



www.simplycounselling.org



VOLUNTEER DIRECTOR

Information Pack

2023



A message from our Founder and Director M-L



I am the CEO and founder. In 2006 I was fortunate to have the opportunity to set up Simply Counselling supported by a cohort of counsellors as I felt strongly that counselling should be accessible to everyone who needed it, from all walks of life.

I believe that everyone is uniquely themselves and often we are too busy to understand what we need and want in order to function well; counselling gives us the opportunity to explore and understand ourselves better so we can feel more at ease in our skin, and offers the opportunity to reach our full potential.

I specialise in couple and family work, as well as long-term counselling with an individual. I have many years of experience working with a diverse range of people, many of whom have had deep-seated trauma and I feel deeply moved /honoured/privileged witnessing their courage and commitment to changing their lives. This is a great change from owning a laundry business in Greece!

We are now looking to strengthen our Board of Directors and are keen to find people who share our vision and who will share their knowledge and experience to support the organisation to remain financially resilient and relevant.

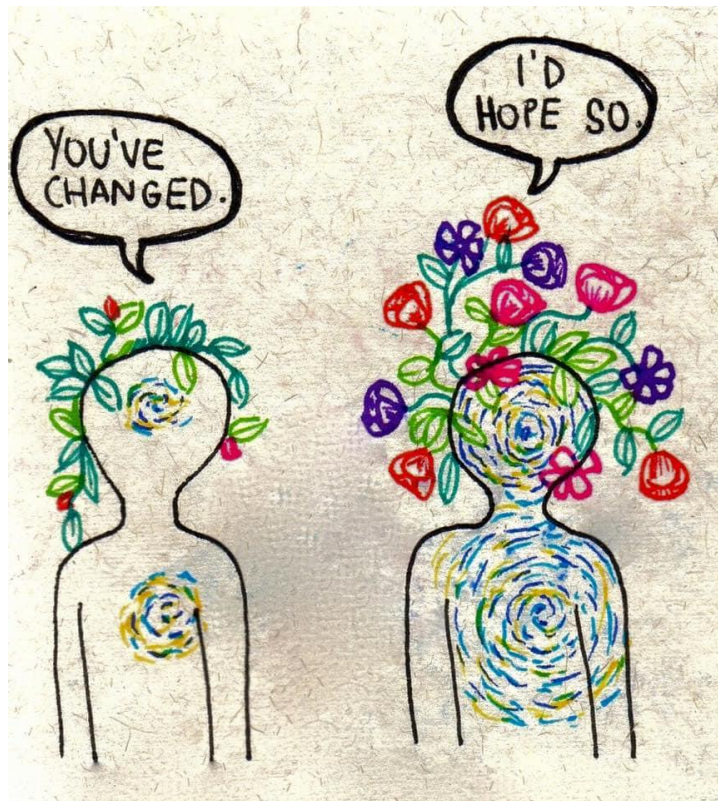
We look forward to receiving your application.

M-L

M-L Wilson, Chief Executive



Our Work



Simply Counselling is a Community Interest Company (No 05155862). We provide person-centred counselling in Plymouth and our clients' needs are at the heart of that counselling. Drawing on different ideas and approaches we work with people to move from where they are to where they want to be, it's not just about surviving but about thriving.

We offer a safe and nurturing environment for clients to talk. The relationship between counsellor and client is pivotal. We have 34 dedicated counsellors offering counselling in Plymouth; each has been carefully selected for their unique strengths and experience.

We offer a bespoke person-centred approach through our counselling services, and we try to fit our client and their needs to one of our counsellors. They are dedicated and highly trained and will work at a pace that allows/increases self-acceptance. When it comes to counselling, there's no one-size-fits-all approach and we work hard to match the right counsellor to work with each of our clients.

Here at Simply Counselling we strive to be kind, respectful and ethical in our relationship with all of our clients.

Our People

Led by our Chief Executive Officer, M-L Wilson, we are a team of 34 counsellors and support staff. Some of our counsellors are employed, some are volunteers and some are student counsellors in their final year. Each of our highly committed counsellors has been carefully selected for their unique strengths and experience and are hand-picked for their empathy and professionalism.

Although we are based in Plymouth, our Counsellors are based across the South West and England, and are able to see clients either in person or online.

We have a small Board of Directors who represent both our counsellors and our clients as well as bringing financial acumen and oversight. We would like to bring some additional financial expertise to the Board as well as marketing, HR and Governance experience and knowledge.

Our Finances

Our counselling fees start at £35 per hour depending on affordability. This level of fee is subsidised (actual cost £63 per hour) and it is the income from Trust and Grant fundraising that enables us to deliver counselling at the level. We need £280,000 every year to cover our costs. Our income in 2022/2023 was £241,000 (please see attached 2022/2023 accounts for further information), and our cash reserves in September 2023 stand at £100,000. We also have funding streams coming in for the next 5 years which elevate our generic bank holding.

Meetings



Our Board meets six times a year at the Family Matters offices in Stoke, Plymouth. We currently meet during the middle of the day, but have some flexibility around this and have met in the late afternoon in the past.



Typically, we prefer to meet in person, but occasionally Directors will join via Teams or Zoom if it is easier.

Volunteer Director Role Description

Directors are the people who serve on the governing body of a CIC. They are equally responsible in law for the Board's actions and decisions and have equal status as Directors. Directors have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for the Company's affairs. They use their personal skills and experience to ensure that the Company is solvent, well run, efficient and delivering its outcomes.

The role can be very rewarding and enjoyable offering an opportunity to serve the community whilst learning new skills. The Director's role is to focus on the strategic direction of the Company and to ensure effectiveness and accountability. Day-to-day operational decisions are delegated to the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.

Key Responsibilities

To actively contribute to the Board of Directors, which:

- Sets and maintains the vision, mission and values
- Develops the strategic direction and longer-term strategies
- Establishes and monitors policy
- Ensures compliance with the Governing Document
- Ensures accountability, in that the Company applies its resources exclusively in furtherance of its objectives
- Ensures compliance with the law
- Maintains a proper fiscal oversight
- Maintain effective Board performance
- Promotes the Company
- Appoints, supports and monitors performance of the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team

In addition to the above statutory duties, each Director should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions.

Person specification

We are seeking individuals with a strong empathy with our mission. We are looking for:-

- Experience, skills, and expertise in one or more of the following: financial management, marketing, communication, social media, governance, press and PR, or HR.
- Experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives
- Ability to demonstrate sound judgement and effective decision making
- A history of impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidentiality
- A commitment to promoting equality and diversity
- Commitment to the work of the Company and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort needed
- Preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board, and a willingness to speak their mind
- Willingness to be available to our staff for advice and enquiries on an ad-hoc basis
- Good, independent judgement and strategic vision
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Directorship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team

Recruitment Process

We are working with Jackie Dawkins of Shine Charity Recruitment, who is supporting our search for new directors. She will be delighted to speak to you about this role and provide further information, advice and guidance in becoming a volunteer Director - jackie@shinecharityrecruitment.co.uk

