







5 June 2020

Welcome to our latest news round-up from across the Dignity Group.

Can't wait for the next issue? Then go to www.dignitygoodtogreat.co.uk
to see the news, comment and get involved.

(P.S. Don't forget to print out a copy for any colleagues who don't have email!)

MANAGING OUR COVID-19 RISK

We're co-ordinating our approach across the business, to make sure we remain in control as we combat COVID-19.

Two weeks ago we let you know about our plans to co-ordinate the government's requirements for risk assessments in the workplace.

The working group has been making good progress, so we wanted to let you know what we've been doing so far.

A big list

The working group has been consolidating all our many tasks and processes onto one big list, so we can see exactly what needs to have a specific COVID-19 risk assessment. Some already exist, but we need to create others from scratch.

Given we have hundreds of properties with many different layouts, most of these risk assessments will be generic which can then be applied to each specific location. We will then ask every colleague to read and sign them on our online system to say they've understood them. Don't worry about this – we will help



guide you through when they are ready.

A co-ordinated response

As with our national PPE procurement, we are co-ordinating our risk assessments on a national, company-wide basis.

While it may be tempting to do your own thing locally, we don't want you to spend lots of effort in putting something in place that may not meet the strict guidelines we need to follow. So, if you have a specific health and safety request, please come to us for help and advice first. That way we can assess your risks against our list and help you in a consistent and effective way.

Dignity Employee Forum

The government's guidelines call for elected representatives to help monitor our approach, and make sure all corners of the company are considered equally and fairly in our plans for a safe workplace.

Last year, you **elected colleagues** to represent your interests, so we are going to train the Dignity Employee Forum on key health and safety matters so they can help manage the response in their areas and be properly up to speed during the consultation period.

This is an important job at a critical time, so if you work closely with an employee forum representative, please help them in any way you can.

We will let you know as soon as we have any more updates. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about COVID-19 risk assessments in your area, please contact HealthandSafety@dignityuk.co.uk











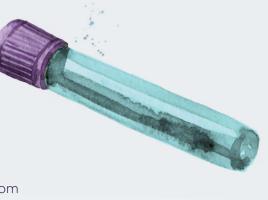
HAVE YOU BEEN TESTED FOR COVID-19?

If you've had a test for Coronavirus, then make sure you report the result to HR.

A couple of weeks ago we let you know how to access COVID-19 tests if you were self-isolating.

If you've been tested since then, we wanted to remind you to let HR know your results straightaway with your name, payroll number and date of test as outlined in the **policy**. While key worker testing has been limited to certain individuals, we also know the government has been inviting people to be tested on a random basis as they try and track the spread of the virus.

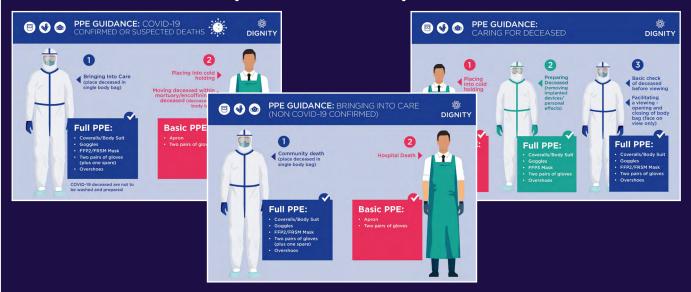
If this applies to you, or you have been tested for COVID-19 privately, please also consider letting HR know your results, so we can continue to ensure the safety of our clients and colleagues.



NEW PPE PICTURE GUIDES

We've created some handy pictures to help you put on the right PPE for every scenario. It can be hard to navigate all the guidance out there, and with your safety our number one priority, it's important you know what type of PPE to wear when.

We've created these pictures to help you know what protective clothing you need to wear for every scenario:



Click <u>here</u> to download and print the posters. Don't forget you can find the full <u>infectious disease PPE guidance here</u>. If you have any questions, please ask your line manager in the first instance.









TEST & TRACE

The government has begun its Test & Trace programme to help stop the spread of COVID-19. But what should you do if you're contacted?

All of us want to get back to normal as quickly as possible, and the government's new Test & Trace programme aims to help us do just that.

An army of volunteers is helping track people down who have had close, recent contact with someone who has received a positive result, and asking them to self-isolate in a bid to stop the virus spreading further.

