



HANDBOOK

July, 2026

Charity No. 1055869

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CONSTITUTION

Adopted on the twelfth day of May 1994 and amended on the sixteenth day of May 1996 and on the fifteenth day of May 1997 and on the twenty first day of May 2018, the eighth day of March 2021, the twenty third day of May, 2022 and the twenty sixth day of May 2025

1 Name

The name of the Association is Winchester Bereavement Support ("the Charity").

2 Administration

Subject to the matters set out below members of the Executive Committee, constituted by clause 7 of this constitution, are responsible to the Trustees for the management of the Charity and its property. The Trustees, who have overall responsibility to ensure the Charity is run in accordance with the constitution and the requirements of the Charity Commission, are also ex officio members of the Executive Committee.

3 Objects

The Charity's objects are to help persons in the Winchester area by the provision of a listening and bereavement support service.

4 Powers

In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise the Executive Committee may exercise the following powers:

- 4.1 power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the Executive Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;
- 4.2 power to buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain and equip it for use;
- 4.3 power to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the Charity's property subject to complying with the restrictions on disposals imposed by section 36 of the Charities Act 1993, unless the disposal is excepted from these restrictions by section 36(9)(b) or (c) or section 36(10) of that Act;
- 4.4 power to borrow money and to mortgage all or any part of the Charity's as security for repayment of the money borrowed subject to complying with the restrictions on mortgages imposed by section 38 of the Charities Act 1993;

- 4.5 power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
- 4.6 power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects;
- 4.7 power to appoint and constitute such advisors and advisory committees as the Executive Committee may think fit;
- 4.8 power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

5 Supporters

- 5.1 Support of the Charity shall be open to any person over the age of 18 years who is working in a voluntary capacity to further its objects or have the status of life member.
- 5.2 Every supporter shall have one vote.
- 5.3 The Executive Committee may by unanimous vote and for good reason terminate the supporter status of any individual: Provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Executive Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.
- 5.4 Any supporter who fulfils the requirements laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee for qualification to work on an individual basis with bereaved clients shall be accorded the status of 'Bereavement Visitor'.

6 Officers

At the annual general meeting of the Charity the supporters shall elect from amongst themselves a Chair, a Deputy Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer, who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting and be regarded as supporters of the charity ex officio.

7 Executive Committee

- 7.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of not fewer than eight nor more than twelve members being:
 - 7.1.a The officers specified in the preceding clause;
 - 7.1.b not fewer than four and not more than eight ordinary members elected at the annual general meeting who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting.
- 7.2 The Executive Committee may in addition appoint not more than three co-opted members but so that no-one may be appointed as a co-opted member if, as a result, more than one third of the members of the Executive Committee would be co-opted members. Each appointment of a co-opted member shall be made at a special meeting

of the Executive Committee called under clause 10(1) and shall take effect from the end of that meeting unless the appointment is to fill a place which has not then been vacated, in which case the appointment shall run from the date when the post becomes vacant.

- 7.3 Not fewer than half of the members of the Executive Committee, whether elected or co-opted, shall be supporters having the status of 'Bereavement Visitor';
- 7.4 All the members of the Executive Committee shall retire from office together at the end of the annual general meeting next after the date on which they came into office, but they may be re-elected or reappointed.
- 7.5 The proceedings of the Executive Committee shall not be invalidated by any vacancy among their number or by any failure to appoint or any defect in the appointment or qualification of a member.
- 7.6 Members of the Executive Committee are expected to act in the best interests of the charity.

8 Determination of Membership of Executive Committee

A member of the Executive Committee shall cease to hold office if he or she:

- 8.1 becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
- 8.2 is absent without the permission of the Executive Committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Executive Committee resolve that his or her office be vacated; or
- 8.3 notifies to the Executive Committee a wish to resign.

9 Executive Committee Members not to be personally interested

No member of the Executive Committee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the Charity (otherwise than as a trustee for the Charity) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a member of the Executive Committee) in any contract entered into by the Executive Committee.

10 Meetings and proceedings of the Executive Committee

- 10.1 The Executive Committee shall hold at least two ordinary meetings each year; any meeting may be held online or in person. A special meeting may be called at any time by the Chair or by any two members of the Executive Committee upon not less than 4 days' notice being given to the other members of the Executive Committee of the matters to be discussed but if the matters include an appointment of a co-opted member, then not less than 21 days' notice must be given.

- 10.2 The Chair shall act as Chair at meetings of the Executive Committee. If the Chair is absent from any meeting, the Deputy Chair shall act as Chair. If the Deputy Chair is also absent, the members of the Executive Committee present shall choose one of their number to be Chair of the meeting before any other business is transacted.
- 10.3 There shall be a quorum when at least one half of the number of members of the Executive Committee for the time being are present at a meeting.
- 10.4 Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members of the Executive Committee present and voting on the question but in the case of equality of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- 10.5 Copies of the Minutes of the Executive Committee and any sub committees shall be kept securely and be accessible to supporters on request. Minutes of the most recent meeting of the Executive Committee shall be posted on the Volunteers' section of the Charity's website.
- 10.6 The Executive Committee may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.
- 10.7 The Executive Committee may appoint one or more subcommittees consisting of three or more members of the Executive Committee for the purpose of making any enquiry or supervising or performing any function or duty which in the opinion of the Executive Committee would be more conveniently undertaken or carried out by a subcommittee: provided that all acts and proceedings of any such subcommittees shall be fully and promptly reported to the Executive Committee.

11 Receipts and Expenditure

- 11.1 The funds of the Charity, including all donations contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Executive Committee in the name of the Charity at such bank as the Executive Committee shall from time to time decide. The funds belonging to the Charity shall be applied only in furthering the objects.

