

# VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND - SHETLAND BEFRIENDING SCHEME

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

### **Introduction**

It is extremely important for the scheme to recruit the most appropriate individuals (who are aged 17 or above), as volunteers will be supporting vulnerable children, young people, 16+ adults and 60+ adults on a 1:1 basis. The volunteers may have to deal with delicate situations and the scheme has to ensure that the people selected are appropriate and able to deal with the challenges that they may face as a volunteer. The recruitment and selection process is vital to ensure that the most appropriate candidates for the role are selected.

### **Advertising for volunteers**

Voluntary roles will be advertised within the scheme, in the Shetland Times and through any local means considered appropriate to attract volunteers.

### **Initial contact**

To assist an individual who enquires about becoming a volunteer an initial informal discussion will take place with scheme staff to ensure that they are fully aware of what the befriending role entails. An application pack will then be provided.

### **Application Pack**

An individual who is considering applying to be a volunteer will be given an application pack. This will contain the following:

- Initial Contact Sheet
- A volunteer role description and person specification
- Training information
- An application form
- An equal opportunities monitoring form
- Local Authority check form
- Medical reference form

### **Application Form**

The application form is used to gather the information required to allow the scheme to begin to make an informed decision on the suitability of the individual to be a volunteer. It is recognised that the information contained in the application is

confidential and all information provided by the applicant will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **Volunteer Role Descriptions and Person Specifications**

All voluntary befriending roles within the Shetland Befriending Scheme are outlined in a volunteer role description and the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to undertake the role are outlined in the person specification.

Each potential volunteer will be provided with a Role and Task Description of Volunteer Befriender as stated below:

### **Volunteer Role**

Volunteer Befriender

### **Accountability**

Directly responsible to the Scheme's staff

### **Role and Task Description of a Volunteer Befriender**

#### **The role of the befriender**

The role of a volunteer befriender is a consciously undertaken voluntary commitment and responsibility by an individual, who has gone through a process of recruitment, selection and training. Their role is monitored, supported and supervised within the policy framework and guidelines of the organisation.

Volunteers with the Shetland Befriending Scheme play a key role in supporting the members of the community who use the service. Volunteers are in a position of trust as they establish a one to one relationship.

In volunteering with the service user, the volunteer will provide a supportive relationship that enables the service user to build their sense of self worth, their confidence and skills. Through involvement in a wide range of activities, the volunteer may be in a position to support them to achieve their goals and move forward positively.

#### **The task of a befriender**

The tasks undertaken by a volunteer will vary depending upon the needs of the individual they are supporting but will at all times be governed by the policies and procedures operated by the scheme. The following list provides the range of tasks and the approach to be adopted by a volunteer whilst working with the scheme:

- To develop and promote a positive relationship with the service user with whom the volunteer is matched
- To establish and maintain appropriate boundaries in the befriending relationship
- To agree with the service user the types of activities they wish to undertake, ensuring that these comply with the schemes safety requirements and insurance cover
- To provide input which acknowledges a persons' right to make decisions for themselves, which is non judgmental and supports the individual to achieve their goals
- To be consistent and dependable when working with a service user
- To recognise that the relationship with the service user may be challenging due to their needs and circumstances and being realistic about what can be achieved in your relationship with them
- To agree to abide by the confidentiality policy and the other policies and procedures of the scheme
- To work in conjunction with the staff of the Shetland Befriending Scheme to provide a quality service, by participating in support and supervision sessions with staff, referring concerns about the service user where appropriate and completing monitoring forms
- To offer an accepting and understanding presence and volunteer within a non-discriminatory framework

### **Experience, Skills and Attitudes required**

The Shetland Befriending Scheme wants to promote an inclusive project that recognises the wide range of skills and experiences that volunteers can bring to the scheme that will support the development of the service user taking part in the scheme.

The volunteer person specification outlines the range of skills, experience and attitudes that the scheme feels would be relevant to the befriending role.

### **Essential Requirements**

All potential volunteers prior to being accepted onto the scheme are required to successfully complete an initial training programme. In addition, as the position

involves working with vulnerable individuals, volunteers will be required to complete an Application to Join the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme).

