



Handbook



The purpose of this handbook is to bring together important information about Let's BeFriends – a charity in the Lancaster and Morecambe district which provides a befriending service to people who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless or recently rehoused after a period of homelessness



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Brief history of Let's BeFriends

Let's BeFriends is an organisation which was set up during the pandemic lockdown by members of the Lancaster Homeless Action Group who had lived experience. Whilst the Government's "Everyone In" campaign helped to bring homeless people in off the streets, our original Chair (Alex Campbell) and Treasurer (Dusty Thomas) identified a gap in service provision - namely that whilst gaining shelter was a great step towards ending a cycle of homelessness, the accommodation itself was not enough to address lack of community connection or alleviate the sense of isolation which often contributes to repeating cycles of homelessness.

In August 2020 an online meeting was held between Cllr Caroline Jackson from Lancaster City Council and representatives from Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission, The Well, Acorn, Oaktree House, Delphi Medical and the Pavilion - as a consequence a management committee was formed. This unpaid board continues to meet fortnightly to discuss issues and make decisions about Let's BeFriends.

The group came up with an idea to recruit, train and support people with lived experience of homelessness to befriend those who are currently homeless, about to become homeless or recently rehoused after a period of homeless. Homelessness is not only about those sleeping on the streets - it also encompasses sofa-surfing, staying in emergency accommodation (such as hostels or B&Bs) and those living in insecure, unsafe or inadequate accommodation.

The majority of our staff, volunteers and Trustees have lived experience of the pressures of homelessness, so everyone is valued for their unique worth and is passionate about recognising stigma, challenging discrimination and promoting resilience. Many of our volunteers have lived experience of homelessness and recovery, though this is not a prerequisite to becoming a befriender. The Management Committee decided that our volunteers should undertake an induction to offer training in Boundaries, Safeguarding and Confidentiality. It was also agreed that we would commission a partner organisation (Positive Futures) to provide training in Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention. The first round of 15 befrienders were recruited in September 2020.

Let's BeFriends was awarded Charitable Status in May 2022.



About homelessness and recovery

Individuals who are more at risk and exposed to the different types of pressures and constraints of homelessness and recovery can lose a lot more than just a roof over their head.

Even before individuals become homeless or go into recovery, they are often living on the edge of society, with few connections to family, friends, and the community.

Relationships with the rest of their family have often reached crisis point meaning they can no longer rely on them as a source of support.

Someone losing their home through relationship breakdown faces two of the most traumatic experiences life can offer. Along with a primary loss can come a range of secondary losses.

Friendships can be hard to make and difficult to sustain when forced to sleep on friends' sofas and floors, live in crowded or unsafe places, sleep on public transport or in cars and on the streets.

Add living in an unsettled and often hostile environment with the constant pressure that comes from experiencing poor physical/mental health, leaving prison/ care, domestic violence, poverty etc.

The pressure that is put on individuals is constant and strong. If the pressure builds up, individuals can be pushed into homelessness. We can relieve the pressure by providing the support they need.

Homelessness is a violation of moral human rights. Everyone, without exception, has a right to an adequate standard of living. Housing is part of this and will remain so even after the pandemic is contained.

Public health is one reason to do this, but basic humanity is most important. If governments can suddenly find housing now in a pandemic they can do so more permanently in the future.



There is no time like now to build the connections between us as human beings and the moral rights we share. Communities are interconnected and interdependent. What affects one of us, affects us all.

It is hard to overstate how much good human connection does for our health and wellbeing - connecting helps us to be happier, feel more vital and have more meaning in our lives: to thrive rather than survive.

We stand to benefit tremendously yet our connection seems more tenuous than ever today. There are individuals who are cut off from the support of family and friends which many people take for granted.

Paid workers may strive to fill the gap, but there is a limit to what they can achieve. Individuals may also prefer to receive at least some of their support from someone who is giving up their time voluntarily.

The fact a befriender chooses to spend time with them, rather than being under a professional or family obligation to do so is respected and valued significantly by the beneficiary.

Befriending can form part of the support package that individuals need to help them find and keep a settled home. It can complement and enhance rather than replace any paid support.

Acting as a bridge to a world of companionship and social interaction, it can help individuals begin to build a network to support themselves through the process of resettlement and recovery in the community.

Let's BeFriends is driven by the value of human connection and collective responsibility for action, one that focuses on the moral human rights we share and the connection between us all.

Let's support each other.

Let's BeFriends.





What do befrienders do?

'Friendship is a private, mutual relationship. Befriending is a service.' (Source: Code of Practice, Befriending Network Scotland).

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations describe befriending as 'a voluntary, mutually beneficial and purposeful relationship in which an individual gives time to support another to enable them to improve their quality of life'.

Befriending is not a paid role, although out of pocket expenses are covered. The volunteers are given an accurate description of their role, good quality training, and access to ongoing support and supervision.

Befrienders do not necessarily come from the same background or have had the same experiences as their beneficiary, although they might do. They give the gift of their time to the organisation and feel that they can offer support and help to individuals in their local community.

Typically, befriending meetings take place every week and last for an agreed amount of time. What happens at each meeting will depend on the befriender and the beneficiary but activities could include a walk, support to attend an appointment (for example at a Citizens Advice Bureau) or simply a coffee and a chat.

What a befriender offers:

- companionship and support
- help with linking into local activities, e.g., libraries and community events
- company and support in attending appointments e.g., medical
- help in dealing with the local services e.g., housing, benefits
- support with independent living skills, e.g., managing a household budget and cooking skills
- help in setting personal goals or objectives and working towards them

It is up to the beneficiary to decide whether they want to set themselves goals that they need help in reaching. Personal goals might range from accessing local services to attending appointments. Equally, the beneficiary may simply just want someone to talk to.



The benefits of volunteering

There are many reasons why people volunteer. Life satisfaction is one of the most common motivations. There is a strong correlation between volunteering, health and well-being. Other common reasons include:

- Develop and grow self-esteem and self-worth
- Contribute to crisis, building community resilience
- Gain work experience and gather new skills
- A pathway to education, training and employment
- Opportunities to develop friends and social networks
- An opportunity to 'give back' to the community

Sources: UK Civil Society Almanac 2020 & Lancashire JSNA.

