



Seton Care Befrienders

Evaluation report on progress and impact
so far

October 2014

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Outside the Box



seton care

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Section 1: Introduction

About the Seton Care Befriending project

The Seton Care Befrienders project is a response to the gap identified by older people living in Berwickshire (the eastern part of Scottish Borders) and the north part of Northumberland around Berwick-upon-Tweed. They wanted company and friendship and someone to do things with when this was becoming harder.

Seton Care Befrienders began in August 2012, when it was known as the Early Intervention Project. The project is funded by Comic Relief and currently is due to run to summer 2015.

The project's objectives are:

- To help vulnerable older people feel less isolated, and help them to improve their management of personal risk.
- To increase self-confidence, skills, and understanding of the needs of vulnerable older people, among older volunteers.

The project pairs volunteers and people looking for befriending support. The type of support reflects what people want. Typical activities are:

- The befriender visiting the person each week for a few hours.
- Having tea and a chat in someone's house.
- Going out on activities that interest the person, or having tea somewhere else.
- Encouragement for people who have lost confidence.
- Gentle physical exercise such as going for a walk.

In mid 2014 the project had 22-25 volunteers: people's circumstances mean that they sometimes have to drop out for a while and then come back. Together they visit or maintain contact with about 40 older people: again, the number in active contact with the project at any time varies, depending on people's health.

How the project is organised

The project is based at Seton Care, which is part of the Berwickshire Housing Association Group.

The co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day running for the project. Her roles include:

- Developing publicity material about the project and raising awareness with community groups and services which are in touch with older people who may benefit from the project.
- Recruiting, checking and training volunteers.
- Meeting and assessing people who want the service.
- Matching the people with a volunteer as soon as possible and introducing the pair to each other.
- Keeping in contact with each party - the volunteer befriender and the person getting support - to see how they are getting on.
- Then maintaining contact with the volunteer through emails, post, phone calls, texts, social events, and face-to-face meetings.

Line management support comes from the Community Development Co-ordinator.

In February 2014 Seton Care Befriending Service achieved the Approved Provider Standard status from the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF). The outcomes that the service must meet for the MBF standards are:

- 1 The mentoring or befriending project (or service) has a clear rationale and purpose.
- 2 There is an effective organisational and management structure in place to support the project.
- 3 The competence of staff involved in the project is developed and maintained.
- 4 There is a clear process for the identification and referral of service users which takes into account their needs and suitability for the service.
- 5 Service users fully briefed and/or prepared for their involvement in the project.
- 6 There is a rigorous and robust recruitment and selection process in place for potential mentors and befrienders.
- 7 There are appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard the involvement of participants in the project.
- 8 Mentors and befrienders receive adequate preparation and training so that they can offer effective support to service users.
- 9 There is a clear and consistent process in place for matching service users with mentors/befrienders.
- 10 There is on-going supervision and support provided for mentors/befrienders to help them in their role.
- 11 The progress of relationships is regularly and routinely monitored to determine whether they are functioning successfully.
- 12 The overall effectiveness of the mentoring or befriending project is evaluated to improve its service and outcomes.

The assessment report from the MBF is overwhelmingly positive and states “The service is obviously valued and held in high regard by service users and volunteers”.

About the evaluation

Seton Care Befriending service asked Outside the Box to review the impact of the project. This evaluation looks at what the project has achieved over the first 2 years and highlights points for the third year and any possible future developments. It also provides an independent review of the work done since the time of the MBF assessment and gives further evidence that outcomes continue to be met.

The sources of information that the evaluation has drawn on are:

- Routine records kept by the project.
- Talking to volunteers and other people in touch with the project at the conference which the project organised in June 2014.
- Structured feedback from the volunteers and from people who get support and their families: people had a choice about how they contributed their views, to make this comfortable and easy for them.

All the current volunteer befrienders were invited to contribute their views. People who used the service and/or their carer were invited to take part, unless the co-ordinator said this would be too confusing for the person. We had in-depth feedback from 11 people during August to October 2014, through telephone interviews and questionnaires returned by post or email. Five of the people who took part were people who use the befriending service or their carer, and 6 were befrienders. All those involved gave their feedback knowing that it would be used anonymously.

Section 2: The people getting support

Who they are

The people who use the service are all aged over 55 and they come from a wide variety of backgrounds and have differing needs. Among the project's service users are writers, retired nurses, community activists, people who are bilingual, people who looked after their own families, parents, sisters, people with dementia, people with hearing loss and people with sight problems.

