

Mental Health Befriending Service

Handbook



The Aims of the Befriending Service

The Blide Trust Befriending Service aims to provide companionship for those affected by mental ill health.

A befriender is the person receiving the befriending service (you) and a befriender is the volunteer who will visit or meet up with you.

About the befriending Service at The Blide Trust

The befriending service provides companionship for those affected by mental ill health who would benefit from the activity and company of a befriender. The befriending service provides a link bringing people together to provide opportunities to get out and about to enjoy activities that they feel they would not do alone. Typical trips may include enjoying a cup of coffee/tea at a café, going for a walk, going to the cinema, joining in sports activities, or it may simply be visiting someone in their home, having a chat...in other words, being a good companion.

The Blide Trust has a part-time Co-Ordinator.

We are open between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

The Befriending service is funded by Orkney Islands Council.

Our volunteer bendifenders

Our volunteers receive training to become a befriender. They all have a PVG check and have regular supervision's with the Befriender Co-Ordinator of The Blide Trust.

The Matching Process

The Co-Ordinator will carry out the matching process. The Co-Ordinator will arrange a visit and thereafter you will be added to the waiting list. Then we will look for a suitable befriender for you. This is not done on a first-served basis, this is done with due consideration to ensure we achieve a positive match.

This can sometimes take some time but please be assured that we have not forgotten about you and are working hard to find you the right match.

At the initial meeting the Co-Ordinator will introduce both parties to one another. Go through what you would like to get from the visits. You and the befriender will discuss and then decide how often you would like to meet and how long for e.g. weekly fortnightly how many hours etc. Once everyone is happy with the arrangements this will be finalized. The Co-Ordinator will carry out regular reviews with both befriender and befriender. The first review will be around 6 weeks after a match has been made and then every few months. This is to ensure that the match is going smoothly and that both befriender and befriender are still happy to continue the befriending service. If you need to speak to staff out with review times don't hesitate to contact our office 01856874874.

What Volunteer Befrienders **DO:**

Your befriender will visit on a regular basis.

During this time, they can:

- Spend an agreed amount of time with you.
- To engage in activities, you would not attend alone.
- Go to a café with you.
- Sit and chat or play a game.

What volunteer Befrienders **DO NOT DO:**

- Deal with any financial issues including handling cash, cheques, PIN numbers, bank statements etc.
- Read personal mail or deal with correspondence or become involved in any personal or private affairs.
- Carry out personal care including dealing with medication or prescriptions. Carry out household tasks for you.

Change of Personal Circumstances

Please let us know if you change address, telephone number or email address. Also, please notify us of changes to your emergency contact person.

Ending the Match

While we hope that the match is successful and works well, we appreciate that from time-to-time things may happen and that the service may have to stop. If there are any grievances or you are unhappy, or have concerns, please contact our office 01856874874 to discuss your options.

Our befriending service is voluntary, and both parties can end the agreement at any time. This may be due to a change in circumstances and have less time to spare. It might be that you no longer feel you need the service. There are several reasons why the befriending relationship might come to an end, and we ask that where possible, that both parties give as much notice possible.

Health and Safety

- The Blide Trust aims to provide a safe and healthy working environment. A home risk assessment will be carried out at the time of the home visit and findings discussed with you and the volunteer.
- **In Case of an Emergency**
- Contact will need to be made with the Blide Trust to speak to a member of staff 01856874874. If during a visit and you were in immediate danger, then your befriender would dial the emergency service first and then contact a staff member.
- **Car use**
- Some befrienders have cars and are willing to use them while volunteering. To ensure your safety this is covered with in the training.
- **Gifts or Borrowing**
- We request that neither you nor your relatives offer your befriender gifts or money as they will have to refuse and report the incident to the Co-Ordinator. It is not permissible for you and your befriender to borrow money from each other.

Confidentiality

Befrienders and Befriendees must maintain confidentiality during their time with befriending service and after if it is to come to an end for any reason. This means that all information about people we support, befrienders, Befriendees and Blide Trust employees and work must be kept private, unless sharing this information is required by law or an emergency situation.

Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, please in the first instance raise the matter with the Co-Ordinator. You can contact the Co-Ordinator by phone, in person, email or by writing. If the issue is unable to be resolved and you wish to lodge a formal complaint, please contact The Blide Trust to request a complaints form. Contacts are detailed below.

Any Questions or Suggestions?

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding befriending, please do not hesitate to contact us in person, by phone or in writing.

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