



Employee & Volunteers Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

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v.0.2	30/04/2026	K.Brownlee	13/05/2026	Links to support organisations updated. Disability Discrimination Act updated to Equalities Act 2010 (most recent legislation)
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1. Charity Statements:

Statement of public benefit:

Wiltshire Treehouse is for the benefit of bereaved children, young people, and their families, living/educated within Swindon & Wiltshire.

Mission:

Wiltshire Treehouse wants to see a world where every bereaved child and young person can receive guidance and support to help them through their grieving process. We will enable those in our local communities to develop the coping strategies, skills, and confidence they need to thrive.

Charity Objectives:

Provide high quality, relevant bereavement support and guidance to children, young people & their families.

Improve the initial experience of a child bereavement through training and awareness raising.

Secure the continuity of our organisation, ensuring a future of child specific bereavement support.

Be proud of the charity, a great place to work and achieve.

Our Values:

Growth – Providing a safe space for personal development.

Respect – Beneficiaries, volunteers, and staff are treated with respect and dignity within their journey with the charity.

Inclusivity – Services and support available to the whole community.

Empowerment – Working with beneficiaries to enable change on their terms.

Friendly – Open and welcoming.

2. Purpose, Scope, and Users

Wiltshire Treehouse believes in a supportive and transparent working environment. It is important to the Charity that staff are fully supported to complete the emotional demand of the role we play to bereaved children, young people, and their families. The Charity recognises that to have the best people, able to provide the highest level of service, we must invest in their wellbeing. This is our commitment to staff and volunteers alike, that Wiltshire Treehouse is a supportive employer.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To create a workplace culture that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of all staff and volunteers.
- Highlight the importance of good mental health practices.
- Ensure staff & volunteers feel valued for their contribution to the Charity and supported within their roles.

3. Reference Documents

https://www.sja.org.uk/globalassets/documents/training/sja_wellbeing_policy_guide.pdf

4. Our Commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing

To create a supportive workplace culture and tackle factors that may have a negative impact on mental health, Wiltshire Treehouse will:

- Provide non-judgemental support to any staff member or volunteer wishing to discuss their mental health.
- Deliver a thorough induction for all new starters, providing an outline of the organisation, the policies, and the role they are expected to play.
- Offer employees flexible working hours.
- Set realistic targets and deadlines for staff to prevent long working hours.
- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism and/or discrimination.
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives, and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well.
- Wiltshire Treehouse maintain a commitment to continued professional development, and beyond a program of training delivered in-house, staff are encouraged to identify training opportunities they wish to explore.
- Ensure good communication between Trustees, Directors, managers, staff, and volunteers.
- Have clear and transparent policies, supporting the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers.
- Work with staff to make best use of their annual leave entitlement, ensuring time off is taken throughout the year.
- Encourage and enable self-care practices.
- Have a clear process of supervision and appraisal.
- Wiltshire Treehouse will endeavour to have a staff member trained as a mental health first aider within the team. Currently this role is held by Sarah Bear, Business Director: businessdirector@wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk
- In addition, Sica Wheeler, Senior Practitioner: senior@wiltshiretreehouse.org.uk is trained in wellbeing support in the workplace.

Wiltshire Treehouse is committed to providing guidance and assistance for any member of staff seeking support with their mental health. Wiltshire Treehouse will:

- Check how working conditions and the organisation's policies could be influencing mental health.
- Ensure staff members with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement.
- Encourage staff to talk to a counsellor, GP, or trusted person about their mental health concerns.
- If a team member has been on long term sickness absence, ensure a gradual return to work with support at each stage.
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental health in the strictest confidence and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned and, on a need-to-know basis.
- Offer support through a confidential counselling service, or qualified mental health first aiders.

To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental health, Wiltshire Treehouse will:

- Ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health and the Equality Act 2010.

Wiltshire Treehouse Wellbeing Support Offer

Who is covered:

Trustees and staff who have passed their 6-month probation period and volunteers who provide direct bereavement support on behalf of Wiltshire Treehouse can access the Wellbeing Support Offer*.

*Variations to this rule are at the discretion of the Trustees.

What is included:

For anyone requesting support, they can receive up to £300 towards the cost of counselling support from a provider of their choice. (This figure is based on the current market rate of £50 per session, for 6 sessions).

You can access 6 sessions within a calendar year/12-month period, access to more frequent support will be at the discretion of the Trustees.

