



Job Description - Befriending Assistant

Job title: Befriending Assistant
Responsible to: Befriending Manager

Background to the service

Ecas is an Edinburgh charity, established over 100 years ago. It is a company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of Directors and various committees and managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive. The charity works to improve the quality of life of physically disabled people in the Edinburgh and Lothians area: promoting equality, choice and participation through our activities, befriending service and grants.

The Befriending Service commenced in October 2007 and has a well-established number of 'matches'. The service has a different approach to the more traditional schemes and started in response to the increasing number of people with physical disabilities becoming isolated and lonely. Isolated people with a physical disability may be in their own homes, in assisted housing, in accommodation provided by a housing association or even in residential homes. Many lack the social intercourse they need; some would welcome the company of a volunteer who is not themselves disabled, others may seek the friendship and guidance of someone who is also disabled.

Ecas has approached the befriending service in two connected ways:

- by recruiting, training and vetting volunteers to meet befriendees in person
- by facilitating visits between isolated physically disabled people who are already friends or family and who would otherwise find it difficult to meet.

The scheme involves liaison with the Council, NHS and other charities. This has the added benefit of strengthening the links between the many charities working with those with disabilities.

The Befriending Assistant will, in support of the Befriending Manager, work with other organisations to recruit both volunteers and those who need the service. To provide a manageable geographic area the service operates only in Edinburgh, but with the flexibility to involve volunteers and clients from outwith that area in exceptional circumstances.

Principle Duties:

To assist the Befriending Manager in developing the Befriending Service for people with physical disabilities who live in Edinburgh.

To recruit volunteers and assist with the provision of training and ongoing support for each volunteer.

To help identify people with physical disabilities who could benefit from the service and provide ongoing support to them once they are involved.

To assist the Befriending Manager with all aspects of developing and evaluating the service including reviewing policies, carrying out risk assessments and writing reports.

Work alongside the Social Media and Website Coordinator to create content and promote befriending opportunities on social media and Ecas website, including activity around Befriending Week, Volunteer's Week and similar relevant events.

Support the Befriending manager in archiving volunteer and client files in accordance with Ecas' Data Protection Policy.

Detailed duties

To work closely with the Befriending Manager to recruit, train and support volunteers. This will involve liaising with organisations such as Volunteer Centre Edinburgh, EVOG, SCVO, CVS, the local councils and similar agencies.

To assist with the co-ordination and delivery of events which provide ongoing training and support to volunteers and/or clients, including volunteer days.

To work with organisations that will be able to identify suitable clients. These will include housing organisations, carers' organisations (VOCAL, EYCP), the Councils' social work and families' departments, NHS, residential homes and similar agencies.

To carry out regular support and review sessions with volunteers and clients on a 1:1 basis.

To carry out risk assessments for clients' homes and outings.

To liaise with the Befriending Manager on the 'matching' process and other detailed issues that may need careful consideration.

To liaise with the Ecas Administrator with regard to specific administration for the service, including disclosure checks and transport arrangements.

To attend any relevant staff training that Ecas recommends is necessary.

To publicise Ecas services, including classes, wherever appropriate.

To maintain effective administration records and filing relating to the service.

To be primarily self-servicing including word processing letters and reports, and assisting with administrative tasks such as developing training packs and client information folders.

As a member of a small office team assist in other reasonable tasks as required.

To comply with Ecas staff policies.

ECAS BEFRIENDING ASSISTANT
TERMS OF APPOINTMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED,
AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Terms of appointment

- The post is part-time for 17.5 hours per week. Although this is based on 2.5 days, the hours could be spread over more than 2.5 days; and the days of work will be discussed with the successful applicant. Ecas' policies operate a flexi-time system.
- The full time equivalent (fte) salary will be £28,330.92 and the salary paid will be *pro rata* based on 17.5/35 fte.
- There will be a probationary period of 6 months.
- Holiday entitlement is *pro rata* based on 30 (which includes statutory holidays) fte.
- There is an optional contributory pension scheme after 3 months. Candidates should note that Ecas will be subject to pensions auto-enrolment.
- The appointment will be subject to membership of the PVG Scheme.
- The appointment will be subject to medical checks.
- The place of work will be Norton Park, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh EH7 5QY.

Client home visits are an essential part of the role and some clients do not live in fully accessible accommodation. Whilst physical adjustments at a client's home are not possible, any other reasonable adjustments will be considered, where necessary. Lone working is sometimes required.

Essential qualifications, skills and experience

- Skills and experience of recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers.
- Knowledge and understanding of disability, social inclusion and equality issues.
- An understanding of the needs of those who are socially isolated or excluded, and a commitment to support them.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively with people at all levels, both verbally and in writing.
- Ability to maintain a professional manner whilst using tact and diplomacy.
- Ability to use own initiative and organise own work efficiently, in consultation with the Befriending Manager and Chief Executive.
- Computer literacy, including email, word and ability to update databases.
- Ability to travel throughout Edinburgh to visit clients at home (see note above regarding accessibility).

Desirable qualifications and experience

- Experience of working with people with physical disabilities, as an employee or a volunteer.
- Experience of a befriending, or similar, service either as an employee or as a volunteer.
- Experience of working in the voluntary sector.
- Experience of organising and delivering events.
- Experience of carrying out risk assessments.
- Knowledge of local areas around Edinburgh.

Candidates should note that whilst a relevant academic qualification may be advantageous, experience in recruiting, managing and supporting volunteers is essential. Candidates should take this into account when writing their covering letter.

Application process

To apply please send your C.V. with the names of two referees. Please also send a covering letter (preferably 1 side, but maximum 2 sides, of A4 with minimum 11 font) making clear how you meet the skills and experience required, and saying why you consider yourself suitable for the post. Referees will not be contacted until an offer has been made and accepted.

Completing the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form is entirely voluntary and will be used for analysis purposes only. The information supplied will be kept confidential and will not be forwarded to the recruitment panel.

We value diversity, promote equality and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds.

The closing date is 8am Monday 16th December and interviews will be held in person at Ecas' office in Norton Park on Thursday 9th January or Friday 10th January 2025, to be confirmed.

Please note: Late applications will not be accepted. Feedback can only be provided to applicants who reach the interview stage.

The Ecas office will be closed over the festive period from 3.30pm Thursday 19th December until Monday 6th January 2025.

Applications should be sent FAO: Sam Collins, Befriending Manager

Email: hello@ecas.scot

If you have any queries regarding the role please email sam@ecas.scot or call 07825 305 376