

# Community Living Well

Winter 2019

## In this edition

Medication  
Q&A



Depression &  
Relationships



Career  
Changes



Community  
**LivingWell**

Working together for your wellbeing

# Contents

## Clinical Services

### Psychological Therapies

Rebecca's Story - **pg. 4**

### Psychological Therapies

Depression and Relationships - **pg. 6**

### Primary Care Liaison Nurses

Mental Health Medication Q&A - **pg. 8**

### Mother Tongue Counselling

Profile Piece - **pg. 10**

## Wellbeing Services

### Employment

New Directions: Career Change - **pg. 12**

### Navigators

A Day in the Life of a Navigator - **pg. 14**

### Peer Support

Mindfulness: Andrew's Story - **pg. 16**

### Self-Care

Self-Care Staff Event - **pg. 18**

## Plus...

Q&A with GP Squier - **pg. 20**

Local Services - **pg. 22**

# Welcome to our Winter Edition

Welcome to the latest edition of the Community Living Well magazine. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I've enjoyed putting it together!

Our winter edition is packed with advice and expertise provided by our seven services. Highlights include guidance on how to make a career change from our Employment team, information and advice on psychiatric medication from our Primary Care Liaison service and a personal view on mindfulness from one of our Peer Support members.

Let me know what you think; what you like, what you think we need to change. This is your magazine and I want to hear from you. You can contact me at [tamsin.cogan@kcmind.org.uk](mailto:tamsin.cogan@kcmind.org.uk) to tell me about your ideas, comments and any suggestions you might have for future features or stories.

**This magazine is published by Kensington and Chelsea Mind on behalf of Community Living Well and its partners.**

## How to Refer

You can refer to the Community Living Well service quickly and securely by completing the form found on this page [communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/). Alternatively, you can ask your GP to refer you.

After we have received your form, we will be in touch within five working days. If you have any questions about the referral process or other parts of Community Living Well, please contact us on **020 3317 4200**

# About Us

## Eligibility

Anyone experiencing a mental health problem who is 16 years or over and signed up with a GP in Kensington and Chelsea, Queen's Park or Paddington.

Our service offers a different kind of mental health support. It brings people together from your local community groups, NHS and the voluntary sector in one service which will work alongside you and your GP to help you access the support you need.

Our model of care aims to:

- work as one integrated service that wraps around the individual
- with the GP at the centre as the accountable clinician responsible for each person's treatment
- highlight the shift from traditional, clinical focussed approaches to a wellbeing approach with equal emphasis on social and clinical needs

## Our Partners

**Central and North West London NHS Foundation**

– Primary Care Liaison and Psychological Therapies

**Brent Wandsworth and Westminster**

**Mind** – Mother Tongue Counselling

**Kensington and Chelsea Mind** – Peer Support

**Jobs in Mind** – Employment

**SMART** – Navigators

## Wellbeing Support

**Employment** – Advice and support to gain or retain paid employment, improve employability skills and know your rights in the workplace

**Navigators** – Practical help and support to access specialist advice on a range of issues, including benefits and debt

**Peer Support** – Social activities, peer support groups and one-to-one support with other people who have had similar experiences to you

**Self-Care** – Activities which can help to keep yourself well

## Clinical Support

**Psychological Therapies** – Support for when you experience difficult emotions, such as low mood, worry and stress

**Mother Tongue Counselling** – Culturally appropriate one-to-one talking therapies and wellbeing workshops in Arabic & Farsi

**Primary Care Liaison** – Structured support from specialist mental health nurses and workers

Find out more information and whether we can help you on our [website](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk)





# Rebecca's Story



"Challenging my Negative Thoughts"

If you have used a Community Living Well service in the past and would like to share your story, please get in touch.

**R**ebecca had been experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression after the death of a family member. Since meeting with one of our psychological therapists, she has found ways to challenge her negative thought patterns and adopt a new mindset.



**What led you to seek therapy with us?**

I was suffering with depression and anxiety following a cancer diagnosis in the family and the breakdown of a relationship. I was referred to Community Living Well by my GP about 5 years ago for similar issues and at the time accessed short-term help from their psychological therapies team. I got good results so felt confident about returning to the service for the second time. I was especially pleased that I was able to see the same therapist again as I felt very comfortable and safe talking to her.

