



# Resources and References

Version 0.38

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## Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Quotes.....	5
<i>Loneliness</i> .....	5
<i>Make People's Lives Better</i> .....	5
Some Relevant Schemes and Groups.....	6
<i>Social Prescribing</i> .....	6
<i>Groups for Workers</i> .....	7
<i>Groups for People with Problems</i> .....	7
<i>Local Support Groups</i> .....	8
<i>Other Links</i> .....	8
References.....	10
Social Prescribing Workshop.....	10
<i>Presentations</i> .....	11
<i>Feedback from the participants</i> .....	12

## Document Status

This is version 0.38 of a working document, currently under development. The latest version of this document can be found by following a link on the web page:

- <https://localfriends.org.uk/docs/>

All the details contained in this document should be understood as a working proposal for how the *Local Friends* scheme could operate; they are presented here as a basis for further discussion.

## Further Details

If you are interested in contributing to the development of this scheme in some way, please contact Paul Hazelden by

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## Executive Summary

There are a number of existing organisations and schemes which cover some of the same ground as *Local Friends*. We are seeking to work alongside them and learn from their experience: there is no good reason to duplicate work which is already being done, but there are very good reasons for seeking to fill in the gaps in the existing provision.

This document identifies some of the key players in this field. Please let us know if you are aware of a group which ought to be mentioned here, or if any of the description or commentary should be corrected or enhanced.

## Quotes

### *Loneliness*

George Monbiot, writing in the Guardian, ‘Without the power of kindness, our society will fall apart’, 2 November 2016:

(<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/02/kindness-government-loneliness-mental-health>)

[Writing about the performances he shares with the singer Ewan McLennan, George Monbiot says:]

“At the end of every gig, we ask people in the audience to turn to someone they don’t know and say hello. I tell them they needn’t do any more than that, but they can keep talking if they wish. On the first night I made the mistake of mentioning the idea before we had wrapped up the show. That was all it took – the conversation flared up immediately, and it was a long time before I could direct people’s attention back to the stage. After every concert the talking has continued long into the night, in the venue’s bar or the nearest pub. It’s as if people have simply been waiting for permission to speak to the strangers who surround them.”

You can think of *Local Friends* as a way of giving people permission to speak to the strangers who live around them.

“An epidemic is sweeping the world: an epidemic of loneliness. Never before have we, the supremely social mammal, been so isolated. The results are devastating: a collapse of common purpose, the replacement of civic life with a fug of consumerism, insecurity and alienation. We cannot carry on like this.”

(<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/20/ewan-mclennan-and-george-monbiot-breaking-the-spell-of-loneliness-review-fellside>)

### *Make People’s Lives Better*

Richard Branson, quoted in an article about him by Richard Feloni, writing in Business Insider, 20 November 2016:

“When somebody comes to me who’s interested in starting a business, I think my first question is, ‘Do you have an idea that’s going to make other people’s lives better?’ If you do, you have a business.”

## Some Relevant Schemes and Groups

There are a number of existing organisations and schemes which cover some of the same ground as *Local Friends*. We are seeking to work alongside them and learn from their experience.

These groups largely fit into some general categories:

- Social Prescribing;
- Support groups for various types of workers;
- Groups for people with various types of problem and their carers; and
- General training and support.

### *Social Prescribing*

Social Prescribing is possibly currently the largest scheme which is closely related to what we are aiming to do. A local worker is employed to put people in touch with activities and resources in their area. Several of the links below describe aspects of Social Prescribing.

There seems to be a great deal of anecdotal evidence for its success, but little hard published research so far to back this up. There is no doubt that this is partly because collecting hard evidence in this area is extremely difficult to undertake and involves serious moral difficulties – to determine the effect you really need to undertake randomised trial, where some people are provided with support and other people who need it just as much are denied the support so their experience can be compared. Sometimes you just have to accept some deficiency in the hard evidence.

