

Wessex Counselling & Psychotherapy

Accessibility Review March 2018

Overview

It is part of our Aims and Objectives to offer affordable counselling to anybody who wishes to access the service. We recognise that we do have limitations however we continue to work towards making the counselling service as accessible as possible. Each year we carry out a review and draw up an on-going action plan

Location/Transport

- Frome

We acknowledge that as we are situated in Frome which is a rural area with limited public transport provision potential clients without their own transport may find it difficult to access the service. There is adequate public transport during the day however the local bus service is very limited access after 18.00. We have counselling rooms available in three locations in Frome all within a short walk of main bus routes. There are two public car parks within a short walking distance of our counselling rooms in Fairfield House. There is disabled parking and access at our other two sites.

- Bristol

We offer counselling at Orchard House, Bristol it is served by main bus routes and close to the centre of the city. Public car parking is available a short walk away from Orchard Street and the building does have disabled access.

- Bath

We offer counselling at The Practice Rooms which is in the centre of Bath. It is easily accessible by public transport and there are public car parks close by.

- Street

We offer counselling in the Meeting Room at Street Library. It is easily accessible by public transport and there is a public car park close by. The library has disabled access.

Sessions

- We have counselling sessions available from 9.00 – 21.00

Low cost Counselling

- We offer various schemes to help people access affordable counselling
 - i. Young people aged 18-25 on low incomes can have a free assessment and 12 counselling sessions at £10
 - ii. Clients can pay £20.00 and have up to two years counselling
 - iii. 6 sessions of free counselling is available to Frome residents on low income
 - iv. We fund raise to support a bursary scheme which offers financial support to existing clients who experience financial difficulties while in on-going counselling.
- We offer a discounted rate for Intake assessments to clients on low incomes.

- On-going counselling fees are based on a household income guide and are negotiated with clients on an individual basis according to their personal circumstances.

Target population and ethnic diversity

From our equal opportunities monitoring form we are aware 90% of our clients describe their ethnicity as White which is in proportion to the local population. At the moment our Equal Opportunities monitoring form does not identify which venue the person is being counselled at. In Bristol and Bristol anecdotally, our client base has a more diverse range of ethnicity which reflects the city's population. We have amended our monitoring form to refine the information we receive and from that identify if we are reaching different ethnic groups.

We have strived to recruit counsellors from a more diverse background and we have counsellors who identify their ethnicity as black and European. We are able to offer clients a choice of male and female counsellors in Frome, Street and Bristol.

Buildings

- **Frome**

Whilst we take all reasonable care to ensure the physical safety of those using our premises at Fairfield House it is not accessible to those people who use a wheel chair or who have difficulties climbing stairs. This is because all our facilities are situated on the first and second floor and reached via a staircase. It has not been possible to adapt the building to meet the needs of those with disabilities due to the age and configuration of the building. We do have access to rooms with disabled facilities at the Key Centre situated on the outskirts of Frome as well as at Frome Hospital.

- **Bristol**

The counselling rooms at Orchard Street are situated on the ground floor and have facilities for the disabled.

- **Bath**

At The Practice Rooms the counselling rooms are only accessible by stairs. In the event of a client needing disabled access we would endeavour to meet their needs by hiring appropriate rooms for their counselling.

- **Street**

The counselling rooms at Street Library are situated on the ground floor and have facilities for the disabled.

Reviewed 3/19

Accessibility Action Plan 2018

The areas we are focussing on as a management team over the coming year are

1. To help overcome the issue of clients without transport accessing our Frome offices investigate the viability of opening outreach projects in Warminster and Trowbridge.
2. To raise the profile of our service in Bristol through developing and strengthening existing links with The Severn Side institute and University of Bristol and the University of the West of England.
3. To raise money Bristol to help potential clients on low incomes access the service.
4. Continue the programme of visits to Gp's and local organisations to promote awareness of the service we offer.
5. Look for opportunities to develop links with groups representing people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Additional Points Added

6. Redesign monitoring forms so the information for each centre can be analysed
7. Put together a report to include with Annual Report and accounts showing our plan re diversity and reaching different elements of the population.

Additional points added 07/18