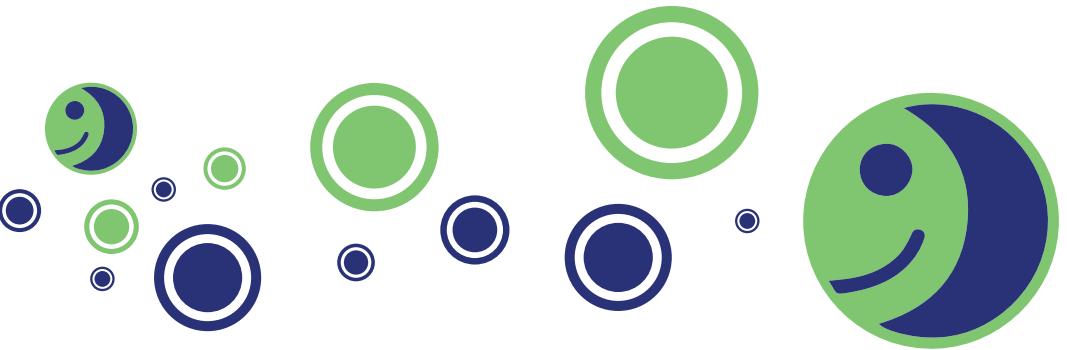




The No. 1
Be-friending
Agency

Supporting people to live fuller, happier lives



Impact Report 2018-2019



While it is true that older people have less opportunities and sometimes not much else to contribute to life, it is also true that this is because they have at this stage of their lives turned their opportunities into realities and lived out values that are now assets in their lives and those of others. That is the deeds done, the love given, and hardships often suffered with courage and head held high. Nobody can take this experience away from them. It is us, who are younger and consider ourselves to still have potential, who can learn so much from spending time with older people. That's why I see befriending as a way to receive and not only as a way to 'volunteer', i.e. to give. While you give the gift of time, you receive the gift of experience and in many a case, absolute wisdom.

Through personal experience, I have found that the wisdom and wider perspective I receive from befriending and supporting the community simply cannot be taught, it must be experienced. I see how friendships are formed through befriending, in some instances creating long-lasting intergenerational bonds and forging

the barriers that age, culture and experiences create. In this day and age, where increasingly more barriers are erected between people, these connections that we have helped form are very valuable, and something we are very proud of.

The No.1 Befriending Agency was formed to support people experiencing loneliness or isolation, and we focus on creating connections and building confidence in and through the people we work with. In the past three years, we have progressed from having a handful of volunteers, and occasionally hosting events, to an organisation that is as young as it is dynamic, and extremely diverse. We have supported over 300 older adults referred to us through other community groups. We have so far contributed over 3100 hours of befriending to people who would otherwise have been lonely or isolated.



Over the last year, The No.1 Befriending Agency as well as The No.1 Care Agency has seen substantial growth in our presence and service delivery. Our profile has risen, and this is a testament to the great support received from our network of community organisations and funders.

We are proud to be the only social enterprise in Scotland that combines a bespoke care service with a befriending service, and even prouder that we are able to provide people with an opportunity to play a role in creating a more connected and caring society. Alongside these successes, there is the challenge of an ever-increasing ageing society and the growing need for our service to reach more communities across Scotland and the UK. We are committed to taking on that challenge with an aspiration to grow, learn and continuous evaluation. We aspire to truly be 'the number one' befriending and care agency.



Compassion

We value the individual and their needs.

Courage

We recognise that it takes courage to fight loneliness and isolation.

Happiness

We want to promote well-being and a sense of deep satisfaction for people we work with: our staff members, befrienders and clients.

Respect

We believe every human being is valuable and can make a meaningful contribution to the world, therefore deserves respect.

Independence

We promote freedom to live life to the fullest.



Facts and
Figures...



Number of befriending matches: **43**

Number of clients supported by Telephone Befriending: **18**

Number of referrals: **110**

Number of volunteers:



One-to-one befrienders: **43**

Telephone befrienders: **3**

Drivers: **5**

Group befrienders (who have come to at least one group event a year): **30**

Number of paying clients: **16**

Number of befriendeds who attended our group befriending events: **90**

Number currently on our waiting list for befriending: **53**

Number of people who attended our volunteer trainings:

Induction Training for volunteer befrienders: **76**

Telephone Befriending Training: **3**

Dementia Training March 2019: **20**

Total hours of one-to-one befriending: **1690**

Total number of hours since 2016: **3107**



What do
we do?





