



## The Opendoors Befriender

(A summary, see Befriending Handbook for more information)

### 1. The role of the Befriender is to

- a. Undertake essential training
- b. Meet, listen and chat to the Guest
- c. Adhere to the terms of the Pact agreed between them and witnessed by the Co-ordinator (see part 6 below)
- d. Accompany the Guest to formal meetings, when this is helpful
- e. Help the Guest to focus on and achieve targets that the Guest agreed with the professional from the agency they are engaged with
- f. Keep a log of decisions and actions taken with the Guest
- g. Attend supervision sessions with the Co-ordinator as required
- h. Adhere to Opendoors policies and procedures
- i. Maintain personal boundaries
- j. Agree 'neutral' locations at which to meet.

### 2. Characteristics of a good Befriender

- a. Caring nature
- b. Non-judgemental
- c. Respectful
- d. Good listening skills
- e. Reliable
- f. Flexible
- g. Good communication skills
- h. Able to maintain confidentiality
- i. Knowledge of issues affecting guests
- j. Can commit at least two hours a week

### 3. Recruitment, Selection and Appointment

- a. The applicant will be asked to write a short piece on, "What I would bring to the role of Befriender."
- b. The applicant should attend the 3 core training sessions (see part 5. Induction)
- c. The volunteer should then be interviewed for the role of Befriender and appointed if deemed suitable.
- d. This appointment is subject to a clear DBS disclosure and two references.
- e. The Befriender should sign a Befriender Agreement (Appendix A1)
- f. The appointed Befriender will be sent a letter confirming their role as an Opendoors Befriender.

#### **4. References and DBS disclosures**

- a. Taking up references is an important part of our risk management process.
- b. DBS checks must be carried out on all volunteers who become Befrienders.

#### **5. Induction**

- a. The 3 core training sessions are a valuable part of the induction of volunteers into the role of Befriender. These are designed to ensure that Befrienders develop a good understanding of the role.
- b. It is also important to cover the following areas:
  - Information about Opendoors aims, philosophy, ethos, services provided and why we involve volunteers.
  - Policies and Procedures - important to provide the Befriender with relevant policies and procedures and to review these with the Befriender.
  - Support and Supervision - the Befriender should report to the Co-ordinator.
  - Introduction to other staff members/volunteers - it is good for volunteers to meet with all staff and other volunteers involved.

#### **6. The Pact**

- a. This will be based on a model Pact and be drawn up by the Co-ordinator for Guest and Befriender to sign.
- b. It will be reviewed at a meeting of the Co-ordinator, Guest and Befriender 8 weeks after the initial meeting. The Befriender's written reports will be considered and plans for the next eight weeks agreed.
- c. It will be appropriate at some stage to end the Pact and an appropriate phrase about this can be added to the bottom of the Pact statement and signed by both Guest and Befriender.

#### **7. Support and Supervision**

Support and supervision of the Befriender are closely linked but are not the same. Support deals with the person while supervision deals with the task.

- a. Support is enabling the Befriender to deal with issues relevant to their role and their relationship with the Guest. It focuses on the needs of the Befriender.
- b. Supervision is about managing the task and assisting the volunteer in carrying this out, in line with the aims of Opendoors.
- c. The Befriender will complete a report form to keep the Co-ordinator informed about each meeting between Befriender and Guest. The Co-ordinator will feed-back comments and suggestions.
- d. One to one supervision between the Befriender and Co-ordinator will take place at least once every two months.

## **8. Boundaries and Lone Working**

- a. There is no doubt that the role of the Befriender can be a difficult and demanding one.
- b. Being clear about boundaries enables all those involved to understand what is to be expected from the role of Befriender and enables them to be empathetic and supportive without any misunderstandings arising.

## **9. The Trinks Scheme**

- a. Trinks stands for “Three Way Link” and refers to the 3-way working relationship between Guest, Befriender and a Key Worker of an agency the Guest is engaged with (Turning Point, Probation, etc)
- b. The way this works is described in Appendix B9 of the Befriending Handbook.