 saw the adoption of the CST resource 'Caritas in Practice' by the Network. Work is continuing to adapt CAFOD's flexible Catholic Social Teaching Cards resource, which focus on our sister Caritas agency's overseas work, to enable people to reflect on life here through CST, particularly through the practice of our members.

Women's Leadership for social action forum launched

2020 saw the launch of our Women's Leadership forum. Women form the majority of those who deliver and sustain Catholic responses to the suffering of vulnerable and marginalised people in England and Wales, yet their expertise and leadership can be under-recognised. This new Forum will provide a space for Catholic and non-Catholic women leaders working in CSAN members to come together to nurture and promote their

Webinar on the Vatican Covid-19 Commission

In March 2020, Pope Francis asked the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development to create a Commission, to express the Church's care for the whole human family facing the Covid-19 pandemic. The Commission has five working groups on: acting now; looking to the future with creativity; communicating hope; seeking common dialogue; and financial support. We were pleased to hold a webinar on this new model of collaboration across Church structures with Fr Augusto Zampini, the Adjunct Secretary to the Commission.



Caritas Food Collective: distributing food in Letchworth



Offering a coherent Catholic voice in the public arena

CSAN chose positive ageing and care as its principal focus for mission and advocacy to mid-2023. This followed the publication of our report, *Care in Time*, in December 2019, and a plenary resolution of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, calling on leaders among religious orders, Catholic foundation charities and diocesan financial secretaries to “work together” on developing a joint plan of commitments. While the resolution was

addressed to those leaders directly and not their umbrella associations, CSAN’s continuing investment has enabled us to put in place some building blocks: of new and deeper relationships within and beyond the Caritas network, and options that CSAN could realistically deliver in the contexts of distributed leadership and political inertia on social care reform.



CSAN organised and participated in multiple calls for increased Government spending for the most vulnerable in society throughout 2020, including for children and families on low incomes (e.g. extension of free school meals, cash payments to parents and abolishing the 'two-child limit'); on the uprating of Universal Credit and legacy benefits; through the Rough Sleeping Taskforce; to extend the *Everyone In* initiative to support

people becoming street homeless, and in developing joint calls by faith leaders for comprehensive action on child poverty. We responded to Danny Kruger's report, *Levelling up communities*.

The Tablet weekly paper produced regular coverage in collaboration with CSAN on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on people served by CSAN's members.





Operating for the public benefit

Caritas Social Action Network operates for the public benefit in England & Wales through all our activities. Our network development work supports the Caritas dioceses and charities in their work with people in poverty and with other needs. Our education and learning work contributes to raising standards of practice in the field. Our advocacy work is an offering in the public arena for the benefit of social policy and decision makers. Our work serves the common good of England & Wales.

Governance

Caritas Social Action Network is a registered charity, a Limited Company by guarantee without share capital and an official agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Information about our status can be found on the websites of the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Our patron is Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster. We are fortunate to have a committed and high calibre Board of Trustees. Our Chair is Bishop Terry Drainey, Bishop of Middlesbrough. We have two other bishop trustees: Rt Rev John Arnold, Bishop of Salford and Rt Rev Tom Williams, Auxiliary Bishop of Liverpool. Our Vice-Chair is Sister Lynda Dearlove RSM MBE. We currently have eight lay trustees drawn from our members or with relevant expertise and experience. They all contribute to our work and give their time freely from their busy schedules. Details of all our trustees can be found on our website.

Internal training and development

We are committed to the education and formation of our team. We have benefitted from expert input on Catholic social teaching from Dr Pat Jones to our quarterly team meetings.

Finances and funding

We are grateful for our ongoing grant from the Catholic Trust for England & Wales, and support from the Dioceses along with the income from our members. These funds enable us to plan a core programme of work. Over the last few years we have supplemented this with income from grants and individual supporters, many of whom have been contributing on a regular basis for many years.