12 Property

- 12.1 Subject to the provisions of sub-clause (2) of this clause, the Executive Committee shall cause the title to:
 - 12.1.a all land held by or in trust for the charity which is not vested in the Official Custodian for Charities; and
 - 12.1.b all investments held by or on behalf of the Charityto be vested either in a corporation entitled to act as custodian trustee or in not less than three individuals appointed by them as holding trustees. Holding trustees may be removed by the Executive Committee at their pleasure and shall act in accordance with

the lawful decisions of the Executive Committee. Provided they act only in accordance with the lawful directions of the Executive Committee, the holding trustees shall not be liable for the acts and defaults of its members.

- 12.2 If a corporation entitled to act as custodian trustee has not been appointed to hold the property of the Charity, the Executive Committee may permit any investments held by or in trust for the Charity to be held in the name of a clearing bank, trust corporation or any stockbroking company which is a member of the International Stock Exchange (or any subsidiary of any such stockbroking company) as nominee for the Executive Committee, and may pay such a nominee reasonable and proper remuneration for acting as such.

13 Accounts

The Executive Committee shall comply with their legal obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to:

- 13.1 the keeping of accounting records for the Charity;
- 13.2 the preparation of annual statements of account for the Charity;
- 13.3 the auditing or independent examination of the statements of account of the Charity; and
- 13.4 the transmission of the statements of account of the Charity to the Commissioners.

14 Annual Report

The Executive Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual report and its transmission to the Commissioners.

15 Annual Return

The Executive Committee shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual return and its transmission to the Commissioners.

16 Annual General Meeting

- 16.1 There shall be an annual general meeting of the Charity which shall be held in the month of May in each year or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 16.2 Every annual general meeting shall be called by the Executive Committee. The Secretary shall give at least 21 days' notice of the annual general meeting to all the supporters of the Charity. All the supporters of the Charity shall be entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
- 16.3 The Chair shall be the Chair of annual general meetings, but if he or she is not present the Deputy Chair shall be Chair of the meeting. If neither the Chair nor the Deputy Chair are

present, before any other business is transacted, the persons present shall appoint a Chair of the meeting.

16.4 The Executive Committee shall present to each annual general meeting the report and accounts of the Charity for the preceding year.

16.5 Nominations for election to the Executive Committee must be made by supporters of the Charity in writing and must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Executive Committee at least 14 days before the annual general meeting. Should nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot.

17 Special General Meetings

The Executive Committee may call a special general meeting of the Charity at any time. If at least six supporters request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered the Secretary shall call such a meeting. At least 21 days' notice must be given. The notice must state the business to be discussed.

18 Procedure at General Meetings

18.1 The Secretary or other person specially appointed by the Executive Committee shall keep a full record of proceedings at every general meeting of the Charity.

18.2 There shall be a quorum when at least one tenth of the number of supporters of the Charity for the time being or eight supporters of the Charity, whichever is the greater, are present.

19 Notices

Any notice required to be served on any supporter of the Charity shall be in writing and shall be served by the Secretary or the Executive Committee on any supporter either personally or by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such supporter at his or her last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 10 days of posting.

20 Alterations to the Constitution

20.1 Subject to the following provisions of this clause the Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of those present and voting at a general meeting. The notice of the general meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed.

20.2 No amendment may be made to clause 1, clause 3, clause 9, clause 21 or this clause without the prior consent in writing of the Commissioners.

20.3 No amendment may be made which would have the effect of making the Charity cease to be a charity at law.

20.4 The Executive Committee should promptly send to the Commissioners a copy of any amendment made under this clause.

21 Dissolution

If the Executive Committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Charity it shall call a meeting of all supporters of the Charity, of which not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting the Executive Committee shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Charity. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Charity as the supporters of the Charity may determine or failing that shall be applied for some charitable purpose. A copy of the statement of accounts, or account and statement, for the final accounting period of the Charity must be sent to the Commissioners.

BACKGROUND

Winchester Bereavement Support (WBS) was established in 1982 when a number of local people recognised that a service was necessary and that the national organisation usually associated with work with the bereaved, CRUSE, did not consider that Winchester provided a large enough demand to warrant a local branch. Since then, the service has grown steadily in terms of both the numbers of referrals and the breadth of service offered. However, it has remained a local service for the people of Winchester and its surrounding area, organised and executed by local people. WBS is an independent, totally voluntary organisation with no ties with either statutory bodies or the churches. It is a Registered Charity.

WBS offers a support service to bereaved adults through home visits or telephone/video calls by Bereavement Visitors, who must successfully complete a training programme provided by WBS before appointment. All are volunteers. Local doctors, hospitals and other health agencies recognise the effectiveness of the service and regularly recommend people. The service is usually available within a ten-mile radius of Winchester. Equal opportunities exist for clients over the age of 18 from any background.

Clients refer themselves and may contact the Referrals Team. A Bereavement Visitor will then be asked to contact the client. Home visits are made at the mutual convenience of client and Bereavement Visitor. From time-to-time social group sessions are arranged, in response to demand, mainly for ex-clients who are recommended by the Bereavement Visitor who is finishing working with them. This is, however, a secondary activity of the organisation.

The work of WBS is managed by an elected Executive Committee, the organisation has a Senior Supervisor and a team of supervisors who are all qualified counsellors, psychologists or psychotherapists. They supervise the Bereavement Visitors in small groups. Ongoing training is provided by experienced professionals.

WBS employs no staff and has no premises, thus minimising costs. Publicity is essential to reach potential clients and to recruit volunteers. Fund-raising activities are organised and WBS receives occasional donations from grateful clients, other charities and local businesses.

