

**Upcoming awareness dates:**

[Stress Awareness Month](#): April

[Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week](#): 4 – 10 May

[Mental Health Awareness Week](#): 11 – 17 May

[Healing Arts Scotland](#) week: 15 – 19 June



## NEWS

### TAKE ACTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH THIS SPRING

Spring is always a busy time for awareness days and weeks and this year is no different! We really like the theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week in May, which is 'Take ACTION'. This year the Mental Health Foundation is asking us all to take action – 'for yourself, for someone else, for all of us'.



- **Take action for yourself** – choose one positive action that works for you. You could use the '[Ways to Be Well](#)' for inspiration;
- **Take action for someone else** – think about what you could do to help build a mentally healthy community. If you haven't already signed up to our [Creating Hope Awards](#) for mentally healthy and suicide safer communities, take action and do that today!
- **Take action for all of us** – individual actions matter but we need all parts of society to take action – organisations can download the free 'Take Action' resources [HERE](#)

**Check out the 'Events' section of the newsletter as well – Borders Community Action and Flourish are both hosting events during Mental Health Awareness Week.**

### TAKING ACTION IN COMMUNITIES WITH THE CREATING HOPE AWARDS

We are delighted to welcome **Greener Peebles** to the Creating Hope Awards Scheme! Greener Peebles provides a supportive space in their thriving community garden and recently completed the training for the foundation level Creating Hope Award.

Congratulations also to both the **Whole Family Support Team** at Scottish Borders Council and **Newcastleton and District Community Trust** who recently completed their two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and online Trauma Skilled Practice training and upgraded their applications to achieve the Creating Hope Champions Award.

We're grateful to all of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Advocates and Suicide Prevention Champions who are helping to make the Borders mentally healthy and suicide safer.

**Getting involved with the Creating Hope Awards is a great way to take action for good mental health. 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.**

## **WELLBEING SERVICE PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYABILITY – NO-ONE LEFT BEHIND**

The NHS Borders Wellbeing Service is now offering Tier One Mental Health and Wellbeing support as part of the Local Employability Partnership workstream No-One Left Behind. Poor mental health is often a barrier to employment and this means that the employability services are often seeking mental health support for people to help them before they can enter the labour market – however they often do not meet the threshold for support from statutory mental health services. The new post in the Wellbeing Service means that there is now a bespoke referral pathway for the employability services and early support for people who may need a bit more help.

**For any LEP NOLB referrals please get in touch by emailing [wellbeing@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:wellbeing@borders.scot.nhs.uk)**

## **LOTHIANS ‘SPEAK THEIR NAME’ SUICIDE MEMORIAL QUILT EXHIBITION**

On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention team were invited to attend the launch event of the Lothians Speak Their Name suicide memorial quilt exhibition at the Great Tapestry of Scotland in Galashiels. This 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 have made squares in memory of their loved ones.

As well as creating this beautiful memorial they have also brought people together as a community where they have found support and friendship in one another. The quilt has been touring the Lothians for over a year and they are now on a Scotland-wide tour. When they began the project they had hoped it would start conversations about suicide and mental health.



After being inspired by the beauty of the quilt our local After A Suicide Working Group (AASWG) members have decided to embark on their own memorial quilt project.

**If you or anyone you know has been touched by suicide and would like to be involved in the quilting project please get in touch with the Health Improvement team by emailing [Health.Improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Health.Improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk)**

## **TIME TO REFLECT EVENT HAINING HOUSE**

The annual Time to Reflect event took place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at Haining House in Selkirk. The aim of the event was to provide time for reflection for people bereaved or affected by suicide.

The reflection event was the seventh annual event for people in the Scottish Borders for those who have lost someone to suicide. Led by Sharron Rossi a local interfaith minister it was an event of words and poetry to offer space, solidarity and opportunity to connect for those touched by suicide whilst providing an opportunity to remember those who have been lost to suicide.

The event was organised jointly by the local After a Suicide Working Group (AASWG) who are a group of volunteers with lived experience of bereavement by suicide, NHS Borders and Scottish Borders Council. The event was supported by the Selkirk Samaritans branch and Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS). Volunteers from each were available during the event to provide support and were on hand with resources and support information.



