

Role Title	Volunteer Befriender – Crisis Café
Responsible To	Crisis Café Coordinator / Volunteer Coordinator
Commitment	Flexible volunteer shifts including evenings and weekends
Location	Richmond (Hampton Road) & Kingston (Alfriston Centre)

ROLE OVERVIEW

The Volunteer Befriender plays an important role in creating a warm, welcoming, and emotionally safe environment for individuals attending the Crisis Café. Volunteers provide compassionate, non-judgmental support to people experiencing emotional distress, loneliness, anxiety, or mental health challenges.

This role focuses on offering human connection, practical comfort, and emotional presence within a communal drop-in setting. Volunteers help attendees feel seen, heard, and supported during difficult moments.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Welcome individuals attending the Crisis Café in a calm and friendly manner
 - Support the smooth running of drop-in sessions within the communal café environment
 - Offer compassionate listening and emotional support to individuals experiencing distress
 - Provide refreshments such as tea, coffee, and snacks where appropriate
 - Help create a safe, inclusive, and non-judgmental atmosphere for all attendees
 - Encourage positive social interaction and reduce isolation
 - Maintain appropriate professional and personal boundaries at all times
 - Report any concerns regarding risk, safeguarding, or wellbeing to the Crisis Café staff team
 - Support with light practical tasks, including tidying communal areas and replenishing refreshments
 - Attend volunteer training, reflective practice sessions, and supervision as required
 - Follow all organisational policies, including confidentiality, safeguarding, equality, diversity, and health & safety procedures
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SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCE

We are looking for compassionate and emotionally aware individuals who are able to support others in a calm and respectful way.

Essential Skills and Attributes

- Strong listening and communication skills
 - Empathy and a non-judgmental approach
 - Self-resilience and emotional awareness due to the nature of the role and exposure to distress
 - Ability to remain calm and supportive in emotionally challenging situations
 - Reliability and commitment to agreed volunteer shifts
 - Ability to work respectfully with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences
 - Understanding of the importance of confidentiality and boundaries
 - Teamwork and willingness to support staff and other volunteers
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Desirable

1. Lived experience of mental health challenges or supporting others (appropriately managed and supported)
 2. Previous volunteering or experience within mental health, wellbeing, community, or support settings
 3. Awareness of crisis support or community mental health services
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WHAT WE OFFER

- ☐ Induction and role-specific training (Suicide prevention and MHFA training)
- ☐ Safeguarding and confidentiality training
- ☐ Ongoing support and regular supervision from the Crisis Cafe team.
- ☐ Opportunities for reflective practice and personal development
- ☐ Experience within a supportive mental health and community setting

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This role may involve supporting individuals experiencing significant emotional distress. Volunteers are not expected to provide counselling or clinical advice, but are expected to offer compassionate presence, listening, and practical support within agreed boundaries.

The Crisis Café is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion and welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds and communities.

All volunteers are subject to an enhanced DBS check and must complete mandatory safeguarding training before commencing this role

If you are interested in applying or would like further information on volunteering with us, please email our Volunteering Team volunteering@rbmind.org click on the QR code or call 07849 090901

Thank you for your interest in Richmond Borough Mind