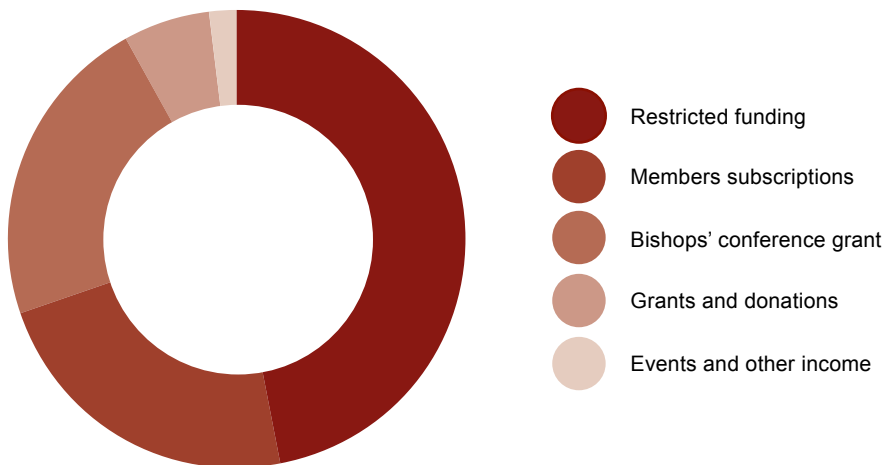
We are grateful to all our funders and donors, but especially recognise the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation has contributed significantly to making our work possible during 2018, 2019 and 2020. CCLA also continue to support our work generously as did the Sisters of the Holy Cross, the Society of the Holy Child Jesus CIC and the Jesuits in Britain.

The total income amounted to some £401k in 2020 compared with £381k in 2019. This figure includes grant income from the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation of £148k. Total expenditure was some £372k in 2020 compared with £393k in 2019.

Full details and our accounts can be found in our Charity Commission report.

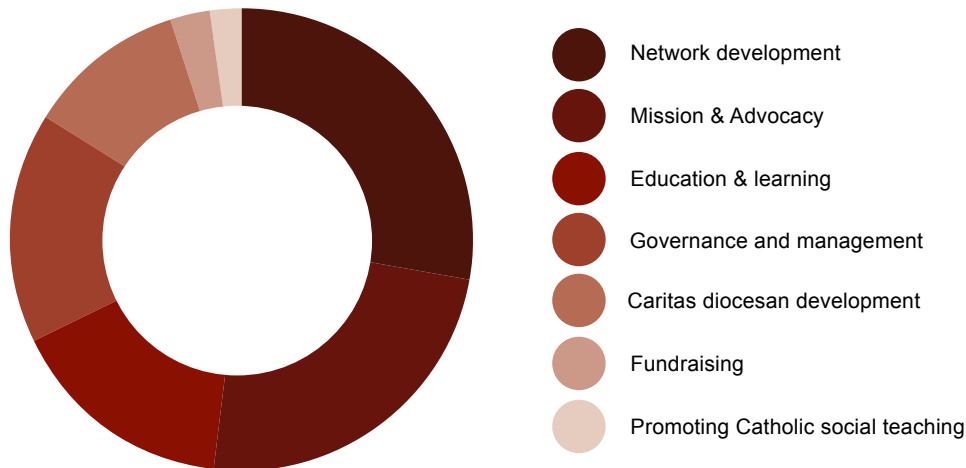
2020 Income

Total: £405,793



Expenditure 2020

Total: £372,251



Premises

The Covid-19 pandemic evidenced the ability for much of the charity's work to be conducted by virtual contact, with reduced transport costs and greater equality of access to virtual meetings, for member charities spread around the country. Staff have adapted to working remotely from home. Caritas Social Action Network is based at Romero House, in Central London, with our sister Caritas agency CAFOD. We are grateful to CAFOD for sharing their office space with us and providing estates and IT support.