### **Volunteer Befriender Person Specification**

Volunteers will come from all walks of life, with a range of experiences and skills to offer. There are no specific educational qualifications required and the scheme aims to recruit people with potential as well as those with relevant experience or qualifications. The scheme is looking for people who will embrace the principles and values that it promotes when volunteering with individuals and see something of themselves in the following descriptions:

#### **Personal Qualities**

- Be able to form positive, supportive relationships with others
- Able to communicate well with other people, particularly children, young people, 16+ adults, 60+ adults and be a good listener
- Are self aware and able to reflect on how situations may affect you and the service user
- Are able to reflect on your relationship with the service user
- Are comfortable working on your own, relying on your own initiative and common sense, but also know when to seek support
- Some insight into the potential significance and importance of the relationship
- Are reliable, consistent, dependable and have an ability to handle a level of stress
- Are able to put your own needs and views to one side and focus on the needs of the service user
- Can relate to the issues and challenges facing service users
- Willingness to question own assumptions
- Can accept that being challenged or let down by other people is a natural part of life and may occur in your relationship with the service user

#### **Personal Values**

- An ability to accept people for who they are
- A respect for others as being of equal worth
- An ability not to impose your own values and beliefs on others
- An ability to appreciate and value the differences between people
- An ability to understand others choices and lifestyles and their right to make decisions for themselves
- Working with hope – being realistic about what can be achieved without becoming cynical
- A belief that we can make a difference, that no situation is hopeless

## **Organisational Issues**

- Able to understand and volunteer within the organisations boundaries and policies
- Able to volunteer within the organisation's confidentiality policy
- Able to actively take part in support and supervision sessions
- Able to organise meetings with the service user and monitor whether these are successful
- Able to complete the record sheets for meetings with the service user
- Able to commit to weekly or fortnightly contact for a few hours at a time for a minimum 6 month period once they have met the individual they will be matched with

## **Probationary Period**

There will be a probationary period of 6 weeks after having been matched with a service user followed by a review.

## **References**

Two references are requested, one from their current employer and one from a "third party" who has known the individual for over 3 years. Referees will be asked to comment on the applicant's character and suitability for the voluntary role.

References will not be accepted from family members/partners and will be requested in writing.

A Medical Reference and Local Authority Check will be requested from each applicant and will be treated in the strictest confidence.

## **Application to Join PVG Scheme - Disclosure Scotland Check**

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme) is a membership scheme that has replaced and improved upon the previous disclosure arrangements for people who work with vulnerable groups. The PVG Scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland which is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government.

It will be stressed to all participants on the first week of training that they have been accepted onto training and will only be fully accepted to be a volunteer on the successful completion of initial training and that their CRBS (PVG Scheme) check comes back with a satisfactory result after training has been completed.

## **Selection process**

- The selection process involves several stages to ensure the appropriateness of the volunteer. The following process will be undertaken:
- Initial contact with the service
- Informal discussion with scheme staff
- Completion of an application form
- Medical check, Local Authority check and 2 references sought
- **1<sup>st</sup> stage of evaluation on suitability** - Short-listing: confirmation that information in application form complies with the person specification. This process will be undertaken by two representatives of the organisation
- **2<sup>nd</sup> stage of evaluation on suitability** – Interview: undertaken by two representatives of the organisation, either two members of staff or one member of staff and a VAS staff member
- Notification of decision by telephone and confirmation in writing
- Successful applicants to be placed on introductory training programme for further assessment of suitability
- **3<sup>rd</sup> stage of evaluation on suitability** - following successful conclusion of training individual assessment proformas will be signed off by the Project Co-ordinator. Appointment subject to positive outcome of PVG Scheme check
- Notification of decision at a training feedback and review session

## **The application and interview panel**

The panel will be agreed at the start of the recruitment process. It will normally be made up of two representatives of the scheme, either two members of staff or one member of staff and a VAS staff member.

The panel is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they understand and are able to take part in the whole volunteer assessment process
- Ensure that they are the only people involved in the interviewing procedure

- Make decisions on applications with regards to the Schemes Equal opportunities policy
- Make decisions about the applicants suitability based on the volunteer role description and person specification
- Ensure that all application forms and interview notes are kept in secure storage for at least 6 months
- Applicants must be provided with information on the time of the interview, its location, the format and be given time to prepare
- Informing both successful and unsuccessful applicants

## **Interviews**

The panel should ask all individuals the same questions, although supplementary questions can be used to draw further information out. The aim of the selection interview is to offer the opportunity for an open and genuine exploration of issues relevant to the voluntary role and how the person's skills, experience and attitudes will meet the needs of the role.

## **Decisions**

All candidates should be informed of the decision as soon as possible. All candidates have the right to request feedback about the application process.