**Emergency Guidelines for Befriending & Home Visitors and Community Connectors**

You turn up at the agreed time and it appears that the older person is not at home: what do you do?

**Prior to the Visit**

* Ensure you have any contact details relating to the older person you have been provided with you when you visit**.**
* Always phone the older person on the day of the planned visit to finalise the arrangement. Even if they are housebound, it is important to get into this habit. This provides an opportunity for them to let you know about hospital or other appointments that may alter your plans.

**Arriving for the Visit**

1. Remember that some people can take time to get to the door due to mobility etc. *(as you get to know the person, you will have more of an understanding of their habits and abilities)*
2. Try to see inside the house/flat. Perhaps the older person has fallen. If so call Emergency Services.
3. Try phoning them. They may not have heard the doorbell.

If still no answer, refer to the emergency contact list.

1. If there is a Sheltered housing officer or member of staff on site, speak to them
2. If they are a member of Careline – call them. 020 7974 1491/2
3. Otherwise call a key holder. (if there is one)
4. If there are no other key holders or you cannot reach them, try a neighbour. They may be aware of the older person’s movements. Do not; unless it cannot be avoided give out information about who you are or where you are from. You can say that you are a friend of the family, which should deter neighbours from asking other questions. This protects client confidentiality.
5. Call the Emergency Social Services (out of hours evenings and weekends) number or your Coordinator if it is during office hours.

Adult Social Care daytime is 0207 9744000.

Out of office hours ring 0207 9774 5406, council switchboard, and ask to be put through to the EDT team (Emergency Duty team). Social Care Team

If all other options have been exhausted, call Emergency Services.

1. Before leaving the situation, the volunteer must leave the situation in the hands of another responsible person or people (i.e. ambulance, supported housing officer etc)

**While you are visiting**

**Falls**

Do not attempt to sit them up or lift them: If they are not able to get up by themselves or with minimal help from you, call and ambulance and keep them warm and comfortable where they are. The ambulance staff will be able to pick the person up check no bones are broken and will take them to hospital if the injury seems serious.

**Sickness**

If the person is taken ill, call their G.P., if they have provided the number, otherwise If the person appears to be acutely ill, call the ambulance straight away.

**Unconscious**

If the person is unconscious, you must call the ambulance straight away. While waiting, DO NOT move the person or try to give them anything to eat or drink. Make sure that nothing is obstructing their breathing and cover them lightly with a blanket.

**Special Circumstances**

The remit of the befriender is one of social interaction with the older person. However, you are often the first person to be aware of changes or issues for concern regarding the older person.

In a one-off situation you behave as any concerned and caring citizen would (e.g. emergency food). But always tell the Befriending Coordinator as it allows situations to be monitored and for you and the client to receive support.

Many older persons are frail and their health and living situation is likely to change over time. It is important to report any concerns or issues to the Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.