

# **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 Befriending Co-Ordinator, working Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

The Blide Trust is open:  
Between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday  
Between 11am and 4pm Saturday  
And between 11am and 2pm on a Sunday

The Befriending service is funded by Orkney Health and Care Partnership.

# What Volunteer Befrienders

## **DO:**

Your befriender will meet with you on a regular basis, either in your home or in the community

During this time, they can do things like:

- Spend an agreed amount of time with you.
- Help 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.

## **Our volunteer befrienders**

Our volunteers receive training to become a befriender. They all have a PVG check and have regular supervision meetings with the Befriending 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-come 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 and support you both to decide 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 finalised.

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 after this. 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 on 01856874874.

# **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**

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 one party has 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.

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 on 01856874874 to discuss your options.

## **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 or the befriender 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 within the Befriender 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 as well as after if it comes 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.

**Orkney Blide Trust**  
**54 Victoria Street**  
**Kirkwall**  
**Orkney**  
**KW15 1DN**  
**01856 874874**  
**[admin@blidetrust.org](mailto:admin@blidetrust.org)**