



Sovereign Befriending Volunteer - Role Description

Responsible to: Volunteer Service Coordinator
Location: Mostly remote; some in-person opportunities
Hours: 2-3 hours per week plus monthly supervision

About Womankind

Womankind is an established charity run by women for women. We provide a range of confidential and accessible services in Bristol and the surrounding area. Every year we help hundreds of women to improve their mental health and well-being so they can experience a better quality of life.

This befriending service aims to provide consistent support to women in Sovereign Housing accommodation who are experiencing emotional distress, isolation, or domestic or sexual violence/abuse. Women may have faced difficulties including childhood abuse, trauma, sexual and domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence. Remote befrienders will offer emotional support, promote self-care and healthy lifestyle choices to improve wellbeing, help alleviate isolation, empower women who may be at risk of abuse, provide and model a healthy relationship, help women to gain in confidence and self-esteem, and generally contribute to women making positive, sustainable changes in their lives.

What will I be doing in this befriending role?

- Providing two phone/video calls per week, of up to an hour each **OR** one in-person visit of up to 3 hours
- Providing emotional support, including non-judgmental active listening
- Modeling and promoting positive, safe and healthy relationships
- Offering aspects of ordinary friendship, having a chat and promoting fun
- Helping women to think about self-care, healthy lifestyle and development of routine
- Supporting women to pursue interests/hobbies and opportunities
- Supporting and gently encouraging women to make changes to improve their lives
- Helping women achieve their goals and become empowered and independent
- Helping women to feel safer and more in control of their lives

What experience do I need?

Womankind provides comprehensive training and supervision, but it's helpful if you have some of the following skills and qualities:

- non-judgmental, reliable and patient.
- a good listener.
- enthusiastic and interested in helping someone regain confidence



- honest and friendly with good communication skills
- confident using the phone / video call technology
- able to calmly respond to the needs of the woman you are befriending, including managing a crisis situation

What commitment do I need to give?

- To complete all sessions of the Befriending Volunteering Training Program (home study and online sessions)
- To provide weekly calls / visits for 6 months – 1 year once you are matched (with some time off for holidays during this period)
- To receive individual supervision and attend group supervision with your fellow volunteers online, monthly.
- To follow Womankind's guidelines, policies and procedures including Safeguarding, Equalities and Confidentiality policies

What you will gain as a volunteer

- A really rewarding experience and opportunity to make a positive difference in the life of another woman.
- Comprehensive in-house training that has been developed over 27 years, enabling you to develop new skills and broaden your knowledge. The training is trauma-informed and covers active listening skills and specific issues such as mental health, sexual and domestic abuse, boundaries and endings. It also covers essential organisational and befriending policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Valuable experience of providing support and using active listening skills in a specialist (women's) mental health setting
- Support and supervision
- Out of pocket expenses
- On-going training and opportunities for personal development and progression
- Becoming part of a group of fellow volunteers with similar interests

We welcome volunteers with lived experience of the issues faced by our service users (e.g. struggles with mental health and/or experiences of abusive relationships), although we do ask that you have been in a period of stability for at least one year before taking on this role, as it is emotionally demanding.