



VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND
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OPEN Peer Mentoring Project – Recruitment and Referral Information

OPEN Peer Mentoring Project will be piloted for one year starting on October 1st 2018.

Our Mission Statement: *“Strive to enable mentees to achieve their full potential and gain confidence to take control of their pathway, through providing guidance, support, and encouragement from mentors that are of similar age or with similar shared experience in a safe and understanding environment”.*

Recruitment and Referral of Mentors and Mentees:

Young people aged 14-25, namely those who are care experienced and/or in the youth justice system will be the primary beneficiaries of the Project, as mentors and mentees.

The Project will offer young people aged 14-18 a chance to build relationships with volunteer peer mentors aged 16-25. This will be achieved by using group mentoring ratios of at least 2:2.

Recruitment and referrals of Peer Mentors – aged 16-25

We are recruiting 6 to 8 young adults that want to commit one year to develop their personal skills, knowledge and understanding to become effective peer mentors. Young adults will be able to apply directly to the Project to become a peer mentor, completing the Mentor Application Form.

Recruitment and referral of Mentees – aged 14-18

Young people will be able to apply directly to the Project to become a mentee, as well as being referred, completing a Mentee Application Form.

Referral systems will be developed with Shetland Islands Council's Children and Families Services & Criminal Justice Social Work departments, Through Care After Care, Schools Services and Shetland's Who Cares? Scotland advocate.

Outcomes:

- Increased at least 6 young adult's confidence, skills and knowledge to become effective peer mentors, per year
- Peer Mentoring programme provided for at least 4 mentees, per year
- Improved advocacy and participation of mentees in decision making structures that affect their lives, LAC reviews, Children's Panel Hearings.
- Improved young people's self-esteem and coping mechanisms, with increased resilience leading to more fulfilling lives with full participation in society.



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Voluntary Action Shetland’s – OPEN Peer Mentoring Project and Shetland Befriending Scheme

We recognise that outcomes for each project are similar in some areas e.g. supporting vulnerable young people through providing developing positive relationships and developing their skills and abilities. However, there are differences between befriending and peer mentoring.

It is important to clarify the differences between the projects, especially in relation to making referrals.

The mentoring project criteria is very specific to care experienced young people and / or involved in the criminal justice system. Peer Mentors will be of similar age or with similar shared experience. Using group mentoring of at least 2:2 ratio. Mentors and Mentees will receive a significant level of support to participate in the project. Focusing on personal development through creating step-by-step targets to enable them to achieve their eventual goals.

The befriending project supports service users to get involved in the community to help them engage with others whilst building on their current skills and abilities. Much of the support is about increasing self-esteem, confidence and self-worth whilst also helping to reduce feelings of social isolation and loneliness. It could be about supporting them to try a new activity, re-kindling past hobbies or interests or it could be about supporting them to make positive decisions for themselves. Service users and volunteers are supported on a 6 weekly/3 monthly basis.

The Shetland Befriending Scheme

The key purpose of The Shetland Befriending Scheme is to offer a one to one support service to vulnerable young people and young adults aged between 7 and 18 and to vulnerable adults aged 16+ years of age. Recruited volunteers from the age of 17 years support individuals who can benefit from some additional input. Volunteers undergo initial training before being matched on a 1:1 basis with a service user. They meet up either once a week or once a fortnight for a few hours at a time over a minimum 6 month period and engage in a range of purposeful activities. Most meetings would be in the community however if there were any mobility issues, meetings can occur in the service users home.

DIFFERENCES	OPEN Peer Mentoring Project	Shetland Befriending Scheme
Mentor / Volunteer - Age	16 to 25 years	17 + years
Mentee / young person – Targeted Age	14 to 18 years - Care experienced/Looked After Child and/or involved in the youth justice system	7+ years - There are key criteria that has must be met to access the service. Contact the scheme for more info.
Timescale	12 months	6 to 24 months

If you are in any way not sure about what project to refer to please contact Una Murray Mentoring Project Co-ordinator on Tel: 01595 745074 or Lynn Tulloch, Befriending Project Co-ordinator on Tel: 01595 743907.



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