

Volunteer Befriender Role Description

Glens Befriending Service • Soirbheas, working with Highland Hospice

A little time and a friendly conversation can make a difference. Our befrienders support adults across the Glens who may be experiencing loneliness or isolation, helping them feel connected and valued.

What you will do

Every match is different. Activities are agreed with the person you support and the Befriending Coordinator. You may:

- Offer companionship, conversation and a listening ear.
- Spend time chatting, reading or writing letters together.
- Encourage social connection, confidence and community activities.
- Go on agreed walks, short outings or activities.
- Provide companionship while a carer takes a short break, where agreed and appropriate; this does not involve taking on a caring role.
- Help with an occasional agreed errand or shopping task, following the boundaries guidance and keeping receipts where needed.

Time and matching

We will agree visits or contact around your availability and match you with someone whose interests and needs suit your role. If possible, we ask for a commitment of at least six months to help build a consistent relationship. Tell the Coordinator if your availability changes or you need a break.

Keeping within your role

- Do not provide personal or clinical care, administer medication, or act as a counsellor or professional carer.
- Do not take on routine cooking, cleaning or domestic duties.
- Do not give medical, legal or financial advice, or lend or borrow money.
- Keep to agreed contact arrangements and follow the Befriending Boundaries guidance. Ask the Coordinator before taking on anything outside your agreed role.

Safety and reporting concerns

- Follow the Volunteer Handbook, Safeguarding Policy, safety guidance and agreed lone working arrangements.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Befriending Coordinator. If unavailable, or the concern involves them, contact the Community Grants Manager. If the concern involves the Manager, contact the Chair of the Board.
- Listen, make a factual note and pass the concern on. Do not investigate or promise secrecy. In an emergency call 999 without waiting for a reply.
- Report accidents, incidents and near-misses promptly using the agreed reporting process. Ask for help completing a report if needed.

Confidentiality and respectful conduct

Keep information about the people you support secure and share it only through authorised routes. Necessary safeguarding reports must still be made. Treat everyone with dignity and respect, and follow the complaints, whistleblowing, bullying and harassment, and behaviour policies.

Driving is optional

You do not need to drive to be a befriender. If you agree to transport clients, complete the required driver documents and checks before doing so. Your motor insurance must include business use and cover voluntary client transport. Follow the Driver Policy and Risk Assessment, and report changes affecting your licence, vehicle, insurance or fitness to drive.

Training and support

Before starting your match, complete the required induction, PVG checks for working with adults, and safeguarding training. The Coordinator will arrange or confirm these with you.

- Helping Hands training and Adult Support and Protection training through Highland Hospice, with refreshers as arranged.
- Ongoing support, agreed check-ins and opportunities to ask questions or discuss a difficult situation.
- Monthly updates to the Coordinator and agreed expenses reimbursed through the current claims process.

Interested or need support

Contact the Befriending Coordinator for a friendly chat or current training details. You can explore the introductory session before deciding whether befriending is right for you.

Befriending Coordinator: befriender@soirbheas.org | 07748 575330

Community Grants Manager: karascott@soirbheas.org | 07842 781986

Chair of the Board: chair@soirbheas.org

Record receipt of this role description on the Volunteer Induction form.

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