Information NOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

Finding friends and Befriending services

Looking to connect and make new friends? There are many places to meet up with people in Newcastle.

As you get older, you may find that your friends and family become fewer or you see them less often. This can be for many reasons, such as life becoming too busy, bereavement, ill health, disability or people moving away from the area that you live in. It may be that you are living alone for the first time in many years if your partner has passed away, or your relationship has ended for other reasons, such as divorce.

Loneliness and isolation can be a huge problem. It can effect your physical and mental health. It's a great idea to try some of the groups below and start meeting people.

Friendship groups

Laing Art Gallery run the free Meet @ Laing Group to socialise, talk about culture, explore new things and visit new places.

Search Newcastle run social groups, coffee morning, activities and groups for older people in the West End of Newcastle. This include West End Friends project: one to one support and group activities in the South Asian and Chinese communities.

Meet new people

There are many ways in which you can make new friends; the most obvious being to join a group of like-minded people. You can do this by thinking about the things that you enjoy doing and finding a group that you can join. If you don't have a hobby, try reading the following sections of our website for some ideas:

- **Hobbies**
- **Fitness**
- **Lifelong learning**
- **Libraries**
- **Food and Friends**

Holidays

Travelling alone may seem daunting at first, but there are many travel companies that specialise in organising holidays for older or single people. Visit our section on **Taking a holiday** for more detailed information about how to arrange a trip or find a holiday that suits your needs.

Local clubs and community centres

If you don't want to travel too far, there should be plenty of opportunities in your local area to meet new people and spend time in other people's company. Have a look at our **Directory of Organisations** for details of groups in the area you live in. You can now search by postcode and area to see organisations that operate in your area. You may also like to see our information on **Food and Friends** and **Day centres**

Meetup is an online network of local groups. You can organise a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up face-to-face. More than 9,000 groups get together in local communities each day, each one with the goal of improving themselves or their communities.

Outsiders is an organisation that offers social opportunities to people with physical, learning and social disabilities.

National Women's Register (NWR) is a social organisation for all women. They offer local group and online meetings for conversation, friendship and fun. The groups are informal and relaxed. You can meet lively minded members who are interested in everything and talk about anything. Visit their website to find your local group and more about their activities. You can attend 3 free taster sessions. If you decide to join the membership subscription costs £32 a year from January 2023.

Tea parties and cafes

Reengage offer monthly afternoon tea parties for people over 75 who live alone.

The Chatty Cafe is a scheme where you can find local cafes who encourage their customers to chat to each other. They also run online sessions on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays

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Volunteering

This is great way to meet new people and also to give something back to your community at the same time. Our section on **Volunteering** will give you some ideas about ways in which you can give your time. Volunteering is also an excellent way of learning new skills and building up your confidence.

Befriending services in the community

If you are isolated and are unable to get out and about, you may benefit from a befriending service. This means that a volunteer will visit you, usually in your own home, to provide you with some company. Some services offer telephone befriending, which involves a volunteer contacting you for a chat over the telephone on a regular basis. We have listed here some organisations that may be able to provide you with a befriender:

Chain Reaction is a service commissioned by Newcastle City Council that supports older people (55+) to live independently in the community.

By promoting the use of community-based resources and facilities, Chain Reaction helps people to lead happier, healthier lives. It supports and sustains friendships in order to combat social isolation and to increase a sense of good emotional health and wellbeing

Chain Reaction is provided by three partner organisations:

- **Search**
- **KeyRing**
- **Mental Health Concern**

Together they have knowledge and experience of working with older people, those who have a learning disability, and people with poor mental health.

Ways to Wellness service helps people in the West of Newcastle to manage their long-term conditions, which may include activities such as:

- Getting involved in local groups and activities
- Accessing specialist services and support
- Healthy eating and getting more active
- Getting support around benefits and welfare rights

Community Wellbeing Pathfinder service offers up to 8 sessions of personalised guidance face-to-face, over the phone, or by video. They support with a range of health, financial and wellbeing needs. They can work with you to reducing loneliness and build social support in your local community.

