

Community Living Well

Issue 12



Community
LivingWell

Working together for your wellbeing

In this edition

Mental health
support for carers



Getting active
in RBKC



Cost-of-living
support



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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,

I'm pleased to welcome you to the 12th edition of Community Living Well magazine.

In this issue, we've included a special feature on how exercise can benefit your mental wellbeing. Evidence shows that regular exercise can help to improve anxiety and low mood, so RBKC have provided us with information on how you can get or stay active in the borough throughout the year.

There's also a feature dedicated to those who may be caring for someone with a mental health problem. It is important that carers take care of themselves too, so we've listed some services that you may find useful.

Our Navigators have provided details of local food banks and other organisations that may be able to help you during the current cost-of-living crisis.

Plus, there are some real-life stories from people who have used Community Living Well services. By sharing their stories, we hope it will encourage others to seek support if they have experienced similar situations.

I hope you find the information useful. If you have any suggestions or feedback about the magazine, please contact me at stewart.gillespie@kcmind.org.uk.

Take care,

Stewart Gillespie – Marketing Coordinator

How to Refer

You can refer to the Community Living Well service quickly and securely by completing the form found here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/. Alternatively, you can ask your GP to refer you.

After we have received your information, we will be in touch within 5 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**

Community Living Well

Eligibility

Community Living Well is your community mental health service for Kensington & Chelsea, Queen's Park and Paddington. It is a service that offers you, or anyone involved in your care, a different kind of support for your mental health needs.

It brings people together from your local NHS, voluntary sector, local community groups and specialist mental health care 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 with a focus on your recovery needs and goals
- work with the GP at the centre as the accountable clinician responsible for each person's treatment and care

Our Partners

Central and North West London NHS

Foundation Trust – Talking Therapies Services

Kensington and Chelsea Mind

– Peer Support Service

SMART (St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation

and Training) – Navigator and

Employment Services

Kensington and Chelsea Social

Council – Self-Care Services

Find out more information and whether we can help you on our website:

communitylivingwell.co.uk

Wellbeing Support

Employment – Advice and guidance on looking for work, staying in work, and improving employability skills. You can refer yourself to this service.

Navigators – Advice and guidance on a range of issues including benefits, debt, housing and signposting to specialist support services. You can refer yourself to this service.

Peer Support – Groups, social events and activities bringing people together to support and learn from each other. You can refer yourself to this service.

Self-Care – Support and activities that help you to take care of your own mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. You can refer yourself to this service.

Clinical Support

Talking Therapies – Talking therapy or counselling that can help you if you are feeling stressed, worried or low in mood. You can refer yourself to this service.

Community Mental Health Hubs – based around GP surgeries and give you access to specialist mental health support. The Hubs bring together a range of mental health specialists who will work closely together to help you on your journey to recovery. Speak to your GP for more information.



Carers need support too

If you are a friend or family member who cares for someone with a mental health problem, it can often be upsetting and distressing. This can take a toll on your own mental health, and sometimes you may need support too. There are services that you can access to support your mental wellbeing, get advice and talk to others who may share similar experiences.

NHS Talking Therapies

Talking therapy provides a range of support if you are experiencing difficult emotions, like stress, worry or low mood.

It can also help if you're feeling overwhelmed with anxiety, struggling with depression, or having trouble with sleep.

A therapist can help by teaching you ways to cope and help manage your thoughts and feelings. The therapy you receive will be tailored to your needs,

and sessions can be arranged over the phone or online, if it's difficult to attend in person.

You can refer yourself for talking therapy, or you can speak to your GP and ask them to refer you.



Peer Support

Peer support is when people use their own experience to help each other. You will often meet as group, online or in person.

The groups are facilitated by a peer support worker who will help to guide the conversation, and they will draw from their own experiences to provide support and give advice. Peer support can have great benefits as you are connecting with people who understand what you are going through.

There are also social peer support activities, like group walks, quizzes, and museum visits. You can refer yourself for peer support, or you can ask your GP to refer you.

Self-Care

It is important to try to take part in activities that help keep yourself well. The Community Living Well self-care programme includes the Well Read play-reading group. It's a brilliant way to meet other local people and read different stories in a friendly and supportive environment.

There's also a massage service to help you relax and unwind. They offer seated massage and reflexology, or guided meditation over the phone, as well as other therapies.

You can refer yourself to these services, or ask your GP to refer you.



Check-in and Chat

The CNWL NHS Check In & Chat Service provides a friendly, trained ear to support unpaid carers who may be experiencing isolation or loneliness.

Check in & Chat has a team of trained volunteers to telephone carers for up to one hour per week for eight weeks to reduce the health-harming impacts of loneliness and isolation, provide informal support and encourage networking with community resources. Volunteer 'Chatters' will confirm who they are and why they are calling.

This service is for unpaid carers (family and friends) who are looking after CNWL patients.

If you are a carer, you can self-refer in three ways by:

- calling 020 3317 5825
- completing the referral form at cnwl.nhs.uk/download_file/view/4950/3786
- emailing cnwl.check-inandchat@nhs.net

**To access Talking Therapy,
Peer Support or Self-Care...**

**... refer yourself quickly and easily
by completing the self-referral
form.**

**Go to [communitylivingwell.co.uk/
self-referral-form-mental-health/](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/)
and select the service or services
you'd like to try.**

Or ask your GP to refer you.



Looking after your mental health in the winter months

2023 brings new beginnings but the winter months remain. These can be difficult months for many of us to manage our mental health. The colder temperatures and shorter days could mean we feel the need to withdraw from things we normally enjoy. Here are some tips of what to do to manage your mental health during the winter months.

Identify what you struggle with during these months

Triggers and situations that we struggle with can be different for everyone. It may be a stressful day at work, worrying about your finances, a difficult conversation with someone or the bus is running late. By being aware of what you find difficult, it is easier to make plans to manage when these difficult situations happen. For example, when you have experienced a stressful day at work, after work you could plan to go for a jog, enjoy a home comfort meal or spend time with loved ones. If you're struggling to work out what makes you feel overwhelmed, keep a diary and see if there are any links between what you do and how it makes you feel.

Keep a routine

In the winter months, it can be hard to feel as motivated to go outside and do things like you would in the summer months. Try and keep as much of a routine like the summer months as possible. Humans love routine so doing similar activities can boost your mood. It can be hard to sometimes do things so plan using a SMART goal. This stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Focused. For example, on next Monday at 6pm for 15 minutes I will do yoga at home. This gives us a set-target whilst keeping it realistic.

