

**GATEWAY TRUST
COUNSELLING
VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK FOR
WELCOMERS
2024**



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Updated November 2024

To be reviewed October 2025.

This handbook has been prepared for the exclusive use of Ribble Valley Gateway Trust and is not to be made available for use within any other organisation.



Welcome

Welcome to Ribble Valley Gateway Trust!

Thank you for donating your time and support to our organisation. The work of Ribble Valley Gateway Trust (RVGT) would not be possible without the help of our volunteers.

This Volunteer Handbook is yours to keep as a reference to help you during your time as a volunteer with RVGT. Our aim in producing this document is to create a one-stop information point where you should be able to access all the information you are likely to need in relation to your volunteering with us, your role as a volunteer, and the necessary guidelines you need to be aware of. We know there is a lot to take in all at once and hope this makes it easier for you!

You may find that some of this document sounds a bit formal and official. On a day-to-day basis we're not like that at all. We are proud of the strong, friendly relationships that exist across volunteers and staff at RVGT.

Nevertheless, volunteering for any organisation comes with responsibilities underpinned by clear processes, so that in the unlikely event of things going wrong, both you and RVGT have a clear arrangement that both have signed up to.

As a volunteer, you are joining a team of people from all walks of life, who contribute not only a great deal of time, but bring skills, knowledge, and individuality. If you have any problems or queries, the staff are more than happy to help so please feel free to approach us. We look forward to a long and happy working partnership with you.

With very best wishes,

Ruth Haldane
Chair of Trustees



**ABOUT
RIBBLE VALLEY
GATEWAY TRUST**

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Introduction

The Ribble Valley Gateway Trust was constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 13th May 2016.

The objects of the CIO are for the benefit of people in the area, currently administered by the Ribble Valley Borough Council:-

- To prevent or relieve poverty, including, but not exclusively by the provision of food parcels, guidance, and support;
- To relieve those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantage;
- To advance Christian faith and practice including, but not exclusively, to promote collective and personal training, outreach services, and ecumenical worship and mission.

The Trust has established an inclusive organisational structure based on active and enduring links with Christian churches in Clitheroe and Longridge. This is reflected in strong levels of volunteering, donations of food and finance, and promotion of the Trust's services within the Ribble Valley communities.

The Trust has practical links with around 40 referral agencies and two local authorities.

The Trust has adopted formal policies regarding safeguarding, risk management, and health and safety and keeps broader policies including staff and volunteer handbooks under regular review.

Projects

Gateway Trust Counselling – weekly or fortnightly one-hour counselling sessions offered by professionally qualified persons to individuals who are referred by doctors, churches, and other care agencies.

Ribble Valley Foodbank and Olive Branch Advice café – providing food parcels and offering guidance and encouragement through the Olive Branch Advice café. Individuals and families experiencing financial constraints are helped through teams of volunteers in Clitheroe and Longridge, led by a manager accountable to the trustees.

Ribble Valley Art4All – weekly art classes led by a retired art teacher and volunteers for students with learning difficulties and other special needs.

Each service is provided to the public-at-large, subject to the recipient's need for the specific service being clarified on referral in line with Charity Commission guidance.



Projects

Gateway Trust Counselling

Mission Statement:

To spread the love of Jesus by serving the people of Clitheroe and the surrounding area through the provision of a quality and affordable counselling service in a God-centred environment.



Defining Principles

Our Christian Faith:

- That an overt Christian ethos will be demonstrated within the centre.
- That anyone working in the centre will either be a Christian or be sympathetic to the Christian faith.
- That all people, of all faiths and none, will be treated with respect and non-judgmental acceptance.
- Meetings may include prayer.
- Our organisation will be managed in an ethical and caring way.
- We maintain close links with the churches of Clitheroe.

Professional expectations:

- A high standard of counsellors will be ensured by only using students or qualified counsellors of Level 4 and above being accepted to work at the centre. There will also be a requirement that they are members of a professional body, e.g. Association of Christian Counsellors or British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists.
- Gateway Trust Counselling will be a member of a professional body as an organisation and adhere our practice to those standards.
- All welcoming staff will be trained to a high standard, to interact with the clients and fulfil administration tasks effectively.
- All staff will be DBS-checked and receive regular safeguarding training where required.
- Gateway Trust Counselling will support this high standard through mentoring, training, and supervision.
- We are an affiliated member organisation of BACP (British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists).
- All necessary policies and insurances will be in place and kept up-to-date.



Projects

Care for the Community:

- We offer counselling without discrimination.
- We seek to work co-operatively and sympathetically with other helping agencies.