## **SEAFIT – HEALTH INITIATIVE FOR THE FISHING COMMUNITY**

SeaFit is a health initiative run by the Fishermen’s Mission and Seafarers Hospital Society aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of fishermen. Given the demanding nature of their work, many experience health inequalities and are often difficult to engage. Fishing remains the UK’s most dangerous peacetime profession and takes its toll on both the physical and mental health of those in the fishing industry.

To address this, SeaFit brings essential services directly to quaysides and harbours across the UK. We recently had an email from Donna Schwarz, the Area Manager for the Fishermen's Mission. They are planning a free health and wellbeing event for fishermen (retired and active) and their immediate family members on Seahouses quayside later in the year. Donna is seeking any organisations who might be willing to attend and support the local fishing community. For further information contact: **Donna Schwarz (Area Manager-South Queensferry to Alnwick) The Fishermen's Mission**  
Email: [DonnaSchwarz@fishermensmission.org.uk](mailto:DonnaSchwarz@fishermensmission.org.uk) or mobile: 07917754528  
[www.fishermensmission.org.uk](http://www.fishermensmission.org.uk)

## MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Maternal Mental Health Week is a week-long campaign that comes the week before Mental Health Awareness Week. It is organised by the Perinatal Mental Health Partnership UK and supported by the Maternal Mental Health Alliance. Keep an eye on their website during the week – last year they launched a helpful perinatal mental health symptom checker which we'll send round with this newsletter.

[Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week](#) | [Maternal Mental Health Alliance](#)

## NURTURE THE BORDERS – WELCOMING REFERRALS

As Maternal Mental Health Week is coming up we were delighted to receive the news from Nurture the Borders that they are welcoming referrals for their Counselling and Psychotherapy Service at the moment. The service provides early, relationship based perinatal mental health support to parents and families in the Borders. They welcome both professional and self-referrals.

**For more information or to discuss potential referrals or suitability please email [info@nurturetheborders.com](mailto:info@nurturetheborders.com)**



## HEALING ARTS RESEARCH – CALL OUT FOR PARTICIPATION

We are researching 'creative health' activity in the Borders for a new report that we aim to launch as part of the Healing Arts festival in June. Healing Arts Scotland is a bi-annual celebration of the role of the arts to improve health and wellbeing, aiming to embed the arts into public health and community wellbeing. This research aims to identify creative health activity in the Borders so that we can look at the impact it has and promote it more in future.

**To submit information to the report please fill in this form by Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April**  
[Healing Arts in the Scottish Borders 2026 – Fill in form](#)

## 25 YEARS OF ARTBEAT STUDIOS!

Artbeat Studios is a registered charity in Hawick that provides a variety of art and creative workshops. This year Artbeat is celebrating 25 years of encouraging, helping and supporting people to feel good about themselves, be proud of what they've created and find friendships as well as create many beautiful pieces of art! Artbeat accepts self-referrals as well as referrals from health, social care and third sector services. There is a charge of £40 for four sessions.

**If you have any questions or queries or would like to know more about what's on offer please contact Artbeat directly:**

Email: [artbeatstudios@hotmail.com](mailto:artbeatstudios@hotmail.com) or telephone: 01450 379547

Facebook: search for 'Artbeatstudios Hawick'

## SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH ARTS FESTIVAL 2026

This year, the annual Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year and has just announced the 2026 dates and theme. Taking place from 19<sup>th</sup> October to 8<sup>th</sup> November, the theme 'Reflections' is designed to invite artists and communities to reflect experiences, stories and creativity shape our mental health. Both event submissions and film submissions for the festival are open.

**To submit an event or find out more please visit the festival website [HERE](#)**

## EVENTS

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1.00pm – 4.00pm, Newtown St Boswells**

### **HEALTH AND WELLBEING FORUM: TRANSFORMING WELLBEING INVESTMENT: CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION IN ACTION**

This Mental Health Awareness Week event will bring together colleagues from across the public and third sectors to explore new funding models, innovative investment approaches, and collaborative ways of working to improve mental health and wellbeing across our region. It will look at how we can strengthen partnership working through shared learning and creative thinking, from procurement and commissioning models to the growth of the Creating Hope movement here in the Borders. It will also be an excellent opportunity to network, share ideas and connect with others passionate about improving outcomes for our communities.