Spend time in nature

Being in nature whatever time of year can do wonders for our happiness. The weather in the winter months can mean that we don't feel as motivated to go outside. However, being in nature can improve our mood by being in a different environment. Why not have a go at going to a local park and come prepared with a coat, scarf and umbrella!

Always have a plan B if you're doing a weather dependent activity

It can be demoralising when a plan gets cancelled because of bad weather. When making plans, have a backup option if the weather is unkind. For example, if your walk with friends gets cancelled, you could meet at a museum, café or someone's home instead. This means you still get to feel connected with others despite the initial plan no longer being possible.

Create healthy habits at home

In the winter months, it can be natural for our motivation to take a dip and we can reduce time we spend doing things we'd normally enjoy. We can overcome this by starting healthy habits at home. This could be something like cooking a meal, having a self-care evening (watching a film, taking a bath, reading a book), exercising or

choosing to put your needs first. If you struggle with staying up too late, try one night where you start your wind down routine earlier.

Talk to someone

Sometimes things feel just too much, especially during the darker months of the year. It can feel hard to reach out and you can feel alone with your feelings. Know that you are not alone and many other people feel this way.

If you feel comfortable to, speak with a loved one or someone you trust. Speaking about our difficulties can give us a sense of relief. If you don't feel comfortable to speak with someone you know, you can try other services such as a peer support or befriending services.

Also, you can reach out to a professional such as a GP or therapist. You can discuss your difficulties with your local Talking Therapies service who may be able to support you to find the best service for your needs. For more information, as well as useful links, go to:

communitylivingwell.co.uk

If you need additional support...

You can refer yourself for Peer Support or NHS Talking Therapies quickly and easily.

Just complete the referral form online at communitylivingwell.co.uk

Or scan the QR code with your smartphone:



Peer Support for Complex Emotional Needs

Kensington and Chelsea Mind is working in partnership with the NHS to provide peer support for people with complex emotional needs across Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster.

About the service

The service offers mental health peer support for people who experience emotional and interpersonal difficulties, often associated with a diagnosis of personality disorder, who would benefit from meeting with others – individually and in groups – to give and gain support based on a shared understanding of their emotional mental health needs.

The service is suitable for people who may experience intense feelings of emotional distress, such as anger, anxiety, very low mood or rollercoaster feelings. They may also feel that their lives are chaotic and/or relationships are unstable, which can have a significant impact on relationships and other factors, such as education and employment. Individuals may also self-harm or use alcohol and/or drugs as coping strategies.

Who is it for?

The Peer Support service is available to people:

- aged 18 years and over
- who live in Kensington & Chelsea or Westminster
- who experience long-standing emotional and interpersonal difficulties which may be associated with a diagnosis of personality disorder.



What help does peer support offer?

Peer Support offers peer-led and peer-facilitated activities which focus on your strengths, hopes and ambitions and can help you develop skills and strategies to manage and maintain your emotional and physical wellbeing. Mental health peer support can help:

- Feeling accepted by others who share your experience
- Developing and sharing skills
- Reducing feelings of isolation
- Building confidence and emotional resilience
- Building new relationships
- Learning new ways to manage your emotional wellbeing.

How to access the service

Individuals can be referred in a number of ways, including referrals from: Complex Emotional Needs Pathway Team, including the Waterview Centre; Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster mental health hubs; GPs; Community and voluntary organisations; Self-enquiries from people who are not accessing specialist mental health services or requiring acute care (please note that a care professional referral may be required).

For more information or to make a referral, go to:

www.kcmind.org.uk/how-we-can-help/peer-support-for-complex-emotional-needs/

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

It is no myth that physical activity is directly linked to mental health and wellbeing. Evidence shows that exercise reduces anxiety and depression, almost on the same level as therapeutic intervention. It can reduce risk of cognitive decline, improve sleep outcomes and self-esteem.

Health Benefits

Physical activity also has many physical health benefits. It has been proven that exercise reduces the risk of cardiovascular issues through lowering of blood pressure, improving glucose tolerance and reducing obesity, which can individually or collectively improve quality of life. It also has many benefits for those who suffer with Long Term Health conditions*. Around 20% of those who access mental health services have been diagnosed with a long-term health condition, and exercise has been proven to reduce symptoms.

Mental Health Support

Community Living Well Talking Therapies (Kensington and Chelsea) focuses on providing mental health interventions in the form of CBT therapy or counselling.

The service is determined to offer the best possible care in providing mental health support to the service users, and since exercise and physical activity play a large role in our mental wellbeing, the service is recruiting for a 'Physical Activity Co-ordinator' to work alongside those who are interested in using exercise to improve their symptoms.



This would be beneficial for both those who are trying to overcome a mental health problem, or someone who is suffering from poor mental health due to the impact that their physical health is having on them.

This new branch of care aims to work alongside the usual care provided already by the therapists, and will deliver a physical activity service to Community Living Well Talking Therapies. The practitioner will be responsible for developing, planning, implementing and evaluating physical activity resources. They will work alongside staff and service users to fully integrate physical activity into the interventions already provided by the service. They will also be able to support by providing resources regarding the help that is available in the community. Healthy body – healthy mind is the main goal for this new advancement.

** Please speak to your medical professional regarding exercise if you have been diagnosed with a long-term health condition.*



Turn to the next page to find out how you can get active in Kensington and Chelsea



Getting active in RBKC

We know that being active helps keep us fit and healthy, but it is also important for our mental wellbeing. When we exercise, chemicals are released to the brain, making us feel happier, more confident, and like we've achieved something. Overall, exercise can help improve our self-esteem, concentration, and even help us to sleep better – not bad for something we can do for free!

Regular exercise

We should aim to do about 150 minutes of moderate activity per week (such as a nice, brisk walk). It could be 30 minutes, five days a week or break it into smaller chunks. Whether it's walking, cycling, taking up a sport, or even cleaning your home, all movement counts and soon you'll notice how you're feeling better.

Taking up regular exercise can also be a great way to meet people, while other benefits include feeling less angry, frustrated, and tired, being more energetic, relaxed, motivated and even excited to see your progress.

Outdoor exercise can mean even greater benefits for your mental health, making us feel happier, and helping with depression or anxiety. Exercise outdoors doesn't have to mean hiking through mountains or long-distance runs. Walking to a local park or strolling around where you live can boost mental wellbeing.



Active for Life

In Kensington and Chelsea, there are many affordable or free activities to try out across the borough. Our Active for Life programme includes wellbeing walks, meaning you can explore your local area as well as exercising.

For those looking for something a little more upbeat, our dancing or Zumba classes might be the right fit, while Tai Chi, Pilates and yoga are great for people looking for exercise that is relaxing and kind to joints.

