

Shine Cancer Support

Shine Oxford – supporting
young adults with a cancer
diagnosis throughout
Oxfordshire since 2016

Why should Shine Oxford have a branded bus?

We are Samantha Hutton and Michelle Nunn, the two volunteer leaders who run Shine Oxford, which is a network branch of Shine Cancer Support:

www.shinecancersupport.org

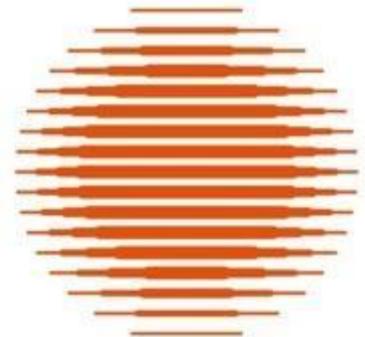
To answer why we think Shine Oxford should have a branded bus we have prepared some information for you to see exactly what it is we do for young adults in Oxfordshire with a cancer diagnosis in their 20s, 30s or 40s. Hopefully it will be evident how important our efforts are to support people who are at the most emotionally vulnerable times of their lives. As a small charity we rely on personal recommendations from health care professionals, other cancer support organisations and word of mouth to point people towards us.

Our membership has quadrupled since we started in 2016 to nearly 100 regular and semi-regular members but we know there are more young adults being diagnosed every day and we want to reach everybody who needs us. We could never afford advertising so having the chance to be on the side of an Oxford Bus would be an amazing opportunity.



As you can see from above, we can already imagine what a Shine Oxford Bus might look like!

SHINE



Why is Shine Oxford needed?

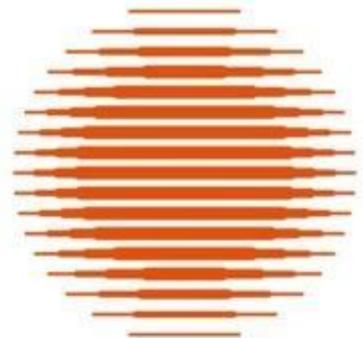
It is an unfortunate fact that 1 in 2 adults will receive a cancer diagnosis in their lifetime. Young adults with a cancer diagnosis face many challenges, including:

- Living with uncertainty – anxiety and depression
- Working after cancer
- Fertility issues
- Relationships & dating
- Caring for young children
- Financial difficulties

