

Mental Health Befriending for Arnold Residents

The Mental Health Befriending Service, run by Arnold Methodist Church and supported by the Council, has many volunteers and links with many providers such as the Alzheimer's Society, Men in Sheds, carer's support and a number of professionals in the mental health field.

The breadth of activities on offer to visitors includes a new multi games table including such things as pool and table football, creative writing courses and a wider range of craft activities.

The weekly Friday sessions offer a safe place for sufferers, carers and their families that they find rewarding and good for their wellbeing.

Men in Sheds

Socially isolated older men continue to participate in the Men in Sheds workshop based in Daybrook and they also benefited from a range of additional social activities such as day trips, meals, sporting activities and a Christmas Party. New friendships have developed and grown beyond the Men in Sheds activities and members have reported that being involved has improved their retirement. Other benefits have been:

- Increased confidence
- Increased awareness of health issues
- Signposting to other support services
- Men empowered to help run the workshop
- Respite for carers
- Teaching and learning opportunities.

Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

Over 3000 local residents are subscribed to this e-newsletter which sends information on activities and services provided to promote healthy lifestyles. Information has included:

- Every Mind Matters campaign
- Self-Care week
- Weight management service
- World Mental Health Day
- Online gambling support
- Talking therapies
- Covid-19 and befriending support

Wellbeing@work

Gedling Borough Council's long established workplace health scheme makes staff aware of health and lifestyle advice through a regular e-newsletter and regular lunchtime sessions, such as fitness, table tennis, pilates and mindfulness, are

offered too. Annual health fairs provided free health screening, checks and advice. The Council has also introduced substance misuse and menopause in the workplace policies and provides an employee assistance scheme that offers free, confidential and independent support.

SPRIING Social Prescribing Scheme

Gedling Borough Council and Gedling Homes have delivered this scheme for older people in partnership, courtesy of funded from Jigsaw Homes group. The scheme was co-produced and co-designed with Gedling Seniors Council in 2018. Since then self-referrals and agency referrals have been received and volunteer community navigators recruited. Many local community groups have supporting the project and others have received additional capacity building support to enable them to get involved. Nottingham Trent University has undertaken an external evaluation of the scheme.

Regular 'SPRIING Link' social and information events have built a wide range of partnerships with local and strategic groups and organisations. Examples of activities that clients have been signposted to and engaged in include leisure centre activities, lunch clubs, SPRIING link sessions and the Arnold Methodist Church Mental Health Befriending project.

SPRIING was designed as a pilot to inform future funding for social prescribing schemes in the area. Learning from the scheme has been used to inform the development of the South Notts social prescribing system and appointment of new NHS Link Workers. The Council has been working with social prescribing partners across South Nottinghamshire to ensure there is a smooth transition for SPRIING clients into the new system.

South Nottinghamshire Community Development Worker

Gedling Borough Council has been commissioned to host a 12 month Community Development Worker post working across South Nottinghamshire. The £35,000 funding has been allocated by South Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership and will work with other districts and partners to support the new social prescribing Link Workers across the area that are funded by the NHS. This work builds on the local community capacity building work that the Community Relations Service area has been undertaking as part of the SPRIING scheme.

The Council's managed to continue its community development work to engage with community groups interested in working with NHS Link Workers to support social prescribing during the Covid-19 restrictions. Existing and emerging Facebook groups and a list of community groups that offer support to vulnerable people have been compiled and shared with the Link Workers.

Sustainable Health and Wellbeing Schemes

A number of local activities continued to be supported promoting the health and wellbeing of more isolated residents prior to the Covid-19 lockdown. These included the local volunteer led Walking for Health scheme and sessions in leisure centres such as Heartbeats, Falls Prevention, Strokability and DNA Health. Work to get these initiatives operating again is part of the Council's Reset Strategy delivery.

Express Yourself

The Council's long running partnership with City Arts has continued as funding was obtained for the Express Yourself project in 2019. Targeting young people in the Gedling area aged 13-17 it aims to support them in gaining skills and qualifications by raising self-esteem in a safe creative environment. Funding has been sourced courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council's Local Improvement Scheme.

Participants in the project worked with an artist to create a new mural for the bridge on the railway cutting running along the edge of Arnot Hill Park to mark 100 years of Arnot Hill Park as a public park.

