

Befriender Volunteer Role Description

We are looking for dedicated volunteers who can give an hour a week to support older people who are at risk of social isolation.

As a Befriender you will visit older people who may be experiencing isolation and loneliness to offer support and companionship.

This is a flexible role that gives you the opportunity to help people in a way that you are passionate about, visiting an older person in their home, to engage them in conversation and to listen with interest.

What's involved?

Help older people feel less lonely by providing companionship and conversation.

- Promote ageing in a positive way
- Use your own experience of life events and help others to adapt to changes
- To refer and signpost an older person to other organisations and agencies that may support their health and well-being
- Encourage older people to attend social groups e.g. coffee mornings or one-off events, if they feel they would like to
- Any other reasonable activities aimed at enhancing an older persons quality of life
- Complete and return monthly visit sheets and feed back to the project coordinator

You will not be required to provide personal care (e.g. feeding, washing) or give direct medical advice to participants.

What knowledge do I need?

As Befriender, it would be beneficial (but not essential) for you to:

- Have first-hand experience of transitional life events e.g. retirement, divorce
- Understand how life events can impact on physical and mental health/wellbeing
- Be willing to find out about local services and how to support individuals to use them

What skills do I need?

As a Befriender, we ask that you:

- Have good listening and communication skills
- Have an interest in and empathy with older people
- Can provide non-judgemental support and encouragement to people in difficult situations
- Are able to respect confidentiality even in difficult situations
- Are honest, reliable, committed and flexible to meet clients' needs

What can I gain from this role?

- A greater awareness of services and activities in your local area
- Training and support in areas such as active listening, understanding the barriers to social isolation and appropriate signposting
- Opportunity to meet new people and use and develop your skills

Training

You will receive full training and support to help you to improve your confidence and understanding for this role. You will be required to complete mandatory training before you begin your role. This will cover areas such as boundaries, confidentiality, and safeguarding.

Support

You will be supported by a dedicated member of staff who will ensure that your training and development needs are met, and provide ongoing support as needed.

Expenses

We will refund you for any reasonable expenses, such as travel and activity costs.

Working practices

We ask that volunteers become familiar with all Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland policies and practices as described in the Volunteers Handbook.

The tasks and activities listed are intended as a summary and may be varied from time to time in consultation with the volunteer concerned.

The role description is intended to clarify the tasks and activities of the volunteer and is for the benefit of all concerned. It does not form the basis of a contract of employment.