

**FEBRUARY 2022**

# MHNE Bulletin

## Keeping Pace with Changes in the Cost of Living

It won't have missed anyone's notice, but the cost of living is rocketing, from gas and electric bills (and more to come in April) to fuel (BP profits £9.4 billion and Shell £14.1 billion), and there seem to be price increases in the shops every visit. National Insurance is set to rise from April and other price rises will be bound to be attached.

Yet the Government's response is complete and utter complacency: it would appear that in contrast to the "we're all in this together" slogan of yesteryear, "you're all on your own" is now the current flavour of the month.

Blame what you want: wholesale prices, Brexit, high wages (the Head of the Bank of England, salary £500,000 a year, says people should not seek wage increases), COVID, transport costs, and now a war taking place in Europe. The impact is clearly on every wage-earner, and particularly the low paid and those on benefits.

The decision to eat, or heat homes should not happen in a civilised society. Yet it is estimated that this amounts to the biggest fall in income in three decades, with one in 10 households not having enough money for food, and food bank use is soaring.

It is against this background that we think the future is going to be increasingly difficult for many so keep watching our bulletins and our website ([mhne.org.uk](http://mhne.org.uk)) for sources of support and help.

Neil Kelly, Chairperson - on Behalf of the MHNE Team

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## It helps me to try something new

**Ernie Malt** has been a volunteer at MHNE for many years and has always given 100% despite his various disabilities. In recent years he has received a diagnosis of dementia but remains positive and determined to help others for as long as he is able.

Around two years ago I was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia. This has affected me in many ways, including my mobility and balance, but I have also notice an impact on my general motivation and "get up and go".

This has been a challenge for me, as I have always been active and not so long ago set up a dementia friendly cafe and a sensory garden in his home village of Evenwood, County Durham. These days, my illness prevents me from doing very much physically, and so I've had to leave the future of the garden to others who are keen to help. The last time I was able to work at the garden was to put up some of the festive lights display around Christmas. About an hour is my limit before I have to rest and take a break.

For these reasons my support worker Sarah gave me the idea of taking up two activities with rural charity Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services ([UTASS](#)).

I have so far tried stone carving from which I made a model of the local historical pit-head wheel house, and more recently pottery where I made some butterfly ornaments and bowls (see photo). I am due to go back soon and see how they have come out of the kiln.

The next activity I will be getting involved with at the centre is creating some Easter Windows.

I have found all of these activities very therapeutic, and they suit my current health in that they last no more than an hour but yet involve me in some physical activity working with my hands and brain, taking my mind off other things.

I would very much recommend activities like these to anyone who might be thinking of trying a new hobby or creative activity.



Photo of Ernie at the Cornerstone Sensory Garden from the Northern Echo







## MH Southern nominate MHNE for their staff fundraisers

We were contacted by MH Southern & Co Ltd, a North East based family company specialising in timber importing and sawmilling. Their staff have decided to make MHNE one of their charities of the year 2022 and began fundraising with a Valentines Day raffle earlier in February (see photo, right).

The company is also planning a charity golf day later in the year at George Washington Golf Club.

We'd like to thank MH Southern for thinking of MHNE and hope that they have a lot of fun with their efforts.

## Follow MHNE on Social Media?

For regular updates throughout the month about local, regional and national news on the subject of mental health.

**Twitter:** [@mhnetweets](https://twitter.com/mhnetweets) and [@mhne\\_yp](https://twitter.com/mhne_yp)

**Facebook group :**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MentalHealthNE/>

## Donating to MHNE with JustGiving

Donations to MHNE support our work, help maintain and grow our outdoor training facilities and strengthen our campaigning voice for the region.

The Mental Health North East page on JustGiving has been created to make this process much easier for the individuals and organisations who decide to help financially, or wish to set up a fundraising event online.

To find our Donations home page please follow this link: <https://www.justgiving.com/mhne>





## MHNE Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

Lyn Boyd, MHNE CEO

Poor sleep can be a contributing factor in mental ill health. Most adults need between seven and nine hours of sleep to function at their best but it isn't always possible.