Companionship at home

Shine On (formerly Caring Hands) offer a range of services for people aged 55 and over in the East of Newcastle upon Tyne. They can arrange friendly visits and telephone chats. Their befriending volunteers visit people at home, in hospital or care settings, or can have a friendly chat over the phone.

St Martin's Centre in Byker have a Befriending and Wellbeing Project. They can arrange for a volunteer to visit you regularly or help you to take part in activities at their Centre or the local community.

Royal Voluntary Service offers a Befriending service where older people can be matched with a volunteer who can offer visits and time for a chat.

Wag and Co provide a trained dog and volunteer to visit you at home, hospital or in your care home setting. This befriending service gives older, isolated, unwell or bereaved people the chance to spend time with a friendly dog. They also offer human company, a chat and cuddles

with a dog. To use this befriending service you need to be referred by a professional, such as your GP, adult social care, or The British Red Cross.

MyFolks Ltd provides practical and emotional support for older people. They connect older adults with people in the community who can support them right when they need it. You can arrange visits as needed. They can provide companionship, time for a chat and also help with small tasks at home.

People with learning disabilities

Friends Action North East (FANE) support adults with learning disabilities and autism to meet new people and make lasting friendships. They work across Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside.

Telephone befriending

Foodcycle run **Check in and Chat free service** you can arrange a 20 minute call each week for a social chat with a volunteer. This is for anyone in the UK. You can sign-up whether or not you come to one of their community meals.

NHS Care Volunteer Responder service is a free telephone service for people who are vulnerable, isolated or lonely. Volunteers will call you to check in and chat. The service is free and you don't need to be referred by a doctor. You can have one off or regular phone calls from a volunteer. They will have a chat and listen to you. They can help you explore changes you can make tin your life. For example to connect with others, become more physically active, to learn new skills or volunteer. They can signpost you to other services and support in the community.

The Silver Line is the confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year. Specially trained helpline staff offer

- information, friendship and advice
- signposting to local groups and services
- regular befriending calls
- protection and support to those who are suffering abuse and neglect

Age UK England have a telephone befriending service. Contact them to ask for a befriender.

Building Connections offer befriending and emotional support to young people up to the age of 19.

Independent Age run telephone friendship groups to help you connect with new friends and to learn more issues that matter to you. This is aimed at people who aren't online or can't get out and about in their community.

Methodist Homes Housing Association (MHA) run telephone befriending services for older people and LGBTQ+ people.

Stroke befriending service

Newcastle Community Stroke Service offers specialist rehabilitation to people at home and in the community. To use this service you must be over 18, have Newcastle GP and have a diagnosis of Stroke. They have a Patient Support Group and a Befriending Service for people with Aphasia.

Socialising online

There are a number of ways of finding new friends, or a partner online. Many of these services are free of charge, but some online dating sites charge a monthly fee.

The Chatty Cafe run online sessions on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays

Social Networking section on Information Now

Finding a partner page on Information NOW

Last updated: June 20, 2025

Useful Organisations

Shine On (formerly Caring Hands)

Email: contact@shineoncharity.org.uk

Website: https://www.shineoncharity.org.uk/

Telephone: 0191 261 5234

Address: Shine On, NE6 5QN

Nexus

Email: customerservices@nexus.org.uk

Website: www.nexus.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 203 3333

Independent Age

Email: advice@independentage.org

Website: https://www.independentage.org/

Telephone: 0191 731 4000

Volunteer Centre Newcastle

Email: karen.watson@volunteeringmatters.org.uk

Website: www.volunteercentrenewcastle.org.uk

Telephone: 0741 9988 821

Address: Grainger Hub Maybrook House, NE1 5JE

SAGA Holidays

Email: reservations@saga.co.uk

Website: https://travel.saga.co.uk/

Telephone: 0800 096 7242

Address: The SAGA Building, CT20 3SE

REengage

Email: https://www.reengage.org.uk/

Website: www.reengage.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 716 543

