

Guidance – Telephone Befriending

Thank you for agreeing to be a telephone befriender. The time you will be giving to have a chat with someone will be really appreciated and just 30 mins of your time could make a huge difference to a person's life.

See below for a few tips that you might find useful when having that chat.

Tips for Volunteers:

- You may wish to cover off a few basic welfare aspects to start with such as whether the person has sufficient food and medication supplies. How are they feeling generally and whether they have neighbours who can check on them?
- Confirm with the person what would be the best time to call and agree if possible, a set time each week for future calls. Thirty minutes is a good guideline for a call but play it by ear as a shorter conversation can be just as welcome.
- It is important during the call to listen to how people are feeling and to make the call as empathetic and positive as possible. Perhaps share and encourage local good news stories.
- Discover whether the person enjoys talking about a particular topic, such as their pet, hobbies, or a time in their life.
- A listening ear may be all a person needs. If they have been on their own during the week, they may be keener to chat than hear from you. This may be a way of finding out what interests them for a call next time.
- People may be reluctant to proffer too many personal details. Respect this and likewise avoid divulging too much personal information about yourself.
- Finish your chat on a positive note and use the person's name when you say goodbye. It may seem like a small thing, but it can mean a lot.