



# Community Connectors

Helping people with Learning Disabilities to be active and involved in their local community



## Derbyshire Community Connectors Service

Community Connectors are a team of trained staff who can assist people with a learning disability and/or autism to access opportunities in their local community. The connectors can work alongside people to use community facilities, take part in activities happening locally, build relationships and try new things such as paid or voluntary work.

The Connectors team work all over Derbyshire and can work with people for up to 12 weeks during the day, evenings and at weekends





## **Aims of the service:**

Community Connectors aim to work with people to:

- meet their individual goals
- make stronger community links and relationships
- explore new skills and interests
- develop or maintain relationships/friendships.

If a person has been awarded an Adult Care personal budget, a connector can help them plan and utilise their budget to meet their desired outcomes.

## **Who can use the service?**

Currently the service can only work with people who have a learning disability and/or autism who live in Derbyshire.

A person doesn't have to have an Adult Care social worker or personal budget to use the Community Connector Service.

The connector can continue to offer support for up to 12 weeks if necessary. A review meeting can be arranged, roughly half way through, to check progress and address any worries or problems.

By the end of the support period it is hoped the person will be able to access the opportunities they've experienced independently (or with pre-existing support).

In some cases the person may need a personal assistant (PA) to continue to access local community facilities. In these instances it would be the responsibility of the person or their carers/family members to arrange the PA. If the person has a designated social worker, they may be able to assist with this.

Once the support period has ended the connector will complete an evaluation. This will include asking the person what they thought of the service and whether they think it helped them achieve the goals they set out to accomplish at the beginning.

Three months after the support period has finished, the connector will complete a further review.

If there are any concerns raised during the review, the connector will work with the person to try and help to resolve them.



## How the service works

Once it has been confirmed that a person is eligible for the service and is likely to benefit from community based support, they will be assigned a named connector.

The connector will then make contact, usually by telephone, to introduce themselves and arrange a meeting with the person and, if appropriate, their carer(s) and social worker.

At the meeting the connector will discuss with the person what they would like to achieve by using the service. This could be accessing community based activities and groups, using local services, meeting new people, gaining paid or voluntary work, taking part in education courses and learning new skills such as using public transport independently.

After the initial meeting, the connector will research what opportunities are available in the person's local community that best match their interests and goals.

The person will then decide which opportunities they'd like to explore further and the connector will make arrangements to accompany the person to their chosen activities providing encouragement and practical support. The connector can also offer travel training if required.





## For people who have an Adult Care Social Worker

If a person wishing to use the service already has a Derbyshire Adult Care social worker, they (or the person making the referral) should speak to their worker in the first instance.

If it is felt that a referral to the Connector Service would be appropriate, the worker should make the referral electronically through the Derbyshire Adult Care case management system.

A member of the Connectors Team will review the referral and get in touch with the person and/or their carers to discuss things further.

## Accessing the service - referral process

A person doesn't have to have an Adult Care social worker to use the Community Connector Service, but the process for accessing the service is different for those people who do.

Professionals and carers/family members can refer a person to the service as long as they have the person's consent.





## For people who don't have an Adult Care Worker

People who don't already have an Adult Care Worker should make initial enquiries about the Connector Service to our Call Derbyshire contact centre:

Tel: 01629 533190

Email: [contact.centre@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:contact.centre@derbyshire.gov.uk)

Our team at Call Derbyshire will carry out an initial telephone assessment and find out what the person would like to achieve by using the Community Connector Service.

The referral will then be passed to the Connector Team who will get in touch with the person and/or their carers to discuss things further.



## Further information

For general information about the service please contact:

Jackie Johnson on 07966 991716 or  
Anna Blair on 07966 991334

Email: [community.connectors@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:community.connectors@derbyshire.gov.uk)

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