

Befriending Coordinator, Nikki Holt

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Our Sittingbourne Centre

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Registered Charity Number 1152234

Company Registration Number 08412045



Befriending Service

Here at Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne we believe “No one should have no one”.

We recognise the value and benefit of regular social interaction and friendship in later life. We offer a free befriending service to lonely or isolated people aged 50 or above living in our community.



Our aim is to provide a carefully matched, volunteer befriender who will normally visit for about an hour a week.

The volunteer befrienders are carefully chosen and DBS checked.

Our befrienders offer a kind, patient listening ear and may also be able to provide details of other services that may be helpful. Befriending can be an essential link between someone and the outside world.

Each befriender and their “friend” might enjoy a cuppa together or perhaps play a game, do puzzles, swap stories and hopefully enjoy some laughs. We hope this will always be an hour a week to look forward to!

Some feedback about the service: -

“I couldn’t do without it: - *It give me something to look forward to each week. I don’t know anyone in this area and although people chat to me when I am out with the dog, I don’t have any friends here so can go days without really seeing anyone. It’s reassuring knowing I have someone just down the road if anything happens.”*

“Good friends: - *We get on like a house on fire and it is one of the most nourishing relationships I could have. He’s an ex-miner and has just turned 91 though you’d never know it. He has a cracking sense of humour and we’ve become really good friends over the last year and I wouldn’t miss our weekly meet up for the world and neither would he. We talk about all manner of things and it truly is a two-way process of learning and growing in openness and understanding.”*

“Much needed social interaction”: - *I have been volunteering for Age UK since January this year. Befriending for me gives a break from the computer and some much-needed social interaction in the week as well as the feeling I am doing something worthwhile for someone else at the same time. No matter what age you are, I feel if you sit around the house with no one to talk to for days on end it is very easy to suddenly feel isolated and dispirited. I feel benefit from the social side of volunteering and so does my friend.*

To be considered for the service individuals **must** be:

- Aged 50 or over living in the Sittingbourne, Teynham, Faversham areas (post codes ME9 / ME10 / ME13)
- We regret we cannot accept referrals for individuals already living in a care setting.

Our aim is to assess every referral individually for suitability. We regret that in some circumstances a person's needs may exceed the support available from our service, in these cases we will endeavour to provide information on suitable support.

Whilst we welcome referrals for anyone who meets the above criteria, Priority will be given to clients who:

- Live alone
- Have little or no friends visiting on a regular basis
- Have no family close by
- Do not attend other activities, e.g. day centres, community services.

Referrals to the service can be made by anyone (with the individual’s consent) – e.g. family members, health and social care professionals (please contact us for a referral form).

Please note that our befrienders are not allowed to become involved in personal care, domestic tasks, administering medication, financial/legal matters or offer formal advice.

If you are interested in having a befriender, would like more information, or you know someone who might benefit from the service, please contact our Befriending Coordinator, [Nikki Holt](#), by telephone, email, post or using our online contact form.