



## Counselling

**We understand how much of a big step counselling can be and have created this information pack to help you manage this. It explains how to access the building, what to expect when you arrive, and the support available during your visit. It also highlights sensory items and guidance to help you feel comfortable if you start to feel overwhelmed.**

Supporting 8-25 year olds to manage and improve their mental health and wellbeing. Counselling can facilitate, support and empower you to make positive changes in a safe and non-judgemental environment.

# What this information pack includes:

(You don't have to read everything, You can skip to the parts you need – click the link below.)

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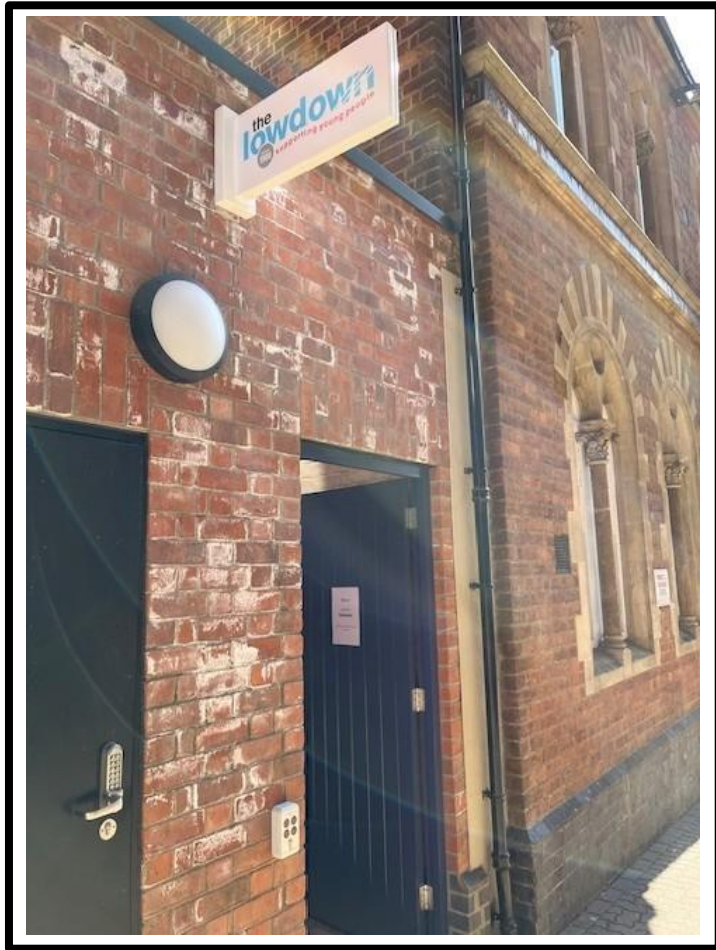
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# How to enter the building - What to do on arrival

## Counselling

1. Look out for the blue door from the street.
  2. Come up the steps to the glass door.
  3. Press the buzzer – this is situated on the right.
  4. If you have an appointment – when you press the buzzer, let the staff member know what or who you are there for. For example – “I am here for counselling with...”
  5. One of the team will answer and let you in.
  6. The waiting area is on your left – please take a seat wherever you find it most comfortable.
  7. Wait for your Counsellor or staff member to meet you.
  8. In the main waiting area, you will find/see – Fidget toys, books and magazines, information cards, flyers, a water dispenser. The water is free, please help yourself.
- **If you have any mobility or accessibility requirements, please contact us in advance where possible.**
  - There is a ramp at the side of the building for an accessible entrance.
  - If it's your first time to the building and you are unsure what to do, press one of the buzzers and let a staff member know what you are here for.

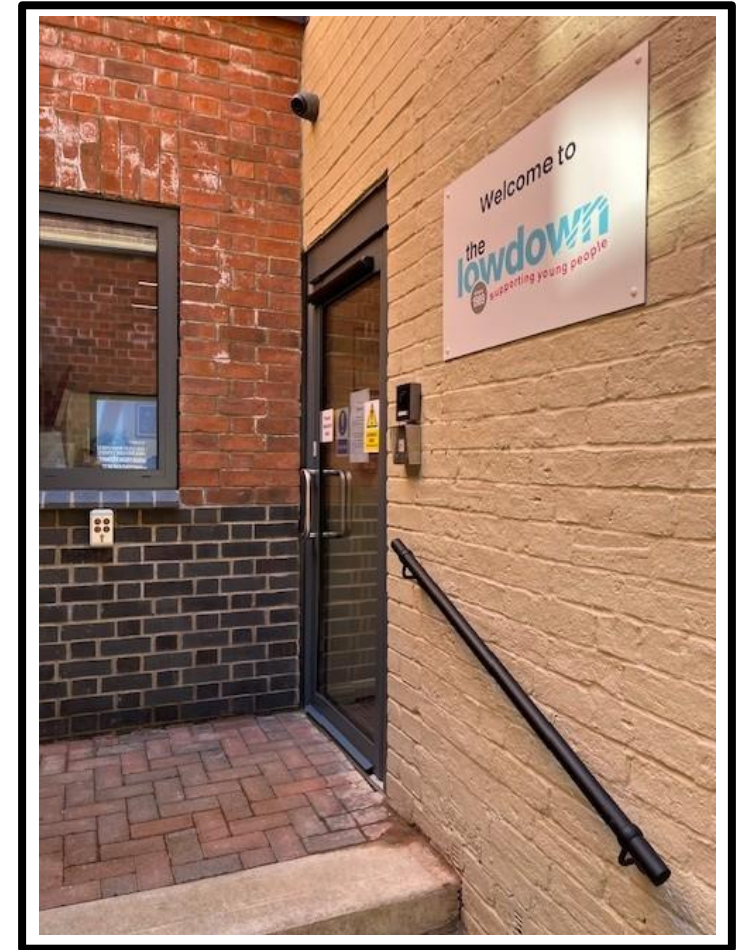
# Entrance – Counselling via the Blue Door