2018-2019 Another year of friendship

We have an active community of volunteers, befriendeds and staff members that strives to bring the values of befriending into our everyday lives. This report was put together to showcase some of the work we do – but of course what it can give is only a taster of the multitude of stories of kindness and friendship that no one can really tell but the people who have experienced it.

This report starts with a bit about our group befriending activity, with some of the feedback the attendees provided, which is followed by a section on one-to-one befriending, with details on its impact as told and experienced by befriendeds and befrienders. We also provide an overview of our highly regarded care service, followed by an update on significant events this year in our community (What's new?). We close with a report on our accounts this year, and the final thoughts of a list of people who have closely followed what had been happening with our wee organisation.

1. Cup of Friendship

Our popular tea parties, called “Cup of Friendship” events started in September 2017 and take place monthly in Maryhill Hub, in the West End of Glasgow. In many cases, these community events are the only occasions for the attendees to get out of the house that month. Many older adults are forced to be always between four walls due to mobility issues, which can be boring, to say the least, but can take its toll on mental health as well.

On these events, we have a cup of tea with cakes and biscuits and our volunteer musician, Arthur, plays some classic tunes so everybody can sing along. We also strive to make each occasion unique and interesting: we have quizzes, arts and crafts sessions (thanks to a lovely volunteer, Gilian), as well as Body Boosting Bingo with Age Scotland, chair exercises, table games, and the list goes on.

Apart from Maryhill, this year has seen the launch of a new Cup of Friendship project in Yoker in partnership with Yoker Parish Church, called Friends in Yoker. More details in the What's new section (page 20).

“

I love the company and getting out of the house, and mixing with other people.

”

“

I feel better because I have something to look forward to.

”

‘Some of the things the attendees said:’

“It’s my lifeline.”

“There is a lovely atmosphere for people who are lonely. It’s easy to make friends here.”

“What we enjoy the most is meeting and talking to new people, and getting out of the house. Not watching television!”

“I really look forward to this each time. Otherwise, you are just sitting in the house 24 hours a day. All the volunteers are nice and do a wonderful job. I’m confident that if anything happened to me here, they’d know what to do.”

“My family have also noticed that I am happier. I have something now to look forward to. I was getting depressed. It makes a big difference.”

“I thoroughly enjoy every minute.”

2. One-to-one befriending - Impact (after six months)?¹

Less lonely

100% of our clients felt less lonely since the visits have started.

“My befriender is a good friend who cheers me up.” Douglas

“I don’t feel as lonely now. Even if I get lonely, I know I can look forward to Tuesday afternoons.” Maisie

“I look forward to the visits. Before, I felt really isolated and cut-off and you start thinking ‘I had a life. But maybe it was all a dream.’ And now there is a human being who is interested, and you are like ‘maybe I’m not fit for the bin.” Karen

¹Based on a survey with clients matched for longer than 6 months



More confident

87.5% of our clients said they felt more confident since the visits have started

"I feel more confident, yes. I can talk to Zoe. An example is: I got a rash some time ago, and Zoe told me to see the doctor, I wouldn't have bothered if she hadn't said to me."
Betti

"[My befriender] gave me the confidence to actually speak to people." Becky



“

I could not go out, my eyes are so bad. We go out together.

Barbara

”

Empowered

69% of our clients said they could do things with their volunteer that they would not be able to do alone

"[Having a befriender] it gets me out and about, it is very good for me. I'm moving forward [with settling in after moving] and Frances [her volunteer] has a lot to do with that. It made such a difference for me." Morag

"They go out into the garden together [the client and befriender] which is great. This is quite unusual for her, she does not go out with anybody else." Client, Alice's son

"I know Eilidh likes listening to me."
Mary

“

It has been an opening door, like having a family. It makes you feel alive again.

Georgina

”

More connected

81% of our clients said that they felt they have developed new friendships and connections as a result of befriending

“What I enjoy the most is the feeling that I’ve made a friend. We can talk about anything and say anything to each other.” Maisie

“I cannot go out alone, and we go out with Andrea [the volunteer] to a local café and we meet people from the area. I get to see the local shops and get to know the local people. We have even met a famous person in one of the cafes!” Marion



Supported

100% of our clients said they felt valued by our staff members and volunteers.

