Blog[ish] One Whole Year [What a Year]

Well, well, well, well, well [think this deserves 5] here we are at a whole year of overall lockdown. We’ve actually been out the office for a year and five days but we’ll go with the official, national date for today.

I know it hasn’t been total strict lockdown for that whole period, we’ve had wee glimpses of freedom and “normality” in that – last summer we were allowed indoors for a coffee, a meal or a drink for a wee while and the shops all opened – and queueing in Princes Street was common. Then we weren’t allowed to have a drink with a meal and the restaurants and pubs closed at 6pm one Friday night. Leith Walk was a sight to behold that particular night with Tesco at the Foot of the Walk doing a roaring trade in alcohol with all the folk rolling out the pubs. I’m sure none of them were going to people’s houses to carry on the party, were they?

I’m trying, and struggling a bit, to remember when all the changes happened and in what order – should’ve done my research before I sat down to do this eh?! Anyway…………since Christmas we’ve had no pubs, no restaurants, no non-essential retail, no drinking outdoors, no meeting up of groups, no gyms, no cinema………..you get the picture.

We’re now moving into a new phase [tentatively as nothing is certain these days]. Schools are returning and will be back full time after the Easter hols, hairdressers, non-essential retail and outdoor hospitality all opening again in a couple of weeks. We have been here before and can only hope that this time it will be different.

For us here at CY, we’ve been back and forward, no face to face, then allowed very limited contact, then small groups indoors, allowed back in [some] schools and then back to no group meetings indoors or outdoors. Currently we’re back in a couple of schools supporting them in this phase of return so that’s been really positive and felt a bit more “normal”. Most of our services are still operating remotely though, and we are now planning for a return to outside work - yay!

The big issue of our building, our base, not being open is still to be resolved so we are all still working from home, and that’s hard in our line of work. Summer maybe………..

It’s been a funny old year all in [understatement]. One that we will never forget. We’ve had to be very creative in our work and adapt to ways of working that we would never have anticipated – on a positive note, if this had all happened 20 or so years ago, it would have been a very different picture, for everyone! We have [generally] the technology to communicate and have numerous platforms to do this, it’s no replacement for face to face but it’s allowed us to connect with our young people, families and partners.

Our children, young people and families have amazed us with their resilience in these tough times. Despite what the media might have you believe, the majority of young people have complied with the rules and just “got on with it”, some have been “up and down” and some have really struggled to cope, but they have kept going, hoping to get a glimpse of that sometimes elusive “light at the end of the tunnel”. We take our hats off to them all - they are amazing.

I can’t write this without mentioning the teachers, who have had such a tough time in all this, so much of it has revolved around schools being back, not being back, being part time, not being part time – what an amount of planning they’ve had to be doing over the past year – when all that most of them want to be doing in school with pupils is supporting them. It would be amiss of me to name individuals but I hope that if they’re reading this, they know who they are - they’ve taken the role of teacher to a whole new level!

I’m going to stop here at a point where we are feeling a bit more optimistic, restrictions are easing, vaccines are being rolled out and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [insert your own particular highlight of the coming weeks].

It wouldn’t be me if there wasn’t a musical reference so I’m going for Elvis Costello “It’s Been a Good Year for the Roses” as with all the home working and time on our hands, I’m sure it has!

Keep on keeping on folks!

P.S – Went out for a run [yes, me, running!] after I wrote this and while I was walking back up the road from Granton Sur La Mer I was thinking about that whole storm and boat analogy that has been popular this past year………

It may be the same storm, but as with anything, we all experience the same things differently. This depends on our position in relation to the storm, our ability to protect ourselves from it and the resources we have at our immediate disposal. For some this has been easy, for others it has been a huge challenge and sadly, for others, it has overcome them.

As for the boats, some have fantastic vessels to protect them and steer them through it – with others around to ensure this, others have vessels not built for storm conditions and it has been a constant battle to stay afloat, some have others to support them in this, others don’t and then there are those whose boats are not fit for purpose and had no chance.

If this pandemic has highlighted anything, it is the inequality in our society. Will the impact of the last year result in any change in that? Who knows…but we will stay hopeful.