**1.** Go to the blue – front entrance (street view.)



**2.** Up the steps  
The accessible entrance is to the right, through the car park, up the ramp to the white door.



**3.** Press the buzzer on the wall to the right and say you are here for an appointment.

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## Entrance – Counselling via the Blue Door



**4.** Please note the door is an automatic door and opens inwards.

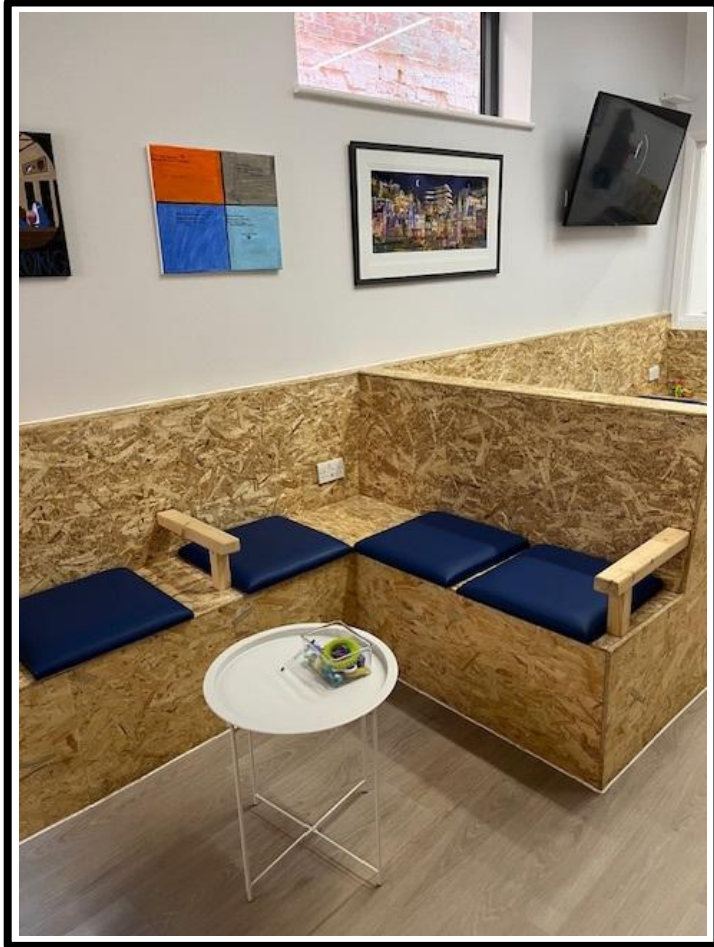


**5.** Enter the main waiting area to the left. There is an eye level sign for direction.



**6.** Take a seat and you will be collected from here for your appointment.

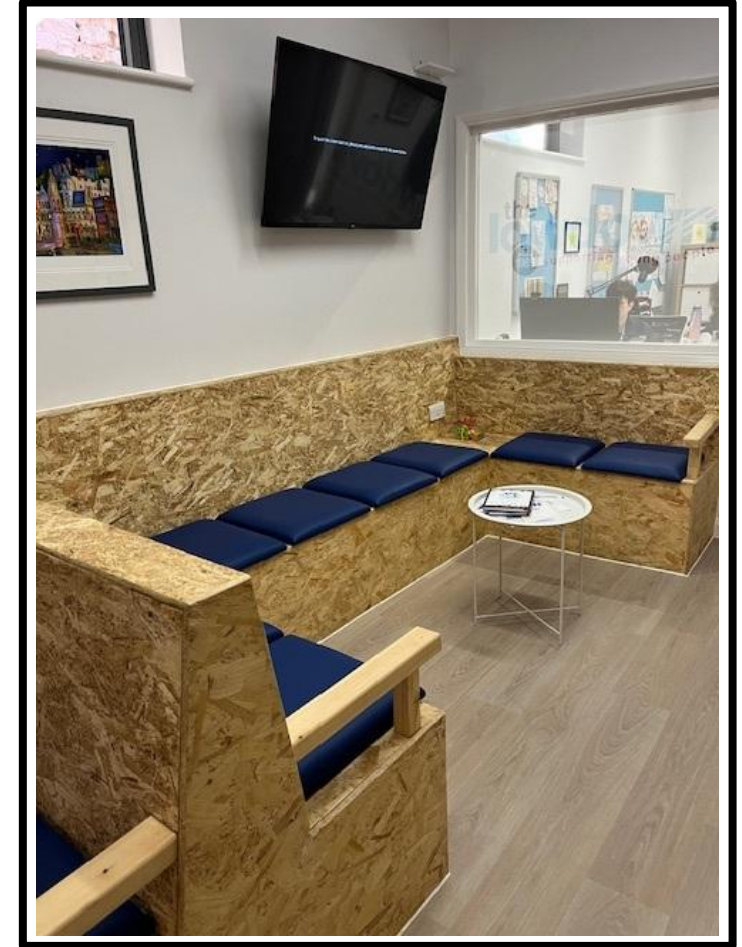
## Waiting area – what this space looks like



