

# Creating Hope

## Scottish Borders

JUNE - JULY 2026

Information Bulletin  
News / Events  
Resources / Training

Upcoming awareness dates:

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

[Carers Week](#): 8 – 14 June

[Men's Health Week](#): 15 - 21 June

[Pride Month](#): June



### NEWS

#### ASIST TRAINING FOR EDUCATION

We delivered ASIST training specifically for those working in Education and now have 20 more ASIST trained caregivers in the Scottish Borders!



The next ASIST training is taking place at Buccleuch House in Newcastleton on 25th and 26<sup>th</sup> June, this training is open to anyone living or working in the Scottish Borders who would like to get practical training to prevent the immediate risk of suicide. To book a place click [HERE](#)

After completing ASIST, an ASIST trained caregiver, will be better able to:

- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide, reach out and offer support
- Seek a shared understanding of the reasons for thoughts of suicide
- Apply a suicide intervention model
- Review current risk and develop a plan to increase safety from suicidal behaviour
- Link people with community resources

#### CREATING HOPE CONFERENCE 2026

This year's Creating Hope Conference brought together people from various sectors, communities and lived experience networks to focus on how we grow capacity for hope through collective action. It was an impactful and thought provoking day attended by nearly 300 delegates.

Iain Corbett delivered a powerful keynote address – “I hope, I think, I know”, which is available to watch [HERE](#)



Also speaking at the event were [COSLA](#) CEO Jane

O'Donnell and Neil Rennick, Director-General for Education & Justice at [The Scottish Government](#) who spoke to Suicide Prevention Scotland about the importance of collaboration between local and national government, and the need to focus on prevention rather than reaction. You can hear what they said [HERE](#)

#### HEALING ARTS IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

For the first time we are taking part in 'Healing Arts Scotland' which is a biennial celebration of the role of the arts to improve health and wellbeing – and part of a global movement to embed the arts into public health and community wellbeing. There is an enormous body of research and evidence that demonstrates

the links between arts, cultural and heritage engagement and health and wellbeing - and how cultural engagement can help to prevent, treat and manage physical and mental health problems.

Following a recommendation from the Chief Medical Officer to engage in the Healing Arts Scotland Festival (15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> June), we have been working with Live Borders to bring together a local research report which we are launching during Healing Arts week. As the NHS Borders Clinical Strategy focuses on prevention and supporting people to keep themselves well, we want to take this opportunity to consider how the arts and creativity can help to support the delivery of the Clinical Strategy.

We're holding a 'roundtable' event on the 17<sup>th</sup> June at the BGH to present the report - you can find the details of this in the 'Events' section of the newsletter.

To discover more about Healing Arts Scotland visit: [Healing Arts Scotland | Healing Arts Scotland](#)

## NEW CREATING HOPE CHAMPIONS AWARDS

We are delighted to welcome **the Wellbeing Service** and **Teri Bikes** to the Creating Hope Awards Scheme!

The [Wellbeing Service](#) is the first NHS Borders team to achieve the Creating Hope Champions Award. The team provides 'tier one' emotional support along with lifestyle support and smoking cessation. The two-day ASIST course (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) is part of the team's core training but taking part in the awards meant that staff refreshed their training, keeping their knowledge and skills up to date. Some staff members from the Wellbeing Service are pictured here along with Steph MacKenzie.



[Teri Bikes](#) is a community based e-bike project in Hawick. They provide e-bike hire as well as bike servicing, maintenance training and cycle led rides. The volunteers have a clear commitment to providing a compassionate listening space as an integral part of their work and we were pleased to award them with 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.**

## NEW CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ADVOCACY SERVICE

The new Children and Young People's Advocacy Service - provided by Borders Independent Advocacy Service (BIAS) - is now operational and accepting referrals.

BIAS has extended their advocacy services to children and young people living in the Scottish Borders who receive social and/or healthcare support from the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership. This important service has been commissioned by the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) to ensure that the voices of children and young people whose rights may be at risk are heard and represented during critical decision-making processes.

Over the next 6–12 months, BIAS hopes to connect with as many teams and partners as possible. If your team would like to learn more about how independent advocacy can support children and young people, please contact Alicja Piliszczyk, Service Manager/CEO on 01896 752200 or email [alicja@bordersadvocacy.org.uk](mailto:alicja@bordersadvocacy.org.uk)

To find out more visit - [Children and Young People Advocacy – BIAS](#)

## **BRAW SURVEY – CALL FOR INFORMATION ABOUT RECOVERY AND WELLBEING ACTIVITY**



'BRAW' stands for 'Borders Recovery And Wellbeing' and is a collaborative project under Programme Four of the Creating Hope Action Plan. It is aiming to serve as an 'umbrella' for all of the varied recovery and wellbeing related learning activity in the Borders, so that we have a better understanding of the opportunities that are available to people across all of our services and organisations. The focus is on 'learning' activities in line with the idea of a 'Recovery College' model. The Recovery College model is an internationally recognised approach to supporting people living with mental health problems that is strengths-based, person-centred, inclusive and community focused – with peer support at its heart. If you'd like to know more about what a Recovery College is, click [here](#) and check out this example in [North Ayrshire](#).

