

The Bower House

Student Placement Information



Who are we?

We are counselling agency in Market Harborough and have been for twenty years.

Before the Bower House opened its doors to clients there was very little affordable accessible support for those who were facing challenging and difficult life situations. It was the vision of a small group of people who felt strongly that they wanted to establish an agency where people could self refer to receive professional therapeutic support as they navigated their way through life's crisis. At this time this group of people had no funding, no building, no volunteers, or counsellors but they felt committed to this vision and gradually over the next two years more people joined this vision and eventually funding was found, as was a building, and counsellors volunteered their time to offer therapy.

This group of people were Christian and the Bower House remains a Christian community and every volunteer identifies as a Christian. However, we do not offer Christian counselling and our clients come from all backgrounds with faith or none.

Where are we?

We are based in the centre of Market Harborough, two minutes' walk from the High Street, near to bus stops and about a 15-minute walk from the main line station. The Bower House is situated in a retail and commercial street and sits between a dry-cleaners and a fish and chip shop. It is a Victorian building and while it is very different in appearance to its neighbours, one can walk past in and not notice it. So the Bower House is accessible and also discreet...an ideal combination for a counselling agency.

The House

We are in an old house that has been manhandled into shape to suit our purposes. It has two counselling rooms downstairs, also an office and a common room.

The office is the hub of the Bower House and this is where the support workers are based, where the phones are answered and where most of our paperwork is kept. We are a charity that is very much hand to mouth so we do not have resources to be paper free. Our support workers understand the system and are always available to assist in helping find your way around where everything goes. You can also consult the procedure manual which leads you through the paperwork process.

Next to the office is the counsellors' common room and this is your 'go-to' place to write notes, grab a coffee, meet colleagues, catch up on paperwork. There is also a library of therapeutic books, which you may wish to borrow, and also up to date professional journals to flick through. You will also see on the wall, adverts for the latest Bower House Support Services excellent CPD days. You are welcome to spend as much time as you like in the counsellors' common room. And if you do need some peace and quiet...check the room bookings diary and if there is a spare counselling room, feel free to use it.

We have five counselling rooms; two downstairs have easy access for those who cannot use the stairs. Four of the counselling rooms have creative resources in them and one in particular has been recently extended and developed into a creative therapy space full of resources.

Our Team

The Bower House volunteer team is mainly made up of support workers and counsellors.

Support workers. As the name suggests, support workers do just that. They answer the phone, undertake the administration, answer the door, and look after your clients until your session time begins. They can pass on messages to other colleagues or to your clients, they also look after the fabric of the building, so that when you use a room you can expect it to be fit for purpose. They are also great at explaining the paperwork system.

Having a support worker team also means that when you are counselling at the Bower House there is always someone else in the building with you.

Counsellors. We are blessed with a talented and committed team of therapists. Some qualified many years ago, some more recently, from level four to Masters, from many different theoretical backgrounds. Some have gone on to study different areas of practice and have become specialist in that field. We also have a number of students with us.... if you are on placement with us, you are known as a 'counsellor', you are as valued as every other member of the team. Never underestimate the value you bring to the team...learning from each other is one of the many benefits from working in a counselling community.

Therapy

We work with depression, anxiety, isolation, grief and losses, behaviour traits, mental illness, personality disorders, issues around gender...the list goes on. We are aware of areas where there needs to be specialist intervention and also that counselling may not work with everyone. We explain more about this when we meet you.

We work with children, couples, and teenagers. We run support groups, offer in-house training, organise CPD days, support peer groups, and also offer one hour's free supervision a month with more available at low cost that you can negotiate with your supervisor. Extra supervision is £15 per half hour.

Placement opportunities

This process starts with you phoning the Bower House and asking for Trish or Philippa and we will invite you to have a chat and a look around. Once we receive your completed application form, we will invite you back for a continuation of that conversation and will give you chance to ask us questions too.

Once that part of the process is over we will invite you for a supervision session, induction and allocation of clients. With the latter you are very much part of that process. We will talk you through how the allocation works and work with you to select a client. We can support you at every point so that you feel this is the right decision....and then you are on your way to meeting and arranging this first session with your first client. We recommend a second client follows soon after so that you get some momentum going with your developing practice.

The best quality you can bring to your placement is honesty with yourself and with us. The better we get to know you, the more resourced we are to support you through your placement.

Good luck with your studies and we look forward to hearing from you!

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