**1.** Seating and tables.



**2.** Main waiting area and seating.



**3.** Staff - Shift Manager's office at the top end of the waiting room. (Shift offer support for all/with counselling in the building.)

# Counselling – how you might get to and from your room



**1.** You will be greeted by a staff member and shown to your appointment.

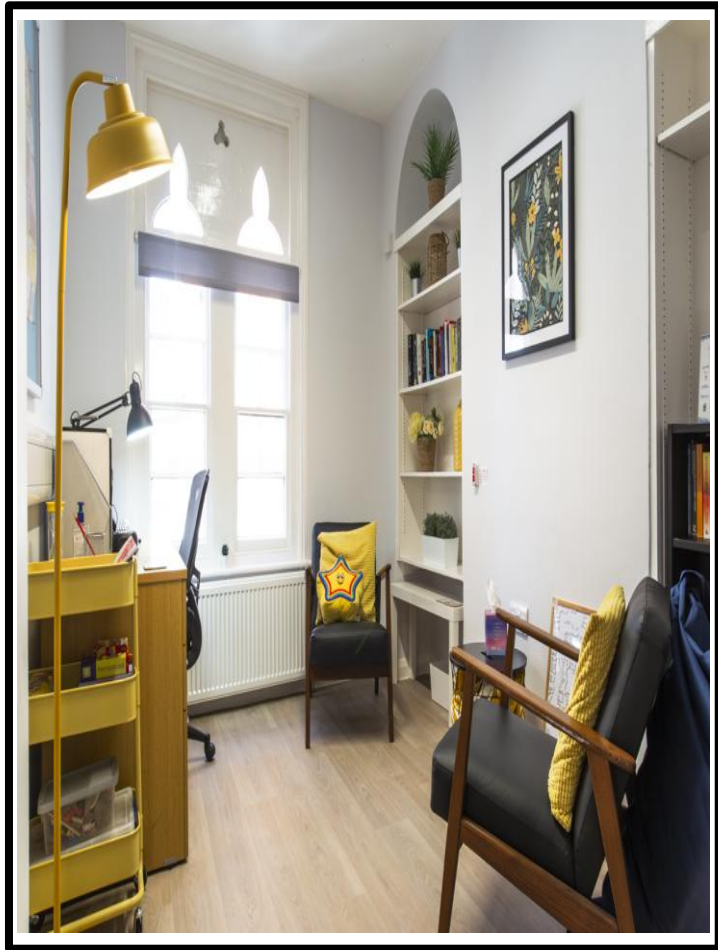


**2.** There will also be signs (blue background, dark text) to direct you to your counselling room.

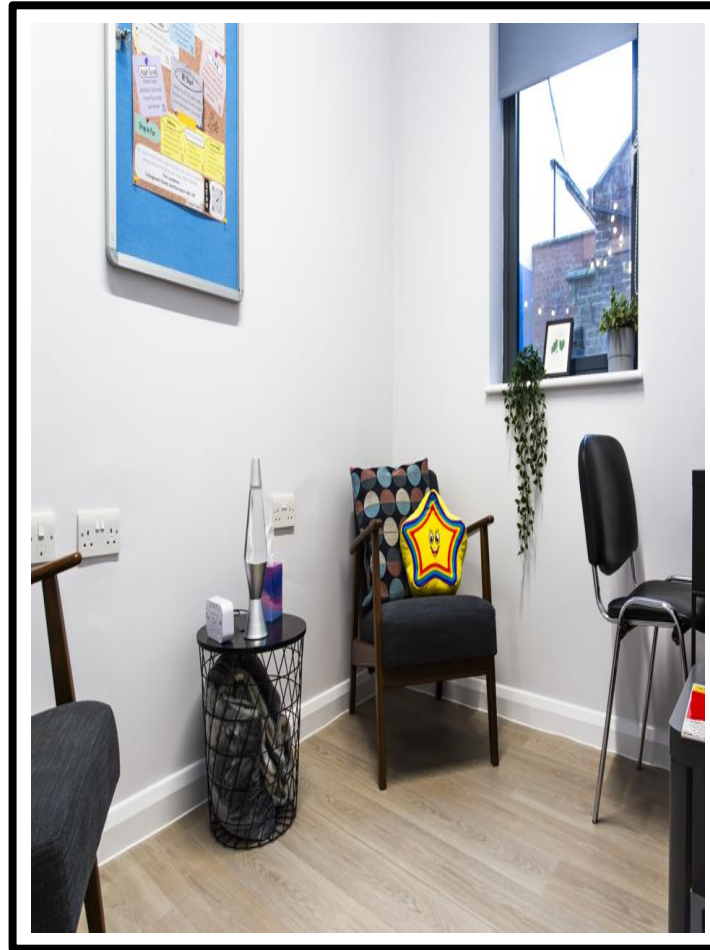


**3.** When you leave you will be shown to the exit.

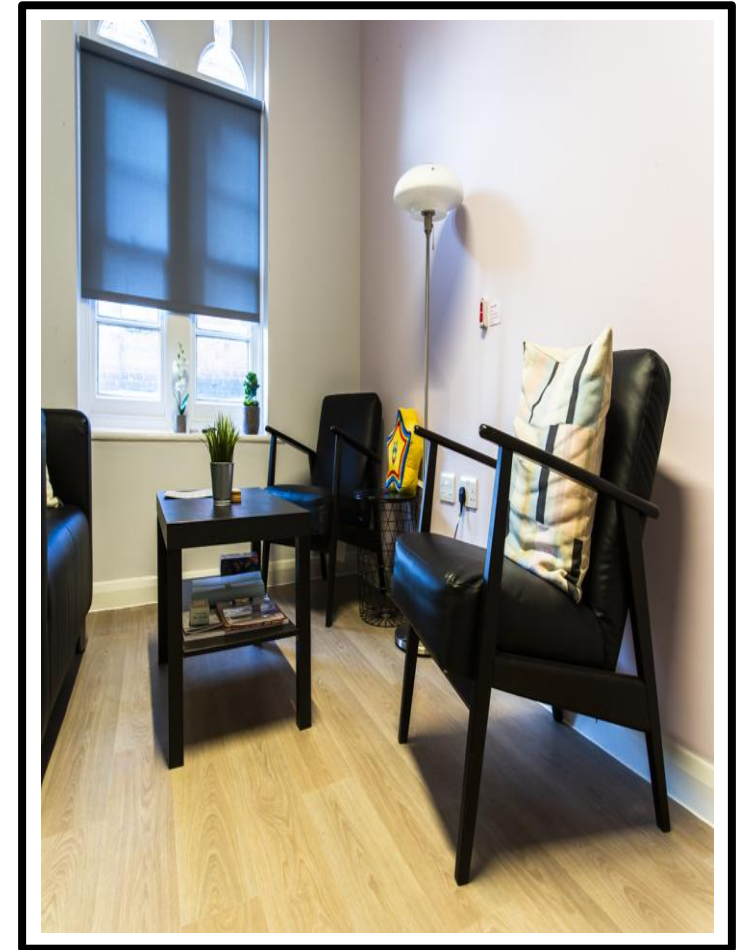
# Counselling Rooms - What our rooms may look like.