During the period of Covid-19 restriction the Express Yourself project has been offering online zine-making classes for 13-17 year olds, designed to support young people's mental wellbeing through exploring creative tips and ideas. The sessions take place on Google Classroom and participants get a free art pack too and the Council has been supporting City Arts to promote these sessions to the Gedling community.

Accessibility Swim Sessions

These swim sessions launched in March 2018 and took place every Tuesday from 1:45pm to 2:45pm at Arnold Leisure Centre prior to the Covid-19 lockdown and closure of the leisure centres. Originally planned as a dementia friendly swim session there is no music or lane ropes and customers can help themselves to floats to assist in their session.

There was nothing programmed in immediately after or before these sessions allowing participants to have a quiet, calm changing experience & all staff on duty have received dementia friendly training.

During the sessions there have been hoists for support into the water and good accessible changing facilities and parking and as a result the session is also proving popular with swimmers suffering from MS.

Social Isolation in Gedling

Nottingham Trent University, working with the Council, have previously commissioned a research project into social isolation affecting older and younger people in Gedling targeting a small cohort of local residents. The report findings considered older and younger participants views on:

- Lack of services

- Online engagement
- Dementia and loneliness
- Lack of mobility.

Gedling Seniors Council

The Seniors Council is a combination of representatives of grass roots groups serving the older community, individual older citizens and representatives of wider charities supporting the older sector. Issues considered as part of its action plan that affect mental health and wellbeing have been:

- Local Healthcare and Advice – CCG Representatives
- Transport
- Getting Out and About in Gedling
- Volunteering and participation
- Housing, Quality of Life, Community Care and Independent Living
- Public Protection

The Seniors Council has helped to co-produce the SPRING social prescribing scheme in 2018 and participated in a successful Intergenerational Conference in 2019 partnering Gedling Youth Council. In December 2019, it hosted the Syrian Society of Nottingham Community Meal event in collaboration with the Syrian Society and Gedling Refugee Befriending Scheme. The theme of the meeting was ‘Celebrating Volunteering and Support in the Community’, and also presented an opportunity for Syrian families to thank Nottingham for the welcome they have received.

Prior to the Covid-19 lockdown there were plans to strengthen links between the Mental Health Befriending project and Syrian Families Befriending project and participate in a heritage tour of the Borough with targeted vulnerable groups to assess the accessibility of a newly proposed heritage walking and cycling way for the Borough.

Seniors Council meetings have had to cease since Covid-19 restrictions have been in place. A key aspect of the Council’s Reset Strategy plans will be to determine appropriate re-engagement with the Seniors Council.

Gedling Youth Council

The Youth Council has entered its third term with 28 active members and has been successful in engaging local young people in its work; 22% of the countywide ‘Make Your Mark’ campaign survey came from Gedling. The survey has informed an action plan relating to knife crime, a Curriculum for Life, young people’s mental health and loneliness and isolation and members of Youth Council have shared their intentions with Gedling Borough Council’s Senior Leadership Team as part of the Children’s Takeover Challenge and previously presented to Full Council their findings from their bullying in schools consultation.

The Youth Council has produced an Anti-bullying Pack championed across Nottinghamshire, has its outgoing Chair win the overall 'Pride of Gedling' Award in 2019 and a current member has been appointed as a Young Person's Health and Wellbeing Champion for Nottinghamshire. It has also led on the 2019 Intergenerational event hosted with Gedling Seniors Council and is keen to move forward on the action plan from that event, which includes:

- School life
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Prejudice and Discrimination
- Loneliness and Isolation
- Mental Health
- Knife Crime, fear of crime

Youth Council meetings have had to cease since Covid-19 restrictions have been in place. A key aspect of the Council's Reset Strategy plans will be to determine appropriate re-engagement with the Youth Council.

Gedling Health Champion for Public Health & the Youth Service

Member of the Gedling Youth Council, Eleanor Lumb has been elected as the Health Champion for Public Health and the Youth Service.

This is a new and important 2-year voluntary role which enables Eleanor to be the voice for young people's health throughout the County. Eleanor had been attending the Young People's Health Strategy meetings, Children and Young Peoples committee meetings, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Patient Participation Groups and local hospital youth forums to represent the voice of young people across Nottinghamshire. Eleanor's role is to work with the Young People's Board and Members of Youth Parliament to communicate key messages and work around healthcare which enables young people to have an active role in services that affect them. Eleanor sends briefs and questionnaires to participation groups to get views, ideas and feedback from young people.