The people who get support have lived in the area all their lives or they moved to the area usually after retirement, but most are losing, or at risk of losing, contacts with other people in their community. Some people are unable to leave their homes without a great deal of assistance and many have memory problems. Others have mental health problems that prevent them from socialising as much as they would like to and need help to encourage greater confidence and provide some contact with the outside world. Some people are being cared for by their husband or wife or another close family member, and having a volunteer visit gives their carer a much needed break. Most are people who just need someone to listen to them.

Some people get in touch with the project after seeing a leaflet or poster, or a family member will get in touch. Most often, though, people are referred by other agencies such as Social Work teams, mental health services, British Red Cross, Royal Voluntary Service and other voluntary services.

The people who gave in-depth feedback for the evaluation

Feedback was received from 5 people who get support from the project or from their carers.

- A daughter whose 90 year old mum has dementia and receives befriending support.
- A daughter whose mum has walking difficulties after breaking her hip. The daughter provides a lot of care and support for her mum, but they have no other family living in the area. Her mum receives visits from a befriender.
- A lady whose husband has dementia and receives befriending visits.

- A lady who is a carer for her husband who has a long term condition. She receives befriending support for herself.
- An older lady with a learning disability who receives visits herself.

There was a big variation in the time that people had been receiving visits at the time they gave in-depth feedback for the evaluation. The time ranged from one person who had recently started getting befriending support to someone who had been getting support since the project began 2 years ago.

Impact for older people and their carers

The service has routine feedback from people getting support and their carers. The positive feedback people have given to the project was repeated in the responses gathered as part of this evaluation.

There are themes that run through the feedback from the people getting support.

For older people the main impacts are:

- Having another person in their lives who is interested in them.
- Company and doing social things.
- Getting out of their home – visits out, going shopping, enjoying activities and interests.
- Being part of their community again.

The main impacts for carers are:

- Getting a break from caring.
- Freeing the carer up for their other commitments.
- Feeling less isolated.

Where someone getting support had a carer – living with them or at a distance – it was clear that both people were benefitting.

“This has given my mother someone other than me to talk to – her own special visitor.”

“While the visitor is visiting my mum I get a break for 2 hours on a weekly basis which is much needed.”

*“I receive indirect support, as the befriender asks about me too.”
(daughter who cares for mum)*

“I work during the week, and have a very busy family life, which makes it hard for me to take mum out. The visits and outings by the befriender are of huge benefit to my mum who really appreciates getting out of the house.”

"This service is invaluable for me as we have no other family in the area, so having a befriender gives my mum an additional activity in the week."

"The visits have made such a difference to me. I am a carer for my husband, and it is during his respite visits that I go out with my befriender."

"My befriender is so flexible. She is happy to take me round the shops and I can now get out and buy fresh fish which is such a treat!"

"My befriender and I go out and potter, pop into shops, and have a cup of coffee. I normally go shopping with my son, but with him it is a quick in and out, so I really appreciate the time my befriender spends with me."

"My husband's befriender is always positive, interesting and friendly. She comes prepared with news, and has found out about his interests like rugby –she even records some rugby on her iPad so he can watch it during the visit."

"Last year I had to visit my daughter who lives abroad. The befriender visited my husband while I was away with my daughter which was a great support to me."

"There is not much public transport in my area, so having the visits and going out with my befriender has been really helpful."

"The visits give my mum someone new to talk to."

"The visits have helped her to get over her feelings of loneliness."

"The visits give me a break to go out and do something normal without having to worry that mum is on her own."

"The visits are extremely helpful to me as I know mum is enjoying some additional social contact."

"I am now happier, and more connected to the outside world. I am a carer for my husband, and having a befriender myself, and spending time with her, has made me a better carer as I am not as isolated as before."

"If I am worried about something, I can talk it over with my befriender."

"When my husband (who has dementia) has his befriender here, I am able to go outside, or go to other parts of the house without him getting alarmed."

"Although the befriender is here for my husband, I also enjoy talking with her, and she has given me some very good and interesting advice."

“I have a learning disability, and the befriender makes it easier for me to get out shopping for clothes. We go out in her car, go to the shops then have a drink and a chat in a café.”

“I am just so grateful. I was at my wits end and becoming quite ill coping on our own with a very elderly person with dementia.”

“The project is a sanity saver. Long may it continue! It gives you the strength to carry on by giving you a little break.”

