



Information for prospective volunteers

1. About Us

The Brigitte Trust, is an independent registered charity, it was set up in 1984 by Dorking resident Brigitte Watkin to support people at the end of life in their own homes, offering support and short breaks to their carers and emotional support to the wider family too, plus bereavement support if requested.

From small beginnings in the early years the Brigitte Trust has grown over the past 35 years to cover the whole of Surrey.

2. What we do

The Brigitte Trust helps people to live well beyond diagnosis. We offer a free service of emotional, practical and social support to people and their family who have a life-threatening illness.

3. What do our volunteers do?

A Brigitte Trust volunteer can play an essential role in helping to meet practical, emotional and social needs of people and their families from diagnosis, through treatment and beyond. That help can take a variety of forms for example:

- ✓ Being there to listen is often what is needed most
- ✓ Providing transport to a hospital appointment or other trips
- ✓ Sitting quietly
- ✓ Providing a break for family carers
- ✓ Grocery shopping
- ✓ Walk in the park
- ✓ Coffee & Cake!

This can make a huge difference, as people have testified:

"It was a great worry to leave my wife, but I felt so secure leaving her with the volunteer"

"I couldn't have got through my problems without the support of the Brigitte Trust. My volunteer encouraged me afterwards and opened up a new life for me"

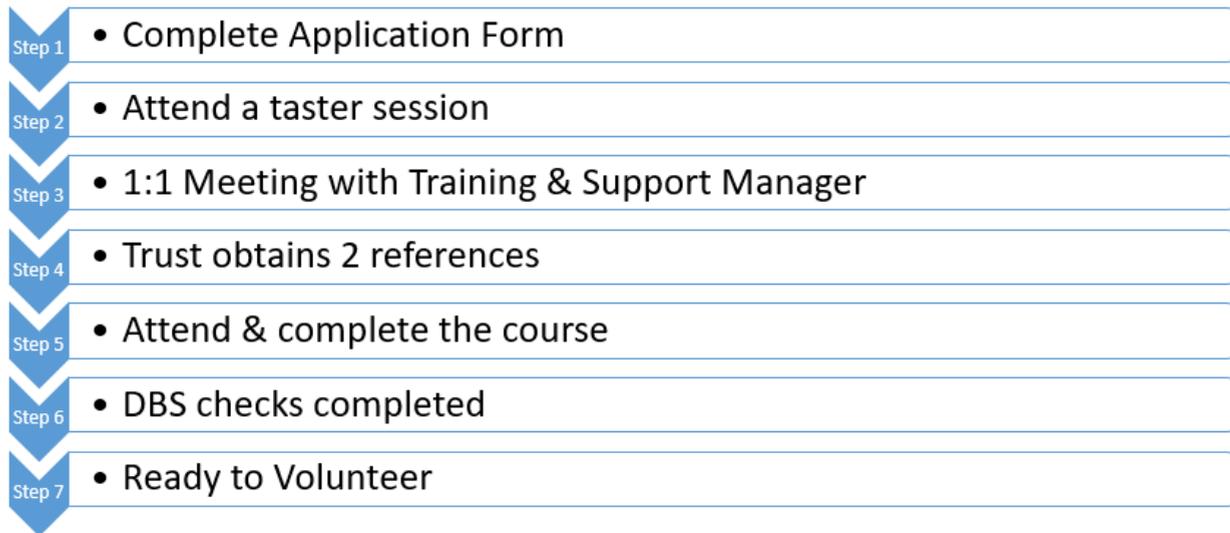
"She lights up my life"

"I have nothing but praise. Simply having a couple of hours a week away from caring was such a relief. It was also good for my late husband to have someone other than me to talk to"

Volunteering can also be a valuable part of volunteers' lives.

4. Volunteer Recruitment

New Volunteers are always welcomed and we recruit throughout the year. The process is as follows:



To volunteer with us you will need to:

- ✓ complete an application form
- ✓ have a current driving licence and access to a car
- ✓ complete our training course
- ✓ provide two references
- ✓ have a Disclosure & Barring Service check
- ✓ give around three/four hours each week you could give to this rewarding work
- ✓ adhere to Trust Policies

We advise that if you have experienced a loss or serious illness yourself, that you wait for a period of up to two years before you apply.

5. Training Programme

We run four courses a year. Our training course consists of 6 sessions plus a weekend.

During the training participants will be expected to demonstrate openness, compassion, reliability, trustworthiness, recognition of any major losses of their own, commitment to learning,

We ask prospective volunteers to make a commitment to attend all training sessions.

The training itself aims to develop a Volunteer's skills in listening and to foster self-awareness. The Volunteer becomes more sensitive to the varying emotional needs of people and their families during the stress and anxiety of a life threatening illness.

6. Volunteer Support

We provide ongoing support and training to all volunteers by:

- Regular telephone support with the Service Co-ordinator
- Support Groups every other month
- Ongoing training sessions during the year plus ad hoc day workshops

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