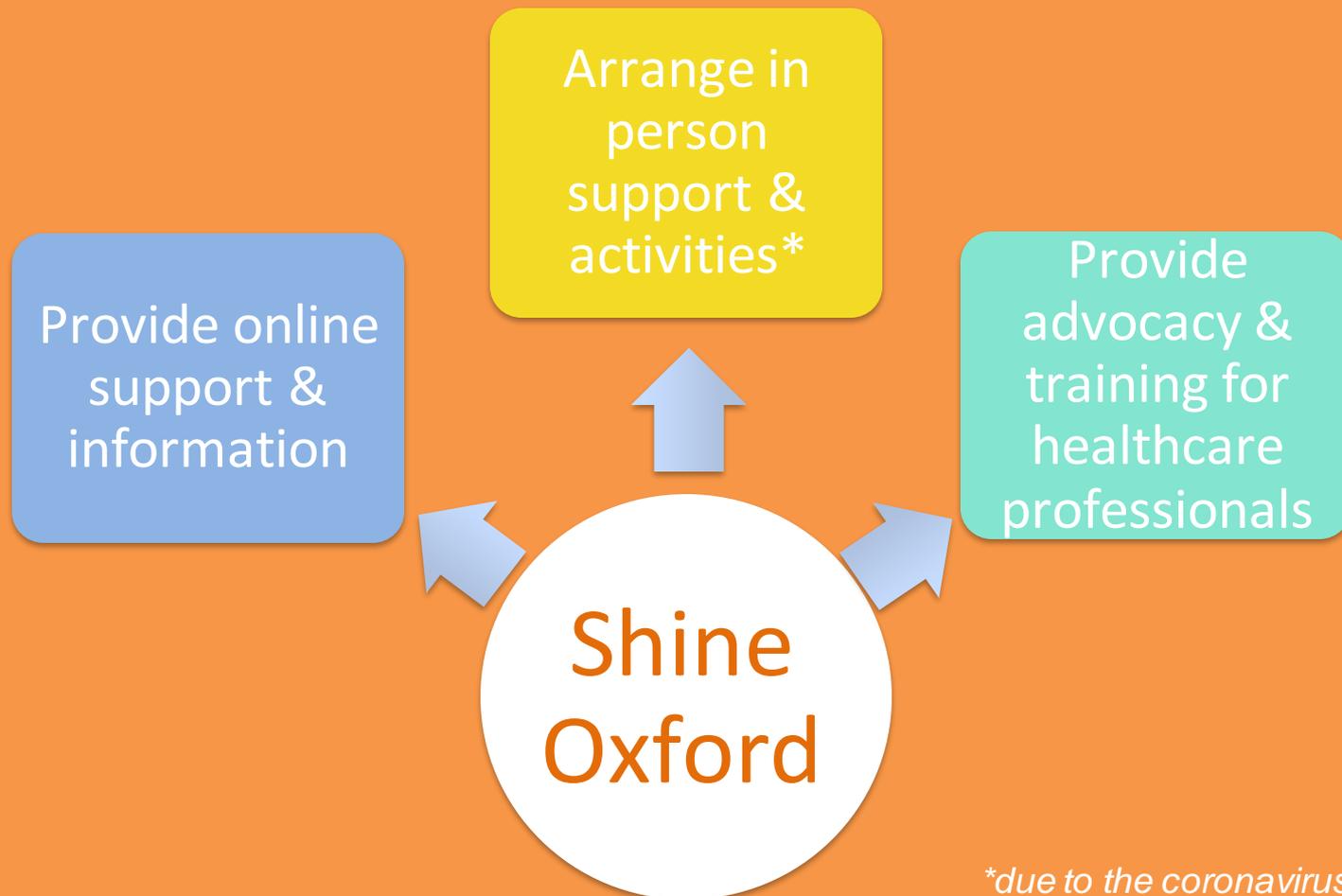
Overall we work to reduce isolation and enable peer support. Since 2016, we have been working with young adults with cancer across Oxfordshire to develop and deliver our services. As part of Shine Cancer Support we work in partnership with other cancer support organisations and experts to design activities that meet the needs of young adults with cancer in relation to our six themes. As volunteer leaders who have both experienced a cancer diagnosis we are well suited to providing peer support and help where needed.



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So, how does Shine Oxford support young adults with cancer? We...



**due to the coronavirus in-person events have been moved online*

Meeting Up Online/ In Person

As we are not able to meet in person at the moment, we have moved our activities online! We keep in regular contact with our members via email and Zoom calls, ensuring that they know that they are not alone and we are here to help. Many of our members are clinically vulnerable and have had extended periods of shielding and extreme social isolation. This means our virtual meetings are even more essential to:

- Connect with others in a similar situation
- Receive emotional support
- Ask questions and receive answers,

all in a **friendly & supportive** place, surrounded by people who **just get it**.

In ordinary times we would meet in a pub, café, park, college, bowling alley or anywhere else that would provide a relaxing and/or fun environment. Punting is a particularly popular activity! Shine always pays for first drinks and endeavours to cover as many costs as possible. We plan to return to in-person meet-ups as soon as possible when it is safe to do so.



Holding Online Clubs/Programmes



In addition to our regular (monthly or bi-monthly) virtual activities we now have several online events including Shine Film Club, Shine Book club, yoga and wellbeing sessions. This year our annual conference for all members will be held online, and in addition an online breakout programme will give a group of young adults the chance to meet up regularly whilst also hearing from experts on topics that matter.



