

Telephone Befriending

Befriender F.A.Q.s

 befriending@thebridgeproject.org.uk



Important Notice

Together Talks is not a professional counselling or therapy service. Our Volunteer Telephone Befrienders are not trained counsellors or therapists.

Do I need a DBS check?

Yes. You will require a current DBS certificate, however, if you do not have one, we will complete a DBS application with you at no cost to yourself.

Will you supply me with a telephone?

No. This service aims to capture volunteers who have their own telephone. Ideally, you will have unlimited minutes on your personal mobile so the calls should not cost you anything. Please note that **we are unable to offer expenses for any telephone call made.**

Before committing to an application, you may wish to consider the number of free minutes you have available with your telephone network provider.

What are they requiring time periods to volunteer?

One cycle of calls with a befriender averages 24 weeks however this can change. Our Together Talks Support Team is available Monday to Friday & strictly between: 09:00am to 4:00pm, so we ask that you arrange calls with your befriender during these days & times. This is so we can provide support to you when needed and act immediately to any welfare concerns.

Will my phone number be visible to Befrienders?

You should always make sure that your telephone number is **not** visible when you make a call to a Befriender. All Befrienders are made aware that calls from their Telephone Befriender will show as 'No Caller ID', 'Private Number' or 'Number Withheld'.

Withholding your number means that it will not be visible to the receiver. Instructions on how to do this will be provided as part of your training.

How do I communicate with a Befriender?

It is important to remember that this service is for **telephone only.**

This is stated in *the Telephone Befriending Code of Conduct*, which you will be asked to agree to before we are able to appoint you as a Telephone Befriender.

The email address that you register with us will be made available to the Telephone Befriending Support Team only. This provides us with a route to help and support you, and to send you relevant information and updates.

Can I have more than one befriender?

We recommend starting with no more than 1 Befriender, with whom you arrange a weekly call. Should you have further capacity, please liaise with the Telephone Befriending Support Team via the contact email: befriending@thebridgeproject.co.uk or telephone 01274 952200.

What happens if my availability changes?

If your availability changes, then we ask that you inform the Telephone Befriending Support Team immediately. This will allow for any Befriendees to be allocated to a different volunteer, who can then continue your great work.

What If I am asked a question but unsure about how to answer?

If it is non-urgent query, inform the Telephone Befriending Support Team who will then try to answer the question.

Tell your Befriender that you are not sure but will find out and relay the information back to them on your next call, unless the answer is needed urgently, in which case you can let them know that you will try to find out and get back to them that day. Always remember to follow up within the agreed timescale.

What if I notice a safeguarding or an urgent welfare issue?

If you have any concerns about the safety or welfare of a Befriender, then you must inform the Telephone Befriending Support Team **immediately**. The earlier we are informed, the quicker we can respond.

Remember that the Telephone Befriending Support Team is available Monday to Friday, between the hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm. However, if you consider there to be a threat to life, you must dial 999.

You will also receive online training and support, and be provided with a Telephone Befriender's Handbook, which will guide you through various scenarios.

What if the Befriender needs other advice or support?

This is not an advice service, however, as things are changing rapidly, it is possible that the support need of a Befriender will change over time.

Your Telephone Befriending Support Team are consistently collating and updating a central list of resources and local services, such as local food delivery schemes, helplines, benefits advice, parenting and carers support services etc. This is an ever changing and growing list, but we will always provide you with any updated versions, as and when they become available.

Can I ask the Befriender for their address or any other form of contact?

No. You should not ask a Befriender for their address or any other form of contact