



NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2020

Dear Friends

We trust that you, your family and friends continue to stay well. As lockdown begins to ease we thought it would be an opportunity to let you know how SCRATCH is doing, what we have been able to restart and how you can help.

The last few months have been a challenge and whilst our paramount concern was keeping our staff and volunteers safe, we were acutely aware that there were many people struggling because we couldn't give them practical help.

We do need to say a huge thank you to Sarah, one of our volunteers, who has kept the office running (on reduced hours) since lockdown started, because staff were shielding or on furlough. With the help of Emma and Lucy (our Welfare Information Officers) over 1200 phone calls were answered in June alone.

During August the office will continue to be open at reduced hours of 9.30am to 2.30pm. We plan to get back to normal hours from September onwards.

[DORCAS PROJECT](#)

Following a period of closure, we were able to restart the delivery of furniture at the end of May and recommenced collections in June. However, to comply with government guidelines we cannot carry out as much work as previously because we can only have 2 people in the vehicles, instead of the normal 3. We also need to have fresh PPE for each visit and extra cleaning is required. Quarantining furniture in the warehouse has been another challenge.

Collections can only be made from a garage, from outside or from one downstairs room. Thank you to everyone for your understanding in this matter. We do still require donations, so please get in contact with the office on 023 8077 3132 or e-mail reception@scratchcharity.co.uk if you have anything that you no longer need that is still in excellent condition. We normally need the following (however there are times when we don't have space for some items): -

- ◆ Beds – doubles, singles, bunks and cots
- ◆ Sofas – small with fire safety labels
- ◆ Chest of drawers
- ◆ Wardrobes (small)
- ◆ Dining Tables (drop leaf or gateleg)



WELFARE LINE

Our welfare line, manned by Emma and Lucy, continues to be busy responding to phone calls from people who are struggling, many of whom have lost work during the COVID pandemic. In March a record 324 calls were dealt with. This has dropped over the last few months down to the more normal level of 136 in June.

SHOPS

These have reopened as follows: -

85 Station Road, New Milton – 10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday
21 East Street, Southampton – 10am to 3pm, Monday to Thursday

Social distancing measures are in place with hand sanitising facilities as you enter to ensure that our customers, staff and volunteers stay as safe as possible.

SPECIAL OFFER AT EAST STREET

Buy one item and get a second free (*selected items only*)

As face coverings will be mandatory in shops from 24 July, one of our volunteers is busy making masks which will be available to buy at our New Milton shop or our office. They cost £2 each and will help you keep safe and stylish!



OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN BUSY

Some of our workshop and textiles volunteers have been busy making items while they were at home during lockdown to sell to raise funds for SCRATCH.

We have a delightful range of dolls cots that can be found at our New Milton Shop or from our office premises in Southampton. If you wish to purchase from the office, please phone through your order on 023 8077 3132 and make a payment before collecting.



Large – 50cm x 23cm = £25
or £28 with drapes

Small – 45cm x 22 cm = £20
or £23 with drapes

Examples of the styles – these particular cots may no longer be available.

Right – examples of bags available at our New Milton shop.



CHRISTMAS COMPLETE 2020

Plans are already underway for our annual toy project, but this year it will have to operate differently. We're assuming that social distancing measures will still be in place and are planning accordingly. With the number of people locally that have been financially affected by COVID 19 we expect that numbers will rise this year.

Help us financially

You can help us to operate another successful project by making a financial donation **now** so that we can start to purchase gifts for the groups we normally experience shortages for (teenagers, babies and toddlers). We will also be able to make use of any bargains in sales between now and Christmas. You can do this by: -

- making a donation using Virgin Money giving by using the link on our donate page - <https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/donate/index.htm>
- phoning the office on 023 8077 3132 to make a card payment
- sending us a cheque made payable to SCRATCH to 33 Mount Pleasant Industrial Estate, Southampton, SO14 0SP.

In each case, please indicate that the payment is for Christmas Complete.

If you are a taxpayer, please do complete a gift aid form. That way we can get an extra 25% back from the government –

<https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/find/upload/files/Gift%20Aid%20form.pdf>

Sponsor a parcel

How about sponsoring the cost of a parcel for a family for £20? This will cover the cost of packaging and delivering the donated gifts. Payments can be made in any of the ways listed above – just let us know that it is a sponsorship payment.

Buy a gift

If you want to purchase a gift to be delivered directly to us, we'll be producing our wish lists later in the year. However, there is already a list of suggestions for older boys on our website –

<https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/find/upload/files/Boys%20gifts%20suggestions.pdf>

Volunteer

For those of you who would like to volunteer on the project, further information will be available on our website during October. We anticipate that groups will have to be smaller and as a result some of the roles will differ this year.

Donate second-hand toys

Please note that we will only be accepting donations of excellent quality second-hand toys from Monday 14 September until Friday 20 November. This will give us time to quarantine donations and do any necessary checking, cleaning and repairs prior to the start of the project.

Thank you so much for your support.



This continues to be a challenging time for SCRATCH and it is proving to be difficult to plan too far ahead or even forecast finances accurately as we are conscious that any spike in COVID 19 or local lockdowns can instantly change plans. We, therefore, need your support even more than ever.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- ◆ Support us financially so that we have the finances necessary to keep the charity going through this difficult time and into the future. There are several ways that you can do this:
 - Sign up to make a regular monthly payment – <https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/keep-scratch-delivering/index.htm>
 - Make a one-off donation - <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?uniqueVmgCharityUrl=SouthamptonCityAndRegionActionToCombatHardship>
 - Send us a cheque made payable to SCRATCH.
 - Consider leaving a gift to SCRATCH in your will. The current pandemic has caused lots of people to think about writing / changing their will. Further information is available on our website – <https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/donate/index.htm>
- ◆ If you do, please pray for us – for the safekeeping of our staff and volunteers and for the future of the charity.
- ◆ Volunteer - Please check our website for details on the various roles - <https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/volunteering.htm>. Please note that we will not be able to respond to volunteering requests until at least September.

Once again thank you so much for your support.

Mike Smith & Annette Davis – Senior Management Team

On behalf of the SCRATCH staff team, Board of Directors and volunteers

Stay safe and well

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www.scratchcharity.co.uk

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