**What is Community Connect?**

Community Connect is a free service funded by North Somerset Council and provided by Housing and Support organisation, Curo, in partnership with the West of England Rural Network (WERN). We want to work with people who feel lonely or isolated and who need support in accessing health services or new social activities, to help improve their wellbeing. We provide:

- A **free service** for people over **50 years of age** living in North Somerset who want to stay independent in their home
- Help for people to find groups and activities that they are interested in, as a way of meeting new people
- Signposting for people to access the right services and support them if they face problems accessing them.

We have a team of experienced **Wellbeing Workers** and Village Agents working in your community who want to meet you.

**The Senior Community Link**

Senior Community Link (SCL) is a group of people aged 50 and over who meet monthly to talk about and influence issues that are important to older people living in North Somerset. We invite local speakers to our meetings and share our views on things that matter to people living in our local communities. Topics covered include transport, police, health, hospital services and lots more. There are five SCL groups, including a black or minority ethnic group, which meet in **Weston-super-Mare**, Yatton, Clevedon and Portishead. The group is free to attend and refreshments are available. Transport can be arranged for those with mobility issues.

New members are always welcome. To find out more telephone Curo on 0300 123 2463 or email **SCL@curo-group.co.uk**.

**If you would like this Newsletter in a different format please get in touch**
A Musical Teatime

Community Connect has helped ‘A Musical Teatime’ become a very successful community group which caters for older, but young at heart, citizens.

Formerly known as ‘Shake a Leg’, the group meets every second Tuesday of the month, from 2.00pm to 4.00pm, in the church hall of Our Lady of Lourdes in Baytree Road, Milton, Weston-super-Mare.

Live music is provided on the keyboard by Bill Stagg, who encourages everybody to have a singalong. The more exuberant guests can even get up and dance to well-known tunes, in between enjoying teas and home-made cakes provided by the committee.

Faye Derrick, Chairperson of A Musical Teatime, said ‘Our group is very friendly and welcoming. We understand that older people can become lonely at times so we aim to provide a warm, inclusive environment, with a little bit of fun’.

A Musical Teatime’s next meeting is on Tuesday 12th January 2016.

North Somerset LGBT Forum

We were pleased to work with the North Somerset Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum to support their annual event, Weston Pride. Community Connect want to work with the over 50s LGBT community to tackle loneliness and isolation and to support the setting up of relevant local activities and new groups.

This year staff knitted coloured squares that became a huge rainbow scarf to support the event. We had support from many groups across North Somerset who joined us in our knitting extravaganza, including the Crafty Chats group on the South Ward.

A spokesperson for NSLGBT FORUM added ‘We are pleased to be working with Community Connect and will be encouraging new members to join us in 2016 from the over 50s age group. Peer support is priceless and can change lives just by being there for each other. Nobody in North Somerset should feel isolated from expressing themselves regardless of their sexual identity.” For further information email nigel.nslgbtforum@gmail.com
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Walking Football at Weston-super-Mare Football Club

Community Connect are working with Weston-super-Mare Football Club and ‘Seagulls in the Community’ to promote sport for the over 50 year olds in North Somerset.

Did you play sport when you were younger? Do you still have a passion for football?

This is an ideal chance to meet other men and women with similar interests and keep fit and active at the same time.

Over 50s Walking Football sessions run at:
Weston-super-Mare Football Club on Tuesdays between 10.00AM and 11.00AM

If you are interested ring Geoff Stevens on 07970 168 178 or email community.manager@wsmafc.co.uk

Nailsea ‘Ellie Lindsay’ Leg Club

Local NHS Nurses and community volunteers have come together to provide this Drop In Service offering:

- Initial assessment
- Treatment
- Dopplers
- General health promotion.

If you have a leg problem and live in the Nailsea and Backwell area you can Drop In at the Nailsea Tithe Barn, Church Lane BS48 4NG any Wed morning 9-12 for care, and meet other people and have some refreshments.

If you live in Nailsea or the surrounding area and would like to support the Leg Club why don’t you consider doing a sponsored event or activity. Come and talk to us about how we can support you to support the Leg Club. Ring Tracy Mann on 01275 888803 for more information.

OVER 50? LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU ACTIVE?

GET IN TOUCH WITH COMMUNITY CONNECT ON 01275 888 803
A Volunteer’s story - Barry

For seven years, after the death of my wife, I lived in Cyprus with my daughter. Whilst relaxing in the sunshine under blue skies was wonderful, family eventually drew me back to the UK. It took a while for us to re-establish ourselves but once we were settled I found that previous ties had fallen away and it was time to go out into the community and make new friends – something my daughter was encouraging me to do as she was worried that I would be lonely whilst she was away at work.

My son invited us to an open day that was held at the Winter Gardens earlier this year and there were a great many stalls present for volunteer groups. With the encouragement of my daughter, I signed up for a couple of these. This was the beginning of my entry into volunteering work.

The outcome of that day was that I was contacted by Tracy Mann from Curo, who asked if I was still willing to volunteer. I of course said yes and the process was started to acquire all the necessary forms and certificates. It took a while before they found how to make the best use of me but now we have hit our stride.

I am currently involved with a group called Loss But Not Forgotten, which has been created to help people trying to deal with bereavement and all the issues surrounding it. The group has only been running for a few weeks but already good progress is being made. Much to my surprise, I was made the Chairman of the group. Apparently the others thought this was a good idea! We continue to work on spreading the word that this group is available for all who need it.

Since signing up for the volunteering work, my days are now much more productive and rewarding. Doing good things for others gives a feeling of wellbeing and fulfilment. I am a person who likes to feel as if they are contributing. I have also noticed that I am much more active, a good thing since I am nearing the end of my seventies.

Inspired by Barry’s story? Want to try volunteering?

COME AND TALK TO US