Volunteering has the potential for improving the quality of life - in 2020 Harvard School of Public Health noted that:

- Volunteers are more likely to be healthier and sleep better
- Volunteers are happier compared to those who do no unpaid work
- Volunteers feel less stressed and have better overall mental health compared to non-volunteers
- Volunteering is linked to a natural 'high' a powerful physical and emotional feeling experienced when directly helping others
- Volunteers experience improved emotional health by feeling more connected and useful and improved physical health by being more active
- Altruistic emotions and behaviours are associated with greater well-being, health and longevity
- The experience of helping others provides meaning, a sense of self-worth, a social role and health enhancement



Our principles

We have a key set of principles that underpin our befriending service.

These are:

- Lancaster and Morecambe are diverse communities and through our service, we embrace the uniqueness that every individual brings
- The right of the individual to choose what they would like to give and receive from the service
- Accept individuals the way they are, not the way we might want them to be
- To create and nurture relationships that are independent and fulfilling, free of expectation and judgement
- The right of the individual to choose their own path and set their own aspirations no matter how small or large these may be
- To embrace a positive outlook recognizing that everyone is an equal and has something of value to offer



Our outcomes

We monitor and track progress against two clear outcomes. At the end of the befriending relationship and as a result of the companionship and support provided by the befriender, the beneficiary will experience the following:

Outcome 1: Improvement in overall health and well-being

Outcome 2: Reduction in feelings of isolation and loneliness

The befriender will:

- Plan and attend weekly meetings with the beneficiary
- Share interests, knowledge, skills and experiences with the beneficiary
- Help the beneficiary to identify their needs and aspirations
- Support the beneficiary in responding to their needs and aspirations
- Encourage the beneficiary to become more independent and active

And Let's BeFriends will:

- Establish a database of service provision to support the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries
- Raise any gaps in service provision to support the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries with the Management Committee and our partners
- Ensure there is qualitative and quantitative information to demonstrate the effectiveness and benefits of befriending
- Provide a toolkit which befrienders can refer to in order to navigate avenues of support available to beneficiaries

Outcomes can be measured from the perspective of both beneficiary and befriender given that each party can benefit from the befriending relationship.

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

As a volunteer you have a number of rights and responsibilities:

AS A VOLUNTEER YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO	AS A VOLUNTEER YOU NEED TO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receive accurate information about the organisation ● Receive a clearly written role description ● Information about what you can and cannot do, including who to report to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) check ● Carry out duties specified in the role description ● Be committed to the role and organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receive training when you start in your role and on an ongoing basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attend the training offered to you
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be treated as part of the organisation and included in meetings and social events ● Be valued as an individual and supported in your role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be reliable ● Be trustworthy ● Avoid overextending yourself and committing to too many things
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be provided with safe working conditions ● Be covered by insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow all health and safety directions and report any risks to an appropriate member of staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have your personal information kept safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect the confidentiality of others in the organisation



Let's BeFriends Befriender role and rewards

We value each and every individual and so anyone who applies to become a befriender will be treated as an individual and will be assessed as such. We do not discriminate in terms of background, lifestyle, age, race, gender, sexuality, and disability. Let's BeFriends Volunteers must:

- Be aged 18 years and over
- Live in easy access to Lancaster and Morecambe
- Be able to offer a minimum of three hours per week
- Be able to plan and attend social outings
- Actively want a befriending relationship
- Be willing to accompany service users to appointments which encourage participation in /access to improved health and social care
- Adhere to safeguarding, anti-discriminatory practice and boundaries as outlined in the LBF handbook
- Complete contact hours and send contact form to the Project Coordinator by the last day of every month
- Complete expense claim forms and send to the Project Coordinator by the last day of every month
- Treat everybody with kindness, compassion and acceptance

In return we offer our befrienders:

- The opportunity to make a real difference to those experiencing the pressures of homelessness / recovery in Lancaster and Morecambe
- The opportunity to develop social networks within the community
- The opportunity to work with statutory and third sector agencies
- Access to flow charts in our volunteer toolkit which help to tackle common situations
- Ongoing support opportunities and certificated training including mental health, suicide awareness and safeguarding
- For every hour volunteered, befrienders receive a Tempo Time Credit which can be spent at places like leisure centres / museums
- 1-on-1 support and supervision sessions
- A DBS certificate (financed by LBF as long as befriender commit to volunteering with the organisation for at least three months)
- A reference for job applications (after three months of volunteering)



The Befriender Role	
Responsible to the Project Co-ordinator	
Main duties and responsibilities	Main skills and experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide companionship and support to the befriender that improves trust, confidence and independence • Develop a healthy befriending relationship that respects confidentiality and boundaries • Assist the befriender to participate in daily life and access the services needed • Be reliable and consistent planning and meeting the befriender at agreed times and locations • Maintain a position of trust and safety by following all of the policies & procedures in the handbook • Support the project with regular information sharing and updates, making the most of training and support opportunities • Respect the work of the project and partner organisations, not bringing it or anyone into disrepute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and/ or lived experience of the different pressures and constraints of homelessness and recovery • Genuine, honest, and non-judgemental • Empathetic with good listening skills • A good communicator who is mindful not to impose personal views, values, and opinions • Approachable with a positive attitude • Able to form positive and supportive relationships with others • Self-aware with a good awareness of how situations may affect you and others • Ready and willing to attend training and receive support as required • Able to treat individuals as unique with kindness, patience and respect • Good at responding to challenging situations in a calm, confident and straightforward manner

Source: Let's BeFriends Recruitment, Training & Support Policy

There are other volunteer roles available and we are particularly interested in hearing from anyone who wants to assist us in any way - for example with:

- Helping volunteers with literacy issues to read and complete forms
- Assisting volunteers who struggle with computers to improve IT skills
- Fundraising
- Van driver