Words used by older people and carers to describe the visits from a befriender:

Friendly, compassionate, caring, listening, fun, very enjoyable, entertaining, interesting, comforting, supportive, makes me less isolated, I now feel that people care, I feel happier, reliable and prompt.

We asked if anything negative happened during the visits or if there were any difficulties. The feedback from all respondents was unanimous, with nobody being able to offer a negative experience.

“No, nothing at all, it has all been VERY positive.”

We asked people about what they have learned about themselves or about their communities while having visits from befrienders.

“I have learned that I need to know when to ask for help. I am not superwoman and the befriender is a friend to both of us.”

“It would be interesting to find out how many other elderly people in the area would benefit from a visit and to find out how Seton Care could extend its network of volunteers.”

“I have found that people are nicer than you think! I had become a bit down and isolated, but being linked to this service has made my mood much happier.”

“I have learned that the volunteer who befriends my husband has a very generous spirit – she does what she does with unstinting commitment.”

Advice to other people

We asked people who get support and their carers what they would say to other people and families who were thinking of getting support from the befriending project.

“Go for it. Do it – it will make a difference. It has to us!”

“This is an excellent service that I would thoroughly recommend to someone with an elderly relative who may be isolated, or who has reduced mobility.”

“Go for it, it is a 100 % wonderful service.”

Befrienders’ and project’s perspective on benefits for people getting support

Another perspective in the impacts for people getting support from the befrienders is that of the volunteers, who also described ways in which the people they supported were benefitting. Their descriptions were similar to those of the people getting support, and suggest that the people in the befriending relationships do understand each other.

“The visits give a break from the usual routine and a chance to talk about things they don’t mention to family.”

“Access to activities that they can’t do with anyone else.”

“The lady I visit gets the sole focus of my attention, and I’d like to think that this raises her self-esteem.”

“The lady I visit is an extrovert, and she gets really down when she is cooped up at home by herself, as she cannot pop out for a coffee with a friend anymore. I know that my visits give her a boost, as I am able to take her out.”

“The lady I visit cares for her husband who has dementia. I think that because she knows she can get out for a couple of hours each week, she is more able to cope with caring for her husband.”

“The visits give her the chance to talk to someone who is not one of her care workers. I have time to sit and chat with her.”

“I think it gives people I visit a connection with another human being who they know will listen to them and have a good laugh with them. That does everybody good.”

“We’re planning trips out which gives my ladies something to look forward to – tea dances, trips to the shops, getting out for a walk and more. It gives them hope.”

The routine updates to the co-ordinator from all the befriending pairs describe similar benefits, plus some of the practical consequences that flow from the contacts.

- Relief from loneliness and boredom.
- Being able to have a conversation about wider issues rather than just someone’s own worries.
- Someone to off load to about their medical conditions.
- Increased exercise.
- Positive risk taking.
- Referrals to other agencies such as mental health services, hearing aid services and handyman services.

We asked the volunteer befrienders to describe any high and any low points in their experience with the project so far. In all cases they focussed on the lives of the people they befriend.

Volunteers had no difficulty in listing the positive things that happened during the visits, and many of these positives focus on the relationships that are being formed with the person they visit.

“Getting to know someone from the older generation, learning about their life story and getting to know them as an individual rather than just another old person.”

“What consistently delights me is discovering more and more about the lives of the ladies I visit, and their knowledge and experience.”

“I learn something new each visit.”

“The lady I visit is a pleasure to spend time with and I am enjoying getting to know her on each visit.”

“I particularly enjoyed one visit to my friend, when he took me around the grounds of the large house in which they have a flat.”

“When we went out for coffee in town, it made the lady I befriend feel like she was out in amongst social life, and she was very grateful that I had given the time for something which we both enjoyed. There are other people that take her shopping but then bring her straight back home.”

“My lady is so positive, she always accepts new challenges. Wonderful.”

“My high and low points were trying to convince my younger lady to use her walker and that it will give her independence, and not take her independence away. Now she has done it and is looking forward to a trip to the supermarket. This will make a big difference for her.”

The low points centred around difficulties in the lives of the people they visit, not about the visits themselves. They also highlight some of the reasons why older people can become socially isolated, and why the project is needed.

“I was told by the care workers that they did not have enough time to put the lady I visit into her wheelchair once a week in order for me to take her for fresh air in the park.”

“One day the lady I visit was feeling a bit down, and had been experiencing anxiety attacks. I felt sad that I could not do more to help her.”