As well as protecting the NHS, it means that the government can also see if there are any spikes in cases at a local or national level.

What does contact mean?

Contact doesn't mean briefly passing someone in a corridor, or getting a bit too near a fellow shopper in the supermarket. It means close physical contact for a sustained time. For example:

- Someone testing positive in the same household as you
- Being within one metre of someone who has tested positive for one minute or longer (this includes face-to-face conversations, being coughed on, skin-to-skin contact)
- Being within two metres of someone who has tested positive for more than 15 minutes
- Travelling in a vehicle with someone who has tested positive

What if I get contacted?

If the government's Test & Trace team get in touch to confirm you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, then you must follow the guidelines and self-isolate at home for 14 days after you were



last in contact with that person. You also need to notify your line manager and provide a copy of your notification.

Our policy is to pay you full company sick pay for those 14 days.

What if I work with someone who has been contacted?

If you work with someone who has gone for a test, or has been contacted by the Test & Trace programme, you should carry on as normal and there is no need to self-isolate. You only need to self isolate if you are contacted directly by the NHS Test & Trace team. If at any time you develop symptoms, you should seek a test and follow government guidelines.

Be aware of scammers

We've already been made aware that cyber criminals are taking advantage of people's anxieties under the guise of the Test & Trace programme. Remember that the government will **never ask you** for bank details or payments, details of social media accounts, a password or pin number, or ask you to call a premium rate number.

What if I'm waiting for test results?

If you're showing symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19, then you should remain at home. If you then receive a negative result, you can return to work, unless advised to isolate as part of the test and trace programme, when you should continue to isolate for the full 14 days since last contact.

If you have a positive result, then you should continue to self-isolate at home for 7 days from the first day you had symptoms.

Stay alert - stay distanced

To help us reduce the effects of our colleagues becoming ill, there must be **no unnecessary, non-essential travel** between branches, offices or third party locations (such as a crematorium).

Instead use technology such as Microsoft Teams, email or a phone call to check in with people. By limiting our contacts as much as possible, we in turn limit the amount of people potentially infected.

Locally managed

We are hopeful that our operations will not be greatly impacted by the Test & Trace system and have got robust plans ready to deal with any incidents on a local level.

If you have any queries, get contacted by the government Test & Trace scheme or become aware of being in contact with someone who has tested positive, please get in touch with your Regional Manager in the first instance.









IMPORTANT OFFICE TEAM & LYRECO ANNOUNCEMENT

As an organisation we haven't been receiving the service we expected from Office Team. Here's what we're doing about it and what the immediate changes will mean for you.

Unfortunately, the service we have received from Office
Team in terms of availability of products and swift deliveries has not been up to scratch for an organisation of our size.

As a result we have re-contracted with our former supplier, Lyreco.

The Lyreco ordering portal is now active. Only colleagues that usually place stationery and consumable orders with Office Team will have received new log-in details for Lyreco. Office Team will still be available for a short period of time to ensure a seamless transition back to Lyreco.

Once log-in details have been received, orders should only be placed using Lyreco.

Importantly, any items ordered on Office Team before and including 20th May have been cancelled. You will need to re-order these on Lyreco. The current Office Team product list will also be available on Lyreco.

Here are a few FAQs to help you get to grips with the new change. If you can't find what you're looking for, please get in touch with the Procurement Team who will be able to advise you - purchasing. team@dignityuk.co.uk. Further updates will follow very soon.

When will I receive my new logon details for Lyreco?

If you currently order items on Office Team, you should have



received your new details on 2nd June 2020, emailed to you directly from Lyreco. Please check your spam folder before contacting the Procurement Team by **email**.

Will all employees be getting logon details for Lyreco?

No. Only colleagues that are approved to order stationery and consumables currently will receive new log-on details for Lyreco.

Can I use my old username and password on Lyreco?

No, not to begin with. All colleagues who order stationery and consumables on Office Team will have received a new username and password directly from Lyreco. You should change your password to something more memorable (if this happens to be the password you used to use, this is fine – just don't tell anybody what it is!).

What do I do if the product I need is only available on Office Team?

All of the products available on Office Team are available on

Lyreco. We have ensured this to help us transition smoothly back to Lyreco.

