

Befriending Statistics for the year to April 2021

Statistics for the previous year are gathered from organisations on joining or renewing membership, the data sought as follows:

- Numbers of people supported through face to face befriending
- Numbers of people supported through group befriending
- Numbers of people supported through telephone befriending
- Numbers of volunteer befrienders supported
- Numbers of hours of befriending provided.

This data was exported from the website on 1st April 2021. At that point current membership was at 354. Of those 220 members, 62%, had provided this information.

Full Membership Data

Results for the responding proportion of the total membership were:

Numbers supported

Face-to-face = 12,250

Group Befriending = 15,000

Telephone Befriending = 24,000

Total numbers supported over the past year = 51,250

Number of volunteer Befrienders

Total volunteers over the past year = 15,200

Number of hours of befriending

Total hours over the past year = 1,100,00

Membership covered a broad range from small to large with an even spread of sizes and covering both urban and rural areas across the whole of the UK and the Republic of Ireland. During this period membership also included projects from Jersey, Australia and Gibraltar. Membership now includes several small local projects set up to help alleviate isolation and loneliness experienced by people as a result of the pandemic.

The average number of people supported was 227 per organisation. The estimated averages per organisation, of volunteers and number of befriending hours, during 2020/21 were 69 volunteers and 4,900 hours.

Given these averages we can therefore estimate that, during 2020/21, Befriending Networks members:

- Provided befriending (one-to-one, group, and telephone) to approximately **80,000** people
- Supported approximately **24,500** volunteer befrienders
- Provided approximately **1,600,000** hours of befriending with an estimated total value of **£23.5 million**¹

Members in Scotland

Of the 354 members, 154 are based in Scotland. Of those, 87 Scottish members provided the data requested.

Results for the Scottish membership were:

Numbers supported

Face-to-face = 3,800

Group Befriending = 4,800

Telephone Befriending = 5,000

Total numbers supported over the past year = 13,600

Number of volunteer Befrienders

Total volunteers over the past year = 5,250

Number of hours of befriending

Total hours over the past year = 200,000

Scottish membership covered a broad range from small to large with an even spread of sizes and covering both urban and rural areas.

One large, national, organisation is included in the Scottish figures, the data they supplied has not been broken down by area. As a result, some proportion of these figures will also be included in the figures for English organisations. To ensure these

¹ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020(ASHE) Median hourly rate of £14.65 for adult males and females

figures do not include double counting the numbers supplied by that organisation have been split between the Scottish and English totals.

The average number of people supported was 155 per organisation. The estimated averages per organisation, of volunteers and number of befriending hours, during 2020/21 were 59 volunteers and 2,400 hours.

Given these averages we can therefore estimate that, during 2020/21, Scottish Befriending Networks members:

- Provided befriending (one-to-one, group, and telephone) to approximately **24,400** people
- Supported approximately **9.100** volunteer befrienders
- Provided approximately **450,000** hours of befriending with an estimated total value of **£6.5 million** ²

CYP Members in Scotland

Of the 354 members, 57 are projects supporting children and young people and based in Scotland. Of those, 31 members provided the data requested.

Results for the CYP Scottish membership were:

Numbers supported

Face-to-face = 1,600

Group Befriending = 750

Telephone Befriending = 1,300

Total numbers supported over the past year = 3,650

Number of volunteer Befrienders

Total volunteers over the past year = 2,350

Number of hours of befriending

Total hours over the past year = 73,500

The Scottish CYP membership covered a broad range from small to large and covering both urban and rural areas.

² Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2020. Median hourly rate of £14.65 for adult males and females

The average number of people supported was 100 per organisation. The estimated averages per organisation, of volunteers and number of befriending hours, during 2020/21 were 61 volunteers and 2,400 hours.

Given these averages we can therefore estimate that, during 2020/21, Scottish CYP Befriending Networks members:

- Provided befriending (one-to-one, group, and telephone) to approximately **5,700** people
- Supported approximately **3,500** volunteer befrienders
- Provided approximately **135,00** hours of befriending with an estimated total value of **£2 million** ³

Members in England

Of the 354 members, 179 are based in England. Of those, 98 English members provided the data requested.

