**Gift of Friendship (Steel City Friends) – Role Description August 2025**

**ABOUT THE ROLE**

This volunteering role involves making regular face-to-face contact to offer companionship, confidence-building and support with an older person who may be feeling alone, cut off from their community and who might have experienced a sudden change to their circumstances.

Volunteering for this role might also mean addressing the barriers older people may face in leaving their homes, such as anxiety or a lack of confidence or transport links, to regain confidence and feel part of their community again.

This combats social isolation, loneliness and promotes independence by reaching more older residents looking for some support to rediscover joy and community. Volunteers are matched based on location, interests and needs.

This volunteer role will involve:

* Being matched with an older person who you will build a friendship with over the course of 6 months to provide encouragement and support in regaining confidence to feel part of their community again.
* You will visit them in their home and/or attend groups, events and meet ups with them outside of their home (e.g. once a week).
* You will listen and work together to set small, meaningful goals that promote wellbeing and independence. Examples include: going for a short walk to get to know their neighbourhood again, rebuilding confidence to use public transport, re-engaging with community activities or joining a local group, or reconnecting with a hobby or a particular interest.
* You will understand what barriers they face, and where possible, encourage them to leave their home either through public transport, community transport, taxis, walking or potentially cycling.
* You may also support them with their computer skills e.g. using the internet to find out what is happening in their local community and for keeping in touch with friends and family.

**BENEFITS TO YOU**

* The satisfaction of knowing you will be making a difference to reduce social isolation and loneliness by having a positive impact on someone else’s life.
* Opportunities to meet new people and get to explore your community.
* Opportunities to develop your own self-confidence, build on soft skills such as communication, collaboration and problem solving.

**THE SKILLS YOU’LL NEED**

* No previous experience required – but you will need to fill in an application to outline why you would like to volunteer.
* You will enjoy meeting and connecting with new people face-to-face or you are looking to build your confidence in this area.
* Have a kind, friendly and outgoing manner.
* Have the ability to work using your own initiative.
* Be flexible in your approach, keen to listen and sensitive to the needs of others as many older people face isolation due to bereavement, declining health or mobility or the simple fact of living alone.
* Commitment to work within Age UK Sheffield guidelines – these will be shared following your application.
* Willingness to learn about the range of Age UK Sheffield’s services and explore what other services, groups and events are happening within your local community.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

* **LOCATION:** City-wide – but we will aim to match you with someone locally.
* **TIME COMMITMENT:** Flexible – but ideally once a week, no less than an hour,and you must be able to commit to six months of visits and/or outings.
* **DBS CHECK/REFERENCES:** Age UK Sheffield will run a DBS check as part of the application process, the cost of this will be covered by Age UK. Two references will also be required, one professional and one personal.
* **RESPONSIBLE TO:** Befriending Coordinator.
* **EXPENSES:** Travel expenses are reimbursed but not food and drink.
* **TRAINING/SUPPORT:** If your application is successfully, before you are matched you must complete Age UK Sheffield’s short training. You will also receive ongoing check-ins and ad-hoc peer-to-peer support.