Visit the Council website www.rbkc.gov.uk and search 'activities for adults' to find out more about what's on or pick up an Active for Life brochure from our borough leisure centres.

Introducing exercise into your day

For some it can be hard to be active, perhaps because of mobility and access needs, or due to mental health or disability. The NHS website can help, with tips on building activity into your day. Our Active for Life programme also includes a range of activities for disabled adults, from swimming, gym time and multi-sports.

If you're starting to exercise for the first time in a long while, start small and with a little bit every day. The NHS website has online videos you can do at home, or begin to go for a short walk every day, increasing your distance or speed gradually.

If you would like to start exercising regularly, but don't want to do it alone, come along to Little Wormwood Scrubs from 11am every Sunday. Open to everyone, you can walk or jog the route for free. Afterwards, stay and meet other local residents over tea and coffee.

Article and photos provided by RBKC

Pay and Play

Exercise can be even more fun when doing it with family, and our residents' Pay and Play card, which is free for all residents in Kensington and Chelsea, can help you mix regular exercise into your family life for less. The free card includes a 'Better Pay and Play' membership which gives discounts of up to 50 per cent for gym, classes and swimming for the whole family at Kensington Leisure Centre and Chelsea Sports Centre. The cards are available from the leisure centres or via our website. [Go to our website](#) and search 'pay and play card' now.

Just remember...

If you're unsure of how to start, just remember:

- 1) Being active keeps you fit and healthy and can make you happier.
- 2) All movement counts.
- 3) There are lots of free and affordable activities for you to try out around Kensington and Chelsea.



For more information...

- Visit the RBKC website RBKC.gov.uk
- call the Sports Development team on 020 7938 8182 or
- email SportandLeisure@rbkc.gov.uk



In the spotlight: Alain's story

A couple of years ago, Alain experienced a traumatic health scare which led to anxiety, panic attacks and eventually, severe depression. He lost his confidence, stopped doing the things he enjoyed, and distanced himself from friends and family. A friend recommended he try peer support. Alain shared his story with us and explained how peer support is helping his recovery.

How did you first hear about Peer Support? Could you tell us a little bit about what you were going through which led you to seek support?

About two years ago, I had a very traumatic operation. It was an emergency operation, I had sepsis, and it was at the height of the pandemic. I ended up suffering a lot of very traumatic post-op difficulties. I started having anxiety on a level I have never experienced; I had panic attacks, I stopped going out. It quickly led to depression, and as the time passed it became very severe. I kept myself from friends, all the things you shouldn't do, but I didn't realise that at the time.

I had reached a point where I could no longer connect with people, even with close friends. I was locked in my head. It was absolutely incredible. And physically it had a great impact as well. I found walking difficult, I was always dizzy, I had panic attacks. It was a terrible time.

A friend had told me about Kensington & Chelsea Mind, so I got in touch. Initially, I tried going to the social

gathering they have at the beautiful church in Ladbroke Grove, but I was still in a terrible place. I felt absolutely overwhelmed and distressed by the fact that I couldn't connect. I couldn't open up, I wasn't even listening!

Then I got a call from one of the peer support workers. He's not a counsellor, although he has extremely good counselling skills. For the first time, I met somebody who was willing to talk about their own experience. He was sharing stuff about himself that I could relate to, and this had a great impact on my recovery. We had weekly conversations, sometimes online, sometimes on the phone, and it was his understanding and kindness that allowed me to open up in a way that I would not have been able to do with anyone else.

Which peer support groups do you attend and how do they help you?

I'm attending the creative arts group on a regular basis now. I find it very cathartic. I have no artistic skills, but everyone can draw or paint. It's so good for me because

there are other people like me around the table, and we don't have to speak about our mental health. We could if we wanted, but we could speak about this or that whilst drawing, and there is no pressure. I really appreciate that, and it also helped me reconnect.

I also take part with the walking groups occasionally in Kensington Gardens and Holland Park. It has all made a hell of a difference. It's community based, so you don't have to travel very far. When you're not well, the idea of travelling can be overwhelming, whereas I could walk from my place to meet the group.

You said you don't have to talk about mental health at the sessions, but when the conversation does lead to mental health, how do you find it? Is it helpful?

Yes. After a little while and you've broken the ice, people start to talk about their mental health. As I got slightly better, I started to open up and tell people about my own struggles. We all have different stories, but there's a lot I realised that is common. Some people in return would be more forthcoming.

Is it helpful then if someone mentions something that you might've experienced or you've been feeling, then you can connect on that level?

Yes, and also people have their own ways of coping and sometimes you can learn a lot from listening to other people's stories. Or they can tell you that they got help from another organisation, they give you names of services you might never have heard of, or techniques that help them. Somebody was telling me about the creative arts group and how therapeutic it had been for them. I asked if I could join the class, and turned out that it was indeed truly beneficial, especially when you're in a state where you're locked in your head.

Have you seen an improvement in your situation or feelings?

Absolutely. I would say I'm well; I haven't totally recovered. I'm very aware of the precarity of my mental health, so I tend to monitor it on a regular basis, every day.

I've adopted a little-step approach and set myself aims, because I would find it overwhelming. I've started gardening again. After the operation, all the things I loved that kept me going, suddenly I was no longer interested. I couldn't stand to think of gardening, I couldn't even watch gardening programmes. The love

I felt for friends, it was gone! I was totally lost. It's truly frightening. To have somebody like the peer support worker, who shared his own experience, was really important to me.

Having the regular timetable of activities also gives you a structure to your day. I found myself having nothing to do. I spent the whole day watching Netflix, just escaping or trying to escape. Every so often my mind was wandering and I was back in my head, it was terrible. So, having a bit of structure to my day, it does certainly help. You go out of the house, you have a bit of exercise.

Would you recommend Peer Support?

Oh absolutely, yes. The worst thing when it comes to depression is isolation, but you can't help it. It's not a matter of courage, you're in a very dark place. You just want to hide. But by attending the peer support groups and knowing that other people are going through the same thing, it can be very helpful. You feel less alone.

There's still some stigma attached to mental health and often it's us, the patient, who internalises this stigma and it becomes deep-rooted in our head. When I was at the height of this depression, I felt terribly ashamed. I didn't want to go out, I didn't want people to see my face because they could see that I was unwell, I was hiding.

What would you say to someone to encourage to try peer support if they are unsure?

I would say, start on the phone. You don't have to leave your home. See how it goes. It might encourage you to go out and meet a peer support worker face-to-face, or attend one of the social gatherings and try that. Then when you feel more confident, perhaps join a peer support group, where you meet people that suffer from depression or anxiety, and who are struggling to get better on their own. I highly recommend it; the peer support team does fantastic work.

