

## A bit about Down's Syndrome Scotland



Down's Syndrome Scotland is a parent-led organisation, established in 1982. We have a membership level of 900 and six branches across the country, which provide social activities and informal support to parents/carers. We are a team of 18 staff (some full-time, many part-time) working mainly out of our own offices in the Balgreen area of Edinburgh. In recent years, we have introduced some home-based staff to be closer to our membership across Scotland.

In the last few years the organisation has seen many positive changes: new branding and new methods of communication have been developed – a new, improved website and e-bulletin; fundraising has a greater, more professional emphasis with a full-time Fundraising Manager and a newly recruited Community Fundraiser. This has resulted in increased financial income; getting closer to our membership with locally-based staff introduced three years ago and then last year we recruited our first Policy Officer and a Speech and Language Therapist.

Over the last 8 years we have run 2 projects specifically for adults with Down's syndrome. From 2006 to 2009 we ran a training project, employing 15 trainers with Down's syndrome who co-delivered training and our awareness raising 'Myth buster' sessions throughout Scotland. For the last five years we have been running a project called "Making Your Way through Life". This offered courses such as Building Your Confidence, Taking Part in Meetings, Health Heart and Happiness and the Big Plan programme, helping adults plan for their future, again funded by the Big Lottery. This project ended on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

There's still much to achieve and we have plans over the coming years to develop further. The new Friends Connect Project is just one of those plans!

**Check out our website [www.dsscotland.org.uk](http://www.dsscotland.org.uk)**

The Friends Connect Project is funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund.



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**Down's Syndrome Scotland**  
helping people realise their potential



## Have you ever thought about being a Volunteer Mentor?



**YOU** can help young people and adults with Down's syndrome have more confidence, self esteem and independence skills by helping them get out and about more, meet up with each other and grow their friendships.

All it takes is a commitment to one session every fortnight.

No experience necessary, just a positive attitude towards people with Down's syndrome, reliable and enthusiastic.

We will provide training and all the help you need to be a successful Mentor.

Friends Connect is an exciting, new project run by Down's Syndrome Scotland. Over the next 3 years, we will be supporting adults with Down's syndrome to connect with each other, develop and sustain their friendships and be better connected to their local communities.

We are looking for Mentors from Aberdeen, Aberdeen-shire (North), Edinburgh, Dundee, Fife, Glasgow and Inverness.

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**We believe that people with Down's syndrome can be valued, active members of their communities and have the same opportunities and friendships as everyone else.**  
**DO YOU?**



## Friends Connect Volunteer Mentor Role Description

**Location:** Home for contact, activities based within local area.

**Responsible to:** Project Worker and Project Manager.

### The Role:

To support young people and adults with Down's syndrome to develop and sustain their friendships and participate in social activities within their local areas.

### Your main responsibilities

- Provide person centred support to young people and adults with Down's syndrome.
- Support adults with Down's syndrome in their friendships with each other by helping to make meeting arrangements, supporting independent travel and social activities they choose to do.
- To support members to find out what's on in their local areas and encourage mainstream activities.
- To provide support at Friendship Group Meetings, encouraging participation and acknowledge positive skills and qualities of group members.
- Communicate positively with participants, parents and carers.
- To inform and clarify any issues that arise with the Project Manager or Worker.
- To establish and maintain appropriate boundaries within the mentoring relationship.
- To observe and work within Down's Syndrome Scotland's policies and procedures.
- To participate in peer support and training meetings (these will be run after Friendship Group meetings to minimise your time commitment).
- To participate in support & supervision meetings with Project Manager or Worker.

### Person Specification

- To be accepting and non-judgemental.
- To be reliable and consistent.
- Ability to work on own initiative.
- Good organisational and communication skills.
- Confident, friendly and outgoing.

### What we offer

- Induction training, ongoing training and support.
- A chance to develop your own skills and experience.
- Increase your own connections within local communities.
- Full expenses paid for travel costs, parking fees and activities.
- A volunteer handbook will be provided.

### Please note:

The role of volunteer mentor is subject to membership of the PVG (Scotland) Scheme.



## Is this the right volunteering role for you? Some things to think about...

- Volunteer mentors will be matched with two young people or adults with Down's syndrome who will meet up with each other. The volunteer mentor will be supporting the 'friendship pairs' to get out and about in their local areas, exploring new activities as well as enjoying things they already like to do.
- Think about whether this is the right time for you to volunteer, weigh up your other commitments and what time you have free.
- We're looking for a commitment of one session per fortnight (this includes coming along to the Friendship Group Meetings). The meet ups will most likely be evenings or weekends.
- Volunteers are expected to attend training/peer support sessions and supervision meetings. This is informal and provides an opportunity to explore the work you are doing, ways forward and personal development.
- We want this to be a good experience for you as well and value the time you are giving to the project.

**Any questions contact Brenda Hepburn on  
0131 313 4225 or [Brenda@dsscotland.org.uk](mailto:Brenda@dsscotland.org.uk)**