**1.** One of our upstairs Counselling rooms.

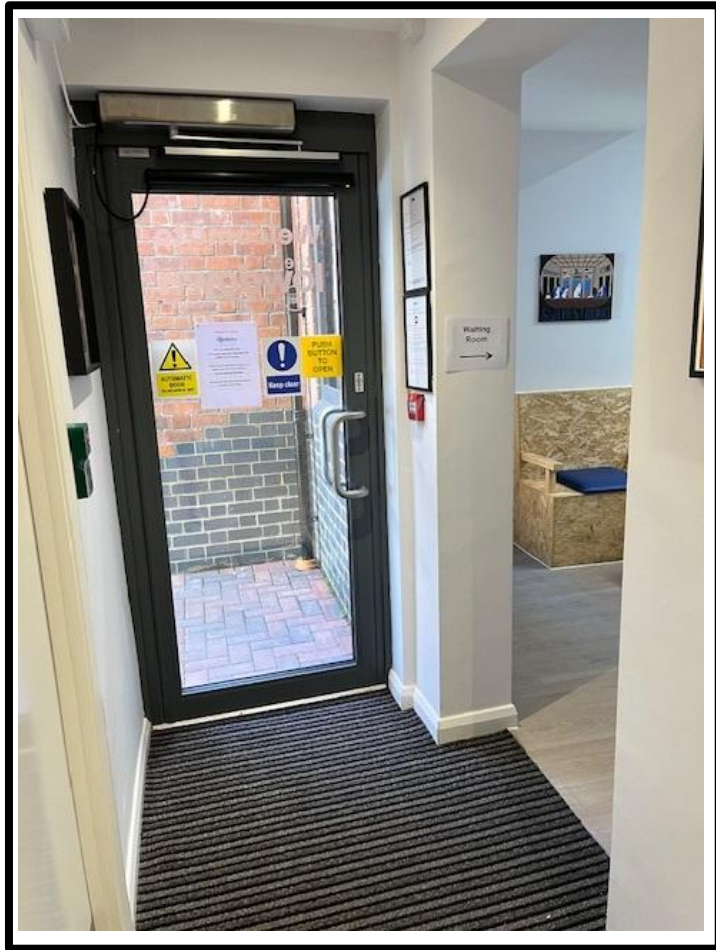


**2.** Chairs, comfort items, counselling resources and information in all rooms.



**3.** Seating, lighting and furniture can all be adjusted.

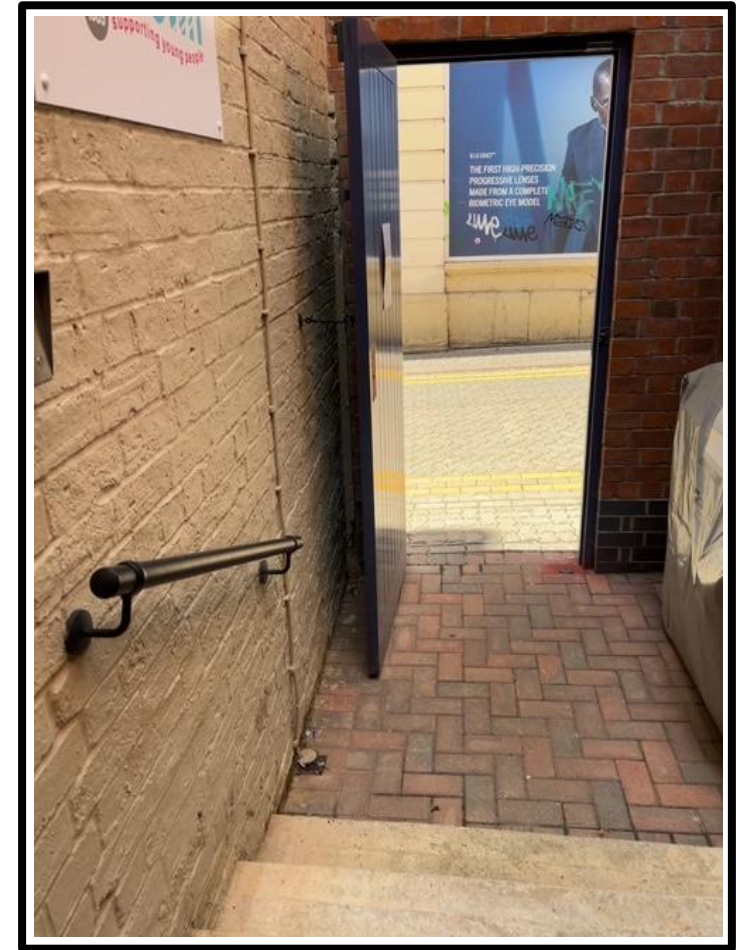
# Leaving/exiting the building – exit via the blue door



**1.** Internal exit from ground floor, next to main waiting area.



**2.** Automatic door, opens inwards.



**3.** Steps down to Kingswell street (blue door).



## What to expect in the building

What to look for, what you might see, hear, smell.  
What to do if you feel a certain way during your visit.

# What to look for in the building

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- **People** – there will be others in and around the building, staff and volunteers are there to help.
- **Toilets** – all our toilets are gender neutral. We also have disabled and ambulatory toilets and baby changing facilities.
- **Automatic doors** – The main entrance into the building (via the blue door), counselling room doors (1 and 4), doors from waiting areas and corridor to garden have automatic doors. (open inwards) to allow easier access for all.
- **Handrails** – These can be found on both sets of stairs from the ground to the first floor of the main building.
- **Emergency exits** – These are at the front and side of the building (what you might see - picture no.7) There are signs to highlight all exits.
- **Signs** – These are throughout the building, to help find your way to rooms and exits. The signs are blue with dark text. Some rooms such as toilets also have pictures. (see examples of signs)
- **Information** – details for who to speak to in the building, what you need to know about today and where and who else outside of The Lowdown can you get support.
- **Artwork & paintings** – these are in various rooms (some have been created by young people.)
- **Comfort & sensory packs** – Fidget toys, ear defenders, blankets and cushions are available to use in the building.
- **Accessible seating & wheelchair spaces** – In the main waiting area there is a specific space for any wheelchairs/ mobility scooters and pushchairs, next to benched seating. There is also some seating with raised arm rests for ease of getting into and out of seats.

