

Creating Hope Scottish Borders

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2026

Information Bulletin
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Upcoming awareness dates:

[Breathing Space Day](#): Sunday 1st February 2026

[Time to Talk Day](#): Thursday 5th February 2026

[Children's Mental Health Week](#): 9th – 15th February 2026

[Self Harm Awareness Day](#): Sunday 1st March 2026



NEWS

CREATING HOPE AWARDS SUCCESS

We are delighted to welcome two new members to the Creating Hope Awards Scheme for mentally healthy and suicide safer communities. Scottish Borders Council's **Whole Family Support Team** recently attended the Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention for Children and Young People training and then went on to apply for the award. Team members are pictured here with their certificate and 'Ask For Hope' poster.

Galashiels Academy has also been awarded with the Creating Hope Award – the second high school to get involved with the scheme. Both the Whole Family Support Team and Galashiels Academy are now working towards the Creating Hope Champions Award with some of their nominated Champions attending the ASIST training at the end of January.



Congratulations and thank you! We're grateful to all of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Advocates who are helping to make the Borders mentally healthy and suicide safer.

If you'd like to find out more about the scheme or sign up please visit the [Creating Hope page](#) on the NHS Borders website.

NEW NATIONAL CREATING HOPE TOGETHER ACTION PLAN

In late January the Scottish Government and COSLA launched the new 2026-29 action plan for Creating Hope Together. The new plan builds and strengthens on the work of the last three years, with a strong focus on building collaboration across our four strategic outcomes. The four outcomes and their national strategic leads are:

1. Creating a safer environment to prevent suicide - Samaritans Scotland
2. Understanding suicide and tackling stigma - SAMH
3. Providing support to people affected by suicide - Penumbra Mental Health & Change Mental Health
4. Collaboration in a way that draws on evidence and lived experience - Public Health Scotland

You can view an animation that summarises the action plan on the Suicide Prevention Scotland website (YouTube) - [here](#).

A new at-a-glance guide has been developed to provide a quick look at the four outcomes and key actions. Download this - [here](#).

There is also a longer form interview with the Minister for Social Care & Mental Health Tom Arthur and COSLA Health & Social Care Spokesperson Paul Kelly about the new action plan. You can view this - [here](#).

We'll be looking at the new national action plan as we work on refreshing our local Creating Hope Scottish Borders action plan over the coming months.

BREATHING SPACE DAY

Celebrated annually on 1st February, Breathing Space Day aims to remind everyone to make time for activities which improve mental wellbeing as well as promoting the service. Breathing Space is the NHS24 emotional support helpline that is available every evening and 24hrs at the weekend. This year's theme 'Open Air, Open Mind' encourages everyone to take a little time each day outdoors.

Campaign materials for Breathing Space Day can be downloaded [HERE](#)

More info about the Breathing Space service can be found [HERE](#)

TIME TO TALK DAY

Time to Talk Day (5th February) is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. Run by See Me Scotland with SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health), it is a day friends, families, communities and workplaces are invited to come together to challenge stigma, talk about mental health and reach out for support. The theme this year is 'making places stigma free for everyone'.

If you want to join the conversation, there are materials to download and activity ideas [HERE](#)

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Place2Be runs the annual Children's Mental Health Week every February (9th – 15th) and this year the theme is 'This is My Place'. The theme aims to support the systems around children and young people to help them feel they belong. Our sense of belonging as individuals, in our friendships, in school and in communities plays a vital role in our mental health and wellbeing. There are lots of resources on the website aimed at schools, families, community groups and workplaces to help them to create inclusive and nurturing environments.

10th February during Children's Mental Health Week is also '[UnPlug Day](#)' – the UK's national day of digital detox where everyone is encouraged to take a digital pause and not use their phone or digital media for 24 hours. High usage of digital technology, excessive screen time and social media significantly impacts children and young people's mental health so this is a good opportunity to put down our phones and rediscover the power of real world connections.

Find out more and download resources for Children's Mental Health Week [HERE](#)

COULD YOU HELP THE BORDERS TO BE BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY?

Breastfeeding promotes a secure emotional attachment and helps to get mental health off to a good start in the early years. In Public Health we're currently looking to expand the **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland Scheme** across the Borders, and we're looking for any local businesses, cafés, hairdressers, beauticians, shops, community spaces, gyms, garden centres, or any other welcoming venues — that might be interested in joining the scheme.

If you have any suggestions or contacts, or if a business would like more information, please contact Breastfeeding.Friendly@Borders.scot.nhs.uk

For further information about the Scheme see: [Breastfeeding Friendly Sway for Businesses](#)

EVENTS

Monday 2nd February, 5.30pm – 7.30pm, Great Tapestry of Scotland Museum, Galashiels

LOTHIANS 'SPEAK THEIR NAME' SUICIDE MEMORIAL QUILT EXHIBITION LAUNCH EVENT

Lothians Speak Their Name is a project which was set up to create a quilt in memory of people who have died by suicide in Edinburgh and the Lothians. 49 people made squares in memory of loved ones, which hold the stories of their lives and loves. The quilt is on a Scotland-wide tour and people are invited to go along to the exhibition to remember loved ones, join in the conversation about mental health and suicide, and about making a memorial quilt for the Borders.

The event is a collaboration between Lothians Speak Their Name, the Great Tapestry of Scotland, Youth Borders and Borders Community Action.

The quilt will be on display after the launch event at the Tapestry Museum for a month. It is hoped that we may be able to do a similar project for a Borders quilt in the future.

Various dates

WAYS TO WELLBEING PROGRAMME - HEALTH IN MIND GROUPS

Health in Mind has a 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. These free 9-week courses run in various locations across the Borders.

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 10th February, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street, Duns
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 11th February, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee, Peebles
- HAWICK - Thursday 12th February, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick café
- KELSO - Wednesday 18th February, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre, Kelso
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 25th February, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café, Galashiels
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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).

- Gala RFC Hospitality Suite (to the right when you enter through the gate), Netherdale, Nether Road, Galashiels TD1 3HE
- 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

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Time to Talk Day reminded us of the ‘bitesize videos’ that Health in Mind produced for us during the pandemic. They’re a wee bit dated now but still useful! One of the video topics was ‘Conversations about Mental Health’ and it is just under half an hour long. If you’re looking for an introduction to what mental health is and tips about how to talk about mental health then you can find the video on this page:

[Health in Mind | Bitesize Videos](#)

RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH

For Children’s Mental Health Week in February we are sharing the Creating Hope web page for Children and Young People’s resources. This page gathers together information and sources of support that you may find useful.

nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope/resources/children-and-young-people/

SELF-HARM RESOURCES

As Self-Harm Awareness Day is coming up in March we thought we would share the Self-Harm Network Scotland resources. The network is run by Penumbra and the website has helpful information for teachers, carers, professionals and anyone else working with somebody that self-harms. There are also self-help resources and information for anyone worried about someone who self-harms.

Find out more: [I am working with someone - Self-Harm Network Scotland Penumbra](#)

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](#)

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 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). This is an excellent module that provides a thorough overview of mental health inequalities. There are two units in the module – allow a good couple of hours to work through them (progress can be saved if you do one unit at a time).

To access the module click [HERE](#)

GET IN TOUCH

This information bulletin was produced by Steph MacKenzie, Health Improvement Specialist (Mental Health), 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



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CREATING HOPE WEB PAGES

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