Want to find out more about Peer Support?

Peer Support gives you the chance to talk to others with similar experiences and who understand your mental health problems. To find out more or to refer yourself, go to: communitylivingwell.co.uk

In the spotlight: Myriam's story

Myriam was looking for on-going support to help manage her mental health following time spent under psychiatric care. She was referred to NHS Talking Therapies. We spoke to her about her experience and why she found the therapy helpful.

How did you hear about Talking Therapy? What made you seek support?

Well, my story with mental issues goes back to six years ago when I had a manic episode. I was sectioned into an NHS psychiatric ward, then transferred to a private hospital. After my episode I was really, really struggling emotionally and psychologically, so I went to stay with my family in France for a couple of years. I had suffered trauma and stress following a difficult divorce, and I would also suffer from paralysing anxiety attacks, usually around money worries.

When I came back to the UK in January 2020, I reached out to my GP and told them I would like some support as I was still very up and down. Of course, then the pandemic started, so I was offered online talking therapy sessions.

I had my first series of sessions then, and I've since had another course of sessions. They were arranged online and over the telephone. I had 6-8 sessions I think, once a week to start with, or every other week if I couldn't make it. They were flexible around me.

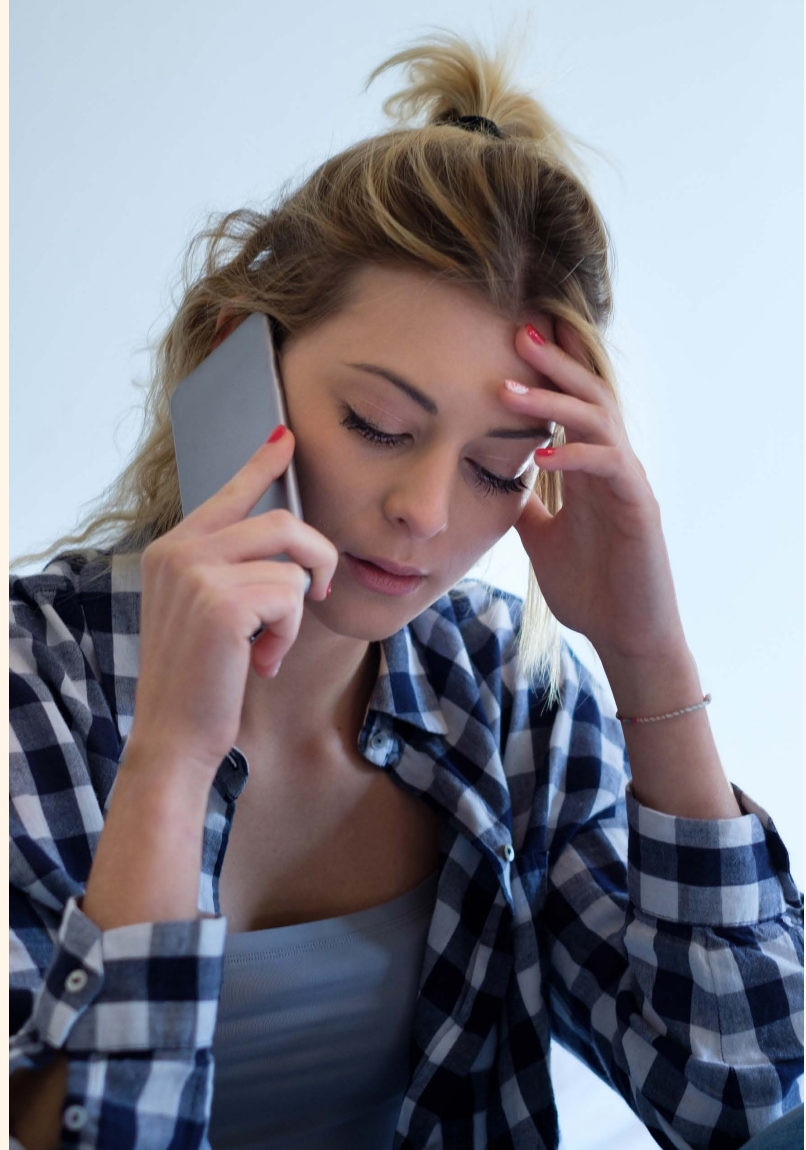


Photo: Stock image

Can you talk me through how the sessions were run? What did they involve?

I was asked to answer a questionnaire before each session, so they could monitor if my mental state was better or worse than the previous session. It was structured well; the therapist was always asking me the same set of questions each time for consistency. Then we would go into whether something had happened since the last session.

I also remember that they provided links to further information or advice depending on what we had discussed in that session. For instance, I remember having issues with insomnia, so she was sending me ways of dealing with insomnia, or ways to manage alcohol, if that would be helpful. There were also links to things I could do to take care of my general wellbeing, like sport or art, things like that. I always had further links to things that might be helpful at the time.

How have the sessions helped you? Have you seen an improvement in your situation and feelings?

I've done a lot; I've taken on board yoga, meditation, mindfulness, breathing, discipline, so that's what I carry on. The insomnia information was really helpful.

Also, what helped a lot was planning my week. Sometimes it's hard to plan my week because I'm quite impulsive, so it can be difficult. But basically, it's about being very mindful of not taking on too much, saying 'no' to certain things, postponing certain things, being very aware of what makes me tired.

Before, I could take on a full day and have zero space to recover, energy wise, so that really helped me make my own rules of doing things my way to pace myself.

You said you thought the therapist was very good during both sets of sessions. What makes you say that?

Obviously, you would expect them to be kind, but they were really very kind. They were also very good at explaining things, or providing an explanation for why they asked certain things or why we discussed certain things.

Also, the link between the practical part and the additional information was really helpful. They customised their links and advice to my story, it was a nice relationship.

Would you recommend talking therapy to other people?

Yes. Obviously since my episode, I'm even more interested in psychology, but I've started a deep personal development. I'm a real fan and believer of that; I think everyone should go to a therapist. We all have so many issues that we don't even know, once you start uncovering it, then you realise then there's even more.

Anxiety dealt with by yourself is like digging yourself into a hole, because you have no idea of how to come out of your own head. It's like if you have fallen into a well and you're trying to get out by yourself. You might get lucky and get out, but it takes a long time and is hard. But with help, you can climb out much faster.

What would you say to someone to encourage them to try talking therapy?

I always say 'you don't know what you don't know', so you should always try new things. Talking therapy should be part of an on-going regime.

For me, the recommendation came from a trustworthy source, which was my GP, so speak to them, find out more.