**As a first step, we are planning to gather links to relevant activities on a new page on the Creating Hope website.**

**If you've got activities you'd like us to include please fill in this survey:**

[Mental Health Recovery & Wellbeing Learning Activities in the Scottish Borders – Fill in form](#)

## **EVENTS**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June for four weeks – online**

### **CARE FOR CARERS – MINDFULNESS COURSE**

A free online mindfulness course designed to help unpaid carers enhance emotional resilience. This four week course is provided free of charge by Peer2Peer Mindfulness.

**Find out more:** [care for carers - Peer2Peer-Mindfulness](#)

# **Healing Arts**

## **↪ Scotland**

15–19 June 2026



**Wednesday 17th June: 2.00 – 4.00pm At The Chaplaincy Centre, Borders General Hospital**

### **HEALING ARTS SCOTTISH BORDERS ROUNDTABLE**

Join us for a 'Roundtable' session, hosted by the NHS Borders Public Health and Arts Therapies Services. Gathering practitioners, healthcare professionals and partners to explore local creative health work and reflect on the learning from a new local research report which will be launched on the day. We are hoping to put a spotlight on good practice, connect across sectors and highlight future opportunities for the arts and creativity to support the NHS Borders Clinical Strategy.

**Places limited – to register please fill in this form:**

[Healing Arts Scottish Borders Roundtable Session - Registration Form – Fill in form](#)

### **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](#)**

## Various dates

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

- DUNS - Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street, Duns
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee, Peebles
- HAWICK - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick café
- KELSO - Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre, Kelso
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café, Galashiels
- PEEBLES - Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July, 10am – 12:30pm, Costa Coffee, Peebles
- HAWICK - Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 10am – 12:30pm, Heart of Hawick café
- DUNS - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July, 12 noon – 2pm, Fare Share Café, Murray Street, Duns
- KELSO - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, 10am – 12.30pm, Mayfield Garden Centre, Kelso
- GALASHIELS - Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 10am – 12:30pm, ASDA Café, Galashiels

Drop-in service with Health in Mind 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](#)

## EVERY SATURDAY AT 9.30AM

### **PARKRUNS IN THE SCOTTISH BORDERS**

Physical activity is a great way of improving and maintaining good mental health and there are now three organised parkruns across the Scottish Borders every Saturday morning. parkrun is a free, community event where you can walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate. parkrun is 5km and takes place every Saturday morning. You can find them at:

- [Wilton Lodge Park in Hawick](#)
- [Wallaceneuk in Kelso](#)
- [Hay Lodge in Peebles](#)

## 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

### SPOKE TO A BLOKE

As Men's Health Week is in June we thought we'd fly the flag for the 'Spoke to a Bloke' movement which began in Australia and is picking up in Scotland. Their mission is to normalise conversations by men of all ages and backgrounds to talk more openly about mental health and suicide prevention by supporting greater social acceptance, community activations and online knowledge.

One of their projects is 'Walk for a Bloke' which they describe as a 25km movement bringing blokes together for real conversations – there were over 30 walks across the world in March 2026 including one in Edinburgh and they are now planning for 2027 - [Walk for a Bloke | Spoke to a Bloke](#)

**They have some great digital resources and have brought together a library of videos for their 'Men in Need of Digital Support' project – find out more here: [M.I.N.D.S | Spoke to a Bloke](#)**

### LGBT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

For PRIDE month we're putting a spotlight on the mental health support offered by LGBT Health and Wellbeing in Scotland. The organisation offers one-to-one support, counselling and group activities delivered by a team who understands LGBTQ+ identities and experiences. The support is for anyone aged 16+ who is LGBTQ+ in Scotland. You don't need a diagnosis, a referral or to be in crisis to access their support.

**Find out more: [Mental health support for LGBT+ people in Scotland](#)**

**They also have a Suicide Prevention Toolkit aimed specifically at LGBTQ+ individuals which you can find here: [LGBT+ Suicide Prevention Toolkit](#)**

### R;PPLE – AI TECHNOLOGY TACKLING RISKS OF HARMFUL ONLINE CONTENT

Ripple is an innovative digital crisis intervention tool designed to ensure more help and support is provided to individuals conducting searches for harmful content online. The focus is on proactive intervention, bridging the gap between individuals in crisis and the help they require. This crisis intervention software is free for individuals, parents, educators and charities.