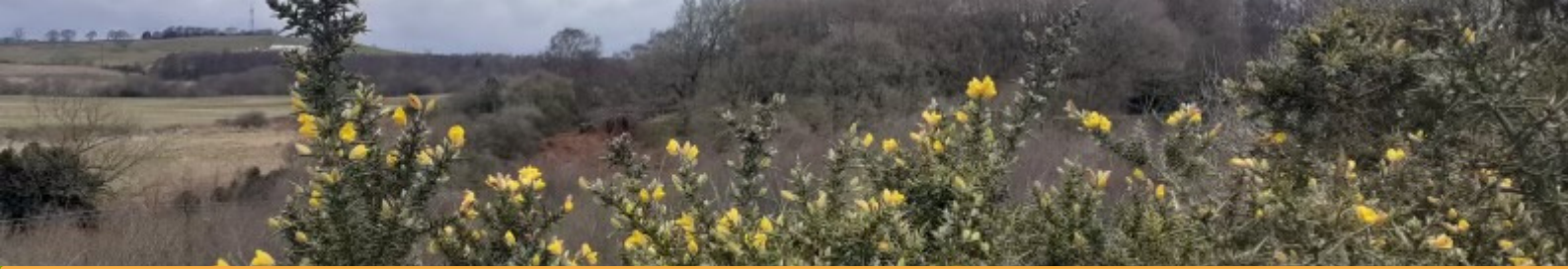
You may have considered many of these but the following 10 suggestions we hope are useful reminders of how to achieve a good night's sleep.



1. Going to bed early can help the quality of sleep
2. A nice warm bath prior to bedtime might help
3. Go to bed as soon as you are sleepy; never try to force yourself to stay up
4. It's helpful to go to bed at the same time each night
5. Even if you're really tired during the day, try to avoid naps, as they can make it much harder to fall asleep later.
6. Eat a healthy, balanced diet - what we eat has a knock-on effect on how we feel. Fruit and vegetables, wholegrain, pulses, nuts and seeds - these foods are also packed with fibre which promotes healthy digestion and further help aid sleep. Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Large meals later at night can be difficult to digest.
7. Cut down on caffeine, tea, fizzy pop and/or energy drinks. Drink enough water - dehydration can harm the quality of your sleep, causing your mouth and nose to dry out, which can lead to snoring and hoarseness.
8. Manage stress. Chronic stress can cause fatigue, but even smaller-scale stress can rob us of the mental and physical energy needed to comfortably get through the day. Create space and time in your day to use what works for you to reduce stress and better control the pace of life.
9. Reduce your alcohol consumption - alcohol is a toxin that our body works hard to expel, and this can throw our body off balance and affect the quality of our sleep.
10. Make exercise a habit. Regular exercise can reduce symptoms of tiredness, while also improving sleep quality.







## Support for Women in Detention at Hassockfield / Derwentside IRC

*update from Alison Stancliffe*



We held the latest of our regular monthly protests outside Hassockfield/Derwentside on Saturday 19th Feb and you can find a brief account of it here - <https://notohassockfield.org.uk>.

It is now known that the initial small number of women detainees has increased, but we have very little knowledge of what's going on inside the centre, which can be seen in the photo to the left.

Also on the website is a link to The Independent's news piece from on the new legal challenge by Women For Refugee Women along with the crowd funding appeal associated with it.

The Home Office insists in-person legal meetings are available on request at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) but campaigners say detainees haven't been able to get them.

So the campaign group has applied for permission to seek judicial review over these practices. The group, claim women detained there have only been able to access legal advice by phone - a policy they say harms their mental health because survivors of human trafficking or gender-based violence may for example find it difficult to talk about what has happened to them as a result of their traumatic experiences.



The next monthly demo outside the centre is on Saturday March 19th 12-2pm. If you want to talk to a variety of people who really care about this issue, enough to give up their Saturdays to support the detained women, make a date and get yourself there! There'll be reminders about it on Facebook and twitter. A national demonstration, place and time yet to be confirmed, is planned to take place on May 21st.

MHNE is still awaiting a response from the centre after we wrote to them requesting information and offering support in January.

**Photo (left):** Jean, Beth and Ash (MHNE volunteers) sorting out bedding and crockery to donate to refugees with Roy, our resident horticulturist at Muddy Boots.



**Stop Loan Sharks  
helpline is open 24/7  
Get advice and support**

**0300 555 2222**

**STOPLOANSHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education

## Loan Shark Awareness by the Illegal Money Lending Team

Advice In County Durham are working in partnership with the Illegal Money Lending Team at Durham County Council to offer online awareness sessions around Loan shark awareness.

The purpose of the online session is to increase awareness around illegal money lending, how it relates to your work and how we can help those who have borrowed from illegal lenders.

The length of the session is approximately one hour and it will include an introduction to the England Illegal Money Lending Team, practical advice on how to spot individuals who may be involved with loan sharks, evidence of the devastating impact loan sharks can have on victims and communities, and how we can work together to stop people falling into the clutches of criminals.

If you are interested in attending they will be hosting two sessions – if you would like to book contact Sam Scotchbrook on [AdviceinCountyDurham@durham.gov.uk](mailto:AdviceinCountyDurham@durham.gov.uk) let her know if you want the morning or afternoon session

**Thursday 31st March 2022 10am-11am (16 places available)**

**Thursday 31st March 2022 2pm- 3pm (16 places available)**

If you are successful you will receive a calendar invite and email confirming your place .