- **Evidence to inform the commissioning of social prescribing:** this is a report produced by the University of York and up to date as of February 2015. According to the report, “There is little good quality evidence to inform the commissioning of a social prescribing programme”. ([https://www.york.ac.uk/media/crd/Ev%20briefing\\_social\\_prescribing.pdf](https://www.york.ac.uk/media/crd/Ev%20briefing_social_prescribing.pdf))
- **Social prescribing for mental health – a guide to commissioning and delivery:** an undated report produced by the Centre for Welfare Reform, Care Services Improvement Partnership. It contains a useful section on Measuring Success. (<http://www.centreforwelfarereform.org/uploads/attachment/339/social-prescribing-for-mental-health.pdf>)
- **What Does Social Prescribing Mean for GPs?** an article on GP Online. (<http://www.gponline.com/analysis-does-social-prescribing-mean-gps/article/1354653>)

Voscur organised a workshop on Social Prescribing in October 2016 at which Bristol’s approach to Social Prescribing was presented, along with some unpublished research. For more details, please see the ‘Social Prescribing Workshop’ section below.

## *Groups for Workers*

- **ChaplaincyPlus:** they seek to support, encourage and resource professionals in Birmingham's city centre supporting the business community. (<http://www.chaplaincyplus.org.uk/>)
- **Christian Healing UK:** (<http://www.christianhealinguk.org>)
- **Christian Healthcare Network West:** they aim to connect the Christian healthcare community in the West of England. (<http://chnwest.org.uk/>)
- **Christian Medical Fellowship:** they aim to encourage and equip Christian doctors and nurses and run a course called 'The Human Journey' to help people think Biblically about health. ([www.cmf.org.uk](http://www.cmf.org.uk))
- **Community Champions:** people offering local advice (<http://www.communitychampionsuk.org> )
- **Neighbourhood Chaplains:** ([neighbourhoodchaplains.co.uk](http://neighbourhoodchaplains.co.uk))
- **Parish Nursing:** they aim to provide pastoral care through employing a qualified nurse. (<http://parishnursing.org.uk/>)

## *Groups for People with Problems*

- **Age UK:** One of the primary things they do is to combat loneliness. "We run befriending services, pairing an older person with a befriender to help provide companionship." A recent fundraising campaign (October 2016) shows an elderly man and the words, "Jim's conversation with us is the only one he'll have all week". (<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>)
- **Bereavement Care:** a team of trained volunteers who support adults and children in the London Boroughs of Harrow and Hillingdon (<http://www.bereavementcareandsupport.co.uk/>)
- **Bristol Aging Better:** (BAB) (<http://bristolageingbetter.org.uk/>)
- **Bristol Independent Mental Health Network (BIMHN):** represents past, current and future users of Bristol's mental health services, as well as those with lived experiences of mental health problems. "We provide a safe space for people to confidentially share their needs and experiences of services, while we campaign for change by holding local providers to account." (<http://bimhn.org.uk/>)
- **Bristol Mental Health:** conversation cafés (<http://www.bristolmentalhealth.org/news-and-events/bristol-mental-health-news/2017/march/bmh-plans-further-conversation-cafes/>)
- **Carers Support Centre:** (<http://www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk/>)
- **Dementia Friends:** (<https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>)
- **Linkage:** they run a 'Say NO to loneliness' campaign (<http://www.linkagebristol.org.uk>)
- **Marmalade Trust:** a Bristol-based charity dedicated to tackling loneliness in vulnerable members of our society. With the support of volunteers, businesses and community partners, we provide Christmas day lunches in local venues for people in Bristol and South Gloucestershire who would

otherwise be on their own and help raise awareness of loneliness and how it impacts peoples lives everyday. (<https://marmaladetrust.org/>)

- **Network Counselling:** they offer affordable counselling in the Bristol area. (<http://network.org.uk/>)
- **RSVP West:** RSVP West is a region of RSVP, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme, part of the national volunteering charity Volunteering Matters. They help to provide befriending visits within some surgeries in Bristol. (<http://rsvp-west.org.uk/>)
- **The Silver Line:** a telephone helpline for older people. (<https://www.thesilverline.org.uk/>)

### *Local Support Groups*

- **Clevedon Baptist Church:** they run a free drop-in service each week called ‘Restore’. Each Thursday evening, they offer listening support to people suffering from problems such as addiction, bereavement, anxiety, loneliness, depression, relationship issues and other life challenges. (<http://www.clevedonbaptistchurch.org/church-life/church-life-what-we-do>)
- **Westbury-on-Trym Baptist Church:** they have a clear public message about the pastoral care they provide to the church and wider community (<http://www.westburybaptist.org.uk/community-life/pastoral-support/>); they also run a dementia support group.

### *Other Links*

- **Acorn:** they run courses on the Surrey – Hampshire border, including several courses on listening skills. The skills taught have been recommended as relevant for use in Surgeries, Churches or Community Centres. (<http://www.acornchristian.org/>)
- **Bristol Wellbeing Therapies** (formerly Lift Psychology): they provide free training to help people with a range of psychological and emotional difficulties. (<https://iapt-bristol.awp.nhs.uk/>)
- **Coffee Companions:** when sitting alone in a cafe or coffee shop, how do people know if you want to be left alone, or if you would appreciate a chat? Simple – you get a ‘chat mat’! A brilliantly simple solution. Get a mat and share the idea with your friends. (<https://www.coffeecompanions.co.uk/>)
- **Community Health Care Chaplaincy:** they are Lay Chaplains based in GP Surgeries, mainly around the Birmingham area. Ross Bryson, a GP in Birmingham, is a leading light.
- **Community Pastors:** Trevor Dickerson at Outreach UK and Colin Johnson of Counties were looking to pilot community chaplains and pastors to work in (‘adopt’) local areas.
- **Connecting Communities:** the impact of loneliness and opportunities for churches to respond. A briefing paper by the Church Urban Fund, seeking to support churches in their response to loneliness. (<https://www.cuf.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=06a66cd5-15c0->



[4fe5-a837-f5f417a2d2b7](#))

- **Death Cafe:** a scheduled non-profit get-together for the purpose of talking about death over food and drink, usually tea and cake, in order to educate and help others become more familiar with the end of life (<http://deathcafe.com/>)
- **Encircled in Care:** training in Pastoral Care developed in partnership between MHA and the Methodist Church. (<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/pastoral-care/training-in-pastoral-care>)
- **Intentional Health:** provide a toolkit for churches to facilitate learning about preventative health and well-being messages in a supportive and non-judgmental way. (<http://www.intentionalhealth.uk/>)
- **Karis Neighbour Scheme:** a small charity operating in a few parts of Birmingham, encouraging local people to volunteer their time and skills to help meet needs in their neighbourhoods. They offer not only listening but also practical help, advice and training in areas such as handling money and English as a foreign language (<http://karisneighbourscheme.org/>)
- **Pastoral Care Council of the ACT:** a body that represents a cross-section of pastoral care providers and is accountable to the community through the network of pastoral carers and pastoral care providers in Canberra, Australia. “Pastoral / spiritual care is the only caring modality in which personal connection is the prime goal of interaction.” (<http://pastoralcareact.org/pastoral.html> )
- **Pastoral Care UK** (part of Association of Christian Counsellors): Theresa Onions is their Director. They have developed a Pastoral Training Course and support network. (<https://www.pastoralcareuk.org>)
- **Pursuing Perfect Depression Care:** a Model for Eliminating Suicide and Transforming Mental Healthcare (<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/Pursuing%20Perfect%20Depression%20Care-1-2.pdf>)
- **Rally Round:** a free online service which makes it easy for friends and family to come together and help a loved one stay safe and well at home. It is one of a number of online services which aim to help people connect in meaningful ways. (<https://www.rallyroundme.com>)
- **Social Isolation:** Bristol City Council recognises that social isolation is a significant is as a priority in Bristol’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy and identifies some of the reasons why tackling social isolation is important. (<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/social-isolation>)
- **Social Isolation and Activity in Faith Settings:** this is the name of a report produced by Bristol City Council following research and consultation undertaken in 2016.
- **Suicide and Self Harm Prevention:** useful pack produced by Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group, with advice, resources and links (<http://www.sheffieldccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/Our%20strategy/Mental%20Health%20etc/Suicide%20prevention%202017.pdf>)

- **Zero Suicide Policy:** document produced by the Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust (<http://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/media/3190/sd38-v2-zero-suicide-uploaded-29-nov-16-review-oct-19.pdf>)

## References

We have made use of a large number of sources in researching and planning *Local Friends*. Here are a few.

- New disclosure and barring services: website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-disclosure-and-barring-services>) and “Regulated Activity (adults)” file ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/216900/Regulated-Activity-Adults-Dec-2012.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216900/Regulated-Activity-Adults-Dec-2012.pdf)).
- Eligibility guidance for enhanced DBS checks: website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-workforce-guidance>) and “Adult workforce guide” file ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/735504/Adult\\_workforce\\_guide\\_v10\\_0\\_030818.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/735504/Adult_workforce_guide_v10_0_030818.pdf)).
- Eligibility guidance for standard DBS checks: website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance>) and file “Standard DBS check eligibility guide” ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/753972/Standards\\_eligibility\\_guide\\_v1.0\\_051118.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753972/Standards_eligibility_guide_v1.0_051118.pdf)).

