

## Kindred spirits connect in city's communities

A new way of working which has helped hundreds of people in our city make new friends within their communities is about to celebrate its second anniversary.

Clubs like the '10 O'Clock Club' in Morriston have been springing up all over the place in Swansea in the last couple of years and much of their success is down to the council's innovative Community Connectors.

The way this project has been encouraging hundreds of people to link up with others in their community to socialise over a cup of tea, enjoy days out or learn a new skill is a real achievement.

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Healthy City, Mark Child said: "Hundreds of people from all walks of life and with different abilities have already benefited.

"Many have joined new or existing groups or clubs because they offer sociable activities and a welcome change of scenery; but more than that, they have helped people to gain confidence and provide the opportunity for them to give something back."

For example, the 10 O'clock Club at the Deer's Leap in Morriston is not only sociable, it has also helped raise hundreds of pounds for the Lord Mayor's Charity, and has made a donation to MacMillan Cancer Support.

Community Connector Corliss Horton said: "For me the beauty of being a Community Connector is in seeing people who may feel isolated or lonely find a new lease of life in their own communities.

"We don't run the clubs. We help set them up by finding good meeting places like community centres or pubs, then we help advertise them and support residents to set up and run them for themselves."

There are currently **five** Community Connectors working for Swansea Council. The team help people who may be at risk of becoming socially isolated find a group or activity in their area which suits their needs and interests.

Clubs supported by Community Connectors also link with local organisations such as Swansea Carers Centre, Age Cymru and The Red Café so that people can get involved in a range of activities that improve their sense of wellbeing.