RESPONSIBILITY and ACCOUNTABILITY

As a registered Charity, WBS has Trustees who are also members of the Executive Committee. The Trustees have overall responsibility for the general and financial management of WBS. Details of the Trustees are reported to the Charity Commission whenever there is a change.

The Trustees include persons holding the office of Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Treasurer's duties include those of financial management of the Charity.

The Executive Committee is elected under the terms of the Constitution which can only be changed with the approval of the supporters at a General Meeting. Certain part of the Constitution may not be changed except with the approval of the Charity Commission.

MISSION STATEMENT

WBS, a Registered Charity, is a voluntary organisation which is accessible to any adult in the Winchester area. It offers emotional support to the bereaved, primarily through home visits by trained Bereavement Visitors. The frequency and duration of visits is by agreement between the client and the Bereavement Visitor.

Visitors observe a code of confidentiality, based on the Code of Ethics and Practice for Counsellors of the British Association for Counselling.

Although initial contact may be through another agency, the service is provided in response to a personal request from the bereaved person.

Meeting a client's needs is seen in terms of:

- the acceptance of grief,
- the ability to recall the dead with sadness rather than pain,
- regaining an interest in life and being able to be rewarded by it again.

Equal Opportunities

WBS is committed to Equal Opportunities. The policy is that it is WBS practice to engage and train volunteers on the basis of their capabilities, experience and personal qualities, as befitting the organisation's mission and objectives, and without discrimination in respect of gender, race, nationality, disability, political or religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

There is no discrimination of any kind in the treatment of clients, whose acceptance is based solely on our judgement of whether we can be of assistance.

FINANCIAL RESERVE

The Charity Commissioners advise that all charities should have a declared policy on this matter. The desirability of having a reserve of some sort is self-evident, but determining the level requires some thought. In the case of WBS the following points have been taken into consideration.

The charity

- is of purely local significance
- is by its nature discreet and self-effacing, and does not lend itself to the more extrovert forms of fund raising
- has no consistent or regular source of funding and is heavily dependent on initiatives undertaken on a year-to-year basis
- is wholly responsive in its provision of services.

In these circumstances the Trustees think it realistic to aim at having a reserve at least equal to the previous year's expenditure. In the event of a serious drop in revenue this would allow WBS to continue its work for at least a further 12 months, while also giving time to (a) undertake emergency fund raising and (b) review the situation and determine future action.

The last might include, in the worst possible case, winding up the charity, but with a reserve it would be possible to do this with due notice and without incurring any debt.

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is elected by the supporters and has powers to co-opt members

All other Appointments

With the exception of the Senior Supervisor and Supervisors, appointments are made from within the supporters.

All other appointments are made by the Executive Committee and office holders are responsible to the Executive Committee.

Appointments are made to the following offices

- Senior Supervisor
- Supervisors
- Referrals Team
- Wellbeing Coordinator
- Bereavement Visitors

The Senior Supervisor and Supervisors are required to be qualified counsellors, psychologists or psychotherapists.

The members of the Referrals Team should be experienced Bereavement Visitors or those considered to have sufficient other experience.

Bereavement Visitors should have completed the WBS training course before appointment.

For new Bereavement Visitors, there should be a period of not less than two years following a personal bereavement before commencing work with clients upon completion of training.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a means of providing the client with safety and privacy and thus protects client autonomy. For this reason, any limitation on the degree of confidentiality is likely to diminish the effectiveness of the work with clients.

The agreement established with the client at the outset will include an agreement about the level and limits of confidentiality offered. This agreement can be reviewed and changed by negotiation between the Bereavement Visitor and the client. Agreements about confidentiality continue after the client's death unless there are overriding legal or ethical considerations.

Limitations

When clients refer themselves to the Referrals Team, they are informed that Bereavement Visitors are supervised by qualified counsellors who review the work that is being done with clients. Bereavement Visitors must ensure that they have taken all reasonable steps to inform the client of any unusual limitations to confidentiality that arise within the setting of the work.

Exceptional Circumstances and Emergencies

Exceptional circumstances may arise which give the Bereavement Visitor good grounds for believing that serious harm may occur to the client or to other people. Examples are potential self-harm, attempted suicide and harm to others. In such circumstances the client's consent to a change in the agreement about confidentiality should be sought whenever possible unless there are also good grounds for believing the client is no longer willing or able to take responsibility for his/her actions. Normally, the decision to break confidentiality should be discussed with the client and should be made only after consultation with the Supervisor, or the Referrals Team if the Supervisor is unavailable. In emergencies this may not be possible and Bereavement Visitors should act in the best interests of the client.

Any disclosure of confidential information should be restricted to relevant information, conveyed only to appropriate people and for appropriate reasons likely to alleviate the exceptional circumstances. The ethical considerations include achieving a balance between acting in the best interests of the client and WBS's responsibilities to the wider community.

Management of Confidentiality

Bereavement Visitors should ensure that the client's identity details are kept separately from any personal case notes they may make and all records should be confidentially destroyed within one year of the end of the visits.

Bereavement Visitors must pay particular attention to protecting the identity of clients. This includes discussion of cases in supervision.

REFERRALS

Clients refer themselves by contacting the Referrals Team by telephone or email. Referrals from third parties are not normally accepted. The Referrals Team takes the client's details and informs them that a Bereavement Visitor will make contact within the next few days. If the client requests a face to face visit but does not have a suitable space themselves, the Referrals Team will suggest a venue to the Bereavement Visitor and advise them of the booking procedures. Once a Bereavement Visitor is given a client, he/she should contact the person as promptly as possible to make an appointment, even if the first meeting has to be delayed for a few days. From then on, all arrangements are made between the Bereavement Visitor and the client. The Referrals Team has a schedule showing which Bereavement Visitors are available and it is most important for Bereavement Visitors to tell the Referrals Team as soon as they have finished with a client and confirm whether they are available to take another. The form Confidential Record of Work with Client should be submitted as soon as possible.