# What to look for in the building - what you might see



**1. Toilets** - Gender neutral, disabled and ambulatory toilets.

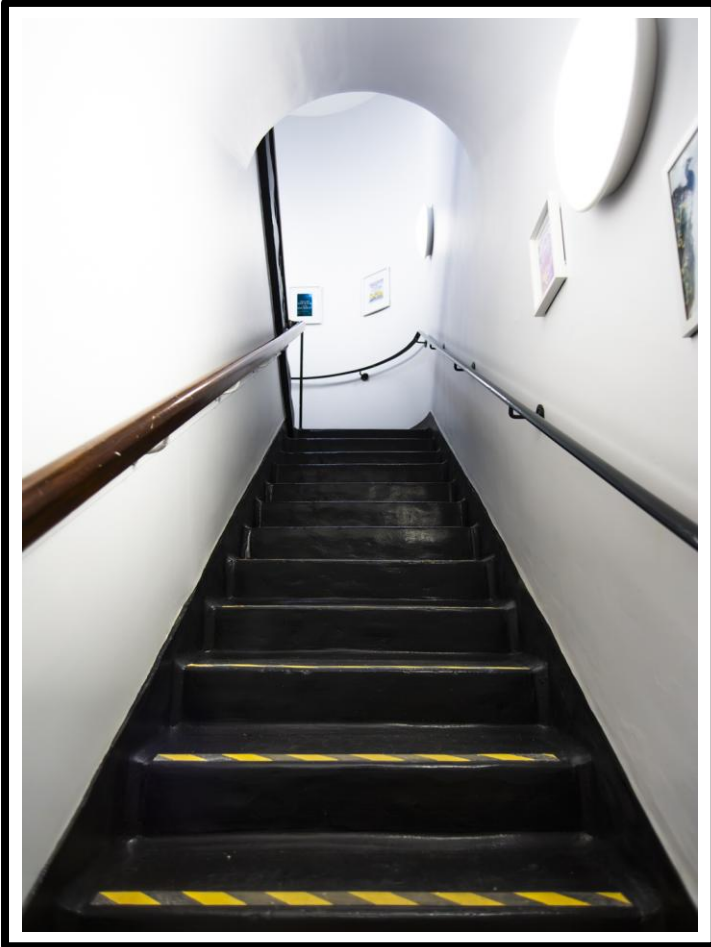


**2. Toilet** - with baby changing facilities.

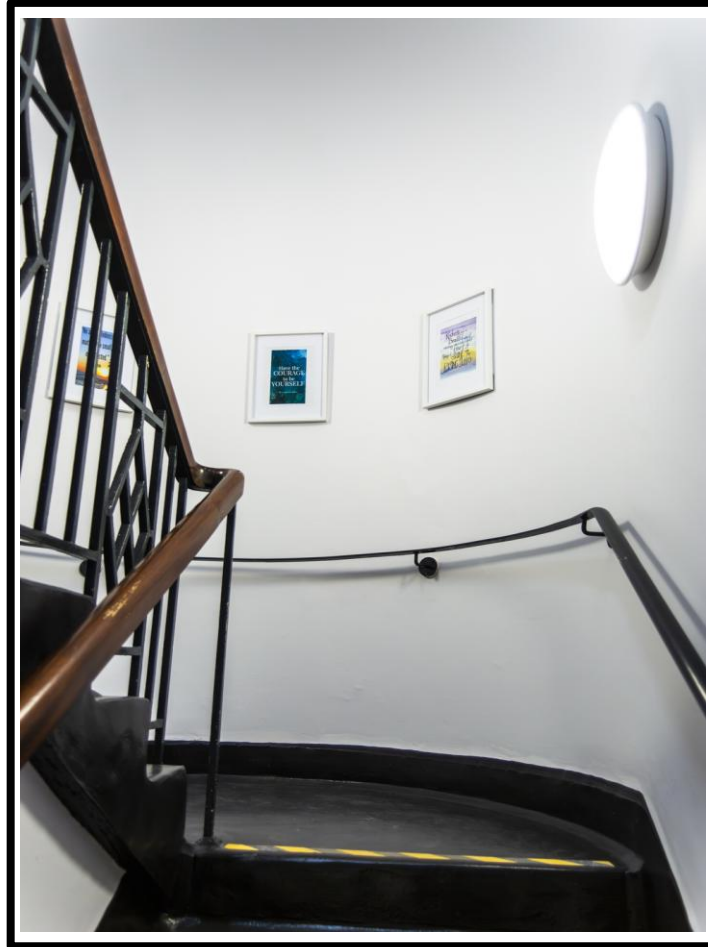


**3. Automatic doors** – inside and outside the building (pictured above an example of an inside automatic door).

## What to look for in the building – what you might see



**4. Handrails** - These can be found on both