“It can be hard for people to accept that they are less able than before and need some more help. The ladies I visit sometimes struggle with this.”

Section 3: The Volunteer Befrienders

Who the volunteers are

All the volunteers provided information about themselves when they first joined the project. The volunteers tend to be older people themselves, with one or two exceptions. Most are retired or working part-time but some are working full-time. Many have been carers in the past and a couple come from a health care background. Without exception, their primary motivation is to help other people. They may have secondary reasons for volunteering with the project such as work experience, using spare time or expanding their social networks, but caring for others is their overriding aim in their volunteering.

The volunteers who provided feedback for the evaluation

Six volunteer befrienders were interviewed. They had come across befriending in different ways:

- Three people heard about the service by reading an article in the Berwickshire Advertiser or another local newspaper.
- One person had applied for a paid post with the organisation but instead was accepted as a befriender.
- One person already had experience of befriending in another area. She heard about it from a Housing Officer in Berwickshire Housing Association soon after she moved to this area.
- One person was told about the service by her sister.

Impact for the volunteers

The project aims to give people aged over 50 opportunities to be volunteers and aims to benefit them too. All of the volunteers identified ways in which they have benefited themselves, as well as the benefits for the people they visit. The themes in the feedback as part of the evaluation and in the routine feedback to the project co-ordinator are:

- Making new friendships with the people they met through the project.
- Relationships with the people they visit and getting to understand their circumstances.
- Being part of the community.

- Getting out and being active themselves.
- Knowing they are making a difference.
- Using existing skills and learning new skills.
- Work experience for volunteers who are still in or looking for other work.

Words used by volunteer befrienders to describe what they do:

Interesting, heart-warming, cheerful, fun, makes a difference, life-enriching, rewarding, satisfying, new friendships, interesting, surprising, intellectually-stimulating, useful, helpful, learning, hopeful, communicating, proud (of myself and my ladies), new experiences, appreciation, warming, heartfelt

What volunteers have learned though their befriending visits

Volunteers were asked to feedback on any things they had learned about themselves or about their community through being a volunteer befriender.

“I have realised that similarities exist across the generations.”

“I feel privileged that I get to spend time learning about someone’s life and being invited into it.”

“I have learnt that I can be a good listener and let the other person talk about themselves.”

“There is an amazing quality of life in this beautiful area (Scottish Borders), but what I have discovered is how very quickly a frail person can become isolated here. I think it would be great if local communities organised themselves to keep an eye out for people who don’t have family living nearby, and who are starting to struggle.”

“Despite having a busy life, it has been good to make the effort to do something to support someone else.”

“It has confirmed my belief that people are all very different and interesting.”

“ Since moving here a year ago, I have been very humbled by the community spirit and the great kindnesses shown to me.”

“I have found though the work I have done so far, that dementia as got so many sides to it’s ‘character’ that I have to keep it to the forefront of my mind when I’m with my ladies. I’m aware that the little I do is only a small part, but I’m hopeful that it is making a difference for them.”

What being a befriender adds to volunteers' lives

Volunteering in any capacity provides benefits to the person who does the volunteering. Seton Care befrienders were asked to list ways that being a befriender added to their own lives:

"Contact on a 1-1 basis with someone from the older generation."

"Uninterrupted time to be with the person I visit leading to me feeling fulfilled and personally enriched."

"I feel I am putting something back into the community and a sense of purpose."

"It gets me out and about and most of all I have made 2 very good friends."

"I benefit from stimulating conversation from the person I visit."

"For me it's a two-way street. I give myself to them and they are very generous with their hospitality."

"It gives me a community feel, that something as simple as giving your time can make a difference to someone."

Perspectives of people getting support

We asked the people whom the befrienders visit and their families for their views on whether doing the visits gave benefits to the volunteers.

"She seems to enjoy the visits. She is that sort of kind and caring person that enjoys being with people."

"I think she gets something back – she is using her skills to make new relationships and is gaining in confidence."

"The befriender seems very socially aware and obviously has experience of dealing with elderly people."

Advice to potential volunteers

Volunteers were asked what they would say to someone else who was considering becoming a volunteer befriender with Seton Care:

“If you can commit the time, and be reliable, then you should go for it as it is likely you will get as much out of the experience as the person you are visiting does.”

“Come and try it.”

“It is a very worthwhile and rewarding thing to do.”

“DO IT. It’s so worthwhile for both parties. Loneliness can be a crippling thing and just having someone to talk to has such a benefit for that person.”