**Tell us about your experience of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)?**

The therapist inspired me to find solutions to my problems by helping me deal with them in a positive way and breaking them down into smaller parts. Instead of just passively listening, she helped me to find practical ways to improve my state of mind on a daily basis. I started doing more exercise, writing a journal and making more of an effort to speak to people. Most importantly, I took time out to reflect on why I was feeling this way and to work on changing my negative thought patterns. I liked the homework that CBT provided as completing it made me feel like I was being proactive in my recovery.

**Did you overcome any particular challenges or obstacles before or during therapy?**

With my therapist's help I learnt how to identify the negative voice inside of me. I began to recognise that the bad thoughts that had been

weighing me down were a separate part of me rather than a reflection on who I was as a person. I was able to put up a barrier to stop them from getting in and I am now aware it's just a voice that I don't have to listen to.

**How are you feeling now that you have just finished your CBT?**

I found my sessions with the therapist to be very helpful. It was comforting at a time when I really needed support. I was reluctant to finish but at the same time I felt that she had provided me with all the tools I needed to carry on my journey alone and knew that the rest of the work had to come from me.

“The Therapist inspired me to find solutions to my problems by helping me deal with them in a positive way and breaking them down into smaller parts”

**Do you have a plan for continuing your good work?**

Yes, I will keep up the regular exercise and everyday awareness activities. I will also continue to work on not letting myself sink into negative thought patterns.

“I liked the homework that CBT provided as completing it made me feel like I was being proactive in my recovery”

**What advice would you give to others who are struggling with psychological issues and who may be nervous about asking for help?**

I would encourage them to try and take the first few steps to recovery by visiting their GP. The stigma around mental health has noticeably declined in recent years. Asking a mental health professional for help is really just the same as asking them for help with a dodgy knee or back. The services are professional and empathetic, and they are there to help you through your lowest points.

**If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...**

To refer to Psychological Therapies fill out the form found on our [website](#)

For more information on the service:

 020 3317 4200

 [cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net](mailto:cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net)





# Depression and Relationships

**G**eorgina Burns is a counsellor and practitioner of Inter-Personal Therapy for Depression.

Below she gives some tips and insights into how depression and relationships interact with one another.

### Inter-personal Problems Can Sometimes Trigger Depression

Whether it is a relationship ending, a dispute with a boss or a family feud, relationship rifts can often spur on feelings of loss and insecurity that can lead to depression.

### Depression Can Sometimes Negatively Impact On Our Relationships

You might feel bad about yourself, suffer from tiredness, feel unmotivated and sleep-deprived or find your concentration is poor, all of which can make communicating with people harder.

### Relationships Are Vital In Our Recovery

When we struggle with depression, we can feel tempted to cancel plans and cut ourselves off from people. Isolation can make depression worse so try to speak regularly with those closest to you. Taking the time to socialise with friends who we feel comfortable with is an investment that will support and enrich us on our hardest days.

### Make New Friends

Connecting with people around us is a vital element of recovery and wellbeing. If you don't have a supportive social circle, find opportunities to meet new people. For instance, you could join a club or an interest-based group. If you are older you could be part of an older adults club and if you are younger you could join a youth group.

### Try To Be Pro-active

Depression can be heightened by poor communication or a desire for people to read our minds. Instead of getting upset that a friend hasn't called and isn't aware of how you feel, why not call them? A good chat with a friend can raise your spirits and lift your mood.

### Remember That Good Friends Will Be There For The Hard Times Too

Depression can cause us to think negatively about ourselves and we may sometimes feel like we are a burden to others. Remind yourself that trusted friends will be there for you through the good and bad times. Think about how you would feel if the situation was reversed; you wouldn't want your friend to avoid you if they were going through a low patch.

### Ask For What You Need

This could be going to the GP and requesting help or confiding in a trusted friend to let them know that you are struggling.

### Try Not To Generalise

Remember that we won't always get on with everyone and it takes time and energy to build solid friendships. If it isn't working, try not to generalise the experience by either turning on yourself ("people don't like me") or other people ("there are no good people in the world").

### Practice Good Communication

Learning good communication skills can help us have better relationships. Try to avoid upsetting statements such as "you're just selfish and not interested in what I have to say," as these may cause a defensive response. Instead try to use statements which express how you're feeling, such as, "I feel like you're not interested in what I have to say."

