

Age UK Barnsley - Befriending Service

Referral Criteria

Within Age UK Barnsley's befriending service we endeavour to support the elderly within the borough of Barnsley who are lonely and isolated and who have limited or no support from others. Our referral criteria is listed below

We support

- Elderly clients of all walks of life who reside within the boundaries of the borough of Barnsley
- Clients who are 60+ years of age
- Clients who are experiencing loneliness and isolation
- Clients who have very limited or no support from others
- Clients whose support needs fall within our scope of experience

We usually do not support clients who;

- Who do not live within the boundaries of the borough of Barnsley
- Who are below the age of 60 (*please note all referrals are assessed on their own merit and as such there are occasions when **we will** work with younger clients if after assessment, it is established that their needs are similar to the needs of the elderly population and their support needs fall within our scope of experience*)
- Whom it is deemed following assessment that, their support needs are being met by others
- Whose support needs are such that they may put our staff & volunteers at risk for example those persons who display violent or abusive behaviour
- Whose support needs are deemed to be too complex for our staff & volunteers to support them safely or effectively (for example those persons who have severe problems with memory related illnesses)
- Clients with severe alcohol or drug issues and who are not on or who are not willing to commit to a programme of rehabilitation

Who we accept referrals from

- Social Services
- Health Agencies – GP's, Hospitals
- Police agencies
- Care providers
- Other support agencies both statutory and voluntary
- Self referral, from a client, friend or a family member

How to make a referral

Call Age UK Barnsley on 01226 776820 and ask to make a befriending referral

If possible provide an email address so that information about the services and a referral form can be sent and returned electronically

Referrals can be made over the phone, in these cases a staff member will take the referral by asking a series of questions, this usually takes around 10 minutes

Referrals can be made via fax on 01226 776823

What happens next?

- The referral form will be assessed and an initial assessment visit will be arranged
- At the initial assessment visit more information will be gathered and a full risk assessment will be undertaken.
- If a referral cannot be accepted for whatever reason the referrer will be told of this and a full written explanation given as to the reasons for refusal
- Once accepted the client will be placed on the waiting list and the referrer and/or client will be informed of the likely waiting times
- When a suitable volunteer is found and matched to a client, (*taking into account a number of factors such as similar hobbies, interests, manageable locations etc*) an introductory meeting will take place facilitated by the befriending manager within the client's home.
- At this meeting dates and times of visits will be agreed and a consent form will be signed by all three parties, the client, the befriender and AGE UK Barnsley
- After one month both the client and befriender will be contacted to assess how the relationship is evolving and to see if all is going well

Stella McDermott

Visiting and Befriending Manager – Age UK Barnsley