“Lovely people, who are so caring and helpful.” Becky

“Caroline always checks in, there is a real desire to make sure that the befriending is going well.” Client, Alice’s son

“I haven’t needed any help, but if I did, I know Jackie would be able to support me and would know how.” Anne





Our case
studies...



Evelyn:

I always look forward to seeing people who come to see me, but there is just something special about I. (the volunteer) I enjoy the time we spend together. I really like having somebody to talk to outside of my family, because there are some things you can't talk about with your family. I used to go around for weeks without a shower and washing my hair, and now I get somebody to wash my hair. I don't go outside at all, but one day we did go out together and stood in front of my door. For years, I had a fear of strangers, and look at how comfortable I am talking to you now! Gail [our volunteer coordinator] made me feel so relaxed. The main benefit of the service I think is that for people like me it's important that somebody makes sure that they are okay and that somebody cares.

I. (the volunteer) It's a Godsend. Having a befriender is better than any antidepressant!

Coordinator:

Evelyn self-referred to the befriending service. She was very open about her issues and was obviously very motivated to try to improve her situation, being very aware that spending too much time alone was detrimental to her wellbeing.

I had got to know I. a bit since she signed up to be a volunteer at a student fair and felt she and Evelyn would be well matched. They are both strong characters with humour, empathy and understanding for others.

Evelyn has told me that when she visits I. listens when she needs to talk, but also that she shares things, funny stories about her family, what's going on for her at work and university, and Evelyn appreciates this. Evelyn has told me that she normally prefers not to be touched, but that she instinctively wanted to hug I. one day when she was leaving, I think that illustrates the bond of trust between them.

Evelyn also told me that one sunny day they went to her front door and stood getting some air. Evelyn normally panics if she is at her door and cannot go out at all so for her to suggest that and manage to do it with I. was a big step.





Karen:

I look forward to the visits. Before, I felt really isolated and cut-off and you start thinking 'I had a life. But maybe it was all a dream.' And now there is a human being who is interested, and you are like 'maybe I'm not fit for the bin.' Having a befriender boosted my confidence. I used to be terrified of men, and when the phone would start ringing. But you start to believe in yourself.

Is there anything you would not be able to do if it wasn't for your volunteer?

A lot of simple things. The other day, I asked my daughter to help me change the sheets [Karen is disabled] which I would not have done before.

You find that you start believing in humanity again. I used to go like 'why bother'. Having company does so much for you and you learn from each other.

Coordinator:

Karen is housebound and cannot go out. She really appreciates having company and having somebody to talk to. She said several times that she needed to have company to feel normal, and having a befriender does exactly that. We are the only social life she has. Karen and her befriender have built a good relationship over time.

Befriender:

She is definitely more talkative now than she used to be, and is enjoying the company. I think she is more engaged with the outside world now, asking more questions. She seems to be more confident in conversations. We can talk very easily. We are both pretty comfortable with the befriending arrangement. As she is housebound, I just go over for a cup of tea and a chat. I'm also more confident now and find it easier to talk to people. Befriending has definitely helped my confidence.



Coordinator:

Sandra's main goal was to go outside and cross the road. They managed to go out a few times for shorter and longer walks, and the client was very pleased. They went to the post office together. She is very anxious, and she used to not go out on her own. She is really looking forward to the visits.

Sandra:

Z. is a lovely girl. I wish she could visit every day. We can just talk and talk. She is so unique. We have so much in common. We also go for a walk. I feel like a prisoner at home sometimes because of my illnesses and they stop me from going out. I've lost my confidence.

Befriender:

Whenever I'm leaving, Sandra has a smile on her face. It took me weeks to encourage Sandra to go out. Now, she has her jacket ready when I arrive. We are really close, with boundaries. I've noticed that she now sometimes puts make-up on for the visits. She knows about a lot of things, and she can offer a lot of guidance. We never run out things to talk about.



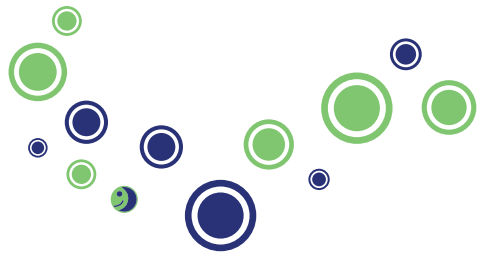
“

Befriending helped me in so many ways with my confidence and to go and try new things.