The befriending relationship

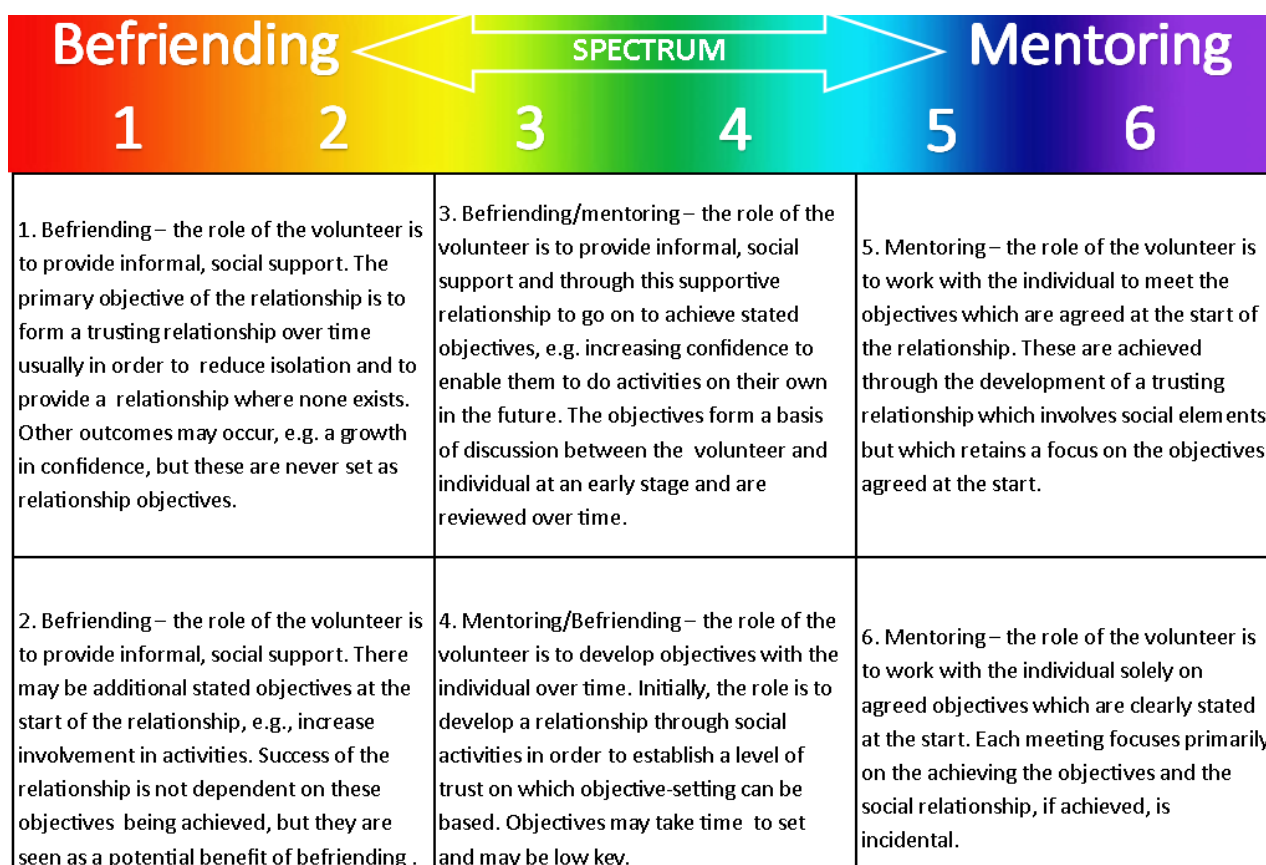
The purpose of the befriending relationship is companionship and support. In choosing to become a befriender and beneficiary, both parties are making a commitment to follow the confidentiality, safeguarding and code of conduct boundaries of the relationship that are non-negotiable.

Befriending spectrum

We ask befrienders to be honest about who they would feel comfortable being matched with - this can include consideration of shared hobbies and interests but we also want prospective volunteers to reflect on the level of support they feel competent to offer. This is particularly important as beneficiaries of our service have varying levels of need.

For example, a **low need** match might involve the befriender focusing on decreasing isolation, where the befriending relationship might mostly involve going for walks and meeting for coffee; a **medium need** match could involve these activities but might also include helping someone to sustain tenancy, for example by offering support to engage with agencies like Citizen’s Advice to obtain a Debt Relief Order or helping a beneficiary to gather the necessary evidence to support with a Discretionary Housing Payment to top up their rent. A **complex need** match could involve these activities but might also include helping someone to access support from agencies who assist people struggling with issues such as poor mental health, addiction, domestic violence and/or street homelessness.

Some beneficiaries have a clear idea of the outcomes they want and how they want to get there, others aren’t happy and want this to change but don’t have a clear picture of how this will come about. All beneficiaries accessing the service would like someone to walk alongside them in their journey. You might find it useful to reflect on the spectrum below:





The Let's BeFriends (LBF) service

Let's BeFriends is a befriending service which offers companionship and social support to individuals more at risk and exposed to the different types of pressures of homelessness and recovery.

Many of our beneficiaries have complex needs and low confidence so our befrienders support them to find and maintain accommodation and enable them to build social connections and participate in their local community. We recognise that recovery journeys can vary and take time so our service offers flexibility of support for as long as it is needed. Our volunteer befriending service does not replace paid support, rather it complements and enhances any package of support offered by statutory services.

We are based in Lancaster and Morecambe but we do not have an office base: much of our befriending takes place outside and sometimes we may be gifted a room inside one of our partners' venues.

Our volunteer befrienders are given appropriate training to create and nurture supportive relationships with vulnerable individuals. All Let's BeFriends volunteers need to complete an application form, a half-day induction training, undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and obtain a Safeguarding Level 1 certificate before they can be matched with a beneficiary who requires our service. We understand that some of our volunteers struggle with literacy and IT skills and staff are on hand to offer support with any aspect of the induction process.

Once the befriender has completed the induction process the Project Coordinator will look to match them with a beneficiary who has similar interests in order to find the best possible match.

Introductory Meeting

Once a suitable match has been found the Project Coordinator sets up and facilitates an introductory meeting attended by the befriender, the beneficiary and their referrer (if applicable); this gives both parties a chance to find out



more about each other, discuss boundaries and decide if they would like to commence a befriending relationship.

At the Introductory meeting the Coordinator will review the information provided on the referral form, noting any additions, omissions or amendments. Information will be gathered in order to formulate a Support Plan to confirm progress and document outstanding actions with regards to the following areas:

- Home
- Benefits
- Health and Wellbeing
- Positive Activity

If both the befriender and beneficiary are happy to proceed then they agree on how often they will meet: this is likely to be once a week for an agreed number of hours and only at a time and place where both parties feel safe.

Meetings may take place in parks, libraries, community centres and cafes. A befriender may only go into the home of the beneficiary when all parties including the Project Coordinator are satisfied it is completely safe to do so.

Befrienders are advised never to give the beneficiary their address or invite them into their home. This is to ensure space and privacy for the befriender and to make sure boundaries are respected.