Working as a team:

- Respecting, supporting, and encouraging one another is non-negotiable.
- Team meetings will happen regularly where the building of the team is of great importance, so attendance is important.
- A happy and positive team attitude which supports the team and our ethos through care, humour, flexibility, and dependability are appreciated.
- We seek to work co-operatively and sympathetically with other helping agencies.



Projects

Ribble Valley Foodbank

Ribble Valley Foodbank is part of a national network of Foodbanks across the UK run by Trussell (formerly The Trussell Trust). Trussell was started in 1997 by Paddy and Carol Henderson using money willed by Carol's mother, Mrs Trussell, to help children living rough on the streets of Sofia, Bulgaria's capital city.

In 1999, Paddy and Carol were promoting their Bulgaria work in Salisbury when they were challenged by a local mum who was struggling to afford food for her children. While helping this family it became clear that there were many other people living in the same way, with just enough money to cover the bills but vulnerable to any crisis such as job loss, long-term illness, or family break-up.

Trussell then developed the Salisbury Foodbank to meet this need.

The first Foodbank was in the summer house in their garden. In 2004, the UK Foodbank Network was launched, teaching churches and communities nationwide how to start their own Foodbank. Paddy and Carol now live in New Zealand having retired in 2007.

Today, there is a rapidly expanding network of Foodbanks throughout the UK, and Trussell continues to work with vulnerable young people in Bulgaria.

To find out more about Trussell and the expanding network of Foodbanks across the UK, please visit their website: : www.trussell.org.uk



Projects



Every day people in the Ribble Valley go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income. Ribble Valley Foodbank provides a minimum of three days-worth of emergency food and support to people experiencing crisis in our local community.

Ribble Valley Foodbank relies on the support of the local community through volunteering, food donations, and fundraising. Almost all food is donated by the community through churches, schools, businesses, and supermarket collection days. Our clients are referred to us by over 50 front-line care agencies, who identify people in need and give them a voucher they can exchange for a food parcel containing three days-worth of nutritionally-balanced food at our Foodbank centre. We can also provide toiletries and items such as baby food and nappies.

Volunteer drivers also deliver parcels, if required, and some agencies hold emergency boxes for us in the local area making sure that people can still access emergency food even if they can't get to our Foodbank centre.

Our volunteers help in the Foodbank warehouse sorting food donations as well as at the Foodbank centre where they chat with clients, pack food parcels, and prepare refreshments. They also help signpost clients on to other agencies who can help with their specific problems in the hope of helping them find their way out of their current emergency.

Our goal is to make the Foodbank centre an informal and friendly place, where clients feel welcome. More information about the Ribble Valley foodbank can be found at www.ribblevalley.foodbank.org.uk.



Projects

Art4All

Art4All delivers art classes free-of-charge to adults from the local area who are disadvantaged or have special needs.

The classes help the students develop their confidence and social connections, give them a sense of achievement, and increase their general well-being. The classes promote the use of art as a means of therapy.

Art4All was started by Frankie Freeman-Ruddock in September 2018 after securing initial grants and donations. It operates within the Ribble Valley Gateway Trust.

Frankie runs the group with the support of a team of volunteers. The classes provide instruction and inspiration to the students who are disadvantaged or have special needs.

Projects are varied and focus on learning one or more techniques (e.g. use of watercolour, drawing, printing, clay modelling, etc.) They may be inspired by a particular artist (e.g. Kat Button, Georgia O'Keeffe, Andy Warhol) or seasonal events (e.g. Remembrance Sunday, Autumn Leaves). Examples of the work that we've done can be seen on our Facebook page - Ribble Valley Art4All.



The group is funded via donations and grants from a range of organisations.

Classes take place at the Salvation Army building in Lowergate, Clitheroe on Fridays during regular school term times. There are two classes each Friday, one in the morning from 10am until 12 noon and one in the afternoon from 1pm until 3pm.



One happy girl..thankyou.x

We have a positive impact on the students, their families, support workers and our volunteers

Meet our Project Managers



ALI GROVES: Gateway Trust Counselling Manager

Having escaped from teaching after 30 years, I retrained as a counsellor and knew from the beginning that there was a need for an affordable counselling service in the Ribble Valley. Once I had completed training and gained some experience in counselling I approached the RVGT and asked if I could open a counselling service under the umbrella of the RVGT charity. In 2018 this became a reality and it has grown ever since. We serve all people and offer high quality counselling for affordable donations.



FRANKIE FREEMAN-RUDDOCK: Art4All Manager

I am an independent Artist living in Clitheroe, having worked for 15 years at Broadfield Specialist School in Oswaldtwistle as an Art Teacher working with students with special needs. My passion is to make art accessible for everyone, not just those that can afford classes: it gives pleasure, develops confidence, builds self-esteem, and helps with mental health. I started Art4All in 2018 after gaining a grant from The Ribble Valley Arts Development Council. I provide an Art experience for adults who are disadvantaged or with special needs and who normally would not have the opportunity due to cost or accessibility.

AWAITING APPOINTMENT: Foodbank Manager

Meet our Trustees

Trustees are the group of people (also called the Board of Trustees) are appointed to oversee the running of a charity. They are responsible for the governance and general oversight of the organisation to ensure it operates effectively, is adequately resourced, financially sustainable, and legally compliant. As such, governance is not necessarily about doing the work or carrying out the day-to-day running of the charity – it is about making sure that things are done. For example, it is about ensuring that an organisation is well managed, but not necessarily about managing it, or making sure that the organisation has clear aims and priorities, policies, and procedures, but not necessarily about forming them.

The Charity Commission outlines the six key duties of a trustee as follows:

- Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with your charity's governing document and the law
- Act in your charity's best interests
- Manage your charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill
- Ensure your charity is accountable

Each RVGT project has a link trustee who you will hopefully meet soon after you begin volunteering. The trustees can be contacted at contact@rvgt.org.uk

Sue Dugdale



Sue is a lifelong member of All Hallows' Church, Mitton, where she is currently the treasurer.

She has always lived in the Ribble Valley and has two grown up children and six grandchildren.

She loves music and choral singing, and has been a volunteer at the Food Bank.

Ruth Haldane

(Chair and Foodbank link trustee)



Ruth was the first manager of the Ribble Valley Foodbank, setting it up in Clitheroe in 2013. She left her role as Warden of Lay Ministry in the Diocese of Blackburn in Spring 2024, and is a Licensed Lay Minister in the Church of England. She also chairs the Board of Whalley Abbey.

Norman Ivison (Communications)



Norman was ordained in 1982 and worked as a BBC religious producer for 20 years. In 2005 he joined *Fresh Expressions*, which encourages churches to engage with people often on the margins of society.

Now a retired Anglican minister, he is passionate about working alongside those in need and has had links with RVGT since its inception.

Alan Meyer (Health and Safety)



Alan has lived in Clitheroe for 20-plus years and worships at Clitheroe Community Church.

Since he retired from the Health and Safety Executive, he has been keeping himself busy studying theology and chairing Clitheroe Christians in Partnership. He loves to see the churches in the community joining together in gospel mission.

Nick Shelley (Gateway Trust Counselling Link Trustee)



Nick has worshipped at St James' Church for the past 10 years, where he serves on the PCC and is the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

As a Child Clinical Psychologist, he specialises in working with children exposed to early-life trauma. He lives with his wife and three children in Wiltshire.

Diane Steer (Company Secretary and Art4All link trustee)



Born and bred in Clitheroe, Diane is married to Terry and has two grown up children. With 40 years' experience as an Insurance Broker, she now owns Diane Steer Training Solutions, specialising in lecturing in Insurance and Law. She is Church Warden at St Paul's, Low Moor, and a volunteer at the Foodbank. Her interests are Pilates, walking her dog, and baking.

**BEING A
GATEWAY TRUST
COUNSELLING
VOLUNTEER**

2



Being a volunteer

Making a difference

The aims of RVGT, as previously stated, can only be fully accomplished through the work of volunteers. We are committed to involve volunteers in the day-to-day life of the organisation, and we value the contribution of their time, energy, and skills, without payment.

We acknowledge that volunteers make a positive and valuable contribution to our organisation and the community we serve and they are vital to our work. Volunteer help is greatly appreciated and really does make a difference. We aim to recognise, value, and celebrate our volunteers.

Volunteering is not intended to be a substitute for paid employment. The role of volunteer complements but does not replace the role of paid staff, and volunteers will not be considered to be employees of RVGT. Any arrangement with a volunteer is binding in honour only. No enforceable obligation can be imposed on volunteers to attend or give a minimum

time commitment; nor is the organisation under any duty or obligation to provide regular tasks, payment, or other benefit for any volunteering activity undertaken. However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability which underpins the arrangement.

We recognise that people may have one or several motivations for volunteering, including philanthropy, personal development, or career development.

Volunteers will be treated fairly and consistently.

RVGT welcomes volunteers to a wide range of roles within the organisation, from delivery driving to professional counselling. We recognise the fantastic contribution volunteers make in helping us fulfil our aims.

In line with our charitable aims, RVGT seeks to involve volunteers to:

- ensure our services meet the needs of our community
- provide new skills and perspectives
- increase our contact with those we serve



Being a volunteer



Why volunteer?

There are a number of reasons why people choose to become a volunteer and these include:

- Using talents and experience to help others
- Learning new skills
- Trying something different
- Being a valued member of a team and making a real difference by helping others
- Having a sense of personal achievement
- Having the satisfaction of seeing results
- Meeting new people, making new and lasting friendships, and sharing experiences with others

Our hope is that some, if not all of these reasons for you becoming a volunteer with us will be fulfilled.

