



# Volunteer Induction Booklet



Walk Talk Action CIC (non-profit) company number:  
12230721

*“We Walk, We Talk and We Take Action”*

Dear Volunteer,

I am so pleased you wish to volunteer for us here at Walk Talk Action. Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our ability get more people outside, developing new coping techniques and ways of becoming self-resilient and achieving their goals.

We want all of our volunteers to find their roles fulfilling and an experience which will be rewarding and positive. We will try and find training opportunities wherever possible that you can access which will help develop your own personal skills further as part of our commitment back to you.

The following information pack contains information about the organisation and the responsibilities of the volunteers. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me on [info@walktalkaction.co.uk](mailto:info@walktalkaction.co.uk)

Sincerely,

*Teri Elder*

Founder & Company Director of Walk Talk Action



### **Welcome our Founder (left) Teri Elder.**



Teri started WTA up officially September 2019. She used her lived experienced - in all, of the five areas WTA supports – to overcome life traumas and turn them in to life lessons and see a silver lining. Teri joined the Armed Forces as a Combat Medic straight from school starting her career at just 16 years old. After a few years Teri left the Services and began a whirlwind of different life experiences from working in Puy, as a Children’s Rep and Nanny, bought a euro rail ticket to travel around Europe, went to College, University and gained several qualifications including Outdoor Education BSc(hons) and Sport & Exercise Science BSc. Later she battled mental health difficulties including, postnatal depression & psychosis, anxiety and ended up having several breakdowns which led to being on the verge of being sectioned.

Fast forward some years, Walk Talk Action was officially born, we have been able to help hundreds of people back to a better state of mind through walking, talking and taking action. It is unique in regard to how we deliver our support as it depends on each individual we help as we all have different needs - therefore no two participants are the same. We deliver different activities to help bring people out of their comfort zones and highlight new skills and abilities. All we request from anyone that chooses to sign up with us, is that you are ready to make the changes necessary to help you back to a better state of mind.

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### **About Us**

Originally founded in 2016 WTA became official as a non-profit community interest company in September 2019, Walk Talk Action have provided walks, signposting, retreats, and programmes to people in Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire. However, we have a reached as far as Plymouth and West Yorkshire during in lockdown when we were online. We encourage you to explore who you are through a unique programme tailored to each individuals' needs, which in turn leads to a better state of mind.

### *Our Mission*

Our mission is to help those with: Depression (including postnatal depression) & Anxiety, Midlife crisis, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Isolation & Loneliness and/or are a Veteran (Serving personnel/spouses/family of); as well as general health and well-being.

### *Our Vision*

We want to get more people outside walking and talking to improve their knowledge about how we can all help ourselves using different coping techniques and methods of working through their problems, one step at a time.



1. We **WALK** to help improve our state of mind and to get out of the house away from the four walls which surround us each and every day. It helps with social anxiety and improves the overall wellbeing of a person with spending just 15 minutes outside.
2. We **TALK** to release the ambush that we carry daily in our heads, bills, kids...life in general our very own burdens that weigh us down are released like clouds being blown away in the sky. We use active listening skills - we are not counsellors therefore would always recommend you see your GP or a healthcare professional to seek further help if this was required.
3. We take **ACTION** to improve our overall state of mind by acknowledging our strengths and weaknesses which help us create a plan of action – a way forward. We all have a talent and Walk Talk Action can help you find yours – **Only if YOU are willing and ready to make the changes necessary\***

## Our Community Events

**Community Walks** - to get people outside to enjoy nature. Being outside surrounded by nature is proven to reduce not only your stress, but your mood, overall mental health, and well-being. We also have a Big Walk each month that covers our local nature reserves and national trust parks.

**Tea & Toast** – help at St Francis Church, Sandon Road, Meir Heath ST3 7LH every Wednesday (term time only) – 10-12pm. We invite Special Guest Speakers into the venue upon request by you (our community and attendees) from Authors to Ceramic artists delivering workshops all in aid of supporting our community and reducing isolation and loneliness. This has grown from our Brew Up Catch Up drop in we did at St Claire’s Church.