A staff member will be available throughout the course of the befriending relationship to provide ongoing supervision and support to volunteers needing to discuss difficult feelings or seek advice on how to proceed with issues. We also have a peer support chat group and host monthly peer support meetings.

At the start of the befriending relationship it is understood that there will be an agreed ending - no-one should feel abandoned and successful relationships often finish naturally when individuals are ready to move on.

If at any point either party wishes to change or end the befriending relationship then a Coordinator is available to discuss any issues, act as an advocate or help bring unfruitful befriending relationships to a conclusion.



Let's BeFriends non-negotiable boundaries

At the start of each and every befriending relationship, the beneficiary and the befriender are asked by the to sign an agreement saying they understand and agree to comply with the non-negotiable boundaries.

Confidentiality is one of the non-negotiable boundaries of the befriending relationship in which both parties make a commitment to comply.

It is not acceptable for befrienders to share personal information about the beneficiary and what happens in the course of the befriending relationship with anyone (i.e., family, friends) other than the LBF Coordinators or their line manager. All information shared must be relevant and necessary to the progress of the befriending relationship and the safety and well-being of both parties.

Whilst both parties agree that most shared information will stay within the confines of the befriending relationship, our safeguarding policy sets out that if a disclosure is made which indicates that either the beneficiary or someone else is at serious risk of harm (from self or others) then the befriender must share this with the Project Coordinator or their line manager as we have a duty of care to keep everyone safe.

The health and safety policy requires that befrienders must inform a Coordinator or their line manager about any information regarding contagious and infectious conditions including Covid-19 that may put the health and safety of others at risk.

It is not acceptable for befrienders to withhold any information which if disclosed could prevent risk of harm, even if a request to conceal the information is made by the individual concerned.

Source: LBF policies on confidentiality, safeguarding, health & safety policies

What follows is a copy of the Let's BeFriends befriending agreement which both parties must understand and agree to before contact details are exchanged and the relationship can commence:



Let's BeFriends Befriending Agreement

WE AGREE TO ADHERE TO THESE NON-NEGOTIABLE BOUNDARIES	
CONFIDENTIALITY	<p>Do not share personal information learned during the course of the befriending relationship without permission</p> <p>Only share information that you are comfortable sharing – trust takes time and needs to be earned</p>
SAFEGUARDING	<p>Do not ignore signs of risk and abuse – report any concerns to the Project Coordinator. If the Project Coordinator is unavailable, alert a member of the Management Committee</p> <p>Only meet in places where you feel safe and at times when you feel safe</p> <p>Verbal and physical abuse is not permitted and will lead to the immediate end of the befriending relationship</p> <p>Avoid physical displays of affection such as hugging or kissing</p>
CODE OF CONDUCT	<p>Do not lend, give, accept or borrow anything from each other such as money or gifts</p> <p>Do not use or be under the excessive influence of drugs or alcohol in each other's presence</p> <p>Respect boundaries and do not use pressure – contact the Project Coordinator if you wish to change or end the befriending relationship</p>

Breaches of the agreement must be reported to a member of staff. Active and regular monitoring of the agreement is completed by LBF Coordinators and where necessary will be elevated to the management committee.

Other boundaries

Boundaries are important, especially in roles where a bond is likely to be formed over time. They help to give the befriending relationship structure and protect the individuals from crossing any lines.

Clear and relevant boundaries are vital, particularly in relationships involving individuals that are at risk and vulnerable. The befriending relationship is one-way. The befriender supports the needs of the beneficiary, not vice versa.

Boundaries are the limits and rules we set ourselves within relationships. An individual with healthy boundaries can say ‘no’ to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening up and sharing where appropriate.

Individuals who always keep others at a distance (whether emotionally, physically, or otherwise) are said to have rigid boundaries. Alternatively, someone who tends to get too close and involved has porous boundaries.

Common traits of rigid, porous, and healthy boundaries.		
Rigid Boundaries	Porous Boundaries	Healthy Boundaries
Avoids intimacy and close relationships. Unlikely to ask for help. Has few close relationships. Very protective of personal information. May seem detached, even with romantic partners. Keeps others at a distance to avoid the possibility of rejection.	Overshares personal information. Difficulty saying “no” to the requests of others. Overinvolved with others’ problems. Dependent on the opinions of others. Accepting of abuse or disrespect. Fears rejection if they do not comply with others.	Values own opinions. Doesn’t compromise values for others. Shares personal information in an appropriate way (does not over or under share). Knows personal wants and needs, and can communicate them. Accepting when others say “no” to them.

Most people have a mix of different boundary types. For example, someone could have healthy boundaries at work, porous boundaries in relationships and a mix of all three types within their family.



The appropriateness of boundaries depends heavily on the setting. Conversations that are appropriate with friends might not be appropriate to have when you are at work or befriending.

Some cultures have very different expectations when it comes to boundaries. For example, in some cultures it is considered inappropriate to express emotions publicly. In other cultures, emotional expression is encouraged.

Some types of personal boundaries:

Physical boundaries refer to personal space and physical touch. Healthy physical boundaries include an awareness of what's appropriate and what's not, in various settings and types of relationships. Physical boundaries can feel violated when someone touches you when you don't want them to (i.e. a platonic hug offered out of kindness to someone who doesn't like physical contact can make both parties feel very uncomfortable). This also applies to invasions of personal space (for example if someone were to rummage through your bedside cabinet without being given permission to do so).

Intellectual boundaries refer to thoughts and ideas. Healthy intellectual boundaries include respect for others' ideas, and an awareness of appropriate discussion (i.e. when to talk about the weather, when to talk about politics etc.) Intellectual boundaries are violated when someone dismisses or belittles another person's thoughts or ideas.

Emotional boundaries refer to a person's feelings. Healthy emotional boundaries include limitations on when to share and when not to share personal information. For example, gradually sharing personal information as a befriending relationship develops, as opposed to revealing everything to everyone. Emotional boundaries are violated when someone criticises, belittles or invalidates another person's feelings.

Material boundaries refer to money and possessions. Healthy material boundaries involve setting limits on what you will share and with whom. For example, it might be appropriate to lend a car to a close family member, but probably not to someone you just met this morning. Material boundaries are violated when someone steals or damages another person's possessions, or when someone feels pressured to give or lend out their possessions.

Time boundaries refer to how a person uses their time. To have healthy time boundaries a person must set aside enough time for each facet of their life such as work, relationships and hobbies. Time boundaries are violated when another person demands too much of another person's time.