### Further Reading

Defeating Depression: How to use the people in your life to open the door to recovery - Roslyn Law







# Mental Health Medication: Q&A

There are many medications available for mental health conditions and it can be difficult to decide which one, if any, are the right fit for you. Our Primary Care Liaison team can help you make an informed decision by explaining their potential benefits and negative side effects as well as how to come off them if you and your GP feel the time is right.

## Why might I take medication?

Generally, psychiatric drugs can't cure a mental health problem. However, in some cases, they can help reduce the symptoms or help you cope with them better. Whether you are offered medication or not may depend on:

- your diagnosis
- your symptoms
- how severely the condition affects you

There are many other types of treatment options available as well as medication. Many people use a combination of medication and other treatments, such as talking therapies, to manage their condition. Your treatment plan should be based on your individual needs and medical situation and chosen under a health professional's care.

## How long might I take any medication prescribed to me for?

This depends on:

- your diagnosis
- how severely the condition affects you
- your recovery

For some conditions (such as depression), you might only be expected to take the medication for a set period of time. If you have repeated episodes of mental ill health, your doctor might advise you to stay on your medication for several years, or indefinitely. If you decide to start taking medication, ask your GP how long you will be expected to take it for.

## What if I want to stop taking my medication?

Before coming off any drug, it's important to make sure you have all the information and support you need to do it safely. If you decide you want to stop taking your medication, you should:

- avoid stopping suddenly
- discuss it with someone you trust (ideally your GP)

The longer you have been taking a drug, the more likely it is that you will experience withdrawal effects and find it harder to stop. You may need to reduce the dose very gradually in order to minimise these effects.

As well as benefits, every psychiatric drug has the potential to cause unwanted side effects. These can occur after both short-term and long-term use.

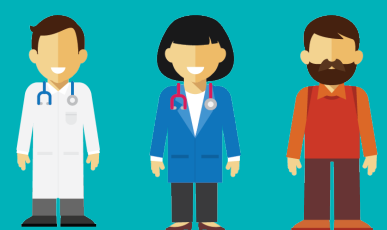
## It can take time to feel better

Some medications take a few weeks to work and a medication's side effects may start to affect you before its benefits. You may also have to try more than one medication or increase the dosage before you find the right fit for you.

Whilst this can understandably be frustrating and distressing, try to remember that many people ultimately find the right medication at the correct dosage is worth the wait.

## If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...

Your GP can refer you to the Community Living Well Primary Care Liaison team. Book an appointment so that you can talk through your options with them.



## Will I experience side effects?

Mild side effects might:

- stop once your body is used to the drug
- be manageable by adjusting how you take the drug (such as taking it with food, or at a different time of day).

Severe side effects might mean that you need to stop taking the drug and seek medical help. It's hard to know how a medicine will affect you until you try it, as the type of side effects you experience will depend on the drug and your individual reaction to it. Side effects vary from person to person and from medication to medication and they could be mild or severe.

Deciding to take medication is all about balancing the advantages against the disadvantages. It's generally up to you to decide whether the benefits of taking the drug outweigh the side effects. However, it is important to remember that you can always seek expert advice from your GP or Primary Care Liaison Nurse if you have one.





# Mother Tongue Counselling

In each edition we will be sharing news and information with you from around the whole of the Community Living Well service. This month we take a look at Mother Tongue Counselling.

## MOTHER TONGUE COUNSELLING

Our friendly and approachable team at Community Living Well Mother Tongue Counselling engage with Arabic and Farsi speaking communities in Kensington and Chelsea, Queen’s Park and Paddington to support them with their wellbeing.

Managed by Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster Mind, we provide up to twelve effective and culturally capable one-to-one counselling sessions to these communities to ensure that their access to help is not hindered by their ethnicity, culture or faith.

## CULTURAL ATTITUDES

Mental health difficulties can happen to any of us, regardless of our age, gender, income, education, ethnicity or religion. Despite being very common, a lot of us do not feel comfortable talking about any troubling thoughts or emotional difficulties we may be experiencing.

The fear of being discriminated against, cultural attitudes about health or stigma around illness can cause us to hide or ignore our symptoms until they worsen. This can lead to overwhelming feelings of helplessness and distress and may even make us feel unable to eat or sleep well and manage everyday tasks.



“I felt empowered because I had the choice to use any words in any language when I wanted to discuss my experiences. Now I feel more prepared and am looking to embrace a much more positive and happy future.”

