

## Volunteer Befriender

**Location:** Walsall

### **About the opportunity:**

We all like to go out with friends and have a good time as well create memories that we can cherish for a lifetime. Some of our service users rely on us to provide that experience as well as build links in the community that give them the confidence to independently get to know people and make friendships. Our befriending opportunity at Autism West Midlands gives you the opportunity to make a real impact in someone's life and help to provide them opportunities to make their own memories and friends.

Befrienders support adults with autism to do activities either at home or in the community, alongside another volunteer. Previous sessions have included going for a coffee or meal, cinema, theatre and concerts.

This professional relationship can be very rewarding for all involved.

One parent has said that her daughter "...had very little social contact outside of the family and really values the time she is able to spend with her volunteers"

One of our volunteer befrienders said: "I really enjoy befriending, and have found it to be fun, engaging and rewarding! It's a great learning experience, and I feel that I've gained a lot from it"

Befrienders will be matched with an adult with autism based on similar interests and availability.

Befriending sessions take place once or twice a month for up to 6 months. They can take place at any time and times are agreed with the service coordinator.

### **About Autism West Midlands**

Autism West Midlands, as the **leading charity** for autism in the region, use our passion and expertise to **enrich the lives** of people with autism and those who love and care for them.

We deliver a wide range of services to people on the autism spectrum including residential and supported living, offering a range of training and education services; family support and a helpline service.

Our volunteers are valued by all at Autism West Midlands and recognised as individuals who really make a difference to the people we support and make incredible memories with and for our service users.

### **What are we looking for?**

We are looking for volunteers who are confident and social and actively show an interest in helping others and giving back to the community. We require people who are interactive and social as well as reliable and responsible. We are looking for volunteers aged 18+ who have the ability to travel within Walsall.

**What can we offer you?**

Autism West Midlands are a specialist and expert provider and as such you will benefit from learning about Autism and engaging in different social activities alongside your peers and our service users. You will have regular feedback sessions with your co-ordinator in which areas of interest can be explored and discussed. A gathering of all our volunteers is also held every year as a way of us showing our appreciation for the invaluable work that you do.

**Practical Considerations:**

Out of pocket expenses for activities will be reimbursed. Travel expenses will be reimbursed, 45p per mile if travelling by car, up to the value of £10 per session.

**Places available: 20**

Find out more information and apply email [volunteering@autismwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@autismwestmidlands.org.uk)