**WTA Retreat & Nature Hub** - We have our Fen Park Site which was gifted to us and we are created a wilderness area for people to come along and enjoy. Bringing there skills and knowledge to create a beautiful community space including bushcraft/fieldcraft area, sensory spots to take five and enlighten your senses with the smells of the different flowers, herbs and scenic viewing locations. Not only this but we have a mapped interactive walking route exclusively for WTA participants and volunteers which include the five ways of well being incorporating all the senses and encouraging positivity. We welcome all volunteers to help us with this project as with all our sites. We are newly founded one of 100 Starbucks Nature Hubs in the UK.

**10 Step Programme** - This is a professionally endorsed programme that has helped people back to a better state of mind using the principles of walking, talking and taking action towards achieving their goal(s). Whether is be to overcome a fear or get back into employment/education. The 10SP can help support participants do this through a carefully created programme of activities and workshops that take you out of your comfort zone, explore your whole self and actively listen to your needs. Exploring your own strengths and weaknesses is key to opening up to a new way of living and adapting to those changes needed to ensure you can focus on new habits, one step at a time.

# 10 STEP PROGRAMME

### Our Partners & Awards

We have a selection of trusted partnerships which we use to signpost participants to if required. If you are unsure of who these are or if a person asks you about them, please contact Teri Elder or a member of Walk Talk Action staff to ensure the correct information is given. Some of the partnerships and professional bodies we are part of are shown at the bottom of each page of this booklet. Establishing community connections with our service users/participants, all community members, and groups. What is important is that everyone knows what is available to them and where their target groups are. We pride ourselves in working with other organisations to make us stronger as a service but also for the people that need us. This could include ensuring that a person is able to achieve their own personal goals such as set up their own business, or gain employment or work experience from our partered organisations in order to help an individual thrive and get back to a better state of mind by achieving their goal(s)

We are current proud Gold Award holders for the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), we are also officially recognised as a Veteran Owned Business, we came second at the National Insight Awards for Listening, we won Best Community Social Responsibility project, we were nominated for four other caterogies including, Community Champion, Best Community Project and we came second for the the Best Community Group of the Year at the Your Heroes Awards event.



### Volunteer Expectations – Attendance

Your attendance is important to the running of each of our programmes. If you are unable to attend a session, contact your programme leader. We ideally prefer 24hours notice but appreciate this is not always possible. In the case of an emergency where possible try to inform us prior to the start of a session.

Every volunteer is expected to attend their session on time and stay for the duration of the session. We rely on you as we would any member of the team.

Bad weather: if bad weather is going to affect an activity and mean a change of location or we will have to cancel a session we will contact you via the WhatsApp group to keep you informed. So, please make sure to check your messages or contact us to confirm sessions will go ahead as planned if you are unsure.



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### *Volunteer Expectations – Dress Code*

As many of our sessions are outdoors and/practical it is important to wear the right kit. We would recommend walking boots, waterproofs for the wet weather and a pair of wellies for the retreat. When working indoors most staff are found to be wearing the same with less mud!

Just remember it is not as much fun when you are cold or wet all day. Always be prepared – if unsure – Just ask 😊

If you require any help with uniform, please speak to a member of the team.

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### *Volunteer Expectations – Health and Safety*

Health and safety can often be seen as red tape which can stop you running activities, however the whole point of it is to make them more accessible for people as well as more enjoyable. It is everyone's responsibility to work safely and report any risks; and on a day-to-day basis you will probably have all of the skills necessary to judge if something is dangerous. On occasions when it requires more than your own judgement, then it is important to ensure you know who is responsible for health and safety in the group and have seen the risk assessments and are familiar with the policy.

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### *Volunteer Expectations – Social media and Images*

Walk Talk Action uses social media and the use of images to promote the work that it does, raise awareness, campaign, and reach people. We recognise that our volunteers may also have personal social media accounts and wish to share the work that we do. We request in order to protect the work of Walk Talk Action that volunteers do not post any disparaging/defamatory statements about: Walk Talk Action; its staff, service users, volunteers, stakeholders, or partners (past or present). If you plan on using an image or a quote from someone on social media, ensure you have their consent and speak to Teri Elder to complete the necessary paperwork before posting. Do not tag anyone into posts or images, as that person may have a no social media/image attached to their file. Do not set up a social media account which represents Walk Talk Action. Remember you must respect everyone's confidentiality and be conscious of data protection at all times. This could include unpublished details of our work for funders for example.