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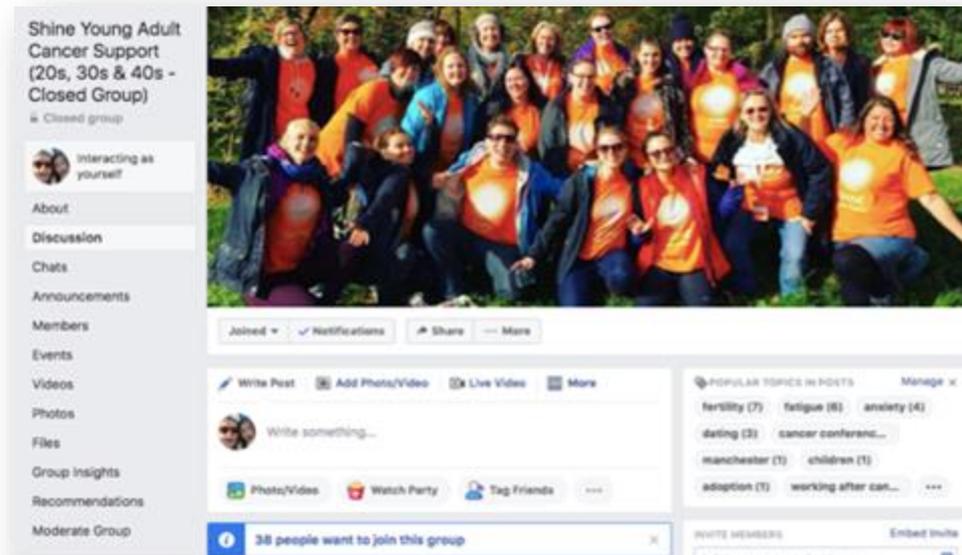
Managing Facebook groups

Shine runs a [closed Facebook group](#) with over 1700+ members from across the UK.

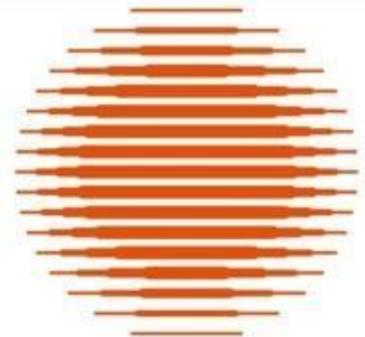
Membership is open to anyone in our age group (20s, 30s and 40s) with any type of cancer, at any stage.

This group is moderated by members and we stress that neither Shine nor members can provide medical advice.

Having the facebook group means that our members have 24/7 access to support outside of the events we hold.



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Shine Oxford's Impact

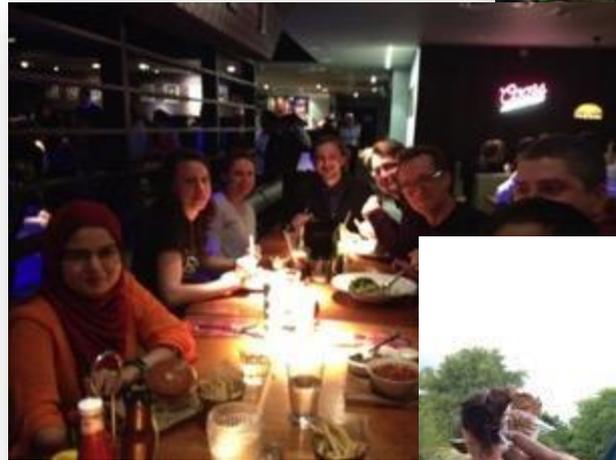
The best thing about Shine? Knowing I'm not alone and there are people my age who understand the way I feel.

Shine Oxford is one of 14 networks across the UK. We have nearly 100 regular members and receive queries from new people almost every day. Our membership has quadrupled over the past 2 years as we have grown and more people have discovered us locally.

Through our annual impact survey we found that:

- 97% of people (who attended at least one of our events) feel more emotionally supported
- 75% feel much less isolated

Shine members also report feeling more **confident** and **hopeful**.



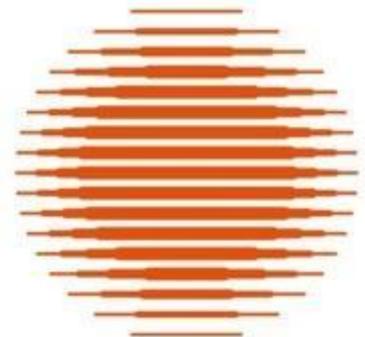
We want to do more...