sets of stairs from the ground to the first floor of the main building.



**5.** Different colours for walls and floors, including tape to highlight steps.



**6. RE:Start stairs** - from garden/ courtyard to office and upstairs counselling rooms.

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# What to look for in the building – what you might see



**7. Emergency exits**



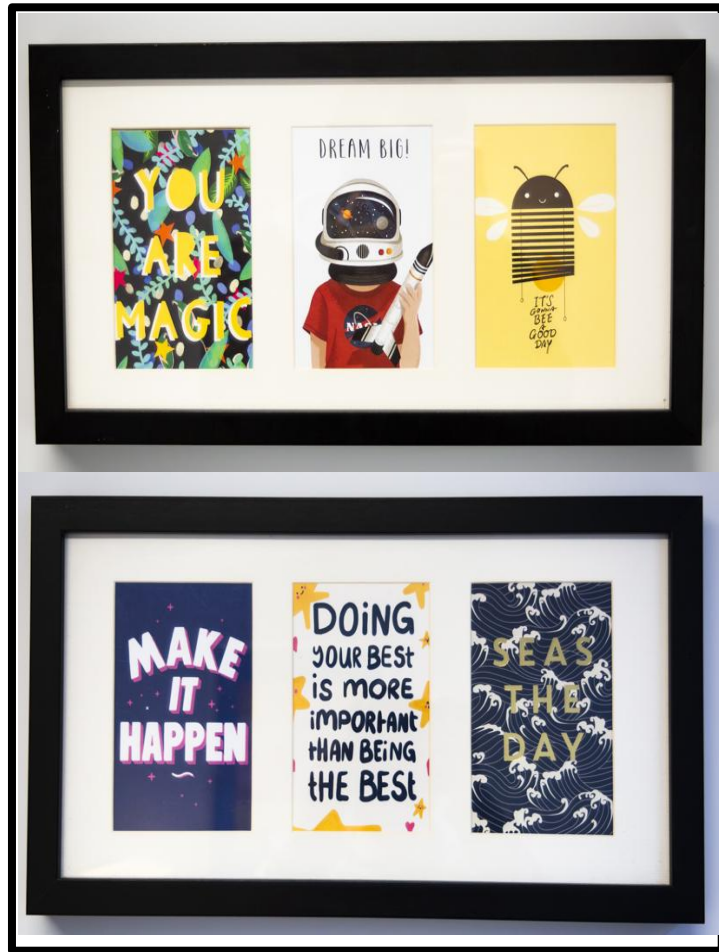
**8. Signs – for directions and information**



