**Barnet Friends**

**Referral Criteria and Guidelines**

**About Barnet Friends:**

Our trained volunteers are matched to isolated residents, who provide weekly befriending calls and work alongside the clients to help build confidence, self- esteem, resilience and reduce social isolation through regular connection, emotional support, signposting and goal setting on a regular basis. The aim of the ***Barnet Friends*** service is to improve the quality of life for our clients, help them to recognise their wellbeing needs and ultimately, utilise the skills and tools learnt in day-to-day life.

Volunteer befrienders (all of whom are 18+) are provided training from CB Plus which include suicide prevention, boundaries and safeguarding.

We ask our volunteers to commit to the service for a minimum of six months and up to one year. Our service remains a telephone befriending service, and volunteers cannot meet clients in a face-to-face setting.

**Our Befrienders *can***:

-Offer 30-60 minutes of ***telephone contact*** with clients per week who have low to moderate mental health needs (low mood, social anxiety, generalised anxiety and OCD). This will be at pre-arranged times

-Support clients to identify issues that are worrying them, and set agreed goals to develop their coping resources in response to stress triggers

-Help clients to access information that may be hard for those who are isolated and digitally challenged to access, and signpost them appropriately to local services

-Provide our clients with safe options to pursue their interests and re-connect with their community

-Improve client’s self-esteem, confidence and encourage them to socialise as a mechanism to support their emotional wellbeing

**Our Befrienders *cannot* provide support with:**

-Alcohol or substance addiction therapy

-Completing benefit forms or making appeals

-Mental Health advocacy or any other formal advocacy

-Housing issues, homelessness or floating support needs

-Home visits or domiciliary care

-Transportation to or from appointments or other activities

-Shopping or regular essentials

-Supporting passport, visa or right to remain issues

-Legal advice

**IMPORTANT TO NOTE.** **The befrienders are unable to provide (clinical) support to clients with:**

-Living with a severe mental health diagnosis

-Experiencing psychotic episodes

-Being treated for addictions

-Receiving treatment from Community based NHS mental health teams, as well as

those who have been sectioned in the last 6 months

Any queries regarding referrals to **Barnet Friends**, please contact the team at:

**020 8016 0016,** or via email**:** befriending@cbplus.org.uk

Out of hours, you can leave a message and a member of staff will return your call as soon as possible during office hours (9-5 Monday to Friday)

Further details and details about the service can be found on our [website](https://cbplus.org.uk/portfolio-items/barnet-friends/).

**Referral criteria:**

-Age 18-55

-Living, studying or working in Barnet

-Experiencing low self-esteem and socially isolated, or lonely

-We **do** support clients with undiagnosed or low to moderate mental health diagnosis

-It is important that **the client’s consent** is obtained prior to a referral, and that they are willing to participate in the assessment process, and commit to a regular weekly call with a Befriender

**Who can make a referral?**

Provided that befriending client consent is given, referrals are accepted from:

-Self-referral

-GP

-Social Prescribing Link workers/ navigators

-Any other professionals

-Non-for-profit charity sector organisations

We would encourage you to consult with your client and obtain their consent to the referral being made, being clear with them about the expectation to commit to appointments made. We ask that the referral form is completed properly and fully.

Referrals are accepted via a completed referral form which is available on our [website.](https://communitybarnet.org.uk/portfolio/barnet-befriending)

Please note that we accept referrals via secure email: befriending@cbplus.org.uk

**Adult Safeguarding:**

If you are concerned that an adult is at risk of harm (physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect), you **must** report it.

**Contact Social Care Direct**

Tel: 020 8359 5000 (9am- 5pm, Mon to Fri), or 020 8359 2000 (out of hours)

Email: socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk; If the danger is immediate, always call the police on **999.**