If you haven't been diagnosed with something, or you don't know the name of something, the jargon and language is too much. You have no idea if you are depressed, or if you have anxiety, bipolar, whatever. The line between them can be a bit blurred, and sometimes treatment is different, so it's best to talk to someone.

Whether it's talking therapy, whether it's exercise, then this is what you want. Whatever it takes to feel better.

During her recovery, Myriam has rediscovered herself through art, which has led her to explore new opportunities in her career and her wellbeing...

When I had my episode and I was sectioned, I had also what I think was a spiritual awakening, an artistic calling. I now call it my artistic 'coming out', because I have no other way to describe it. I lived in an altered state of consciousness for about two weeks during my recovery, and it gave me this kind of vision. My family was completely panicked, but for me, I had the best time of my life there. Suddenly, I saw myself. My life's purpose and mission was so clear. It was very deep, it was very transformational. It was awakening to myself. It's only been six years, but it was a change of identity for me. It has been such a journey. I had this spiritual awakening. I knew I needed to seek ongoing support for my mental health, but I also knew I wanted to focus on my art and help myself heal through expressing myself creatively.

Want to find out more about Talking Therapies?

Talking Therapies provide support for when you experience difficult emotions, such as low mood, anxiety and stress. To find out more or to refer yourself, go to: communitylivingwell.co.uk



Cost-of-Living Support

Life may feel particularly difficult at the moment. Rising energy bills and other living costs can cause us worry and anxiety. This added stress can seriously affect our mental health, especially if you are already living with a mental health problem. Our Navigators have provided information on some local organisations that are offering help and support during this time, including local food banks and warm spaces.

Food Banks in Kensington and Chelsea

Monday	None
Tuesday 11am-1pm	Notting Hill Methodist Church, 240 Lancaster Rd W11 4AH (V)
Wednesday 11am-12pm	Mary Smith Court, 17-21 Trebovir Rd, Earls Court SW5 9NF
Thursday 2pm-6.30pm	Dalgarno Way Centre (need to get a time-slot ticket at 10am first)
Friday 1pm-3pm	Notting Hill Methodist Church, 240 Lancaster Rd W11 4AH (V)
Saturday 2.30pm-3.30pm	Community Response Centre, Brompton
Sunday	None
Key: (V) = Voucher required (R) = Referral needed	

Food Banks in Westminster

Monday	Westminster Chapel (R); The Space (Community Market – ticketing from 10am)
Tuesday 11am-1pm	Notting Hill Methodist Church, 240 Lancaster Rd W11 4AH (V)
Wednesday	St Matthew's (W2 4LA) 4pm-6pm; Granville Community Kitchen 3pm-4.30pm (collection NW6 5HE)
Thursday 4pm-5.30pm	Westbourne Park Pantry (W2 5DX) (R); 2pm-6.30pm at Dalgarno Way Centre (need to get a time-slot ticket at 10am first); Bay20 (W10 6JG) 2pm-4pm
Friday 11am-1pm	Westbourne Park Pantry (W2 5DX) (R); 4pm-5.30pm Granville Community Kitchen (collection NW6 5HE)
Saturday	Venture Centre W10 5YB registration from midday to 2pm, collection from 3pm-4pm (assigned timeslot)
Sunday	None
Key: (V) = Voucher required (R) = Referral needed	

How to check for Foodbanks near you:

- trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/
- kcsc.org.uk/food-banks-rbkc
- westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

Warm Spaces:

- rbkc.gov.uk/cost-living-support-hub/stay-healthy-and-warm-winter/find-warm-space-near-you
- westminster.gov.uk/winter-in-the-city

Community Living Well Navigators

Community Living Well Navigators are for people over 16 who experience mental health problems whilst under the care of their GP, and their carers.

They can offer practical support with a range of issues and support you to access specialist advice, information and other services.

Refer yourself at:

communitylivingwell.co.uk

Where to get further help and vouchers/referrals:

People who are struggling with their household or energy bills can contact one of a number of referral partners in their area for further support and advice:

RBKC:

- Citizens Advice Kensington & Chelsea - 0808 278 7982 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday
- Nucleus Legal Advice – 020 7373 4005
- World's End Neighbourhood Advice Centre (WENAC) - 020 7351 5749
- Age UK Kensington & Chelsea - 020 8969 9105

Westminster:

- Age UK Westminster - 020 3004 5610
- Citizens Advice Westminster – 0808 278 7834 10am – 4pm Monday to Friday
- Cardinal Hume Centre (Westminster) - 0207 227 1673, 9.30am – 3pm Mon to Fri



Job Applications

Applying for jobs can be quite stressful and emotionally exhausting. The uncertainty and having to deal with the disappointment of rejection can also cause anxiety. Our Employment Support team have provided some advice on how to manage your feelings, as well as tips on how to write your CV and cover letter.

"I've been applying for a lot of jobs recently, but sometimes I hear nothing back from the employer and it is getting me down. What can I do?"

Trying to sustain your motivation when there are a number of external influencing factors can be extremely difficult.

When we don't hear back it can be hard not to take it personally and our resilience is truly put to the test. Alongside continuing to give our best effort, we can consider how we can influence factors which are in our control.

On a practical level, having a fresh pair of eyes on how you are currently looking and applying for employment can be beneficial. For example, working with an Employment Adviser you can address points such as:

- Are your CV and Cover letters concise, relevant and with excellent grammar?
- Where are you searching for roles? i.e online/ job boards/ contacting employers directly etc
- Have you researched the role thoroughly to ask the best questions at interview?

On a holistic level we can understand how different parts of our life can impact on other parts. These include but are not limited to our mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and financial health.

When we can take an honest look at these parts of us, reflect and introduce small changes - this can help us to take our control back. Thus improve our wellbeing, reduce anxious thoughts and hopefully allow us to come across in a more confident and relaxed way.



What to include in a CV

- Have you reflected on your professional and educational achievements, to ensure you add all your relevant experience here?
- Have you thought about your key skills and strengths which you can add here?
- Are you able to tailor your CV to highlight the specific skills and experience you gained in a specific role or sector?
- Has this document been proof read to ensure it reads well and the grammar is at its best?

What to include in a cover letter

- Do you have any examples of you doing similar work to that in the role you are applying for, which you can highlight? If you are changing career, can you use your transferable skills that are relative to the role?
- Is there a certain project or piece of work that you are passionate about or excelled in, and can mention here?
- What do you enjoy most about the role, that you can highlight here? This should always be backed up by specific examples.
- Have you researched the company and their values and highlighted something/s that stand out to you?

Community Living Well Employment Support

The Employment Service is for people over 16 who experience mental health problems whilst under the care of their GP, and their carers.

