

Year 8 2024 Befriending review

The Befriending Team continues to work with a steady number of enthusiastic and loyal befrienders who willingly donate their valuable time to visit, phone and/or text local residents (aka befriendees). As well as maintaining regular, often weekly, contact with a befriender, befrienders may also choose to have occasional contact and not necessarily be exclusive to one individual. This means there is a lot of flexibility to offer local residents.

In 2024 the Befriending Team initially comprised Claire, Carol and Hilja. It was sad to say goodbye to Hilja who has now moved away from the village, but happily I (Su Mac) have stepped in to take her place, maintaining a core Befriending Team of 3. One of Hilja's legacies was her encouragement to revise and review the Befriending guidelines and procedures. Last year, with the added help of Judith, this included a new A4 leaflet for new Befrienders and a postcard sized advert to attract new befriendees. We are currently in the process of distributing these in key locations in Old Woodhouse/Woodhouse Eaves and will be putting them in letterboxes of residents who we think might be interested.

On the social side, befrienders enjoyed the annual afternoon tea, once again kindly hosted by Susan and Stuart Tyler. The weather was great - not too hot, not too cold and not too windy and the garden provided a stunning backdrop for the cream tea and chatter between befrienders and befriendees. An added bonus were the goody bags of surplus delicacies to take home. Many thanks to the befrienders who were able to attend, help with lifts and kept the tea and the cakes flowing throughout the afternoon.

In 2024 we were delighted to establish contact with the community volunteering service of Loughborough University and, through the mailing list, we have been made aware of a range of social events some of which may benefit our befriendees. We dipped our toes in the water when a few people attended a film show "Flick Down Memory Lane" and then, a few months later, a few hardy befriendees plus befrienders attended a Tea Dance organised by LSU Action. The student jazz band was superb - displaying an amazing musical standard - and the students were considerate, lively and fun to be around as they kept us topped up with copious amounts of tea and goodies to eat. The three befriendees who attended were in their 90s and full of praise for the event which generated some happy memories and lots to talk about. One of them was also very successful in the raffle.

Su McFarlane
Befriending Coordinator