

VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND - SHETLAND BEFRIENDING SCHEME

ACCESS TO THE PROJECT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, ADULTS AND 60+ ADULTS

Access to the Scheme for 7 to 15 Years section

Referral Procedure

The Scheme is currently offering befriending to a particular target group. The client criteria is as follows:

- Young persons aged 7 – 15 years of age
- Where external factors, (such as the family home, peers or substance use), are having a detrimental and negative impact on their ability to reach their full potential
- Who have been involved in anti-social behavioural issues
- Who have significant social and emotional issues and difficulties in forming and maintaining positive relationships/friendships with other adults and their peers
- Who lack consistent positive adult role models and who would benefit from regular contact with an adult befriender

Referrals will be accepted from Shetland Children's Panel, Shetland Islands Council department of Social Work and Education and any other appropriate agencies.

Any young person who fits this criteria is eligible for befriending.

Information from Referring Agencies

The Scheme requires the information asked for in the referral form and may contact either the referral agent or the family direct if further information is required before a match can be considered. All information provided in the referral form will be shared with the volunteer.

Contact with Referral Agencies within the Befriending Process

It is extremely important for the befriending scheme to establish good working relationships with the referral agencies.

It is important for referral agencies to understand:

- That young person's should choose to get involved in befriending
- That befriending is a form of complementary support
- The role of the befriender and the limitations of this role
- The need for the continued involvement of the referring agency

Referral Agencies will be responsible to be involved in:

- Discussion of the matching process
- Meeting with the potential matching befriender should it be necessary
- Being present at first meetings between befriender and young person should it be necessary
- Being involved in the monitoring process of the befriending relationship
- Supporting the befriending relationship
- The evaluation of the befriending relationship and scheme
- Maintaining contact and providing information and support to the scheme and it's befriending relationships as necessary

Procedure to refer for 7 – 15 Years

1. Referral Agent has an initial interest in referring a young person to the Scheme
2. The Referral Agent discusses with the young person and their parents/guardians about the scheme, giving out relevant information leaflets
3. Referral Agent telephones the scheme staff to informally discuss in order to ensure the referral would be appropriate. Staff member completes an initial contact sheet based on the information shared and decision made

4. If the referral is appropriate, the scheme staff will send out a referral form and a user profile for young persons. All referral forms and user profiles are pre-coded to ensure they are not duplicated
5. The Referral Agent fills in the referral form only after they have obtained **consent** from both the young person and their parents/guardians. This is extremely important because if consent has not been obtained from both parties the befriending will not work
6. The user profile for the young person is to be filled in. The young person can either take it home to fill in or at the school with the help from their parents/guardians or teacher, wherever necessary. The information on this sheet will be shown to volunteers through the process of matching. Volunteers will be given a similar user profile that will also be shown to the young person throughout the matching process
7. Referral form and user profile is sent to the scheme and the young person is accepted and placed on the matching list. Letters confirming this will be sent to the referring agent and the young person's parents/guardians. If further information is deemed necessary the scheme staff will contact the family/guardian and/or referral agent
8. Once the scheme has found a suitable volunteer, staff will contact the young person to discuss the match. If the young person is happy to proceed the referring agent will be contacted and updated. If all parties are happy the befriending can begin and all appropriate consent forms will be filled. If not, then a new search for another volunteer occurs until the scheme can find a match.
9. The first initial meeting will take place wherever the family feel comfortable. Scheme staff will bring the volunteer to meet the family and the young person they have been matched with. Arrangements will be made between the volunteer and young person about what they want to do in their first meeting and in future meetings
10. The monitoring of the match will continue throughout the life time of the match as stipulated the monitoring and evaluation policy

Access to the Scheme for 16+ Years and 60+ Years affected by Dementia

Referral Procedure – 16+ Adults

The scheme is open to all 16+ adults who meet the following criteria:

