

Support Session

Welcome Pack



**We'd like to welcome you to Support Sessions at
Victoria House.**

**This pack is to help you find us and know
what to expect while visiting
Manchester Mind.**

What is Manchester Mind's address?

If you are coming to see us [in person](#) for a Support Session please come to:

Manchester Mind

Victoria House
5 Samuel Ogden Street
Manchester
M1 7AX



How do I get there?

Victoria House is a 5-minute walk from Oxford Road train station and around 10 minutes on foot from Piccadilly train station and the tram stop at Manchester Central Library.

There are major bus and tram routes nearby and you can [plan your journey](#) using Transport for greater Manchester's Bee Network:

<https://tfgm.com/plan-a-journey>

We're happy to help you plan your journey and we can meet you at the door when you arrive. Let us know what works for you.

You can also find us using **what3words:** [/// length.cloud.wish](https://what3words.com/length.cloud.wish)

What are your contact details?

Our main telephone number is **0161 769 5732** and you can contact us by email at: info@manchestermind.org.

Our website and other materials reflect both our full postal and [in person](#) addresses.

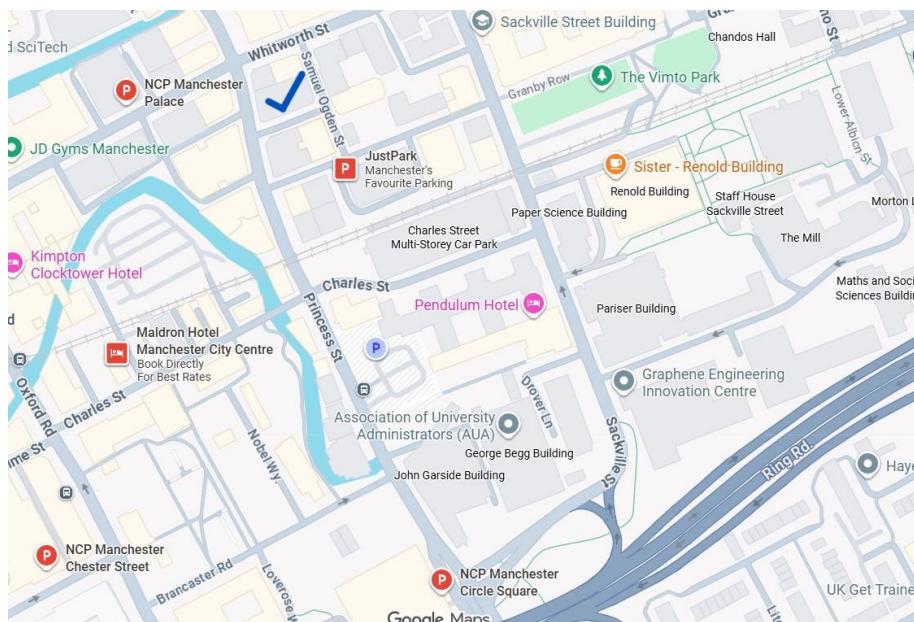
Where do I park?

There is lots of on-road parking nearby with meters.

These cost from £2.10 per hour and have a maximum stay of 2 hours.

There are several multi-story car parks within walking distance as listed below.

Victoria House is marked with a blue tick on the map:



NCP Manchester Palace on Whitworth Street (approx. £9 for 2 hours)

JustPark on Granby Row (approx. £9 for 2 hours)

NCP Manchester Circle Square on Oxford Road (approx. £7 for 2 hours)

Can I leave my bicycle somewhere safe?

There will be somewhere safe to leave your bike and we are planning to have bike racks fitted. Please check with the person who is making your appointment where's the safest place to leave your bike.



Is Victoria House accessible?

Victoria House is designed to be inclusive and welcoming for everyone and offers:

- Step-free access throughout the building
- A fully accessible toilet for everyone to use and gender specific toilets on the ground floor
- Improved spaces for delivering our services comfortably and safely.

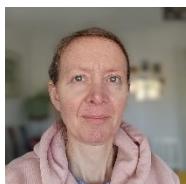
We're committed to ensuring that everyone who works, volunteers or visits us feels safe, respected and supported.

What are the support sessions?

Our support sessions are held at Victoria House in a large communal room. A few kind staff and volunteers offer a small group of people a listening ear, a warm drink and some snacks, wellbeing activities and a safe space. We can support you to explore options to support your mental health.

Who will I see there?

You will see our supportive staff who are all very good listeners.



Dionne (she/her) can help you to find opportunities to volunteer to support your mental health.



Verity (she/her)

Is there to listen and help you access the support you need.



Tara (she/her) is the Manager. She makes sure that the sessions are safe, helpful and supportive. If you have questions, she can help find the answers.



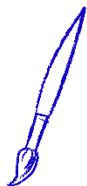
Darren (he/him) is our Administrator and he helps us all to stay organised. You will speak with him on the phone before your session.

Volunteers help out too. They have their own lived experience of poor mental health and are there to provide some peer support.



What is the room like?

We have a large room with a communal table and large windows which look out onto the Manchester Streets. There are also a couple of smaller tables, comfy seats and beanbags you can sit at if you prefer not to sit at the large table or to speak more privately. In some circumstances we can also provide space to speak 1-1 if needed. Tea, coffee, snacks and on occasion warm meals are available.



On the tables there are colouring pages, items and activities to help you relax. We play gentle music on a large TV unit very quietly. We try to keep the room at a nice temperature, but we also have blankets if you need them for comfort.