I have an order I'm waiting for on Office Team - what should I do?

If the item was ordered on or before 20th May 2020 we have automatically cancelled the order. Please re-order on Lyreco and it will be with you in the same week.

Is the change back to Lyreco a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Unfortunately, yes. Office Team went into administration during lockdown and have been bought by the Paragon Group. Although this looked like good news for Dignity with greater buying power for Office Team, continued strains on their supply chain remain and they are unable to meet our business needs. Given the important role we play for families and local communities, it's crucial that we can get quality products and orders arrive on time to meet the needs of our clients.









FUNERAL NOTICES EXTENDED

We've extended the time that Funeral Notices are available, as more clients choose our Timeless Funeral.



A few weeks ago, we introduced our new Timeless Funeral in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, offering clients the chance to honour their loved one with an intimate funeral now, and a memorial at a later date when restrictions are lifted.

With memorials planned some months ahead for many, we've decided to extend the online availability of Funeral Notices from 6 to 18 months after the funeral, backdated to 1st January 2020.

How will this work?

Flexibility and security remain important, so once the family inform us of their plans, the arranger or admin centre will add the memorial details to the 'FNotice Reception' fields in

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Compass. Then they simply follow the normal edit cycle to update the Funeral Notice with the details of the memorial, including an appropriate title for the event.

To protect us against unknown changes and services we may not be able to provide at the

time (such as limousines), the client will not be able to change or add event details themselves. However, the family will need to approve the amended Funeral Notice by logging into their My Dignity account before they can share it with friends and family. Likewise, they can use their My Dignity account to remove the Funeral Notice at any time.

The small print

As this is a change in terms and conditions for funerals dating back to 1st January this year, new and existing clients will need to agree to the updated T&Cs before they can proceed.

If you have any questions about these changes, please email FuneralNoticesSupport@
dignityuk.co.uk.









HELPING VULNERABLE FAMILIES AT NEED





A few weeks ago, we let you know that the government had increased financial support for eligible benefit claimants arranging a funeral.

Specifically, the government increased the element of the award intended to contribute towards 'other costs,' which had been capped at £700 since 2003. This cap was increased to £1000 for people that died after 6th April 2020, taking an average award to around £1700.

While it is not the role of funeral directors to give advice to families on eligibility for social fund support, or to make the claims, we do have an important role to play in sensitively signposting its availability.

Therefore, with COVID-19 adding to the financial pressures of many vulnerable families, we wanted to give you six top tips to help your conversations with clients and to help make sure their Funeral Expense Payment (Funeral Support Payment in Scotland) claims are successfully progressed

through the government's system:

- 1 Ask clients to apply for the funding **before the funeral**, as soon as they have a signed contract (our arrangement form), instead of waiting for the final invoice.
- 2 Advise clients to apply over the phone by calling the Bereavement Services helpline on 0800 7310469. This is already the most popular way to claim as it's a quicker and more personal experience than posting an application form. (If clients still wish to apply by post, make sure they send a copy of the contract (signed arrangement form) or the funeral invoice together with their claim form.)
- 3 Make sure the client includes the name of our funeral director (branch name) and our bank account details, so the DWP can make the payment.
- 4 Ask the client to include information and documentary proof of the deceased's estate

- and any funds or finances available (such as occupational pension or savings.)
- 5 Advise the client to include whether they have purchased additional death certificates to help them release funds. The costs can be reimbursed as part of the claim.
- 6 Make sure the client includes the claimant's relationship to the deceased and any other relevant family member information, to help the government avoid the need to contact them and causing potential distress.

The Funeral Expenses Payment can be a significant benefit to families affected by a bereavement, so taking the greatest care to help them complete the forms will be a significant benefit to them at their time of need.

