

Befriender Role Description



Time commitment - around 1-2 hours per week

Dumfries and Galloway LGBT Plus Befriending Scheme aims to recruit volunteer befrienders who will support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, as well as others affected by issues of sexual orientation and gender identity ('LGBT plus'). Befriending is not counselling or mental health support (although it can be offered to complement these) but instead often has the purpose of reducing social isolation, through the befriender spending a few hours with the client (or 'befriender') each week to have a chat, go for coffee or some other social activity. Befrienders aim to help people build up their confidence by providing a listening ear and encouraging the person to get out and about to rediscover interests and make new friends and social connections.

We are particularly looking for people to befriend: □

- Older and disabled LGBT plus people (including those who are housebound or in supported accommodation, hospital or care homes) □
- Transgender people including cross-dressers □
- LGBT plus people from rural areas □
- People who are not 'out' or who are confused about their sexual orientation or gender identity

Ideally, you have many of the qualities below: □

- Knowledgeable about issues for LGBT plus adults and older people □
- Trustworthy, reliable and a good timekeeper □
- A good listener, empathic, approachable and objective □
- Discrete □
- Dedicated to the cause of keeping people safe and ensuring their wellbeing □
- Able to put the other person and their issues above your own □
- Well versed in the various service of Dumfries and Galloway LGBT Plus □
- Criminal Records checked with an enhanced PVG

What you will do: □

- Establish, build and maintain a befriending relationship □
- Establish and maintain appropriate boundaries with your befriender □
- Spend regular time/share activities with the befriender □
- Be aware of, and work within, the organisational policy framework □
- Respect confidentiality of the befriender at all times □
- Notify your supervisor of any issues/difficulties relating to the client □
- Undertake induction training and any other relevant training □
- Attend Volunteer Supervision and one-to-one support with your supervisor □
- Complete the necessary paperwork (e.g. Expenses Claims, Session Records etc.) □
- Be non-judgemental and non-discriminatory □
- Offer an accepting and understanding presence to the befriender □
- Acknowledge positive qualities and skills and support the befriender to develop □
- Read, understand and follow the Policy Handbook of Dumfries and Galloway LGBT Plus, as well as the specific Guidelines for Befrienders

What you will get out of it:

Your role is vital in supporting some of our more vulnerable service users, and your input could make the difference between a person continuing to feel isolated, or them accessing friends, social networks and other positive opportunities. Although progress may be slow at times, you will have the satisfaction of seeing your befriender move gradually forward to a more positive place. It will also be great experience for those people who are looking to enter volunteering or employment within the caring professions.