The chairs are fabric and we have some with and some without arms. If you require a larger, softer or sturdier chair for any reason, please let us know in advance and we can organise this for you. The room is accessible for wheelchair users. We have natural lighting from the window and overhead automatic lighting.



Do I have to do the activities?



No. This is your session, and you can decide what you want to do. We are there to listen and also just to spend time with you if you need company. The activities are there as an option to help manage any anxiety you may experience, for enjoyment and to support your wellbeing or to aid relaxation.

Will there be lots of people there?

There will be 1 member of staff and usually 2 or 3 volunteers and we invite a few people to the sessions. No more than 10 people will come. Most people say it is a calm and helpful place to be and that coming helped them to feel less isolated and to access support. It is helpful to remember that everyone there is struggling with their mental health and trying to access support.

Will I be safe?

Yes – your safety is our priority. All staff and volunteers have enhanced DBS checks which they are required to have to keep activities safe.

We have staff who are trained in physical and mental health first aid and will support you if you are hurt or struggling.

If you're feeling anxious or need help, please let us know. We will do our best to support you and help you feel more comfortable.



At your first session we will look through our **safe space agreement**. It is a set of guidelines where we agree to treating each other with respect and keeping ourselves and others safe whilst in the session.

Is it confidential?

As it is a small group setting, the discussions in the room are not always confidential. We do ask all people attending to respect privacy if people share things about their lives. A big part of what is helpful about the session, is that it is an opportunity to find peer support. It's normal to find it difficult to open up, and you may feel nervous about sharing your experiences with others, but it can be helpful to remember, they are also attending for support and probably feel or have felt the same, or similar ways to you.



However, **everything is a choice** and you can choose how much to share with the group. If you wish to share something you want to keep private with only our staff or volunteers we can support this.

Anything you tell Manchester Mind **will be kept confidential** unless we are concerned you may be unsafe, at which point we may need to speak with someone else and share information to support your safety. If this happens we will tell you and speak honestly with you about it.

How much do I have to tell you?

You can tell us as **much or as little as you need and want to**. When you or the person who supports you complete the referral for the session, the details you share then will be passed to us confidentially. This means, that we may already know some of the reasons you need help, so you don't have to tell your story again if that is difficult for you. Staff and volunteers will give you opportunities to reflect on your experiences and look at support options without having to share upsetting details.

When are the sessions and how long do I have to stay?

The sessions are on **Mondays** and **Thursdays** and start at **10am and finish at 12.30pm**. You are welcome to come at any time and stay for as long or as little as you want. If you want to speak with a Housing Welfare Rights Worker, we can arrange this during the session but your appointment may be at a later date.

How many sessions can I attend?

Some people attend the session only once, but we invite everyone to attend for up to **3 sessions**. This is flexible though, and in some circumstances, you may be able to attend a little longer, until you feel we have been able to support you with your mental health, or personal situation.

What type of mental health support can you offer?

We will help you with **any** mental health issues you are experiencing. We can simply listen, or we can provide information and resources, which may help you to understand your mental health better. We can let you know about the activities and groups we have at Manchester Mind to support you and also the activities other organisations have available, and we can help you to access those. If you are struggling to communicate with your care team, we can sometimes help with that too.

Can I come if I am in crisis?

Yes, please come to a support session if you feel you are experiencing a crisis. We will do our best to make sure you can keep yourself safe and help you to explore options to improve things.

Can someone come with me?

Yes, you may be able to bring a friend, carer or support worker with you. There may be occasions where they will have to wait in our reception area while you attend your session or appointment. Let us know in advance if someone is coming with you.

What if I can't make it because I am struggling with my mental or physical health?

We want to let you know that there is **no shame** in not being able to attend. It is common to find attending any kind of activity difficult when you are struggling with your health.

We also want to tell you that **it is ok, not to be ok** at the sessions. We have staff and volunteers to support you.

It is also fine to take time out of a session or to leave early if you need.

How will I let you know if I am not coming?

A few days before the session, Darren will either call or text to check if you are able to attend. If at any point you realise you will not be coming we would be grateful if you could let us know. You can also do this the morning of your session.

You do not need to explain why. You can simply send a  or  emoji or a **yes** or **no** answer. If we receive these replies we will not ask you for any further explanation. Knowing about attendance helps us to plan better sessions and to use our resources more efficiently. We will invite you to try again another time.

If you are unable to make a session a few times, we will attempt to contact you via telephone to see how we can help. If there is something you are worried about, we may be able to make adaptations and/or try to plan with you to help you feel more able to attend.

If you change your mind about attending, that is fine, we may be able to suggest another service within Manchester Mind or the local community that suits you better.

What do I do when I get there?

When you arrive at Samuel Ogden Street entrance, press the buzzer on our intercom and a staff member or volunteer will come directly to the door or the door will be opened through the intercom.

You will come through to the reception area of the building.

You'll be asked for your name and which session you are attending and we'll offer you a hot or cold drink if you need a refreshment before the session starts. A volunteer or member of staff will then take you to the Support Session.

Will I be able to smoke or vape?

No smoking or vaping is allowed inside Victoria House. You can smoke or vape outside of the building.

Do you have any other questions?

We understand that going somewhere new can feel a bit unsettling. If you are experiencing any difficulties or have any concerns please call us on **0161 769 5732**.

We're here to help.