To find a service:

Wiltshire Treehouse recommend the use of the BACP register: [How to find a therapist: BACP Therapist Directory - https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/using-our-therapist-directory/](https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/using-our-therapist-directory/)

Or

Other local options include:

Willows Counselling - <https://www.willowscounselling.org.uk/counselling/> – Willows offer counselling support for people facing mental health difficulties and we are specialists in counselling trauma and abuse with its complex challenges.

Ipsium - <https://www.ipsum.care/> – Ipsum provide: Arts and Crafts, Music Therapy, Creative Writing, Talking Therapies, Professional Training, Meditation & Mindfulness, Dramatherapy.

How do I access this:

To access this support, you can send an e-mail request to any of the Trustees or Directors within Wiltshire Treehouse.

Once this has been received the Director/Trustee will contact the administrator to approve the spend of up to £300.

How do payments work:

There are 2 ways to organise payment. You can either have invoices directed to Wiltshire Treehouse for payment directly. (Invoices should be directed to Wiltshire Treehouse, can be emailed to the director/trustee signing off on your approval and the administrator for payment).

Alternatively, you may pay the counsellor and seek reimbursement. To do this you should provide copies of your receipt(s) within 30 days of the date on the receipt. These can be emailed to the Director/Trustee who signed off on your application and the administrator who will organise payment.

5. The role of the Mental Health First Aider

In line with Mental Health First Aid England, a mental health first aider is the first point of contact for colleagues experiencing mental ill health at work. Their role is to provide non-judgmental listening and guidance.

They are trained to:

- spot the early signs and symptoms of mental ill health,
- start a supportive conversation with a colleague who may be experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress,
- listen to the person non-judgmentally,
- assess the risk of suicide or self-harm and contact the appropriate Emergency Services should the need arise.

Their responsibilities include:

- Being available to staff and volunteers during normal working hours.
- Encouraging the person to access appropriate professional support or self-help strategies.
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate. Please be aware that where there is a perceived lack of capacity to decide to share information, the Mental Health First Aider will act in your best interests. *For example, if there has been an instance of self-harm and the person is incapable of communicating their name or contact details with the emergency services.*
- Protect themselves while performing their role.
- Help Wiltshire Treehouse build a range of mental health resources, as they are not a replacement for company policy or guidance.

A Mental Health First Aider is **not**:

- A replacement for counselling.
- An alternative to an occupational health provision.
- The sole solution to supporting Mental Health within the workplace.

6. How staff and volunteers can safeguard their own wellbeing – Self-Care

Wiltshire Treehouse understand that the nature of our work as bereavement support can take its toll, and we have implemented this wellbeing policy to clearly outline our commitment to your wellbeing. However, we cannot do this alone, and therefore ask for you to make a commitment to your own self-care.

Self-care is the act of taking care of your own physical, mental, and emotional health. Wiltshire Treehouse promotes and encourages self-care by:

- Encouraging proactive management of your wellbeing, not waiting for the moment when things become too much to manage (the crash) but seeking support along the way.
- Remaining mindful and open to your own emotions and having self-awareness of how your own behaviours can affect others.
- Providing regular support and supervision, with trained mental health first aiders within the staff team.
- Actively promoting staff and volunteers to support one another and enabling this to happen throughout our working practices.
- Encouraging reflective practise. Thinking how you may do something differently in the future, or how you might tailor your response to better promote your own wellbeing. We are all learning.
- Before you begin your work for the day/session, consider your own boundaries and how these may flex based on the day you have had, or the type of grief you may be supporting.
- Remain connected with the outside world, there is more to life than the work and volunteering you do. Staying connected to friends and family is one way to safeguard your own wellbeing, and it can be quite fun too.
- Always promote self-care within the work you do and your own practices.

7. Communication

All employees, Volunteers and Trustees will be made aware of the Employee Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy - and the resources that are available to them. Reference to the Employee Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy will be included in the employee handbook and is a required reading document as part of the induction process.

All staff will also be made aware of their own responsibilities in implementing the policy actions. Including, raising any issues or concerns, and seeking help from a line manager, Director, or Trustee.

8. Reviewing & Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually, as well as monitoring its effectiveness. The policy's effectiveness can be measured through:

- Feedback from staff
- A mental health and wellbeing at work risk assessment
- Staff sickness, presenteeism and staff turnover levels
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health or counselling services
- Staff complaints or referrals

9. Helpful Resources

This list of resources is not exhaustive, only suggestions where you may find helpful information:

Samaritans: Available 24/7 including national holidays.

Phone: 116 123

Website: www.samaritans.org

Shout: The UK's first free mental health support text service available confidentially and 24/7.
text **SHOUT** to **85258** (UK-wide)

Mind:

Phone: 0300 123 3393

Website: www.mind.org.uk