The principles of healthy boundary setting

The easiest way to understand a boundary is a property line. We have all seen the 'No trespassing' sign. Used to send a clear message there is a boundary in place and if you violate that boundary, there is likely to be a consequence.

8 Basic Principles of Healthy Boundary Setting

1. **Good, Decent People Set Boundaries.** Establishing boundaries makes you a safe person. People know where they stand with you. Boundaries are the way we take care of ourselves. We have both a right and a duty to protect and defend ourselves.
2. **Generous People Set Boundaries.** If you don't set boundaries you are giving yourself away. With boundaries you only give what you want which means you can afford to be generous to more people over a longer period of time.
3. **Boundaries Allow Others to Grow.** Because it makes others conscious of their behavior thus allowing them to change.
4. **Boundaries Allow You To Get More of What You Want, and Less of What You Don't.** Boundaries not only protect you from unwanted behavior, they also foster the behavior that you want.
5. **Effective People Set Boundaries.** Because doing so keeps you in control of your time and efforts which makes you feel better about yourself. This leads to your being more effective.
6. **Stick to Your Guns.** In order for boundary setting to work for you, you must develop a commitment to uphold what is right and true for you. You must act consistently in upholding your boundaries.
7. **Practice Makes Perfect.** If this is not familiar behavior it will feel awkward and unnatural at first, but anything worth doing is worth doing badly at first. People may not like it at first that's natural they are used to getting their own way with you.
8. **Keep It Up.** With practice you will get more skillful and graceful.



Healthy boundaries help to define where one individual ends and the other individual begins. Used to determine what type of communication, behaviour and interaction are acceptable and what is not.

It is important to remember we are not responsible for how an individual might react to the healthy boundaries that we set in a relationship with them.



We are only responsible for communicating our boundaries in a clear, consistent and courteous way.

Some individuals, especially those accustomed to controlling, abusing or manipulating behaviours might find it hard to accept the boundaries we set in a relationship with them: in these cases it is important to honour your own needs and remain firm. Below are some examples of what we might say:

Tips for stating clear consequences

Befrienders might find it useful to consider the following phrases when responding to challenging comments or uncomfortable requests:

- “It’s not OK with me that you are making comments about my weight. Please stop. If you don’t stop I won’t feel able to continue our conversation”
- “I can see how you would value my accompanying you to the show but I’m sorry that I’m not available in the evenings”
- “Remember that befrienders cannot lend any money, but I can speak to one of the Coordinators to see if they know of any funds we can help you apply to”
- “I know we normally meet on Tuesdays but next week I have to support a family member at a medical appointment on Tuesday so I’m sorry that I won’t be able to attend then”
- “If you continue to break arrangements by not showing up or calling me I will be honest with you about how this makes me feel let down and reticent to make any further appointments with you”
- “I don’t like it when people shout. If you carry on yelling I will end the meeting”
- “I have a policy of not making snap decisions. I need time to think and reflect on what I want to do before I give you an answer”
- “If you continue with this..... (state offensive behaviour) I will have to leave”
- “If you repeat these behaviours I will speak with the Project Coordinator and say that I wish to end this befriending relationship”



- “If you continue to put pressure on me I will see this as a breach of the non-negotiable boundaries contract which we both signed at the start of the befriending relationship and will have to stop being your befriender”

Source: Let's BeFriends Volunteer Befriender Induction Training

Endings

Whilst the befriending offered by Let's BeFriends is not time-limited, the befriending we offer is only intended to remain in place for as long as it is necessary for the beneficiary to feel supported by / able to access support within their own communities.

Sometimes however, the befriending relationship ends for other reasons - for example when a volunteer's personal circumstances change so they no longer have time to gift to Let's BeFriends, or perhaps a befriender and beneficiary who seemed well-matched on paper just don't gel in real life and one or other requests an end to the relationship. At other times the befriending relationship does not develop in the way we expect or wish - for example at the introductory meeting the beneficiary may seem ready and willing to engage in the befriending relationship but later (for whatever reason) they decide otherwise and the relationship ends before it has even begun - this can often leave the befriender feeling deflated or with unwarranted feelings that they might have done something wrong - in all of these cases a Coordinator will be on hand to help all parties steer their way through the endings process.

Ideally the befriending relationship flourishes, will bolster resilience and can conclude when identified outcomes have been met and the beneficiary no longer feels isolated. In these cases our service has helped to improve the beneficiary's knowledge of / familiarity with local provision to such an extent that they feel confident, integrated and enabled to engage with community groups and services without our support.

Once this happens, the volunteer and/or LBF Coordinator can seek to ascertain the beneficiary's feelings about bringing the befriending relationship to a close. If it is clear that the beneficiary no longer needs our support then a



Coordinator convenes an “Endings” meeting with the befriender and beneficiary.

There are other occasions when an “Endings” meeting is convened - for example if a volunteer needs to leave the service (e.g., due to work / health / other commitments) before the beneficiary feels ready for our support to withdraw. In this instance we endeavour to allocate a replacement befriender.

The “Endings” meeting will seek to confirm progress and document outstanding actions with regards to the following areas:

- Home
- Benefits
- Health and Wellbeing
- Positive Activity

If there are any outstanding actions but the beneficiary does not feel confident enough to disengage then we try our best to set up a new befriending relationship - the process of finding a suitable match can take time so the Coordinator has to manage expectations and can offer to make referrals into groups or organisations who can meet the beneficiary’s needs.

All outstanding actions are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART).

If there are outstanding actions but the beneficiary feels ready for our service to end then we signpost onto other groups or organisations who can meet given needs in any area.

The Endings meeting can provide an opportunity to recognise and celebrate all that has been achieved during the course of the befriending relationship - the befriender can help the beneficiary reflect on their progress and the beneficiary can give thanks for the befriender’s support. The Coordinator also asks for feedback which can be used to improve the service.

After the Endings meeting the befriender is free to support a new beneficiary, and as part of their continuing recovery journey the beneficiary may wish to train as a volunteer for Let’s BeFriends in order to use their own lived experience to befriend others.



Appendix

- **Let's BeFriends Volunteer Application Form**
- **How to access the mandatory Safeguarding Adults Level 1 online training**
- **Let's BeFriends Referral Form**
- **How to claim expenses**
- **How to complete Contact Sheets**
- **Let's BeFriends Policies List**



Let's BeFriends Volunteer Application Form



Let's BeFriends is a befriending agency for those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or recently rehoused. We are made up of befriender volunteers who offer companionship and social support such as: a walk, coffee, chat, help to get and stay in touch with services, company attending appointments.