## MENTAL HEALTH IS UNIVERSAL

Mental health problems are a common human experience and do not represent a personal failure or weakness. One in four of us will experience a mental health difficulty such as stress, anxiety and depression at least once in our lifetime. They can happen to anyone, at any time. It is vital to remember that with effective and suitable support, most people can achieve full recovery and live fulfilling lives.

## HOW COUNSELLING HELPS

Improvements to your wellbeing can be achieved with something as simple as a chat with a trained professional. Our counsellors offer helpful, expert advice that can help you identify your problems and assist you in finding the best ways to cope with them. This may involve changing behaviours that contribute to the problem or finding constructive ways to deal with a situation that is beyond your personal control.

## WHAT WE OFFER

For those looking for a group format as opposed to a one-to-one session, we also deliver regular self-help groups and emotional wellbeing workshops (co-facilitated in Arabic and Farsi) on a range of topics related to mental health, suited to the participant’s needs and demands.

You are also welcome to pick up our translated literature and leaflets on common mental health issues, self-help techniques and frequently used terms. To receive an electronic copy, please contact [mothertongue@bwwmind.org.uk](mailto:mothertongue@bwwmind.org.uk)

## Mother Tongue Counselling in Numbers:

Over the course of community development work, Mother Tongue counselling has engaged with **525** people through its wellbeing programme.



## WHO IS IT FOR

- Mother Tongue Counselling service is available to people
- Aged 18 and over
  - Who are registered with a GP in Kensington and Chelsea, Queen’s Park or Paddington
  - Who have Arabic or Farsi cultural and language needs

## If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...

To refer to the Mother Tongue Counselling service, please fill out the form available on our [website](#) or call 020 3317 4200

“I was looking for someone who listens to what I have to say and responds without being pushy, and that’s what I got”





# New Directions: Career Change

The average person will change jobs 5-7 times during their working life. This might be down to changes in career goals, personal circumstances or because they are ready to try something new. Maybe the role you're currently in no longer interests you or you are looking for a new direction. Whatever the reason, have a look at our employment team's tips on how to apply for a new job.

## Experience is Transferrable

Just because you haven't worked in a certain industry, it doesn't mean you don't have the essential skills necessary for your ideal role. Previous experience can be very useful - think about what skills you have acquired that could be transferred over into a new role.

This could be from previous work experience, any volunteering you have taken part in or even things you do at home on a daily basis like managing a personal budget etc. Think about and write down what you've learnt and how these skills could be transferred to your desired job.

## Access Support

Working long hours or not sure how to go about looking for the right role? We offer up to 15 one-to-one sessions with our employment advisers who will listen to your individual support needs and base your sessions around what your goals are, and what you want to achieve.

Some people know exactly what job they want and are ready to apply for work, whereas others may want a change in direction, to start afresh or perhaps get into work for the first time. We can help you look at your options, skills, abilities and interests to help you decide what kind of work you would like. It's all based around you.

## Joe's Story

Joe had been working as a food runner for several years. He was constantly tired and feeling low due to his irregular shift patterns. He decided to speak to his GP about the effect it was having on his depression. After finding out about Community Living Well, he met with one of our advisers to discuss how his job was affecting his mental health, family and social life. One of the options presented to him was to explore a potential career change.

Being able to talk about the struggles he was experiencing at work and discuss his options boosted Joe's mood and motivation. He had a keen interest in sports and youth work, so with the support of his adviser, they looked for roles which involved a combination of these two passions. Whilst looking at the person specifications for this kind of work, they identified that Joe already possessed much of what they were looking for; he was patient, willing to help, able to engage with different people and physically fit - all of which was demonstrable in his previous role as a food runner.

Working through the application forms and practicing interview techniques with his adviser was really beneficial to Joe as it built up his confidence. He was invited for an interview shortly afterwards and subsequently received a job offer as a Youth Engagement Officer for a charity. His new position has fixed hours and has had a transformative and positive effect on his overall wellbeing.

At Community Living Well, our employment advisers can help you explore changing career paths.

For example, together we could:

- Figure out how to get started- what are the entry routes into your new career?
- Decide the salary you need- can you take a pay cut to move into a different sector which may be less well paid but more rewarding?
- Being your own boss- do you want to be self-employed? If so, we can help you access specialist advice about how to set yourself up e.g. inland revenue, local authorities, chamber of commerce, bank accounts etc.
- Identify any skills gaps- do you need any more qualifications or training?
- Plan how you are going to fund any training- are there any bursaries or grants available?
- Get information from professional bodies in the industry- are there any local networking events you can attend?

