

I really could have written another column ranting about transport issues again. With emergency water works taking place on Hermitage Lane it is taking up to an hour do a fifteen minute journey. Then there is the issue of continually appalling or non-existent bus services. But given none of that would be good for mine or anyone else's blood pressure I thought I'd write this week about the positive impact of local community groups.

This half term week I have been able to go along and meet two groups that just by being, bring huge benefits to individuals, families and local communities. The first group I visited, at the invitation of the ladies branch, was our local Nepalese community. After a wonderfully traditional welcome I got to see how they are using sport to integrate communities, specifically Taekwondo and Boxing, both being delivered by champions, including an Olympiad! They were speaking to the converted when talking about how sport can be used for good and both martial arts and boxing is a great example of a sport teaching discipline.

I followed this meeting with a talk about women and politics at the "Greenslade" WI. The WI is a wonderful organisation that gives women an opportunity to make friends, learn new crafts, hear about interesting projects and organisations and go on the occasional group trip. It enables a freedom from potential isolation and creates a sense of belonging.

There are many other similar groups that do the same, and many will be showcasing at my next pensioners fair in May. Groups like these bring something special into people's lives and by doing so enhance our community. There are many around catering for all tastes and with so much negativity around I for one enjoyed celebrating and supporting two positive life enhancing groups this week.