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### *Volunteer Expectations – Conflict of Interest*

A conflict of interest is any situation in which the personal interests or interests owed to another body, of a volunteer run counter to those of the Walk Talk Action. Conflicts of interest occur in those situations where an individual volunteer stands to gain directly or indirectly through engagement in activities which may potentially affect the Walk Talk Action adversely. It will also occur if that individual is engaged with an organisation which has aims incompatible to those of Walk Talk Action. It is the personal duty of the volunteer to declare any conflict of interest to Walk Talk Action.

Examples include: furthering their own financial interests by taking on private work with a service user; discriminate against a service user due to political or religious views or allegiances; refer people to the associated agencies you have a connection with; unfairly benefit a service user you have a connection to ie. related to. This also includes any training completed with WTA such as Walk Leader certification we do not expect you to use this training with other organisations unless otherwise discussed.

### *Volunteer Expectations – Code of Conduct*

All volunteers are expected to follow the code of conduct by:

- Performing their volunteer role to the best of their ability in a safe, efficient and competent way;
- Following Walk Talk Action’s policies and procedures as well as any instructions or directions given to them;
- Acting honestly, and with integrity;
- Treating others with fairness, equality, and respect;
- Providing sufficient notice when they will not be available so that alternative arrangements can be made;
- Acting in a way that is in line with the purpose and values of the organisation, that enhances its work;
- Communicating respectfully and honestly at all times;
- Observing safety procedures, including any obligations concerning the safety, health and welfare of other people;
- Reporting any health and safety concerns;
- Declaring any interests that may conflict with their role or the work of Walk Talk Action (e.g. business interests or employment). If any doubt arises as to what constitutes a conflict of interest, volunteers may seek guidance from their line manager;
- Keeping confidential matters confidential;
- Seeking permission before communicating externally on behalf of Walk Talk Action;



- Maintaining an appropriate standard of dress and personal hygiene;
- Disclosing the fact that they have been charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence by prosecuting authorities (or given the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act 1907 as amended) to Teri Elder. For the avoidance of doubt, volunteers are not required to disclose the fact or details of ‘spent convictions’ under the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016 (as amended).

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### *Volunteer Expectations – Leaving Walk Talk Action*

When it is time to leave your role, please inform your programme leader. All uniform is to be returned. A member of the WTA team will complete a feedback and evaluation form with you. They will also be able to provide you with a reference for any employment or further volunteering work you may wish to apply for.

*Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Walk Talk Action. We value your time and efforts given to us. Together we can make a difference and help people back to a better state of mind.*

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#### **Contact information:**

**Email:** [info@walktalkaction.co.uk](mailto:info@walktalkaction.co.uk)    **Website:** [www.walktalkaction.co.uk](http://www.walktalkaction.co.uk)

If you wish to volunteer with us or know someone that does here is the link for the application/sign up form: <https://forms.office.com/e/HYJsxCHUQV>

## A Royal Visit



Founder of Walk Talk Action met HRH Princess Anne where she deemed Walk Talk Action as ‘what fantastic work – it is good to hear work like this is being done a contribute to the community well done’ spoken by HRH Princess Anne. Walk Talk Action has been professionally endorsed by Stoke on Trent Council, Royal University Hospital and NHS Combined Healthcare, we are also recognised as a reputable organisation for people undergoing Occupational Health services. Mr David Smith, Armed Forces Champion for Stoke Hospital, listed us, Walk Talk Action as a recognised service for patients to use. We have held a Wellbeing Information Stand at the hospital alongside the Defence Medical Welfare Officer Lucy McDonald. We also had the privilege of Lord Lt Mr Ian Dudson attend one of our Community Walks.



### Meet the Walk Talk Action Team

**(From left to right)** Jaimie Wilkes Volunteer Facilitator – Claire Fowler Facilitator – Mandy Dobson Administrator – Steven Wrahton Walk Leader – Teri Elder Project Manager & Director (Bottom) Tara Dean-Burdred Director – Jennifer Thursfield Director

