



Disability Nottinghamshire Volunteer Befriender Role Description

Our Mission Statement

Disability Nottinghamshire promotes the independence and choice of all persons with disabilities and impairments within the Nottinghamshire County Council area (excluding Nottingham City). We provide free, confidential, and impartial information, advice, and advocacy in respect of any aspect of disability to people with disabilities and impairments, their careers, friends, and families as well as professionals and students. Our service is provided by people who either have a disability or personal experience of disability.

We aim to increase understanding by shared knowledge, raise awareness of the challenges facing disabled people and/or their carers and influence decision makers to develop services based on needs.

Role title

Volunteer Befriender

Hours of volunteering

- Expectation to conduct at least one phone call a week, at a length subject to volunteer and befriender needs, on average 15 to 45 minutes.
- Expectation to attend once a month supervision session with fellow volunteers and Volunteer Coordinator.
- Minimum 3-month commitment to volunteering.

Responsible to

Volunteer and Friendship Coordinator and the Board of Trustee Directors.

General description

Our befriending service is designed to provide individuals with companionship and support through one-to-one social interaction over the telephone.

Volunteer Befrienders will work to alleviate isolation amongst the community we represent by:

- Providing service users with companionship, social interaction, and the support they have identified to enable them to participate in community life.
- To be a caring listener for people who may not have others they feel comfortable talking to.
- Conducting phone calls with aim of addressing social isolation and reducing loneliness.

The Volunteer Befriender role will be supported by the Volunteer and Friendship Coordinator, who will provide training, support and supervision.

Key tasks and responsibilities

- Provide support via telephone.
- Signpost where applicable.
- Contribute to the development of the service.
- Maintain accurate records and statistics.
- Act as an effective team member by working co-operatively and promoting mutual respect among all colleagues.
- Participate in training and development as required.
- To understand and promote Disability Nottinghamshire's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Comply with health and safety regulations.
- Ensure that all work is carried in accordance with relevant legislation and Disability Nottinghamshire's policies and procedures.

Person specification

Skills or experience in the following are essential:

- Good communication / listening skills.
- Empathy and compassion.
- Understanding and respect of confidentiality.

Skills or experience in the following would be desirable:

- Awareness of disability issues.
- Knowledge and commitment of the social model of disability.
- An understanding and commitment to equality and diversity and to the aims and principles of Disability Nottinghamshire.
- Ability to give and receive feedback objectively and sensitively.
- Ability and willingness to work independently and as part of a team.
- Self-motivated.

No previous volunteering experience is required, we will provide full training, mentoring and regular support.

Why volunteer?

Befriending support can:

- Lower rates of depression.
- Improve social skills.
- Reduce social isolation.
- Improve self-management.
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Reduce vulnerability and risk of abuse.
- Build sense of purpose.

These are just some of the benefits of having a befriending relationship and some of these positive outcomes are not just the benefit of the service user.

Studies show that volunteers receive these many positive benefits as well. For example, you may enjoy knowing you are making a positive difference in someone's life, whilst improving your own social skills and growing your confidence.

You will receive training on:

- Communication and listening skills
- Confidentiality and safeguarding
- Equality and diversity

Further opportunities for specialised training will be offered such as dementia awareness training.

Expenses provided.

What to expect? Application process, Training and Matching

All volunteers who express an interest are contacted for an informal introductory chat, either in person or over the phone, and asked to complete an application form. Following these two references are required. Upon receipt of references a follow up interview is arranged and depending on the role training is arranged.

Befrienders are required to attend two half day training sessions in preparation for the role.

Upon successful application and completion of training, befrienders will begin a matching process based on interests and availability with a service user.

This whole process can take up to 2 months.