

Keep in Touch

Writing letters and cards to people living with dementia

The Dementia Befriending supports people to live independently and safely at home for as long as possible, stay socially engaged and carry on doing what they love. The service supports Camden residents over the age of 55 in the early or moderate stages of dementia.

We offer Camden residents the opportunity to join our Dementia Befriending service.

While clients are on our waiting list, waiting to be matched with a befriender, we would like them to receive a regular letter or card, as a way of reassuring them that we have not forgotten them.

Most people like to receive a card or letter in the post. For people living with memory loss and dementia, they can be a wonderful way of prompting memories and reminding someone they are being thought about.

This is not a penpal role. The clients will not be reciprocating/ responding.

In this role you will:

- Be linked with 2 – 3 people
- Write a card or letter every 2 – 3 weeks to each person.
- Seek out interesting articles or images that may be of interest to the client to enclose with the letters and cards.
- Provide the coordinator with regular updates on the cards and letters sent, and if possible, a record of the content. (This could be scanning or photographing the cards/letters and sending them through or giving a brief synopsis of content via email.)

We are looking for people who:

- Are creative and enjoy writing
- Can write clearly and simply
- Consistency and reliability
- Understanding of Confidentiality
- Understanding of and empathy with the needs of older people, particularly those living with memory loss and dementia.
- Have the energy and momentum to keep the dynamic of the communications going.

Volunteering Hours

- A letter or card sent to 2 -3 clients every 2 -3 weeks.
- Flexible to fit with your own schedule, on the understanding you will fulfil the requirements of the role.

Training and Induction for the role is provided and includes: (this is mandatory)

- Online Dementia Awareness course
- Induction to organization
- Keep in touch guidance workshop/manual

We will give you:

- Ongoing support including regular supervision by the coordinator of the service.
- Provide an initial welcome pack of stamps/cards/paper
- Reimbursement of agreed expenses
- Access to Volunteer Forum events

If you are interested, we will ask you to:

- Complete an application form
- Meet with the Befriending Coordinator
- Provide details of two Referees
- Complete a Basic DBS check (we arrange this with you)
- Induction and training (as laid out above)

We understand that completing the various steps takes time and we support and keep in touch with you through the process.

As this role brings our volunteers into regular contact with vulnerable older people, we make sure that all volunteers understand their role and have completed our recruitment procedures to both our and their satisfaction.

Thank you

You can find out more about the Befriending Service and Age UK Camden here:
www.ageukcamden.org.uk