

Volunteer Befriender

Project:

Befriending.

Location:

Ealing and Hounslow boroughs.

Arrangement:

Voluntary, 1-2 hours per week, agreed expenses reimbursed.

About the role:

Our core Befriending Project supports people who are socially isolated in Ealing and Hounslow. They may have a physical or sensory disability, or they may have mild dementia, and are sometimes housebound.

On successful completion of the training, Befrienders are matched with a suitable client. They make a weekly 1-2 hour visit to the client's home, where they might stay in and chat over a cup of tea or, where possible, go out for a walk together, visit a café or undertake a local activity.

These visits make such a difference for the client and, as a Befriender, you'll get to know inspirational people with fascinating stories, develop new skills and be part of a supportive team that values compassion and connection.

(Please note that this role is not available as part of a student placement – if you are a student looking for your befriending to be part of a placement, take a look at our *Volunteer Befriender: Linked Minds* role).

Becoming a Befriender:

You'll have an informal interview with a Befriending Coordinator, who will answer any questions you might have, then follow-up two character references and arrange your training and an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check, the cost of which is covered by BEfriend.

The training is split into convenient courses:

- Part 1: A short online course that can be completed in your own time.
- Part 2: A 3-hour facilitated session, either in-person or on Zoom, where you'll be able to meet other volunteers.
- Part 3: An online Safeguarding Adults course.

Responsible to:

Befriending Coordinator.

Befriender responsibilities:

- To visit your client regularly each week at a mutually convenient time, spending 1-2 hours with them. (If you are unable to visit occasionally, you can phone instead).
- To let your client and the Coordinator know if you can't make a visit.
- To report back to the Coordinator any issues or concerns you have about your client.
- To complete a monthly online monitoring report form.
- Each month, on your monitoring report form, to either claim expenses, donate expenses back to BEfriend or declare that you have not incurred expenses.
- To attend a Volunteer Review meeting with your Coordinator 6 months after you start volunteering and annually thereafter.
- To attend further BEfriend training sessions where applicable (optional).
- The DBS check is carried out as part of our Safeguarding Policy to protect our clients who are 'vulnerable people'. After three years the check needs to be done again.

Befriender requirements:

The abilities, qualities and skills we seek from a volunteer are:

- To have good listening and communication skills.
- To have an understanding of, and empathy for, this vulnerable client group.
- To be non-judgemental in your attitude towards your client.
- To be available once a week for up to two hours to visit your client.
- To be reliable and punctual when visiting your client, when returning your monthly monitoring forms and with any follow-up required for your client.
- To have the ability to work alone and cope well in one-to-one situations.
- To have an understanding of and willingness to work within the BEfriend framework, including following policies and procedures.

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