Section 4: How the project is organised

Achieving positive impacts for both the people getting support and the volunteers is a consequence of good planning for any project. The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation's quality standard sets clear requirements for good practice in recruiting, training and supporting the volunteer befrienders. The evidence gathered in this evaluation shows that the standards continue to be met.

Recruitment and training

The befrienders interviewed are fairly new to the service, having been doing visits for between 4 and 8 months. Only one of the volunteers who took part in the interviews had previous experience of being a befriender.

A series of training opportunities are available to volunteers, including induction sessions, the volunteer conference and external training events with other providers (Health and Safety and First Aid). All of the volunteers interviewed were satisfied with these processes for induction and training for new volunteers prior to being matched with a friend.

"The training is comprehensive, relevant and beneficial."

"The training given to volunteer befrienders is as thorough as that given to paid employees, with some sessions being shared with paid staff."

"There is an open and friendly atmosphere, making it easy to contribute ideas and feedback."

"My only worry was that there was a long gap between being trained and starting as a befriender, and I may have forgotten some of it during that gap."

"It was very helpful, giving advice on what as a befriender you should do and not do. Advice on keeping yourself and client safe."

On-going training for befrienders who are visiting people at home

Seton Care provides a pathway of on-going training for volunteers once they are matched with a person to visit. Some volunteers who are younger and in paid employment find that work commitments clashed with the on-going training and they have to miss training sessions. This situation arose for one of the volunteers who took part in the evaluation, who commented that the Project Coordinator is always available for 1-1 advice should this be needed.

We asked people about the impact of the training on their ability to be a befriender, their skills and their confidence in the role. The feedback was positive on all 3 aspects, and the volunteers described the benefits of a varied and comprehensive training programme.

“It brought me up to date with information about dementia, which has changed a lot since I witnessed my mum suffering from it.”

“I might not have thought about issues like discretion and confidentiality were they not covered in training.”

“The training pointed out possible awkward situations that might arise.”

“It’s helped me a lot because as you get older, your confidence in life can be knocked back sometime. Knowing that Terri (the co-ordinator) is always there to help us is a big confidence booster for me.”

On-going support and supervision for volunteers

The project coordinator provides on-going support and supervision to volunteers. This is provided by a range of techniques including:

- “News” emails sent to volunteers about the project or about training opportunities.
- The annual volunteer conference, which provides an opportunity for volunteers to meet and mingle, talk to each other, socialise over coffee and lunch, and attend workshops.
- Individual support and supervision is also provided for volunteers on an on-going basis.
- Telephone numbers of other staff at Seton Care, in case volunteers need advice at a time when the co-ordinator is out on an assessment visit or otherwise not available.

All of the volunteers interviewed were very positive about this support. The benefits of this on-going support mean that volunteers feel both supported and informed.

“It prevents me feeling isolated.”

“Terri is available at the end of the phone whenever I need and she regularly checks up that I am doing ok.”

“Whenever I have had any concerns I know that I can phone or email Terri for advice.”

“Terri always gets back to me promptly.”

“Terri is very helpful and approachable and I am sure that if I do encounter problems they will be dealt with.”

“Terri has been in touch often to find out how my visits are going and I know she is always available by phone should I have questions or problems.”

“There have been a couple of times when I have not been sure how to respond to a question or request from the person I visit. It is such a relief on those occasions to know that I can ask Terri and that I will be able to go back to my friend with the right answer.”

“Being at training with other befrienders helps to give you more confidence in your role as a befriender. We hear about other situations and the positive values of the scheme.”

“I know that there is always someone that I can contact in relation to Befriending that will give me support if required. Terri keeps in contact and has organised a small conference with other befrienders which was very helpful. Although I am in a one to one situation I know there is a wider picture for the project and good support.”

The support from the co-ordinator also enables people to expand the activities they offered to the people they befriend.

“It has the effect of giving me the confidence to carry on with my work and to take on more befrienders. I’ve also started to get my ladies to join a transport scheme so that I can take them out away for the same four walls. I feel proud to be part of Terri’s team, as she provides a much needed service.”

The nature of this project, and of the people who are benefitting from the befrienders, is that the people getting support may be unwell and unexpected events can happen. Most people found that they were able to deal with any situations that came up by applying their training or by checking something out with the co-ordinator. One volunteers had more difficulties in one occasion:

“I arrived for a visit and got no reply and found the door locked. Despite all of the training, I was not prepared for this, and did not have my mobile phone with me, or any contact information for the person I visit. A neighbour told me what had happened.”

