

## What difference does Passing the Baton make?

The Scottish Government’s Homelessness Task Force recognises that loneliness and isolation are the biggest causes of resettlement breakdown. Passing the Baton bridges the gap from social isolation to self-sustaining supportive relationships.

“The absence of positive social networks puts you at greater risk of homelessness, makes the transition out of homelessness even more difficult than it already is and often leads to repeat episodes of homelessness – each on more damaging than the last.” *The Scottish Executive’s Homelessness Task Force Final Report.*

98% of people who have engaged with Passing the Baton have succeeded in keeping their home. This chart shows Dougie’s friends and support networks before and after getting involved.

Type of Relationship	Number of People	
	Before	After
Intimate and meaningful	0	3
Friends or people you know well	4	15
People you associate with	0	30
People paid to be in your life	4	2

## Why Befriending?

Over 50% of people who are registered as homeless, site a breakdown of relationship as a major factor in them becoming homeless. This may be a breakdown of relationship with their partner, children, parents or someone else who is significant in their lives. The largest reason for a resettlement breakdown when someone who was previously homeless loses their tenancy again is isolation and loneliness.

Reducing isolation and loneliness through befriending can help people feel better about themselves, more confident and become a valued part of the community around them. When people feel less isolated and lonely and are encouraged to develop and re-establish healthy and supportive relationships their risk of homelessness is reduced.

*“Thanks to Passing the Baton more friends to socialise with than before and I’ve been supported to correspond with my employers and the benefits agency. They also referred me on to Christians Against Poverty to sort out my debt and manage my finances. If I hadn’t had help from Bethany, I would have struggled to regain my confidence again after being homeless but now I’m more hopeful about the future.”*

## Why do people become a befriender?

People befriend for all sorts of reasons. They or someone they know may have been affected by homelessness in the past, they may have been touched by someone’s individual story, they may have experience in their lives which they feel may benefit someone going through difficulties or they may have no previous experience but have a heart for people who may be struggling with the situation they are in.

## **Befriending isn't just a benefit to the people who are being befriended.**

Befrienders get lots out of it too...

*"I had no idea when I started befriending, how much I would get out of it. I assumed that it would all be me giving, how wrong I was! I sometimes wonder who is doing the befriending! I feel privileged that a true friendship has developed with which certainly didn't come to an end when the year was over."*

Studies show that volunteering makes people happier...there is research data to show that volunteers have lower levels of depression, increased life satisfaction and enhanced well-being. Volunteering as a befriender can give a particular benefit in that you increase your social circle as you introduce your Member to different groups in your community.

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