



# Plan for Full-Day and Overnight Trips May 2015



## Interest Link Borders: Plan to provide full-day and overnight group trips

### Summary

- Interest Link has been delivering 1:1 and group befriending projects to adults with learning disabilities since 1990, and to children and young people with learning disabilities since 2008.
- We are currently running a 1:1 and group befriending project for children & young people (8-25), which ends in July 2015. We also have an adult project, which ends in October 2015. Together, these annually support up to 200 people with learning disabilities and their families.
- When consulting with families in 2013-14 we found a high level of demand for full-day and overnight trips resulting from a shortfall in statutory respite at weekends and school holidays, particularly in families caring for children & young people.
- Although our projects have not previously offered full-day and overnight trips, the growth of our befriending groups in our current Children & Young People's Project 2012-15 has made trips more practical.
- As a result, we undertook a consultation and research exercise in winter 2014-15 and a successful pilot trip in April 2015. We now plan to include full-day and overnight trips in our next children's and young people's project starting in September 2015.

### Context

- The conventional befriending model of meeting for 2-3 hours once a week, fortnight or month is prevalent partly because of limitations on the availability of volunteers' time, but also because short meetings do not overtax service users and avoid the need for personal care (which befriending volunteers and staff do not provide).
- The majority of befriending services provide only 1:1 links, and there are perceived issues around adult & child protection, health & safety and regulation which discourage services from offering overnight 1:1 trips.
- However, we are always looking for new ways to benefit service users, and our 2012 Outline Development Plan included as a priority for 2012-15: "Examine the feasibility of developing new services for people with learning disabilities in the Borders, such as an overnight & holiday services".
- In the current Children & Young People's Project, Interest Link's befriending groups have developed rapidly and function much like mainstream youth or social groups. Trips away are a common feature of these types of group and it now feels natural to extend our activities to include them, so long as any barriers can be overcome.
- While we have never provided overnight trips, we do have some experience of full-day trips from some 1:1 links and Branch social outings.

### Evidence of Need & Demand

The survey for our 2013-14 Impact Report included a section asking service users, carers and volunteers what new services they would like to see Interest Link provide, but did not specifically mention full-day and overnight trips:

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- People with learning disabilities: Of 20 suggestions for new services, 6 were for longer sessions and day-trips and 2 for overnight trips
- Carers: Of 14 suggestions, 4 requested full-day and overnight trips.
- Volunteers: There were 3 requests for more trips out and one suggestion for overnight stays. Volunteers felt these would be beneficial to families.

From subsequent informal consultation with around 40 families (principally at annual reviews) it was apparent there was a very high level of demand, particularly from families caring for children & young people:

- Service users were enthusiastic about trips, and carers were keen for them to have the chance of a longer break independently of the family.
- The need for trips was felt particularly strongly by carers of older young people (18-25), who say that statutory respite availability drops sharply after the age of 18. They also felt that young people had reached a stage at which carers felt both happy for them to be away and keen for them to broaden their experience of life.
- We know from previous evaluations and the 2013-14 Impact Report that short break respite has a positive effect on the wellbeing of the whole family. It is natural that extended respite would increase these positive outcomes.

As a result, we carried out a formal consultation with 16 families spread across our four branches and aimed at confirming demand and finding out whether barriers such as personal care needs could be overcome.

- All of the families consulted included young people aged 16-25 who were already in befriending groups that could realistically include full-day and overnight trips. As well as gathering families' views, this approach potentially provided a foundation to planning specific trips for specific groups.
- As well as being the age-group most in need, we concentrated on young people because only around 30%-40% of service users in each of our adult befriending groups are cared for by family.
- The full results of the consultation are attached, and indicated that the families were all keen to participate. Where personal care issues arose, carers were prepared to join the trip to provide personal care and felt this would still give them a worthwhile break, and possibly an opportunity to take a sibling somewhere new.

### Learning from other services

- 4 other Scottish befriending organisations are known by Befriending Networks to have recently provided overnight trips in some form, namely COVEY, South Ayrshire Befriending Project, Befrienders Lochgilphead and Linkliving.
  - ❖ All the projects work with children and young people, but only COVEY and Linkliving's trips had been for groups containing volunteers, and none had featured overnight trips as a regular part of their service or involved carers. All the trips had been focused on rural locations, principally Outdoor Education Centres.

