# Effective interventions

* Gentle and supportive approach.

How is it best to approach people for the first time? Sometimes this might mean going to a space where the person feels most comfortable. Having a supportive conversation can build a person’s confidence to get involved in an activity or part of a weekly programme.

* Teach new skills.

Learning something new can often help people build confidence. Explore ways to include learning in your programme. For example, this could include language lessons, digital media guidance or chances to develop creatively.

* Language, communication and social skills.

Be prepared for conversations with non-English speakers or people with hearing or speaking disabilities. You may want to look at focusing your interventions around gaining language skills or learning sign language as a new skill.

* Be reactive.

Everyone experiences loneliness and isolation differently. Make sure you are responsive to an individual’s needs. Not everyone will feel ready to get instantly involved, but make sure they know they will always be welcome.

* Recognise limitations.

This might be poor transport links or limited numbers of volunteers. Find ways to work around these issues and work to your strong points.

* Shared interests.

Introduce people with similar interests, or perhaps offer volunteer opportunities for people to come and be part of a team.

* Identify root causes.

What is causing someone to feel lonely or isolated? Spend time unpacking someone’s feelings and situation with them. Understanding an individual’s needs will help to inform their next steps and the support you can offer.

* Prioritise building relationships.

Allowing time for relationships to develop is important and should be a central element of interventions. Team members play an important role in creating a positive environment for relationships to build. Sometimes this includes the running of games, noticing if someone is more reserved, or being a part of conversations.