

Supporting and working with community groups and clubs to promote a deeper understanding of local health and care needs and experiences

Spotlight on Time to Talk Befriending

Time to Talk Befriending is an accredited befriending charity overcoming loneliness experienced by older people through a range of intergenerational befriending activities.

The average age of this organisation's members is 82 years and most of their volunteers are aged between 20-55 years. They specialise in delivering intergenerational projects bridging the gap between the generations.



Their service is available for anyone aged 65+ living in Adur and Worthing. They also operate in Brighton and Hove where the Charity was first Founded (in 2013) in response to research with older people who advised that they felt '*invisible*', '*forgotten*' and '*desperate to see a friendly face at home*' because '*until I came here, I hadn't spoken to anyone for week's*'.

The charity continues to respond to the voice of older people and volunteers developing services to best meet their needs. Their range of services is outlined below but during COVID-19, while restrictions are still in place their core service is focused on telephone befriending, frequent postal contact, doorstep pop rounds and signposting.

They provide:

- **One to one Befriending:** matching older people aged 65+ (average age 82) with community volunteers (majority age 20-55 years) for mutually rewarding friendship and companionship.
- **Telephone Befriending:** positive connections over the phone between scheme members and carefully matched volunteers for friendship and company.
- **Group Befriending:** helping older people to leave the four walls of their homes in a safe and supported way providing opportunities to meet each other. This is delivered in partnership with local Churches and colleges.
- **Enhanced Befriending:** training and supporting volunteers to provide dementia inclusive befriending helping to create meaningful moments of connection. In addition, volunteers



can access enhanced training and support on the topics of wellbeing, maintaining good brain health, bereavement, and loss.

- **Intergenerational projects:** opportunities for different generations to come together. For example, Great Oaks and Little Acorns Forest School project, Pen Pal schemes, group events, and Life-Stories projects using a toolkit developed by Bridging Ages, whereby young people are trained to become journalists producing a published book about the life of an older person.
- **Seasonal Events:** ‘Thinking of You at Christmas’ and ‘Holidays at Home’ helping to overcome feelings of loneliness during peak times in the year (i.e., when families are away on holiday or at Christmas when people are on their own).
- **Signposting:** tapping older people into what is existing in the local community helping to build wider social networks.
- **Chaplaincy:** helping to meet the spiritual care needs of our members. Affiliated with Anna Chaplaincy through the Bible Reading Fellowship.



Time to Talk Befriending

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All of the insight we collect from people across West Sussex is collated and anonymised and forms part of the evidence that Healthwatch gather to identify common themes around what works and what could be improved for local people. **This insight is used to influence service development and can feed into**

- West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board
- HASC - Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee
- WSCC Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Safeguarding Adult Board
- Sussex Health and Care Partnership workstreams (the NHS Integrated Care System for Sussex).

Healthwatch West Sussex also share reports with the Care Quality Commission (who are responsible for the registration and inspection of services which deliver regulated activities) and to Healthwatch England to form part of the national picture used to influence national developments, such as the NHS Long Term forward plan.

Not only do we collect the experiences of local people, but we can also provide free information and guidance just call: **0300 012 0122**. Email helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk, Website www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk.

healthwatch
West Sussex

You can also follow our social media channels:

Facebook [@healthwatchwestsussex](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchwestsussex) Twitter [@healthwatchws](https://twitter.com/healthwatchws)

If you are setting up or would like to share news of a similar project we would be interested to hear from you. Please contact Cheryl Berry, Community Partnership Lead, email: cheryl.berry@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk