



**TASK AND FINISH GROUP (SOCIAL ISOLATION)
1PM FRIDAY 6th MARCH 2020**

AGENDA

MEMBERS:

COUNCILLORS:

Mrs S Ager
Miss C Jay
Mrs C Lager
R Ramage
Miss M Weeks

Mrs K Barton
Mrs D Brown
Mrs J Williams

OFFICERS: Miss N Smith - Assistant Responsible Financial Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

3. CLERK'S REPORT

To receive a verbal report on matters arising.

4. AGENCY MEETING

To discuss a meeting held with outside agencies already dealing with the issue of Social Isolation.

5. PENPALS

To discuss an article ([attached page 3](#)) concerning a possible project between the Youth TAFG and the TAFG for Social Isolation encouraging interaction between primary schools and the elderly.

6. WASHING LINE OF KINDNESS/WISHING WASHING LINE

To discuss an article ([attached page 5](#)) concerning Washing Lines of Kindness for possible inclusion in the Information Centre.

7. FRIENDSHIP BENCH

To discuss an article ([attached page 7](#)) concerning the benefits of installing a Friendship Bench within the town.

8. CLUBS

- a) To discuss those clubs that should be included in a list for public distribution.
- b) To discuss the merits of inviting the above clubs to the Town Hall for a meeting.

9. 2020 GROUP FOCUS AND ACTION PLAN

To review and discuss the ideas for consideration into an Action Plan to help combat Social Isolation for 2020/2021.

10. SOCIAL ISOLATION OUTREACH PROGRAMME

To discuss ideas for a structured Outreach Programme.

11. FUTURE COMMITTEE WORK

To consider any other tasks and areas the committee should focus on going forwards.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To give an indication of when the committee should reconvene.

coverage  care



Care home residents become primary pen pals

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10th January 2019

They may not be up to playing tag or doing the hopscotch but residents at a Shropshire care home are not letting that get in the way of making new friends.

Through the power of writing, residents at Montgomery House in Shrewsbury have been striking up new friendships with pupils at Harlescott Junior School and Sundorne Infant School and Nursery, who form the Haughmond Federation.

The youngsters, who might be more used to tablets and emojis, have sent letters to the residents as part of a project on building links with the community and their on-going work on values.

To maintain momentum with the inter-generational letter exchange, staff at the home, which is run by Coverage Care Services, are now planning to hold regular 'Pen Pal Days' with the residents.

Activities Coordinator Haf Evans said: "We have received the first bundle of letters from the schoolchildren and we've been very excited to show these to residents. It's a really special way for residents at the home to stay connected with their local community and are looking forward to sitting down and helping them to write letters back to the children.

Resident June Wooley was one of the first at the home to receive a letter from her new penpal. She sat beside the fireplace whilst Haf read the letter out loud to her. She will now begin penning her own message to send back.

Children have been sharing information in the letters about school values, their favourite colours, hobbies, what they like to eat for lunch and asking residents' lots of questions.

It's hoped the pen pal scheme will continue into the New Year and will build on existing relationships the home has with other schools and organisations in the town.



Caption: Resident June Woolley sits with Montgomery House activities coordinator Haf Evans to read a letter from her new pen pal at Harlescott Junior School.

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Wishing washing line

Pants, socks and wishes – a ‘Wishing-Washing Line’ in the supermarket can help bring residents and community together

Elsie, 96, would love to watch a dancing show; Bill, 86 would like to go out for a beer; and Ethel, 82, would like to meet an owl...

These are just a few of the wishes from local care home residents that Essex FaNs have helped fulfil.



How? By hanging the wishes on ‘The Wishing Washing Line’ – a cardboard clothes line in local supermarkets.

Busy shoppers can take in the information at a glance, and see if they can help.

It’s very easy to respond! The shopper simply turns the card over to access the name and telephone number of the care home.

“It’s great, wishes are seen and can be responded to multiple times,” explains Tony Lee who has helped set up five washing lines.

“But we’ve found that things really take off if you use Facebook too.”

The group has been blown away by the speed of response that social media can bring. Ethel asked to meet an owl in the morning and, thanks to a local bird sanctuary, had one on her arm by teatime!

By letting people know what they are wishing for, residents create a very human opportunity for connection that can really draw people in.

Are you a care home wanting to start a Wishing Washing Line? Or are you a community member who could host a Wishing Washing Line in your local area? Either way, please get in touch! mhl@city.ac.uk (<mailto:mhl@city.ac.uk>).



(<http://carehomefans.org/>)

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ITEM 7



'All of a sudden, you're not invisible anymore'

For 40 minutes an elderly man sat on a bench in a busy city centre park - alone.

He was ignored by the passing dog walkers, joggers, parents with pushchairs and teenagers with headphones, all too busy to even say "hello".

Did he want company? Did he want to be alone? Did anyone actually care?

It was enough to move one woman to try and get strangers to chat, helping inspire a movement that has spread across the world.

"There was some of that British reserve that made me think he may think me weird if I sat next to him," said Allison Owen-Jones, 53, from Cardiff.

"Wouldn't it be nice if there was a simple way to let people know you're open to a chat, I thought.

"So I came up with the idea of tying a sign that would open the avenues for people. I didn't want it to sound too vulnerable so I wrote, 'Happy to chat bench. Sit here if you don't mind someone stopping to say hello'.

"All of a sudden, you're not invisible anymore."



The idea in May this year led Allison to laminate cards and begin tying them to benches in parks around her home city.

It was a blissfully simple idea to tackle loneliness that swiftly created a buzz.

The **Senior Citizen Liaison Team** charity took the idea a step further.

It has already set up partnerships with both Avon and Somerset Police and Gwent Police to have permanent benches across their areas and arrange volunteers to "chat-bench".

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