For general advice and to report loan sharks visit this site:  
<https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/>

**STOPLOANSHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education



# J O B S



## Operational Support Manager

[Tyneside and Northumberland Mind]

Based in Newcastle and Gateshead.  
Permanent, Full time, 37 hours per week  
Salary: £25,000 Per Annum

They will manage the admin team and ensure all tasks are carried out in a timely manner.

**Closing date for this post is Friday 6th March 2022 at 12 Midnight.**

Please Note they do not accept CV's, please email [admin@tynesidemind.org.uk](mailto:admin@tynesidemind.org.uk) for an application pack.



## Carer Information and Advice Worker (x2 posts)

[Carers Northumberland]

Posts: 1 x General, 1 x Mental health  
Salary: £25,016 per annum  
Full-time, 37 hours per week; Monday to Friday (fixed term to 31/03/23)  
Based: Ashington (Blended working currently in place).

More information: <https://carersnorthumberland.org.uk/vacancies>

**The deadline for these posts is 5pm Monday 7th March 2022.**



## Team Manager / Prevention Practitioner

[Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services]

### Team Manager

Salary: £27,905 per annum, Full time, Permanent

### Prevention Practitioner

Salary: £25,311 per annum, Full time, Permanent

Based: Hexham and around Northumberland

**Deadline for both posts is Monday 28th March 2022**

For more information or to apply for either post visit the NDAS website: <https://www.nda.services/>



Photo: St Margaret's Centre, Durham

To add details of your courses or activities, please contact us.



## Courses and Activities

### **ARCH Recovery college Online (TEWV)**

[www.tewv.nhs.uk/services/arch-recovery-college](http://www.tewv.nhs.uk/services/arch-recovery-college)

### **Crisis (Newcastle) - Timetable and more details:**

[www.crisis.org.uk/get-help/newcastle/timetable](http://www.crisis.org.uk/get-help/newcastle/timetable)

### **Durham Learn (Durham County Council)**

[www.durham.gov.uk/durhamlearn](http://www.durham.gov.uk/durhamlearn)

### **Gateshead Clubhouse**

[www.gatesheadclubhouse.com](http://www.gatesheadclubhouse.com)

### **NT LIFE Recovery College (North Tyneside)**

[www.voda.org.uk/north-tyneside-recovery-college/](http://www.voda.org.uk/north-tyneside-recovery-college/)

### **PACT House (Stanley)**

[www.facebook.com/PACTHouseStanley](http://www.facebook.com/PACTHouseStanley)

### **PCP (Newton Aycliffe) - [www.pcp.uk.net/activities](http://www.pcp.uk.net/activities)**

### **ReCoCo (Newcastle and Gateshead)**

[www.recoverycoco.com/e-courses](http://www.recoverycoco.com/e-courses)

### **St. Margaret's Centre (Durham)**

[www.stmargaretscentre.co.uk](http://www.stmargaretscentre.co.uk)

### **Sunderland Recovery College**

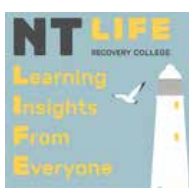
[www.sunderlandrecoverycollege.com](http://www.sunderlandrecoverycollege.com)

### **Waddington Street Centre (Durham)**

[www.waddingtoncentre.co.uk](http://www.waddingtoncentre.co.uk)

### **Wellbeing for Life (County Durham)**

[www.wellbeingforlife.net/training-courses](http://www.wellbeingforlife.net/training-courses)





## Mentally Sound: Life in Lockdown Radio Show and Podcast

**Mentally Sound** is an award-winning radio show, recorded as a podcast on a weekly basis, and broadcast on Spice FM each Tuesday from 1pm, repeated Saturdays at 3pm. It was originally set up as a peer support project on community radio supported by MHNE, MHM and Launchpad in March 2015.

It was rebranded as **Life in Lockdown** due to the COVID situation with over 75 podcasts now recorded since March/April 2020.

Joining Ricky in the most recent episode #79, broadcast this month, are friends of the show RT Projects and Steve Pledger. They have a good catch-up, and preview the Never Give Up mental health charity gig in Durham held on 6th March.

In episode #78, Ricky and therapist Amer, talk about the year ahead, the easing of restrictions and the impact of political upheaval on wellbeing

In episode #77, the guest is Dean Teasdale from The Blaydon Shed <https://www.ourgateshead.org/blaydon-shed>. They discuss mens sheds, lockdown, and pay an emotional tribute to shed co-founder & late wife of Dean, Fiona!