Eleanor was elected to the Gedling Youth Council in March 2018, and in that time has participated in the Scrutiny of Young People's Health and Wellbeing Services in Gedling and a number of Youth Council projects and initiatives.

WeRHere Counselling Service

WeRHere is a counselling service for families who are facing crisis that is part funded by a grant agreement with Gedling Borough Council.

The organisation supports many local residents and has reported increases to its waiting list and also an increase in the number of young people suffering with mental health issues, particularly since the Covid-19 lockdown.

The grant agreement with WeRHere has continued during the Covid-19 lockdown with clients being supported via their preferred remote medium, such as telephone, video call or skype.

Good Neighbour and Garden Competitions

Gedling Borough Council has been running these annual competitions in Netherfield and Newstead Village. Many local socially isolated people engage in the garden competitions and the annual presentations provided an opportunity for them to socialise and engage with the wider community. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 it has not been possible to run these projects in 2020.

Gedling Caribbean Elders

This group that meets at the Brickyard Community Centre has been supported to establish a committee of four individuals, a bank account, a constitution and full set of required policies, membership forms and membership register. In addition it has been supported to receive a further three year's grant funding from Nottinghamshire County Council in 2018. Three of the group are represented on the Gedling Senior's Council and the Elder's group offers an essential opportunity for local older people from the Caribbean community to meet and socialise.

Sustainable Community Hubs

Community halls and centres are key locations for communities to meet and participate in social and physical activities. Local work continues to provide community centres and support sustainable community run initiatives. Outcomes have included:

- A broad programme activities delivered by communities at Gedling Borough Council community centres, including tea dances, Swing Into Shape, Zumba, Yoga, Age Concern, Mencap, Caribbean Elders and activities for children and young people
- The successful development of Eagle's Nest Community Centre in Arnold following its asset transfer from Gedling Borough Council. The centre has been refurbished and provides a thriving programme for older and younger people.
- The successful asset transfer of Haywood Road Community Centre to Haywood Road Community Association following significant investment to refurbish the facilities. The centre's programme includes an Arts group, Circle Dance group, Scrabble group, yoga, meditation, Weight Watchers, martial arts and drama.

All of these facilities have been required to close as part of Covid-19 restrictions. A key aspect of the Council's Reset Strategy is to support the re-opening and future sustainability of these settings as essential community assets supporting local residents.

Citizens Advice Bureau Outreach in Arnold, Calverton and Netherfield

Gedling Borough Council has a grant agreement with Nottingham and District Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide these outreaches in the Borough. Between April 2018 and September 2019, 689 local residents were assisted, 63% of these were female and 50% were either disabled or had a long-term health condition. 60% of residents assisted were over 50 years old. Most advice related to benefits, tax credit and universal credit, although consumer debt was also a key issue.

There has been successful brokerage for CAB to pilot outreach in key GP Surgeries from August 2019. This is being funded by the Homelessness grant initiative.

The grant for CAB outreach services for Gedling residents has continued during Covid-19 lockdown, but has needed to be delivered over the telephone.

Portfolio Holder for Young People and Equalities

To raise the profile of issues of inequality in the Borough and to further work to support young people locally, Gedling Borough Council appointed a new Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Equalities and Young People in 2019. Cllr Viv McCrossan currently occupies this position.

Carlton-le-Willows Health Fair

A Health and Wellbeing Fair has been held at Carlton Le Willows Academy in 2019 in partnership with the Council. In all over 1200 pupils attended the event.

Providers included the Bereavement Society, Harmless, Sexual Health, LGBT and Outburst from base 51. The young people responded positively to the event and visited the stalls in their hundreds.

Gedling Borough Council adopts a Menopause at Work Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide managers and team members with information about what menopause is and identify how the organisation can respond in practical and positive ways to ensure women experiencing symptoms of menopause can be supported within the workplace.

Its main objectives are:

- To inform of causes and symptoms of menopause
- To identify specific roles of a manager to effectively support employees within their team who are experiencing the symptoms of menopause to foster an environment in which employees can openly and comfortably engage in discussions about menopause and to ensure that women suffering with menopause symptoms feel confident to ask for support and reasonable adjustments
- To identify links to other relevant local policies and organisational support that exist to help support women who are experiencing the menopause
- To identify channels of support

Promotion of accessible leisure facilities within Gedling

Gedling Borough Council has published footage online to promote their accessible leisure facilities and sessions. This includes two members of the public talking about their positive experience in using physical activity to recover from a period of ill health. <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/specialist-sessions/>.