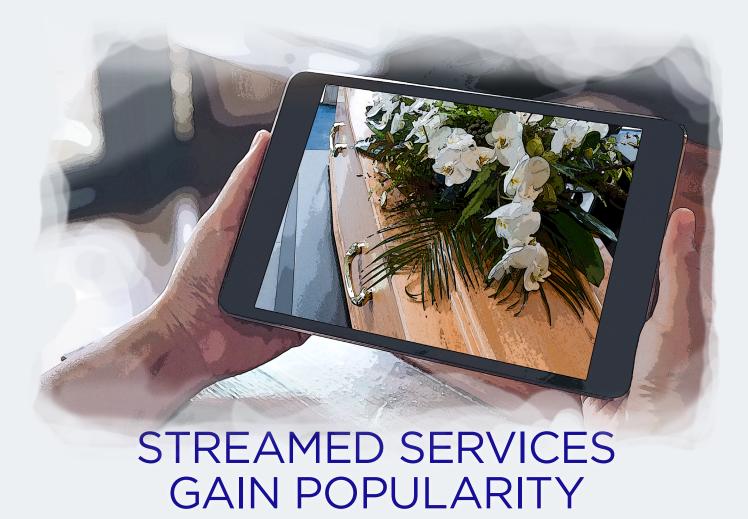
You can find <u>more information</u> <u>about funeral expense payments</u> <u>here</u>, including how to claim on the <u>Government's website</u>.











As more mourners choose to stream funerals online, we provide some handy hints to help you help clients.

With lockdown restricting the number of mourners that can attend a funeral, more and more families are choosing to live stream their loved one's final farewell.

They're finding comfort in the knowledge that friends and family far and wide are with them during the crematorium service - maybe not physically, but present online nonetheless. And of course, the online mourners are also finding solace in being able to participate, however remotely.

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more colleagues are naturally being asked about it.

To help you talk to clients and offer a service they may not have previously considered, the Branch Development Team has created this useful guide outlining the benefits, processes and approximate costs for our two key webcasting suppliers, Obitus and Wesley.

Don't forget that each crematorium sets their own charges, so please check with them before advising clients what the costs may be.

You can also find more information and support about our webcasting services **here**.

(NB: We are aware that some CMG crematoria are experiencing issues with the webcasting supplier. We are working to resolve these as quickly as possible).









TELL US ONCE

Making sure our clients are aware of this important service for reporting a verified death.

GOV.UK

Many of us will be familiar with the Tell Us Once service provided by the Department for Work & Pensions. It enables families to inform multiple government organisations about the death of a loved one, including HMRC, the Passport Office, the DVLA and the relevant local council.

The service is free to use, available online as well as over the telephone and can save families a considerable amount of time and effort.

Tell Us Once was introduced several years ago, but has extra significance at this time given the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

This is because the new Coronavirus Act 2020 gives funeral directors the power to register deaths on behalf of their clients. When they do, a unique Service Reference Number

is automatically generated which must be provided to the client so they can proceed with making notifications via Tell Us Once.

How we can help

This week we're distributing supplies of a new leaflet to all branches. Copies should be included with the

information provided to clients when making funeral arrangements and offered to anyone else seeking general guidance on what to do when someone dies.

If a digital version is required, please refer clients to the local web page for your branch. The leaflet can be found in the 'Our brochures and guides' in the footer section at the very bottom of the page.

Tell Us Once is available throughout England, Wales and Scotland, but is not currently offered in Northern Ireland (the leaflet will not be added

to web pages for Northern Ireland branches).

Feedback shows how people find the service helpful during a time of distress. During the last tax year, it was used by 79% of all people registering a death.



IT SERVICE DESK: HELPING YOU WHEN YOU NEED IT

The IT Service Desk is here for you when you need a helping hand with IT.

It's been a busy few months for all of us, and we wanted to remind you that the IT Service Desk is here to help - whatever technical issue you may have.

Since lockdown began the IT Service Desk has received over 8,000 calls plus emails. They've fixed over 90% of the issues raised- quite the feat given the team are working remotely and liaising with colleagues over the phone and online.

And that's not all. With extended opening hours during the COVID-19 pandemic to support our colleagues in operations and on the front line, the team has been on-hand to offer support when you need it.

So if you have an issue with your laptop, computer or connectivity to networks - whatever it may be (although we must point out the Service Desk will only be helping to solve IT related problems!) - get in touch sooner rather than later.

Current opening hours for the IT Service Desk are:

- Monday to Friday 8am 5.30pm
- Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays, 9am - 5pm.

You can contact the Service Desk via **email** or call 0800 151 3795.









A GIFT TO TREASURE

Colleagues in the North West are offering handmade rainbows to clients after every funeral service.

