

Scheme Member Referral Introduction Pack



Welcome

Thank you for registering an interest in making a referral to Time to Talk Befriending. We are a local befriending service connecting volunteers aged 16+ with older people for friendship. This is usually through home visits. We hope that the information in this booklet will answer your questions, however, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further information.

Our background

Through in-house qualitative research undertaken in 2012, ninety-four participants aged over sixty-five and living in East Brighton were invited to express their views about the need for service provision in the local community. The results of this research highlighted an overarching need for the development of trusted lasting relationships. In essence individuals said they would like to regularly *'see a friendly face'*, *'have someone to visit me at home because I can't get out of the flat'* and simply have *'time to talk'* with a likeminded friend. This knowledge combined with the ever-increasing evidence base about the damaging and life-threatening effects of loneliness in later life, has therefore formed the basis of the Time to Talk Befriending scheme we run today.

Emily Kenward, Founder and Scheme Manager says;

“The research we undertook in 2012 was gathered through a social action project that I was fortunate to manage through the Church I attended at the time. We really felt it on our hearts to try and connect with the hundreds of older people that we knew were living in the neighbouring tower blocks and shelter housing schemes, yet rarely ever saw out in the community. As a Church, our motivation for undertaking the ‘Honouring Older People Event’ was to remind the elders living in our community that they were not forgotten and that we did in fact honour and respect them. As well as providing a special event to facilitate this aim, we felt it was important to ask each person what they would like from the community that would help to improve their well-being so that we could work with other local Churches, professionals and agencies we were already connected with to try and meet some of the huge need for befriending in Brighton and Hove.

From the offset we have developed strong partnerships with secular governing bodies, inter-faith groups, Churches and Charities such as the national Linking Lives befriending scheme (formerly known as Link Visiting), Age UK Brighton & Hove and local authorities such as Sussex Police. We recognise that we are much stronger together so if we are going to effectively meet the mammoth need to reduce feelings of chronic loneliness within the older population, unity and cohesion must exist regardless of whether individuals and organisations are faith based or not.

As a Christian I am personally motivated by putting my faith into action – to show genuine love and compassion towards older people who might otherwise feel invisible and forgotten within society. I advocate the need for faith groups like ours to work with people from all backgrounds, faiths and beliefs and echo exactly what Pastor Bobbie Houston says that *“God has a higher plan for us all – faith based or other - to work together in unity for the well-being of humanity”* (The Sister Hood, 2016).”

In 2017 our service is being piloted in the Worthing area. In the spirit of positive partnership working we have linked in with the existing well respected Charity called Guildcare. Through this collaboration, we hope to identify people who would benefit from befriending which is proven to be a ‘life-line’. The aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of our work with a view to launching the Charity across Adur and Worthing in 2018 (subject to funding).

How the linking process works;

We receive referrals from numerous organisations across the City who work with older people. Some referrals also come from family members or the individual themselves.

Criteria to access our service:

- Aged 65+
- Limited or no family or friends to visit regularly.
- Spend long periods of time alone.

Upon receipt of a referral we undertake the process outlined below. Please note, however, that the time-frames for undertaking the process differ for each person because each individual has different needs. All our Volunteers are interviewed, references are obtained and they are policed checked.

Our aim is to ensure that we find the right volunteer based on strengths, personality and interests, whilst also considering location. We will let you know the outcome of this referral.

General Process

1. **Referral Form** – We receive basic details about the person who has been referred to our service.
2. **Initial Assessment** – The Referrals and volunteer's coordinator will initially telephone the person being referred. The aim of the conversation is to assess whether he/she fits within the scheme's criteria and would like to become a scheme member. (If they do not fit our criteria, every effort is made to refer them to other relevant agencies).
3. **Home Visit Assessment**- The Scheme coordinator will visit the scheme member to introduce themselves and to get to know them so that we can find a good match with a volunteer befriender.
4. **Volunteer Assigned** – We endeavour to find a suitable volunteer who would work well with our scheme member. We take into account personality, experience, interests, availability and geography.

5. **Introductory Visit** – The coordinator will introduce the volunteer to an assigned scheme member. This will take place in the scheme members home. Assuming this meeting goes well; the scheme member and volunteer will then agree to regular ongoing visits. Other forms of communication i.e. telephone calls will also be discussed at this stage.
6. **Regular Visits Begin** - Provided the above proceeds satisfactorily, visits will continue according to the availability of the volunteer. This is usually once a week or fortnightly for approximately an hour. Visits take the form of informal conversations over a cup of tea or coffee. The aim is to provide crucial time to talk and listen to the person the volunteer is befriending. The goal is to reduce isolation by developing a lasting and trustworthy relationship between scheme member and volunteer.
7. **Reviews**- Regular reviews are carried out to check the progress of the befriending match and to provide support when and where needed.

Meet the Team!



Emily Kenward
 Founder and
 Scheme Manager



Sally Crawford
 Referrals
 Coordinator



Jacqueline Reyher
 Befriending
 Coordinator



Karin Smale
 Office
 Manager



Hannah Hammond
 Volunteer
 Coordinator

What you can expect from us

- To be treated with respect, politeness, kindness and honesty at all times.
- After a trial period we will ask to you to confirm if you wish to continue to be visited by your allocated volunteer. If you decide not to continue with your allocated volunteer, but wish to continue with the scheme, we will endeavour to find another volunteer to visit if you as soon as possible.
- Your carefully matched volunteer will visit you on a weekly/fortnightly basis. A convenient time will be arranged between yourselves.
- If for any reason the volunteer is unable to visit you at the agreed time the volunteer will give you as much notice as possible,
- If your volunteer is unable to do something for you we will signpost you to the appropriate person or service.
- We will respect your confidentiality at all times. We will not contact other people or discuss personal information with other agencies, unless you give us permission to do so. The exception to this is if we believe that you are at risk of harm or if you are in need of urgent medical attention.
 - If your volunteer visits you and you do not answer the door or the phone they will contact the Time to Talk Befriending Office.

What we would ask of you

- To let the Befriending Co-ordinator or Scheme Manager know as soon as possible if you wish to cancel a visit.
- That you do not ask your volunteer to undertake personal care (e.g. washing), to dispense your medication, or to lift you. This is for your own safety and that of your volunteer.
- If you ask your volunteer to do something and they say that they are unable to do it (e.g. handling money) that you will respect their decision
- To show your volunteer politeness, respect, kindness and honesty at all times.
- If you have changes to your health you inform the befriending coordinator or scheme manager.
- That visits do not take place in your volunteer's home.