Ripple is designed to present a visual prompt when a person searches for harmful keywords or phrases relating to the topic of self-harm or suicide. The software is free to download for education settings.

**More information here: [Ripple Crisis Intervention | Suicide Prevention & Mental Health](#)**

### SORTED: MENTAL HEALTH APP

Some of you may remember the 'Feeling Good' app, which was an audio wellbeing app with positive mental training. The app has changed name to 'Sorted: Mental Health' – it has the same content, just a new name and brand.

Sorted is recommended for use by the NHS and across the UK it has helped over 80,000 patients to build mental resilience, confidence and coping mechanisms.

Research has shown it can help people to feel better, lift mood, and recover from stress, anxiety and depression by building resilience and developing positive feelings.

**To access the full content on the app, people need the NHS Borders username and password. If you would like to use the app or recommend it to anyone you are supporting, please email [health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:health.improvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk) and ask for the Sorted: Mental Health app username and password.**

**To find out more about the app click here - [Sorted Mental Health](#)**



## LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS

Public Health Scotland has developed a Learning Needs Analysis which acts as a practical tool to guide decisions about who needs what learning and why in relation to mental health improvement, self-harm, and suicide prevention, so that training is relevant, consistent, and effective across settings.

The document is designed to help individuals, teams, and organisations identify gaps in knowledge, skills, and confidence relevant to their roles and ensure learning is targeted, appropriate, and aligned with workforce roles and the wider Knowledge and Skills Framework.

[Guidance document: Learning Needs Analysis \(LNA\)](#)

Along with the [Knowledge and Skills Framework \(KSF\)](#), it can help you make an informed decision about which learning is right for you. Please also refer to our Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Training information below and get in touch if you have any questions about what training is most suitable.

## TRAINING

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION IN CONSTRUCTION FUNDED TRAINING**

Construction workers are almost four times more likely to die by suicide than the national average. That's why SAMH, in partnership with Barratt Homes North Scotland and funded by the CITB Industry Impact Fund, is offering free suicide prevention training to people working across the construction industry and related sectors in Scotland.

The workshop explores the prevalence of suicide in Scotland and within the construction industry, the stigma surrounding mental health, and the impact this can have on individuals, teams and workplaces. Participants gain the skills and confidence to recognise warning signs, alongside clear, step-by-step guidance on how to support someone experiencing thoughts of suicide.

Funding is currently in place until October 2026, and the training will continue to be available to book beyond this date.

Training options

- In-person workshop (3.5 hours) Delivered at your preferred location for 6–16 participants
- Virtual workshop (2.5 hours) Delivered via Microsoft Teams for 6–12 participants

**To book a session or find out more, please contact: [ciif.training@samh.org.uk](mailto:ciif.training@samh.org.uk)**

### **MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND SUICIDE PREVENTION - INFORMED LEVEL TRAINING**

This training is for staff and volunteers in health and social care settings and beyond and is delivered by Borders Care Voice. It aims to help them develop their abilities in recognising and responding to people they meet who may be in distress and require additional support.

It will cover:

- Mental health and how to maintain it
- The factors that can lead to mental distress or mental ill-health
- Having compassionate conversations to support people who are experiencing mental distress and may be suicidal, and help them to seek help
- Suicide prevention

**Date:** Tuesday 29th September 2026 10am-3pm

**Where:** Borders Care Voice, Galashiels

**Book a place [HERE](#)**

### **SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (SMHFA)**

Delivered by Borders Care Voice, SMHFA teaches you:

- How to apply the five steps of SMHFA
- How to respond if you believe someone is at risk of suicide
- How to give immediate help until professional help is available
- What to say and do in a crisis

- The importance of good listening skills
- Practice listening and responding
- Understanding recovery from mental health problems
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and alcohol and drugs
- Understanding the connection between mental health problems and discrimination
- Some basic information about common mental health problems
- Self-help information

**Date:** Tuesday 8th September & Tuesday 15th September 9:30am-5:30pm (you must attend both days)

**Where:** Borders Care Voice, Galashiels

**Book a place** [HERE](#)

### **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), Charlotte Jones, Health Improvement Specialist (Suicide Prevention) and Kelda Pearce, Health Improvement Specialist (Mental Health & Suicide Prevention for Children & Young People) 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)



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**CREATING HOPE WEB PAGES**

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope)



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[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/creating-hope)

# What if... asking about suicide could save a life?

[SuicidePrevention.scot](http://SuicidePrevention.scot)

Suicide Prevention  
Scotland.

