



What is The Bridgeway?

The Bridgeway provides a range of services to help you through the difficult time following rape or sexual assault.

The Bridgeway provides the following services if you have been raped or sexually assaulted in the last 10 days:

- 24 hour helpline **0808 118 6432**
- Emotional and practical support
- Emergency contraception and access to screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Medical examination and collection of forensic evidence
- Referral onto counselling and/or other support services
- Support in making a report to the police, if that's what you want
- Follow-up support.

The Bridgeway provides the following services if you were raped or sexually assaulted more than 10 days ago:

- 24 hour helpline **0808 118 6432**
- Emotional and practical support
- Referral onto counselling and/or other support services
- Advice and access to screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

This is about you and what you want to happen. You can access all or one of our services.



What to do if you have been raped or sexually assaulted in the last 10 days

- Try to get to a safe place
- If you wish to involve the police, call 999 if you are at risk of immediate harm or 101 in a non-emergency
- If you do not want the police involved, contact our 24/7 helpline on **0808 118 6432**
- Save all the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault, unwashed and if possible in separate bags
- Please Do Not: Shower, bath, wash, brush your teeth or disturb anything in the area where the assault took place. This is to try to preserve evidence of the rape or sexual assault. You can do this whether or not you wish to involve the police.

Even if you do not telephone or visit The Bridgeway for support, we strongly recommend that you visit your local sexual health clinic for health advice within 72 hours of the assault. Call the Cumbria Sexual Healthline on **0845 3714037** to find your nearest clinic.



The Team at The Bridgeway

Crisis Workers

A Crisis Worker will be available to support you and provide information on what options you have. If you attend The Bridgeway for a medical examination, the crisis worker will support you and ensure that you are kept informed of the procedures that will take place. They will be able to tell you about what other services are available and with your permission, make a referral to the services you choose.

Medical Examiner

The medical examiner will be a doctor or nurse who has been specially trained to carry out a forensic-medical examination. They may take samples for evidence and help with any immediate health concerns such as sexually transmitted infections and contraception.

Ongoing Support

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) offer on-going specialist practical and emotional support. This includes dedicated support for children and young people.

They will explain options that are available to you and can support you through the police and court system. They can also accompany or support you to attend other services.

We can help your family, friends or partner to get support if they need it.

Counselling

The Bridgeway works with a team of specialist therapists who can help you to deal with the impact which the rape or sexual assault is having on you and your life.

How do I access help?

Police

If you choose to involve the police, you should call 999 if you are at risk of immediate harm or 101 in a non-emergency. They will talk to you about what help is available. If you need a forensic-medical examination, a police officer will attend The Bridgeway with you.

Self-Referral

If you would prefer not to involve the police, you can contact The Bridgeway directly on **0808 118 6432**. All you need to do is call The Bridgeway and we will explain your options. This can give you time to think. If you decide at a later date to report the assault to the police, we can help you with the process.

Professionals

Any professional can refer you to The Bridgeway as long as you have agreed to the referral so feel free to talk to your GP, social worker or other health professional about your options.

Always remember that everyone who experiences rape or sexual assault deals with it in a totally different way. The Bridgeway is here to help explain your options and help provide you with the best possible care.

We will support and respect whatever decision you make.

Is this service confidential?

The information you give us will be treated as confidential. However, there may be certain circumstances in which we are obliged to share information with other agencies e.g. if we are made aware of a child who may be at risk of harm. We will aim to obtain your consent unless we believe that this knowledge will place you in danger.

You can contact The Bridgeway directly, or you can ask to be referred to Bridgeway services by the police or another professional.

Some of the Bridgeway services are delivered from our centre at the Penrith Hospital site (postcode CA11 8JA) and other services are delivered more local to you.

Please note that The Bridgeway is not a drop-in service. In order for us to provide the best possible care for you, please call to make an appointment.

The telephone helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and a member of staff will be available to assist you with your needs.

The Bridgeway
0808 118 6432
www.thebridgeway.org.uk

the bridgeway

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICE

Helping you from crisis to confidence



The Bridgeway is a dedicated service that aims to help men, women and children in Cumbria who have been raped or sexually assaulted either recently or in the past.

We offer free help and a non-judgemental environment that focuses on your needs.

Call our 24/7 helpline
0808 118 6432
www.thebridgeway.org.uk