

At the recent Friendship afternoon we discussed all the places we used to go and have people to chat to or serve us.

Shopping meant queuing and being served by a person who would chat while 'patting' butter or cutting cheese. We would shop in the same place so could catch up on each other's families.

Going to the train station we would see a man in the booking office, a man (usually men) on the platform and guard on the train. The guard would help us on the train with heavy luggage or the pram.

A bus had a driver and conductor.

So many people with whom we could chat. .

Now stations rarely have even a person in the ticket office.

We can go to a store and pick our own 'to build' furniture or food, take it to the self check out, and if it is furniture we build it ourselves.

Where have all the jobs gone? Where are all those people who had work? In time of unemployment why are we cutting all these jobs? Are these people now on benefits?

In a time when people are lonely there is added consequences when there is no-one with whom we can stop and have a chat.

Churches can provide coffee or 'chat' stops. Especially, churches on High Streets.

These can be a huge resource for friendship. It is not only elderly people who need interaction with other people but young Mums too. Church buildings are THERE even if the church does not have a hall the church can be open to all. Many have a kitchen and toilet now. The building can be used every day not just on Sunday.

Volunteers are needed now.