- Individuals aged 16+ years
- Who are currently living in their own home/tenancy*
- Who are having difficulty in being able to manage their own home and to live independently
- Who are lonely, significantly socially isolated and has very limited/no support or support networks around them
- Who would benefit from support to engage in their community in a purposeful capacity to increase their social connections and reduce their feelings of loneliness

**We presently only accept application from individuals who are currently living in their own home/tenancy. This means that service users must have tenancy responsibilities, e.g. being a tenant of a property, having responsibilities of the property paying rent/insurance/council tax/etc. or owning their own property*

Referral Procedure – 60+ Adults affected by Dementia

The Scheme is open to all 60+ adults who meet the following criteria:

- Adults aged 60+ years who are affected by Dementia
- Who are currently living in their own home
- Who are significantly socially isolated
- Who have very limited/no support around them
- Who may be experiencing a period of significant loss or change in their lives

Involvement in the scheme is entirely voluntary. We will only turn down a 16+/60+adult if we are unable to find a volunteer to match with them or where we feel that we are not able to keep the adult or a volunteer safe from harm or the risk of harm.

Applications will be accepted from agencies as well as directly from an individual.

Agencies who wish to refer must do so only where the individual is in agreement and is fully aware of the information that will be supplied in the application form.

An individual can approach the Befriending Scheme and staff will be happy to assist them to complete a form.

Once the application is received the Development Worker will make contact with the 16+/60+ adult to explore their needs and to assess suitability for the service.

The purpose of this meeting will be to:

- Enable the development worker, to begin to get to know the person
- Ensure that they understand what the scheme is able offer them
- Explore with them the things that are going on in their lives at that time which are having a positive or negative effect on them
- Identify the things they would like to achieve whilst they are part of the scheme
- Identify anything that might hinder the development of a good relationship with a volunteer
- Agree with them the issues of confidentiality and to confirm who the scheme can share information with

Procedure to refer or self-refer for 16+

1. Application received from individual or via referral from agency
2. Initial meeting with 16+
 - Review application form and current situation
 - Identify goals & needs
 - Establish boundaries of Scheme
 - Confirm our expectations of them
 - Complete Standard Consent Adults Form
 - Complete Sharing of Information Form
3. Development Worker to confirm with 16+ adult and referring agency/Power of Attorney (if appropriate) outcome of decision

4. Application is accepted. Development Worker to review any available volunteers for appropriate match or add 16+/60+ adult to waiting list. Where there is no appropriate match the Development worker will inform 16+/60+ adult
5. Match identified:
 - Initial discussion with volunteer to agree to progress
 - Discussion with 16+/60+ adult to seek agreement to progress and to reconfirm goals
 - Arrange matching meeting between volunteer and 16+/60+ adult
 - Update referral agent/POA on match started if appropriate
6. Review the match:
 - First contact after first meeting
 - 3 monthly contact with 16+/60+ adult thereafter
 - Formal Questionnaire completed to review goals every 6 months
7. Endings:
 - Support is offered to both parties at the ending process
 - Formal ending questionnaire completed to review progress on goals

Matching List Management – All Sections

The number of befriending matches that can be adequately supported by a member of staff depends on the level of available resources. From guidance via the Befriending Code of Practice a full-time member of staff with no project/management responsibility whom can dedicate all their time to their befriending case load can support a maximum of 30 matches (safe and competent practice) and a part-time member of staff (e.g. 20 hours), 20 matches (safe and competent practice).

The following table confirms the number of referrals each section can accept at any one time. Should demand exceed availability a waiting list to refer to the scheme will be initiated and monitored. Once a space becomes available on the matching list, either the referral agent or individual will be contacted to see if would like to continue with their referral. Referral agents and/or service users will be contacted on a 4 monthly basis about their position on the matching list and updated accordingly.

Sections	No of max referrals they can accept	No of max matches supported at any one time
Children and Young People at Risk – PT (14hrs)*	20	10
16+ Adults – PT (21hrs)*	20	15
60+ Adults affected by Dementia – PT (14hrs)*	20	10

*As of May 2024