Let's BeFriends will keep the information you share with us safe according to General Data Protection Regulation. We will not pass information to anyone outside the organisation without your consent.

Name	
Date of birth	
Address	
Contact number(s)	
Email address	

A little more about you

At Let's BeFriends we believe that the growth and wellbeing of our volunteers is as important as it is to the people we are befriending

Do you have lived experience of homelessness / the pressures of homelessness (i.e. addiction / poor mental health / debt etc.)? (Please tick relevant box – if you have personal lived experience, please write “personal” next to YES and if you have supported someone with lived experience, please write “secondary” next to YES)	
YES	NO

IF YOU HAVE TICKED YES:

Lived experience is valued, but Let's BeFriends volunteers are required to have six months post recovery from addiction / mental health crisis before we can match them someone to befriend.



Please can you tell us how long you have been in recovery and a bit more about your lived experience / recovery journey?

--

It helps with finding the correct match if we know a little bit about you. Please use the space below to tell us about any hobbies and interests

--

What would be your preferred match criteria?

	Please tick the relevant box which you think suits you best.
COMPLEX NEED: this could include active substance misuse/street homeless etc.	
MEDIUM NEED: this could include helping to sustain tenancy, help with bills etc.	
LOW NEED: This could include going for walks, coffee, cinema etc.	

Do you drive and have access to a car?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

We operate in the Lancaster and Morecambe district – please tick which areas you are happy to befriend someone in

Lancaster		Morecambe	
-----------	--	-----------	--

2



We ask our volunteers to commit to a minimum of three-hours. Please use this box to tell us which days and times you would be available to befriend

--

All our volunteers need to undergo a Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) check. Please use this box to tell us whether you have an existing DBS check – if you do, please let us know your DBS certificate number and whether you are registered with the DBS update service

--

Do you have access to a computer?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Do you need support with Information Technology?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

Next of kin / emergency contact

Name	
Address	
Contact number	

Signature		Date	
------------------	--	-------------	--

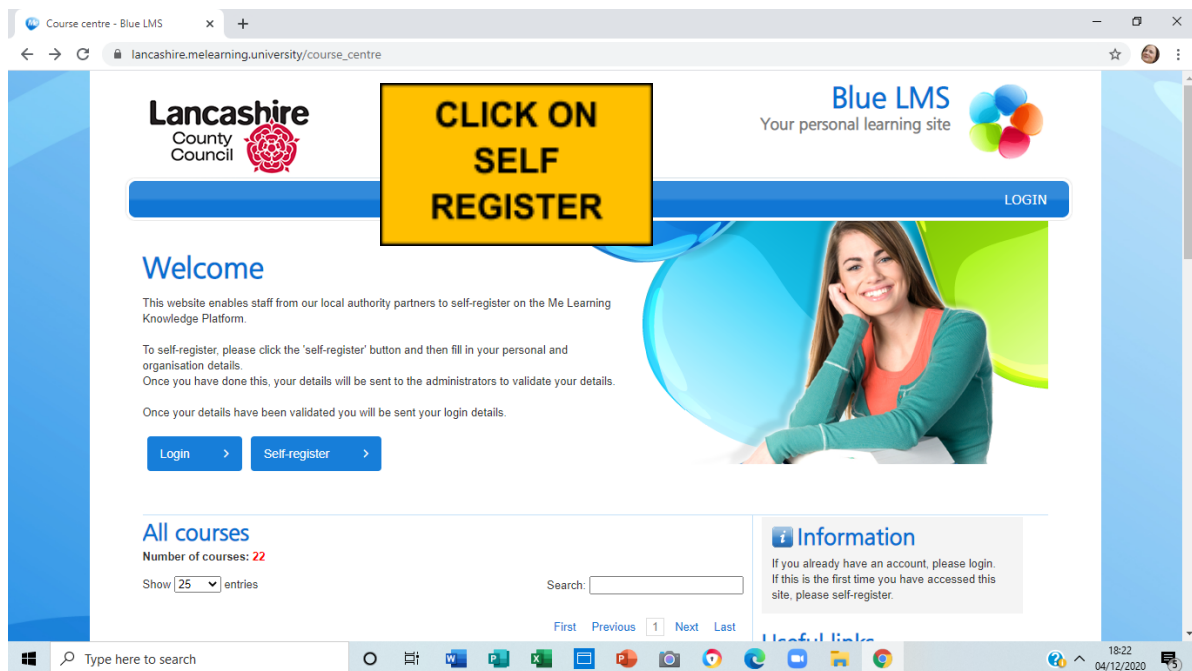
Please email your complete form to: lbflancastermorecambe@gmail.com or pass to a member of staff

Registered Charity Number 1199161

How to access the online Safeguarding Adults Level 1 (mandatory) & Mental Capacity Act (optional) training provided by Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB)

COPY & PASTE WEBSITE BELOW IN THE BROWSER

https://lancashire.melearning.university/course_centre



Lancashire County Council

Blue LMS
Your personal learning site

CLICK ON SELF REGISTER

LOGIN

Welcome

This website enables staff from our local authority partners to self-register on the Me Learning Knowledge Platform.

To self-register, please click the 'self-register' button and then fill in your personal and organisation details.
Once you have done this, your details will be sent to the administrators to validate your details.

Once your details have been validated you will be sent your login details.

[Login](#) [Self-register](#)

All courses

Number of courses: **22**

Show entries

Search:

First Previous 1 Next Last

Information

If you already have an account, please login.
If this is the first time you have accessed this site, please self-register.

18:22 04/12/2020



User Self Registration - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/self_register

User details

Please hover over the help icons for guidance on completing this form.

Username:

Title:

First name:

Last name:

Email address:

Confirm email address:

Mobile number:

Work number:

Name of employer:

Sector*:

Service*:

Group:
Admin
AT RASO
Carer
Childrens Support Worker
County Councillor

Photograph: No file chosen

Do you require the accessible version of the system? Yes No

Validation process

Registration will automatically be approved.

**COMPLETE BOXES WITH RED *
DON'T FORGET TO MAKE A
NOTE OF USERNAME**

**SELECT
SECTOR = PARTNER ORGAN
SERVICE = OTHER
GROUP = GENERIC**

**IGNORE
PHOTOGRAPH**

Type here to search

18:21 04/12/2020

Login - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/login

Login

Welcome to your personal learning site.

