

Contact the Elderly start up two new tea parties in Edinburgh



Two new tea parties have been started in Edinburgh in the past six months along with another eight groups across Scotland.

The idea behind the free tea parties is that those aged 75 and over who live alone get invited along to socialise, and volunteer drivers pick them up, takes them to tea and then returns them safely home again.

The charity behind the scheme Contact the Elderly are looking for more volunteers and also more guests.

The tea parties take place once a month on a Sunday afternoon when a volunteer host invites around half a dozen people to come to afternoon tea in their home.

Morna O' May, Head of Service – Scotland, for Contact the Elderly said: "We are immensely pleased we are providing a vital lifeline of friendship to around 50 more older people who live alone.

"Our presence has grown significantly in recent years but we are always aware there are so many more people we could be supporting and volunteers we could potentially be working with.

"Our tea parties in towns and cities throughout Scotland, including those running locally, make such a difference to older people who live alone and we cannot thank our volunteers enough. Without them the charity wouldn't be possible."

The charity recently launched the 'Be Our Guest' campaign

encouraging people to help identify those in their local community who would enjoy the tea parties.

Morna added: "It is incredibly difficult for someone who is older, and often isolated, to reach out and ask for help. We work with agencies throughout Scotland to help us identify who might benefit from our services but we know there are more and are encouraging those to help us reach out to people in their community who would benefit from the chance to enjoy a bit of a blether over a tasty afternoon tea.

"We are also continuously looking for more people who can offer a little amount of time to make an immeasurable difference. Our volunteers are always telling us how much the groups mean to them and although 10 new groups is fantastic, we are always striving for more."

To find out more about Contact the Elderly and volunteering contact Morna O'May, 01786 871264 or morna.o'may@contact-the-elderly.org.uk.

To refer a potential older guest call Freephone 0800 716 543, visit www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk or email guest@contact-the-elderly.org.uk.