Rainbows have been an enduring visual image throughout the coronavirus pandemic, appearing in windows across the country as drawings, paintings and collages to spread a little cheer during dark times. They symbolise peace and hope as rainbows will often form when the sun shines again after heavy rainfall.

We've been wowed by the array of **stunning artwork** colleagues have been sending us, but felt these crocheted rainbows deserved a special mention as well.

They are the handiwork of administrator Rosina Cahill and funeral service arranger Sarah Fairclough and are being given out to clients mourning the loss of a loved one.

The idea came from Susan Taylor, funeral director based at Scales Funeral Service in Blackburn, who was sent one as a gift by a friend during lockdown.

"I thought it was a lovely thing to do while we're all separated, but it also got me thinking we could create something similar for our clients," she said.

"Rosina and Sarah are the resident crafters in our local





cluster and both very talented. I knew if I provided the wool, a copy of the pattern and plenty of encouragement they'd be able to make more."

And make more they did! Susan estimates more than 100 rainbows have been produced so far and with additional balls of wool already on order, our nimble knitters aren't easing off just yet.

"We put a rainbow on each coffin and it stays there while the deceased is in our care," Susan explains. "After the funeral service, we offer it to a family member. People have been really touched by the gesture and they appreciate the symbolism, now more than ever.

"Viewing at the funeral home is obviously problematic at the moment, but passing on something that has been with the person throughout their final journey means a lot."

At first rainbows were just for those who had died because of COVID-19. Now they are added for all funerals carried out locally.

Susan added: "We're getting some fabulous feedback, including one

client who was going to include her rainbow in a keepsake box she was making in memory of her mother.

"Another family asked us to send the pattern so they could start crocheting rainbows themselves to add to our stocks."

To show her appreciation, Susan nominated Rosina and Sarah for a much-deserved thank you via our

Good Deed Feed.

She said: "They are both amazing and have given up so much of their spare time to create these rainbows. It's worth the effort when you realise how much comfort they are bringing.



"We can't deliver traditional funerals in the way that people are expecting right now, however this is a small extra touch we can add to keep the day feeling special."

The Good Deed Feed is open to all, so please keep those submissions coming to celebrate kind gestures, teamwork and client care wherever you work.









A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN FSA

Beth Munday is a Funeral Service Arranger at Lewis Scorah & Son in Wakefield, and she wrote this heartfelt poem.

When the doctors and nurses have done all that they can.

When it is time for a life to come to an end.

We stand right behind them, "Put down your instruments and medicines, and take a bow. "Come on, it's my turn to take care of them now."

First, the phone call. We must be patient, we must wait. For when the family ring, we must be ready and we mustn't be late.

But that phone call, so full of sadness, love and anger. All I am to them, for now, is a complete stranger.

"Take your time" I say, "There's no rush. I know it hurts, but be reassured.

"I am here for you and I've done this before."

Tell me about them, this person you treasure.

I can tell from your voice, you loved them beyond measure.

Keep calm, I will explain what to do. I know it's all so confusing, painful and new.

I'm here to look after you, and this tired soul.

Whose absence in your life, has left a gaping hole.

We will treat them with dignity, care and respect. We wash, we dress. Their final

journey, we want to perfect.

Bring me a photo, we'll do their hair. We'll make sure they're looking their best, a touch of flair.

I'm here to guide you, not tell you what to do.

There's no such thing as right or wrong, you know.



Maybe you'll come to visit, or maybe you won't. Maybe you want to bring photos, a teddy, a letter. We will do what we can, to make you feel better.

And so the day comes, you must say goodbye.

You've been so brave, it's okay to cry.

Remember, you're not on your own, I'm right here whatever the weather.

Alone? Never, we can do this together.

But let's have some smiles, and a bit of a laugh too.

Remember the good times, when there were no clouds and the sky was blue. Today can be a happy day, a celebration of life.

A day to be thankful for the time you had. (No one ever remembers the strife.)

And once the send off is over, you did them so proud.

We know there is emptiness and heartache. And silence so loud.

Birthdays, milestones, anniversaries. Now they just hurt, even though you prepare. It's the little things that catch you out, like the cup on the sideboard, the dusty slippers or the empty

If ever you're stuck, and don't know what to do.

Pick up the phone, I'd love to hear from you.



I'll stick the kettle on, and put out a biscuit or two.