SUPERVISION

Objective

The aim of supervision is to provide a safe environment for the Bereavement Visitor (supervisee) to explore and learn from the interaction between him/herself and the client. Group supervision enables Bereavement Visitors to benefit through the variety of cases discussed there. Particular attention must be paid to protecting the identity of clients. Supervision should provide support and guidance for the supervisee in his/her work with clients, while maximising competence and enhancing job satisfaction. It should also enable the supervisee to reflect on feedback from supervision and be a means of ensuring that the support offered to clients is appropriate to their needs.

Participation in regular monthly supervision is mandatory for all active Bereavement Visitors.

Supervisors

Supervisors will be qualified and experienced counsellors, psychotherapists or clinical psychologists, appointed by and responsible to the Executive Committee. Supervisors are expected to have completed or be undertaking training as a supervisor.

Supervisors are expected to attend the monthly meetings held by the Senior Supervisor.

Each supervisor should offer supervision at monthly intervals, lasting typically 1½ hours, for a group of not more than 6 supervisees. For difficult situations they should provide emergency telephone consultation between supervision sessions.

OBLIGATIONS OF BEREAVEMENT VISITORS

- Visitors are expected to behave in a professional and appropriate manner at all times.
- They are expected to accept a minimum of two thirds of the referrals offered to them.
- They are required to participate in regular supervision sessions.
- They are expected to attend the events in the Continuing Professional Development programme.
- They should not provide clients with a reference.

Failure to meet the above obligations will lead to reconsideration by the Executive Committee of the Bereavement Visitor status.

If a BV wishes to resign/retire, they should, in the first instance, advise their Supervisor. They should then advise the Chair copied to the Referrals Team and Secretary in order that all amendments to the Charity's records can be made.

BEREAVEMENT VISITORS WHO ARE TEMPORARILY INACTIVE

Bereavement Visitors should inform their Supervisor and the Referrals Team that they are temporarily inactive stating the reason.

Whilst temporarily inactive the Bereavement Visitor should attend supervision and training regularly when they feel they are able to do so. This is to be discussed and agreed with their Supervisor.

If Supervision is being missed for 2 months with no explanation given, then the Supervisor is to make contact with the Bereavement Visitor and report back to the Senior Supervisor and, if necessary, to the Executive Committee. Any action to be taken will then be discussed.

The acceptable time for being inactive will normally be 3 months. We appreciate that BVs may have their own bereavements or illness or family issues which affect them longer term and if this means likely inactivity for more than 3 months, then the supervisor and BV will discuss a sabbatical and agree a period of time.

During this time there will be no expectation for the BV to attend supervision but they will normally be able to do so if they wish. There is also always the opportunity for the BV to talk to our Wellbeing Coordinator. The BV will remain a supporter of WBS and be able to attend social groups and training events.

At the end of the sabbatical the supervisor should discuss with the BV whether they want to carry on as a bereavement visitor and if so whether any extra training or supervision might be needed.

The BV should then attend at least one supervision meeting before taking on a new client.

SUPPORT GROUP

From time to time, our Bereavement Visitors run an informal support group for ex-clients who might wish to join. The group is held at a suitable tea/coffee selling venue in the Winchester area which is decided upon according to who attends the group and its appropriate accessibility for those using public transport. It is hoped that, with the Visitors acting as facilitators, the group will both help bereaved people enjoy the company of others as well as reintroduce them to social life.

Clients may be advised of this group at their final visit with a formal invitation following in due course.

SOCIAL GROUP

There is also an informal social group for Bereavement Visitors which takes the form of tea/coffee, morning/afternoon. BVs are advised of the appropriate dates and times by email. This is organised by two of our Visitors and takes place from time to time at a central Winchester venue.

TRAINING

- All Bereavement Visitors must receive training before they visit clients.
- Subsequently they will be expected to attend regular Supervisions as well as ongoing training sessions.
- The initial training course will take place over a period of two to three months. Participants must attend not less than 90% of the sessions.

WBS has a Training Committee that oversees the practicalities of the training programme and reports back to the Executive Committee.

The Training Committee meets up to six months prior to the training to plan the dates and advertising. The Training Committee responds to interest with information and application forms.

Trainers convene to discuss dates and finalise the syllabus.

Selection and Monitoring

Two confidential references will be required for each applicant and must be taken up before acceptance for the course. If during the course, trainees become aware they are not suited to the role of Bereavement Visitor and the trainers agree, appropriate action will be discussed outside of the group.

They will also be interviewed by two people, most usually one of the Supervisors and a member of the Executive Committee, to confirm their motivation and suitability. For ease of organisation, this interview will probably be online.

Training Course

The training course is delivered in two separate parts:

Part 1

- To build deeper understanding about bereavement and the grieving process
- To explore personal experiences of loss and how this may impact the work as a bereavement visitor - your own motivation for becoming a bereavement visitor, and the gifts you can bring to the work
- To develop self-awareness and appreciation of difference concerning beliefs about death, grieving and recovery
- To enhance good listening skills through practice in the group
- To understand the role of a bereavement helper, what helps and hinders a client's grieving journey

- To learn and discuss accepted theories about the grieving process

In the middle of the course, you will be given the opportunity to discuss your progress on a one-to-one basis.

Part 2

- Give a brief history of the organisation and the various roles within it.
- Explain the referrals process and making contact with clients
- Address the more practical skills of arranging and managing visits
- Explain the administrative and supervisory support available
- Discuss safeguarding and confidentiality, and other practical aspects of bereavement visiting.
- Give an opportunity to meet the Executive Committee and learn how it operates

The final session of the training will be a meeting for all WBS Bereavement Visitors to meet the new trainees, discuss topics of interest and share good practice. This should take place as soon as practicable after the preceding sessions.