If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...

To refer to our employment service please fill out the form found on our [website](#) or call 020 3317 4200





# A Day in the Life of a Navigator

## Navigators in Numbers

Community Living Well have **5** navigators that offer practical support with a range of issues and support clients to access specialist advice

**Michael:** Every day we work alongside the Primary Care Liaison nurses, therapists and employment advisers. If I have a question about counselling, or how someone can go about finding work, there's always someone around to have a chat with. I enjoy being part of a team that has people with lots of different skills and backgrounds.

Our collaborative work environment means we share knowledge and expertise to ensure that we can provide a joined up and effective mental health service that helps with all aspects of mental health issues.

“It is really satisfying to provide assistance that quickly effects change and helps people feel better”

If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...

To refer to the Navigator service please fill out the form found on our [website](#)

For more information on the service:

020 3317 4200

[cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net](mailto:cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net)

**Lindsay:** Other times, it can take longer if someone has a more tricky or complex issue that requires specialist support. I recently worked with a person referred by their GP who was experiencing problems with her benefits. She had several physical disabilities as well as some mental health needs, and it became apparent that she was also entitled to a social care needs assessment. She was unable to manage daily tasks at home but was finding it hard to communicate her struggle to close relatives.

After visiting her, I organised access to a professional benefit advice agency and referred her to adult social care. A short while afterwards she was provided with specialist equipment and a carer, which significantly improved her quality of life.

“Having a navigator to talk to can help (you) to define the problem clearly and identify what to do to improve your situation”

occasions immediate help can be provided. For example, a lady came to us recently because she was on the verge of eviction after a loss of benefits left her unable to pay her rent. She felt frightened, alone and uncertain about where to start or who to turn to for support.

By talking things through, we were able to tackle the problems together and decide on a course of action that could immediately provide her with some relief. We visited the council's housing department to start a homeless application and also registered for Universal Credit.

A few weeks later this lady was in temporary accommodation and receiving benefits again. We still had a long way to go but the immediate crisis was resolved. It is really satisfying to provide assistance that quickly effects change and helps people feel better.

**M**ichael and Lindsay have been part of the Community Living Well service for 18 months. They share what a typical day looks like for a navigator.

**Michael:** A navigator is "a person who navigates a ship or a person who explores by sea". To me it means someone who finds a way through, or helps set a course to a destination, and that's what we help people do every day. People can feel "at sea" when they are faced with a complicated issue and can start to panic. Having a navigator to talk to can help them define the problem clearly and identify where to go and what to do to improve their situation.

The problems that people bring to us can really vary, but on some

GET TO KNOW



Michael Roberts



Lindsay Lotun





## Mindfulness: Andrew's Story

**M**indfulness is a meditative form of therapy and an established technique. Initially developed in the United States, it's beginning to make waves in the UK as an evidence-based approach. Paul, a peer support member, tells us about his journey with Meditation and Mindfulness.

People who know me well would describe me as someone who has always tended to overanalyse and overcomplicate things. It's probably true. Throughout my life there have often been times when I have found it difficult to relax or connect to others in social situations. This became even more apparent after I experienced a bereavement and it was at this point

that I realised I needed to change things and get help. I was living in a bubble; isolated, depressed and disconnected from others.

With the help of my GP, I started seeing the Community Living Well Psychological Therapies team. In one of my therapy sessions we talked about how I could manage my depression by finding ways to cope. I had heard of meditation and mindfulness already, but after that session I decided to explore the concepts more.

I went to a variety of Peer Support Workshops where I had the opportunity to learn about different types of meditation and relaxation. Now I know more about mindfulness and meditation, I feel less ambushed by my negative thoughts. The techniques I have learned have helped me to press the "pause button" in my mind and made it easier to channel positive thoughts and access good memories.

As well as improving my mental health, it has broadened my social networks after meeting other people who also use meditation, so that's been an unexpected bonus.

“The techniques help me to press the 'pause' button in my mind and make it easier to channel positive thoughts”

I joined the Peer Support Service a couple of years ago and it now includes a weekly relaxation and meditation group. A small number of us meet up at a local café and then head off to the class at the West London Buddhist Centre. Meditating with others means that we can help and encourage each other, and it is nice to be around others who share this interest.