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- ❖ All four contributed valuable experience, particularly in the areas of personal care issues (such as medication), 1:1 trips, staff and volunteer experiences, insurance, group dynamics & teambuilding, family financial contributions and Outdoor Education Centres.
- ❖ COVEY also provided us with sample documentation which, together with material from Borders College, we used to create the planning template, venue questionnaire and service user and volunteer consent forms attached.
- Because there were a limited number of befriending examples and we were intending to involve carers (and possibly siblings), we also looked at a number of non-befriending organisations:
  - ❖ Projects run by No Limits, Barnardos Dundee, Over the Wall, The Linn Park Group Dumbarton District Disabled Children's Forum, Charlie House and Epilepsy Connections all involved carers (and most also included siblings).
  - ❖ The Action Group, Over the Wall, Barnardos Dundee and Achievement Bute also involved volunteers in some form or another.
  - ❖ Almost all of these projects were based at activity centres such as Kielder, Ardlui and Abernethy. Barnardos Dundee was a notable exception and included a city-break. This required a higher number of volunteers and staff because there were no activity centre staff.

### Regulation and insurance.

We spoke to the Care Inspectorate to see whether we would be obliged to register the project if it included overnight trips. Their response was:

"As long as what you are doing is activity based and the purpose is not to provide personal care or personal support (the regulations describe personal support as "...counselling, or other help, provided as part of a planned programme of care") this does not fall to be registered. This applies whether you go away in groups or one to one, whether over or under 16 years and as long as anyone who needs care is supported by a someone else, such as a relative."

As we will continue not to provide personal care (or support as they define it), there is no need to register.

Our insurers have also confirmed that our cover would not need to change.

### Our strengths:

Looking at the other projects, it is clear that our planned project has several advantages:

- Because trips will involve befriending groups that have already been meeting for some months, the participants can have a full say in the choice and planning of trips, and no additional lead-up teambuilding days are needed.
- Because group dynamics are already established and known, character clashes and unpredictable behaviour will hopefully be minimised, and risk assessments can be more precise.

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- We will always have more volunteers and staff than service users on the trips, and so will not be limited to activity centres which provide additional support through their own staff. This makes, for example, sightseeing city-breaks possible.
- Similarly, because family carers will accompany trips to provide personal care, we are not restricted to the Calvert Trust centres in Kielder and the Lake District, which are the only Outdoor Education Centres offering care.

### Pilot

We felt that because there were few befriending examples to work from (particularly for the city-breaks that some groups had expressed a preference for), it would be prudent to run a pilot trip. Accordingly, a group trip went to Edinburgh on 18<sup>th</sup>-19th April 2015 with funding from Scottish Borders Council Community Grant Scheme. The report is attached as Appendix 2 below.

We also trialled an overnight trip for a well-established adult 1:1 link to Newcastle in November 2014. This provided us with an early opportunity to test our planning system and documentation and was very successful.

### Plan

- Our Children & Young People's Project starting in September 2015 will include full-day and overnight trips.
- The 16 families included in the formal consultation will provide the minimum cohort for year 1, with each branch running one trip per year.
  - ❖ The intention is for all the trips to be overnight, with full-day trips as a fall-back option if overnights prove impractical for any branches. Trips can be for one or two nights.
  - ❖ Trips will be at weekends and in school holidays: this is more practical for children and young people and volunteers and provides respite to carers at a time when the caring role is at its heaviest.
  - ❖ Activities and destinations would be chosen by the groups, but it is likely that Outdoor Education Centres. and sight-seeing city-breaks will be prevalent.
  - ❖ Where personal care is needed, the relevant family carer(s) will accompany the trip.
  - ❖ Even if no personal care is needed, carers will still be given the option of joining the group (potentially with a sibling) so they can have a break, possibly doing separate activities from the group.
  - ❖ The project plan will estimate as many as 20 families benefiting annually. This gives us additional scope to take a group of children aged 8-15 on a full-day trip: Branch Co-ordinator opinion is that an overnight trip for a children's group would not be advisable (certainly until we have plenty of experience with the older groups) but a full-day trip is certainly feasible.
- Following Interest Link's normal pattern of fundraising, the costs of transport, accommodation and activities will be raised annually, with each trip being regarded as

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a mini-project for fundraising applications. This will provide some scope for the level and type of activities to be varied in response to experience.

- After discussions with other projects, 1:1 overnights are not included in this plan.
  - ❖ There were suggestions that some funders of children and young people's projects, are averse to overnight trips because of protection issues. These objections are understandable, and even without them our use of peer-age volunteers would make 1:1 overnight trips for this age group very unlikely because of the level of responsibility involved.
  - ❖ There is more scope for adult 1:1 trips however, as our pilot trip to Newcastle demonstrated, and we will keep these under review, together with adult befriending group trips.

