



Building Connections Volunteer Role

Why this matters: Significant life transitions, such as bereavement, ill health or caring commitments can result in some older people lacking a regular friendship group or social connections and then experiencing loneliness.

Our vision: To reach out to those who desire increased social contact and walk alongside them as they explore new groups, activities or interests and hopefully build new friendships and connections.

Role summary: Building Connections is not a befriending service, as the hope is that our volunteers support and encourage people into other local groups and social settings that can

Location:

In the older person's home and by phone. Monday to Friday

Time Requirement:

People are supported a maximum of 4 times over a 3-month period. The day and time of these visits will be agreed between you and the older person.

provide longer term connections. As a Building Connections volunteer, you will offer one-to-one support, which will be agreed between you and the older person at an initial visit, depending on the person's own interests and what is important to them. This may include:

- Supporting the older person on an agreed course of action e.g. starting a new hobby or resuming an activity they have enjoyed in the past.
- Accompanying them to a social group or connecting them with their community.
- Signposting to other services provided by Age UK Gloucestershire, such as our Digital Champions, and to other agencies and partner organisations (information provided).

Your role: Our volunteers tell us that they gain enormous satisfaction by helping people overcome their challenges and improve their well-being. The regular contact from this role will enable the volunteer see progress with the person they are connecting with and understand the real difference they are making to the lives of older people. Volunteering provides the opportunity to develop and use coaching and mentoring and is also a great way to make new friends!

Requirements and skills

- ✓ Patience and empathy, to engage sensitively with all older people
- ✓ The ability to listen, question and communicate to understand someone's hopes and wishes
- ✓ The ability to help someone create a plan and support them to follow through with it.
- ✓ To understand the need for confidentiality as people share their personal information.
- ✓ The role supports an individual four times over 3 months. A regular commitment is required.
- ✓ You will usually need a car to get to the person's home and possibly to transport them.
- ✓ You will need to complete relevant training required for the role, both in-person and online.
- ✓ For safeguarding reasons, all volunteers will be required to complete an application form, provide 2 satisfactory references, and pass an Enhanced DBS check.
- ✓ **Please note:** the role **does not** include personal care, such as bathing, dressing or toileting.

If this role fits your skills, interests and experience, and you'd like to apply
simply download and complete the Volunteering Application Form
on our website and return by email to
volunteering@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk