



# **EALING ABBEY COUNSELLING SERVICE**

A NON-DENOMINATIONAL COUNSELLING SERVICE OPEN TO ALL

## **CLIENT INFORMATION BOOKLET**

### **Our address and contact number:**

**1A MONTPELIER AVENUE  
EALING  
W5 2XP  
020 8998 3361**

Registered Charity Trust of St Benedict's Abbey, Ealing: 242715

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SERVICE**

We have been providing low cost counselling/psychotherapy to people living and working in the London Borough of Ealing and surrounding areas since 1994. We are a voluntary sector organisation, with close links to other mental health providers in the local area. We fund our services through contributions made by our clients for receiving counselling; through fundraising; and through partnership working with the NHS / Council who provide joint funding to help support the work that we do.

We are committed to meeting the needs of the community at a time when statutory resources are over-stretched and many people on lower incomes are unable to pay for private counselling.

**Our counsellors and psychotherapists**, both male and female, come from a range of ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. Most are in advanced training on accredited courses, many of whom have gained a counselling diploma en route to working towards their psychotherapy qualification. Some continue to offer their services long after they have completed their training. Our counsellors/psychotherapists work in a non-discriminatory way regardless of belief, culture, sexual preference, age or gender. All our counsellors honour the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice guidelines set out by our Professional Body, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy ('BACP').

We offer a range of different counselling approaches which broadly fall under the 'humanistic' therapies. Research indicates that all approaches are generally of equal benefit, with the counselling relationship itself being one of the most important factors in helping people to work through their difficulties.

### **Current services offered:**

- Individual counselling and psychotherapy up to a maximum period of one year;
- Psychosexual / Couples counselling service for couples who are experiencing relationship and/or sexual difficulties. Individuals with psychosexual issues can also attend this service.

## **Problems we can help with:**

Our counsellors are able to work with a very broad range of issues: anxiety; depression; relationship difficulties; sexual, psychological, or physical abuse issues; bereavement; loss; life transitions; family difficulties; work-related problems; identity issues – this list is by no means exhaustive. Booking an assessment appointment with us will give you the opportunity to speak about your difficulties and for us to see how we could help.

**Suitable for:** Any person who feels that something in their life or within themselves is not working and who is motivated to work through their concerns with a professional.

**There is no upper age limit.** Currently we do not work directly with children or young people under the age of 18.

**Not suitable for:** Anyone who is actively psychotic; having a current serious mental illness; who is unable to commit to once-weekly counselling sessions; a recent history of violence; or a person whose needs could be met more fully by a specialist agency or treatment centre e.g. alcoholism, drug addiction, or psychiatric service.

**We do not work with counselling students / trainees or those who are qualified.**

**Contacting us:** You can telephone us Monday 9.00am to 1.00pm, Tuesday, and Wednesday 8.30am to 1.00pm; and Thursday 9.00am until 12 noon. There is an answering machine if we are busy or the office is closed.

**We do not have an emergency/crisis intervention service or drop-in facility.**

**Referral:** If you are currently being supported by a psychiatrist / community mental health team, we require a written referral from them. Otherwise, we accept self-referrals. Simply call us to talk to us about arranging an assessment session.

**Assessment/acceptance:** There is high demand for our services so you may have to wait up to 6 weeks for an assessment. Following your assessment we will try to match you with a counsellor as soon as possible. This will depend upon our waiting list at the time. In some cases the assessor may feel that EACS is not the most appropriate service for you; should this be the case they will discuss other possibilities within the area that you could use.

**Payment:** We ask for a contribution of £20.00 for your assessment. (£10.00 to those with no income other than benefits). A contribution is required for each counselling session as this is the only way EACS can continue to offer its services. Please see '**Contributions and Charges**'. Please think about the level of contribution you are able to make for counselling prior to attending your assessment appointment.

**Languages:** We mainly offer counselling in English. We do have some counsellors who are bilingual in several European languages, and to a more limited extent, Asian languages. Please call to enquire.

**Client Records:** In order to operate professionally and ethically, it is an Agency requirement that written records and brief notes of contact with you are made, which are retained by EACS and for which EACS takes responsibility. Notes made by counsellors are retained by the counsellor. These are kept to a minimum and are maintained in accordance with Data Protection Regulations 2018. After seven years, records are destroyed. If EACS were ever to close, all records would be kept in safe storage and destroyed over a seven year period. Full information about your rights regarding your personal data are contained within our separate Privacy Notice.

**Getting to EACS:** Please consult the map and directions. Entrance to the Service is gained via a fire escape steps at the side of the building. Please use the entry phone at the foot of the stairs. We have use of a ground floor annexe for those requiring disabled access.

We look forward to meeting you.

## CONTRIBUTIONS & CHARGES

**It is important that you read this before coming to your assessment session. Your assessor will be pleased to answer any queries or questions that you have about your contributions.**

EACS is a voluntary organisation, which was established in 1994 to support people in the local community. EACS offers counselling at low cost for up to a maximum of year. This service is offered regardless of ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs and sexual orientation.

To enable us to continue to offer counselling in the community, we receive support from a number of sources: NHS/Council funding; our trustees who grant us use of 1A Montpelier Avenue at a negligible rent; our counsellors who give their time for free; and the contributions our clients make for their counselling sessions, which is our main source of income for running the Service.

Your contribution therefore goes a long way to help us to keep offering low cost counselling in the community.

**Initial Assessment:** A contribution of £20.00 (£10.00 if you have no income other than state benefits) is requested.

**If you cancel your assessment with less than 24 hours notice, or fail to attend the confirmed assessment and would like to rebook, you will need to pay the cancelled appointment and new appointment in advance.**

**Counselling Sessions:** You would pay a fee for each session. Many clients ask for a guide on how much to pay. Your assessor will discuss the most appropriate level of contribution with you. As a guide we ask that you consider the following:

**If you have no income other than benefits:** A minimum of £5.00 per session (day-time) and £12.00 in the evening (after 5pm).

**If you are working or receiving money other than / in addition to state benefit:** As a **guideline**, the recommended weekly contribution is based on a calculation of £1.00 for every £1,000 of income / salary (a minimum of £12 for evening sessions).

**Contribution levels can change through the course of counselling particularly if your circumstances change. You may discuss these changes with your counsellor.**

**You will be asked to make a double contribution at your first counselling session, which means you do not need to bring payment to your last counselling session**

# EVALUATING THE WORK WE DO

## C.O.R.E. QUESTIONNAIRE

EACS uses a standard evaluation system, which has been developed to help providers of counselling and other psychological therapies to deliver the best possible service to clients seeking help for their difficulties and concerns. As part of the evaluation system, we ask all clients to complete a brief questionnaire at the assessment stage; during the counselling at 6 weeks, 3 months and every 3 months thereafter, and at the end of their counselling with EACS.

These questionnaires assist us in understanding your problems, and ultimately, to evaluate the degree to which we are able to help you with those problems. We hope you will agree to complete the questionnaires, but would like to emphasize that participation is entirely voluntary and declining to complete them will not affect your counselling in any way, nor will anything you put on the questionnaire. However, the more people who complete questionnaires, the more comprehensive the information is for improving the service of future clients.

### About our evaluation:

- Your responses to the questionnaires help us understand more about the problems that counselling is required to address, the problems which counselling is most effective in helping, and the way in which our services can be improved.
- To help us make the most of the information we gather, we may liaise with the 'CORE System Group' at the Psychological Therapies Research Centre, University of Leeds, which set up CORE in the late 1990s and has a small team of researchers specialising in the evaluation of therapy services.
- The information from the questionnaires will be treated as strictly confidential, no names, address, date of birth or other identifying information are used on any questionnaires, and no one other than ourselves and the researchers will have access to your responses.

If you have any queries regarding the CORE questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact us.

# SAFETY AND SECURITY

## THE FIRE DOORS

The main entrance to the EACS is through the Fire Door at the top of the Fire Escape. **Warning: This door opens outwards so it is important you do not stand too close to it while waiting for it to be opened**

For everyone's safety in the building counsellors lock the Fire Door behind them when they both enter and leave the building.

## THE STAIRCASE

Unfortunately our only access into the building is via the **FIRE ESCAPE**. The steps have grooves in them to help give grip. Nonetheless, **please take extra care when going up and down, especially in the rain and winter weather.**

The external staircase lights are on a timer set to keep the stairs lit up in the evenings.

## ENTRY PHONE

You can contact your counsellor by using the entry phone at the bottom of the stairs. Please give your counsellor's name.

The use of the entry phone system means:

- You can let the counsellors or Office know that you are there and who you have come to see so that strangers do not get into the building
- The counsellor can open the door and check the stair lights are on
- The counsellor can see if you need any assistance
- You can feel more secure and private coming into the building.

