

BEFRIENDING SERVICES PURPOSE, ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA, 2020

PURPOSE OF SERVICES

To provide emotional support and companionship to the lonely and isolated residents of Borough of Barnet.

Where relevant and feasible to provide by telephone or face to face meetings;

- Help to access information that may be hard for those who are isolated and digitally challenged to access.
- Volunteer assistance to help the isolated identify problems and issues that are worrying them and, with the assistance of Age UK Barnet, signpost them appropriately. This may involve our Handyperson change a lightbulb, someone researching information or talking through how clients feel about the options open to them.
- Updating clients on safe options to pursue their interests and re-engage with society.
- Refer clients to our specialist volunteers who can assist with Digital Inclusion if befrienders are unable to provide this help.
- Encouraging and motivating clients where appropriate to resume social interaction and interests as Covid 19 restriction ease.

Home visiting Service

- Normally volunteers meet with the client face to face once a week for an hour or on occasions for a longer period for prearranged, risk assessed outings.
- Help the sensory impaired to make calls and read mail
- During the pandemic, meetings need to comply with Government guidelines and client wishes. Therefore many matches will follow the Telephone Pals format.
- The service is not time limited but we encourage befrienders and befriendees to move on if our support is no longer required.

Telephone Pals

- To offer at least 40 minutes of phone or digital contact with clients per week. This will be at pre-arranged times and either in one long call or multiple shorter calls.
- Optional occasional 'Covid compliant' face-to-face meetings. These chats in the garden, short walks or whatever the guidelines allow need only be every 1-2 months to strengthen the bonds between befriender and befriendeed.

Age UK Barnet

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- This is new service. Its continuation will be subject to demand and resources.

Eligibility Criteria

Potential users of the service need to:

1. Be 55 years of age or over.
2. Be residents of the borough of Barnet
3. Acknowledge they are socially isolated and/or feel lonely.
4. Have agreed to the referral.
5. Have needs and expectations that meet the service's scope and capacity.
6. Be able to form a mutually rewarding social relationship with a carefully matched and vetted AUKB volunteer.
7. Be able to remember and keep appointments or have the assistance available to do so.
8. Be prepared to participate in the assessment process
9. Be able to understand and agree to our service guidelines and a data protection agreement.

Priority to those who:

- Are isolated due to Covid 19, frailty, physical impairments or care duties, which prevent them from leaving their homes.
- Have no alternative sources of regular companionship.

The service is not:

1. A shopping service able to supply regular essentials.
 - a. We have a parallel shopping service during the Covid 19 pandemic. Some volunteers are able to support both services.
2. A replacement for paid care services.
3. A respite service.
4. A crisis or short-term service.
 - a. Except during national crises, such as the Covid 19 prevention measures
5. A specialist service for those with dementia, mental health conditions or complex needs. Those who we assess as falling into one of these categories will need additional risk assessment and support. In order, to provide a service safely, we may require additional input from the referrer or those who support the client during assessment and beyond.
6. Appropriate for those living in conditions, which do not meet our health and safety standards. We risk assess any environment and activity our volunteers and clients enter on our behalf.

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