

KINCARDINE & DEESIDE BEFRIENDING



NEWSLETTER MARCH 2021

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter of 2021. A lot has happened in the last year but Kincardine and Deeside Befriending has continued to facilitate befriending matches with many older people across Kincardine, Mearns and Deeside throughout the pandemic. Thank you to everyone who has made this possible.

March 2020 saw an abrupt pausing of face-to-face befriending visits as the initial lockdown of the COVID pandemic started. There was a flurry of work to adjust to telephone contacts for our matches and homeworking for the staff team to keep everyone safe. This was a challenging time for all but we managed to safely transition to a model of telephone support thanks to the commitment and flexibility of our volunteers, both befrienders and trustees, as well as the staff team. It was great to be able to carry on making new matches during this time too, and telephone calls became a highlight in the week for many.

A short period in August/ September saw some matches managing to meet up in gardens or outside spaces with some fine weather helping to make this possible.

But by the end of 2020, we were back into tighter restrictions again. We know this has been hard for some matches where telephone calls are difficult but many of you have found new ways to stay in touch whilst staying safe, and without your cooperation and flexibility, we would not have managed to keep our matches going. There have been many acts of kindness to help make our befriendees feel remembered. Thank you so very much.

As we move into 2021, we hope for gradual lifting of some restrictions and that the vaccines will help to offer protection. We will continue to work in such a way as to keep everyone safe and hope we will eventually be able to see the resumption of precious face to face befriending visits.

Friends Fundraising Group

"Well this COVID certainly has gone on longer than we could ever have imagined and has put a stop to most of our fundraising activities until the situation improves."

If you are interested in joining or remaining in our Friends group of volunteer fundraisers please contact us (see below). Once we have a group of people we know are still interested, together with some new friends, we will keep you informed by email or zoom including plans for regular group meetings and social events.

We can still raise some funds by collecting ink cartridges. The cartridges must be original makes and not burst. The cartridges can be dropped off at the Banchory or Stonehaven offices, Stonehaven Library or contact Liz or Trish.

Future plans include ~ a car boot sale ~ a collection/tombola at local supermarkets We are also in need of a few new ideas so please share your thoughts with us.

Hopefully 2021 will be an exciting year for the Friends group.

Liz Wood and Trish Hughes (07769 738685)



David & Holli

Holli is a new volunteer and was matched for telephone befriending at the start of lockdown in April 2020. She shares her experience of befriending here.

The reason I became interested in becoming a volunteer befriender was from my experience with my own grandparents. I knew the importance of keeping in touch and how much they loved having regular visits and chats with family and friends. Therefore, when the opportunity arose, I signed up with the knowledge that I could potentially make a positive difference in someone's life.

Due to the restrictions, it was agreed David and I would first meet over the phone. Despite the age gap between myself and David we had lots in common and had the same sense of humour.

When restrictions eased, we had the opportunity to meet face-to-face for a couple of socially distanced walks. It was great to finally meet David and share our love of countryside and beach walks.

My friendship with David continues to grow and I'm so grateful to be matched with someone who has so many interesting stories to tell. I honestly think we both benefit from our weekly chats. Befriending is one of the most enjoyable and rewarding things I've done and would recommend it to anyone.



Eleanor & Alison

Eleanor & Alison had been matched for around a year prior to March 2020 lockdown. They are seen here on a socially distanced garden visit in the summer when guidelines allowed.

"See you next Tuesday! Have a good week and don't forget to look out those old photographs of your walking tour of Dumfries and Galloway!"

"Bye, dear! I will do!"

That was around 12 months ago.

My aspirations for my voluntary work were based on deeply held belief systems and values, garnered from childhood, school, and a sense of ethics which emanated from a long teaching career. Put simply, my aspiration was "to make a difference" to another's long-lived, and well-lived life, to broaden horizons, Eleanor's and my own, to explore mutual interests and to discover new things.

Matching must be an essential part of the befriending process and our match, Eleanor's and mine, has been the most fruitful, the most enjoyable and the most valuable in terms of the value we place on this new 'friendship'. And because of the relationship we had crafted for each other prior to lockdown, we respected the rules and the new ways of friendship imposed on us by COVID19. Our chats are always full of laughter and enjoyment of each other's use of language. They are lifelines enjoyed by both and face to face visits will be resumed in the fullness of time.

Shirley, Julie & Lesley

Despite lockdown restrictions, regular befriending contact has been kept up with Shirley and her husband for a chat each week and her befriender has left small tokens such as flowers on her doorstep with a wave from the pavement. This is all helping in a hard time to keep possible contacts whilst wishing we could be back with the befriending pattern of before.

Shirley's daughter writes below about her Mum's match and the challenges of lockdown.



When introduced to the Befriender's, it was a very welcome and much-loved service in which both mum and dad benefitted.

Having been introduced to Julie initially and then Lesley, mum had the opportunity to have female company and enjoy drives in the country. She would come home happy, saying how much she enjoyed the trip out and the company. She did not always remember what she did or where she went but it was always a pleasant experience. During this time dad was able to relax and have a restful nap.

The kindness of these ladies ensured that mum did not miss out on the things in life that made her happy.

Since the beginning of the lockdown, essential activities that mum attended such as a local club have stopped. With mum no longer having these social interactions, she has become more isolated and cut off from the outside world. Dad has no longer been able to have that nap as he is conscious of mum maybe going outside and falling.

We are hoping that the restrictions will ease by summer so that they can both enjoy the countryside and days out and that our beloved befriender ladies will bring sunshine back into their lives.

Volunteers wanted



We hope in reading about these three matches you can see the difference befriending can make, the fun it can be and how it helps to connect older people with their local communities.

If you or a family member/ friend could commit to a regular contact, enjoy listening to others and have interests you can share, Befriending might be for you/ them.

You can look at details on our website www.kdbefriending.org.uk or contact us for a chat.

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Funding

It has been a challenging time for charities with many sources of funding having changed their criteria.

We were fortunate to receive COVID specific funding in the initial stages of the pandemic. This enabled us to renew IT resources and to set up more efficiently to work from home as required by government guidance for much of 2020.

At Christmas time we were able to create gift bags for delivery to all our befriendees in Kincardine and Deeside. Many thanks to those who made this possible: Kincardine Development Partnership funding, a donation from a local businessman; and several local businesses who provided generous donations and discounts.

If you might consider fundraising for us, please do get in touch and we will be happy to help.



In addition to Friends events and marmalade sales, we are delighted to have the support of befriender Sue Barrie and her husband Donald. The couple have again chosen K&D Befriending to benefit from their participation in Scotland's Open Gardens Scheme; we will issue more details later about the chance to visit their garden at Glensauth Lodge, Drumtochty Glen on 12th September 2021.



As well as ongoing funding from Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership we have been successful in being selected by the National Lottery Community Fund. The National Lottery Community Fund, Scotland Chair, Kate Still: said:

"In these unprecedented times, it's heartening to see the way Scottish communities are coming together to provide each other with support. I would like to congratulate Kincardine and Deeside Befriending on their award which is testament to the incredible efforts of their staff and volunteers. National Lottery players can be proud to know that the money they raise is making such a difference."



Social media



We have joined Facebook and you can find us under Kincardine and Deeside Befriending. We will be sharing news there so please do encourage those who use Facebook, be that yourself, family or friends, to follow us.

Kincardine & Deeside Befriending

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