

## Volunteers' Week 2021 - Lynsey



Over 100 older people have been kept from loneliness since the start of the Covid-19 crisis thanks to our new telephone befriending service.

We deliver a successful Befriending Service – where volunteers are matched with older people based in North Tyneside for the last 20 years, but because of lockdown and people's need to self-isolate we've adapted this popular service to socially-distance.

Head of Charity Services, Yvonne Probert, said: "Loneliness can affect people in very different ways and even if an older person

has family and friends, they may still have times when they may feel lonely or are in need of friendship.

"Our befriending services offer older people a chance to share their stories, make a new friend and connect with someone outside their usual social circle.

"It is fantastic that we have many more people coming on board to receive support from Age UK North Tyneside, but we are always on the lookout for more people to work with – both as befrienders and befriendees.

Many older people are still receiving their Befriending support over the phone as they continue to socially distance. Moving forward, Befriending customers – who are matched with a volunteer by us based on their needs and interests will be able to choose if they receive the service over the phone, or face-to-face.

Customer Tom Bailey, 91, received regular phone calls from volunteer Befriender Lynsey Finlayson for five months before he was able to meet her face-to-face again.

He said having someone to talk to has helped him get through lockdown, and helps him take his mind off any worries he has.

The great-grandfather said: "Lynsey is a such a lovely young lady and I love when she comes to see me. It takes my mind off any troubles that I have and puts me at ease.