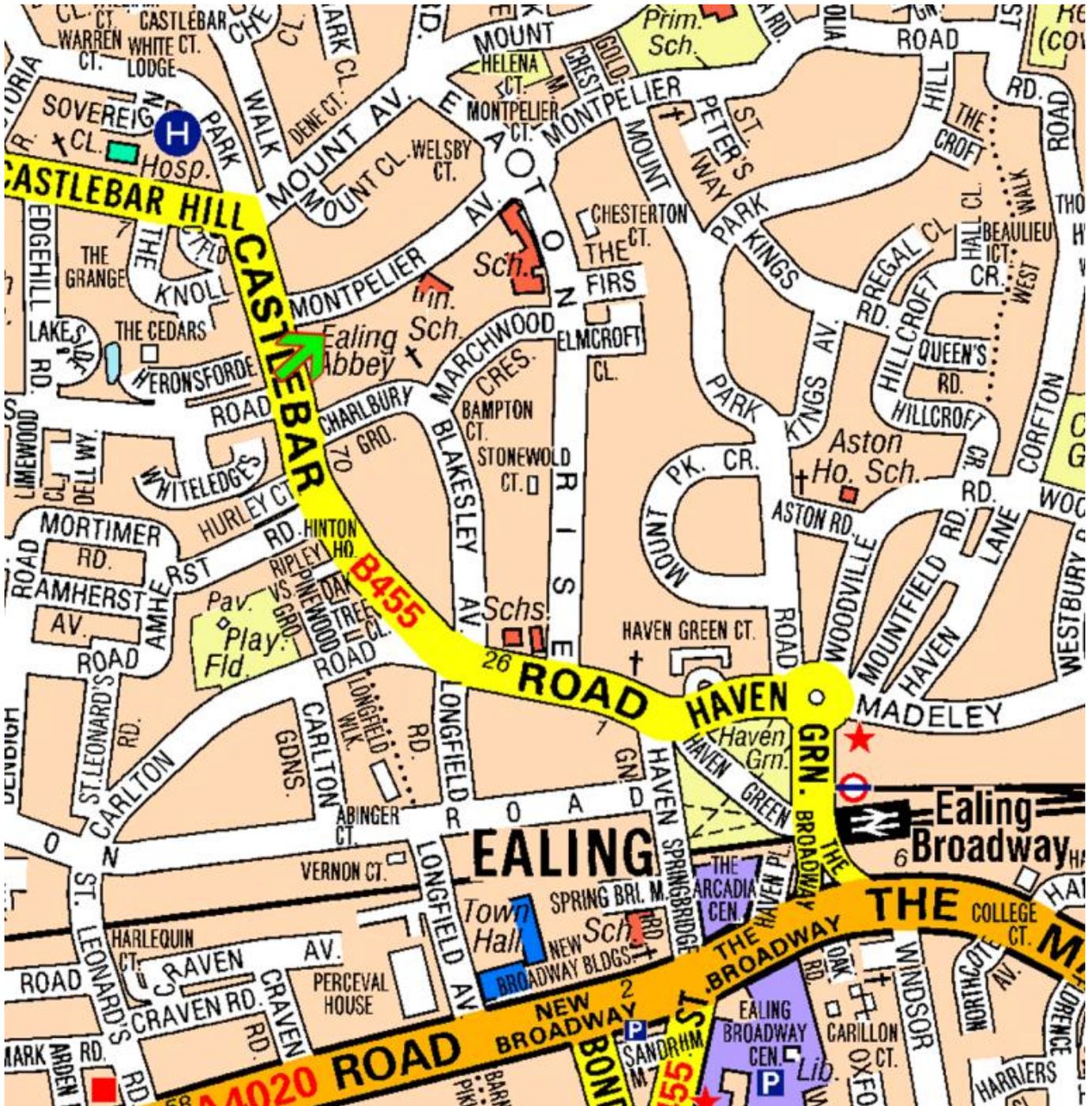
## ROOM SAFETY

- There is no smoking in the counselling rooms.
- All the rooms have an alarm system in case there is an emergency e.g. someone needs medical attention.

## PARKING

**Counsellors and clients are not permitted to park in the driveway.** There are parking spaces in the street but not during school drop off and pick up times. At night please take care when leaving to go to your car or to public transport. It is a quiet area.

## MAP & DIRECTIONS



### **Bus Routes from Ealing Broadway Station**

You can either take the **E2** or **E9** heading towards Greenford via Eaton Rise. Leave the bus at St Benedict's School just before the roundabout on Eaton Rise. The next turning on your left is Montpelier Avenue. Number 1(a) is the last house on the left before Castlebar Road. The **297** bus heading towards Willesden comes up Castlebar Road and the stop is just opposite Montpelier Avenue and we are at the top end if you are approaching from this direction. The offices are located above Links2Work and are accessed via black fire escape stairs.

### **Nearest Tube**

Ealing Broadway Station (10 – 12 minute walk across Haven Green & up Castlebar Road)