May 2015

### Appendix 1: Consultation Record

#### Group member consultation.

- In December 2014, 4 Befriending groups involving a total of 16 children and young people with learning disabilities were identified as being particularly suitable for full-day or overnight trips.
- At group sessions, trips were talked about, with examples of destinations and activities being Outdoor Education Centres. and sightseeing city-breaks.
- The children and young people were asked by staff if they would like to go on trips as part of their befriending group activities, and all said that they would.
- Volunteers were asked the same question, and all said they would and that it would add to the outcomes of the group.

#### Carer Consultation

- We needed to be confident that family carers would give their consent to trips, which would be considerably different in nature from the fortnightly group sessions.
- The issue of personal care also needed to be addressed:
  - ❖ Many of our service users, including some in the groups consulted, have personal care needs which would definitely need to be addressed for an overnight trip, and possibly for a full-day trip. These most commonly involve administration of epilepsy and diabetes medication.
  - ❖ In common with all befriending services, Interest Link is not registered with the Care Inspectorate, and so Interest Link volunteers and staff cannot provide personal care. This would restrict any overnight trips to the Calvert Trust centres in Kielder and the Lake District.
  - ❖ The only alternative would be for family carers to accompany trips to provide the personal care. This is a feature of several comparable projects we looked at where the aim was to also give family carers (and possibly siblings) a break staying with the child they care for but often doing separate activities from them.
- Family carers of the 16 children and young people who had been identified and consulted were interviewed face to face or on the telephone in January 2015 about these issues, and the responses are given below:

1. Do you think your child would like to do a full day or overnight trip and would you be happy for them to do so?

Yes: 16 (13 possibly full-day only)

No: 0

Comments

Yes, definitely a full day. It would depend who she was with for an overnight stay. If she was with the ACE group she would most probably want to go.
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Yes, definitely. As long as it was with people she knows, or at least one person she knows well.
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Yes, she probably would.
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## Full-day and Overnight Trips Consultations

Yes
I am sure that James would love to do a full day and overnight trip.
Stewart would enjoy either but especially overnight
Yes, definitely
Both
Day trip is fine. Not so keen on Charlie staying away overnight due to wakeful periods and Nocturnal Epilepsy
Both
Both
Yes he would.
A full day trip at the moment/ might consider overnight trips later on.
Thomas would love that!
Yes
Yes

2. Do you think there might be any problems involved, for example the need for personal care?

Yes: 4 (2 re epilepsy medication, 1 re Diabetes Injections, 1 unspecified)

No: 12

Comments

No, she would be fine.
No, she doesn't need personal care, just some help to tie her shoelaces.
No, none at all.
No personal care but would require support in managing his anxieties and timetabling the trip so he would know exactly what to expect.
He had medication that needs to be taken twice daily – this is for epilepsy. This could be discussed with his epilepsy nurse. He would need a little help with personal care.
No problems at all
No personal care needed
Medical Issues Diabetes Injections administered.
Medication in the evening Anticonvulsive medication. Reduces Nocturnal Epilepsy considerably.
No medication
Requires no medication
I don't think so.
No major problems for any trips.
No
Hannah would need help with personal care overnight.
No there wouldn't be any problems.

## Full-day and Overnight Trips Consultations

3. Would you accompany a trip, either to provide care for your child or just to have a break?

Yes: 5 (4 to provide personal care)

No: 11

Comments

I wouldn't mind but I don't know if she'd want me to be there! Because she would probably want to go on her own.
I don't think Rachel would want me there but I'd be happy to go.
Probably not, to be honest. She's better going without us, she enjoys the independence.
No
To go with could be arranged but I have other children and commitments to be taken into consideration.
Stewart enjoys trips and behaves far better if Alec and I are not around so we would see this as respite.
No: very important for Andrew to be able to go away without parents being there: there are no other opportunities for this.
She is happy to come along on trip but to be there only for administration of medication purposes. She is happy to do this but would bring along a sibling and do something separately with him. Happy to pay towards costs.
Yes, to provide care.
No
No
Yes I would, either to help or a break.
Not at the moment.
Terry would probably rather I didn't – so no.
Yes, I would like to come and I could provide the care needed.
Sorry circumstances aren't the best for me to join the trip just now.

### Appendix 2: Pilot Report

#### Central Borders young people's group trip to Edinburgh 18th-19th April 2015

All the group members are from our local community and have been together for at least a year. We all took an active part in planning the trip.