Hospital to Homes

The Council were finalists in the “Best Environmental Health Project 2019” at Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Awards. They have been shortlisted for The Gedling Hospital Prevention and Discharge Project. This pilot project between Gedling Borough Council Public Protection Service and three hospitals in Nottingham was established to reduce bed-blocking and avoidable admissions caused by unsafe or unsuitable housing and to support homeless patients through holistic and flexible services. Two part-time coordinators support vulnerable to towards positive outcomes. The service is currently funded by Gedling Borough and the Council has been working with the Greater Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group to bid for Public Health England for additional 12 months funding.

South Nottinghamshire Befriending Service

The Council has worked with Rushcliffe CVS to establish a telephone volunteer befriending services that will target support for Gedling residents. Initial funding has been obtained from the Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Fund for a collaborative Humanitarian response across Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe. We are keen extend this bid to cover a 12 month period to align better with the existing community development work we have already been leading on, linking with NHS Link Workers. The befriending service has provided further opportunities for the volunteers the Council has recruited as part of our Humanitarian response to Covid-19.

Community and Voluntary E-newsletter

Our latest e-newsletters have been circulated to support groups and residents during Covid-19 restrictions. Details circulated include:

- City Arts Express Yourself project are offering online zine-making classes for Nottinghamshire 13-17 year olds, designed to support young people’s mental wellbeing through exploring creative tips and ideas.
- Age UK’s Veteran’s At Home activity packs for lonely and isolated armed forces veterans.
- Relate Nottinghamshire free counselling sessions
- South Nottinghamshire Volunteer Befriending Service
- Various Covid-19 funding schemes.

In Need Requests and Contacting Vulnerable People (VP) during Covid-19 Pandemic

As part of its Humanitarian Response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council established its Giving for Gedling website portal. The portal offered an opportunity for local residents to request support from the Council. In addition the Council has undertaken calls to locally identified Vulnerable People (VPs) with whom there had been no recorded contact with by agencies during the pandemic.

By 12/08/20, the Council has dealt with 862 requests for need and had made 944 additional calls to other VPs.

As the shielding period for VPs ended at the start of August 2020, along with completing the nationally identified VP calls, our Customer Services team is also calling those residents who receive food parcels and helping them to return to some sort of normality and sustainable way to obtain their food in the future. They are also looking into potential benefits they may be entitled to which may help them financially. The team is aware that there are still residents on the list who still require some help, and will continue to arrange support while it is required.

Mental Health Awareness and Support for Staff

The Council had identified a local supplier to deliver a programme of “classroom-based” mental health awareness and training events. These events were to be targeted at both team members and team managers and had been planned for September 2020. Unfortunately it has not been possible to deliver these events but it is planned to continue with these again next Spring 2021 subject to the proposed methods of delivery being Covid-safe. In the meantime however, the Organisational Development Team has sourced a simple and cost-effective mental health awareness package that can be delivered remotely either to employees that have a council computer or to those that don't through their own devices such as a smartphone. The package focusses on awareness and signposting rather than being a full training package but it is customisable to allow links to other specialist sites that the council would want to bring to the attention of employees. This is seen as an additional support service alongside other offerings including the long-standing Employee Assistance Programme that is open to all employees.

Covid-19 Reset Strategy

In order to ensure the needs of our residents and employees are supported as we move out of the pandemic situation, the Council has developed actions as part of its Covid-19 Reset Strategy. Recognising the mental health wellbeing needs of the population and our staff during this challenging time, the following actions have been embedded in these plans:

Resident and Communities Action Plan

- Adopting an integrated whole system wellbeing approach to agency and sector working from strategic to neighbourhood level ensuring all commissioned health services are meeting the needs of the Gedling population.
- Developing and working with key stakeholders to embed a sustainable social prescribing programme for vulnerable and lonely and isolated residents across the borough.
- A community asset based approach where communities and all agencies can support residents through physical and social activities.
- Supporting local groups to tackle loneliness and isolation.
- Enabling the development of strong community wellbeing hubs and venues across the Borough that offer support and help to connect our residents.
- Considering how digital technology can be embraced to support those most isolated in the community.

Support Services Action Plan

- Promote mental health and wellbeing amongst staff.