“The mindfulness tools have helped me to relax and relate to others better”

Asking for help and receiving help has not always come naturally to me but mindfulness techniques have helped me to relax and relate to others better. There are so many books on meditation and relaxation out there, and if I had to recommend one, I would suggest "The Rough Guide to Mindfulness". The Mobile App "Headspace" has also been a great friend to me. "Headspace" is commonly known as "gym membership for the mind" and is used by millions of people all over the world.

**If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...**

To refer to Peer Support please fill out the form found on our [website](#) or call 020 3317 4200

I hope that some of my words can help others who are also managing periods of depression.

Best Wishes,

**Andrew**

Peer Support Member

### Peer Support in Numbers:

In 2018, Peer Support welcomed **258** new members into their community.







# Self-Care Staff Event

## What is Self-Care?

Self-Care is something that many of us overlook, often because we are unaware of all the tools and support available on our doorstep. There is a whole host of activities on offer in the community that are designed to improve mood and reduce anxiety. The following projects are designed to help you feel better, stay well or manage existing medical conditions.

### Better Life Befriending

**"Sports Solidarity Befriending supports parents to recognise their own emotional and physical health needs"**

Better Life Befriending helps parents build friendships and develop confidence to enable them to pursue their life goals through befriending sessions such as coffee meet-ups or help attending appointments.

### Unwind Sessions

**"I don't think I've ever felt so revitalised and refreshed on a Monday morning!"**

SMART offer therapy sessions such as head massages and reflexology. The centre-based therapy sessions include Indian head massage, reflexology, reiki and seated massage.

### Multilingual Support Service

**"Certain groups can slip through the cracks of mental health service provision so it was great to see this forum are eager to make a difference in their lives"**

The Black and Minority Ethnic Health Forum offers a mother tongue service which is available in Arabic, Bangla, Somali and Farsi. The project provides emotional and practical support and help to access other long term services.

### Volunteering on Prescription

**"This Volunteering Project sounds like an exciting initiative that empowers its volunteers"**

Volunteering can help to improve the skills, knowledge and confidence of people with mental health needs. Volunteering on Prescription is a programme where volunteers help to design and deliver the activities.

### Community Theatre Project

**"It was a very warm and welcoming environment that didn't involve any pressure from the group leaders"**

Queen's Park Community Theatre runs a theatre project which focusses on a different aspect of mental health every quarter and supports people to reflect on ways they can manage their mental health.

### LGBT Advocacy

**"It was great to speak to Stonewall Housing who run an advocacy service for people who identify as LGBT as they thought that our clients could benefit from their service"**

This project provides one-to-one mental health support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people - helping them to express their views and wishes and stand up for their rights.

### Reconnect Mindfulness Group

**"The class wasn't just about being mindful and practicing mindfulness, we were given clear direction from the group leader who spoke about what it was we were trying to do and achieve"**

This mindfulness group gives people over the age of 55 the tools to re-connect with the present moment and helps to improve wellbeing.

### Older African Men's Club

**"It sounds like a friendly and supportive group that combines life's best things; warm food and good conversation"**

The "Like the Old Days" Club brings older African men together to enjoy traditional meals in each other's company, as well as access information and share experiences.

On Monday November 19th, Kensington and Chelsea Social Council hosted their 3rd annual Self-Care event at

Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall for local health professionals in the area. The event was designed to promote the Voluntary and Community Sector and highlight health services available in Kensington and Chelsea, Queens Park and Paddington that encourage residents to build social networks, take control over their own health, and look after their wellbeing.

Over 150 people attended the event and it was a great success. Throughout the day, Community Living Well staff took part in several workshops, taster and information sessions where staff got the chance to try out the services offered locally. One staff member said: "This was an excellent event and I relished the opportunity to connect with different services that will benefit our patients." Further feedback from our staff can be found on the right.

For more information on how to sign up for these self-care projects please visit our [website](#) or check out the Autumn edition of our [magazine](#).





# Q&A with GP Will Squier



Will Squier  
Community Living  
Well GP Lead

**G**P's are at the heart of our Community Living Well model. Our services wrap around you with your GP at the centre as the accountable clinician responsible for your treatment. We spoke to Will Squier, the GP lead for Community Living Well, about the service, his experiences with mental health in this area and the importance of social prescribing.

## How did you get involved in Community Living Well?

I have a background in mental health after studying psychiatry as part of my degree. When I moved to the area I was keen to get to know local GPs and work with the West London Clinical Commissioning Group so was very pleased when a vacancy on the Community Living Well project emerged.