What is a volunteer?

Volunteers are people who are unpaid, and of their own free-will contribute their time, energy, and skills to benefit others. At RVGT, we work to the following definition of volunteering:

- Volunteering is an activity that someone does freely, by choice
- Volunteering is unpaid (except for reimbursement of expenses incurred whilst volunteering, e.g. food, drink, travel, or any equipment you need to buy)
- Volunteering is not contractual (volunteers can have a volunteering agreement and a role/task description to clarify expectations on both sides, but not a contract of employment and a job description)
- Volunteers can receive training and development appropriate to their role



Being a volunteer

Expectations

RVGT expects its volunteers to be realistic in their commitment and volunteers are expected to give as much or as little as they consider is appropriate to them. Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Once a commitment is made, RVGT expects its volunteers to fulfil this unless negotiated otherwise.

There will be a specified range of tasks that volunteers can undertake. All volunteers will be given clear guidelines and task descriptions. Volunteers will be required to work within the boundaries described in these guidelines. Each volunteer will be given an individual 'Volunteer Agreement' and 'Volunteer Task Description' (see appendices section) which outlines

and formalises the commitment made. However, this is in no way intended to be seen as a 'contract' or a binding obligation.

Some volunteers give a set amount of time per week. Others offer small periods of time, perhaps in the run-up to an event. It is completely up to you! Either way, all that we ask from you is that you are able to honour the time that you offer. However, we do realise that everyone's circumstances can change, and so, if you find that you can no longer make a longer-term commitment, or you cannot make an agreed time, we just ask that you keep us informed. And if you're planning to go on holiday, please just let your supervisor know that you'll be unavailable for certain dates and when you plan to return.

What you can expect from us

We want to make sure that you enjoy your role and get the most out of it.

RVGT seeks to offer all its volunteers a worthwhile volunteering experience and you can expect the following from us:

- to be treated with respect, consideration, and appreciation
- to know what is (and what is not) expected of you
- to have adequate support in your volunteering
- to volunteer in a safe environment
- to be insured
- to know your rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
- to receive relevant out-of-pocket expenses
- to receive appropriate training
- to be free from discrimination
- to be consulted with, and kept informed of possible changes

What we can expect from you

RVGT expects volunteers to be realistic in their commitment and they are free to give as much or as little time as they wish. Although volunteers offer time freely and willingly without obligation, once a commitment has been made there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability.

To ensure you get the most out of your role, RVGT asks you:

- to be reliable (providing as much notice as possible if you are unable to fulfil your volunteering commitments, or if you wish to finish)
- to be honest
- to respect confidentiality
- to make the most of training and support opportunities
- to carry out tasks in a way that reflects the aims and values of RVGT
- to carry out tasks within agreed guidelines
- to respect the work of RVGT and not bring it into disrepute
- to comply with appropriate RVGT's policies and procedures



Being a volunteer

Recruitment and selection

Volunteers are recruited in accordance with RVGT's Equal Opportunities Policy. We believe that volunteering should be open to all regardless of gender, race, disability, religion, or belief, sexual orientation, or age.

Volunteering opportunities will be promoted using publicity methods suitable for the roles that need to be filled, whilst ensuring that they are accessible to all members of the community. Potential volunteers may also apply speculatively.

All prospective volunteers will be asked to complete an application form and provide the names of two referees. Once these have been received, the prospective volunteer will be invited to attend an informal interview. This will help identify how best their skills, suitability, and potential may be matched to appropriate volunteering opportunities.

If the volunteer will be carrying out activities with vulnerable groups (children and/or adults) there may be other safer recruitment procedures carried out including asking a volunteer to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check. More detailed information will be made available specific to legislative requirements and to the particular volunteer position. All volunteers will be asked to provide two references, which will be taken up.

RVGT will develop a role/task description for each voluntary opportunity – an example can be found in the appendices section of this handbook. Prospective volunteers will be offered a trial period, after which they will be confirmed as an established volunteer.

Volunteers may be required to undergo other checks relevant to their prospective role (e.g. health OR eligibility to volunteer.) If permission for such checks to be carried out is not given by a volunteer, that volunteer will not be placed.

Induction and probation

RVGT recognises that joining a new workplace, whatever the size and whatever the role to be undertaken, can be daunting. All volunteers will receive an induction when they begin voluntary work with us. An induction will include:

- information about our vision, mission, and future plans
- information on our aims and principles
- the role of the volunteer

- introduction to other volunteers and staff
- tour of the facilities/premises
- copies of other relevant policies, e.g [*this Volunteer Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Expenses Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Safeguarding, Data Protection Policy*]
- clear information on what is expected of volunteers and what training, support, and ongoing learning opportunities are available
- essential procedures, including timekeeping and documentation requirements



Being a volunteer

Training

Training in the supervision and support of volunteers will be provided for all those who have direct responsibility for volunteers. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can take their volunteering concerns and seek guidance and support.