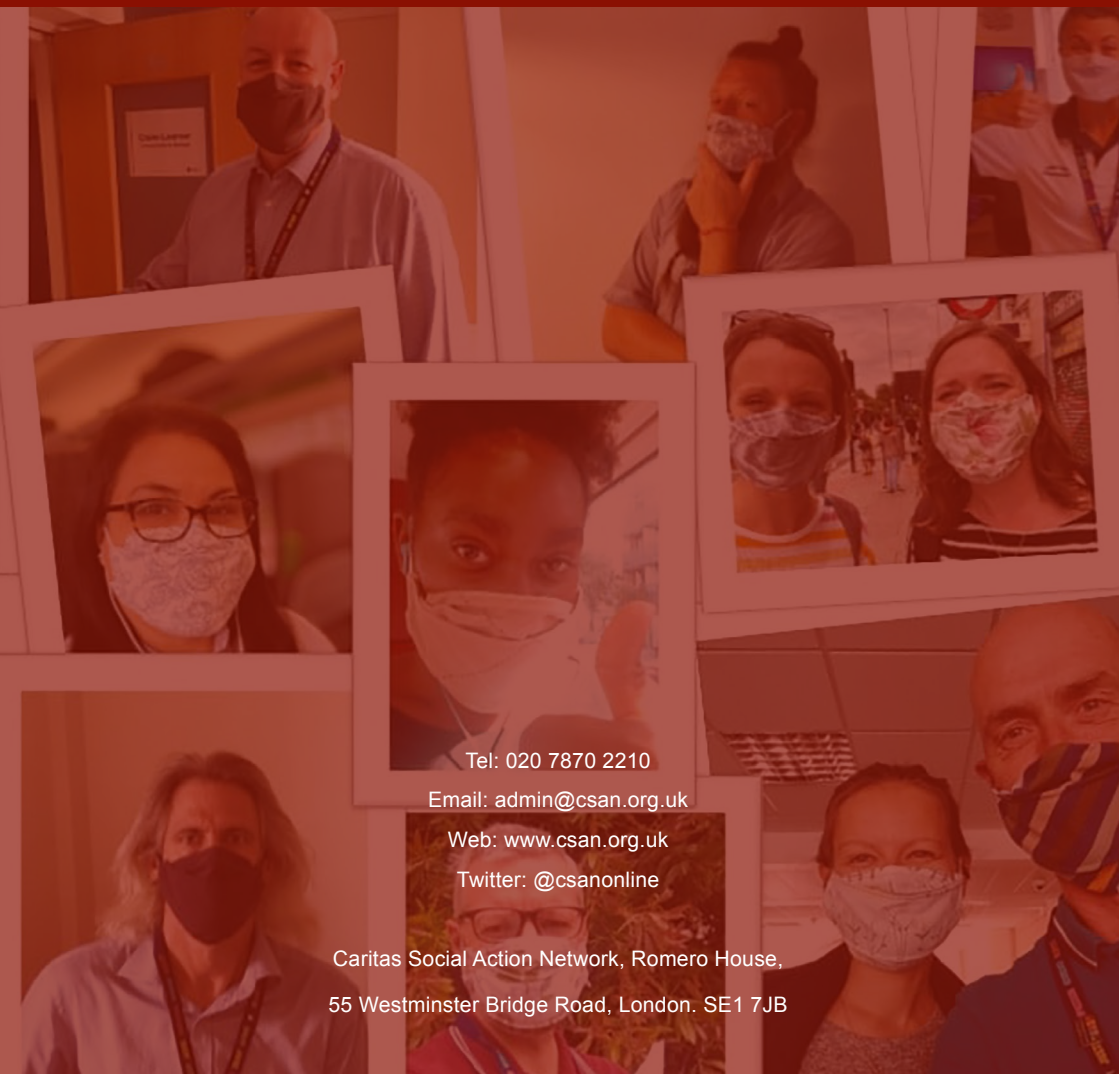
We are also grateful to Nugent and its staff for its kind offer of hospitality and part-time office accommodation in Liverpool to provide office facilities for our Network Development Officer.

List of members

1. Brentwood Catholic Children's Society
2. British Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
3. Cardinal Hume Centre
4. Caritas Anchor House
5. Caritas Archdiocese of Birmingham
6. Caritas Archdiocese of Cardiff
7. Caritas Arundel and Brighton
8. Caritas Diocese of Brentwood
9. Caritas Diocese of Hallam
10. Caritas Diocese of Middlesbrough
11. Caritas Diocese of Portsmouth
12. Caritas Diocese of Salford
13. Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury
14. Caritas East Anglia
15. Caritas Hexham and Newcastle
16. Caritas Jersey
17. Caritas Leeds
18. Caritas Plymouth
19. Caritas Westminster
20. Catholic Association for Racial Justice (CARJ)
21. Catholic Care (Diocese of Leeds)
22. Catholic Children's Society (Westminster)
23. Catholic Disability Fellowship
24. Catholics for Aids Prevention & Support (CAPS)
25. Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)
26. Depaul UK
27. Faith in Families
28. Father Hudson's Care
29. Institute of Our Lady of Mercy
30. Irish Chaplaincy
31. Jesuit Refugee Service UK
32. Marriage Care
33. Million Minutes
34. The Medaille Trust
35. The National Board of Catholic Women
36. NOAH Enterprise (New Opportunities and Horizons)
37. Nugent (including Caritas services for the Archdiocese of Liverpool)
38. The Passage
39. Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact)
40. Saint John of God Hospitaller Services
41. Seeking Sanctuary
42. St Antony's Centre for Church and Industry
43. St Elizabeth's Centre
44. St Joseph's Hospice
45. St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP, England & Wales)
46. Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea)
47. Together for the Common Good (T4CG)
48. Welcome Me as I Am
49. women@thewell



St Joseph's Hospice: flu jab, protecting the carers



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