”



The No.1
Be-friending
Agency



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We are a Scottish Community Interest Company (CIC). Company Registration SC516418.



Impact on volunteers²

Developing skills

"You learn so much during befriending. It's very rewarding."

"I found this opportunity when I was at a point in my career when I needed more experience. So befriending has definitely helped me in my career. My volunteer coordinator is actually one of my references for the graduate job that I've applied for."

"Being an immigrant myself, I think befriending helps in the sense that how better to learn about the culture and history than from people who have experienced it. They have their stories and memories. And you get a taste of what it means to be Scottish which helps in adapting."

More confident

"I feel like I discovered a part of my personality that I never knew I had before, which is the ability to connect with someone no matter their age or their background. And this I think gives me more confidence in a social setting."

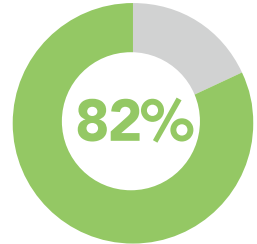
"Befriending helps with my confidence and anxiety."

More connected

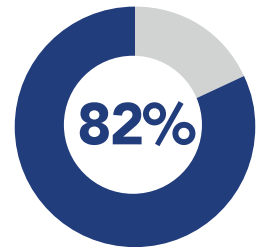
"My befriender and I live in the same area. Befriending makes you realise who else is living around you, makes you feel less separated from others."

"Befriending makes me feel more valued and as part of a community."

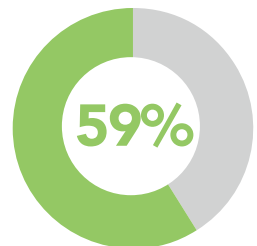
² Based on our volunteer survey (which had 19 participants) and volunteer focus group



of volunteers said volunteering has helped them gain new skills.



of volunteers said that volunteering has helped them in their personal development e.g. in increasing their confidence, or self-esteem



of our volunteers said they felt more connected to their community as a result of befriending.



Volunteer
stories...



Andrea

"I really look forward to each visit. I know Marion is waiting for me and I know I have to be there, and it really helped me with my anxiety and increased my confidence. I wouldn't have come into a café alone because of my anxiety, but befriending helps me with my social skills and being more confident. It makes me feel good about myself. I really enjoy the visits, and I get a lot of advice from Marion. I'm also meeting new people, which is a confidence builder. The neighbours see me and recognise me, and say hello. I used to be working as a carer, but haven't worked since I had kids. My oldest is 18 now. Volunteering really helped me to push myself, gain more confidence and experience, and as a result, I want to start working again as a carer, because I know I love helping others. Joanna (Joanna Tomzik, volunteer coordinator) is always there for me, and I know that I can call or text her anytime and she will answer as soon as she can."

David

We've recently said goodbye to one of our volunteers, David, who went home after studying in Glasgow and volunteering as a befriender to Terry.

He wrote about his experience: "First of all, the contact and communication with the Befriending Agency was fantastic. Gail really conveyed the feeling that she cares about me as a volunteer, which is great. Also, the training session in the beginning was an extremely positive experience. I did not know what to expect, but the atmosphere was so nice, a lot of super-friendly people and that made the training a lot of fun.

I visited an elderly gentleman named Terry. It was not always easy to keep conversations going in the beginning, but he opened up more and more with time and it was nice to see that he enjoyed me visiting him and the possibility to get out of his flat. From the beginning I understood that he was a very nice guy however he was lonely, and I hope I was able to help him a bit. Overall, it was always nice to visit him and to just talk.

I wanted to get involved with the local community and felt that during my studies it might be the last time that I have enough time to volunteer. Volunteering helped me to understand during all my stress with uni that there are more important things in life, and it helped me to stay open-minded. I grew a lot from this experience."



Care service overview

At The No.1 Care Agency we believe that everyone should have the chance to receive the care they need in the warmth, safety and familiarity of their own home.

We believe we have created a care service like no other. Using the expertise from our No.1 Befriending Agency, we ensure your loved one is matched with an experienced, vetted care professional that matches their specific needs, personality and life experience.