You're never a bother, it's my job to take care of you too.

If you're on your own, and there's no one near.

Please just remember:

I am always here.









PAINTING HOPE

Silent auction raises much-needed funds for children's charity in Aberdeen.

There's a new framed picture hanging in reception at Gordon & Watson Funeral Directors in Aberdeen which is sure to be a talking point once clients start returning to the premises.

Firstly there's the artwork itself. Called 'Painting Hope,' it's a composite photo inspired by the uncertain times we're experiencing that highlights the underlying sense of community and positivity that has continually shone through.

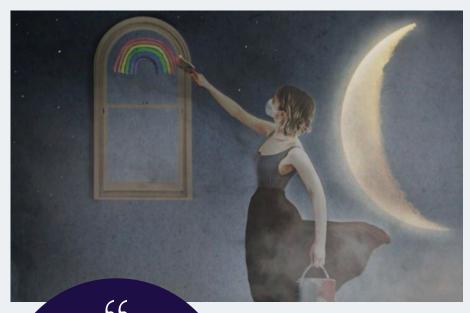
Then there's the charity responsible for it. The picture was auctioned off in aid of Charlie House and Dignity's Business Manager Annette MacDonald put in the winning bid.

She said: "The artist Beth Hopkins works for the charity and has produced a beautiful and very meaningful piece of art.

"Our local teams are longstanding supporters of Charlie House, a charity that cares for children with disabilities and life limiting conditions in North East Scotland.

"I wanted to play my part, so placed a bid as part of a silent





Our local teams are longstanding supporters of Charlie House, a charity that cares for children with disabilities and life limiting conditions in North East

Scotland.

auction organised by the charity through its Facebook page. It sits proudly in the branch, signifying a future we're all looking forward to that is safe and free of restrictions."

Annette is joined by a number of kind-hearted colleagues in her region in supporting charitable causes, but their fundraising plans have unfortunately been affected by coronavirus.

David Pedelty, Gemma Barron and Steve McLaughlan were

all planning to take part in the Aberdeen Kiltwalk next month, which has had to be postponed.

Nevertheless, they still managed to raise more than £1,200 between them - David and Gemma in aid of Charlie

House, while Steve is helping the Grampian Child Bereavement Network.

Their individual totals will be doubled thanks to Scottish businessman

Sir Tom Hunter of the Hunter Foundation who has pledged to match all the money raised by this year's Kiltwalkers.

And let's also offer thanks to Katrina Adams, who is fundraising for the MS Society, and John Smith, who raised £150 for Sue Ryder Care by raffling off this delightful teddy bear made by colleague Lilian Marshall.

Well done everyone!









COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS AWARD

FOR LOCAL FUNERAL HOME

Titford Funeral Service in Clacton-on-Sea were delighted to receive an unexpected community award from their local Asda superstore.

Businesses are usually excluded from the store's nomination process for community champions, but with so many nods from the public, Asda let their shoppers decide... resulting in the community champion award for Titford Funeral Service.

Raymond Harrison, Area Manager, explained: "We were delighted that the local store and it's shoppers wanted to acknowledge the work we do to help local families. "In general we've been seeing a lot of recognition from the public, from the Good Deed Feed to letters to branches, it's clear that the public appreciates the work all of Dignity is doing in all of our communities, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Titfords Funeral Service has nine employees including casuals. They were very pleased to receive a basket of goodies from Asda.



Pictured Jaqui Smith, Funeral Manager and Darren Smith, Funeral Service Operative being awarded their basket of goodies



#FRIDAYFEELS: MUST-SEE TV!

We're not going out, so what's been on your box during lockdown? Must-watch TV is this week's topic.

News emerged a few days ago that filming will finally be resuming on some of the nation's favourite soap operas, albeit with social distancing measures firmly in place.

That got us wondering what colleagues have been watching to keep themselves and their

families entertained while at home.

Are you box-set binging on Netflix? Have you been rooting through the DVD collection to dig out some classic films?

Tell us which channels, series and shows have got you reaching for

the remote to tune in.

Together let's try and build the ultimate must-see telly schedule that makes staying in (and safe) a pleasure, not a chore.

See the recommendations in the **comments section** – why not add your own?

We featured some of your paw-fingered pets as part of our #FridayFeels series too. Check out the gallery!