## Social Prescribing Workshop

Voscur organised a workshop, “Just what the Dr ordered, social prescribing in Bristol – breaking down barriers” on 19 October 2016. There were two presentations and two structured discussions, some of which is reproduced below. Also, some unpublished research was presented by Dr Richard Kimberlee (Senior Research Fellow, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, University of the West of England) which provides hard evidence that Social Prescribing reduces the number of visits people make to their GP.

More information is available on the Voscur event web page. (<http://www.voiceandinfluence.org.uk/social-prescribing-meeting-19-october-2016>)

## *Presentations*

Definition: “Social prescribing provides a pathway to refer clients to non-clinical services, linking clients to support from within the community to promote their wellbeing, to encourage social inclusion, to promote self care where appropriate and to build resilience within the community and for the individual.” (Social Prescribing in Bristol Working Group 2012)

There is emerging and consistent evidence that social prescribing:

- Improves mental health and wellbeing
- Reduces social isolation and exclusion
- Increases patient confidence and independence
- Leads to fewer primary care consultations
- Reduces hospital utilisation

Who is most likely to benefit?

- Frequent attenders at primary care presenting with social isolation and other psychosocial and emotional needs
- Vulnerable and at risk groups e.g. recently bereaved
- People with chronic (but stable) physical illness (long term conditions)
- People with mild to moderate depression and anxiety

The recommendations of the ‘Better Care Bristol’ report (September 2015).

- a) We need to harness the enthusiasm to develop social prescribing in Bristol and agree a city wide vision through wide stakeholder engagement.
- b) Social Prescribing now sits clearly within the Better Care Bristol Plan. Leadership for Social Prescribing should be identified ... to take the agreed city wide vision forward.
- c) Since there is no new money, we need to maximise the efficiency of funded services as well as harness the enthusiasm and capacity of other community groups and services including the non-funded, self-sustaining voluntary sector, preferably further utilising the asset based community health development approaches already adopted within the council.
- d) We need to develop clear pathways to ensure the right people are able to access appropriate social prescribing services.
- e) A monitoring and evaluation framework and a quality assurance process needs to be developed. This should dovetail with other key developments, such as the Prospectus for grant funded activities and Bristol Ageing Better.
- f) Further work is needed to consider how best to map and keep updated the extensive number of social prescribing initiatives in Bristol.

Social Prescribing Coordinators

- Currently only in some of our more deprived localities
- Changing funding environment (i.e. grants prospectus)
- Aspiration that there will be a universal service (proportionate to need)

- Important role for volunteers / ‘buddies’ to accompany individuals to new activities

Social Prescribing activities are funding dependent and therefore continually subject to change.

Other ‘navigators’ have a similar role to the SP Coordinators but different source of referral and can refer individuals to the same activities/interventions.

### *Feedback from the participants*

Items to take back to the short life steering group.

- Participants’ feedback on sharing common impact measurement tools
- Ensure thinking includes funding of VCSE activities: an increase in numbers of referrals through social prescribing (SP) may not be supported due to lack of capacity in delivery organisations.

Other comments for consideration.

- Could SP thinking be taken into hospital settings?
- Look towards education: could you view SP as a ‘prescription for life’ and therefore design a health/mental health college/course that informs and supports self-care and resilience?
- The approach in Bristol looks more like ‘asset stripping’ than ‘asset based’. If SP takes off then it falls on existing services with no (extra) resources going into them. If Rotherham and Gloucestershire are willing to invest in SP then why not Bristol?
- How could a small, local project access a SP co-ordinator?
- Is there a central directory of SP activity and co-ordinating projects in Bristol?
- Will there be any marketing around SP to raise awareness?
- What is the mechanism to allow for the flow of money into SP from care or health? Especially for activities?
- There are too many short-term pilots being created – local people will become disillusioned and it’s not cost effective. We need to consider the training and skills build-up of staff and volunteers.

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Web site: <http://www.mad-bristol.org.uk>

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