Results for the English membership were:

Numbers supported

Face-to-face = 6564

Group Befriending = 10738

Telephone Befriending = 17141

Total numbers supported over the past year = 35,000

Number of volunteer Befrienders

Total volunteers over the past year = 9000

Number of hours of befriending

Total hours over the past year = 410,000

English membership covered a broad range from small to large with an even spread of sizes and covering both urban and rural areas.

As with the Scottish figures, one large, national organisation is included, the data they supplied was not broken down by area. To ensure these figures do not include

³ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2020. Median hourly rate of £14.65 for adult males and females

double counting the figures supplied by that organisation have been split between the Scottish and English totals.

The average number of people supported was 257 per organisation. The estimated averages per organisation of volunteers and number of befriending hours during 2020/21 were 68 volunteers and 3,100 hours.

Given these averages we can therefore estimate that, during 2020/21, English Befriending Networks members:

- Provided befriending (one-to-one, group, and telephone) to approximately **46,500** people
- Supported approximately **12,150** volunteer befrienders
- Provided approximately **650,000** hours of befriending with an estimated total value of **£9.5 million** ⁴

Members in Wales, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and international

Of the 354 members, 8 are based in the rest of the UK, Jersey, Irish Republic, Australia, and Gibraltar. Of those, 13 members provided the data requested.

Results for this membership were:

Numbers supported

Face-to-face = 2,306

Group Befriending = 903

Telephone Befriending = 1,424

Total numbers supported over the past year = 4,633

Number of volunteer Befrienders

Total volunteers over the past year = 1664

Number of hours of befriending

Total hours over the past year = 120,000

⁴ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2020. Median hourly rate of £14.65 for adult males and females

The average number of people supported was 350 per organisation. The estimated averages per organisation of volunteers and number of befriending hours during 2020/21 were 128 volunteers and 10,000 hours.

Given these averages, while also bearing in mind the small group of members involved, we can therefore estimate that, during 2020/21, the remainder of Befriending Networks members:

- Provided befriending (one-to-one, group, and telephone) to approximately **7,200** people
- Supported approximately **2,300** volunteer befrienders
- Provided approximately **200,000** hours of befriending

Conclusion

The data shows that a significant number of people across the UK, and beyond, have benefited from befriending relationships, one-to-one, in groups, and by phone and other virtual means, over the year leading to April 2021.

From the outbreak of Covid-19 and the start of the first lockdown, befriending organisations made huge efforts to maintain befriending matches, supporting volunteers and befriendees to manage their relationships remotely.

It is interesting to note comparisons with the 2019/20 data (in table below) showing similar numbers of people supported through face-to-face and group befriending and a significant increase in the number supported by telephone or other remote befriending. During the 2020/21 year projects adapted their service to allow them to continue offering befriending throughout lockdown. As things eased in late summer on into the autumn of 2020 some projects began cautious resuming of elements of face-to-face and group befriending. With the second wave of the pandemic in late December they were forced to return to virtual means of communication.

	April 2021	Sept 2020
People supported by Face to Face Befriending	19,500	19,775
People supported in Group Befriending	23,000	22,291
People supported by Telephone Befriending	37,500	20,067
Total people supported	80,000	62,133
Volunteer Befrienders	24,500	35,880
Hours of Befriending	1,600,000	1,636,593



Once again a significant increase is apparent in the numbers supported through remote befriending in the 2019/21 year. Data from that year, which includes the initial 6 months of the pandemic and the first lockdown, suggests around 20,000 people supported remotely as opposed to an estimated 37,500 throughout the year ending April 2021.

In the period from the outbreak of Covid19 members saw a significant increase in the numbers of people interested in volunteering. This was, in part, a result of the campaign encouraging volunteering during the pandemic. As the first lockdown eased and people began returning to work the numbers fell once more.

Overall the figures for the year up to April 2021 show increases in numbers of people supported. While organisations have been working hard to ensure they support as many people as possible the limitations Although the figures show an overall increase this is, in part, due to the significant rise in membership during this period.

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20th April 2021