



What is the Brighter Futures Project?

Brighter Futures is a Mental Health Foundation pilot peer mentoring service for isolated older people in the community working with three project partners. (Better Government for Older People in South Lanarkshire, Glasgow Association for Mental Health and Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health).

Brighter Futures is funded through Big Lottery Fund's Life Transitions area of investment to run for a period of two years.

The aim is to significantly improve the quality of life of older people, enhancing their social networks, mental health and enabling meaningful activity.

The project is managed by Mental Health Foundation and delivered throughout East Renfrewshire by Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health, who is one of the three project partners.

The Brighter Futures project consisting of a number of advisory groups including: a learning network, a national Reference Group and local groups and an Older People's Involvement Group.

Within each partnership there is a Brighter Futures Volunteer Co-ordinator whose role is to recruit, train and supervise a team of volunteer peer mentors who will deliver a mentoring service tailored to the needs of older people as part of the Brighter Futures project.

Brighter Futures in East Renfrewshire is based within the Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health (RAMH) Barrhead office and is committed to achieving the project aims.

What is Brighter Futures peer mentoring?

Mentoring is a one to one relationship based upon trust, confidentiality and mutual involvement.

Mentoring works particularly well with people who are at risk of exclusion from society and as part of voluntary and community schemes helping people to play a full part in their communities.

What does a peer mentor do?

A Brighter Futures volunteer will be able to use the skills and experience they have built up during their lifetime to help an older person become less isolated and enhance their mental health and well-being.

This will involve supporting an individual to achieve their identified goals.

The volunteer will visit the matched participant on an agreed basis and support them to participate in opportunities and activities of interest to them, thus enabling them to become more actively involved in their community.

Want to Peer Mentor Volunteer?

Questions to ask

Are you thinking about volunteering? Here are a few questions to ask yourself before you agree to become a volunteer with us.

- Do I really want to do voluntary work
- Do I feel I am being pushed into volunteering
- Am I ready to take on and carry through a voluntary commitment
- How well do I relate to other people

- What would I like to get out of doing voluntary work
- How long do I want to remain a volunteer
- Do I have any particular ideas about what I would like to do
- Do I have any expectations about volunteering

Volunteer profile

There are many different qualities that volunteers can bring to our work. These are just some that are important to us – do they describe you?

We need volunteers who are:

- Reliable
- Sensitive
- Understanding
- Interested in people
- Flexible
- Supportive
- Comfortable working as part of a team
- Able to work under their own initiative
- Willing to undergo training
- Friendly
- Good sense of humour
- Dedicated and committed
- Honest and trustworthy
- Caring

Benefits of Volunteering

Voluntary work can offer you many benefits as well as assisting your personal development

Voluntary work can sometimes offer you:

- Work experience

- Recognition that you have something to offer others
- The chance to acquire new skills
- A reference
- An awareness of the difficulties other people face
- Social contact
- Active involvement in the community
- A challenge
- A sense of achievement and satisfaction of doing something worthwhile
- Something to occupy or fill your time
- A chance to give something back to the community
- Growth in self-confidence

Volunteer rights and responsibilities

In engaging volunteers we recognise the right of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- Respect confidentiality and privacy
- Be shown appreciation
- Have safe working conditions
- Be insured
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are
- Be paid out-of-pocket expenses
- Be trained and receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development
- Be free from discrimination
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- Ask for a reference
- Withdraw from voluntary work

Selection process

When an initial interest has been expressed all potential volunteers will be invited for an informal interview.

An application will be issued and expected to be completed within 2 weeks. This gives us a written record of your details and motivations behind volunteering, as well as clarifying available days and times. Two references will be taken up to seek your suitability for volunteering. Please note that you can request assistance from the Volunteer Co-ordinator if you are having difficulty in completing the application form.

After the application form is completed and returned you will be asked to come back to the office and complete a Disclosure Scotland check. For this check you will be required to bring 3 forms of identification which will be confirmed by the Volunteer Co-ordinator.

You will be invited to attend an induction training course after which you will meet with the Volunteer Co-ordinator to discuss how you felt about the training, if you would still like to volunteer and whether it is appropriate for you to commence volunteering. If so, you will be offered a volunteer agreement which both parties will sign.

Please note: If references and disclosure results contain information that we feel would deem you unsuitable for volunteering with vulnerable individuals you will not be invited to work with the project.

Volunteer Status

As a volunteer with Brighter Futures, you will be a highly valued member of our team and your contribution will be very much appreciated by the project, the partners and forum members.

We believe that volunteers should be at the core of the project and we place great importance on ensuring each volunteer is happy and content while working with the project.

We recognise the wealth and diversity of skills volunteers can bring to both our project and to the older people community in general.

The importance of volunteers to RAMH:

- Volunteers extend our capabilities as they enable us to achieve our aims and objectives by undertaking task actions and provide support to the project team.

- Volunteers provide RAMH with a wide range of skills, talents, abilities and experiences.
- Volunteers raise our profile in their own groups and societies and with other older people in the community.
- Volunteers bring passion and enthusiasm to the project.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss becoming a volunteer with the Brighter Futures project, please contact:

Laura Griggs on 0141 881 8811 or 0755 424 7972 or via e-mail laurag@ramh.org

