

Befriending

Loneliness can affect people of all ages, but as we get older the risk factors, such as poor health, bereavement, loss of mobility, poor transport and becoming a carer, increase. Isolation and loneliness are increasing problems throughout the UK: 17% of older people are in contact with their relatives less than once a week; 51% of over 75s live alone; and about 3.9 million of all older people say that television is their main source of company. As you can imagine, the story is similar in our area. Madeley Practice and Madeley & District Community Association Transport Scheme have identified the need for befriending in our rural community.

As part of a new community initiative we are hoping to introduce a befriending scheme. Befrienders extend the hand of friendship to anyone over 18 who feel lonely or isolated for any reason. The befrienders are people who care, and are willing to visit regularly for a drink and a chat. *There will be no charge for this service.*

Many people already befriend on an informal basis, and we would like to thank and congratulate all of those people who carry out this valuable service.

If you think you would like to know more about what befriending involves, or you know someone who would benefit from a befrienders visit, please contact Brigitte or Debbie on the following numbers:

Debbie Burns: 01782 751164
Brigitte Knowles: 01782 750274