

Talk...

Some statistics about our volunteer team

We currently have about 70 plus volunteers at the Bower House. There is never a point at the Bower House when all the work is done. It is like a 76 person job share.

Our Counsellors

We have about 40 at the moment.

You may be interested to know that it takes a minimum of four years to qualify as a counsellor, and can cost that counsellor in excess of £3,000. In addition to this they will have to pay for personal therapy at £45 per session, at least 20 sessions are mandatory. They also have to pay for supervision when they are on placement and that can cost about £45 a session, one session per month over a two year period.

Most counsellors go on to train at higher levels and this can cost approximately £7000 a year, again with the expectation that they pay for personal therapy and supervision.

Once qualified a counsellor could have spent about £10,000 to qualify and once qualified will have to pay for insurance of £100.00. And membership of a professional body for £150. And also commit to train for a further 37 hours a year to retain membership of that qualification and again the cost of this will run into to £100's. This helps to explain that some of our counsellors are leaving the service because they need to seek out paid work. We desperately need more counsellors to help with our increasing waiting lists.

Our Support Team

Our support workers team do an incredible job, all offer a rich mix of gifts and talents, an enabling role and they simply enable the Bower House to happen. We would like more to join the team of support workers and invite you to share this with those who you know in your churches. The support worker is the first point of contact when a client phones us, and the first person a visitor will meet when they arrive at the Bower House. It is a role that can develop as far as that volunteer wishes it too. Once gifts and talents are recognised we encourage them.

Our clients

We have a waiting list of about 7 weeks. We feel this is not acceptable for the Bower House. However, a recent talk to a psychiatrist who provides psychiatric services in Market Harborough talked about his waiting lists. At the very best he can offer six sessions of counselling with a waiting time of 12 months at the worst, for specialist counselling his patients can expect to be on his waiting list for two and a half years, and this is for 12 sessions. This is a man whose resources are being squeezed, he remains passionate and committed to his work but the constraints within which he works is getting more and more challenging. Many of his patients become our

clients. Many GPs patients become our clients. They can access NHS counselling, but there is a wait for this and then six sessions only are offered.

So where does this leave us?

#### Short Term Aim

To encourage more to join the team, whether they are counsellors, in training, support workers, or people with practical skills to help us maintain the property. To make the Bower House an affirming and encouraging place to volunteer. To go live with our website – designed and created by one of our support workers.

Our short to medium aim is to ensure all our administrative systems are up to date and compliant with professional standards....with the help of a new administrator (job currently being advertised) we hope to begin this soon. And also to begin to attend to the fabric of the building.

We also need to look at significant income and funding stream in the future.

#### Medium to Long Term Aims

To look at offering support groups for those who are isolated and struggle with making effective relationships. Interestingly, one of our volunteers is self funding a training course that looks at facilitating these groups – another example of the commitment and generosity of our volunteers.

We could not do any of the above without God being at the heart of what we are about. We ask for your continued prayers as we seek to sustain the project and the work we do over the next 12 months.

Our immediate aim is to seek out a representative from all the churches in the area so that we can keep in touch with you regularly.