- Training will be offered to help volunteers develop in their role.
- Volunteers are actively encouraged to undertake any training courses, or to attend any seminars or conferences, which will help them to better perform their roles.
- A volunteer may request reimbursement of the cost of such a training course (by seeking approval OR via RVGT's Expenses Policy).
- Only training specific to your volunteering role will be paid for, for example, supervision/Continuous Professional Development of our counsellors.

Support and recognition

RVGT recognises the important contribution volunteers make to our organisation. We believe we should invest in our volunteers, and so will provide regular and ongoing support, supervision, and training to enable volunteers to develop their skills. We want to ensure that all volunteers benefit from their voluntary work. Volunteer support will be provided through:

- formal training opportunities
- informal advice and information sharing
- work reviews
- one-to-one supervision
- peer mentoring

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact who will provide regular support throughout their time volunteering with us. Regular support sessions will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue about the development of the role and any advice and guidance as needed.



Being a volunteer

Expenses

Volunteers give their time and skills free-of-charge. The cost of volunteering should never discourage those on low incomes. We acknowledge this and offer to reimburse all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred whilst undertaking voluntary work. It remains the decision of the volunteer as to whether they wish to reclaim expenses or not.

What can be reclaimed from RVGT and the calculation of expenses will be explained to the volunteer before they start any activity likely to give rise to expenses. Normally, expenses should be claimed on a monthly basis on the 'volunteer expenses form' which is then paid by cheque/BACS.

Expense claims must be supported by original receipts or other evidence of payment and should be claimed in accordance with RVGT's Expenses Policy.

Insurance

Insurance is provided by RVGT to cover all volunteers working on behalf of, and at the direction of the organisation.

RVGT does not insure a volunteer's personal possessions against loss or damage.

Any volunteer using their own vehicle whilst undertaking their volunteering role must ensure that the vehicle is appropriately covered by insurance. Any volunteer who is required to drive as part of their volunteering role must hold a current driving licence.

Confidentiality

During your volunteering role with us you may have access to confidential information in relation to the organisation or our clients. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of such information.

- We expect all volunteers to adhere to a duty of confidentiality. This duty continues even after you cease to be a volunteer with us.
- You will be provided with a copy of the RVGT's Confidentiality Policy.
- Our guidelines, including those relating to volunteers' personal information held by the organisation, will be explained to you during induction.

Data protection

RVGT will handle personal information relating to volunteers in accordance with its Data Protection Policy.

Volunteers are also expected to comply with the obligations set out in our Data Protection Policy and other relevant policies, including in relation to internet, email, and communications, information security, bringing your own device (BYOD), to help us meet our data protection responsibilities to other individuals. (Please see the additional policies section).



Being a volunteer

Health and safety

Volunteers will be given a copy of the RVGT Health and Safety Policy.

RVGT will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure volunteers' health, safety, and welfare while at work in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.

Volunteers will receive training to ensure that your health and safety is protected. We will ensure you are aware of our procedures for accidents and emergencies. The relevant First Aiders will be made known to you.

Any activities carried out on a voluntary basis are covered by the same health and safety legislative requirements as those carried out by employees. It is therefore important that you understand and accept your personal responsibility towards promoting and maintaining health and safety standards in order to

provide a safe working environment for all. It is important that you:

- Carry out your own duties without endangering either your own health and safety, or that of colleagues, third parties and/or the general public
- Comply with all relevant instructions and procedures relating to safety and follow RVGT guidance
- Inform your supervisor of any personal health and safety requirements that you have.

If you have any doubts regarding your health and safety role or responsibility, please speak to your supervisor as soon as possible.

All volunteers are asked to read and familiarise themselves with the RVGT Health and Safety Policy (Please see the additional policies section).

Equal opportunities

All our volunteers are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or age.

We are committed to promoting diversity and equality. Everyone has an opportunity to be considered for the role of volunteer. As a volunteer, the RVGT Equal Opportunities Policy applies to you as much as to members of staff.

Volunteers are treated as equally and fairly as paid staff. We will consider everyone as a potential volunteer. Individuals must, however, demonstrate a commitment to the aims of the organisation and will only be placed if the needs of the volunteer match the

needs of the organisation. No person who has a conflict of interest with any aspect of the organisation will be accepted as a volunteer.

When representing us as a volunteer, we expect you to support our commitment to promoting equality and to follow our Equal Opportunities Policy.



Being a volunteer



Problem solving

RVGT aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively, and consistently. We seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard and acted upon. We aim for positive and amicable solutions.

