

## Helpline, Email Support and Live Chat Volunteering Application Information



*What's involved in volunteering  
and how to make an application*

*We are delighted that you are interested in volunteering for us!*

We are the only specialist service in Cambridge providing dedicated support to women survivors of rape and sexual violence. Our helpline service has been run by volunteers since 1982 and our email support service since 2013. Our live chat service opened in 2021 and, after a service break, it reopened in 2023. These confidential and anonymous services would not exist without our volunteers, who provide vital emotional support to women and girls in their local community who have been subjected to rape, sexual abuse or any form of sexual violence.

We are a feminist organisation, although we do not require that women who volunteer for us are feminists. For more information about Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre's values and mission, visit our website: <http://cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk/about-us>

### Why volunteer with CRCC?

- ❖ The opportunity to acquire or enhance understanding and skills to support survivors of sexual violence and abuse
- ❖ The opportunity to live our values and make a difference
- ❖ Fulfilment from supporting women & girls who inspire us
- ❖ Joining a community of amazing women
- ❖ Ongoing training and development opportunities

'Volunteering at CRCC is very rewarding. The community of volunteers is warm and supportive. It is fantastic to be able to work with such a dedicated group of like-minded women.'

## Volunteer Helpline, Email and Live Chat Worker Role Description

**Where:** CRCC'S Cambridge office and remotely (the latter only possible if volunteers have access to a private, confidential space to volunteer from that isn't their bedroom)

**Duration:** Ongoing, ideally for 18 months+

**When:** After initial training period:

- ❖ Shifts: Wednesday 7-9.30pm & Sunday 10am-12.30pm
- ❖ Monthly reflective practice: Monday or Tuesday 6-7.30pm

**Commitment:** After initial training period:

- ❖ Ideally 3 shifts per month on helpline/email/live chat shifts per month (we operate a flexible rota)
- ❖ 1 reflective practice session per month
- ❖ Volunteer meetings once every 6 months
- ❖ Regular ongoing training
- ❖ Regular one-to-ones

### Responsibilities:

- ❖ Provide emotional support to women and girls over the phone, email and live chat using counselling skills, the empowerment

model, empathy and an understanding of sexual violence and its impacts

- ❖ Regularly reflect on your practice with other volunteers
- ❖ Read email updates and respond (if needed) in a timely manner.
- ❖ Follow CRCC policies and procedures around data protection
- ❖ Attend reflective practice, volunteer meetings and ongoing training
- ❖ Maintain confidentiality and anonymity

### Who we're looking for

*We especially welcome applications from Black & minoritised women, women with disabilities and women from the LGBTQIA+ community.*

*We also welcome applications from non-binary AFAB (Assigned Female At Birth) individuals and those who have experienced oppression as a woman and feel comfortable volunteering within a service run by women for women.*

- ❖ Women 18 years+
- ❖ Empathetic, non-judgemental & good listeners
- ❖ Self-aware & emotionally resilient
- ❖ Excellent communication skills
- ❖ Interested in discussing and understanding rape & sexual violence, and its impacts on women and girls
- ❖ Able to maintain confidentiality & anonymity

- ❖ Able to work independently using initiative & be part of a team
- ❖ Share CRCC's survivor-focused ethos
- ❖ Able to meet volunteer commitment (see pg 4)
- ❖ Have access to a private, confidential space to volunteer from that isn't their bedroom – only if volunteering remotely.

**Please be aware that if you have previously accessed support from CRCC, for your own wellbeing, we ask you to wait 12 months before applying.**

#### Accessibility:

CRCC's office is located on a first floor and it can be accessed via stairs or lift. In addition, we have an accessible toilet. Please contact us with any questions about accessibility and let us know if you require accessibility support as we will do our best to ensure we minimise or eliminate barriers. CRCC can contribute to out-of-pocket expenses (ie childcare costs and reasonable travel expenses) to enable women to volunteer with us.

#### Anonymity:

Helpline, email and live chat volunteers don't tell anyone other than very close friends and family that they volunteer with CRCC. This is to preserve confidentiality and reduce the chance that women will be put off from using our services in case they speak to someone they know. If you make an application, please ask your referees to keep this information confidential.

'As a volunteer I get to spend my time in a meaningful way, contributing to a cause I really care about.'

#### Volunteer commitment:

Please be aware that as a small organisation it costs us a lot of money to train volunteers, and we rely on trainees becoming committed volunteers in order to keep our support services running. If you are not able to meet the volunteer commitment, please think carefully about applying for the role.

'I really value all the training and learning opportunities we have, as well as the friendships I have formed with other volunteers.'

#### Duty of Care:

CRCC has a duty of care to ensure the safety and well-being of our volunteers at all times. Many of our volunteers are themselves survivors of sexual violence who now support other survivors, although we don't discuss our own personal experiences of rape and sexual abuse with the women and girls we work with. We would however ask prospective volunteers who have personal experience of rape and sexual abuse to think about how being a volunteer helpline, email and live chat volunteer and hearing other women and girls' experiences and feelings around sexual violence will affect their own emotional health and ongoing recovery process, and whether they themselves have been able to access the support they need. It is crucial that we look after ourselves first.

