

# Map of Gaps

A look at befriending service provision across Scotland

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Befriending  
Networks



This document comprises part of the 2014 Befriending Resource Pack, which is available on the Befriending Networks website. The complete pack contains the following:

1. Good Practice in Befriending-a comprehensive guide to befriending practice in the UK\*
2. Befriending Map of Gaps : a look at befriending service provision across Scotland
3. Square 1: Developing new befriending services\*
4. A summary of recent research evidence
5. The Quality in Befriending award
6. Befriending in Scotland-an overview of current practice.

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## Introduction

### **Map of Gaps (2010)**

Over the last four months, I have been working as an intern for Befriending Networks. The internship is run through Third Sector Internships Scotland, which is an internship scheme for students throughout Scotland run by the Open University, Queen Margaret University and the SCVO.

As an information intern, I have been working on a project for Befriending Networks 'Map of Gaps' of befriending services in Scotland. The research has found that there are significant gaps in befriending provision for specific groups and that there are disparities in befriending provision between local authority areas.

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### **Map of Gaps (2014)**

My six-month research and publications internship with Befriending Networks was also run through Third Sector Internships Scotland. Part of my role has involved updating the map of gaps to reflect current services in Scotland. The research has found that gaps persist for specific groups and between local authority areas.

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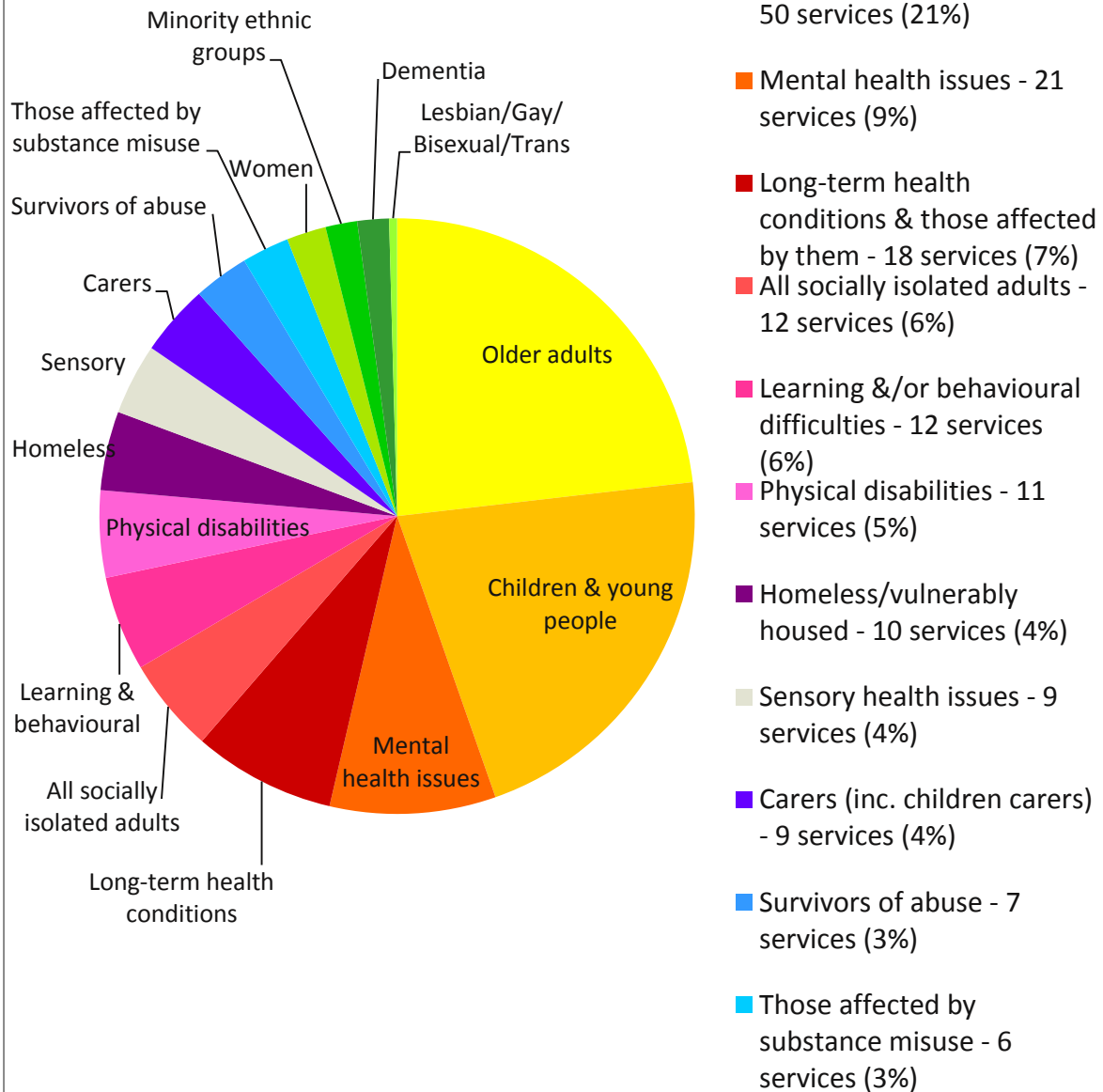
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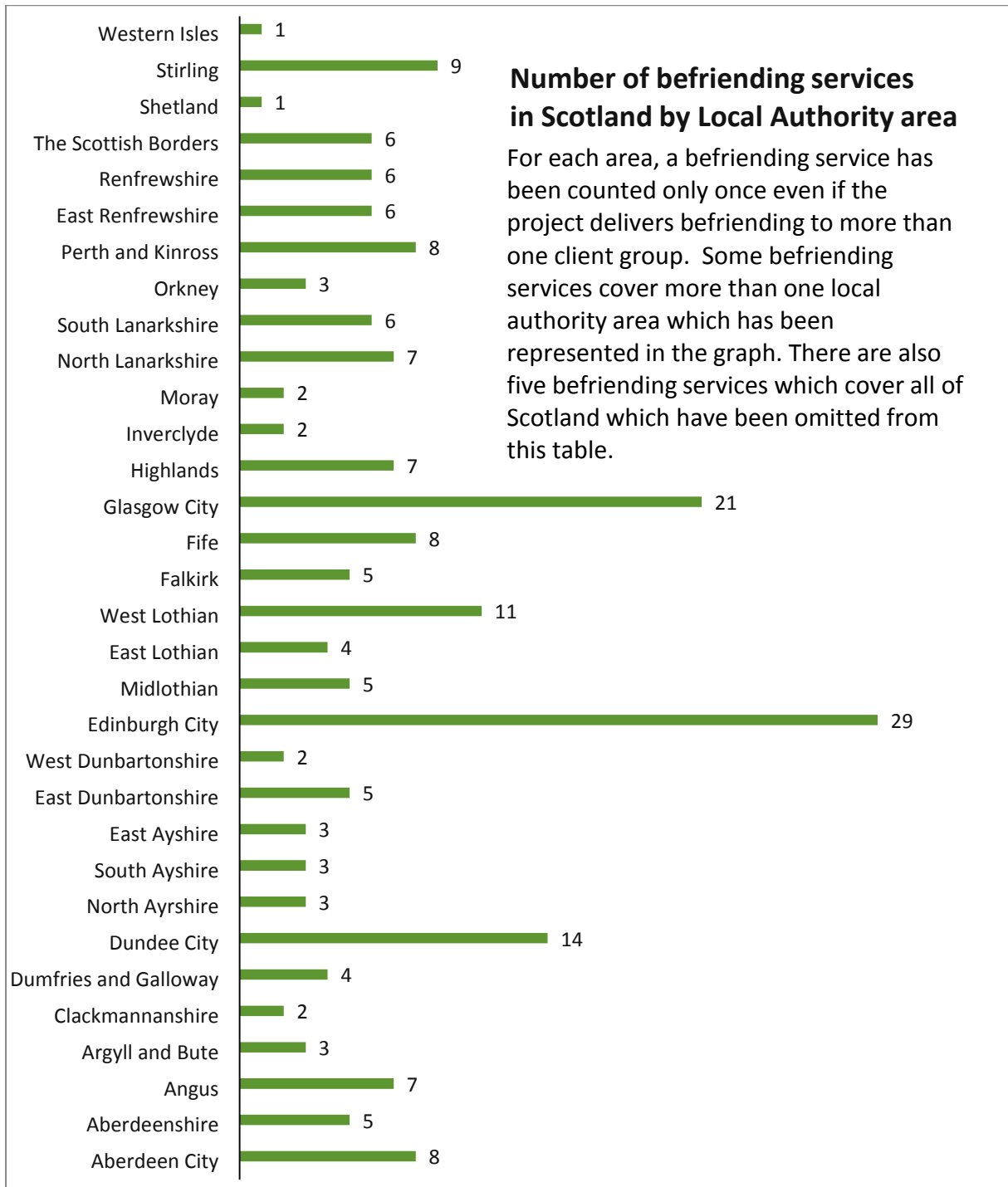
## Mapping the gaps