## What is your favourite part of your job?

Developing relationships with patients over several years is very rewarding. Helping them out and seeing them through the different stages of their life has built up my fondness of the borough and helped me to feel part of the community.

## What do you like about working in this area?

It is exciting working in such a diverse and vibrant borough that has so much going on. The breadth and scope of the service provision is inspiring, and it is great to see so many well-needed and essential services available in one community.

## What is your take on social prescribing?

Social prescribing is a way of linking patients in primary care with sources of support within the community. It provides GPs with a non-medical referral option that can operate alongside existing treatments to improve a patient's health and wellbeing. Areas with a restricted budget often find it difficult to justify community support but the results clearly speak for themselves.

Social prescribing is of vital importance as it reduces isolation, provides better health outcomes and supports community members to take greater control of their own health through teaching them the skills to maintain their wellbeing. This stops people from getting more unwell as well as eliminating the need for more intensive input later down the line.

“A huge benefit to the Community Living Well service is its accessibility”

## What do you and other GPs like about Community Living Well?

I have worked with Community Living Well since its early stages as well as through its more recent phases of development. It has been great to see it develop into a holistic service that addresses both social and clinical needs. The Community Living Well model recognises that mental health is complex and determined by a range of social, economic and environmental factors.

Another huge benefit of the service is its accessibility. GPs and community members can sign up a patient or themselves through the self-referral section of the website without having to book an initial appointment. This successfully removes the initial barrier that many face when trying to access help.

## What would you recommend patients do who need help with their mental health?

I urge them to seek help. There are various ways of doing this depending on what will best suit your needs. For anyone located in Kensington and Chelsea or Queen's Park and Paddington, I would advise you to speak to your GP or access information about the range of clinical and wellbeing services provided by Community Living Well via their website.

## What's on the horizon for Community Living Well and local GPs?

Further development will include moving the service onto the same IT system that the GP surgeries currently use. This will make it easier for Community Living Well to communicate with all the practices in the area.

“Social prescribing is of vital importance as it reduces isolation and provides better health outcomes”

## Without access to a computer?

Your GP can refer you to Community Living Well. Book an appointment so that you can talk through your options with them.





# Other Local Services

There are lots of other services situated within both Kensington and Chelsea and Queen's Park and Paddington. We've included details of some of them below.

## Book Break

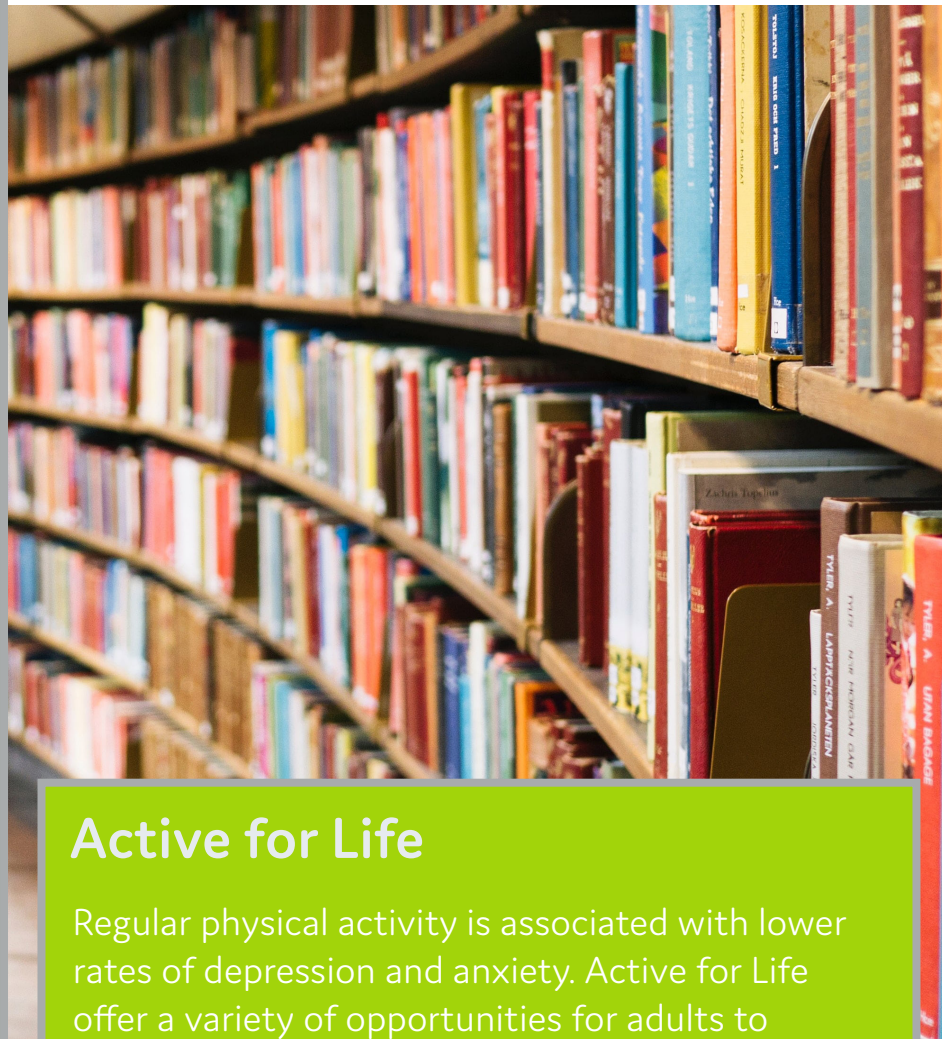
Looking for something different to do? Book Break is a reading group with a difference. Their sessions are open to all, readers and non-readers alike. Come along and listen to short stories, poems, novels and plays read aloud in a welcoming and friendly environment.

