

Befriender (Voluntary)

Turning Tides are a community led homelessness organisation that puts clients and local people at the heart of our mission to end homelessness

Location: Within local community, activities/ meet ups to be based locally.

Time / Hours: 1 or 2 hours, weekly or fortnightly, plus monthly Group feedback and supervision sessions.

Supported by: Befriending Team – Danielle Huet and Jacqui Wells.

Background: Befriending is part of our Routes to Roots programme and is part of Turning Tides' community response to the impact that homelessness has on peoples' lives.

Routes to Roots offers an effective and inclusive menu of opportunities for people who have experienced homelessness. It includes: befriending, mentoring, community connection and peer support.

At the heart of Routes to Roots is kindness and companionship; aiming to build connections on a one to one and community level.

Befriending directly involves local people supporting Turning Tides clients back into community life. It promotes social inclusion, helping to reduce social isolation and institutionalisation.

Every Befriending relationship has a person centred approach, individually focused to the needs of the client (Friend). The relationships are helpful, meaningful and supportive.

Role Purpose: A Befriender is an individual offering another companionship through a listening ear, a non-judgemental attitude and kindness.

The purpose of the role is to provide companionship on a one-to-one basis to an individual.

The Befriending Volunteer qualities we look for:

- Good interpersonal skills, including an approachable manner
- Good listening skills
- Flexible and adaptable
- Patient and consistent
- Reliable, trustworthy and honest
- Able to maintain boundaries within a Befriending relationship.
- A non-judgemental attitude
- Empathetic and kind
- An ability to deal with stressful and difficult situations in a calm manner
- The willingness to help raise the self-esteem and confidence of their Friend through a positive befriending relationship.

Befriending volunteers must also:

- Be over 18 years of age
- Participate in initial and ongoing training sessions
- Have DBS clearance (we can assist with the application process)
- Have the right to volunteer in the UK.

Main duties:

- Meet with your Friend on a regular basis (for approximately one to two hours weekly or fortnightly)
- Update Volunteero after each “meet up” with your Friend – Volunteero is a Befriending mobile App so a smart phone is a desirable
- Be reliable and provide as much warning as possible if you are unable to meet with the Friend
- Communicate with the Befriending team leaders and raise any concerns immediately
- Respect your Friend’s right to confidentiality
- Provide support, encouragement and guidance to the Friend when taking part in social, recreational activities.
- Build a relationship based on trust and companionship
- Maintain the boundaries outlined in Turning Tides Volunteer training.

What Training will I receive?

Turning Tides offers Volunteers training so your time volunteering is the best it can be, is as safe as possible, and of course adds value to your experience and to Turning Tides clients.

Every Volunteer, regardless of the role, will have an initial induction and will receive Turning Tides ‘Not Just a Volunteer’ handbook. The induction looks at Professional Boundaries, Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity and we encourage you to ask any questions you may have.

The Befriending Volunteer role requires the following additional training, and we ask that you can commit to this. (The training is in a variety of formats depending on the subject – a video to watch, a document to read or an online course).

Training	Format	Time commitment
Professional Boundaries	On Volunteer website	1 hour
Safeguarding	PowerPoint	10 minutes
Safeguarding	On - line MeLearning	1hr30 minutes
Loneliness and Isolation	On - line MeLearning	15 minutes
Mental Health Awareness	On - line MeLearning	45 minutes
Substance Misuse	On - line MeLearning	1hr30 minutes
Unconscious Bias	On - line MeLearning	30 minutes
Active Listening	On Volunteer website	5 minutes
Making a positive Impact	On Volunteer website	10 minutes
Communication Skills	On Volunteer website	10 minutes

COVID-19:

The health and safety of our volunteers and supporters are always our top priority. As the situation with COVID-19 evolves, we will ensure any volunteering you carry out is within current Government guidelines. We will support you in this so guidelines are met.

We need to ensure you are eligible to volunteer in the UK. To do this we will ask to see documentation that proves your right to volunteer in the UK at your induction. If you are unable to provide this documentation, you will be unable to volunteer. If you have the right to work in the UK on a permanent basis you are also normally allowed to volunteer. If in doubt, please contact the Home Office.

Commitment and Time Frame: Due to the nature of this role a commitment for a minimum of 6 months is preferred.

The Befriending service is generally open ended and usually has no fixed end date i.e. it would not automatically end after a certain amount of sessions. However, the support will be reviewed after a four week period to ensure that both parties are satisfied with their friendship, and can be reviewed at any time at the client or Befriender's request.

Expenses covered: Reasonable expenses can be covered. This can be discussed with the Befriending Team Leaders.

Sign up Process:

Application form including 2 referees, an informal 1:1 chat, Befriending Volunteer induction, Befriending Volunteer training, and an enhanced DBS.

Please note: all of Turning Tides' roles require two character references. These references do not need to be employment references, however, we cannot accept references from family members.

For more information please contact the Befriending team:

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Email: befriending@turning-tides.org.uk