As soon as possible after the course finishes the new Bereavement Visitors are allocated to their supervision groups and attend for at least 2 supervisions before agreeing with the supervisor that they are ready to begin seeing clients.

Ongoing Training

The Executive Committee will plan to organise ongoing training in the form of talks or workshops at least twice a year. Bereavement Visitors should make every effort to attend.

GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL SAFETY OF VISITORS

**Please use your own judgement in applying these guidelines,
as the ultimate responsibility for how you behave in a particular situation rests with you**

**Please be aware that failure to follow these guidelines may mean
that you are not covered by the charity's insurance policies**

The Referrals Team contains very experienced members of WBS, who vet all prospective clients extremely carefully on the telephone before contacting visitors. If you are uncomfortable with the referral when approached by the Referrals Team please say so, rather than accepting the referral without comment.

Examples of reasons for not accepting a referral might be:

- if you are not comfortable visiting a member of the opposite sex;
- if you have experienced a very similar sounding bereavement yourself and you fear that you will find it too painful;
- if you know the client or someone connected with the client.

If the Referrals Team is unsure about a referral, they may suggest that a first meeting should take place in a neutral venue, i.e., a hired room. They will be able to recommend a suitable place.

If the Referrals Team considers that in their judgement a referral is inappropriate, they will not accept it.

Once you have accepted a referral from the Referrals Team and start to visit a client:

- See 'Secure Communications', below regarding the safest way to contact a client and protect your anonymity
- Your ID badge shows only your first name to protect your anonymity.
- Always have your badge with you when visiting a client, even though it is unlikely that you will be asked to produce it.
- Never give a client your home or business address, personal telephone number or email address. See 'Secure communications' below.
- Check out a new client's address in advance if the first visit is to be made in the dark and ensure you have a map with you.

- Make sure a responsible person knows the address you are visiting and the time you expect to finish the visit. Arrange to telephone that person again as soon as you have left the client.
- Always carry a mobile phone. If you do not have a mobile phone of your own, WBS will provide one for you. See also 'Secure Communications', below. Make sure it is fully charged and easily available, preferably pre-dialled to the number of your responsible person.
- If an appointment is made in vain and the client has missed a scheduled appointment, please discuss this with your Supervisor and leave a card.
- Never take a client to your home, or to the home of another Bereavement Visitor, even if there is a part of the home normally used for business purposes.
- Only use premises other than the client's home if the arrangement has been authorised by the Referrals Team.
- When visiting a client, it is important to dress appropriately.
- When entering a client's house, check that the front door is left unlocked or that the key remains in the lock.
- When visiting a client's home, you would expect to work in the living room.
- Arrange to sit between the client and the door, with your coat and bag beside you.
- Do not accept the offer of food or drink from a client. Take a bottle of water with you if you feel you need it.
- If for any reason you feel unsafe or uncomfortable with a client, make some excuse ("not feeling very well" would do), leave promptly and ring your Supervisor or if they are not available then email the Health and Safety team at: healthandsafety@wbs.org.uk
- If a client seems under the influence of alcohol or drugs, suggest rearranging the appointment for another day and then leave. Ring your Supervisor or if they are not available the Health and Safety team.

SECURE COMMUNICATIONS

Bereavement Visitors are required to carry a mobile telephone with them at all times when visiting. For safety reasons, Bereavement Visitors should not give any personal telephone numbers, email addresses or their home or business address to clients.

At all times a Bereavement Visitor must be secure and these are some suggested different ways to contact a client and maintain their anonymity:

By Telephone

- If using a personal home or personal mobile phone dial 141 before the client's number to remain anonymous. Do NOT message (text) with the personal mobile phone.
- Another secure way of phoning a client from a mobile is to go into settings, then phone, and turn off caller ID. Your number will not show up on the client's phone. This does NOT work with messages (texts) or WhatsApp.
- In the event of any problem arising with a client which threatens the safety or well-being of a Visitor, the WBS mobile telephone number known to that client will be withdrawn and the affected Visitor issued with a new and different WBS mobile phone number.

Visual Communications

- Visual communications can be made safe in the following ways:
- It is important to have any personal Zoom, FaceTime, Skype accounts registered to an anonymous email address. Setting up a new email address or using a personalised WBS email address is advised. See below
- The use of the WBS Zoom dedicated account is also available to all working volunteers. Please contact our info@wbs.org.uk for details.
- With visual communications **always** make sure you consider where you sit so that the background is not revealing anything you would not want.
- Headphones or earphones are recommended so that the client's conversation will not be overheard by others sharing your home. The client may well hear background noise from where you phone from. Note if there is a mute button should you need to use it.

Your client communicating with you

- In order that a client may contact you between appointments, for example to cancel or rearrange, you should provide them with a contact number. This should be included on the First Visit form handed out to clients.

- The best option is to communicate by emails using a personal WBS email address

or

- If the BV or the client isn't happy with the email option, then WBS will pay for either a separate SIM or a separate phone. This also applies to any BV who does not have a personal mobile phone.

WBS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

What is safeguarding?

Adult safeguarding is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. It is an important part of what many public services do and a key responsibility of local authorities.

Safeguarding is aimed at people with care and support needs who may be in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of abuse or neglect. In these cases, local services must work together to spot those at risk and take steps to protect them.

WBS Safeguarding Statement

WBS as an organisation is committed to fostering a positive safeguarding culture through its policies, recruitment, training and supervision so that any concerns may be recognised and dealt with appropriately. We must also learn from any issues that arise within the organisation and will keep updated with national policies and developments to ensure best practice.

Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody in WBS. Bereavement Visitors (BVs) need to be trained to recognise any signs of abuse or other safeguarding concerns in their clients and to know what action to take, including the limits of confidentiality, what to say to the client and the appropriate action to take. Supervisors are all professionally qualified counsellors or clinical psychologists and they need to have an in depth understanding to support their BVs and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has the responsibility for leading the oversight and review of the culture, policies and practice of the organisation and for supporting all the supervisors and visitors.

Bereavement Visitors:

- Endeavour to establish if a client is “an adult at risk” (see definition under “Legislative Risk” below).
- Value them, listen to them and respect them.
- Adopt safeguarding practices including a verbal confidentiality agreement (with the limits of this explained) and a code of conduct delivered in training for all WBS volunteers
- Attend training to ensure that they are adequately trained to identify adults at risk of abuse or neglect, talk appropriately about it to the client and notify their supervisor.
- Let the client know that they will seek advice from their WBS supervisor as to the best course of action, adhering to confidentiality procedures and exceptions as appropriate.
- Call 999 if the client is at immediate risk (threat of injury or life).

Supervisors:

- Support their BVs with any potential safeguarding concerns.

- Discuss with the DSL where appropriate.
- Ensure that all BVs in their supervision group are meeting safeguarding standards by regular discussion and training.
- Attend training as needed to ensure they are kept up to date with national policies and developments

The Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- For an adult deemed “an adult at risk” contact Hampshire Adult Safeguarding Board and take any other appropriate action.
- Provide support to all Supervisors and BVs regarding any potential safeguarding concerns.
- Lead on providing effective management for all volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.

The organisation as a whole:

- The safe recruitment of volunteers, ensuring that all necessary checks are made, including up to-date Enhanced Disclosure.
- The recording and storing of information professionally and securely and the sharing of information about safeguarding and good practice with bereaved clients and volunteers.
- Raise awareness of other agencies, support services and experts to our clients, volunteers and the public
- Provision of documentation to clients with a simple explanation of our safeguarding procedures and the route a client should take if they wish to register a concern.

Legislative framework

The Care Act 2014 identifies “an adult at risk” (previously called a vulnerable adult) as:

- someone who has needs for care and support
- who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- and as a result of their care needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, neglect and abuse

The Care Act 2014 lists ten specific categories of abuse and neglect. These are:

- neglect
- self-neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- financial and material abuse
- organisational abuse
- discriminatory abuse

- modern slavery
- domestic abuse

In addition HM Government specifies that there are several types of abuse and neglect and these include any kind of behaviour towards a vulnerable person that deliberately or unintentionally causes them harm.

These are:

- physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - domestic abuse
 - harassment and stalking
 - female genital mutilation
 - honour-based abuse
 - children witnessing domestic abuse
 - psychological abuse
 - financial or material abuse
 - modern slavery
 - forced marriage
 - neglect and acts of omission
 - coercive control
 - discrimination
 - organisational
 - child sexual exploitation
 - hate crime
-

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-in-hmcts/hmcts-safeguarding-policy#what-are-the-different-types-of-abuse-and-neglect>)

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health
- Has a learning disability

- Has a physical disability and / or a sensory impairment
- Has mental health needs including dementia or personality disorder
- Has a long -term illness /or condition
- Misuses substances or alcohol
- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support
- Is a young adult, over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is 'in transition' from children's to adults' services
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs)

This list is not exhaustive, other people might also be considered to be adults at risk.

(<https://www.peoplefirstinfo.org.uk/staying-safe/abuse-and-neglect-safeguarding-adults/who-adult-risk>)

Managing allegations against individuals within WBS

In our documentation for clients, we explain our safeguarding procedures and clearly identify the person and the route to be taken in reporting any concerns.

We ensure that any allegation or concern raised against a Volunteer of WBS is investigated objectively, including the involvement of statutory bodies if deemed necessary.