We hope that you will have an enjoyable and rewarding experience volunteering with us. If you find that your role as a volunteer with us does not meet your expectations or if you feel we have not fulfilled our commitments to you, you are encouraged to let us know by speaking to your named supervisor. If there is an issue with your named supervisor, please contact the link trustee or Chair of Trustees. Many problems can be sorted out through discussion. We will do our very best to try to resolve any issues or concerns and to remedy any shortfall.

Ceasing to volunteer

Deciding to finish volunteering will depend on a number of factors. Volunteers may wish to leave volunteering to take up paid work, to retire, to step down from volunteering with us, or to move on to a different volunteering opportunity. Volunteers are obviously free to leave RVGT at any time.

However, if at all possible, volunteers are encouraged to give their supervisor reasonable notice of their intention to finish. Volunteers are not subject to any set notice period if they wish to cease volunteering. However, when volunteers move on from their role, we encourage reasonable advance notice so that we can plan and make alternative arrangements accordingly.

When a volunteer moves on from their role, they will be asked to provide feedback. This may be by way of an exit questionnaire. Volunteers may also ask for a reference.

If a volunteer is found to have done anything that would be grounds for immediate dismissal for a member of staff (see our Disciplinary Policy), for example, theft, or being under the influence of drink or drugs, we will ask the volunteer to cease volunteering with immediate effect.

Monitoring and evaluation

We will systematically monitor and evaluate our use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy which will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is still appropriate to RVGT.



BEING A VOLUNTEER WELCOMER

3



Being a Welcomer

Welcomer Task Description

Thank you so much for volunteering for this role.

You are the first face of Gateway Trust Counselling as you answer the entry phone and go down to answer the door to clients. Your job is to offer a warm welcome to our clients and help to put them at their ease. Within your role the following points are key:

- To observe **strict confidentiality** for the clients. You may want to ask them if and how they might want greeting if you meet them out and about.
- To be reliable in attendance and time keeping
- To prepare drinks for clients and counsellors
- To washup and tidy at the end of your shift
- To keep the diary entries for clients attending and their next appointment
- To let the manager know when they need to replenish tea and coffee supplies.



Being a Welcomer

Access, arranging, and admin

YOUR COUNSELLOR SHOULD BE IN THE BUILDING AHEAD OF YOU.

If church is open, please enter through the main entrance.

You will find this check in/out board just outside the office.

Please slide the tabs to IN for Nazareth, Bethany, Gateway Trust Counselling and Galilee, if required.

As you leave, please slide them to out.



If church is locked:

Your counsellor should have a key and should follow the following protocol.

If they are not there and church is locked:

PLEASE CALL THE COUNSELLOR YOU ARE WELCOMING FOR AND FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING.

IF THIS DOESN'T RESOLVE THE SITUATION PLEASE CALL ALI ON **07935273334**.



Being a Welcomer



Once in the building and upstairs, you may need to unlock upstairs rooms.

There is a key safe with a key that unlocks all upstairs rooms. The code has been given to you. Please make sure you replace the key and spin the dials round to other numbers after use.



Once inside the office (Nazareth room) the key safe, on the far wall, holds the keys for the office. The code has been given to you for this as well.



Our key fobs: D:
under table desk drawers.

1: filing cabinet 1

3: filing cabinet 3

LC: large cabinet

SC: small cabinet

We are leaving the water heater on but here is a pic of the switch at on.



Being a Welcomer



Here is a pic of what is required on the counselling table in Bethany room.

There are tissues, envelopes and a small clock in the large cupboard, in the office, that go on the table in the Galilee room when it is used.

Please try to get in the room early since it may need a tidy up before we can use it.

Extra brown envelopes can be found in the cupboard under the large picture.

Boxes of tissues are in the opposite brown cupboard, open with the twist knob.



Answering the GTC entry phone

When the phone trills, the client will mostly say who they are. If they don't, please ask to make sure you are giving entrance to an expected person. Then go down to the entrance door in the side of the tower and let them in.

Mobile phone pin is 1962

Photocopy code is 1111

PLEASE KEEP THIS INFORMATION SECURE!!!



**OTHER
GATEWAY TRUST
COUNSELLING
POLICIES AND
PROTOCOLS**

4



Other Policies and Protocols

Code of Conduct

At Ribble Valley Gateway Trust (RVGT) we wish to provide the best counselling service possible and to ensure that at all times this is delivered in a caring and professional manner. In order to promote confidence and trust in the organisation, all employees and volunteers are required to comply with this policy.

Statement of Policy

This code of conduct applies to all employees and representatives of RVGT. A representative of RVGT refers to all connected with delivering the counselling service and includes, trustees, employees, temporary, agency, volunteers, and students.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines of what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. This code sets out the expectation of RVGT with regard to behaviour standards in delivering the counselling service we provide.

