**Female volunteers wanted to join our Befriending Service**

Swan Womens Centre’s Befriending Service is here to help women over 18 years old in Sefton who have become lonely or isolated due to barriers caused by their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Our Volunteers will support women in Sefton who are unable to fully engage in their community and who would like to take steps towards socialising and accessing services independently.

We are looking for female volunteers who are:

caring \*non-judgemental \* respectful \* good listening skills \* reliable \* positive communicators \* able to maintain confidentiality \*

Each woman using the service will be in regular contact with a volunteer who is committed to supporting them long term. We will aim for around 12 months; but we can shorten or extend that depending on each woman’s needs. By contact we mean:

* **Home visits to chat in a safe space**
* **Help with using public transport or going shopping**
* **Company during activities or hobbies**
* **Visiting Swan Women’s Centre to meet new people**
* **Meeting for a coffee**
* **Finding positive social activities** (for example photography clubs or walking groups)

Sometimes women using our service can struggle to attend appointments and meetings. This can hugely affect their emotional, physical and financial wellbeing. Our befrienders can accompany a woman to support appointments such as:

* **Medical appointments**
* **Appointments regarding welfare benefits**
* **Engaging in other services such as Citizen’s Advice Bureau or attending a food bank**
* **Meetings regarding housing or employment**

The service can also support women to attend activities at the centre i.e. counselling, holistic therapies and creative activities.

We offer support and training to all volunteers to prepare them for their role and enable them to develop new skills.

**Volunteer Role: Befriender (Female)**

**Reporting to – Befriending Coordinator**

**Location - Office in Linacre Road**

Swan Womens Centre Befriending Service is here to help women over 18 years old in Sefton who have become lonely or isolated due to barriers caused by their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Volunteer Befrienders will support women in Sefton, on a one-to-one basis, who are isolated, lonely or unable to fully engage in their community. You will help women to build confidence through home visits, practical support at appointments and positive communication.

Each volunteer will be committed to supporting a woman for around 12 months though this may be shorter or possibly a little longer, depending on the woman’s need.

We will provide comprehensive training and ongoing support to all volunteers. This will enable you to understand your role as a befriender as well as developing new skills.

Swan Womens Centre will provide ongoing learning opportunities for befrienders. We will provide space and time for individual supervision and group support within the Swan Womens Centre’s existing volunteer community.

**Responsibilities**

* Participation in induction and ongoing training
* Provide references and undertake a DBS check
* Agree to be matched with a woman in the community according to background, experience and interests
* Agree to meet with the woman on a weekly basis for approximately 2 hours per week for 6 months, after the initial induction & training period.
* Participate in supervision with Volunteer Befriending Coordinator every 6 weeks
* Work with the befriended person to identify their needs, wants, achievable goals and objectives and to help her to work towards these
* Complete visit reports and keep record of progress achieved by the service user for monitoring purposes and to ensure that the service is working well. These will be shared with the Volunteer Befriending Coordinator
* Provide support and encouragement to the woman you are supporting.
* Be empathetic to the challenges faced by the woman you support.
* Maintain confidentiality in accordance with Swan Womens Centre Policies and Procedures
* Participate in evaluation of the service, if required
* Adhere to Swan Womens Centre Policies & Procedures (available during induction)

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| **SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED** | **ESSENTIAL** | **DESIRABLE** |
| Empathetic and caring | **E** |  |
| Excellent communication skills | **E** |  |
|  Ability to commit 12 months to your role  | **E** |  |
|  Good time management and attendance  | **E** |  |
| Understanding of the needs of women facing challenges with their mental health/emotional wellbeing |  | **D** |
| Ability to work under direction and be able to make decisions.  | **E** |  |
| Willing to attend training, supervision, volunteer meetings as requested.  | **E** |  |
|  A positive and calm disposition. | **E** |  |
|  Basic I.T skills (Word, email)  |  | **D** |
|  Access to a mobile phone  |  | **D** |