

# Brantham Good Neighbour Scheme



## What people say about the Good Neighbour Scheme in Brantham

Steve Allman  
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Brantham Good Neighbour Scheme has been running since 2013. It can help with transport to health appointments, collecting prescriptions or shopping, household tasks and social opportunities.

When we visited the coffee morning in January 2019, it was buzzing with around 50 people in attendance.

The group has organised music events, craft activities and trips out for lunch or shopping in Ipswich. They can also help with emergencies, such as fixing fences or lights, and walking dogs when people are unwell.

Here's a summary of the feedback people shared with us on our visit:

## What Clients Say

"I was involved in an accident which left me disabled and using a wheelchair. I live alone and, if it wasn't for coming here, I'd be stuck at home unable to get out and see people.

I can only use accessible taxis, which can be a bit limiting, but Good Neighbours helps with the cost and, when it first happened, my friends clubbed together to help out. My friends are my lifeline."

"I like the friendship. It's a good way of meeting your neighbours and making new friends."

"I come once a month for tea and cake and we've had a few trips too, like shopping in Ipswich and a Christmas meal. If it wasn't here, I'd be lost. It's my only chance to get out."

"If I can't get here, the volunteers phone up and offer me a lift. The people who run it are wonderful. I come all the way from East Bergholt because there's nothing like this there."

"I can't get out on my own, so I find it hard to do things. I always find something to do at home, but it can be quite isolating. There's so much to do here; cake, company, music. We're busy bees."

"Mum has Alzheimer's. It's lovely coming here because a lot of people know her and remember her how she was, even if she doesn't always remember them. They used to help mum get to the day centre too, we just phoned up and they arranged everything. They do a lot of good for people."

"I knew about Good Neighbours for ages, but I was looking after myself and didn't think it was for me. Living on my own, I was becoming more isolated so I thought I'd give it a try. It's so friendly, I have a chat and see familiar faces. They make me feel like me, not like I'm receiving help."

"There was a time in Brantham when everyone knew everyone. Most people were connected with the

factory, but since it closed we all seemed to go our separate ways, especially the older folk. Good Neighbours gives us a reason to get together again, we get a little bit of our community back."

"My husband has dementia and this gives us both a chance to get out and see other people. It's strange to think we all live in the village, but we don't see each other around. My husband's a Brantham boy, so we know a lot of people and this gives us an excuse to get together. If we weren't here, we'd be at home staring at four walls."

"This is my first time here! I've come down from Lawford where there's nothing like this. It's a nice atmosphere, the people who run it seem very nice and it all seems very well-organised."

"The volunteers really do go the extra mile. I've been struggling to get to hospital appointments, but I didn't feel it was so difficult that I should ask for help. When I did, they didn't make me feel bad about it, they're all so kind and helpful."

"Coming here gives me a purpose, it's a reason to get up, get ready and get out. I like the friendship and companionship. Sometimes I see people I've met at the coffee morning on the bus or around the village and we say Hello and have a little chat, which is nice."

## What Volunteers Say

"For most people, it's about company. We look out for who's not here and

we drop in on them during the week to make sure everything's OK, especially if they don't have family or they've had a bereavement. If they stop coming, we try and find out why and do our best to get them back."

"The volunteers are a close team. We know who's making the cakes, who's making the sausage rolls, who's setting the tables out. We get together outside of GNS too, we have lunch and talk about what we can do to improve things in the community. We get something from it too, it makes you feel good to do good."

## What works?

Team work makes the dream work in Brantham. The volunteer team of around 20 are well-supported and have a shared vision for the scheme. They meet up outside of the scheme to plan and to socialise and they all have clear roles and responsibilities.

The venue also appears to work well for Brantham GNS, it's accessible with a large car park and there's plenty of space to accommodate everyone.

## Find out More

Good Neighbour Schemes enable residents to develop stronger, more resilient communities. There are 35 schemes in Suffolk, with more in development. Good Neighbour Schemes in Suffolk are led by local volunteers and supported by Community Action Suffolk, thanks to grant funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.

[www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk)