



We are launching a new scheme in our villages, one which connects neighbours through kindness; by a neighbour providing and delivering a meal to a neighbour who is in need of one. This may be due to illness or accident, during periods of therapy eg chemotherapy, following a fracture or a recent bereavement, after the birth of a baby and so on.

This isn't a new idea; it works in hundreds of small communities across the world. There is no money involved just goodwill. We also know that this sort of help is happening all the time throughout Cottingham and Middleton, this scheme just formalises and widens that reach.

If you are currently supporting neighbours we salute you! You may wish to carry on doing what you do independently or you may wish to join the project. What we are proposing is that individual villagers put themselves forward as a 'meal contributor'; you simply fill in a form giving us your details and the level of commitment you can manage. Nothing is set in stone; you can change your mind or adjust your commitment any time, for example perhaps when you are away on holiday.

At first we are asking people if they could contribute 1 meal a month on a day of the week to suit them. This meal can be homemade or bought, you may not be needed every month, but when you are you will be contacted and given instructions such as specific dietary requirements, the number of people the meal is for, the neighbour's address and any special instructions for delivering the meal. You then provide the meal, deliver it and collect your dishes if needed a couple of days later. We will be providing a 'safe place' at neighbours' houses for dropping off and collecting dishes too. These factors will vary month to month, neighbour to neighbour.

Once we have a team of contributors we then will open the scheme to nominated neighbours, again by completing a form. You can nominate yourself or a neighbour/family member. The neighbour will have an informal visit from one of us to talk through some likes and dislikes, food allergies etc then we can set the system up for that individual. Support can also be provided for as long as people need it and will be assessed on each individual situation.

The basis of this whole scheme is to make our small community feel even closer, giving us all more opportunities to connect with each other and show each other kindness, and the beauty of it is that we can all contribute and receive when we may need it.

Please have a think if you have time to contribute one meal to a neighbour once a month. Forms are available to download from [www.cottinghamnews.co.uk/friendlyfood](http://www.cottinghamnews.co.uk/friendlyfood), or in paper form from the shop and St Mary Magdalene Church, or contact us directly on **01536 770766** or **07956 363869**, or <mailto:racheldhudson@hotmail.co.uk>.

Thank you, Kirsty and Rachel.