



## Information for Restore's volunteer befriending team

We are writing as the advice relating to coronavirus seems to be changing rapidly and we want our volunteer befriending team to be kept well-informed.

In addition to information on NHS and Government websites (see links below), we are writing with some suggestions relating to befriending.

### FOR BEFRIENDERS

Please do not feel any pressure from Restore to keep meeting your befriended face-to-face, if you feel that could put your own health at greater risk or the health of your befriended at greater risk. In fact, if you are deemed to be at greater risk due to age or health then we would advise you to stop face-to-face befriending for the time-being.

The Restore staff are currently taking the following steps, and we suggest you take the same approach, IF you are able to continue meeting your befriended for the time being:

- On the day of the meeting, we phone or text to ask if they have a fever or a cough. If they are unwell, we cancel the appointment. We would also encourage them to contact NHS 111 by phone or online. They can ask for an interpreter.
- When we meet, we are avoiding shaking hands and hugging. (If we do shake hands, due to the weather this can be done with gloves on [winter gloves not surgical gloves!] without appearing unusual.)
- If going for coffee, we wash our hands first and encourage the refugee or asylum seeker to do the same.
- If during the meeting the refugee or asylum seeker appears feverish or coughs frequently, we would curtail the meeting, encourage them to self-isolate and contact 111.

If you are not able to meet your befriender face-to-face or they are not willing to meet with you, then some contact could be continued via phone, text or email. This may help the refugee or asylum seeker to feel less isolated.

## FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

A document with links to advice in a range of languages, including Arabic, Farsi and French, has been circulated to refugee and migrant support agencies in Birmingham. Please pass it on to your befriender if they need information in their own language. Please [click here](#) for that link on the Restore website.

## RESTORE STAFF AND RESTORE OFFICE

If a staff member show symptoms then that staff member will self-isolate and take further medical advice.

At this stage there is no immediate plan to close the Restore office. We will abide by Government advice. Although the decision may be taken for us by our landlords, if they decide to close the building. If the Restore office is closed then staff can still do some of our work from home and would still be contactable. We will let you know if the Restore office closes.

## INFORMATION AND DIRECTION FROM GOVERNMENT

We recognise that any suggestions we share at this point, may be superseded by Government announcements. We expect befrienders to abide by any Government advice or instruction.

Please see the following sites for more information:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> explains about the viral infection,  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan> was published on 3 March but is still worth reading as we now see how the action plan is working out.

As mentioned earlier, the situation is changing rapidly. To keep up-to-date you can sign up for the latest Government information via email. [Please click here](#)

Thank you for your support of refugees and asylum seekers at this challenging time.

15 March 2020