Unfortunately, we had two last minute cancellations from volunteers (one for ill health and one for exam pressure) so the total party was 3 service users, 2 peer mentors, 1 sessional worker and 1 staff member.

By using the local transport service as a group and heading to our capital city, we accessed places which are both ordinary and valued. We chose to take the bus rather than drive as we felt it was more of a team trip to travel together. Our service users would not (at this stage) be able or confident enough to take a bus to Edinburgh alone.

By staying at the hostel, we were able to encourage independence away from the family homes and carers for all our members, whilst challenging the comfort zones of our service users in a supportive manner and further encouraging responsible peer mentoring from our younger volunteers.

The weather was fine and we decided as a smaller group that we would like to spend the time we had outside: instead of going to the Museum and Royal Yacht Britannia we went on a sight-seeing walking tour of the city and saw historical monuments and modern sculpture. We walked a total of 13,000 steps around the city and there was much laughter and chatter. Very relaxed and it was great to see our service users coming out of their shells more and more. We relaxed over a cup of hot chocolate after our long walk.

The Ghost Bus tour was purely for amusement – selected by the group- and whilst it contained a lot of interesting historical facts, it was something completely new for all the group members. One service user was nervous of sitting on the top deck of the ghost bus – where all guests sit – but was fine once we were all sitting down together. One other service user was initially bothered by the fake spooky noises but with some reassurance and a seat next to her favourite peer mentor, was soon giggling along with everyone else.

We walked back to the hostel through the city and all took some lovely photos of the sunset over the bridges. Again, this is not an unusual activity but is out with the norm for our group and it was much enjoyed.

One of our higher functioning young people is now considering using the experience of the trip as a springboard to possibly attending a fan conference of one of her favourite boy bands in October on her own (meeting up with other fans who she already knows at the venue). This would be a significant first for her and she is looking into all the details to see

## Full-day and Overnight Trips Pilot Report

if she could manage. She feels our Interest Link trip has given her a better idea of what it would be like.

Family/carer respite – all the service users who attended the trip live with family and we know from various text messages that the respite was enjoyed by all, both from the benefit of knowing that their son/daughter was away and safely having fun but also in terms of time to spend with partners or other siblings.

Stefanie Poletylo  
May 2015





## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation

9. Outline of communication with parents/carers (in addition to Overnight Consent Form):

10. Outline of activities planned and preparation of participants (e.g. training for outdoor pursuits, itinerary):

11. Any other relevant information (attach separate sheet/information if necessary):

Signed (Branch Co-ordinator)

Date

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation



# Interest Link Borders Full-Day or Overnight Trip Venue Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Independent Activity Centres, Residential Centres, Riding Centres, Boat Trip Operators etc.

1. Name of establishment:

2. Name and address of owners:

Tel no:

Fax:

Mobile no:

E-mail:

3. Name and address of manager: (if different from above)

Tel no:

Fax:

Mobile no:

E-mail:

4. Brief outline of activities offered: (enclose any relevant printed material)

5. Does your establishment have an appropriate licence to operate? YES/NO  
Please give details:

How many employees do you have?

6. Does your establishment have a written Health and Safety Policy? YES/NO  
If YES give brief details (enclose any relevant printed material)

7. Indicate main Health and Safety and First Aid procedures enforced in your Establishment (with regard to safety of visitors).

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation

8. Insurance Policy - give brief details of your Third Party insurance cover:

Policy No:

Expiry Date:

9. Have fire risk assessments been completed and recommendations Implemented? YES/NO

If NO are there:-

(a) adequate means of raising the alarm in the event of fire? YES/NO

(b) adequate fire fighting equipment? YES/NO

(c) suitable fire action notices posted? YES/NO

10. Do you have written fire risk assessments? YES/NO

11. In the case of residential establishments indicate if separate sleeping arrangements are available for male/female and indicate number per room and proximity of leader rooms to group member rooms/dormitories (enclose relevant printed material):

12. Please indicate any security arrangements in place:

13. Qualifications of resident staff undertaking instruction in Outdoor Pursuits. Please give names and qualifications (e.g. of National Bodies) for those instructing water-sports, mountaineering, skiing, riding, etc:

14. Any other relevant information related to safety (including reference to any literature you have enclosed):

Signed:

Date:

Name:

Position:

Please return completed form to Interest Link Borders Platform One, Station Road, Duns Berwickshire TD11 3HS

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation



# Interest Link Borders Carer Consent Form for Full-Day or Overnight Trips

This form to be completed by Branch Co-ordinator and carer for every full-day or overnight trip.