Responsibilities

Each employee and representative of Gateway Trust is responsible for observing the highest standard of professional boundaries and ethical behaviour in the course of their work. This is to ensure the safeguarding of our clients, the provision of excellent service, and to uphold the reputation of the organisation.

All staff are responsible for challenging behaviour that is not consistent with the code of conduct. The managers and trustees are responsible to deal with any breaches of this code.

RVGT operates within the ethical framework of the BACP, of which we are organisational members.

Appropriate conduct and behaviour

Appropriate conduct and behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Adherence to policies, practice and procedures of RVGT.
- Maintenance of professional boundaries.
- Prompt and regular attendance at work or to allocated voluntary hours.
- Courtesy and respect for co-workers, clients, visitors, and any other person who deals with RVGT.
- Promoting the safeguarding of clients by ensuring that no act or omission places them at risk or in harm's way.
- Maintaining confidentiality in accordance with service policy and procedure
- Wearing suitable and appropriate clothing to maintain the professional standards of the service, ensuring a tidy and clean appearance at all times.

Inappropriate conduct and behaviour

Inappropriate conduct and behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Inconsistent and or disrespectful treatment of clients or colleagues.
- Leaving work early without permission.
- Using obscene or abusive language.
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours.
- Harassing, threatening, intimidating or coercing any person at any time.
- Reporting to work or working under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or prohibited substances.
- Excessive personal use of telephones or computer facilities.



Other Policies and Protocols

Unacceptable conduct and behaviour

Unacceptable conduct and behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

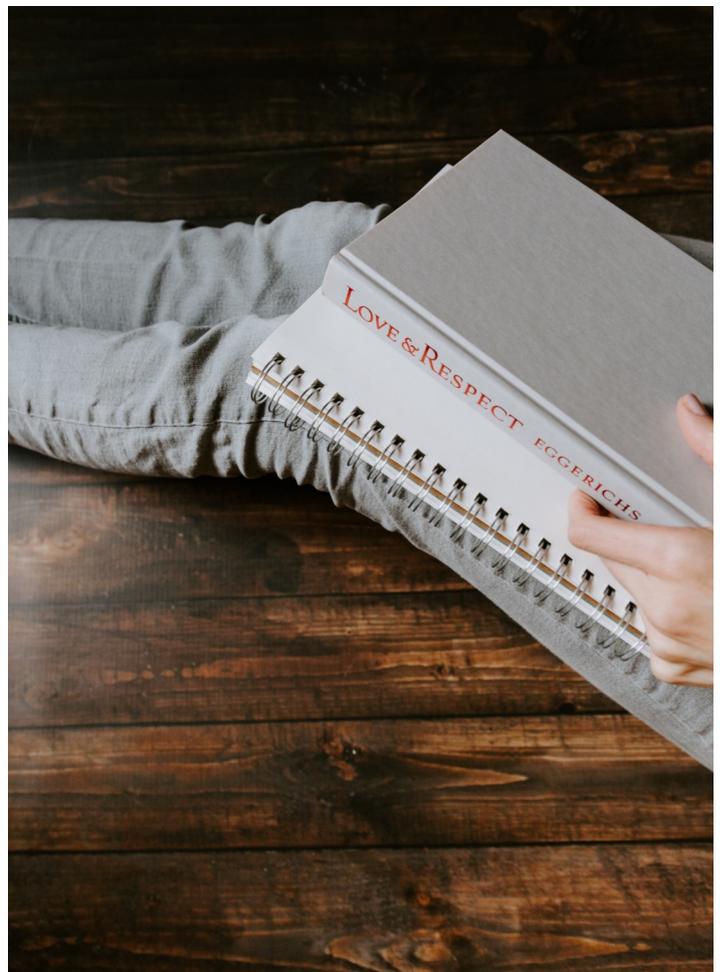
- Perceived inappropriate comments directed at an individual related to the person's sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, or physical ability.
- Behaving outside of work in such a way to bring yourself or the organisation into disrepute. This may include use of illicit substances, committing a crime, and general anti-social behaviour.
- Possession or consumption of alcohol or illicit substances whilst on the premises.
- Wilful breaches of health and safety procedures.
- Wilful neglect or misuse of the organisations equipment.
- Theft or falsification of records.
- Threat or actual physical violence towards another individual.
- Sexual harassment of any kind, which includes sexual remarks or jokes, comments about a person's sex life, derogatory or degrading remarks, and the display of sexually suggestive material in the workplace.
- Indecency.
- The commencement of any personal relationships with a client of Gateway Trust. This may include friendship, romantic relationship, pen pal, or via any social networking site. If a client has left the service, consideration must be given to the impact on professional boundaries, client vulnerability, and organisational implications.
- The viewing of inappropriate websites/online material; this includes pornography, sex sites, sites with violent or demeaning images, or jokes which contravene equal opportunities and standards of professional working.