The range of methods used to communicate with the volunteers is hitting the right note with volunteers. None of the people interviewed felt that communication and information could be faulted or improved.

"I'm happy with it how it is."

"I get as much information as I think I need."

"Interesting, clear to read and informative."

The information sent is clear and it makes you feel part of a team even though you are generally one to one.

"Has the right balance, it is there when you need it, but I am not badgered too often."

"It is relevant and I find it helpful to know what is going on."

Only 2 of the 6 volunteers interviewed used the website. Both are happy with the website, which has relevant information, is easy to navigate and seems to be kept up to date. Other people are not connected to the internet, and would not be able to do so until barriers around costs for them or reliable access in their area were addressed.

The only form of information volunteers would add is more meetings with the other volunteers. This would be especially useful for people who do not have access to the internet.

Section 5: Assessment

Overall assessment

The assessment of the impact of the Befriending project is based on how the project is achieving it's own aims and objectives, and how it reflects wider research evidence and good practice in community capacity building projects aimed at supporting and giving early intervention to older people, including that shared through the national Reshaping Care for Older People programme

All of the feedback in this report points to a service that is high quality and well respected and valued by those who benefit. The comments from service users and families point to the value of the service in supporting families. The service is highly valued also by the volunteers who carry out the visits.

The volunteers were very clear in their respect for the project co-ordinator and gave feedback that indicates that the support provided is high quality, sensitive and responsive.

The range of feedback within this report shows that the project outcomes listed in the introduction to this report are being met, leading to a very high quality of befriending service.

- Feedback from volunteers, family members and older people themselves back up the outcome that vulnerable people are less isolated.
- Feedback from volunteers clearly shows that volunteers increase their self-confidence through befriending visits.
- Families and those visited are strongly in agreement that the volunteers are skilled, and volunteers are able to give feedback on the training, induction and support process as a means of increasing their skills.
- The feedback and comments from the volunteers strongly indicate that the befrienders are aware of the needs of vulnerable older people and that they understand these needs.

It also reflects good practice in effective support for people who are experiencing or at risk of social isolation, especially for older people who have additional needs.

“I get a bit anxious about the mileage. The distances involved add up alarmingly. But then when I see the good times that my friends are having on our trips out, I feel ok. The rural nature of the place we live in must make this project challenging.”

“The article in the Berwick Advertiser inspired me to find out more about the befriending opportunities with Seton Care. It is good to have an organisation that enables you to do this type of volunteering and provides the support and encouragement to do it.”

There are few points for the project to action from this evaluation, other than to maintain the way the project is organised and to continue supporting the volunteers in their support to the people they befriend.

There are suggestions that the project may want to consider for the next year or for future developments. In the short-term, the points can be looked at as part of the continuous running and development to which the project is committed. Longer-term developments would be part of any follow-on that builds on the achievements of the project.

- Exploring ways to support volunteers who do not have access to the internet – this includes support and information from the co-ordinator and the elements of peer support.
- Making sure that befrienders have the training and back-up to enable them to continue supporting people when their friends’ health and wellbeing declines, such as when people have hospital stays or their dementia becomes more advanced. The experience of other capacity building projects is that it helps when they anticipate the expected changes for the people they support, such as training for volunteers on responding to bereavement and loss. Other practical aspects for the way projects work are having arrangements around when a volunteer keeps visiting someone in hospital when it is a outwith the local area, and developing appropriate policies around when volunteers withdraw from a befriending relationship.
- Looking at ways to contribute to or link with any wider initiatives around promoting social inclusion for older people who have additional support needs. This may help the befrienders and the people they support to have access to more activities in the community, especially activities that welcome and respect people who have dementia and their carers.
- Looking at ways the befriending project can adapt to enable the befrienders to offer more opportunities for older people who need more support. An example could be occasional visits by 2 befrienders to people who need extra help to get out, for example when there is no other support to help someone get ready. Another example could be circles of support, as a way of enabling people who have extra needs and carers to have more people around them.

More information

Seton Care Befrienders

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Twitter: @scbefrienders

Facebook: SCBefrienders

Website: www.setoncare.org.uk/volunteering/befriending.html

Outside the Box

Contact: Anne Connor

Email: anne@otbds.org

Tel: 0141 419 0451

Outside the Box is a voluntary organisation which provides community development support to small voluntary organisations and to people who use support services and their families.

There is more information on the website: www.otbds.org