



## Parent & Carer Information



We can link the person with learning disabilities you care for with a volunteer or group so they can meet up regularly and do social and leisure activities they enjoy while giving you a break.

### Our Services:

#### **1:1 links for children (aged 8 and over), young people and adults.**

- The volunteer would usually live locally and have similar interests to the person you care for.
- They would usually be of a similar age (most of the children's and young people's volunteers are aged 16-20).
- They would do activities they choose: for example the cinema, cycling, local events, walks, shopping, going for coffee, arts & crafts, golf, swimming or football.
- Activities are usually for two-three hours, and could be as often as once a week or as little as once a month: our main priority is to set up a sustainable relationship that they both enjoy.

#### **Befriending groups:**

- Groups usually have equal numbers of volunteers and people with learning disabilities and all the members are as close in age to each other as possible.
- Group members decide what they want to do, and as well as fun social and leisure activities, they often do personal development projects involving, music, art, drama and outward bound activities.
- The large numbers of volunteers involved mean the groups operate just like mainstream community or youth groups.

### How to request a service:

- You can make a request for service for anyone with learning disabilities. For children and young people, this usually means anyone with complex needs who is likely to go on to use adult learning disabilities services, or anyone who has autism.
- The first step is to contact your local Branch Co-ordinator (details below) who will arrange to meet up with you and the person you care for, and complete a registration form with you. You should also contact them if you have any subsequent questions, suggestions or complaints. A complaints form can be downloaded from our website.

- Even if we are able to offer a service, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to link up the person you care for: this depends mainly on how many volunteers can be recruited and where they live.

### Your Role

- You would be consulted at all stages on issues such as whether the person you care for would suit a group, what activities would be realistic, how a volunteer should be introduced and whether a 1:1 link should be continued after its initial trial period.
- You would arrange practical details with the volunteer, and help the person you care for prepare for activities.
- The service is free apart from contributions towards some befriending group activity and travel costs. If you can't afford these they will be waived.
- All personal information you give us about the person you care for will be kept confidential by us.
- The Branch Co-ordinator would always be available to give you support and advice, and you can make suggestions or raise concerns with them.

### Our volunteers

- We draw volunteers from the general public, schools & Borders College.
- All are trained by us and police-checked. We also pay all their travel and activity costs.
- We are always looking for volunteers and should be grateful if you would pass on our details to anyone you think might be interested.

### Further information

Our website at [www.interestlink.org.uk](http://www.interestlink.org.uk) has information about your local branch and plenty of evaluation material to give you a better picture of what we do. It also has our Child Protection and Complaints Policies.

### Branch Contact Details

<p><b>Berwickshire:</b> Volunteer Hall, Langtongate, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3AF 01361 883662  <b>Adult Service:</b> Angela Laidlaw 07977 774515 <a href="mailto:angelalaidlaw@interestlink.org.uk">angelalaidlaw@interestlink.org.uk</a>  <b>Youth Service:</b> Kate Borthwick Tel: 07527 699888 <a href="mailto:kateborthwick@interestlink.org.uk">kateborthwick@interestlink.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Central Borders:</b> Stefanie Poetyllo, Triest House, Bridge Street, Galashiels, TD1 1SW  Tel: 01896 750020/07717 403529 <a href="mailto:stefaniepoetyllo@interestlink.org.uk">stefaniepoetyllo@interestlink.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Roxburgh:</b> Val Reilly, CHSS Community Hub, 61 High Street, Hawick TD9 9BP  Tel: 01450 377600/07738 567498 <a href="mailto:valreilly@interestlink.org.uk">valreilly@interestlink.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Tweeddale:</b> Mary Mouat, Volunteer Resource Centre, School Brae, High Street, Peebles EH45 8AL Tel: 01721 729348/0777 3303829 <a href="mailto:marymouat@interestlink.org.uk">marymouat@interestlink.org.uk</a></p>