It can support you if you want to find work or are struggling in your current job because of a mental health problem.

The Employment team offers a wide range of practical help, advice and coaching support. They can help to answer any questions you have about jobs or employment. Your dedicated Employment Adviser can help you:

- **Find the right kind of work for you**
- **Return to work after a period of sick leave**
- **Stay in work and/or deal with workplace adjustments**
- **Know your employment rights**

To find out more, or to refer yourself to this service, go to communitylivingwell.co.uk



Volunteering on Prescription

The Community Living Well Self-Care programme helps people to take more control of their mental health and physical wellbeing, and build social contact with access to community, leisure, education, arts and volunteering opportunities.

As part of the Self-Care service, The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea gives you the chance to meet people, share skills and interests and improve your wellbeing through workshops and volunteering tailored to your needs. Here is Stevie's story...

"When ill health stopped by career in my mid-fifties, I lost more than a reasonable income; I lost a focus, a rationale and a structure that involved regular interaction with both colleagues and clients.

As weeks turned into months and months to years, engagement with a wider world began to fade and contact with this previous
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life ceased completely. Never gregarious, isolation set in. Fortunate in having an active mental life with much reading to catch up on, I was able to cope. But eventually isolation and loneliness began to take its toll. Whole weeks could pass without anything more than the most cursory interaction with shop assistants.

It is insufficiently appreciated how much loneliness takes on the whole of one's life. It can impact on everything from the psychological, self-esteem and identity to self-care, neglect and a sedentary existence absent of exercise and healthy eating.

It is difficult to ask for help. Deprived of much else, pride can feel like the last bit of wreckage on which to cling. Having had a career spanning addiction, mental health and offending, the idea of asking for support felt especially difficult. The stigma attached to mental health problems is irrational but rational thinking proves no defence against stigma. It is possible to seek to combat such stigma and yet feel a sense of inadequacy when experiencing such difficulty.

Seeking support was a slow process, characterised by hesitancy and nervousness promoted by my fear of not being treated on a basis of equality, and not feeling in control. It began with an email to the Wellbeing service and from that initial contact began, again slowly, to engage with the service run by Wellbeing at the Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea.

From telephone conversations with someone able to provide intelligent and friendly exchange of ideas (for support can also take the form of being reminded that you too have ideas and a contribution to make), to walks by the canal and watching Gilbert and Sullivan in Holland Park. As time progressed my confidence and self-esteem began to be restored.

It is not as infrequent to cross over from giving to receiving support. The line has always been much more fluid than people imagine. Given the way life is currently structured, especially in big cities, this is hardly surprising. The journey from provider to receiver or receiver to provider is a journey that can enrich all. Support can also take the form of being reminded that you too have ideas and a contribution to make."

Other Self-Care services include:

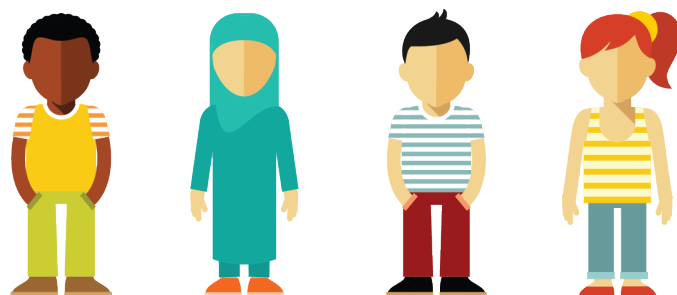
Clement James Wellbeing Programme – offers a variety of group sessions and one-to-one appointments, for those looking for support with employment, advice and guidance, and wellbeing.

Well Read – a community play-reading programme that is open to all. It's a brilliant way to meet other local people and read different stories in a friendly and supportive environment.

In your language – A service offered only for Arabic (including Moroccan and Sudanese dialects), Farsi, French and Somali speakers to provide emotional support and help with practical problems.

Massage and Reflexology – in partnership with Community Massage London, SMART is offering centre-based therapies to help you relax and unwind.

My Recipe, My Way – activity group for women of diverse backgrounds to explore the stories behind their favourite recipes with others in the community.



If you think you would benefit from the Self-Care service...

To refer yourself to the Self-Care service, please fill out the form available here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/

Same quality service, new location

North Kensington Community Mental Health Hub is moving from the Pall Mall Centre to Hathaway House in January 2023

The North K&C Community Mental Health Hub currently located at the Pall Mall Centre in North Kensington will move to: Hathaway House, 7f Woodfield Road, W9 2BA on 23 January 2023.

This move is compulsory due to the expiry of the current lease at the Pall Mall Centre from March 2023.

Patients will hear directly about any changes to the location of their appointments over the next few weeks. Some appointments will take place at the Pall Mall Centre until the move is complete.

About Hathaway House

Hathaway House is a modern purpose-built space; designed to meet the needs of the services moving there.

It has extensive treatment areas including clinic rooms, interview/ therapy rooms and group rooms and sufficient flexible space to use if the services need more space in the future.

It is next to CNWL's Woodfield Road which houses similar teams from Westminster and specialist teams serving the whole of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster (including the Early Intervention Service, Trauma Service and Waterview Centre). This means they can work together more where its beneficial for an individual's needs.

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Getting there

Hathaway House has good transport links and remains close to the St Charles Mental Health Unit.

By road

Hathaway House is situated on Woodfield Road and is accessed from The Great Western Road, Westbourne Park.

Blue Badge parking and standard parking is located on site

By bus

The nearest bus stops are Westminster Registry Office (Stop G and H) located on either side of Harrow Road and approximately 180m from the service. The 18, 36 and N18 services stop here.

By underground

Hathaway House is a short walk from Westbourne Park Underground station, served by the Circle and Hammersmith and City lines.

Who to talk to about the moves

We understand that this change may cause some uncertainty. Therefore, we want to let you know what's happening as soon as possible.

Your named worker or clinician in charge of your care will be able to discuss the move with you and answer any questions that you have.

Activities, Groups and Courses

Our partners run a full calendar of events throughout the year. There is a mix of online and face-to-face activities, groups and courses that you can get involved in, depending on your needs.

Peer Support (provided by Kensington & Chelsea Mind)

Mental Health Peer Support Groups - every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday - These weekly groups bring people together to give and receive mutual support in a peer support setting, to help manage daily stresses. Structured self-help peer support groups aim to bring people together who can share their experience of mental health. It's your chance to talk about your mental health, an opportunity to learn about how others in similar situations manage their symptoms and connect with people who know what it's like to feel the way you do.

