



Local churches bringing people together

From the Befriended Team

We know that these are very difficult days for everyone to adjust to and that everyone has had to make quick decisions to adjust their lives. We as a team want to reassure you of our ongoing support, prayer and provision of resource ideas/advice sheets

TELEPHONE BEFRIENDING

BEFRIENDERS

- Arrange a regular time to speak with your befriender, a time suitable for them and for you
- The calls should last up to 30 minutes max on a weekly basis, it is better to have a 15 minute conversation 3 x a week than 30+ minutes once a week to suit your availability
- Call when you say you will, your call may be the highlight of your befriender's day and perhaps the highlight of your day too
- Ask if "now is a good time to talk" just in case it isn't
- Make a note of a few things to chat about, that you would like to share
- Take brief notes about your conversation and keep in a safe place
- Ask about your befriender's day/how are they
- We have two ears and one mouth so remember to listen twice as much as talk
- Give plenty of time to your befriender to talk, you may be the only one they have spoken to since you last rang
- Share something from your day, especially if you have encountered some unexpected kindness or spotted some hopeful signs of spring
- Listen to any concerns or questions your befriender may have – no concern is too small, and it can be helpful to share something even if there is no immediate solution.
- Offer encouragement where possible and try not to speculate
- Encourage them to keep in contact with other friends and family by phone, skype or facetime wherever possible
- Suggest to them to take up old or new interests ie crafts, gardening, learning a new language, jigsaw puzzles
- Treat your befriender with respect, politeness, kindness and honesty
- Respect your befriender's right to confidentiality
- Ask your befriender how the nation has come together in the past – we need wisdom from the older generations more than ever (for example sharing neighbourhood resources, 'Make do and Mend', 'Dig for Victory') note: the focus here is not on the war so much as coming together
- Talk about a whole range of subjects not just about current issues. Please remember we want to bring hope, joy and support to them
- Share any good news stories you have heard – people singing on balconies across Europe, the water running clear in Venice for the first time in a long time with sightings of swans, the young lad who gave the pasta from his shopping basket to an older person.
- Double check at the end of the call – is there anything else on their mind
- Arrange the time of your next phone call
- Share something you are looking forward to – this can be something small, like having another phone call together
- Finish on a positive note, offer to pray
- Recognise your own personal boundaries
- Don't give out your home telephone number or address



BEFRIENDEES

- Arrange a regular time to speak with your befriender
- The calls should last up to 30 minutes max on a weekly basis, based on the availability of your befriender
- Make a note of a few things to chat about, things that you would like to share and anything concerning you
- Let your befriender know any times of the day that it may not be convenient for you to speak on the phone
- Share something from your day, especially if you have encountered some unexpected kindness or anything that has made you smile
- Share any concerns or questions you may have – no concern is too small, and it can be helpful to share something even if there is no immediate solution.
- Share with your befriender if you have any experience of how the nation has come together in the past – we need wisdom from you - the older generations more than ever (for example sharing neighbourhood resources, 'Make do and Mend', Dig for Victory) note: the focus here is not on the war so much as coming together
- Share any good news stories you have heard – people singing on balconies across Europe, the water running clear in Venice for the first time in a long time with sightings of swans, the young lad who gave the pasta from his shopping basket to an older person.
- Arrange the time of your next phone call
- Share something you are looking forward to – this can be something small, like having another phone call together
- If you would like your befriender to pray for you or have someone call you to pray with you please share with them your prayer request

WHAT WE CAN DO AND CAN'T DO AS A BEFRIENDER

We can

- Provide regular telephone calls on a regular basis
- Be a listening ear
- We can be a contact for someone who has any unmet needs or concerns about their wellbeing
- We can support one another if you have difficult conversations
- We can look out for ways that we can help in other ways within our local communities
- Pray for and with our befriender

We can't

- Visit people at home until the threat of COVID-19 has come to an end
- Offer a counselling support service
- Take out money from anyone else's bank account

SCAMS AND FRAUD

Sadly we are already hearing about potential scams using the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to take advantage. We sincerely hope this does not happen to any of our older people. We want to remind you of all the advice we have through our Scams and Fraud material to be wise, be safe, be sure. If you want any more details about advice and what to be aware of contact your local OPM Specialist and they can email you a Scams and Fraud Pack.

Gail Millar 24 March 2020