



About Buckinghamshire Mind

We are Buckinghamshire Mind, the mental health charity. Our vision is that everyone with a mental health problem gets both support and respect.

We deliver high quality community-based services across Buckinghamshire and East Berkshire to reach out and ensure everyone with a mental health problem gets access to the help they need.

We are affiliated to national Mind and proud to play our part in the local Mind network. Together we are Mind. Open, caring, experienced, unstoppable, together.

Buckinghamshire Mind is run by local people for local people and is responsible for its own funding and the services it provides. To donate or fundraise for us, please visit www.bucksmind.org.uk/support-us



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Buckinghamshire Mind is affiliated to national Mind and is quality assured under the Mind Quality Mark.

Buckinghamshire Mind (The Buckinghamshire Association For Mental Health) is a Registered Charity (No: 1103063) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (No: 5000185)



Telephone Befriending Service



What is Telephone Befriending and who can access this service?

Telephone Befriending is just one of a range of services offered by Buckinghamshire Mind. A successful, trusting Befriending partnership can encourage you to feel more confident about forming relationships in the future and reduce a sense of isolation. If you are over 18, experiencing mental health difficulties and perhaps find it hard to leave the house to meet someone, Telephone Befriending may be the right service for you.

What does a Telephone Befriender do?



When face-to-face services were interrupted due to the pandemic, many people found that phone calls provided a lifeline during the week. We are therefore continuing to provide this service alongside our usual Befriending Service. Volunteer Befrienders and service users usually speak over the phone once a week for 20-45 minutes. It is

up to you what you and your Befriender talk about. However, please bear in mind that our volunteers are not mental health professionals. They are there as someone to talk to. They will listen with empathy and without judgement.

What happens after I have been referred to Telephone Befriending?

Once we have received your referral form, a Befriending Coordinator will contact you to arrange the completion of a support plan. This will involve asking some questions about your circumstances and getting to know you and how we can support you based on your needs. This is also

an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the service and let us know of any concerns you may have. Your Coordinator will let you know when they have found you a volunteer Befriender and will arrange for them to contact you.

How long will I have to wait for a Befriender?

This depends on the volunteers we have available. We need to make sure that we find the right Befriender for you, so we look for someone who is most suitable based on the information you shared with us on your support plan.

How will you protect my confidentiality?

Any information that you give us will be treated confidentially and will not normally be passed on to any outside agency without your permission. Information shared between service users, volunteers and support workers remains confidential. However, if we become aware of any risk to your own or anyone else's safety, then it might be necessary to break confidentiality.

Will the Befriender be able to understand my difficulties?

All our volunteers attend training, have a DBS check and provide two references. We only select volunteers who we have established are suitable for the role.

How will my Befriending start?

Your Coordinator will contact you once they have found a Befriender for you and will arrange the first phone call. Please be mindful that it can take some time for you to start feeling comfortable with your Befriender and to get to know them. We want you to enjoy your calls and so if, after couple of weeks, you feel that this is not working for you, please speak to your Coordinator.

You may use your first phone call with your Befriender to get to know each other a little. After the first phone call the Coordinator will ring you to check how your call went, whether there is anything you need to discuss with them and if you would like to continue. After this meeting, your Coordinator will check in periodically to make sure your Befriending partnership is going well. If you want to, you can call your Coordinator to let them know how things are going.

How long will I have a Befriender for?

If all goes well, you will receive calls once a week for around six months. Six to eight weeks before your last meeting your volunteer and Befriending Coordinator will remind you and start to prepare you for the end of the partnership.

What are my responsibilities as a service user?

- Respect your Befriender and staff (Buckinghamshire Mind does not tolerate any forms of discrimination).
- Respect boundaries such as not contacting your Befriender out of arranged hours or asking for their sensitive information.
- You should not be under the influence of recreational drugs or alcohol during phone calls.
- To the best of your ability, to commit to your weekly agreed phone calls.
- Report to your Coordinator any issues.
- Update us of any changes in your address, GP details and circumstances.
- Please inform your Befriender or Coordinator if you wish to terminate your partnership.