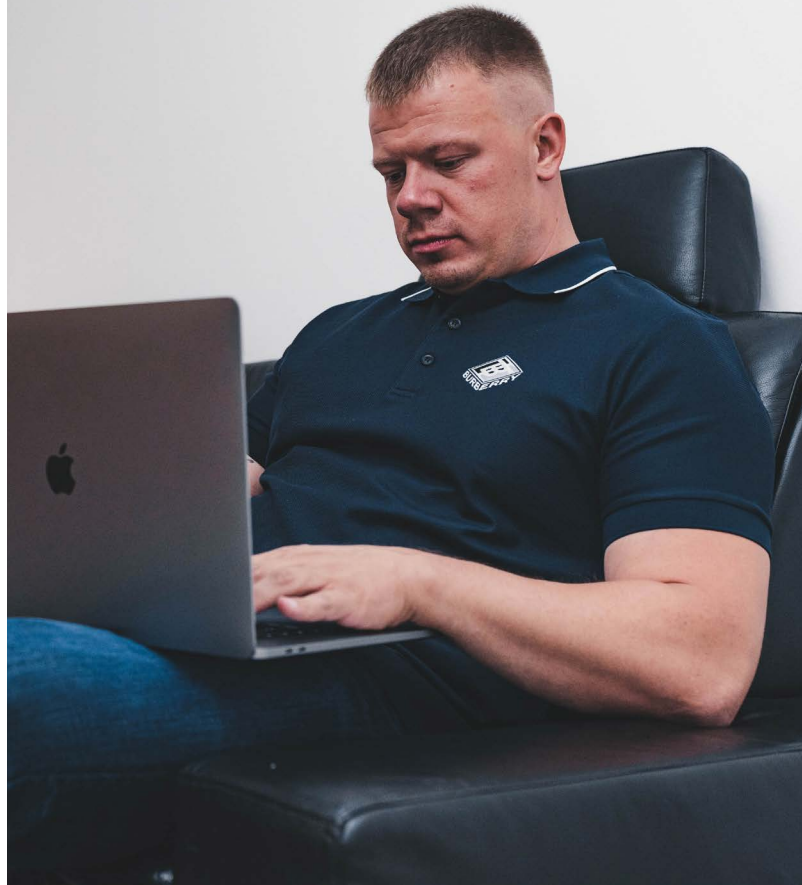
Specialist Support Groups - every other week - These specialist groups include a creative arts group, and sessions specifically for women and the LGBTQIA+ and BAME communities.

Group Walks - weekly - Join a peer support worker and other peer support members for a refreshing, relaxed walk in one of our beautiful local parks. Walks are for an hour or so, although if you need to leave sooner that is fine. A great chance to meet, socialise and chat with others, whilst having some exercise, sunshine and fresh air too!

Monday Social - every Monday at St Peter's Church - a social peer support group where you can come and chat with others, have a cup of tea or coffee, and relax in this beautiful local venue.



Activities and Groups



Talking Therapies (provided by CNWL NHS)

Mood Boost - Wednesdays 5.30pm-7pm - This 6-session group which supports you in understanding low mood and how it impacts us on a daily basis. The group aims to support you to better manage and improve your mood through learning of different strategies in an interactive way. You are not expected or encouraged to discuss personal details of your struggles, and evidence shows that learning with your peers has positive effect on your recovery.

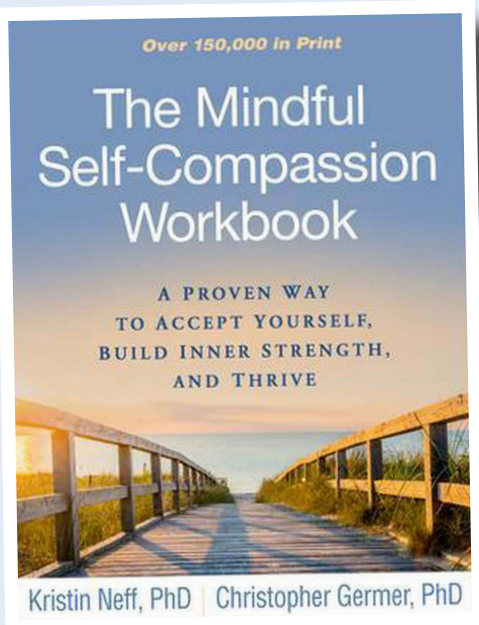
Gardening Group - Tuesdays 1pm-2.30pm - This 6-week in-person group at St Charles Hospital Allotments combines psycho-education and mindfulness techniques, along with outdoor gardening, to help improve wellbeing and build routine.

Boosting Mood and Motivation - Tuesdays 10am-12pm - This is a 10-week online course for people who experience low mood and depression to help understand how the problem developed, identify unhelpful patterns of thinking and behaviour to break the vicious cycle of negative mood.

To see the full calendar of activities, groups and courses, including how to register, go to:
[**communitylivingwell.co.uk/events-and-meetings**](https://communitylivingwell.co.uk/events-and-meetings)

Book Reviews

We asked Community Living Well staff to review any books that they've found helpful when looking after their own mental wellbeing. Here are the recommendations for this edition...



The Mindful Self-Compassion Workbook

"A proven way to accept yourself, build inner strength and thrive"

By Kristin Neff, PhD; Christopher Germer, PhD.

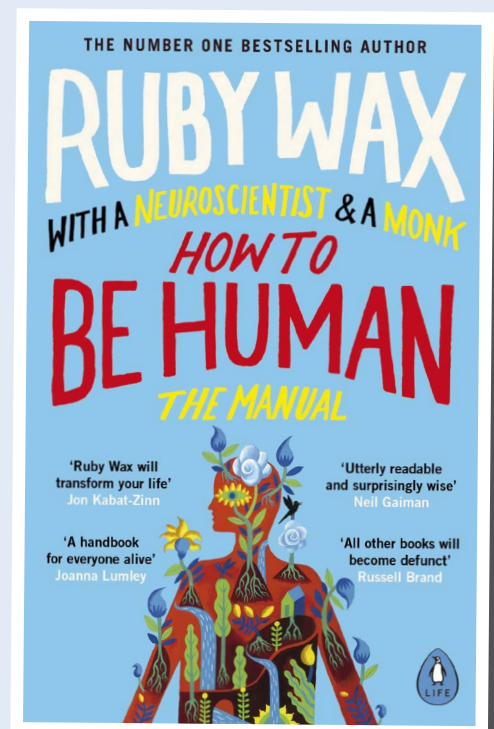
Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) is a training programme which has been developed to help us through those difficult moments which can occur in our lives. It links two skills, Mindfulness, which asks us to be open to things which are happening around us and to be more aware of them, and Self-Compassion which teaches us to be kind to ourselves. Sometimes we can be a bit harsh with ourselves, especially during tough situations, not remembering to work on our mental health which makes those tough situations, more difficult. By practicing these tools daily, when not in hardship – we are more likely to use these tools when we mostly need them. On the basis of this programme, the book takes you through 24 chapters which are all based around different topics including relationship stresses, weight and body image issues, health concerns, anxiety and other common problems. It also includes exercises, informal practices and meditations, to practice at any time, and anywhere. Reviewed by Alina, Assistant Psychologist and Research Assistant

How to be Human

"We should be the happiest species alive – but most of us aren't. What's gone wrong?"

