



Equality & Inclusion Statement

Essential Space (ES) was founded to provide access to counselling/mentoring and mental health support for all members of society within Gloucestershire, regardless of background or circumstances. This may include discounted and fully funded services. For individuals, groups and families in Gloucestershire.

Essential Space ethos is based upon respect, to nurture a sense of wholeness, and to support someone to feel safe, heard and valued in our organisation and within our community.

We recognise that discrimination operates consciously and unconsciously in our society, which means some people have greater access to opportunities than others. Our core belief is that all people are treated with dignity and respect and that we are creating an environment where:

- Inequalities are challenged
- We anticipate and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances, our own values, equality and diversity goals
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength to our members and the people who receive our service.
- We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation/relationship diversity, or other distinctions, would not be welcomed or tolerated by our organisation.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile, harmful, or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, group members, clients, applicants, and partners or providers of goods and services in working towards these goals.

Equality & Inclusion Service Delivery

We regularly review the matter of public access to our services and practice including safer recruitment.

With regards to disability, we have inaccessible premises in Shurdington, Cheltenham. We make potential service users and staff members aware of this via our website and upon induction to our services. We have alternative premises in Cheltenham town centre which is accessible, and we continue to foster good relations with local arrangements for the hire of alternative premises in surrounding areas for use in the event of a service user not being able to access our other premises as the option for attending a session/workshop. In addition to this, we are aware of the need, in time we wish to have one building to fully relocate to, which will be user friendly premises and improve access in the future.

All service users will be asked if there are any access needs when applying for support, training courses or attending counselling/mentoring. We use surveys to assess the experience of users of our services resulting in action as and when required.

Good practice and experiences are also shared via our management structure and in the planning and development of the services we offer. Any service user who feels they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against, can raise their concerns via our complaints procedure.

For more information on the Equality Act 2010, please see the Equality and Human Rights Commission website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

What we can guarantee

- A passionate service dedicated to our community
- Trained and skilled group members and leaders
- Attentive, confidential support
- Safe therapeutic listening and talking spaces
- A non-judgmental and collaborative approach
- An encouraging and affirming environment
- Compassion and understanding of individual needs