

LIF Befrienders



Photo: fairshares.org.uk

*Companionship for
people on their own*



Luton Irish Forum

Welfare Support and Social Opportunities for everyone

The LIF Befriending Service

Luton Irish Forum's Befriending Service helps to relieve social isolation experienced by local people. Our volunteers visit people at home on a regular basis. It is a free service and available to local residents who feel socially isolated.



Photo: Vol Centre Westminster

All our volunteers are DBS checked (for criminal record, etc). They receive comprehensive training before becoming a befriender and ongoing support and training during the period of their befriending. For everyone's safety, all visits are arranged in advance, our volunteers carry identification and visit in pairs.

What our Befrienders can do

- ✓ Visit you at home to provide company and a listening ear.
- ✓ Accompany you on a walk, even if it's just 'round the block'.
- ✓ Assist with completing official forms, e.g. applications for a Blue Badge.
- ✓ Get a few essentials or 'top-up' your grocery shopping.
- ✓ Accompany you to take part in a local activity or social group.
- ✓ Provide information about other services that may be helpful to you.
- ✓ Assist with preparing meals and/or hot drinks.
- ✓ Collect items from the local pharmacy.
- ✓ Accompany you to an appointment, e.g. doctor or hospital.

PLEASE NOTE: While befriending can make you feel less lonely, it is a service provided by volunteers and it is not the same as having a friend visit or having a paid carer/home help.

What our Befrienders don't do

- X* Accept money or gifts from clients.
- X* Administer medication.
- X* Do your weekly shop.
- X* Clean your home, do housework.
- X* Provide personal care, e.g. dressing, washing or toileting.
- X* Provide lifts or transport using their vehicle. Any journey should be made on public transport or by taxi.
- X* Lift or move heavy objects.
- X* Become involved in personal affairs or family disputes.
- X* Give out their personal contact details.

How LIF Befriending works

Local people can contact us themselves, or they may be referred. This can be by a family member who may not live locally, by an acquaintance, via a support agency or the local council.

We speak with the person referred to confirm that they would like a befriender, outline our service and to arrange an assessment visit. During this visit we listen to the potential client to learn what help they need, and to find out more about them so that we can match them with the most suitable befrienders available.



Photo: josh-appel-unsplash

Volunteer Befrienders are introduced to the client at a subsequent visit. All visits are pre-arranged at a time mutually convenient to client and befrienders. Our Volunteer Officer maintains regular contact with both the client and befrienders.

If the client or befrienders feel unhappy then or at any point with the befrienders or client allocated to them, those befrienders won't visit the client again; we will offer the client alternative befrienders and our volunteers an alternative client at the earliest opportunity.

How you can help



Volunteer - Volunteering not only helps others, it's also good for volunteers' wellbeing. If you can spare two hours a fortnight and are interested in being a Befriender, go to lutonirishforum.org/support-us/volunteer-today/ or get in touch with our Volunteer Officer at the address below.

Donate - Our befriending service is partially funded, the rest we make up from generous and kind people donating and fundraising for us. Please make a donation online at lutonirishforum.org/support-us, send a cheque or pop into the Forum.



Fundraise - Raising money for a good cause is the perfect excuse to try something you've never dared to, like abseiling or a parachute jump! You could hold a cake sale, organise a pub quiz, take part in a sponsored walk (or get the children do a sponsored silence!); whatever it is, link up with your friends, have fun helping us make life better for older people living near you.



Luton Irish Forum

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