

Upcoming awareness dates:

Brew Monday 2026: Monday 19th January

Breathing Space Day: Sunday 1st February



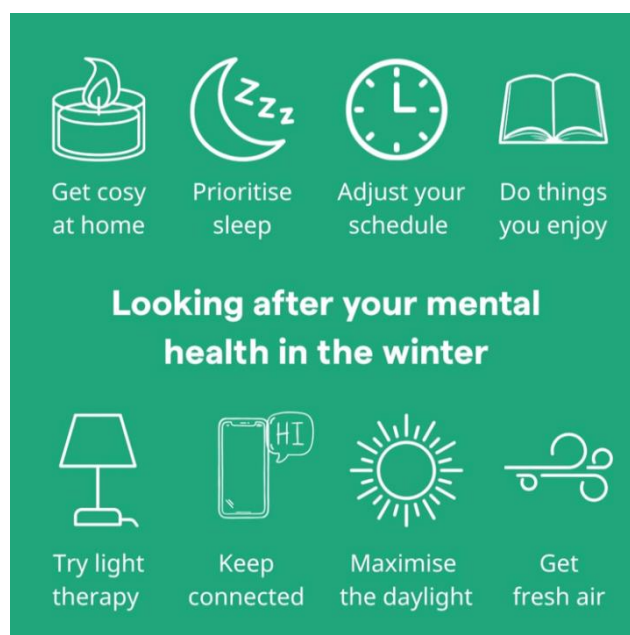
NEWS

KEEPING WELL OVER WINTER

Self-care is really important at any time of year - especially over the winter months when the weather and dark nights can affect how we're feeling. Think about what could nurture you at this time and how you could make small changes to take good care of your body and mind – see our 'Ways to Be Well in Winter' guide on page 5 for ideas.

Mental Health UK has a good blog about how to cope with the challenges of winter, which you can read [here](#). Their main tips for looking after your mental health in the winter are in the box on the right.

Health in Mind also has a page on its website about '[Beating the Winter Blues](#)'. Their resources include managing 'SAD' (Seasonal Affective Disorder), 5 Ways to Winter Wellbeing, avoiding isolation and coping with financial stress.



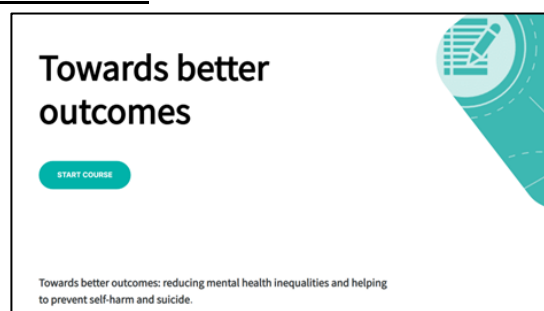
Some local support services will have reduced hours over the holiday period so it is worth taking a note of the digital and helpline supports that will be available throughout:

- **NHS Inform** – [online information about mental wellbeing](#)
- **Breathing Space** – [emotional support helpline telephone 0800 83 85 87 \(evenings and weekends\)](#)
- **NHS 24 Mental Health Hub** – [telephone 111 for urgent mental health support](#) (24 hours)
- **Samaritans** – [telephone 116 123 for emotional support](#) (24 hours)
- **Togetherall** - [online mental health and wellbeing support](#) (24 hours)
- **Papyrus** Prevention of Young Suicide – [HOPELINE 247 telephone 0800 068 41 41](#)

TOWARDS BETTER OUTCOMES: REDUCING MENTAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND HELPING TO PREVENT SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE – NEW E-LEARNING MODULE

NHS Education for Scotland and Public Health Scotland are pleased to announce the launch of a new eLearning module.

"Towards better outcomes" is designed for learners across sectors and settings who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who are at risk of mental ill health, self-harm or suicide.



The new module builds on the knowledge and skills developed through the “Ask, Tell, Respond” resources and promotes rights-based approaches, with a focus on Time, Space and Compassion (Scottish Government, 2023).

Drawing on person-centred stories and encouraging ongoing reflection, the module helps learners identify practical ways to address mental health inequalities through their work.

To access the module click [HERE](#)

EVENTS

Monday 19th January

BREW MONDAY

At Samaritans they know there's no such thing as 'Blue Monday' and that feeling low isn't just something that happens on Mondays or a random day in January. So they say out with the blue and in with the brew! Reaching out to someone could help them know that they are valued and someone cares. If you've noticed someone has gone quiet in the group chat or you haven't heard from them in a while, reach out and check in. A simple message can mean a lot to someone who is going through a difficult time. Once someone starts to share how they are feeling, it's important to listen. This could mean not offering advice, not trying to identify what they are going through with your own experiences and not trying to solve their problems. For more suggestions about how to be a good listener, take a look at Samaritan's [SHUSH active listening tips](#) and the [little tips to help someone open up](#).

