



Sports Buddy Sutton

A project from



SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

Sports Buddy Sutton is a new project from Sutton Befrienders, our award-winning, volunteer-led befriending programme.

Sports Buddy Sutton will enable people with mild to moderate disabilities or those with learning difficulties and/or autism to undertake mainstream sports activities by the help of a volunteer 'buddy'.

Our volunteers will support people with disabilities to take part in sport and physical activities in a fun, flexible and motivating way, encouraging choice and independence.

Who is The Buddy Scheme for?

- ✓ Aged 18 and over
- ✓ With a disability
- ✓ Living in the London Borough of Sutton

We accept referrals from any professionals working with someone with a physical disability or mild to moderate learning disability or on the autistic spectrum, any family members as well as self-referrals.

Due to the nature of the project, we regret that we are unable to support people with profound and complex disabilities.

What do volunteers do?

Volunteers are matched to a service user and then the buddy pair meets up regularly to enjoy leisure and sport activities together. This can be anything the service user enjoys, or would like to try, such as going to the gym, playing tennis, going swimming, cycling or walking or any other physical pursuit. The amount of time the pair spends together depends on the leisure activity and the volunteers time, so may vary from outing to outing.

The role of a volunteer is purely as a befriender. Volunteers are not carers, escorts, or support workers and are there to improve quality of life for the service user.



Inclusive cycling at the David Weir Leisure Centre, run by Ecolocal
Photo reprinted with kind permission from Ecolocal

How often do buddy pairs meet up?

Volunteers will meet with their buddy for a minimum of 12 sessions.

Ideally, these 12 sessions will occur weekly but the scheme is designed to be flexible to fit around the availability of both the volunteer and service-user as well as being able to go at the client's pace. This is the minimum we expect of volunteers though we hope that they will continue with their buddy after these 12 sessions, although this is not a guarantee.

It is important that service-users are aware that the volunteer may only be available for 12 sessions. (Care is taken to ensure that when befriending relationships come to an end, it is done so in a respectful and sensitive manner).

How do I refer someone?

To refer someone who you think will benefit from the project, please complete a referral form **(you can find here on our website)** Please complete the form in as much detail as possible, including any information you think may be relevant to a volunteer in planning their sessions. Please also ensure that the service-user is aware that you are making the referral

It is important that as the person referring you are able to be contacted about the referral and provide necessary information about the service-user. If you feel there may be someone more suitable, please ask them to make the referral.

If you wish to discuss a referral before completing a form (or at any time) please ring the project co-ordinator,

How long will the person have to wait for a volunteer?

This depends on the case's priority, the number of new volunteers joining the project and how long it takes to find a suitable volunteer for a service-user (including availability, interests and any relevant experience a volunteer may need). Please be aware that there may be a long wait for a volunteer. Unfortunately, we are unable to guarantee everyone who is referred to the scheme a volunteer, as there are such a large number of people requiring a sports buddy.

What happens when a suitable volunteer is found?

The Project Co-ordinator will be in touch with the service-user to let them know that there is a suitable volunteer available (and ready to begin volunteering), and tell them a little about the person. If the service-user is happy, then an introduction will be made. You will be notified once the match has been made.

Project Co-ordinator:

Jess Farazmand

Email: jessfarazmand@vcsutton.org.uk

Tel: 07743 751062/020 8661 5900