✔ Your account has successfully been set up. Please check your emails for your login details then login below with your username and password.

Please enter your login details

Username:

Password:

Useful links

- Check my computer specifications
- Me Learning website

Latest news

'Unacceptable' do not resuscitate orders made in first Covid wave and some may still be in place, says CQC

There is evidence that "unacceptable and inappropriate" do not attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation orders (DNACPRs) were made at the start of the pandemic and some may still be in place, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has warned. In an interim report..... Dec 04 2020

'Our profession must be much more inclusive to disabled people': a letter to the chief social workers

By Vikki Walton-Cole Today (3 December) marks the International Day of People with Disabilities and sits in the middle of UK Disability History Month (18 November

**CHECK YOUR EMAIL FOR
YOUR PASSWORD**

Type here to search

18:14 04/12/2020



Home - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/dashboard

Lancashire County Council

Blue LMS
Your personal learning site

Messages [1] My profile LOGOUT

CLICK ON COURSE LIBRARY

HOME COURSES HISTORY

Welcome Andrew

Welcome to your personal learning site.

Course library >

Introduction

The courses that you have been enrolled on will appear in the 'My courses' section below. Please complete these courses as soon as is practicably possible. There may be other courses available to you within the course library - which can be accessed via the Courses menu above.

My courses Show completed courses

Please complete the courses listed below.

System alerts

You have [1] unread message in your message inbox

Type here to search

18:15 04/12/2020

Course library - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/course_library

Care Act - Information and Advice	01 hours	Not enrolled	Details >
Care Act - Integration Cooperation and Partnerships	01 hours	Not enrolled	Details >
Care Act - Introduction and Overview	01 hours 30 minutes	Enrolled	Access Course >
Care Act - Personal Budgets	30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Care Act - Review of Care and Support Plans	30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Care Act - Safeguarding Duties and Responsibilities	30 minutes	Enrolled	Access Course >
Care Act - Transition to Adulthood	01 hours	Not enrolled	Details >
Information Governance	01 hours 30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Lancashire LLCS Child Exploitation Team Practice Manager	30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Lancashire LLCS Child Exploitation Team V3	30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Mental Capacity Act	01 hours 45 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Private Fostering	30 minutes	Not enrolled	Details >
Safeguarding Adults - Level 1 v2	2 hours	Not enrolled	Details >

CLICK ON SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

Type here to search

18:16 04/12/2020



Course library - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/course_library/course_details/65

Course library » Safeguarding Adults - Level 1 v2

[Share](#) [Print](#) [Add note](#) [Bookmark](#)

Introduction

The course will give you the skills and knowledge required to identify and respond to concerns, disclosures and allegations of abuse and substandard practice.

The course will also enable you to learn about prevention and proportionate interventions, and the dangers of risk adverse practice and the importance of upholding human rights.

This course complies with Level 1 Social Care and Levels 1 & 2 Healthcare.

Course rating: ★★★★★ 716 ratings

Enrolment details

Current status: Not enrolled

Options: [Enrol](#)

Refresher guides

The Refresher guide can be launched once you have been enrolled on the course.

Course documents

- What is Adult Safeguarding Refresher Guide
- What is Abuse and Neglect Refresher Guide
- Responding to Concerns Refresher Guide Part 1
- Responding to Concerns Refresher Guide Part 2
- Recognising Abuse and Neglect - Refresher Guide

Course flyer

Please click the link to download the course flyer.

[View flyer](#)

Course detail

Duration: 2 hours

The certificate will be awarded upon completion of the Level 1 & 2 feedback form.

Module name	Type	Duration	Status	Score
Modules				
What is Adult Safeguarding?	Online	00:20:00	Not started	--
What is Abuse and Neglect?	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--
Recognising Abuse and Neglect	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--
Responding to Concerns	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--
Evaluation (learning)				
Feedback (mandatory)	Evaluation	--	Not started	--

CLICK ON ENROL

My courses - Blue LMS

lancashire.melearning.university/user/multi_level/view/65

Introduction

The course will give you the skills and knowledge required to identify and respond to concerns, disclosures and allegations of abuse and substandard practice.

The course will also enable you to learn about prevention and proportionate interventions, and the dangers of risk adverse practice and the importance of upholding human rights.

This course complies with Level 1 Social Care and Levels 1 & 2 Healthcare.

Course rating: ★★★★★ 716 ratings

Enrolment details

Current status: Not started

Options: --

Refresher guides

Please click the links below to launch guide(s).

- What is Adult Safeguarding
- What is Abuse and Neglect
- Recognising Abuse and Neglect
- Responding to Concerns
- Responding to Concerns and Mental Health
- Safeguarding and Mental Health
- Safeguarding and Mental Health

Course documents

- What is Adult Safeguarding Refresher Guide
- What is Abuse and Neglect Refresher Guide
- Responding to Concerns Refresher Guide Part 1
- Responding to Concerns Refresher Guide Part 2
- Recognising Abuse and Neglect - Refresher Guide

Course flyer

Please click the link to download the course flyer.

Course detail

Duration: 2 hours

The certificate will be awarded upon completion of the Level 1 & 2 evaluation form.

Module name	Type	Duration	Status	Score	Option
Modules					
What is Adult Safeguarding?	Online	00:20:00	Not started	--	Launch
What is Abuse and Neglect?	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--	Launch
Recognising Abuse and Neglect	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--	Launch
Responding to Concerns	Online	00:30:00	Not started	--	Launch
Evaluation (learning)					
Feedback (mandatory)	Evaluation	--	Not started	--	--

