

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>		
<b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>	<b>27 November 2025 7.00 pm</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Congleton Town Hall</b>
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	<b>Cathy Dean, Communities Manager</b>		
<b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>15 Congleton Partnership Update</b>		
<b>Background</b>	<p>Founded in 2006, the Partnership originated from the Congleton Market Town Initiative, evolving significantly since its first constitution in January 2007. The Partnership continues to respond to the needs of the community and support the VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) sector, leveraging local resources to enhance Congleton.</p>		
<b>Details</b>	<p><b><u>Events held in 2025</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover Volunteering – 11<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>• Health and Wellbeing Fayre – 18<sup>th</sup> March</li> <li>• VE Day Celebrations – 8<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>• Green Fayre – 27<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>• Partnership Sponsored ‘Know Your Memory’ Event – 17<sup>th</sup> November</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Upcoming Events</u></b></p> <p><b>Partnership AGM – 25<sup>th</sup> November</b></p> <p>The AGM will be a chance to meet new members who have joined over the last year, these include:</p> <p>Choice Support, Genesis Dance Troupe, Vale Allotments, Springboard, Wild Spirit Woods, The William Dean Trust, Congleton Rugby Union Football Club, Congleton Street Pastors, Congleton Pride, Congleton Rotary Club, New Life Church, Wild Spirit Woods, Swans, So Cheshire and CHOC Care Community.</p> <p><b>No Tier Snooker Society Christmas Lunch – 8<sup>th</sup> December</b></p> <p>Dementia Friends/Senior Forum continues to support the No Tier Snooker Society. The group supports those with Early-stage dementia, and carers also come along to enjoy refreshments while their loved one plays snooker.</p> <p>A fundraiser event has been organised on 8<sup>th</sup> December, ‘Christmas Lunch with Steve Davis’ at Pecks Restaurant, which has sold out.</p> <p><b>Christmas Tea Party – 17<sup>th</sup> December 12:30 pm, Congleton Town Hall.</b></p> <p>Senior members of our community will be invited to an ‘afternoon tea’ event, with live singer Rich Hazlewood. Local care homes and community groups will be invited, and transport can be provided if required. Plus Dane has kindly sponsored £350 towards the event.</p>		

	<p><b><u>Congleton Sustainability Group (CSG)</u></b></p> <p>CSG held its AGM on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The group thanked outgoing chair Heather Seddon for chairing the group since 2022. One of the many achievements was securing the future of Vale Allotments. Heather Pearce is the new chair of CSG.</p> <p><b>Partnership/CSG Awarded Healthy Neighbourhood Grant</b></p> <p>Working with Changing Lives Together and CHOC care community, we have secured funding to continue the Telephone befriending scheme, and expand the service with a monthly in-person meeting called a Warm Welcome group.</p> <p>The telephone befriending scheme has run in Congleton over the past 4 years. 196 residents in the Congleton area have benefited from the project through either using the service or volunteering. See Appendix 1 for the Final report when the project ended in September 2025.</p> <p>A new SLA agreement will be drawn up with Changing Lives Together, we expect the project to start in January 2026.</p> <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce loneliness and isolation among older residents in Congleton. Measurement: Baseline and follow-up wellbeing questionnaires at 6 and 12 months</li> <li>• Expand volunteer capacity and community engagement. Measurement: Volunteer recruitment and engagement logs.</li> <li>• Provide meaningful, regular social connections through in-person sessions. Measurement: Attendance records and session feedback forms.</li> <li>• Improve access to services for residents facing transport, digital, or mobility barriers. Measurement: Referral tracking, transport support usage logs, and participant surveys.</li> <li>• Measurement: Self-reported healthcare usage and input from CHOC and Social Prescribers.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	None. Work is delivered within the reserved funds for Congleton Partnership.
<b>Environmental Implications</b>	Considered as part of each piece of work.
<b>Inclusivity Diversity Impact</b>	The Congleton Partnership uses communication tools to meet different audiences and provides events/activities that try to reach isolated members of our community.
<b>Decision Required</b>	That Councillors note this report.



## Buddy & Befriending

### Congleton Partnership

**Fourth year - Fourth Quarter Report**

**July 2025-Sept 2025**

#### **Summary**

As the project comes to an end, we're proud to reflect on the strong connections and positive impact we've built within the Congleton community. This quarter, we continued to raise awareness through regular social media promotion and monthly newsletters to our referrers, helping to keep our service visible and accessible to those who might benefit most.

Referral numbers have been slightly lower this quarter; however, this trend reflects the pattern seen across all areas of Cheshire rather than being specific to Congleton. At the same time, we've seen increased engagement in our face-to-face Warm Welcome groups, highlighting the growing value of in-person connection and community support.

We're pleased to have come very close to achieving our annual matching target, just one short which demonstrates the commitment of our team and the effectiveness of our matching process. Across Cheshire, clients continue to be matched promptly, often within five working days, reflecting the responsiveness and quality of our service.

Volunteer sign-ups have also been slower this quarter, consistent with trends across the county. Despite this, we remain encouraged by the continued interest we've received and are deeply grateful to all those who have given their time to support others through the project.

Although we will no longer be actively seeking new clients, all existing clients will continue to receive ongoing support to ensure continuity of care and connection. We would like to thank yourselves, partners, referrers, and volunteers for their continued collaboration and commitment throughout the project. Together, we've made a lasting difference in our communities.

Overall clients in Congleton benefitting	Overall volunteers in Congleton Benefitting	Total residents Benefitting
53	50	103

#### **Client Quotes:**

xxxx said *"I love Friday chats with Kirsty. I can't thank you enough for matching me with Kirsty as she is a breath of fresh air."*

xxxx said her mobility is even worse now but Kirsty really gives her a lift every week.

6 Month follow up with xxxx who said she absolutely loves her calls with Cherrie and said *"I really wouldn't know what to do without her"*, she also said what a *"wonderful thing it is that we do helping people who would otherwise be so lonely"*.



12- month evaluation, completed.

"Thank you so much for checking in on me and making sure I was okay these past months. Calls from Caroline are a real tonic and services like yours are a godsend!"

#### Volunteer Quotes:

*"What a lovely gentleman, I could have chatted all afternoon with him we got on so well. I think this might be the start of a lovely phone friendship".*

*"Thank you, these calls have really given me a purpose and really cheer me up"*

Fiona said she loves her weekly calls with xxxx. Fiona told us that she only wishes she had *"got in touch sooner as since volunteering with you it has had such a positive effect and I feel useful again"*. Fiona is a wheelchair user and has lost touch with a lot of her contacts over the years and this has really been a great experience for her helping others while reducing her own isolation.

4 year round up

Overall Referrals	Overall volunteers	Overall Matches
79	117	<b>73</b>

So far, **196 residents in the Congleton area have benefited** from the project through either using our services or volunteering—an encouraging reflection of the positive impact we're making locally.

#### Agreed Targets From SLA

1. To actively promote the Buddying & Befriending Scheme across the Congleton area to increase awareness of the service to potential referral sources and clients.
2. To recruit 15 volunteer Buddies and Befrienders to support Congleton residents
3. To match an additional 18 clients in the Congleton Town area referred into the Scheme with a Volunteer Befriender over and above 2024 baseline figures.

Overall Referrals Target	Referrals This Quarter	Referrals Achieved to date
18	2	<b>13</b>

Overall Matches Target	Matches Achieved This Quarter	Matches Achieved to date
18	4	<b>17</b>

Overall Volunteer Sign-Up Target	Volunteer Sign-Up This Quarter	Volunteer Sign-ups to date
15	2	<b>13</b>

Photos from the last 4 years

