



Kingdom Companions Befriending

FAQs and Referral Guidance

What is Kingdom Companions? What could it offer me or someone I am working with?

Kingdom Companions is a short-term, goal specific befriending service for people living in Fife, aged 18 or over. The service aims to support lonely and isolated adults in Fife who would like to reengage in their local community with the gentle support and encouragement of a volunteer befriender. The service matches a befriender with a volunteer who work together towards achieving a personal goal for the befriender. The goal is agreed by the befriender, volunteer and coordinator prior to the beginning of the sessions.

Befriending with Kingdom Companions can take place anywhere in the community. Some befriending matches choose to meet at a different venue each week, others embark on a tour of local community groups until they find a suitable group for the befriender whilst others have been known to put on their walking boots and enjoy weekly walks together. The setting of the befriending is up to the befriender and volunteer and is often dependent on the befriender's goal as well as the capabilities of both parties. The maximum duration of a befriending match with Kingdom Companions is 4-6 months.

Our project is fully insured, all staff and volunteers are trained, and we have robust risk management processes in place to ensure a safe, beneficial experience for befrienders and volunteers.

Can befriending be extended beyond 6 months?

Kingdom Companions is a time-bound befriending service. As above, the aim is to provide short-term support to assist individuals to achieve specific goals which are agreed upon prior to the start of the befriending. The Befriending Coordinator works with the befriender and volunteer throughout the match to ensure that the befriender is happy with the support they are receiving and are progressing with their goal. A befriending match will not be extended beyond 6 months. We are happy to assist in signposting befrienders to other services who may be able to offer additional support at the end of a befriending match if required.

Can you support someone with complex mental health needs?

No, unfortunately, our staff and volunteers are not trained to provide specialised support for someone with a complex mental health condition. We are always happy to suggest services that may be a more suitable fit to meet someone's needs.

Are there age limits for referrals to Kingdom Companions?

The minimum age of befriender is 18. There is no maximum age, however we are looking to support individuals independently reintegrate into the community.

I suffer from a condition meaning I have limited mobility and use a mobility scooter when I am not at home. Can I apply for befriending?

Absolutely! Our volunteers are not permitted to carry out tasks such as moving or handling (i.e. they are unable to push wheelchairs), however several of our previous befriendees have used mobility scooters.

Rather than going out in the cold, I would prefer to meet a volunteer in my home and chat every week- can this be arranged?

The aim of Kingdom Companions is to help socially isolated or lonely people reintegrate into their local community and is not a home-based befriending service. We would be happy to suggest another organisation who offer home-based befriending.

Could a volunteer drive me to a café or to the shops?

Volunteers meet their befriendees in the local community, for example in a community café, at a local craft group or meet outdoors to walk together. Our volunteers are not insured to drive their befriender during their befriending match as this does not support or future proof the befriender's independence for after the conclusion of the match. Volunteers and befriendees may choose to use public transport to travel locally together.

Can I refer someone who lives in a care home?

Due to funding, Kingdom Companions is unable to provide befriending services to anyone who lives in a residential care setting.

We are happy to assess applications for those living in sheltered housing on a case-by-case basis.

Referral process:

How do I refer myself or someone I am working with to Kingdom Companions?

Please send an initial enquiry to befriending@fva.org or call 01333 433697. We will arrange for an application to be sent to you either by e-mail or by post.

Once I have referred someone to Kingdom Companions, how long will it be before they are matched with a volunteer?

Once we receive the referral, we aim to contact the befriender for an informal chat within ten working days. If the referral criteria has been met the Befriending Coordinator will arrange a convenient time to meet with the befriender who has been referred. Following this meeting, if the Befriending Coordinator is satisfied that the befriender is an appropriate candidate for Kingdom Companions they will be added to the waiting list.

If the referral criteria has not been met for any reason we will be happy to suggest services that may be a more suitable fit to meet someone's needs.

Will I receive an update about my referral?

Once your referral has been received, it will be reviewed and an update will be provided to the referrer within ten working days. If the application meets the referral criteria, we will be in touch with the person who has been referred to arrange an initial visit with the Befriending Coordinator.

Is there a waiting list to be matched with a volunteer?

Yes, as with most other local befriending services there is currently a waiting list. The Befriending Coordinator will advise on the approximate length of waiting list at the initial meeting/call.

How can I volunteer to support this project?

We would be delighted to talk to you about becoming a volunteer with Kingdom Companions.

Please contact the Befriending Coordinator either on 01333 433697 or via e-mail: befriending@fva.org who can arrange to send you FVA's Befriending Handbook which provides an overview of the role.

Any Other Questions?

If your question has not been answered, please either e-mail: befriending@fva.org or call 01333 433697 for more information.