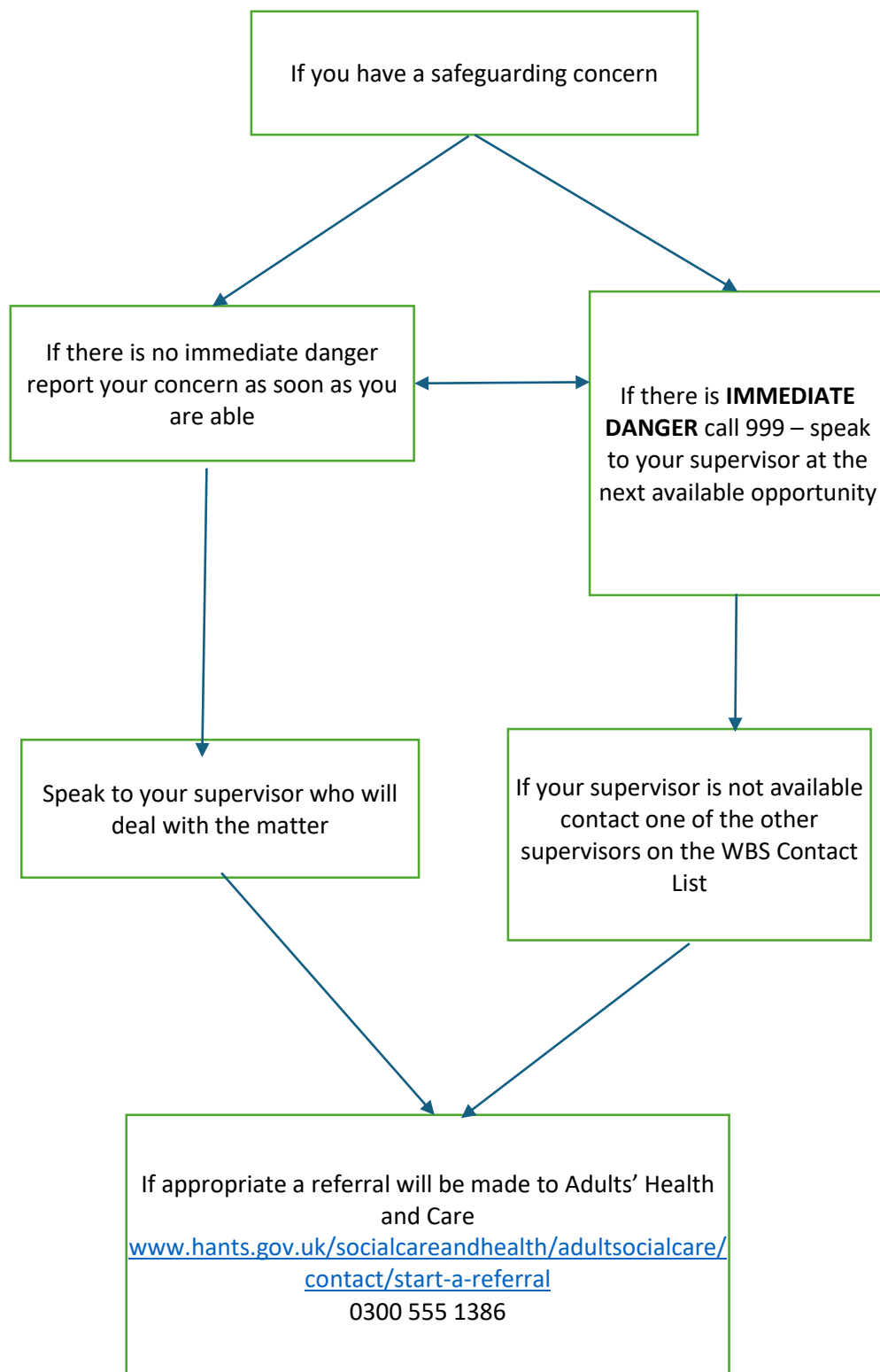
We try to ensure the sort of open and honest culture that encourages people to feel able to report any concerns, and that those concerns will be responded to openly and consistently.

Local information:

Hampshire Adult Safeguarding Board: <https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk> for further information on reporting concerns.

If you or someone else is in imminent danger, phone the police on 999, or call them on 101 if it is less urgent.

If your request is urgent and you need support in the next 24 hours contact Adult Services on 0300 555 1384 or the 'out of hours' number 0300 5551373



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Complaints from the public (including clients)

Clients are advised that WBS operates a complaints procedure. If you are not satisfied with the service you receive, write to the Chair or to the Chair care of the Secretary: secretary@wbs.org.uk

If a letter of complaint is received,

- 1 Within 7 days the Chair acknowledges the letter, either resolving any straightforward issue with the complainant (e.g., in cases of a simple misunderstanding or where an apology is clearly all that is needed) or ensuring that the issue is well defined.
- 2 If simple resolution of a client's complaint is not possible and further investigation is necessary the Chair writes to the Bereavement Visitor and the relevant Supervisor, explaining to each that a complaint has been made and asking them to meet and discuss the matter within 14 days.
- 3 The Supervisor draws up a report and submits it to the Chair, giving an assessment of how the complaint has arisen.
- 4 The Chair writes to the client and informs the Executive Committee at the next meeting that a complaint has been made. However, details should not be given unless there is a possible need for disciplinary action. In any debate the confidentiality of both client and visitor should be respected.
- 5 The Bereavement Visitor may use the internal complaints procedure (see below) if they feel that the matter has been handled inadequately.

Complaints from supporters

A supporter has the right to complain about the conduct of other individual supporters of the organisation where this adversely affects his/her work or where he/she considers that the organisation may be brought into disrepute.

The complaint should be made in writing to the Chair or the Well-being Coordinator via the Health and Safety team, who will take any action that seems appropriate. This may involve mediation between the parties to the dispute.

A confidential record of the outcome will be created and retained by the Secretary.

If the party who is the subject of the complaint is unhappy with any part of the investigation, they may follow the same procedure as the original complainant.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Mileage Claim Rate

Travel expenses by car are paid at 55p per mile or at a rate to be decided from time to time by the Executive Committee. Travel expenses by bicycle are calculated at 20p and by motorbike 24p per mile.

Expenses for External Training

WBS will consider financial support for external training that is complementary to the development of the roles of Visitors and Supervisors.

The Executive Committee will normally consider applications for course fee support at a regular committee meeting and applications must be submitted in writing to the Secretary and approved by the Executive Committee prior to the Visitor enrolling on and undertaking the course.

The maximum contribution to course fees will be set at the rate of 50%.

The choice of the most appropriate person to be requested or funded to attend any particular event rests with the Executive Committee.

WBS contributions will normally be for course fees only.

Feedback on any external training is to be made to the Executive Committee.

Client Records

Client details are recorded in electronic format and held in the secure password protected WBS Dropbox.

Client records are held in calendar year groups according to the year in which they contacted WBS.

Clients are visited for varying periods, typically up to two years.

Each calendar year group is deleted from the Referrals spreadsheet at the start of the 7th year from the year in which they first contacted WBS.

Bereavement Visitors may make confidential personal notes that are their own responsibility and may only be kept for up to one year after the last contact with the client.

