

## HOW TO REFER INDIVIDUALS TO THE BEFRIENDING SERVICES

### What is this Service?

Barnet residents who are over 55 and who feel isolated and/or lonely are assessed to see which available services best meet their needs and has the capacity to help them. Age UK Barnet offer many other services designed to help reduce the effects of isolation. We are also a referral agent for many other organisations offering similar services but not known to those who need their help. With your assistance and their permission, referees can be signposted or referred to these services. (See Befriending Links) Where appropriate and possible referees are matched with one of our carefully vetted volunteers for regular companionship and emotional support.

Under the **Home Visiting Service**, volunteers visit their Befriender in their homes, for a period of six months or more. These visits are weekly, average length an hour, unless otherwise agreed and may involve some practical support with paper work or going out but not, if the person does not consider themselves lonely or isolated. The service is not time limited but we encourage befrienders and befriendeds to move on if our support is no longer required.

In Response to the COVID 19 Crisis we also offer a **Telephone Pals** service. Most of the contact is by phone or a social media platform, though occasional face to face meetings to strengthen the contact is possible. Keeping the isolated up to date with information and encouraging them to re-enter society safely is an important part of this service. This is new service. Its continuation will be subject to demand and resources.

### Who is eligible? (See Befriending Service Purpose and Criteria and Is this Service Right For You?)

Potential service users need to be over 55 years of age, and live in the borough of Barnet. Those with no alternative sources of regular companionship are prioritised but this is subject to a suitable volunteer and our assessment of the positive difference we can make. Referees need to be able form a mutually rewarding relationship with a volunteer and be able to make and keep appointments. They also need to be aware of what the service can realistically do and to actively want the service. It is also important that they know of the alternatives, as our capacity is limited and not designed to cope with those with complex needs. Referrers need to ensure the client understands and agrees to the referral.

### How do I refer someone for the service?

1. Request an information Pack, if you do not have one, then complete the Befriending Service referral form, and post/email it to the Befriending Manager, Sian

#### Age UK Barnet

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Oak Lane  
East Finchley  
London N2 8LT

t 020 8203 5040  
f 020 8349 0346  
e [info@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukbarnet.org.uk)  
[www.ageukbarnet.org.uk](http://www.ageukbarnet.org.uk)



Jones, whose contact details you will find below. The referral form can be downloaded from our website. Pass word protection can be agreed in advance.

2. A telephone referral may be possible if we already know the client and have sufficient information and permissions or you are unable to fill in the form but can supply the necessary information verbally.

### **What happens next?**

The client will be contacted to start the assessment process, usually within a fortnight. As many of clients are ill or have sensory and capacity issues, knowing how and when to best communicate with them or having a third party to assist is very important. Sometimes all we can do is send an information pack and wait for them to contact us. If the service seems to match the client's needs and our capacity then an assessment visit (or call during Covid a call) will be arranged. During the visit/call, the service manager will take down any additional details we need, do a brief risk assessment, and get to know the client so they can find the right volunteer for that client. The clients will also need to sign a GDPR and service agreement form. Verbal agreements are acceptable but we prefer to have a witness. Waiting times for assessment and match vary according to current demand. We try our best to update you on progress but due to the sheer numbers of enquiries, this may be overlooked. Do feel free to remind us an update is required.

### **If you have any further questions, complaints?**

Please contact Sian Jones, Development Manager for Volunteer Services. Her normal working days are Monday to Thursdays.

If you have a serious complaint about the service please ring Helen Newman Age UK Barnet, 020 8203 5040. Email: [mark.robinson@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:mark.robinson@ageukbarnet.org.uk)

### **Sian Jones, Befriending Manager**

**Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley, N2 8LT, 020 8432 1416, Mobile 07505 089 129 Email [befriending@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:befriending@ageukbarnet.org.uk)**

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