In order to map the gaps, a database of befriending services in Scotland was created through collating data from Befriending Network's member database and researching online for non-member services. The research has found that there are currently 186 befriending services in Scotland delivering befriending for 16 different groups. Some of the befriending services cover more than one group which has been represented in the pie chart below:

## Befriending services in Scotland by befriended group



With regards to the 32 local authority areas in Scotland, there are 206 befriending services available (this figure is higher as some of the projects also cover more than one local authority area). There are also five befriending services which cover the whole of Scotland provided by Independent Age Scotland, The Scottish Cot Death Trust, The Scottish Spina Bifida Association, In Care Survivors Service Scotland and The Meningitis Research Foundation. The majority of the services are currently members of Befriending Networks.



By combining the data sets, an analysis can be made of the service provision by befriended group in each Local Authority. As some services work with more than one befriended group, which is represented in the table, the totals for any area may be higher than the number of distinct services existing, as shown in the graph above. There are also five services which cover all of Scotland which have been omitted from this table:

Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriended group:	Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Angus	Argyll & Bute	Clackmannanshire	Dumfries & Galloway
Older people	6	1	3	2	0	1
Children and young people	1	1	1	1	2	1
Mental health issues	0	2	0	0	0	0
Long-term health condition	1	0	2	0	0	0
All socially isolated adults	0	0	0	0	0	0
Learning/behavioural difficulties	0	0	0	0	0	0
Physical disabilities	1	0	0	0	1	0
Sensory health issues	1	1	0	0	0	1
Carers (incl. young carers)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Survivors of abuse	0	0	0	0	1	0
Substance misuse issues	0	0	1	0	0	1
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0
Minority ethnic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dementia	0	0	0	0	0	0
LGBT	0	0	0	0	0	0



Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriended group:	Dunde e City	North Ayrshire	South Ayrshire	East Ayrshire	East Dunbartonshire	West Dunbartonshire
Older people	3	1	1	1	1	1
Children and young people	4	1	1	1	1	1
Mental health issues	3	0	0	0	0	0
Long-term health condition	2	0	0	0	0	0
All socially isolated adults	0	2	0	0	1	0
Learning/behavioural difficulties	1	0	0	0	0	0
Physical disabilities	0	1	0	0	0	0
Sensory health issues	2	0	0	0	0	0
Carers (incl. young carers)	1	0	0	0	1	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	0	0	1	1	0	0
Survivors of abuse	1	0	0	0	0	0
Substance misuse issues	2	0	0	0	0	0
Women	1	0	0	0	0	0
Minority ethnic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dementia	0	0	0	0	1	0
LGBT	0	0	0	0	0	0

Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriended group:	Edinburgh City	Midlothian	East Lothian	West Lothian	Falkirk	Fife
Older people	5	1	1	4	1	1
Children and young people	6	1	0	3	1	3
Mental health issues	4	1	2	2	1	2
Long-term health condition	5	0	0	0	0	1
All socially isolated adults	1	0	0	0	0	0
Learning/behavioural difficulties	2	1	1	2	0	0
Physical disabilities	2	0	1	0	0	1
Sensory health issues	2	1	2	1	1	1
Carers (incl. young carers)	3	0	0	0	1	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	3	0	0	0	0	1
Survivors of abuse	0	0	0	1	2	0
Substance misuse issues	1	0	0	0	0	0
Women	2	0	0	0	1	0
Minority ethnic	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dementia	2	0	0	0	0	0
LGBT	1	0	0	0	0	0

Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriended group:	Glasgow City	Highland	Inverclyde	Moray	North Lanarkshire	South Lanarkshire
Older people	5	2	0	1	3	3
Children and young people	5	0	0	0	1	2
Mental health issues	2	3	0	0	0	0
Long-term health condition	2	1	0	0	3	1
All socially isolated adults	0	0	1	0	0	0
Learning/behavioural difficulties	3	0	0	0	0	0
Physical disabilities	0	0	0	0	1	0
Sensory health issues	0	1	0	1	0	0
Carers (incl. young carers)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	2	0	0	0	0	0
Survivors of abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0
Substance misuse issues	2	0	0	0	0	0
Women	1	0	0	0	0	0
Minority ethnic	2	0	0	0	0	0
Dementia	1	0	0	0	0	0
LGBT	1	0	0	0	0	0

Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriender group:	Orkney	Perth & Kinross	East Renfrewshire	Renfrewshire	The Scottish Borders	Shetland
Older people	0	0	3	3	3	1
Children and young people	1	3	2	3	3	1
Mental health issues	1	0	1	0	1	0
Long-term health condition	0	2	0	1	0	0
All socially isolated adults	2	1	1	1	0	0
Learning/behavioural difficulties	0	2	1	0	1	0
Physical disabilities	0	2	1	1	0	0
Sensory health issues	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carers (incl. young carers)	0	0	0	1	0	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	0	1	0	0	0	0
Survivors of abuse	0	0	0	0	0	0
Substance misuse issues	0	1	0	0	0	0
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0
Minority ethnic	0	0	1	0	0	0
Dementia	0	0	0	0	0	0
LGBT	0	0	0	0	0	0

Local Authority Area: No. of services for befriended group:	Stirling	Western Isles
Older people	0	0
Children and young people	3	0
Mental health issues	1	0
Long-term health condition	0	0
All socially isolated adults	1	1
Learning/behavioural difficulties	2	0
Physical disabilities	0	0
Sensory health issues	0	0
Carers (incl. young carers)	0	0
Homeless/vulnerably housed	1	0
Survivors of abuse	1	0
Substance misuse issues	0	0
Women	0	0
Minority ethnic	0	0
Dementia	1	0
LGBT	0	0

The project has identified significant gaps in befriending provision for specific groups and also by local authority area (see table and charts for data). The key findings from the research are:

- **older adults:** while there are 54 befriending services for older people in Scotland, there are no befriending services advertised specifically for this group in Clackmannanshire, Inverclyde, Orkney, Perth and Kinross, Stirling and the Western Isles (although there is a Scotland-wide project for this group).
- **children and young people:** although there are 50 befriending services for children and young people in Scotland, there are no advertised befriending services specifically for this group in the Highlands, Moray or the Western Isles.

- **mental health:** there are 21 befriending services for people with mental health problems but there are no befriending projects available for this group in 18 of the 32 local authority areas.
- **long-term health conditions:** there are 18 befriending services for people who suffer from a range of long-term health conditions, including those affected by spina bifida, HIV and epilepsy. There is no evidence for befriending services for this group in 21 of the 32 local authority areas, although there are three Scotland-wide befriending services for this group.
- **learning and/or behavioural difficulties:** there are 12 befriending services overall for those with learning and behavioural difficulties. However, there are no advertised befriending services for this overall group in 22 of the local authority areas.
- **physical disabilities:** there are 11 befriending services for adults with physical disabilities but these are unevenly spread throughout Scotland and 20 local authority areas have no advertised befriending services available specifically for this group.
- **homeless/vulnerably housed:** there are 10 befriending projects for adults who are homeless, ex-homeless or vulnerably housed. These services are predominantly in the central belt of Scotland.
- **sensory:** there are 9 befriending services for the sensory group covering 11 local authority areas. The majority of these projects are for people with visual impairments.
- **carers:** there are only 9 befriending services specifically for carers in Scotland; 3 of these are for carers in Edinburgh City.
- **survivors of abuse:** there are currently 7 befriending projects for survivors of sexual, domestic or in-care abuse. There is no evidence of befriending services for this group in 27 local authority areas including Aberdeen City, Glasgow City and Edinburgh City. However, there is a Scotland-wide befriending service for this group. This category represents an emerging group for befriending which was not evident when mapping the gaps in 2010.
- **those affected by substance misuse:** there are 6 befriending services for people with alcohol or drug problems and those affected by them, which cover only 5 local authority areas in total.
- **women:** there are 5 projects providing befriending specifically for women, which include minority ethnic women, women with postnatal depression, and women affected by domestic or sexual abuse. Befriending services specifically for women are offered only in the local authority areas of Angus, Dumfries and Galloway, Edinburgh City, Glasgow City, and Perth and Kinross.
- **black and minority ethnic groups:** there are only 4 befriending services for black and minority ethnic groups in Scotland, and only in the 3 local authority areas of Edinburgh City, Glasgow City and East Renfrewshire. Of these projects, 2 are offered only to minority ethnic women.
- **dementia:** there are only 4 services that deliver befriending specifically for people with dementia in the local authority areas of Edinburgh City, Glasgow City and Stirling.

