



Befriending for those who can't get out and social activities for those who can...

What's it all about?

We are working together towards the common goal of reducing isolation in our community and exploring ways to live our best life.

As we get older, we can lose a little of our confidence. This can be even more challenging as we deal with life-changing situations like adjusting to retirement, long-term health conditions and bereavement. This may be especially hard for those of us who live alone.



So how does it work?

It all starts with a chat (which can be on the phone, or face-to-face at a time and place to suit you). What do you want to do? What are your interests? Is there anything stopping you? Maybe it feels scary going along to a new activity on your own, or possibly transport is an issue? Can you do it on your own, or do you need some help?

Once we have talked with you about what interests you and what might be in the way, we can look at how we can make it easier for you to do what you want to do.



A variety of activities and groups are organised by AVA; many of which take place at the Health & Wellbeing Centre in Kirkby-in-Ashfield. All our groups are friendly, informal and welcoming. A cuppa and chat is always on offer whatever the activity. We have our finger on the community pulse; so if there's an activity we're not doing, we usually know somebody who is. If you still can't find what you're looking for then maybe we could work together to set something up.

Barriers to joining in...

Sometimes there are things that make it more difficult to take that first step. Maybe you have been used to doing everything as a couple and now are having to face the prospect of doing things on your own. Also getting to and from an activity can be difficult; particularly for those with mobility issues. Other people may be

worried about the cost of activities.

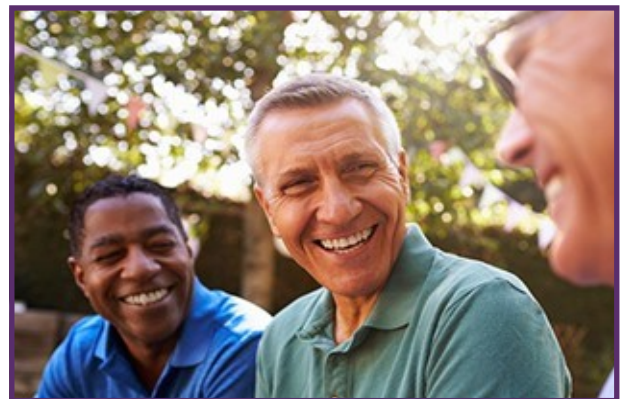
AVA can help; going with you to a new group or activity can make it easier to break the ice. Transport need not be an issue, as we work closely with Our Centre, the local community transport scheme. We try to make sure that the activities and groups we promote are either low cost, or no cost, as no-one should have to miss out.



What if I can't get out or don't want to go to an arranged activity?

Not everyone can get out and about and some people don't want to. This doesn't mean that you can't benefit from our service. If you would welcome the opportunity to meet new people and have some company, AVA provides a befriending service matching you with one of our wonderful team of volunteers. All of our volunteers are interviewed and DBS checked and we ask them to provide two references, we also provide training as necessary and provide support for our volunteers so they are well equipped to support you. Where possible, we try to match people with similar interests, so that you really benefit from the experience.

Our befrienders can provide telephone or face-to-face support and can also accompany you if you want to get out and about, but would benefit from the confidence companionship brings. Befrienders can go shopping with you, out socially to a café or garden centre, and our new walk buddies can join you in getting some fresh air and exercise.



Who can use the service?

Anyone over the age of 18 who is living in Ashfield District. Whilst many of our service users are older people, we are here for the whole community. If you are a younger person who would benefit from broadening your horizons, we also have other

opportunities that are open to you, within our volunteering programme.



What kind of activities can I do?

There's something for everyone at Ashfield Voluntary Action. We run a wide range of activities; some are part of the Living Well project and others are linked to other projects we deliver. You can access any of our activities through Living

Well and take part in as many or few as you want. Activities include:

- A coffee and chat group
- Crafting
- Days out (two recent days out include a river cruise and a trip to a garden centre)
- Board games
- Quizzes
- Gardening and working on our allotment
- Go at your own pace computer sessions
- Woodworking
- Seasonal and short courses (including Nordic Walking, meditation and fishing).



You can also join our wonderful team of volunteers, speak to one of the team or look on our website www.ashfieldvoluntaryaction.org.uk to see what is on offer. Please note that our building is fully accessible and many of our activities are suitable for people with mobility issues.

How do I access the service?

It couldn't be easier. You can get in touch with us yourself, or a family member or friend can contact us on your behalf.

Some people are also referred into our service through their GP, through a support worker or through other services, such as Age UK.



Why is it so important?

In Ashfield, there are 24,230 pensioners and a quarter of these live alone, more than a fifth have no car; 15% of pensioners are claiming pension credit which means 3,634 pensioners are living on a basic minimum income; 18.9% of the population in Ashfield are over 65 and this will continue to rise rapidly over the next 10 years.

Ashfield Voluntary Action helping you to live well

Most people want to continue living independently in their own home. Staying active and engaged is a positive step towards this. Sometimes small things can make a big difference. We know that opening doors to new friendships, social groups and interests can reduce isolation and improve strength, mobility and well-being.





Ashfield
VOLUNTARY ACTION

Living Well



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**Contact Samantha Clarke
Ashfield Voluntary Action**

☎ 01623 555 551

