



When life is an uphill struggle VSS may help



You can contact

## Voluntary Support Scheme

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Registered Charity Number: 1097279



Voluntary  
Support  
Scheme

Rough Patch?

Who Cares?



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## What is the Voluntary Support Scheme?

The Voluntary Support Scheme is a small local organisation, a registered charity, linking trained volunteers with people going through a rough patch. The people helped are over 18 years of age and live in the areas around Tiverton and Cullompton. Volunteers come from all walks of life. The Scheme is managed by a committee with many years of experience.



*With a little help most things grow*

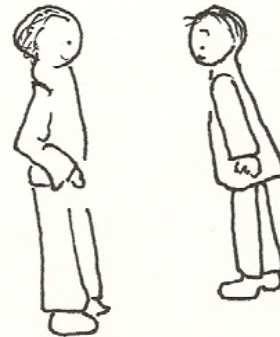
## Who are we for?

Life can deal us all sorts of blows like illness, relationship breakdown, bereavement or job loss. When any of us experience emotional distress we can lose our confidence in our ability to make relationships, mix with other people socially, or take up old hobbies or activities. As a consequence we can become lonely and isolated and have fewer opportunities to enjoy everyday life.

## What do our volunteers do?

Volunteers visit for an hour a week. They listen and help people to explore what steps they want to take to change the way life currently seems. Just having someone listen to you (without judging you) when life seems a bit of a muddle can help you to work out what you want to do next. It is easy to put off doing something when no-one seems to care, but knowing your volunteer will be coming back next week and asking how things have gone can prompt you to make that phone call or book that appointment. And when life seems bleak having a volunteer who has noticed the little steps that you have been able to make can encourage you and help you to begin to see yourself differently.

We do not expect volunteers to offer counselling - just every day common sense and tolerance.



*I don't know how to get there, but I'll come with you.*

## Who are our volunteers?

We don't ask volunteers for any specific qualifications. The most important thing they bring to the work is being a good listener with the ability to stay alongside someone who is struggling and to encourage them to take their own steps without the urge to offer advice or to do it for them.

Often our volunteers have been through some rough patch in their own lives and are able to understand when someone is feeling totally isolated and lacking in self-esteem because of what life has thrown at them. However it is really important for volunteers that any rough patch they have experienced is now well in the past because doing this work can be very demanding in itself.

Volunteers are offered all the support, information and training they need. Through the Support Group meetings volunteers gain confidence in their own skills and develop new ones becoming a valued part of a supportive team.

Volunteers are covered by our insurance and have their travel costs and any out of pocket expenses reimbursed.



*For my volunteer*