- **lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans groups:** There is only one befriending service for this group. The project is run by LGBT Age and covers both Edinburgh City and Glasgow City, and is only for people who are aged over fifty years.
- Edinburgh City has the most befriending services in Scotland; 29 projects are delivered in this area and cover every group except survivors of abuse. Glasgow City is second and offers 21 befriending services. There are no local authority areas which have no befriending service, although Shetland and the Western Isles have only one project. However, it should be noted that both areas have smaller populations than other Scottish local authority areas and that the services offer support to multiple befriended groups.
- in the remaining local authority areas (besides Edinburgh City and Glasgow City), the number of befriending services found range from 2 to 14. The average number of befriending projects per local authority area is 6.5.

In some cases, the statistics may not present a completely accurate view of the number of befriending services available, due to the complexity and variety of the projects and client group categories. For example:

- 3 of the services for children also include befriending support for the child's family
- 3 of the befriending services in the long-term health conditions category are specifically for children and/or young people. The befriending services in this overall category are each for *specific* health conditions including spina bifida, motor neurone disease and HIV
- some services offer befriending to specific people *within* a group. For example, Bield Housing & Care offers befriending only to its service users rather than to all older adults in Edinburgh City

Distance befriending services also exist throughout Scotland including telephone befriending and befriending by email and letter. Telephone befriending has risen over recent years; the research has found **19 befriending services in Scotland which offer telephone befriending** (7 of these offer *only* telephone befriending while 12 offer telephone befriending alongside face-to-face and/or group befriending). These services are for a range of befriended groups though are mainly offered for older adults and those with sensory health issues; for example, *Visibility* has a telephone befriending service in Dumfries and Galloway for adults with visual impairments. In the Highlands, **2 distance befriending schemes were identified** which offer letter and email befriending for isolated individuals, or those suffering from mental health issues.

Services also offer group befriending in Scotland. **There were 10 befriending services identified which offer group befriending**, 1 of which offered *only* group befriending while 9 projects offered it alongside face-to-face and/or telephone befriending. These services are offered for a range of groups, including children; for example, *Quarriers Befriending Project* offers group activities for children affected by addiction in Glasgow City. There is also additional befriending-like support available across Scotland in which charities provide one-

to- one support for a range of groups; for example, *Open Door* in Stirling provides a buddy service for people with disabilities and mental health problems who have become involved in volunteering.

More detail can be found on the Befriending Networks website ([www.befriending.co.uk](http://www.befriending.co.uk)) about the services who are members.

## The current situation of befriending services

As part of the map of gaps research, member and non-member projects were contacted to gather information about the current situation of befriending services in Scotland. 68 of the projects contacted provided current data regarding how many befriending matches they currently have in place and how many potential befriendees are on their waiting list. Although the statistics do not represent the whole of Scotland, they provide a useful insight into the current situation of befriending services in Scotland.

From the information gathered from befriending services, the longest waiting list was 128 and only 10 befriending services reported having no waiting list. The average number on a waiting list was 18. The number of matches varied between organisations; the highest number of current matches reported by a befriending service was 188 and the smallest reported having no current matches (but 4 befriendees on their waiting list). The average number of current matches of the 68 services was 28.

The map of gaps research has revealed that there are significant gaps in befriending provision in Scotland with regards to provision available for particular groups and also by local authority area. Information from individual services has also shown that many are under pressure due to long waiting lists. There is evidently a need for continued befriending provision and more befriending services to meet the needs of vulnerable and isolated people living in Scotland.





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