

## Funding request from Tunbridge Wells Counselling Centre

Dear Parish Council Member,

I am writing to you on behalf of The Counselling Centre (TCC) in Tunbridge Wells in the hope that as in previous years, Benenden Parish Council might be able to help us.

The Counselling Centre is a non-profit registered charity, and has provided affordable, BACP accredited counselling for the past 30 years. We exist to provide affordable counselling to individuals who might not otherwise be able to access this type of mental health care.

Specifically, we run an Assisted Places Scheme which provides highly subsidised counselling for up to 2 years for anyone seeking such support.

Many people try to access counselling through the NHS but are usually offered counselling restricted to only 6 sessions, and often have to wait for some time before they can access this.

Amongst many other issues we help clients with anger, depression, anxiety, stress, relationship issues and all types of loss including bereavement. A great deal of our work supports people to combat anti-social behaviour or domestic abuse. We help those experiencing trauma, confronting unemployment or disability; those having problems adjusting to change or coming to terms with emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

In our last financial year (August 18-July 19) we provided 1113 sessions of Assisted Places counselling. This compares with 612 hours in the previous twelve months; an 82% increase on last year and a 182% increase on the historic average. With the advent of the Coronavirus pandemic we are seeing an increase in clients suffering with mental health issues and we believe this trend will continue for many months to come. It is vital that we are able to reach vulnerable individuals at their time of need and provide them with the much needed support through our Counselling Services.

Our experienced team of counsellors are unpaid volunteers and we are only able to expand our Assisted Places scheme with support through fundraising; as an independent charity we do not receive government funding and I would be very grateful if Benenden Parish Council would consider making a donation to enable us to continue to meet the demand for our services; giving those who would not normally be able to afford counselling support, and in turn improving the lives of many, especially at this difficult and uncertain time.

Thank you for your kind consideration and on-going support, it is much appreciated.