Find out more information about hosting your own Brew Monday by clicking [HERE](#)

Various dates

WAYS TO WELLBEING PROGRAMME - HEALTH IN MIND GROUPS

Health in Mind have a series of dates for their upcoming weekly workshop programme. The workshops aim to support people to learn more about their wellbeing, offer opportunities for self-reflection and provide space to consider new possibilities for the future. This free 9-week courses will be running again from January.

To find out more about the workshops and make a booking please visit [Health in Mind | Groups and Workshops in the Scottish Borders](#)

INFORMATION STATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING at the WHAT MATTERS HUBS

- DUNS - Tuesday 9th December, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 10th December, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee
- HAWICK - Thursday 11th December, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick
- KELSO - Wednesday 17th December, 10am – 12:30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre
- HAWICK - Thursday 8th January, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick
- DUNS - Tuesday 13th January, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 14th January, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee
- KELSO - Wednesday 21st January, 10am – 12:30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 28th January, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café

Drop-in service where you can find out more about the advice, information and support that is available to help mental health and wellbeing. Find out more [HERE](#)

Mondays - 7-9pm

ANDYS MAN CLUB

Andys Man Club is a peer to peer support group for men (aged 18+) who have either been through a storm, are currently going through a storm or have a storm brewing in life. Andys Man Club meets every Monday from 7pm (excluding English Bank Holidays).

Where:

- Gala RFC Hospitality Suite (to the right when you enter through the gate), Netherdale, Nether Road, Galashiels TD1 3HE
- Eyemouth Parish Hall, Victoria Rd, Eyemouth TD14 5JD
- Vale of Leithen Social Club, 2 Leithen Crescent, Innerleithen, EH44 6JL

Find out more at <https://andysmanclub.co.uk/>

1st Tuesday of the month, Galashiels

SURVIVORS OF BEREAVEMENT BY SUICIDE LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP

For more information contact the local co-ordinator on 0770 4691 111 or email

scottishborders@uksobs.org

AFTER A SUICIDE WORKING GROUP

Have you or someone you know lost a family member or friend to suicide? If you feel ready and able to contribute to improving the support and information available to others going through a similar experience come and join the After a Suicide Working Group. The working group are a group of people with lived experience of bereavement by suicide. The group is not a support group, but offers members the opportunity to use our lived experience to contribute to the local suicide prevention strategy.

For more information email: health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Various dates

BORDERS IN RECOVERY GROUPS

Borders in Recovery runs weekly Recovery Cafés in Galashiels, Eyemouth, Hawick, Peebles and Jedburgh, open to anyone over 16 years and in recovery from substance use or supporting someone who is (friend/family). The cafés offer a free hot meal, peer support, meaningful activities, socialisation opportunities and health and wellbeing activities as well as many other leisure and personal development opportunities. Borders in Recovery also have a Weekly Music Group on a Tuesday and Recovery Coaching Training is available. There is also a Whatsapp group and SMART meetings in Peebles and Gala including a Womens SMART meeting in Gala. **To find out more click [HERE](#).**

RESOURCES

Suicide Prevention Scotland – Podcast Series

Earlier in the year Suicide Prevention Scotland launched a new website. The website contains a service directory and provides information and key links to a range of centralised resources to support people experiencing thoughts of suicide, those who are worried for someone else or for those who have been bereaved by suicide. There are also a number of podcast series including the recently released [What if podcast series, presented by Amy Irons](#).

The What if Podcast is presented by TV & radio star Amy Irons, who is joined by guests. Amy is herself bereaved by suicide, having lost partner Wayne in 2018. Now she's using the power of her own lived and living experience to guide a series of unique conversations. Over four episodes, guests shared their experience and insight on the topic of suicide and each episode explores a different theme.

Episode guide and links:

- [Episode 1 – What if we need to talk about suicide?](#) Introducing suicide, what it is, why it happens and what we can do about it.
- [Episode 2 – What if a dog could save your life?](#) Talking about how you find hope when it feels like all is lost.
- [Episode 3 – What if society actually worked for people?](#) Exploring systems and society, with an aim of thinking about what we can do to make people's lives better – and in doing so reduce suicide.
- [Episode 4 – What if I feel I don't fit in?](#) Focussing on the impact of suicide for people in marginalised communities.

Fae the Source

Fae the Source is a five-part docuseries, exploring masculinity, men's mental health and what it means to grow up as a man in Scotland today. This is a Scottish Government funded project through Young Scot and linked to the established AyeFeel suite of mental health resources.