For more info and to book a ticket visit - [Health & Wellbeing Forum | Borders Community Action](#)

**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**  
11-17 MAY 2026

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 10.30am – 12.30 pm, Galashiels**

### **GETTING READY TO FLOURISH**

During Mental Health Awareness Week – on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 10.30-12.30 - there is a **Getting Ready To Flourish!** intro session in the Borders Care Voice training room at Triest House. 'Flourish: Mental Health Matters' is the lived experience forum for mental health in the Borders.

The theme for the week is **Action** - come along and find out how Flourish is improving adult mental health services in the Borders through collective advocacy.

To book a place visit [Getting Ready To Flourish! - Intro Session](#)

**MENTAL  
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### **Various dates**

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

- PEEBLES - Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee, Peebles
- HAWICK - Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick café
- DUNS - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street, Duns
- KELSO - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre, Kelso
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café, Galashiels
- DUNS - Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street, Duns
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee, Peebles
- HAWICK - Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick café
- KELSO - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre, Kelso
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café, Galashiels

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](#)

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#### **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](#)

**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](mailto:scottishborders@uksobs.org)

## **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/>

### **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](mailto: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**

### **'YOUR LOCAL FRIEND' MENTAL HEALTH BOOKLET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

A brilliant example of young people taking action for good mental health is 'Your Local Friend' - a mental health support booklet for young people that has been created by a young social enterprise group at Earlston High School. The book is thoughtfully designed in a friendly and accessible way and explores common challenges that many teenagers face including stress, pressure from school, friendships, confidence, and managing emotions.

The young people are offering groups and organisations the chance buy a license for the book at £250, this licence means that the book will be a 'live' document for other young people to update or add to where they think feels right for the young people in the area they are based. Alongside buying the license you will also receive 10 hard copies of the 'Your local friend' books. You can also buy the book on its own at a price of £10 per book.

**If you would like to buy a licence or an individual copy please email their mentor**  
- [moira@moirarecruitment.com](mailto:moira@moirarecruitment.com)

### **SAM AT BORDERS COLLEGE HELPING MEN TO UNDERSTAND MENOPAUSE**

Borders College lecturer Sam Anderson is a Health and Social Care lecturer and has recently released a book 'Perimenopause: The A-Z Guide for Us Idiots'. This is a humorous but honest guide aimed at breaking down stigma and making the topic of menopause more approachable for men. The menopause can have a significant on women's mental health as well as having an impact on their families so we are delighted to see Sam taking action to help people understand it better.

The book is now available to purchase on Amazon as an e-book or paperback copy.

Find out more [HERE](#)

## STRESS AWARENESS MONTH RESOURCES

Every year the Stress Management Society runs an awareness month in April to increase public awareness about the causes, effects and management of stress. This year the theme is #BeThe Change and, like the 'Take Action' theme for Mental Health Awareness Week, the society is encouraging everyone to take personal action and join in with understanding stress, learning strategies to manage stress and with creating open conversation.

**For further information and resources:**

[Stress Awareness Month Resources - The Stress Management Society](#)

## NHS INFORM WOMEN'S HEALTH PLATFORM

The online Women's Health Platform on NHS Inform has some excellent resources covering a whole range of women's health issues from puberty to later years.

[Women's health | NHS inform](#)

## TRAINING

### **SAFETALK - AWARENESS LEVEL SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING**

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April, 12.30 – 4pm, Boardroom, Newstead**

safeTALK is a suicide alertness training course delivered over half a day. The session teaches you to recognise people who may have thoughts of suicide and how to connect them to appropriate help. safeTALK prepares participants to activate a suicide alert by following the TALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe) steps. **To book a place click here:**

[https://mhandsplearning.publichealthscotland.scot/course\\_registration.aspx?id=56c04cbc-a765-496d-abb3-95cc5f1dc445](https://mhandsplearning.publichealthscotland.scot/course_registration.aspx?id=56c04cbc-a765-496d-abb3-95cc5f1dc445)

### **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 21st May 2026: 9am – 1pm **PLACES AVAILABLE****

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](mailto: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](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk)

### **MENTALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE TRAINING**

Details of local Mentally Healthy Workplace Training for Managers is included within this collection of workplace health and wellbeing resources:

<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/Ytg2OFWEcvfH7QrU?ref=Link&loc=mysways>

### **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) and Hannah Lacon, 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](mailto: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](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope)



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