

Could you be a telephone befriender?

This is strictly a telephone befriending service – in no circumstances should you visit your clients.

In these times of uncertainty, can you help support some of our most vulnerable members of the community in your local area?

We are entering uncertain times and are looking for more people to support older or isolated people by offering their time to check-in on how people are by phone.

Would you like to make a difference to someone's week by offering a friendly call? We are looking for people who have excellent listening skills and enjoy a good old fashioned chat on the telephone. Are you able to commit to calling one, two or more people for up to a 40 minutes chat at least once a week, to see how they are doing, and to help reduce loneliness and feelings of isolation and reassure people in these difficult times? You will need to show respect, empathy, patience and understanding.

What is telephone befriending?

What telephone befriending is ...

- An informal, friendly chat on the telephone.
- Companionship to help overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation.
- A reliable person who cares and wants to help.
- Checking how people are feeling.
- Let a Volunteer Officer know when you think additional advice or guidance is needed.

What it is not ...

- A shopping or cleaning service.
- Providing any kind of personal or intimate care.
- A counselling service, health advice or hotline.
- Handling any monies, cash or banking.
- A replacement for professional social care.

Training & Safety

Before you start, you must familiarise yourself with our Safeguarding guidance and Data Protection. It's part of Lancashire Volunteering Partnership terms and conditions that all LVP volunteers agree to.

Safeguarding training will help you be aware of someone's wellbeing, and know how to report any concerns to a Volunteer Officers, so they can step in and arrange any additional professional or specialised help.

In light of the current situation you will be asked to complete an online DBS check. To do this we will require you to take part in a skype or WhatsApp video call.

Volunteer Officer

You will have a dedicated Volunteer Officer for your area, however you may be asked to call vulnerable people outside of your locality. They will help you get started support you regularly, and if you have any questions they are your first point of contact.

Who you are helping

We call the people we help in the community our 'clients'. They are vulnerable, at risk or lonely adults. Often, a befriending volunteer could be the only person they speak to that week, so you are making a huge difference to a lonely or isolated person. Thank you.

Your Volunteer Officer will give you the name of the vulnerable person you are helping, their telephone number and a suitable day and time to call.

Covering the cost of calls (expenses)

We appreciate your time and do not expect any volunteers to be out of pocket or worse off financially for wanting to help others.

If you have a mobile with inclusive minutes, if you're happy to use those minutes towards being a telephone befriender, we would be very grateful.

However, if you only have a landline or pay-as-you-go phone and telephone befriending is going to cost you extra money, please contact your Volunteer Officer to discuss this further.

Please note: We pay a flat rate of 18p per minute.

We process expenses in the last week of the month. Please ensure your email with photograph of your phone bill and minutes claimed is sent to us by the end of each month.

Personal information

We ask that you do not give out any personal information about yourself, especially not where you live or work, *etc.* Your telephone befriending phone calls are purely to give support to the vulnerable person. Please alert your Volunteer Officer to any potential situations where additional support maybe needed from professionals, *e.g.* if someone doesn't have enough food or drink in the house and urgently needs shopping.

Security - use 141 before making a call

Before dialling a client's phone number, put 141 before their number to ensure your personal phone number does not show up on the client's phone; thereby keeping your personal details secure. If you have any issues setting this up please contact your Volunteer Officer.

Frequently Asked Questions**What training do I need?**

You will be required to complete Safeguarding Adults and Prevent online training (if online learning is an issue, please let us know)

Who will I be matched with?

You will be matched with a vulnerable/isolated and/or older person who would benefit from a telephone call.

What if they need assistance that I cannot help with?

You would be required to pass any significant information on to your assigned Volunteer Officer who can then make necessary arrangements to offer assistance.

What if I am unable to make the call?

Please let your assigned Volunteer Officer know as soon as possible so we can pass the information on.



What if they do not answer the phone at the scheduled time?

Wait 10 minutes, call again and leave a message informing them of the time you will call back. If after this attempt, there is still no answer then please let your assigned Volunteer Officer know as soon as possible.

How long will it take to match me with someone?

As soon as you have completed all the mandatory documents, we would aim to match you with someone within 1-5 working days. Please note we are experiencing high demands from clients so this may take longer but we will discuss this with you when you apply.

How many people can I support?

We ask for support for a minimum of one person and there is no maximum; we are incredibly grateful for whatever time you can give and will match you with as many people in need of companionship as possible.