**9. Notice boards - details for who to speak to in the building and what you need to know about today.**

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## What to look for in the building – what you might see



**10. Artwork, paintings and decorations** – can be found around the building.



**11.** Each counselling room has its own picture quote to match the room name.



**12.** Some of these have been created by young people.

## People – Who you might see

- **Staff & Volunteers** – there will be staff and volunteers to help or support you. Below is an example of some of the people you may come across during your visit:
  - **Shift Managers** – the role of a Shift Manager is to manage the Counselling appointments and ensure you are where you need to be to get to your session. They help staff, support clients and keep everything safe and organised. You can ask them questions while you are in the building, they are always happy to help.
  - **Drop-in Support Workers** – There are always two Drop-in support workers whilst the Drop-in's are open. They are there to see anyone who attends and offer mental health and wellbeing support, sexual health support, information and guidance and where necessary further signposting.
  - **Admin Staff** – They may be the first people you speak to, on the phone or in person. They answer phones, organise and communicate about all appointments and services at The Lowdown.
  - **Other staff** - including Counsellors and Support Workers across all services such as RE:Start support workers, service managers, management and others.

## Sounds you might hear in the building

Below are some of the things you may hear during your visit, sounds can be different depending on what day or time it is.



### **Sounds/ hearing:**

- Buzzers- when pressed to enter.
- Voices/conversation and noise from other people in the building.
- Radio – often on in waiting area as background (if noise is overwhelming let us know).
- Doors – high pitched beep on some automatic doors, slamming doors.
- Banging and movement from other rooms – furniture moved, doors closing/opening and footsteps.
- Building work or repairs improvements, these are less frequent, but you may hear these occasionally.
- Street noise – vehicles, people and other noises from nearby shops or buildings.

A lot of this is out of our control but let us know if there is an issue and we will do our best to help

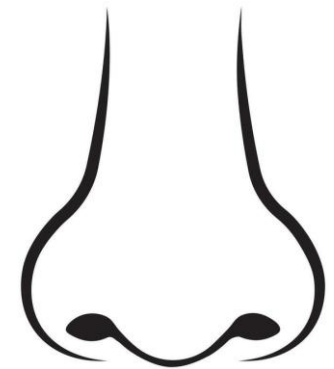
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# What you might smell in the building

Below are some of the things you may smell during your visit. These can be different depending on what day or time it is.

## Smells:

- Cleaning products.
- Essential oils (may be used in some Counselling rooms).
- If you are in garden areas, food smells from nearby.
- Food smells from kitchen areas in the main building and Lounge area.
- Other smells from the street or surrounding areas.
- Perfumes and body sprays worn by others in the building.



A lot of this is out of our control but let us know if there is an issue and we will do our best to help

# What to do if you feel.....

## **Overwhelmed:**

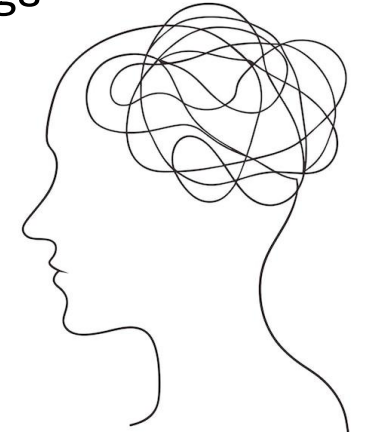
- Speak to a staff member, there are alternative quiet spaces and ear defenders available.
- Take a minute to remind yourself this is a safe space and breathe deeply, what 3 things can you see, hear and feel.

## **Anxious/ Stressed:**

- Speak to a staff member – what helps you feel more calm or relaxed?
- Comfort items, fidgets, ear defenders are available to use in the building.

