

## **Gift of Friendship - Befriender**

**Responsible to:** Befriending Coordinator

**Purpose of role:** This involves visiting or phoning an isolated, older person on a weekly basis, to provide friendship and companionship.

**Location:** Across West Sussex and Brighton & Hove

**Hours:** Ideally 1 - 2 hours per week

### **About Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove (AUKWSBH):**

AUKWSBH is an independent local charity working to support older people, their families, and carers. For over 65 years we have been at the forefront of supporting local older people through our many essential services, as well as our clubs and activities which help to tackle loneliness and isolation.

### **About the role:**

- Offering a regular weekly visit or phone call to the customer, offering companionship and conversation, helping them develop new relationships and explore possibilities to participate in social activities where possible, helping to create lasting friendships and connections for older people.
- It may involve supporting a Befriender with accessing a community activity or event.
- Taking part in recreational activities such as board games, puzzles or crafts, or simply sharing memories.
- Working on your own initiative with support and training from AUKWSBH.

### **Main tasks:**

- Commit to making a regular check in to the customer, for around an hour a week.
- Arrange visits/calls with the customer at times that are mutually convenient, but within the hours that support is available from AUKWSBH.
- Be aware of the boundaries and limitations of the Befriending role and not become involved in other tasks such as cleaning or shopping.
- Report any concerns about the well-being of the Befriender.
- Complete a record of visits/calls and return these to the Befriending Coordinator.
- Be aged 18 or over.
- Commit to the role for a minimum of 6 months.
- Complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check and complete a Volunteer Induction.

### **Role requirements:**

We are looking for people who are:

- Understanding of the needs of older people
- Excellent listening skills
- Understanding of the need to observe confidentiality in informal settings and maintaining professional boundaries

- Kind, empathic and patient
- Fun and have a friendly character
- Keen on meeting people and supporting them to change how we age.

### **How we will support you:**

You will get ongoing support. You will also be invited to attend volunteer support sessions, where you will always be encouraged to share your thoughts and concerns.

### **Induction and training:**

You will get a full induction and there will be training. This will help you do the role well and confidently.

### **Benefits of volunteering:**

- Be part of a growing team making a difference in the community.
- Gain experience, skills and confidence in working with older people.
- Gain an understanding of the needs of older people.
- Build a fulfilling and enjoyable friendship with an older person.
- Enrich the sense of fulfilment and strengthen connections to the community.
- Develop abilities in communication, problem solving and empathy.
- Learn about our Charity's work.
- Enhance employability through the valuable experience and knowledge gained with us.

You will make a big difference to the lives of older people in West Sussex, Brighton & Hove. This experience can help you build your skills or apply for paid jobs.

### **How to apply:**

Sign the agreement below and send it to [richard.harris@ageukwsbh.org.uk](mailto:richard.harris@ageukwsbh.org.uk)

### **Volunteer Agreement:**

I have read and understood the above role description and would like to become a volunteer for this service.

**Print Name** .....

**Signature** .....

**Date** .....