Inappropriate and unacceptable conduct could result in disciplinary action, up to, and including termination of employment, student placement, or volunteer position.

Required Action

If a breach of this code of conduct is witnessed or suspected, initially the RVGT staff member should be informed. If this is not possible then a Trustee of RVGT should be made aware of this breach and a decision made on how to proceed, in line with other policies of RVGT.

We will endeavour to maintain anonymity of the person reporting the breach of conduct, although this may not be possible in all cases.



Other Policies and Protocols

Health and Safety

In compliance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) and all relevant Health and Safety Regulations, it is the policy of Gateway Trust Counselling Centre to seek to provide a safe and healthy place and work environment for all staff. This includes:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Those engaged by Gateway Trust Counselling Centre to carry out business on its behalf whilst in the process of carrying out that business, e.g. persons on placement
- Visitors to Gateway Trust Counselling Centre premises in connection with Gateway Trust Counselling Centre work
- Centre users

To achieve this effectively, Gateway Trust Counselling Centre will provide, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Safe premises and systems of work
- Safe access to, and exit from a place of work and procedures for evacuation in an emergency
- Information, instruction, training, and supervision in safety matters
- All relevant risk assessments where necessary

Duty of all staff

The Health & Safety at Work Act also lays down certain duties on all individuals operating within the Centre, from the most senior to the most junior.

In particular, individuals have a duty to:

- work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, the general public, or any other person who has a right of access to the Centre's premises at any time.

- Adhere to the safety procedures laid down by the Centre
- Report all accidents, near miss occurrences, and hazardous situations to the centre manager.
- All members of staff shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available they should be used (e.g. water-based markers, correction fluid, etc). If there is no way of avoiding use of a hazardous substance, then staff must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment, which shall be made available in line with the St James' Health and Safety Policy, as below.

For full details, please see The Centre's Health and Safety Policy (This is the St James Health and Safety Policy whilst we are using their building) and procedures which are filed with this Handbook.



Other Policies and Protocols

Safeguarding information

THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY IS STORED SEPERATELY WITH THIS HANDBOOK AND KEPT UP-TO-DATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANY NEW DIRECTIVES.

KEY CONTACTS

If someone is injured or in imminent danger, call 999. Manage the situation and then call a safe guarding lead.

- **Designated safeguarding lead** – Project Manager – **Ali Groves** – 07935273334
- **All concerns to be reported to Ali in first instance**
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** – **Emily Clarke** 07875447539
- **Lead Trustee for Safeguarding** – **Nick Shelley** 07547374386 – to be contacted in event that Ali or Emily not available, or if concerns raised in regards to Ali.
- **Chair of Trustees** – **Colin White** 07769707398 – if neither Nick or Ali are available.

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care:
0300 123 6721

Lancashire County Council Children’s Social Care:
0300 123 6720

Other National Advice Providers

The Action Elder Abuse Confidential Free phone help-line: 0808 808 8141 - 9am-5pm

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

NSPCC 24/7 Helpline: 0808 800 500 or help@nspcc.org

If you think a crime has taken place

Clitheroe Police Station: 01200 458734

Local Police: 101

Lancashire Police Constabulary: 101

Local Authority Designated Officer Lancashire

01772 536 694

LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk

Duty Telephone Number: 01282 471253

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board

Concerns about a child should be reported on 0300 123 6720 or out-of-hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am).

Children’s Social Services

(Office Hours): 0300 123 6720

(Out-of-hours/Emergencies): 0845 602 1043

Safeguarding concerns should be written into the Safeguarding folder, which can be found on the top shelf of the Large Cupboard (LC).

These notes should be clear and concise. Importantly they should include exact phrases used by the person about whom you are writing the report. And exactly what you did in the circumstances.

Do not include opinion or reflection.

Aggressive Visitor Protocol

What to do if a client or person connected to a client turns up to the building in aggressive state.

Make sure that you are not alone.

Ask any other staff member to be with you even if that means interrupting a counselling session.

If the person will not calm down let them know that you will call the police and do so if they do not begin to calm down.

If the person is outside of the building, do not open the door to them.

Ask them to leave. Again, say that you will call the police if they do not leave or calm down.

Let the manager know.

Let any church member of staff know what has happened since you share the building and they might need to interact with the person at another time.

Write a report of events in the Safeguarding file in the LC cupboard.



Ribble Valley Gateway Trust

St James' Church

St James' Street

Clitheroe

BB7 1HH

contact@rvgt.org.uk

www.rvgt.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1167261