

## **Support Services for those with lived experience of abuse**

A variety of resources are available online to assist in finding counselling and other services that maybe suitable for individuals with lived experience of abuse.

### **The Waiting Room**

An online directory of services offering support for health and well-being in Birmingham and Solihull

<https://the-waitingroom.org/>

### **Safe Spaces**

Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service for anyone who has experienced abuse in relation to the Church of England, the Church in Wales or the Catholic Church of England and Wales. This could be abuse by someone who holds any role at the church or is linked to participating in a church-led activity or group. Safe Spaces can provide support however long ago the abuse happened and whether or not it has been reported.

Tel: 0300 303 1056 Email: [safespaces@firstlight.org.uk](mailto:safespaces@firstlight.org.uk)

<https://www.safespacesenqlandandwales.org.uk/>

### **Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)**

SARCs are specialist medical and forensic services for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted. Their services are free of charge and provided to women, men and children, regardless of whether the person wishes to report the offence to the police or not. Local Sexual Assault Referral Centres can be found on the NHS website by searching a postcode or town here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Rape-and-sexual-assault-referral-centres/LocationSearch/364>

### **Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)**

ISVAs provide a range of specialist support for those who have experienced sexual violence to look after their needs. ISVAs can offer information about how the criminal justice system works, but there is no expectation that by contacting an ISVA the offence will be reported to police. ISVAs can provide information to make individuals make the right decision for them. ISVAs are available at some SARCs and some other specialist support agencies.

More information about ISVAs and how to access them is available at the Survivors Trust website here:

<https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/independent-sexual-violence-advisers>

There are also Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) and those who specialise in both domestic and sexual violence (IDSVAs) available at some survivor support organisations.

### **The Survivors Trust**

The Survivors Trust is an umbrella organisation with 129 member organisations based in the UK and Ireland which provide specialist support for women, men and children who have survived rape, sexual violence or childhood sexual abuse. The Survivors Trust also holds further information about SARCs and IDSVAs.

On the Survivors Trust website it is possible to search a postcode to find local support or to view services operating in a particular region. The Survivors Trust also holds information about services operating nationally. This information is available here:

<https://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/find-support>

### **NHS Therapists**

Therapy provided through the NHS should be free of charge and it is possible to be referred via a GP. Alternatively, it is possible to contact some services directly for self-referral. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) is an NHS programme offering talking therapies for common mental health problems. IAPT services can be found by searching a postcode here:

[https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Psychological-therapies-\(IAPT\)/LocationSearch/10008](https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Psychological-therapies-(IAPT)/LocationSearch/10008)

### **The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)**

The BACP is a professional association for members of the counselling profession in the UK. The BACP website holds a directory of members and services that are registered with or accredited by them. Most of these are private and will charge for their services. It is possible to search their directory via postcode here:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/search/Therapists>

The BACP also provide information about pre-trial therapy here:

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/bacp-journals/healthcare-counselling-and-psychotherapy-journal/april-2015/pre-trial-therapy/>

## **Counselling Directory**

Counselling Directory holds details of individual counsellors and psychotherapists that are personally registered as a member of a relevant professional body, and of counselling/ psychotherapy practices at which at least one of their therapists is registered, or the practice itself is. The list of the professional bodies they recognise is available at:

<https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/accreditation.html>

However, they do not monitor changes and therefore it is the responsibility of the person or organisation accessing the service to confirm that the accreditation is still valid.

It is possible to search Counselling Directory by postcode, town or country, here:

<https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/adv-search.html>

## **UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP)**

The UKCP holds details of registered psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors. Their register is accredited by the Professional Standards Authority. It is possible to search their directory by postcode or location here:

<https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/find-a-therapist/>

## **Charity and third sector therapists and support services**

Some community and charity sector organisations offer free or low-cost therapies.

### **Mind**

The Mind website details local Mind charities and the services they offer here:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/local-minds/>

### **Rethink Mental Illness**

Rethink Mental Illness has a network of over 140 local support groups offering space for people suffering mental illness to talk about their experience and get peer support. It is possible to search for these groups by postcode or town here:

<https://www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/groups-in-your-area/>

They also provide over 200 mental health services in England including advocacy and helplines, offering support in issues ranging from employment to legal rights. It is possible to search for these groups by postcode or town here:

<https://www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/services/>

## **Mental Health Matters**

Mental Health Matters provide mental health support services including helplines, therapy, advocacy and crisis support. Details of the services they offer can be found here:

<https://www.mhm.org.uk/Pages/Category/find-a-service?Take=24>

## **Helplines Partnership**

Helplines Partnership holds a database of helplines that may be suitable for those with lived experience of abuse. The search tool allows for a keyword search and for helplines to be filtered by topic and region. This is available here:

<https://helplines.org/helplines/>

**The Samaritans** 24 hour listening service. Call 116 123. <https://www.samaritans.org/>

## **Self-help resources**

**Help for Adult Victims of Child Abuse** provide a number of resources, many of which are freely available and written by survivors for survivors. They are available here:

<https://www.havoca.org/resources/>

**The National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)** provides some online [advice](#) addressing common concerns that many survivors have, available here:

<https://napac.org.uk/common-concerns/>

They also provide some freely-accessible reading on various topics here:

<https://napac.org.uk/resources/>

**Rape Crisis** provide online advice for many issues and concerns. Much of their advice is suitable for adult victims of child abuse, not just for adult victims of rape. Further information is available here:

<https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/looking-for-tools-to-help-you-cope/>

**One-in-four** provide a page full of resources focusing on support and self-care to download and work through at the individual's own pace here:

<http://www.oneinfour.org.uk/support-self-care/>

**From Report to Court** is a downloadable handbook for adult survivors of sexual abuse and violence. It is produced by the organisation **Rights of Women**, but as the handbook focuses on the process of reporting sexual abuse all the way through to a criminal trial, it is usable by both men and women, and is available here:

<https://rightsofwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/From-Report-to-Court-2018.pdf>