

# Warm Welcome: “A warm safe space where we laugh a lot.”

Warm Welcome is a free weekly community drop-in and anti-isolation hub, open every Wednesday (12-5pm) at St Peter's Church in De Beauvoir.

We provide a free soup and bread lunch, along with other refreshments throughout the day. We're open to everyone including children (accompanied by guardians). We welcome and chat with guests, play board games, lead craft activities and have fun!

We were established in December 2022, initially as a short-term winter response to the cost-of-living crisis. Quickly it became clear that Warm Welcome was serving an important need in addressing loneliness in the area. We have now been running each week for two years, and have seen a new community emerge, and new friendships form among isolated people who would not otherwise interact.

Our guests are mostly local De Beauvoir residents. Many are elderly, and many are in various vulnerable situations, including social isolation, financial difficulties, long-term unemployment, physical or mental health challenges, or experiencing housing challenges. Guests tell us about struggles with fuel and food poverty, and how this has detrimentally affected their physical and mental wellbeing. Our volunteers provide a much-needed listening ear and signpost guests to other local services and charities, and those organisations refer people to us.

Coming to Warm Welcome gives them a space where they can stay warm, be fed, make friends, have fun, and develop a sense of inclusion and belonging. We've seen friendships form among guests in this space that are proving life-giving for them. Helping at Warm Welcome has also been an important stepping stone for some of our volunteers as they move back into work.

Last year we welcomed a total of 1,049 guests over the year. Currently we welcome about 25-35 guests each week. We know how crucial this work is for serving local people, and we want to continue helping this community to flourish.



## Guest testimonials

- “A blessing for sure. A warm, safe place where we laugh a lot. There’s a genuine interest in people’s lives. And plenty of cake! It has become part of my weekly routine and I look forward to coming. The volunteers are great. So many nice people in once place, is a gift at this time. It’s a lovely community of people, in the best venue. Thank you!”
- “Close by. Welcoming. We need places like this.”
- “Nice atmosphere (no aggro). Feels peaceful.”
- “I feel very welcomed and enjoy sharing experiences with people.”
- “Sense of joy, uplifting. [Good to be] out of the house.”
- “Safe, secure, comfortable, relaxed.”

## Support your De Beauvoir neighbours

We don’t receive regular local authority funding for Warm Welcome, and rely on grants and donations to do our work. You can help support your neighbours by making a donation.

- A **£100** donation would pay for half a session of Warm Welcome, and **£200** would cover our full costs for a day. This includes our costs for refreshments; our contribution to heating and fuel costs; our fee for a trained steward; and other costs like leafleting.
- A **£39** donation would cover the costs of about an hour of our pastoral work. Over a year, our volunteers provide 260 hours of face-to-face support and companionship for local people, in the context of long-term community.

Donations can be made at the link [here](#), and are hugely appreciated.

You can make a one-off gift, or a regular monthly donation which helps us plan our budget.

We also welcome new volunteers! Volunteering is a great way to meet local people and make new friends. Our volunteers are there to create a welcoming, fun atmosphere and to be listening ears.

Anyone interested in volunteering can email Debby Lawrence at [steward@stpeterdebeauvoir.org.uk](mailto:steward@stpeterdebeauvoir.org.uk).