This has been created in response to the reported rise in "toxic masculinity" and the growing concerns of children and young people around misinformation and "false narratives". Presented by gamer and former teacher Duncan, Fae the Source brings together open, honest conversations with experts in youth justice, violence reduction, fitness, and youth advocacy. Across five episodes, the series dives into the pressures many young men face - from stereotypes and social expectations to personal struggles - and how these shape identity and wellbeing.

The series is now streaming on YouTube ([Talking Masculinity in the Gym: Fae The Source](#)), with additional mental health resources available [HERE](#)

TRAINING

SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE - SKILLED LEVEL

All dates are IN-PERSON at Scottish Borders Council HQ, Newtown St Boswells

- **Thursday 5th March 2026:** 9am – 1pm
- **Thursday 21st May 2026:** 9am – 1pm

This course is aimed at anybody working with children and young people who are likely to have direct and/or substantial contact with those who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide. The content is drawn from the NHS Education for Scotland Skilled Level packages for Self-harm and Suicide Prevention.

Anyone attending this training must first complete the Informed Level e-module 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and preventing self-harm and suicide' on the NHS 'TURAS' website.

Email health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk to register for one of the dates at SBC HQ

APPLIED SUICIDE INTERVENTION SKILLS TRAINING (ASIST)

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training ASIST is a 2-day intensive, interactive and practice dominated course, aimed at enabling people to spot the risk of suicide and provide immediate help to someone at risk of suicide. In the same way that skills are needed for physical first aid, ASIST develops the skills necessary for suicide first aid.

To be added to the distribution list to be informed when course bookings go live please email:

health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

SELF HARM NETWORK SCOTLAND TRAINING

The Self-Harm Network Scotland, run by Penumbra, has free training opportunities about self-harm:

- **1-hour Self-Harm Awareness Session** - for anyone in Scotland who is interested in learning more about self-harm. This includes professionals, parent's, carers and loved ones. It is delivered in a webinar/seminar style with a presentation and time at the end for questions.
- **3 hour Self-Harm Awareness Training (for professionals)** – covers the underlying reasons for self-harm and give information, tools and resources that can be used to support people who self-harm.

To find out more and book click [HERE](#)

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS PARTNERSHIP WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING DIRECTORY

Borders ADP has a training directory for 2025 / 26 – you can download the directory from [this page](#) on the NHS Borders website.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING INFORMATION

There are two local catalogues available that set out the training available:

Download the Adults catalogue (PDF) [HERE](#)

Download the Children and Young People's catalogue (PDF) [HERE](#)

Ways to Be Well in Winter



Be Connected

Some people are overwhelmed by social events and others are lonely at this time of year. Reach out to people who you care about to check in with them.



Eat Well

Exercising can help with symptoms of depression and strengthen your immune system. Moving every day helps to keep both our minds and bodies well.

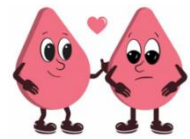


Be Active

There is a lot of temptation to overeat in winter, especially if you are celebrating. Try to get a balance of healthy foods and remember to drink water.

Be Kind

Be kind to yourself over the winter months and plan some time for self-care. It is ok to rest, recover, get cosy and look after yourself.



Be Creative

Winter is a good time to wind down, reflect, and gather some creative inspiration for the year ahead. Draw, paint, knit, play music or start writing!

Connect with Nature

Get outdoors and spend some time in daylight, nature and fresh air – getting enough light is important during the shorter days.



Be Mindful

Being mindful and paying attention to present moment can boost mental wellbeing. Try deep breathing to help you feel calmer and relieve stress.

Limit Alcohol

If you're likely to drink over the festive period try to plan ahead – eat before you go out, be aware of your units and avoid being in a 'round'.



Enjoy and Learn

Plan an activity that you enjoy doing or learn a new skill – having a sense of achievement can boost your mood.

Sleep Well

Keeping a consistent night-time sleep routine, exercising, limiting alcohol and getting enough daylight all helps to improve your sleep cycle.



Manage Money Worries

There is often extra financial pressure at this time of year. Try to set a realistic budget, plan your shopping and avoid overspending.



Stop Smoking

Find healthier ways to cope with stress – breathing exercises, regular physical activity, spending time outdoors or a new hobby can be helpful.

Creating Hope
Scottish Borders



www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope

GET IN TOUCH

This information bulletin was produced by Steph MacKenzie, Health Improvement Specialist (Mental Health) and Charlotte Jones, Health Improvement Specialist (Suicide Prevention), Public Health Department, NHS Borders. If you'd like to join our mailing list or talk to us about any of the news, events, resources or training above, you can get in touch with us by emailing

health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk



For our updates on Facebook please follow [NHS Borders Small Changes, Big Difference](#)



For our updates on Instagram please follow [@small_changes_nhs_borders](#)



CREATING HOPE WEB PAGES

www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope

Creating Hope

Scottish Borders

