



banish the crows
independent
counselling psychotherapy

BEING COVID-SECURE.

**Guidance for Existing and Prospective
Clients.**

1 December 2021

At the time of updating this guidance note and the coronavirus, Covid-19 'Omicron' variant circulating, Covid-Secure measures remain applicable. The building and our studio space is fully risk-assessed, as required by the Health & Safety Executive and local Government. A copy of the Covid-Secure Risk Assessment and Management Plan is available to those who wish to see it before booking or attending for therapy in-person by clicking [here](#).

I am fully vaccinated against coronavirus (February and May 2021) and have now had my booster vaccination (November 2021). I continue to test daily using the Lateral Flow Test (LFT) provided free of charge by Government. Click [here](#) to find out more and to order LFT kits. Since starting testing in October 2020 I have continuously reported negative results. Should this change at any point then I am committed to notifying clients - those that I am scheduled to meet with but also those that I have met with in-person in the preceding seven days.

Whilst the vast majority of clients are now meeting with me in-person I am **not** insisting that clients meet with me in this way and therefore continue to offer alternatives to meeting in-person. For some people there may still be very practical reasons why they are unable to meet face-to-face, even if they would prefer to.

Set out below is an update about my therapy space at St. James House and the range of ongoing safeguards being maintained to uphold and protect the health and wellbeing of clients, but also myself.

Covid-Secure Measures

- Those clients who **prefer** or **need** to continue with **online or teletherapy** sessions **will** be able to do so. For new clients, please specify this preference when booking an appointment; when making contact via the website enquiry form, or via the BACP* 'Find a Therapist' directory page. Banish the Crows has always offered video and teletherapy sessions as part of our offering and will continue to do so. Please read our preparatory **advice for video and phone sessions** by clicking [here](#).

You will never be pressurised by me to attend in-person if you are not comfortable in doing so.

- Between sessions, soft furnishings are (lightly) sprayed with antibacterial fabric solution of the required % alcohol level.
- Hard surfaces that clients typically come into contact with such as doors and door handles, tables and the iZettle card reader, for those of you who preferring to pay by card rather than bank transfer, are damp wiped - again using antibacterial solution of the required % alcohol level.
- Clients are provided with antibacterial hand solution to clean their hands before they enter and leave the room. St. James House also provides sanitising stations at front and rear entrances/exits.
- The **distance** between seating in the studio more than meets the 2m social distancing rule set out by the Government and its scientific advisers earlier in the pandemic and physical **contact** between therapist and client can be managed relatively easily when entering and leaving the room.

However, together with the antibacterial hand solution, we will provide masks for those clients who would **prefer** or **need** to use them and we are accepting of using them ourselves if this is your preference. Clients will typically be asked this each time they attend for an in-person session. Due to the other precautions being taken to minimise risk, including the layout of the studio space there will be no routine wearing of masks and gloves.

- The studio space is ventilated during and between sessions.
- Bottled water continues to be provided and offered to clients without charge. Clients are also invited to bring along their own hot (and cold) drinks - if preferred.

Our polite request to clients

- Please consider taking a Covid-19 Lateral Flow Test on the day of attending for an appointment. If you test positive please follow the guidance outlined below.
- Please continue to pay by bank transfer if you are able to. If not, a card rather than cash payment would be preferred.

- Please continue to observe social distancing when entering, moving through, and leaving St. James House, and wear a face covering when entering areas where social distancing is not easily achievable.
- Whilst bathroom facilities are available and open at the Centre but continue to be restricted to one person at any one time.
- **Most importantly** - if you or anybody else in your household display any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19); if you are made aware that you have been in contact with somebody with coronavirus/symptoms e.g. through NHS Track & Trace, OR you have returned from overseas travel to an area that the UK Government requires you to self-isolate upon your return, then the Government and its scientific advisers advise that you **MUST** stay at home (self-isolate) and get a Covid-19 test at the earliest opportunity.

If you have booked an in-person session and are unable to attend on the day, due to coronavirus symptoms, you will be offered an alternative method of meeting such as secure video platform - no contract or registration is required for using the video link, or by phone (teletherapy).

The NHS Coronavirus website is the most reliable source of information and guides on what action you should take and when. Click [here](#) to access the NHS website.

Main symptoms:

The main symptoms of coronavirus continue to be:

- **a high temperature** - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** - this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

What to do if you have symptoms

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

1. **Stay at home (self-isolate)** - do not leave your home or have visitors. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also self-isolate.
2. **Get a test** - book a **PCR test** to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, should also get a test if they have symptoms.

Please contact us if:

- You require any further information about the safeguards that we have put in place.
- You want to talk to us about a session that you have already scheduled with us and need to change it or the format OR if you would like to talk about the practicalities of attending in-person.
- If you have **any** concerns about **anything** discussed in this update.

Your health, safety, and wellbeing - whether emotional, psychological or physical is **ALWAYS** our priority.



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* The **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)** is the professional association for members of the counselling professions in the UK. Therapists associated with Banish the Crows Independent Counselling Psychotherapy are registered members of the BACP. All BACP members must work in accordance with its professional code: [Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions \(2018\)](#).

