Volunteer Befrienders

Befriending is an incredibly rewarding role that involves visiting and offering supportive, reliable relationships to people who may otherwise be socially isolated.



Share's befriending project aims to significantly reduce loneliness by providing enjoyable social connections and experiences for adults with learning disabilities, autism and other physical and sensory impairments.



What do befrienders do?

- You'll be carefully matched with someone who has similar interests
- You'll usually meet them once a week for 1-2 hours - it's a flexible arrangement, you'll agree a time that works best for you and your befriendee
- You'll take time to listen, talk, share experiences, and take an interest in their wellbeing
- Ideally you'll commit to volunteer for a minimum of 6 months to give continuity to members of the scheme
- On visits you'll go for a walk in the park, a bike ride, get a cup of tea or coffee, accompany people to the shops, and even go bowling when restrictions allow!

How does befriending help?

- It offers people companionship with someone outside their immediate support bubble
- Social interactions help people feel less lonely and isolated
- People are supported to get out and explore their local community which helps build connections
- It encourages exercise and getting out in the fresh air
- It allows people to have someone trusted to talk to
- Befriending helps people to communicate more thereby building confidence and social skills





What training and support is there?

- A comprehensive group induction and initial training session
- Further training opportunities including First Aid, Mental Health First, Makaton, and Autism Awareness
- Ongoing support from all the staff at Share
- You'll be able to have your say in how we develop the project longer term and take part in our annual volunteer survey

Who should volunteer?

- Anyone wanting to make a difference in their community
- Health and social care students, trainee nurses - looking for placements or just to gain experience of working with people who have learning disabilities and autism
- People who are good listeners, reliable, sociable, friendly, honest and trustworthy
- Those who are open minded, positive about diversity, able to be professional in approach, and offer a caring and understanding presence
- No previous experience is necessary and all travel costs will be reimbursed





Benefits of volunteering

- It's a chance to develop your skills, and most of all a genuine opportunity to make a difference to people at risk of social isolation
- You'll learn something new, and you'll gain friendship too!
- It's rewarding and fulfilling, giving a sense of purpose
- It's a meaningful way to connect with and help your community
- You'll be part of a friendly and supportive team at Share
- You'll have fun!

What people say

'This whole project can be so empowering and potentially life changing'

'I've found that I come home feeling really happy with a renewed appreciation for life.'

'I absolutely love it, so much so, I will chat about the trips to anyone who will listen afterwards!'

Sounds great! How do I get involved?

- Complete our short application form (available as a download from our website)
- Once we've received your application we'll get in touch to arrange an informal interview. If you're successful, we'll invite you to a taster day and training, and we'll complete a DBS check and references for you.
- We'll aim to match you with one of our members within 2 months from the date you apply

Any questions?

We'd love to hear from you, please get in touch with Peri MacRae
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