If you have accessed Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre support services yourself in the past, such as counselling or our email support, we ask that you wait 12 months after finishing receiving support, before applying to volunteer with us. Beyond this, your readiness to volunteer on the helpline, email and live chat support service is down to your discretion and ours.

### Leaving CRCC:

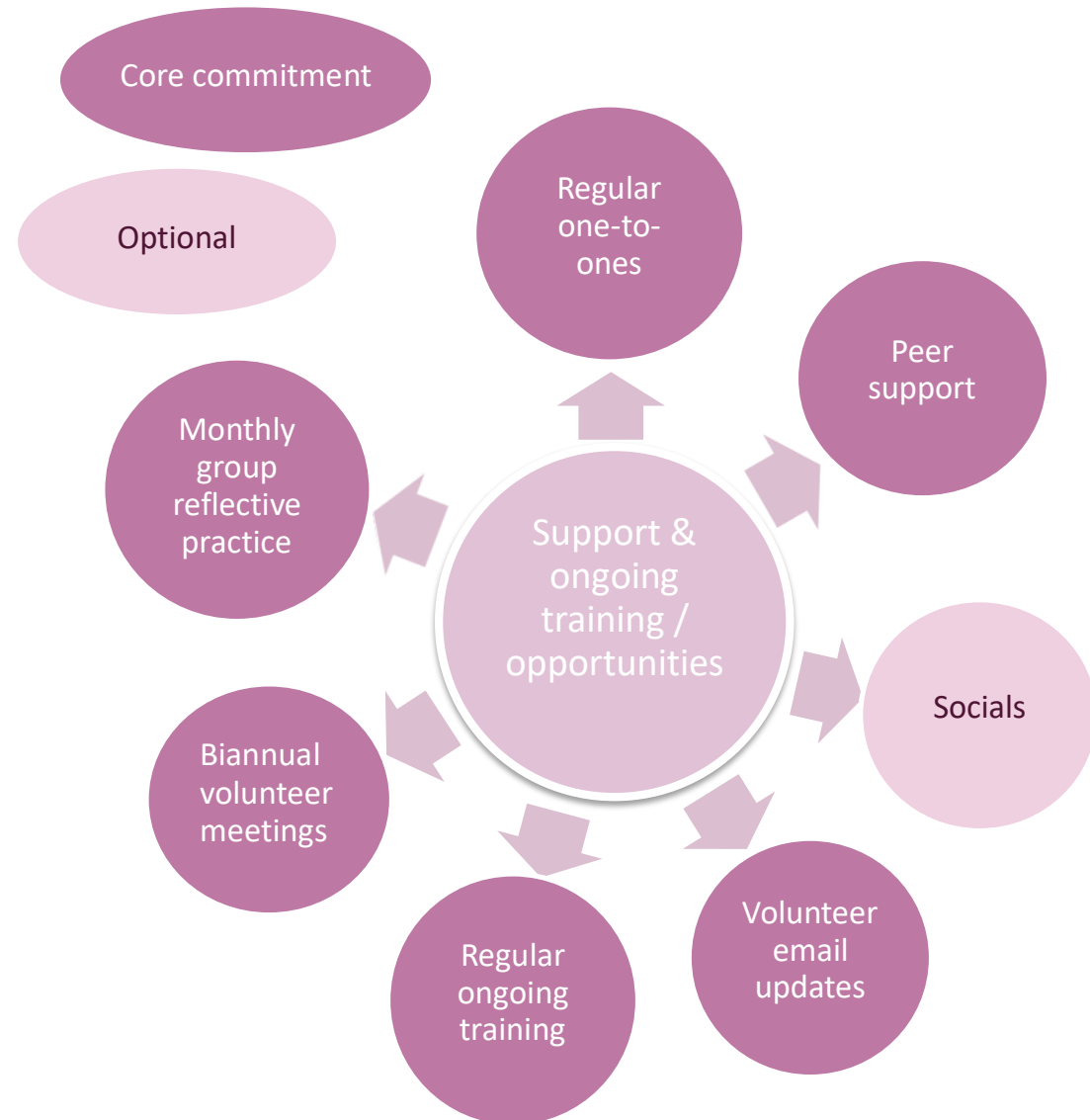
We understand that your circumstances may change, however, to help us run a sustainable service for survivors, we ask that you confirm that you are intending to be in Cambridge for at least 18 months, and will provide us with at least 2 weeks' notice of your intention to leave CRCC if your circumstances do change. If you leave sooner than 18 months, we will (at our discretion) ask you to contribute £100 towards training costs.

If you have any questions, concerns and/or would like to discuss your circumstances, please get in touch with us at [volunteering@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk)

'I believe that we provide essential support to the women who use our services, and I am proud of our high standards of delivery.'

'The training was very intense, but a great experience. It prepared me well for the helpline.'

## Support & Ongoing Training Opportunities



## Application and Training Process