By Ruby Wax

Actress and comedian, Ruby Wax, has lived with depression her whole adult life. Wanting to understand more about mental health, she first studied for a postgraduate certificate in psychotherapy and counselling, and has since obtained a Master's degree in Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy. Ruby's second mindfulness-based book, *How to Be Human: The Manual*, explores how the human brain works and explains why we experience certain emotions and feelings at certain times. She breaks everything down in a simplified way, often using amusing personal experiences to help further. Throughout the book, she also speaks to two friends, one a neuroscientist, the other a monk. I found this book extremely helpful to understand why we humans have evolved to experience anxiety, fear and depression. Once I understood 'why', it made it easier for me to understand what was going on in my own situation. I found it fascinating to read, and also very funny, thanks to Ruby's down-to-earth story-telling. The book also includes mindfulness exercises to try to help with specific things such as our thoughts and emotions, our body, compassion, relationships and addiction. Reviewed by Stewart, CLW magazine editor



Helpful Resources

We have compiled a list of resources and organisations in the Kensington and Chelsea and Queen's Park and Paddington area that you may find useful.

Crisis support

If you or someone you know needs urgent support:

- Contact your GP and ask for an urgent appointment
- Contact **Central and North West London's Single Point of Access**. This service provides a first point of contact for people experiencing a mental health crisis and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Phone: 0800 0234 650
Email: cnw-tr.spa@nhs.net

If you feel your situation is getting worst, contact 999

Helplines

For listening support, there are a number of helplines you can contact:

- **The Samaritans**

They can be contacted for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:
Call 116 123 or visit www.samaritans.org

- **SANEline**

Sane is a UK mental health charity and runs an out of hours mental health helpline offering specialist emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers. SANEline is open 7 days a week every day of the year from 4.30pm – 10.30pm.
Call 0300 304 7000 or visit www.sane.org.uk

- **Age UK Kensington and Chelsea or Westminster**

An independent charity working in local areas, that provides a range of services for older people, including advice, support and activities.
Kensington & Chelsea Call 020 8969 9105 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/kensingtonandchelsea/#
Westminster Call 020 3004 5610 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/westminster/

Continued...

- **Al Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre**

Al Hasaniya provide practical and emotional support for women and their families. A programme of advice, advocacy and referral helps the women to deal with their problems and access mainstream NHS and voluntary services

Call 020 8969 2292 or visit www.al-hasaniya.org.uk/

- **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Cruse Bereavement Care is a national charity for people who have been bereaved. Cruse offers support to adults, young people and children to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Cruse can offer individual and group sessions.

Call 020 8964 3455 or visit www.kchf-cruse.org.uk

- **Grenfell Health and Wellbeing**

The Grenfell Health & Wellbeing Service is a free and confidential NHS service for children and adults affected by Grenfell. They provide a range of psychological therapies and support to help you feel better if you're feeling traumatised, down, stressed or have been bereaved.

Call 020 8637 6279 or visit www.grenfellwellbeing.com

- **Help Counselling**

Help Counselling offers low cost counselling and psychotherapy to a wide range of people, mainly in the west London area. As well as their core counselling service, Help offers free listening support for people in temporary accommodation, individuals and staff groups.

Call 020 7221 9974 or visit www.helpcounselling.com

- **Hestia**

Hestia provides housing and mental health day services, including free community outreach counselling service for people who need emotional support.

Call Grove Resource Centre on 020 7221 0052 or The Oremi Centre on 020 8964 0033

Visit www.hestia.org

- **Kensington and Chelsea Mind**

A local charity affiliated to national Mind that provides advice, information and signposting to local services and recovery focused support services for people who are experiencing mental health difficulties

Call 020 8964 1333 or www.kcmind.org.uk

- **Midaye Somali Development Network**

Midaye is a registered charity providing advice, advocacy, mental health support and education services for members of the Somali community. Midaye is the co-ordinating group for Grenfell Community Forum.

Call 020 8969 7456 or visit www.midaye.org.uk

- **One You Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster**

One You offer a free healthy lifestyle and stop smoking service to residents of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. They are fully funded by local councils to help residents quit smoking, lose weight, eat well and move more.

Visit www.oneyou-rbkc-westminster.org.uk/

- **SMART**

SMART is a day service offering a range of support services located in the south of the Borough, with outreach locations in north Kensington.

Call 020 7376 4668 or visit www.smartlondon.org.uk

- **Step Change**

Step Change is a debt charity that can help you deal with your debt in a manageable way. They offer free, flexible debt advice that is based on a comprehensive assessment of your situation. They can provide practical help and support for however long it's needed.

Call 0800 138 1111 or visit www.stepchange.org

- **West London Action for Children**

West London Action for Children offers a range of counselling and therapy services for children in need, and their families. They support families under stress to develop their confidence and skills to cope with the ordinary and extraordinary challenges of family life.

Call 020 7352 1155 or visit www.wlac.org.uk

Online support

- **Side-by-Side**

Side by Side is an online, moderated, peer support forum run by Mind. Side by Side is a supportive community where people can give and gain support and share experiences with people who understand, based on their own lived experience of mental health problems. .

Sign up for Side by Side at sidebyside.mind.org.uk/

- **Easy Health**

The Easy Health website provides videos and easy-read leaflets which help people with learning disabilities understand mental health issues and mental health care:

Visit www.easyhealth.org.uk

Volunteering

- **The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea**

The Volunteer Centre recruits, supports, manages and develops volunteers.

Call 020 8960 3722 or visit www.voluntarywork.org.uk



Community
LivingWell

Working together for your wellbeing

Working together for your
wellbeing

Contact Details

communitylivingwell.co.uk

020 3317 4200 | cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net

Find us on...



Facebook: [CommunityLivingWell](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityLivingWell)

Twitter: [@CLWMentalHealth](https://twitter.com/CLWMentalHealth)

Instagram: [@CLWMentalHealth](https://www.instagram.com/CLWMentalHealth)

Scan to self-refer:



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.