We provide 24 hour 7 days a week respite care cover for families and carers who need to take a break or in emergencies we are often able to respond quickly. Our goal is quality of care and not major growth in size.

Our glowing customer reviews are testament to our ability to provide friendly, reliable carers that families have grown to know and trust.

"A team of wonderful ladies cared for my stepfather and mother for nearly a year. They were endlessly caring, kind and gentle. All that you could hope for in looking after loved ones.

And more than that they were happy and fun and their company gave real pleasure to my stepfather and mother.

The care was provided in their home on a Scottish island, with a wildly erratic ferry service. The team was 100% reliable, staying on if their relief couldn't arrive and spending up to 2 days on the journey to ensure there was continuous cover." Rupert

"This small and deeply committed team has my wholly disabled mother at the heart of all they do. Extremely competent, skilled, understanding, patient and kind, they go above and beyond to manage her degenerating condition, ensuring her comfort, security and wellbeing." Candy

"Excellent care. I would HIGHLY recommend the agency. Each operative was tactful, polite, hard working, gentle and kind, and made the last months of my father's life in his own house possible." Katie



What's new?

This year has seen the launch of The No.1 Community Gospel Choir, that will support our organisation from its ticket revenues. Our team members and our dedicated supporters participated in fundraising projects, and we have raised £1554 which has been used to fund volunteer training.

- We launched a telephone befriending service this year, with great success. Our friendly volunteers phone a client for a regular chat creating a valued relationship and helping to improve self – confidence. The aim is to reduce our waiting list by referring clients to Telephone Befriending, reaching more clients and providing emotional support.
- We were awarded nearly £8000 from the Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, to expand our Cup of Friendship events into Govan and Cardonald areas, allowing us to develop a group befriending service for isolated people in those areas who are not able to attend other groups.
- In January 2019, we received the Quality in Befriending Award from Befriending Networks.





Great Scottish Run

Our team has run more than 100 kms altogether, and raised £440.

Volunteer events

We have community-building events for our volunteers every three months. This year, we had a 'Summer Soiree' a Winter Celebration, an office-warming party and a volunteer family picnic. Our Volunteer Star Awards took place in September.

Friends in Yoker

This year, we continued our partnership with Yoker Parish Church for the Friends in Yoker project. We have regular joint tea parties and four lovely volunteers.

Dementia training

Alzheimer Scotland kindly agreed to give a group of our volunteers a Dementia Awareness Training. 26 volunteers have attended this informative and important course and have all become 'Dementia Friends'.

Mandatory Training for Carers

We have introduced manual handling, basic life support and food hygiene training for our team of carers.

Georgina inspires us all

One of our lovely befriendeds, Georgina, who is a regular attendee of our Cup of Friendship events, crocheted a blanket with the help (and yarn-donation) of other regular attendees, that she has decided to donate to the Magpie's Nest, a homeless charity.



Working with the Scottish Refugee Council

Over the past months, we have developed a partnership with the Scottish Refugee Council. We now regularly attend their events to recruit volunteers, and have managed to recruit a great number of amazing volunteers, who are refugees or asylum seekers.

Ben Nevis fundraiser

Some of our staff members and a group of our supporters climbed Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Britain. The group grazed stormy weather and waterfalls on the way and climbed up 1300 meters while collecting £874 in donations. The group had also gone on 4 practice walks together in preparation for the big day on 31 August.



Accounts & Funders



Income by source

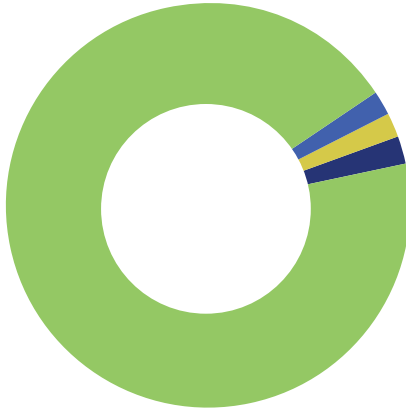




Expenditure by type

97%

Service delivery
(Salaries, event costs, volunteer expenses etc.)



1%

Audit & Accountancy

1%

Fundraising & Marketing

1%

Governance & Legal costs

Final
thoughts .





