

# WELCOME TO WALK AND TALK COUNSELLING INFORMATION

‘Being in nature can free our minds allowing us to open up  
in a way we can’t when confined by walls’

‘All truly great  
thoughts are  
conceived by walking’  
– Friedrich Nietzsche

‘Walking is good  
for the soul’ –  
Andy Rooney

‘Walking is the  
man’s best  
medicine’ –  
Hippocrates

This information pack provides information and guidance on the service  
that Walk and Talk Counselling offers

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# WHAT IS COUNSELLING?

Counselling provides a space for you to talk about your life in a non-judgemental environment.

- It can help you to think about your life and reflect on what is happening in a way which you had previously been unable.
- The sessions will focus on what you want to talk about or explore
- It's a chance for you to share your worries and concerns
- The Counsellor will support you and move through the process with you.
- You may be helped to find appropriate coping strategies.
- Some Counsellor may use creative ways of working with clients and sensory items are often available.

We offer up to 10 sessions of Counselling rather than open ended as it is important that a person does not become dependent on Counselling. Part of the process is to provide the tools take forward in their lives so that in the future they may be able to cope with stressful situations on their own.

## What Counselling isn't:

- An advice service
- A way of changing the behaviour of a person
- A chance for others to try and change a person or influence the content of the session
- A place where a person is told what they have to do

## What is the difference between Counselling and Walk and Talk Counselling?

In Walk and Talk Counselling you and your Counsellor will go for a Walk in the local area to have your Counselling session rather than sitting opposite each other in a Counselling room.

By being out in nature and walking side by side it can facilitate the Counselling process. There is no pressure from having someone looking at you while you are trying to talk or trying to find the right words.

**'When I took them to a park I found that clients were much more relaxed and the sessions were much more productive. Clients have verified that looking forward rather than directly at a therapist can help them open up'** (Cathy Brooks-Fincher, quoted on WebMD)

**'Some clients may become anxious when confronting something difficult in a traditional seated face-to-face interaction. Walking in parallel with visual distractions allows for easier engagement'** (Kate Hays, quoted in WebMD)

Walking is good for us. This is because there are benefits to both our Physical and our Mental Health. In addition to this, studies have shown that being in a green space can help promote mental wellbeing and increase the quality of life for people with Mental Health needs.

**'Exercise is good for the body and the mind'** (Suzanne Wright, WebMD)

**'I have found that bringing a little bit of movement enriches the Counselling session'** (Clay Cockrell, quoted in WebMD)

#### **The benefits of Walk and Talk Counselling in addition to traditional Counselling can be:**

- A reduction in anxiety
- A reduction in depression
- Positive improvements in other mental health conditions
- An ability to talk more easily as it can reduce the awkwardness of sitting opposite someone and making eye contact while talking about difficult topics
- Enabling people who are unable to sit still to engage in therapy
- Clients can find it more therapeutic.
- It can help a client get 'unstuck' when confronting difficult issues (Kate Hays, quoted on WebMD)
- Can encourage deeper thinking
- Encourages physical activity

## **Considerations of Walk and Talk Counselling**

These things will be discussed in your first session with your Counsellor to set the boundaries for the sessions:

### **The Weather**

Counselling in nature can happen at all times of the year. However, you must be prepared for the weather. Ensure that you have coats, umbrellas, suncream, hats, sunglasses, correct footwear ie wellies or comfortable trainers depending on ground conditions. If the weather is too bad and you would prefer to have your session in an indoor space we are able to have sessions in a polytunnel away from the elements.

### **The Route**

You will discuss with your Counsellor whether you want to walk a long way, or just a little way and then spend some time sitting in nature or how fast or slow you want to walk. Your needs will be considered then when planning the route taken and any stops along the way.

**What happens if I see someone I know?**

You can discuss this with your Counsellor but generally it would be advisable to acknowledge with a hello and then keep walking with your Counsellor. Other people will usually recognise when you are engaged in conversation and unable to talk and are unlikely to realise that you are in the middle of a Counselling session. Please do not bring your dog with you as this may encourage others to stop and talk to you.

# THE COUNSELLING PROCESS AT 121

At Walk and Talk Counselling we support People who live or who are registered with a Doctor in the Hart or Rushmoor Districts. We accept self-referrals and referrals from GP's and other professionals. Our referral form can be found at <https://www.hartvolaction.org.uk/counselling/walk-and-talk-counselling/>

Referral



Waiting list



Initial Session



Counselling



Review



Ending



What next?

If you are referred to Counselling it is important that it is something that you want to do and that you haven't been told you have to come. Once you have decided you would like to try Counselling then you can complete the referral form on our website.

Once we receive the referral form you will be placed on the waiting list. We will contact you to let you know we have done this and we will arrange an initial call with you. Waiting times do vary depending on how flexible you can be with session times and method of delivery. We will ask you for your availability and preference on delivery at this stage.

The first session will be a one-off initial session. This is a chance for you to find out more about Counselling and what 121 Walk and Talk Counselling can offer you. It is also a chance for you to explain why you want to come to Counselling. At the end of this session, if counselling is the right option for you, you will be asked if you want to continue and have Counselling.

We offer up to 10 Counselling sessions for each person. Each session will be up to 50 minutes long and will be at the same time and place each week with the same Counsellor. Sessions take place at Edenbrook Country Park.

The Counsellor will review with you on a regular basis to see how you are finding the sessions, what has changed and confirm that you want to continue. People do not have to continue with Counselling and are able to drop out at any time if they find it is not for them.

The Counsellor and you will discuss coming to an end and plan for this.