You will be under no pressure to read or participate more than you want or are able to. It's an opportunity to read and chat together whilst also discovering new literature. Free refreshments are provided at every group.

**Who is it for?** Book Break is open to anyone who would like to hear literature read aloud in a small and informal group setting

**Location:** Sessions held at Brompton Library, Chelsea Library, Kensington Central Library and North Kensington Library

**Contact:** [lizison@thereader.org.uk](mailto:lizison@thereader.org.uk) or 07807 106 815



## Active for Life

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety. Active for Life offer a variety of opportunities for adults to take part in sport and physical activity, including Health Walks, Yoga, Line Dancing, and Zumba classes. These sessions will provide you with a chance to meet new and like-minded people, enhance your confidence and self-esteem, improve your mobility and posture and reduce any stress and anxiety you may be experiencing.

**Who is it for?** Adults over eighteen living in Kensington and Chelsea

**Location:** Across the borough

**Contact:** [sportandleisure@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:sportandleisure@rbkc.gov.uk) or 020 7938 8182

## Open Age

Open Age work to enable anyone aged 50 or older to sustain their physical and mental fitness, maintain an active lifestyle and develop new and stimulating interests. They provide a wide range of physical, creative and mentally stimulating activities to enable you to develop new skills, fulfill your potential and make new friends. Activities cover everything from health classes such as dance, yoga, chair exercise and walking groups to creative and performing arts sessions and weekly groups with speakers. They also have daily computer classes and drop-in sessions at their Open Age computer suites, as well as from other venues.

**Who is it for?**

50+Kensington and Chelsea residents

**Contact:** [mail@openage.org.uk](mailto:mail@openage.org.uk)

**Website:** [openage.org.uk](http://openage.org.uk)



## Volunteer Centre

The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea work with local people, institutions and organisations to ensure the long-term recovery of North Kensington is community-led, responds to the needs of local people and enables them to decide their own solutions. Volunteering is used as a gateway to the skills and knowledge that lead to employment, a tool to support rehabilitation as well as a stepping stone on the path to recovery from poor mental health.

**Who is it for?** Kensington and Chelsea residents

**Location:** 1 Thorpe Close, Ladbroke Grove, W10 5XL

**Contact:** 020 8960 3722





Community  
**LivingWell**

Working together for your  
wellbeing

## Locations

CLW North Hub  
St Charles Centre for Health  
and Wellbeing, Exmoor  
Street, W10 6DZ

CLW South Hubs  
Violet Melchett Health  
Centre, Community Living  
Well, 2nd Floor, 30 Flood  
Walk, Chelsea, SW3 5RR

Gertrude Street  
15 Gertrude Street  
London, SW10 0JN

## Contact Details

[communitylivingwell.co.uk](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk)  
020 3317 4200 | [cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net](mailto:cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net)

Community Living Well is not a crisis service. If you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a friend or family member then please contact the Single Point of Access on 0800 0234 650 for help, advice or support over the phone, 24 hours a day.