

# ROLE DESCRIPTION

**ROLE TITLE:** Listening Volunteer

**LAST UPDATED:** April 2021

**REACH:** Branch      Region      UK & ROI      International

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## 1. MAIN PURPOSE OF ROLE

To provide confidential emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. To provide such support by telephone, face to face, email, letter, web chat and whatever other means of communication may be adopted by Samaritans.

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## 2. POSITION AND SUPPORT IN ORGANISATION

**Accountable to:** There will be a duty Leader and Director

**Accountable for:**

**Liaises with:** Leader and Branch volunteers

**Works within a team of:** Branch volunteers

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## 3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- To provide confidential emotional support as above
- To uphold Samaritans Mission, Vision & Values & Policies & Procedures
- To complete regular volunteering duties, including overnight duties, as agreed
- To support fellow Samaritan volunteers during shared duties
- To debrief with duty Leader after each shift
- To liaise with duty Leader in respect of difficult or emergency situations or when in doubt
- To follow instructions given by duty Leader or Director
- To maintain caller log sheets and/or systems as required by the branch
- To undertake continuous development training

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## 4. QUALITIES & EXPERIENCE

- Ability to maintain confidentiality at all times
- To be able to actively listen without prejudice
- To be able to communicate clearly with callers and branch volunteers
- Ability to deal sensitively with all callers, including vulnerable people, those with mental health issues and children, as necessary
- Able to follow procedures and maintain systems
- Ability to recognise the need for support (in themselves and others) and to seek or provide support where necessary
- Awareness of own emotional triggers and can cope with own feelings
- Demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of Samaritans values
- Listening volunteers should be 18 or over upon completion of their training.

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## 5. APPOINTMENT AND TIMESCALES

- Duties to be arranged with the branch  
(As a guide, the typical arrangement is 3-4 hours per week including an overnight duty approximately once a month, or as required by the branch)

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## 6. LOCATION, TRAVEL & EXPENSES

- Based at the branch
- All out of pocket expenses related to the role will be reimbursed in line with Branch Expenses Policy

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## 7. BENEFITS

- A chance for personal development
- Access to a thorough training programme
- Contribute and share existing skills
- Develop new listening and communication skills you can use in all aspects of your life
- Meet new people from all different kinds of backgrounds and cultures
- Give something back to your local community

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## 8. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

- Completion of a Samaritans application form
- Attendance and successful selection at an interview
- The offer of a listening volunteer position is conditional on the completion of;
  - Background checks; including references and enhanced criminal records check
  - Completion of initial CORE training
  - Period of mentoring and Embedding
- Successful completion of a probationary period before becoming a full branch volunteer

**This role description has been constructed as a best practice template. To ensure it remains in line with current Samaritans policy and operating practice, any branch adaptations to the content should be made following consultation with the Volunteering Team.**