

Activity Befriender Volunteer

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Age UK Norwich. Volunteering is an amazing way to give something back to your local community whilst learning new skills and meeting new people.

This document outlines the key aspects of this volunteer role, its duties and the skills and experience we look for. All volunteers are subject to a **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** check.

ABOUT THE ROLE

We need volunteers to support older people in the city to re-connect and introduce positive changes to make the most out of later life. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the older population. Due to the enforced shielding and lockdowns, many older people have seen their health decrease due to inactivity and have lost their confidence in being able to do the things they did before the pandemic. Norwich is already one of the loneliest cities to live, and with an aging population – many people go days without the connection of another person and the global pandemic has only made this problem worse. Across the UK, 3.9 million people class their television as their main form of company, and such loneliness can be as harmful for our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day!

We are looking for Activity Befrienders who can spare an hour or two a week, Monday to Friday. You will be matched with an older person in your local area to do something together - meet for a coffee at a local café or a walk to the park or shops, or to accompany them to a community group. You will help and guide them to reach their goals – whether that's to meet new people, be more active or to learn something new.

The role normally lasts a few months, but this varies for each match depending on the goals of the older person and how long you want to be involved – but we are looking for volunteers who can commit to seeing someone every week. We understand that “life happens” and there will be times you can't make a visit, and this can be worked around when needed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Each volunteer is matched with a person who has requested this service and has been visited and assessed by an Age UK Norwich staff member who will determine suitability of a match with a volunteer. Once a match has been made, you will be introduced to the person and supported by an Outreach Officer and will visit the person for one hour per week at a mutually agreed local venue

- Maintain an informal diary of visits where you record your activity
- Report any progress/concerns promptly to an Outreach Officer or other named contacts (Specific training on Safeguarding is undertaken prior to commencement of placement).
- Undertake supervision sessions with the Befriending Coordinator or Client Support Team
- Attend any further training events identified as required for your befriending role.
- Offer general signposting to other Age UK Norwich services that may be able to give further support.

- Adhere to the relevant Age UK Norwich policies and procedures, such as Data Protection, Adult Safeguarding and Health and Safety.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The table below outlines the skills and background that would suit this opportunity.

Essential	Desirable
Good communication and active listening skills. Comfortable to work with clients on a 1-1 basis.	Previous experience of working/volunteering with older people or in health or wellbeing services e.g. counselling, coaching, social work.
Reliable, able to work on own initiative and problem solve.	
Good administrative / record keeping skills. Computer literate and able to use e-mail, telephone and Microsoft Word.	Experience of using mobile devices and tablets.
Be empathetic to the problems faced by older people and their carers.	Understanding of social demographics and barriers to social inclusion and their effects on older people. Experience of working with different groups of people and community engagement.
Open to learning new skills to enhance relationships and the service provided.	Background or qualifications in health & social care, social work, health practitioner. A Dementia Friend or Dementia Champion.
Experience of working to organisational guidelines, policies and procedures.	Knowledge of Health and Safety, Data Protection, Adult Safeguarding and Lone Working procedures.
Able to organise own travel to meet with clients within the Norwich locale.	

PRIMARY CONTACT

Befriending is part of our **Community & Neighbourhood Support Department**. Volunteers report to the **Befriending Coordinator** who is the primary day-to-day contact or department management.

TRAINING

- Volunteers are required to attend an Age UK Norwich Volunteer Induction Session, prior to the starting their placement given by the Volunteer Coordinator
- Volunteers are required to attend a Role Training session, prior to being matched with an older person. This will be given by the Befriending Coordinator.
- Whilst supporting us as a volunteer, refresher training may be required to keep-up-to-date with best practice and/or Age UK Norwich policies and procedures.
- For specific clients with complex needs, further short-duration training may be required, however this will be discussed with you, prior to any placement.

ROLE BOUNDARIES: Volunteers are not required to deliver any personal care (such as washing, dressing, bathing or toileting) or manual handling (such as lifting or moving) of clients.

TIME COMMITMENT

- Volunteers must be available for 1-2 hours per week, for a minimum sixteen week period.
- Visits will take place 8am-6pm, Monday to Friday.

AGE RESTRICTIONS: Volunteers must be over the age of 18 for this service.

LOCATION: Various locations in and around Norwich.

SUPERVISION:

- Supervision and review of the match will take place every three months. This will be a one-to-one chat, either face-to-face or on the telephone, for us to discuss how the role is going and make sure you have everything you need.
- Our Befriending Coordinator will also provide support and guidance when you need it.

EXPENSES: Travel costs and any service-related expenditure incurred on behalf of the charity will be reimbursed. These must be pre-approved and claimed in accordance to the Age UK Norwich Expenses Procedure.

This role is voluntary therefore no reimbursement will be made for any time given to support this activity.