



Role description for: Telephone befriending

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus in early 2020 we have had to move many of our service online and via the telephone. Visual Impairment can be isolating at the best of times but with lockdown measures and new social distancing rules the world has become even more isolating for many visually impaired people. Our telephone befriending service is an important part of what we do across the county to keep people with sight loss connected. For many people the phone call you make may be one of the few times a week they speak to someone.

This brief description outlines the role and the type of activity you could get involved in as a volunteer.

The role

The purpose of the role is to call and befriend a person with a visual impairment.

This may involve:

- Making a call at least once a week at an arranged time that suits you both.
- The length of call can vary depending on both your circumstances, you may find at the start they will be short but as you get to know each other the call will become longer.
- Conversations can include such things as:
 - A general chat
 - Reading the news, magazines, poetry, books.
 - Playing games, quizzes etc
- The person you will be calling will be:
 - Visually Impaired or the carer of a visually impaired person



Oxfordshire

Association for the Blind

Registered office: Bradbury Lodge
Gordon Woodward Way
Oxford, OX1 4XL
Tel: 01865 725595
www.oxeyes.org.uk
info@oxeyes.org.uk

- Feeling isolated and lonely, or just likes to chat
- More likely to be elderly but the service is open to anyone over the age of 18.
- Living in Oxfordshire

Your skills

You don't need any specific experience, but you should be:

- Someone who is patient and able to empathise with people who may be lonely, elderly and have a disability.
- Reliable (it is important to call when you have arranged to and to let someone know if you are unable to make the call).
- Someone who enjoys talking to and meeting people.

The commitment

We ask our Telephone Befrienders, when they start volunteering, to feel they will be able to commit for at least a year. This is because it takes time to build up a relationship and it is unfair on our clients if volunteers come and go too often. However, we recognise that this is an entirely voluntary role and volunteers are of course free to stop when they choose.

Preparing to be a Telephone Befriender

Our volunteers are calling people who may be very vulnerable, so we take great care over the recruitment and training of our volunteers.

- We will take up two references.
- All Volunteer Telephone Befrienders are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- All volunteers will have training, currently this is provided online but, in the past,, we have had volunteer get together and update sessions.



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- There is a trial period, during which the volunteer is in regular contact with the Volunteering Coordinator.

If you feel this is a role that would suit you please fill out the application form and return it to volunteers@oxeyes.org.uk.

With special thanks to the Coronavirus Community Support Fund, distributed by The National Lottery Community Fund for supporting this project.



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