Many people will not need any further intervention once the Counselling has finished. However, we do not leave any person without support if it is needed. If relevant we will recommend alternative services to you if we think you will benefit. We are also able to do referrals to Adult Services and other agencies if required


# BOUNDARIES IN COUNSELLING

## Confidentiality

Counselling is confidential. This means that a Counsellor will not report back to anyone including a person who has referred you or a GP.

You can choose to discuss the sessions with others if you wish but you don't have to.

As you are generally going to be in a public space during your session consideration will be given by your Counsellor to how you keep this confidentiality and this will be discussed in your initial session.



Will you really not report to anyone, even if I am under the care of another health professional?

There are exceptions to confidentiality. These are:

- **If there was concern about the safety of the client or of another person**
- **Where information is required to be released by law**
- **Inference to an act of terrorism**
- **Money laundering**
- **Drug trafficking**

## The Counsellors

All of our Counsellors are members of a Counselling Association, usually the British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). We do use Counselling students to see some of our 16 + age group. However, all have passed a competency test to be able to work with clients.

## Attendance

We do have a strict attendance policy. It is really important that a person attends on a regular basis and does not miss lots of sessions. When a person misses sessions it disrupts the continuity of the Counselling. We are a charity and rely on funding and donations to be able to provide the service. A missed session costs us roughly £40.00.

When accepting the offer of Counselling sessions please advise us of any already planned and booked holidays or events you have over the period the sessions are being offered. We will allow you to miss two sessions for anything that you had already booked prior to sessions being offered.

In addition to the two weeks of planned holiday you will be able to cancel two sessions giving us more than 24 hours' notice. These sessions will be counted towards the total number of sessions ie if you have 10 sessions and you cancel two sessions during the period you will only attend 8 sessions in total. The third time a session is cancelled then you will lose your place in the service.

# WHAT TYPES OF THINGS CAN I TALK TO MY COUNSELLOR ABOUT?

You can use your Counselling sessions to talk about whatever you need to. However, some of the common things that People talk about in sessions are listed below:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Bullying
- Online bullying
- Self-Harm
- Suicidal ideation
- Low self-esteem
- Loneliness
- Lack of self-care
- Gender Identity
- Sexuality
- Relationship issues
- Family issues
- Stress
- OCD
- Body image

# WHAT OTHER HELP IS AVAILABLE?

Between Counselling sessions, you may want to access other help and support. Please see some options below:

**If you find yourself in a place where you need crisis support then the following services are available for you to access:**

**Crisis line for North East Hants and Farnham CCG catchment (including Hart)**

0800 915 4644 – Open 24 hours 365 days a year

<https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health/CrisisHelpLn>

**Samaritans**

116 123 – Open 24 hours 365 days a year

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) – email support provided within 24 hours

**Calm (Campaign against Men Living Miserably) phone and webchat:**

0800 585858 - open 5pm – midnight

<https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/get-help/>

## **Counselling and Wellbeing Services available at Hart Voluntary Action**

For information and referral forms for these services please visit our website using the links given below. Alternatively, phone 01252 815652 or email [info@hartvolaction.org.uk](mailto:info@hartvolaction.org.uk).

**Hart Health Walks** – organised walks for all ages in a safe and social setting

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/hart-health-walks>

**121 Adult Counselling** – for those struggling with suicidal ideation

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/counselling/adult-counselling>

**Sunshine and Showers Anxiety and Depression support groups** – a chance to share you experiences in a safe and friendly environment

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/counselling/sunshine-showers-support-groups>

**Harts Community Garden**

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/community-garden>

**Family Counselling** – sessions for all the family together as well as individual support where required

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/counselling/family-counselling>

**121 Youth Counselling** – Counselling Support for Young People aged 11 – 25

<https://hartvolaction.org.uk/community-services/counselling/youth-counselling>

## Other Local Organisations Providing Mental Health Support

**Andover Mind** – Wellbeing Centres in Aldershot and Basingstoke

<https://www.andovermind.org.uk/services/accessing-our-services/>

tel: [01252 317481](tel:01252317481)

email: [well-beinghartandrushmoor@andovermind.org.uk](mailto:well-beinghartandrushmoor@andovermind.org.uk)

Basingstoke

tel: [01256 476572](tel:01256476572)

email: [well-beingbasingstoke@andovermind.org.uk](mailto:well-beingbasingstoke@andovermind.org.uk)

**Hampshire Parenting Support Service**

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/support-for-parents-and-carers>

**SUN (Service User Network)** – Support groups for PD and people with complex emotional needs

<https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services/services-a-z/service-user-network-sun>

**START – Sexual Trauma and Abuse Restorative Therapies**

<https://start-org.uk/>

**For more local options a list of other support can be found here:**

<https://hereforhartdirectory.org.uk/>

<https://www.hart.gov.uk/community/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-support> and

<https://www.connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk/mentalhealth>

## **Nationwide organisations**

Each of these services provide specialist support in different areas.

**Combat Stress** – Mental Health Support for veterans and their families

[www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

0800 1381619 – open 24 hours

**LGBT foundation** – Advice and support in relation to LGBT issues

<https://lgbt.foundation/helpline>

0345 3 30 30 30 – open weekdays 9am – 9 pm

Email support [helpline@lgbt.foundation](mailto:helpline@lgbt.foundation)

**Womens Aid** – support for women and children exposed to domestic violence

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

**National Self Harm Network** – a forum to support individuals who self-harm and family member and friends of those that self-harm

<https://www.nshn.co.uk/>

**The Compassionate Friends** – supporting bereaved parents and their families

<https://www.tcf.org.uk/>

0345 123 2304

[helpline@tcf.org.uk](mailto:helpline@tcf.org.uk)

**SANDS** – support for pregnancy and baby loss

<https://www.sands.org.uk/about-sands>

**Age UK** – phone support for the elderly

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

**Cruse** – Bereavement support

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/>