Volunteer records

WBS needs to keep certain information on its volunteers and officers to carry out its day-to-day operations, to meet its objectives and to comply with legal obligations. The organisation is committed to ensuring any personal data will be dealt with in line with the Data Protection Act

2018. To comply with the law, personal information will be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully.

ON-LINE, PHONE AND LOCAL SIGNPOSTS FOR WORK WITH BEREAVEMENT CLIENTS

Please note that it would be time consuming to check all these details regularly to ensure they are still correct. Please check yourselves to ensure the most up to date information is passed to clients

1 Emergency Help:

Samaritans	www.winchestersamaritans.org.uk	116123
Parents Association for the Prevention of Young Suicide	www.papyrus-uk.org	0800 0684141

2 General help and all bereavements

Finding support in different areas of UK	www.ataloss.org	
Bereavement Advice Centre for practical advice	www.bereavementadvice.org	0800 634 9494
The Good Grief Trust run by the bereaved for the bereaved - a general signposting website	www.thegoodgrieftrust.org	

3 Parents concerned about their children & teens:

Hope Again (11-18) via Cruse	www.hopeagain.org.uk	0808 8081677
Childhood Bereavement Network (children & teens)	www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk	0207 8436309
Child Bereavement UK (children & teens)	www.childbereavementuk.org	helpline 0800 0288840

Grief Encounter (children & teens)	www.griefencounter.org.uk	0808 8020111
Winston's Wish (children & teens)	www.winstonswish.org	Head office 01242 515157
Simon Says, Eastleigh (children & teens)	www.simonsays.org.uk	helpline 02380 647550 office 01794 323934
Winchester Youth Counselling (11-25)	www.winchesteryouthcounselling.org	01962 820444

4 Parents who have lost a baby/infant:

Lullaby Trust	www.lullabytrust.org.uk	advice 0808 8026869 bereavement support 0808 8026868
Stillbirth & Neonatal Death Society (Sands)	www.sands.org.uk	helpline 0808 1643332

5 Parents who have lost a child:

Child Death Helpline	www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk	0800 282986
Compassionate Friends Nearest group was meeting in Alresford on Saturdays, also Alton?	www.tcf.org.uk	0345 1232304
2wish -sudden death in young people	2wish.org.uk	01443 853125

6 Parents who have lost their partner:

Gingerbread for single parents	www.gingerbread.org.uk	office 0207 4285400
WAY (Widowed and Young) for adults and parents under 50	www.widowedandyoung.org.uk	online only

7 People affected by cancer:

Romsey Cancer Support Centre (help and therapies)	www.janescarthhouse.co.uk	01794 830374
Wessex Cancer Trust (Chandlers Ford) (help and therapies)	www.wessexcancer.org.uk	02380 516576
Winchester and Eastleigh Cancer Support Group	www.wecansupportuk	01962 658170

8 People affected by suicide:

Survivors of bereavement by suicide (SOBS)	www.uk-sobs.org.uk	0300 1115065
Support after suicide Partnership	supportaftersuicide.org.uk	

9 People affected by alcohol-related bereavement:

Al-Anon Family Groups UK and Eire	www.al-anonuk.org.uk	office 0207 5932070 helpline 0800 0086811
DrugFam for drug, alcohol and gambling addition related bereavement	www.drugfam.co.uk/bereavement/	0300 8883853

10 People affected by drug-related bereavement:

Adfam for parents	www.adfam.org.uk	helpline 02380 399764
DrugFam for drug, alcohol and gambling addition related bereavement	www.drugfam.co.uk/bereavement/	0300 8883853

11 People affected by gambling-related bereavement:

DrugFam for drug, alcohol and gambling addition related bereavement	www.drugfam.co.uk/bereavement/	0300 8883853
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12 Adults and Older Adults including local activities:

Walking groups in the wider Winchester area	www.winchester.gov.uk/activewinchester/activelifestyles-schemes/health-walks/	
Way Up (widowed people over 50)	www.way-up.co.uk	online only
Age Concern Hampshire	www.ageconcernhampshire.org.uk	01962 868545 0800 868545
Badger Farm Community Centre, monthly Chat-Tea-Café, 1-3pm Badger Farm for those “of a certain age”!		01962 868630
Beehive over 60s social group, St Barnabas Church Hall, Weeke	www.stb.church	01962 886629
Brendon Care Clubs in Bishops Waltham, Otterbourne and Winchester	www.brendoncare.org.uk/clubs	01962 852133
Community First	www.supportatfirst.org.uk	0300 5008085
Friendship and support group in Fareham	www.help-in-bereavement.org.uk	01732 467940 & 07921 893934
MHA Communities Winchester (aka Live at Home Scheme), support, friendship, activities for older people living in their own home	www.mha.org.uk	01962 890995
Silverline friendship line for over-60s	www.thesilverline.org.uk	0800 4708090

Weeke Friendship Club: alternate Fridays 2-4pm, Weeke Community Centre (games/speakers -also see Brendon Care Clubs		01962 857099
Winchester Cathedral, Tea at Three	www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk	01962 857099 Office 01962 857200

13 Other specialist groups:

For road traffic victims	www.roadpeace.org	0845 4500355
For those affected by a sudden death	www.sudden.org	0800 2600400
Jewish Bereavement Counselling Service	jbc.org.uk	0208 9513881
Support After Murder and Manslaughter	https://samm.org.uk	0121 472291
The Olive Branch Counselling (general)	www.theolivebranch.org.uk	01962 842858
Citizens Advice Bureau, Winchester	www.citizensadvice.org.uk	0808 2787861
“ “ “ (Wickham)		0808 2787861

14 For those mourning the loss of a pet.

Blue Cross	bluecross.org.uk	0300 790 9903
Cat's Protection Paws to Listen	cats.org.uk	03000 12 12 12
Cruse Bereavement Support	Cruse.org.uk	0808 808 1677
Pet cemeteries and crematoria Hook, Hants	www.appcc.org.uk	01252 844572
RSPCA 'online toolkit to cope with pet loss'	rspca.org.uk	

