Befriending Networks launches free Dementia and Social Connection CPD training for third sector

Wednesday 15 July, 2026

Booking is now live for the Connected Lives training programme, with events in 20 locations across Scotland and online.

The new training programme from Befriending Networks kicks off in Edinburgh on Tuesday 11 August and will continue until February 2027, visiting 20 towns and cities across Scotland. Four online sessions will also be available for those who are unable to attend in person.

Connected Lives training is free and open to staff and volunteers at third sector organisations based in Scotland who want to feel more confident supporting people living with dementia.

Research suggests that social isolation is a key risk factor for developing dementia. Alzheimer's Research UK estimates that if everyone kept socially connected, there would be five fewer cases of dementia for every 100 people who develop it now.

Over 6 hours of learning with an experienced facilitator (3.5 for online sessions), attendees will gain the skills and confidence they need to deliver dementia-friendly events and services. The course blends research, case studies and practical advice with lots of opportunities for discussion and peer learning.

Connected Lives training is CPD-accredited and includes access to the Connected Lives Good Practice Guide, a new dementia training resource created for the project.

In-person training sessions will be facilitated by Edel Roddy, a freelance trainer whose passion for creating spaces for connection and learning has taken her across the breadth of Scotland, the UK and even to Australia.

Befriending Networks has commissioned Glasgow-based videographer Sean Catlin to create a series of short films showcasing good practice from Scottish charities that offer services to build social connection for people living with dementia.

Dr Victoria Jupp Kina has also been commissioned to evaluate the impact of the Connected Lives project on the staff, volunteers and carers who take part.

The Connected Lives Dementia and Social Connection course has been created by Befriending Networks' Learning and Development Manager, Victoria Galloway. She said:

"Through my years delivering dementia training at Befriending Networks, I've seen the powerful difference meaningful connections can make. For people living with dementia, staying socially connected supports wellbeing, brain health and quality of life.

"I'm excited for our Connected Lives events, which will bring together staff, volunteers and carers to highlight the positive impact they can have on people living with dementia and to support them in building and nurturing meaningful relationships."

Befriending Networks is an Edinburgh-based charity that supports organisations to deliver services that create meaningful connections. They have been providing sector-specific training, resources and awards for the befriending sector for over 30 years.

Funded through the Scottish Government's Dementia Resilient Communities Fund, the Connected Lives project contributes to the Scottish Government's dementia strategy, which prioritises the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce with access to the highest-quality dementia education and training.

To find out more and book your free training session, visit befriending.co.uk/dementia-training.

Places are limited to up to 2 per organisation. Demand is expected to be high, so booking early is advised.

Media:



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