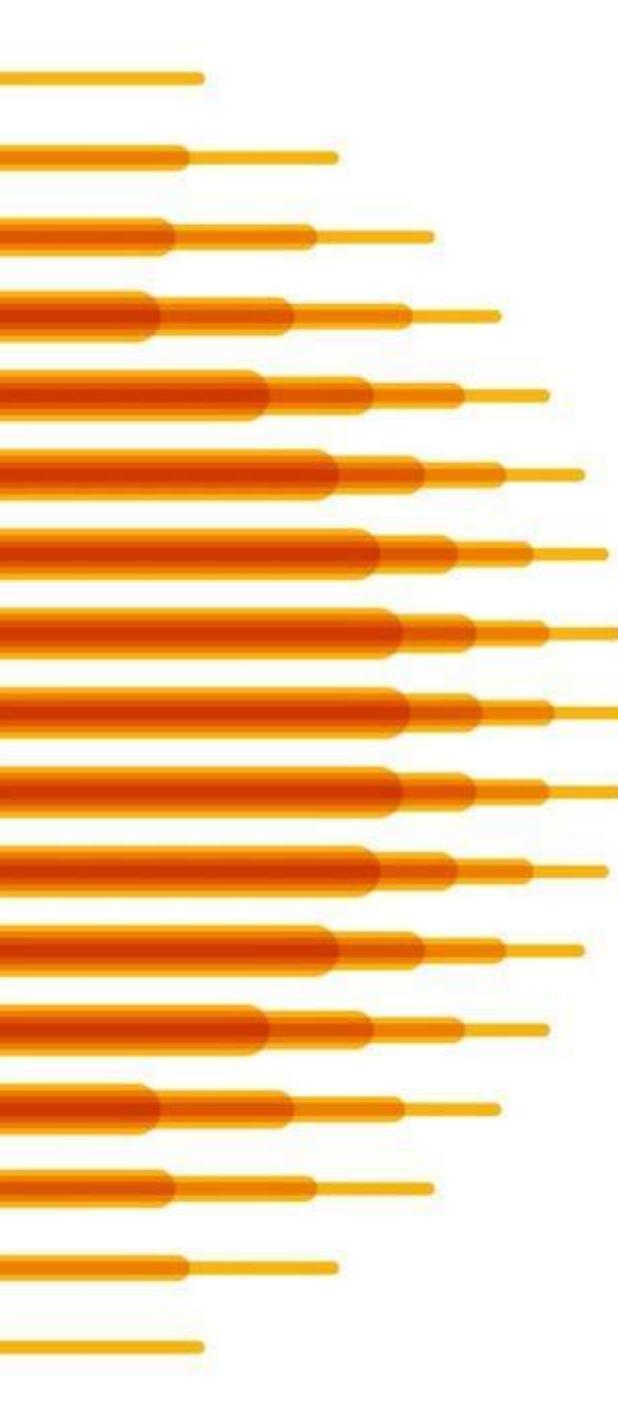
Whilst we are proud of what we have been able to do over the past 4 years we want to do much more! Our membership (email registration) is growing rapidly. Shine Oxford is a supportive environment where we hope members return again and again (and many do) but completely understand if they only need us for a short while, or only get involved occasionally. We know that we have impacted the lives of more than just our current membership, as formal membership is not required for attendance or involvement in any of our activities, making it more difficult to quantify how many we have helped. However, we know our support will continue to be needed, even more so because of the difficulties and delays caused by the coronavirus.

Our members come from all over Oxfordshire, and love visiting the many Oxford attractions where we would normally hold our events. Whilst we are part of the larger Shine Cancer Support charity we are proud to and passionate about supporting local people. The benefits of having our name promoted on one of your bus would hopefully allow us to:

- **Raise overall awareness of Shine Oxford amongst the community**
- **Provide contact and pathway information for potential members**
- **Increase the opportunity for fundraising so we can do more to help**

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Shine Oxford

We hope that by briefly showing you **what** we do, **why** we do it and the **impact** we make we have persuaded you of the value we have to the Oxfordshire community and why we would be worthy to win the brand the bus competition. As a peer support charity it isn't always easy to quantify and prove what we have done. How do you measure the relief someone might feel from meeting others who have been where they are, and know they way through? How do you count the number of people who smiled for the first time since leaving hospital, because they had a fun day out with people just like them?

As network leaders we see the results of our efforts, we see the smiles, the laughter, and occasionally the tears. We know the difference Shine makes, having been members ourselves before becoming network leaders. We want to make sure that no one ever feels alone and hope that you will help us the opportunity to reach out to as many as possible. With grateful thanks,

Michelle Nunn and Samantha Hutton