Address: 7 Bell Yard, WC2A 2JR

Equal Arts

Email: information@equalarts.org.uk

Website: www.equalarts.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 261 1619

Address: Newcastle City Library, NE1 8AX

Outsiders

Email: members@outsiders.org.uk

Website: https://www.outsiders.org.uk/outsidersclub/

Telephone: 07872 681 982

Mature Times

Email: editorial@maturetimes.co.uk

Website: www.maturetimes.co.uk

Telephone: 01275 852 317

Address: Suite G, The Old Vicarage Business Centre, BS48 1RN

Hand in Hand

Email: admin@handinhandproject.org.uk

Website: www.handinhandproject.org.uk

Telephone: 01275 852 317

Address: Trinity Methodist Church, NE28 8SA

KeyRing

Email: catriona.huck@keyring.org

Website: http://www.keyring.org

Telephone: 07917 686 658

Address: KeyRing, SE16 2XB

The Silver Line

Email: info@thesilverline.org.uk

Website: www.thesilverline.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 4 70 80 90

Address: The Silverline, EC3N 2LB

Royal Voluntary Service (RVS)

Email: tynewearhub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Website: www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 300 9334

Address: Correspondence to:, NE30 2AY

LaterLife

Email: laterlifeenquiries@laterlife.com

Website: http://www.laterlife.com

Telephone: 0191 300 9334

Chain Reaction

Email: info@chainreaction-newcastle.co.uk

Website: http://www.chainreaction-newcastle.co.uk/

Telephone: 0191 273 7443

Address: Chain Reaction, NE13 9BA

Ways to Wellness

Email: info@waystowellness.org.uk

Website: http://waystowellness.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 816 3540

Address: Ways to Wellness, NE1 3RH

Meetup

Website: https://www.meetup.com/

Telephone: 0191 816 3540

Heaton Probus Club

Email: geoffgarrettuk@googlemail.com

Website: http://www.stgeorgesurc.org.uk/communityusers.html

Telephone: 07944 821 404

Address: St Georges URC Church, NE7 7AA

Volunteering Matters

Email: gtm@volunteeringmatters.org.uk

Website: http://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/

Telephone: 0808 196 6831

Address: The Levy Centre, E5 0PD

Search Newcastle

Email: info@searchnewcastle.org.uk

Website: www.searchnewcastle.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 7443

Address: Carnegie Building, NE4 8XS

Laing Art Gallery

Email: info@laingartgallery.org.uk

Website: www.laingartgallery.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 278 1611

Address: New Bridge Street, NE1 8AG

Foodcycle

Email: hello@foodcycle.org.uk

Website: https://foodcycle.org.uk/

Telephone: 020 7729 2775

Address: FoodCycle Head Office 2.16, SW8 5EL

NHS Care Volunteer Responders

Website: https://www.goodsamapp.org/

Telephone: 0808 196 3646

Address: GoodSAM, EC2A 3JX

Methodist Homes Housing Association (MHA)

Website: https://www.mha.org.uk/

Telephone: 01332 296200

Address: MHA, DE1 2EQ

Newcastle Integrated Community Stroke Service

Telephone: 0191 282 6310

Address: Newcastle Community Stroke Service Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust, NE3 3HD

Friends Action North East (FANE)

Email: info@friendsaction.co.uk

Website: www.friendsaction.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 231 4327

Address: C/o Ouseburn Farm, NE1 2PA

Wag and Company North East Friendship Dogs

Email: office@wagandcompany.co.uk

Website: https://wagandcompany.co.uk/

Telephone: 01434 611 801

Address: Wag & Company, NE46 4DL

Building Connections

Email: buildingconnections@nspcc.org.uk

Website: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services/building-connections

Telephone: 01434 611 801

Address: Weston House,, EC2A 3NH

Age UK England

Email: contact@ageuk.org.uk

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 678 1602

Address: Age UK, EC3N 2LB

Myfolks Ltd

Email: louise.thompson@myfolks.uk

Website: www.myfolks.uk

Telephone: 0333 004 5922

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