Any information you give us will be kept confidential.

A. Details of trip (to be completed by Branch Co-ordinator)

Name of volunteer (if 1:1 link):

Excursion Dates:

Location:

Activities:

Travel arrangements:

B. Personal Details of person cared for (to be completed by carer).

1. Name:

Address:

Date of Birth:

2. Details of any overnight personal care required (e.g. administration of medication, help with dressing/undressing, eating & drinking, washing, toileting, walking, climbing stairs, crossing the road).

3. Details of medical information relevant to an overnight excursion (such as essential medicine, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, vision or hearing defects, recent illness/injury, allergies to food or medication).

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation

4. Details of any special dietary needs and/or food & drink that should be avoided.

5. Are there any other factors which might make a full-day or overnight trip unwise or require special attention by volunteer or staff member?

6. Date of last Tetanus Injection:

7. G.P: Name

Address:

Phone:

6. Please circle as appropriate :

a. Is the person you care for fit enough to take part in the proposed activities? Yes / No

b. In an emergency, do you give consent for Interest Link to call 999 and GP? Yes / No

c. Do you consent to Interest Link staff or volunteers administering non-medicinal basic first aid (such as applying plasters, bandages or antiseptic).? Yes / No

N.B. If specific health protocols are in place, these will be given priority and may involve more extensive first aid.

d. Do you consent to an Interest Link staff member or volunteer accompanying the person you care for to hospital. Yes / No

e. Do you consent to the person you care for receiving emergency medical/surgical/dental treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities Yes / No

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation

**Emergency Contact Details:** Please provide details for two next of kin and one additional emergency contact. (If no next of kin please provide emergency contacts as appropriate)

### Next of Kin Details

1. Name:

Address

Tel:

Mob:

2. Name:

Address:

Tel:

Mob

### Additional Emergency Contact:

3. Name:

Address:

Tel:

Mob:

## Consent

- I confirm that I have parental/carer responsibility for the person named above.
- I consent to the participation of the person I care for in the full-day or overnight trip
- To my knowledge the information given above is correct.
- I acknowledge receipt of information and guidelines re full-day or overnight trips.
- I undertake to see that the person I care for is provided with the required clothing/equipment and that the appropriate contribution is paid.
- I undertake to notify Interest Link of any relevant changes with take place prior to the full-day or overnight trip.

Signature

Date

Name

Thank you for completing this form.



# Interest Link Borders Volunteer Parent/Guardian Consent for Full-day or overnight trips

This form to be completed by Branch Co-ordinator and volunteer's parent/guardian for every full-day or overnight trip.

Any information you give us will be kept confidential.

## **A. Details of full-day or overnight trip (to be completed by Branch Co-ordinator)**

**Excursion Dates:**

**Location:**

**Activities:**

**Travel arrangements:**

## **B. Personal Details of volunteer (to be completed by parent/guardian)**

**1. Name:**

**Address:**

**Date of Birth:**

**2. Details of medical information relevant to an overnight excursion (such as essential medicine, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, vision or hearing defects, recent illness/injury, allergies to food or medication).**

**3. Details of any special dietary needs.**

**4. Are there any other factors which might make an full-day or overnight trip unwise or require special attention by volunteer or staff member?**

**5. Date of last Tetanus Injection:**

## Full-day and Overnight Trip Documentation

6. G.P: Name

Address:

Phone:

7. Please circle as appropriate :

- a. Is the volunteer fit enough to take part in the proposed activities? **Yes / No**
- b. In an emergency, do you give consent for Interest Link to call 999 and GP? **Yes / No**
- c. Do you consent to Interest Link staff or senior volunteers administering non-medicinal basic first aid (such as applying plasters, bandages or antiseptic).? **Yes / No**
- d. Do you consent to an Interest Link staff member or senior volunteer accompanying the volunteer to hospital. **Yes / No**
- e. Do you consent to the volunteer receiving emergency medical/surgical/dental treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities **Yes / No**

**Emergency Contact Details:** Please provide details for yourself and an emergency contact.

**Your contact details**

Name:

Address

Tel:

Mob:

**Emergency Contact:**

Name:

Address

Tel:

Mob:

### **Consent**

- I confirm that I am the parent/guardian of the volunteer named above.
- I consent to the participation of the volunteer in the full-day or overnight trip
- To my knowledge the information given above is correct.
- I acknowledge receipt of information and guidelines re full-day or overnight trips.
- I undertake to see that the volunteer is provided with the required clothing/equipment

Signature

Date

Name

Thank you for completing this form.