CLICK ON LAUNCH TO COMPLETE EACH OF THE 4 X MODULES

YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE EVALUATION FORM BEFORE YOU GET YOUR CERTIFICATE

SEND A COPY OF YOUR COURSE CERTIFICATE TO THE PROJECT COORDINATOR

red charity number 1195

GO BACK TO THE COURSE LIBRARY & COMPLETE THE COURSE ON MENTAL CAPACITY ACT

How to claim expenses

	Reimbursable expenses
<p>Use of own transport</p> <p>Motor vehicle</p> <p>Motorcycle</p> <p>Bicycle</p>	<p>Mileage is paid in line with Lancashire County Council and the current rate is as follows:</p> <p>Motor vehicle 45p/p/m or 30p p/m after 100mile round trip Motorcycle 24p/pm Bicycle 12p/pm</p> <p>Mileage is calculated from postcode to postcode using the shortest route via Google Maps.</p> <p>Full reimbursement will be made for car parking charges where applicable. Appropriate receipts and car park tickets must be attached to a completed LBF expense form and submitted to the Project Co-ordinator at the end of each month.</p> <p>We do not reimburse parking fines or speeding tickets under any circumstances.</p> <p>Volunteers who choose to use their motor vehicle to carry out their befriending activities such as transporting a Beneficiary to appointments must contact their motor insurer to confirm their motor insurance covers them for befriending activities.</p>
Public transport	<p>Full reimbursement will be made for the cost of travel tickets - bus or train fares. Appropriate receipts, used tickets, or ticket stubs must be attached to a completed LBF expense form and submitted to the Project Co-ordinator.</p> <p>The use of taxis will not be reimbursed unless in exceptional circumstances and only where agreed in advance with the Project Co-ordinator.</p>
Subsistence	<p>Befrienders may claim for reimbursement of the reasonable cost of refreshments. Buying a non-alcoholic drink for your Beneficiary and yourself when you meet is a reasonable cost.</p> <p>A receipt must be attached to a completed LBF expense form and submitted to the Project Co-ordinator.</p>



Here is an example of our expenses claim form:

Let's BeFriends Expense Form To be submitted to Project Coordinator by final WORKING day of each month



Name									Claim date
Date	Purpose of journey	Mileage claim From POSTCODE	Mileage claim To POSTCODE	If return enter miles again	Total mileage	Car parking claim (Attach receipts)	Bus/Train claim (Attach receipts)	Subsistence claim (Attach receipts)	
MILEAGE CLAIM GUIDELINES Motor vehicle = 45p p/m or 30p after 100-mile round trip Motorcycle = 24p p/m Bicycle = 12p p/m				TOTALS	miles X £0.45= £	£	£	£	
GRAND TOTAL					£				

I have checked the calculations carefully and I certify that the expenses claimed above were incurred during the course of my duties for Let's BeFriends

Signed:

Dated:

FINANCE: OFFICE USE ONLY

Auth pymt sign 1		Auth pymt sign 2		Pymt active	
Project	Dept Number	Fund Number	Nom code	Jnl to	Posted cash bk

1. Expense forms are to be completed and submitted to the Project Co-ordinator by the last day of each month
2. The date of any expense incurred must be entered in the first column with a brief explanation of the purpose (i.e. "Befriending meeting at CAB") in the second column.
3. Volunteers are asked to calculate their mileage from postcode to postcode using the shortest route via Google Maps.
4. Miles using own transport to be recorded in columns 3-6 and then the total amount of miles should be multiplied by the rate of claim (i.e. x £0.45 for car journeys) and the total entered in the "TOTALS" row underneath column 6.
5. The amount of parking tickets should be entered in column 7, fares accrued using public transport in column 8 and amount of claimable expenses (i.e. amount paid for one non-alcoholic beverage for each person in the befriending relationship per hour) in the final column.



6. A clear copy of an appropriate receipt for non-mileage expenses listed must be attached to the expense form given to the Project Co-ordinator. (An appropriate receipt includes used public transport and parking tickets and cash register receipts. All receipts must clearly state the date of purchase and the amount paid.)
7. Volunteers are asked to submit claims within one month of incurring the expense.
8. If possible, expense claim forms and clear copies (i.e. photos or scans) of accompanying receipts should also be emailed to the Treasurer.
9. Retain hard copies of receipts - these can be presented to one of the Coordinators or the Treasurer (for example at the monthly Peer Support meetings) or posted (with a note of your name) to: c/o Let's BeFriends Treasurer, 39 A Storey Avenue, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 5PA

Contact sheets



Here is an example of the monthly timesheets we ask our befrienders to complete:

Befriender initials:

Date of contact	Type of contact F2F / Tel / Text	Beneficiary Initials	Length of contact in hours / minutes	A brief summary of the contact For example, what you did together / where did you go / details of agencies contacted etc	How was the contact for you and your befriender? It is good practice to get regular feedback from the befriender about the time you spend together

There are a number of reasons that accurately completed timesheets are important:

- They support our funding bids - one hour volunteered = £9.50 of matched funding
- To flag up up Project Coordinator any signposting / sources of support that may be suggested to enhance the befriending relationship
- So we can reward befrienders with a TEMPO time credit for every hour volunteered
- If befriender later requires a job reference (available after three months) then these provide evidence of the dates on which certain tasks were completed
- If someone is off sick / leaves LBF due to employment and another befriender takes over, contact sheets aid understanding what work has already taken place

How to complete contact sheets:

1. The volunteer's initials should be noted at the top of the page
2. The date of any contact / attempts at contact should be logged in the first column
3. The contact type (i.e. Face to Face) must be indicated in the second column
4. The initials of the beneficiary should be entered in the third column
5. When completing contact sheets the amount of time spent on any activity should



be logged and rounded up or down to the nearest 5 minutes - the exception to this is for a short text message or missed call - these should not be rounded down to zero - the minimum contact time should be recorded as 5 minutes. The date of all calls should be logged, even if they go unanswered

6. Details of what happened during the contact (including names and contact details of any agencies involved) should be input in the fifth column

7. The final column can be used by the befriender to note any positive outcomes or unmet needs - for example, if there is a sense of concern that the person is struggling with debt is documented, this might prompt a call from one of the Coordinators to give advice about who to contact to resolve the issue. If someone who was previously struggling with health issues is now well, examples of progress can be anonymised and used as case studies which help LBF secure funding. More generally this column helps to document whether or not the befriending relationship is going well or nearing an end

8. Contact sheets should be submitted to the Project Coordinator on or before the final day of every month



Let's BeFriends Policies List

All policies are available in our Policies document available on request from the Project Coordinator

Policies

LBF Recruitment, Training and Support policy

LBF Expense and Reimbursement Policy

LBF Boundaries Policy

LBF Confidentiality Policy

LBF Health and Safety Policy

LBF Lone Working Policy

LBF Safeguarding Policy

LBF Referral Policy

LBF Complaint Policy

LBF Equality and Diversity Policy

LBF Grievance Policy and Procedure



For any queries or comments please contact the
Project Coordinator by emailing:

lbflancastermorecambe@gmail.com

This handbook was last reviewed in November 2022