



Case Study:

Tailored Learning - ATTFE College Coffee Mornings at Idlewells Community Hub

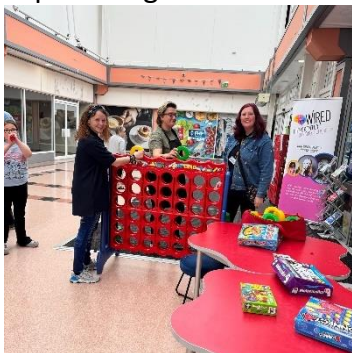


ATTFE College's Coffee Morning sessions, held at the Community Hub in Idlewells Shopping Centre, have become a vibrant and much-loved part of the local community. These **twice-weekly** gatherings offer more than just a warm drink as they provide a lifeline for many who are seeking companionship, a sense of belonging, and meaningful connections. What began as a simple initiative to bring people together has grown into a safe, inclusive space that reduces isolation, builds confidence, and uplifts all who attend.

The sessions are open to all and **completely free of charge**, making them an accessible space for everyone regardless of background or circumstances. Participants enjoy a variety of engaging activities including arts and crafts, music, card games, bingo, and themed celebrations. Whether it's Valentine's Day, Autism Awareness Week, or Christmas, each session is filled with warmth, joy, and a spirit of community. **Local organisations** are regularly invited to speak with attendees, offering valuable information, advice, and support on issues that matter most to them, from health and wellbeing to education and cost-of-living support.



These mornings have had a deeply personal impact on individuals. **Paula** shared that attending the coffee mornings has helped her connect with others and form new friendships. **Simon** mentioned how the sessions give him a sense of purpose and help him cope during difficult times with his mental health. **Jodie** expressed how rewarding it is to feel useful by simply listening to someone can make a big difference. For **Beryl**, the coffee mornings have been nothing short of a lifesaver. Other participants have spoken about how the sessions make them feel less lonely, more informed, and part of a trusted and supportive community. They value the opportunity to keep warm, have fun, play games, sing, and receive advice on further learning, all in a safe, non-judgmental environment they can look forward to each week.





Beyond individual benefits, the sessions have had a wider impact across the community. The Hub provides a place for people to meet without financial pressure, offering free drinks and entertainment. It also serves as a **soft entry point into further education**, with more people enrolling onto courses after building confidence through attendance. Attendees improve literacy and numeracy skills through informal games like bingo and Scrabble, while also engaging in intergenerational activities, as care homes bring residents to mix with different age groups. There has also been a positive economic effect, as the sessions contribute to footfall in Idlewells Shopping Centre, supporting the local economy.



The Coffee Mornings have become a **focal point for partnership work with organisations** such as the NHS, Ashfield District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Talking Therapies, Portland College, local churches, and many others. They also serve as a valuable referral unit for social prescribers, who accompany individuals until they feel confident to attend independently. Furthermore, they have provided a platform to raise awareness of neurodiversity and other protected characteristics, creating a truly inclusive space for all.

Crucially, these sessions help to **tackle loneliness**—an issue known to have a significant negative impact on health, contributing to depression, anxiety, heart disease, and even early mortality. By offering people a space to connect, share, learn, and grow, the Coffee Mornings promote mental wellbeing, build resilience, and strengthen community ties. They also act as a stepping stone for those wishing to gain new skills, volunteer, or progress into employment, and provide a welcoming environment for senior leadership visits, police insight training, and observational visits from Ofsted.

In short, ATTFE College's Coffee Morning sessions are far more than social gatherings. They are a **celebration of community spirit**, a vital support network, and a testament to the power of human connection. Their ongoing success highlights the importance of investing in accessible, grassroots initiatives that truly make a difference to people's lives.

