

## What Is The Charter?

The Charter is a community led initiative to help people who use services for their mental health and wellbeing to feel safe and supported. It is for people accessing services and their supporters\*, putting people's rights and expectations at the centre of the services they use.

It was developed by people who have used mental health services in collaboration with family, friends, organisations and groups.

In April 2019, the Charter was written into the contracts of local organisations and championed by others in order to uphold its principles. As part of a collaborative approach, organisations will be sharing examples of best practice and innovation in wellbeing for the benefit of the community.

Further work is planned to develop tools to evaluate organisations' effectiveness in delivering the Charter. This will also include feedback and involvement from people using services.

The ultimate aim of the charter is to reduce the stigma and discrimination which can be associated with mental health and increase 'Parity of Esteem' whereby mental health is valued and treated equally to physical health.

*\*In this context supporters mean family, friends, volunteers, advocates, peers, carers, professionals and anyone else who supports an individual's wellbeing.*

The Charter's Ambassadors are B&NES Mental Health Commissioners, Virgin Care, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP B&NES), B&NES Council, B&NES Health and Wellbeing Board.

The principles of the Charter are vital to ensure you get the best service. You should expect these principles to be followed.

Further information is available on [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

### Compliments, Comments or Complaints

Any compliments and comments about the services provided are always appreciated by the organisations. Please contact directly.

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received please use the organisation's Complaints Procedure.

If you are not happy with the way your complaint was handled, you can contact [BathNES.Contracts@virginicare.co.uk](mailto:BathNES.Contracts@virginicare.co.uk)



### The Meaning Behind the Charter Logo

The logo seeks to convey movement illustrating that lives are not static and services need to be dynamic to support people.

The tree symbolises the support and safety of services. The birds are the people using services who are guided and nurtured until they are ready to leave knowing that support is always there. The sunrise brings hope, light and the potential of new beginnings.



## B&NES MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CHARTER

### Your Rights and Expectations Explained

The Charter is your document to help you when accessing local services in Bath and NE Somerset (B&NES). This leaflet introduces you to the principles of the Charter.

**The Charter is available in different formats. Please call 01225 831 861 or email [banes.yourvoice@nhs.net](mailto:banes.yourvoice@nhs.net)**

# B&NES MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CHARTER

There are 5 main guiding principles which highlight the support you can expect to receive in B&NES. These guidelines will work alongside a framework which will be created for staff and organisations.

## 1. My Support My Way

**I understand the different support available to me and can access it when I need to.**

*This means I have access to available services locally that meet my needs. My options are communicated in a clear format that I understand. I know who is responsible for the support, how long it will last and what alternatives are available.*

**I am offered the opportunity to shape the way my support and care is provided. This may include working with a variety of supporters.**

*This means I can be actively involved in planning my wellbeing and care. Any support is adaptable as my needs change and I do not need to repeat my story unnecessarily.*



## 2. Feeling Safe and Supported

**I am able to speak with people that I trust and who help me to build safe and supportive relationships. I am treated with dignity, respect and empathy.**

*This means I have access to a variety of different people who understand my needs and circumstances and help me to feel safe.*

**If I feel I am becoming unwell, need extra support or am reaching crisis point, I can access relevant and timely support which meets my needs.**

*This means when I need help I will not feel isolated or be turned away. I, or my supporters, know who to call and which service or group can support me.*



## 3. Insight Into My Mental Health

**I am able to learn more about both my mental and physical health in an environment that encourages me to view my life as a whole.**

*This means those around me assist me to understand what helps, hinders or impacts on my health. This enables me to enhance my quality of life.*

**I am supported to gain insight into my mental health, including past traumas and possible triggers to me becoming unwell. This could help strengthen my resilience and self-understanding.**

*This means I am supported to recognise both when I'm ready to move forward, when I may need different support or when I am becoming unwell. I can meet with people (peers) who have had similar experiences to me.*

## 4. Supportive Staff/ Organisations

**I feel confident that people are skilled and experienced. They work together and focus on my best interests.**

*This means people are respectful of my wishes and, where appropriate, will work with other organisations.*

**People work with me to develop a greater understanding of my health and wellbeing.**

*This means I am helped to look at what might affect my health and wellbeing. I can explore new opportunities, which take my health needs into account.*

## 5. Advice and Information

**I can access a range of relevant advice and information which is clear and accessible.**

*This means I have access to resources and can find experienced and knowledgeable people to help me make informed decisions about my health.*

**My needs and preferences are always taken into account when I receive advice and information.**

*This means I can get help with my chosen life plan including advice on accommodation, benefits, employment and volunteering etc.*

**I know where to go to make positive comments or raise concerns about my support and care.**

*This means I have opportunities to give feedback on the services I receive.*

