

Backup system

ROLE OF THE BACKUP – GUIDELINES FOR BACKUPS AND VISITORS

One of the Coordinators arranges for each client to have a visitor and a backup.

Backups are there to support the visitor, whether newly trained or already experienced.

Backups are experienced and are able to offer advice, guidance and support to the visitor. They have usually met and know the client.

Backups should encourage the visitor (especially if new) to be involved with the group, join a Support Group and attend General Meetings.

For new visitors the Backup's role will also include mentoring and support.

Prior to meeting the client

The visitor and backup meet to get to know each other and to share as much of the client's background that is known. They also share details of the client's address, mobile number, solicitor, legal status, health, fluency (or otherwise) in English. They discuss and prioritise any actions which are needed. (If the visitor is experienced this may be done phone and e-mail.)

Visiting the Client

For new visitors – the visitor and backup meet the client together until the visitor feels confident enough to meet up on his/her own.

The backup normally meets with the client if the visitor is away or out of action. The backup may also accompany the client to appointments if it difficult for the visitor to do so. It is important therefore that the client also has contact details for the backup.

Keeping in Contact

The visitor and client should keep in regular contact:

- either by phone, e-mail or meeting
- the visitor should copy e-mails (eg for MAG or NAM) to the backup
- they should discuss any concerns or developments about the client - eg health issues, solicitor contact, legal developments, important meetings (with the Home Office etc), financial problems.

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group *Working with asylum seekers and refugees*
Patrons: Miriam Margolyes OBE, John Pilkington, Dr Shirley Firth **Registered charity:** 1103093

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Problems

The backup is the first person for the visitor to consult on any problems or difficulties. If these cannot be sorted out one of the Coordinators should be contacted.

EPD & AM November 2015

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