## **Unsure or unsafe:**

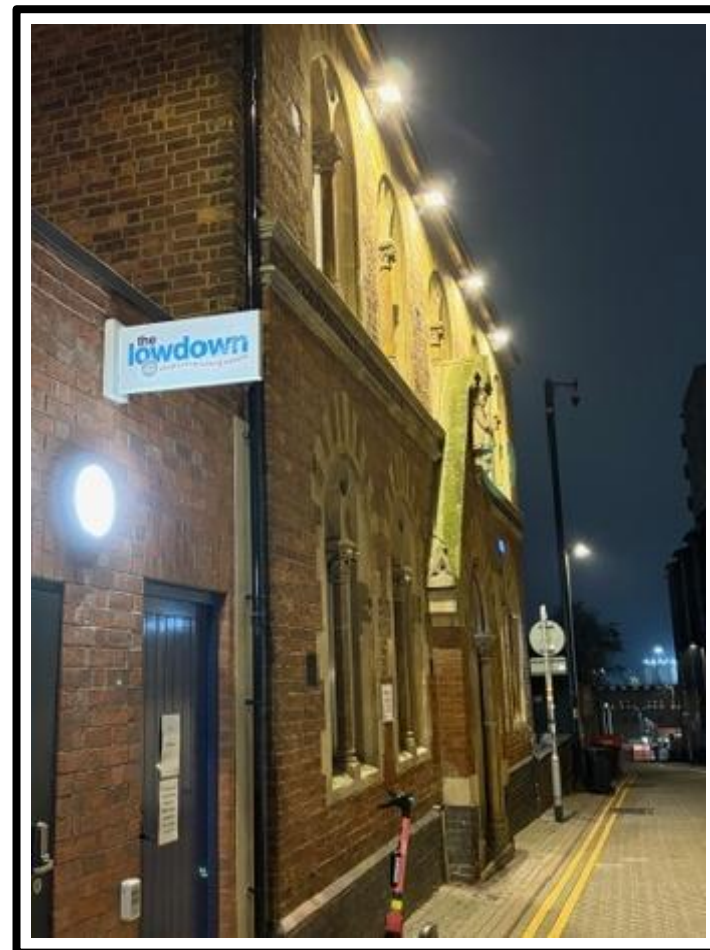
- Check the waiting room notice board and find out which Shift Manager or Drop-in Worker is in they will be happy to help you. Speak to them or another staff member. Our aim is to provide a safe and welcoming space for you.
- Use the rule of 3 grounding techniques above – what can you see, hear and feel.



## A safe space – lights & CCTV outside the building.



1. CCTV outside of the building to keep everyone safe.



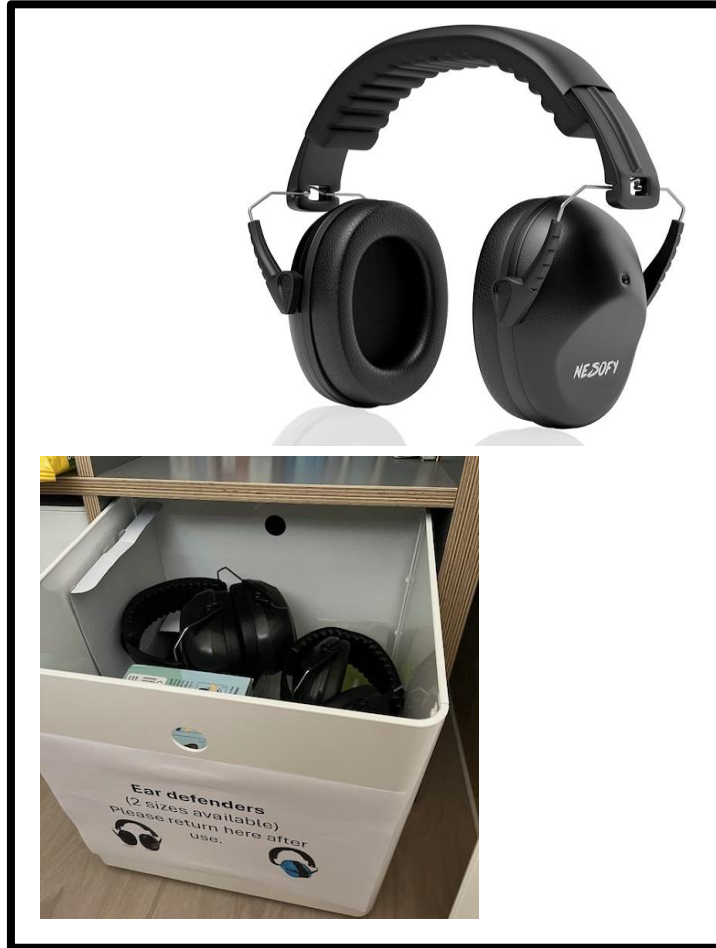
2. Lighting at the front of the building for when its dark.



3. Lighting also at the side of the building (white door/ accessible entrance.)

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# Your sensory needs - Comfort and sensory items



**1.** Pictured: ear defenders – found in every counselling room, in the shift office and Lounge. For use in the building, please ask a staff member.



**2.** There are dimmable lights, blinds and lamps in every room, let staff know if light needs adjusting for you.



**3.** Blankets in every counselling room and waiting areas (storage baskets, pictured.) Floor cushions found in some rooms.

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**Thank you for reading.** Is there anything missing from this information pack that you would like to see included/ need to know?

If you have any questions or need any further information, contact us:



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