Some key figures in the organisation look back at the past year, and share their views on what lies ahead:

Pete, Board Member:

Statistics are clear: on the one hand, 9 in 10 people in Glasgow believe loneliness in older age is now “more likely than ever”. On the other, 7 in 10 Glaswegians say they want to help address the loneliness epidemic. The No1 Befriending Agency is ideally placed to channel the Glaswegians’ innate desire to help and address this urgent and growing problem. In fact, numbers for the Agency never looked better: as more and more volunteers join, more and more lonely older people see their lives transformed. This is a reason for happiness and pride for us on the Board. The one number that doesn’t look good, however, is funding, and this is a reason for major concern. We know what needs to be done to tackle social isolation, and we’re good at doing it, but donors have to be more forthcoming in order to ensure that we can keep functioning.

Tommy, Chair of our Advisory Board:

Like all social enterprises, The No.1 Befriending Agency faces an inherent conflict between pursuing our social mission and ensuring we’re a sustainable organisation. This state of flux is an ongoing challenge that has required us to continue to build close relationships with our key funders, such as the Robertson Trust, as well as looking to grow the commercial arm of the enterprise, The No.1 Care Agency. Developing this vital area of operations has proved formidable as we seek to not only find new service users but also to ensure that the care provided mirrors the values and ethos of our befriending services. As we move towards 2020, growing the Care Agency will prove vital to the organisation as a whole and will require the same hard work, positivity and cooperation to replicate the success of The No.1 Befriending Agency.



Caroline, Volunteer Coordinator:

The past year has been an exciting venture for the organisation.

As Volunteer Coordinators we are faced with many challenges but this year we have welcomed many positive changes.

The No.1 Befriending Agency over the past year has gained a fabulous amount of dedicated and compassionate new volunteers from all walks of life. We have managed to reach out to a diverse range of communities including asylum seekers and refugees, adults experiencing mental health issues and people looking for a steppingstone into employment. We believe that befriending not only benefits the clients we are supporting but improves lives for everyone involved.

Another exciting development for the organisation is our extended training programme for volunteers. This allows us to upskill the volunteers and increase their confidence when carrying out their role as a befriender. We have introduced Mental Health Awareness, Safeguarding and Protecting Adults, Bereavement Awareness and Equality and Diversity trainings.

The staff and volunteers over the past year have formed closer connections and are working well together as a team. We have joined forces to raise funds for the different No.1 projects: we participated in the Great Scottish Run, climbed Ben Nevis and are planning to take part in the West Highland Way. It has been a joy to build positive relationships with the volunteers and being able to recognise their invaluable input to the organisation.

I have great pleasure in turning up for work every day and I am very lucky to work with such a special team. We all hold the same desire for making positive changes in the world. I am confident that The No.1 Befriending Agency will go from strength to strength and we will continue to spread joy throughout Glasgow.



Joanna, Operations Manager:

It has been more than a year now since I joined The No.1 team. Through the year I had many opportunities to lead volunteers on their journey through all stages of the process, from receiving their initial enquiry, meeting them for the first time to the final matching with befriendees and providing ongoing support. It is extremely empowering to listen to their feedback after visits, and experience their dedication to deliver outstanding support and how befriending contributes to their personal development.

From the other side, working closely with befriendees I have been able to experience how they benefit from befriending visits. After recognising the need for support among clients on our befriending waiting list, we launched our telephone befriending project in June, where our dedicated volunteers call clients for a friendly chat weekly.

There is also great joy in attending our events with the house full of familiar faces. One of the befriendees told me recently: "I am on the wheelchair, my access to any events is so limited and I am very much looking forward to my monthly Cup of Friendship... it is the highlight of the day, of the week and even the month!"

Not everyone has the luxury of a family, and as human beings, we have a basic need for belonging. What I'm really proud of is that we are able to connect people and build strong relationships between our befriendees, befrienders and staff members. That's why every working day is so rewarding: it feels like being part of big family. Our team plays an important part in creating this atmosphere with its dedication, and willingness to go the extra mile to achieve our goals, share our vision and promote our services.

Going forward, we would like to continue building strong partnerships with organisations and individuals. We have secured further funding to expand Cup of Friendship events to two further areas of the city, Govan and Cardonald and we would like to continue to attract people from all backgrounds to come and volunteer; that includes professionals, refugees, students, and people from all walks of life who are currently out of work but potentially are looking for a route back to employment.

We hope you will catch a befriending bug too!