You can contact Ricky (photo right) about the show to get involved, with a question or comment by emailing: [mentallysound@spicefm.co.uk](mailto:mentallysound@spicefm.co.uk).

**Mentally Sound** shows are available to stream or download. You can find Mentally Sound on Twitter @\_mentallysound and Facebook for the very latest show information and download links.

All archived #LifeInLockdown podcasts can be found on Spotify, Clyp, Apple and Pocket Casts.





## Durham Countywide Forum (CWF)

MHNE is proud to support the Durham Countywide Mental Health Service Users & Carers Forum (also known as the Countywide Forum or CWF).

The Forum is a group of service users and carers based in County Durham and Darlington. The brief of the group is to improve and promote Mental Health, looking at general issues facing service users and carers, flagging up issues such as stigma and discrimination.

Keith Phillips, the chair of the CWF has also been providing updates through the seasons from his allotment:

"There was a lot of wind damage at the allotment site where my allotment is. Greenhouses and polytunnels have been blown down, part of the fence has broken in the wind. I haven't had any expensive damage in my allotment, but there are some repairs needing to be done to the fence. Minor damage compared to some.

I should start planting seeds soon. There's some soil preparation to be done too. I will use some organic fertilisers, and garden compost to prepare for the spring planting."



The next meeting of the CWF will be Monday, March 7th when there's a speaker from the Involvement Service at TEWV Trust. The group was also represented at a meeting on February 27th highlighting experiences of poverty.

Please contact Peter Smith [psmith@waddingtoncentre.co.uk](mailto:psmith@waddingtoncentre.co.uk) or phone 0191 3860702 for more details, or to confirm that you would like to attend any upcoming meetings.





## Mental Health & Emotional Support for **Adults** in County Durham

This is a **great starting point** to help you **access support**

### Advice and Self Help

**NHS | [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**

Stressed, anxious or depressed? Or just want to feel happier your NHS is here to help

**NHS Every Mind Matters | [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters)**

Find expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing

**The Recovery College Online | [www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk](http://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk)**

Providing a range of online courses and resources

**Mind | [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)**

Resources from Mind can help find what's right for you and your family

**Rethink Mental Illness | [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)**

Offer online support and some local groups

**CRUSE | 01642 210 284**

Advice, information and support to anyone who has been bereaved

### Helplines and Webchats

**Shout | [www.giveusashout.org](http://www.giveusashout.org)**

Anxious? Worried? Stressed? Get 24/7 help from our team of Crisis Volunteers. Text 85258

**Samaritans | 116 123 | [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

The Samaritans are there to listen. 24 hours a day 365 days a year

**SANE | 07984 967 708 | [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)**

Sane and the SANEline offers one-to-one support for those times you feel you need it most

**Calm: Campaign against living miserably | 0800 58 58 58**

Access the helpline to talk and find support. 5pm-Midnight 365 days a year

**[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)**

**TEWV Crisis line | 0800 0516 171 | [www.tewv.nhs.uk](http://www.tewv.nhs.uk)**

24 hour service for young people experiencing a mental health crisis

**Qwell | [www.qwell.io](http://www.qwell.io)**

Offers free, safe and anonymous mental wellbeing support for adults across the UK



## Connecting to Local Services

**Wellbeing for life** | [www.wellbeingforlife.net](http://www.wellbeingforlife.net) | 0800 876 6887

Helping you find what's around you and how to make the most of it. Call free for expert advice

**ManHealth** | 01388 320023 | [www.manhealth.org.uk](http://www.manhealth.org.uk)

Offering advice, peer workshops and a place to talk

**Talking Changes** | 0191 333 3300 | [www.talkingchanges.org.uk](http://www.talkingchanges.org.uk)

A self-help, counselling and talking therapies service designed to help anyone with common mental health problems

**Time to Change Hub** | [www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk)

A local social movement aiming to change the way people think and act about mental health

**Durham Locate** | [www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk)

**Durham County Council** | [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

Helping you find support locally

## Accessing Specialist Services

**NHS** | 111 | [www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health)

Answer questions about your mental health and find your support locally

**County Durham Together Hub** | 03000 260 260 | [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

Help when self-isolating/how to volunteer

**Community Floating Support Teams** | 03000 269 071

Offering services for people with mental health issues who do not have a social worker or care coordinator to access support

[www.durham.gov.uk/cfs](http://www.durham.gov.uk/cfs)

**Crisis Resolution and Intensive Home Treatment Team**

Providing specialist treatments and assessments with a range of professionals 24/7

03000 200 317 | [www.tewv.nhs.uk](http://www.tewv.nhs.uk)

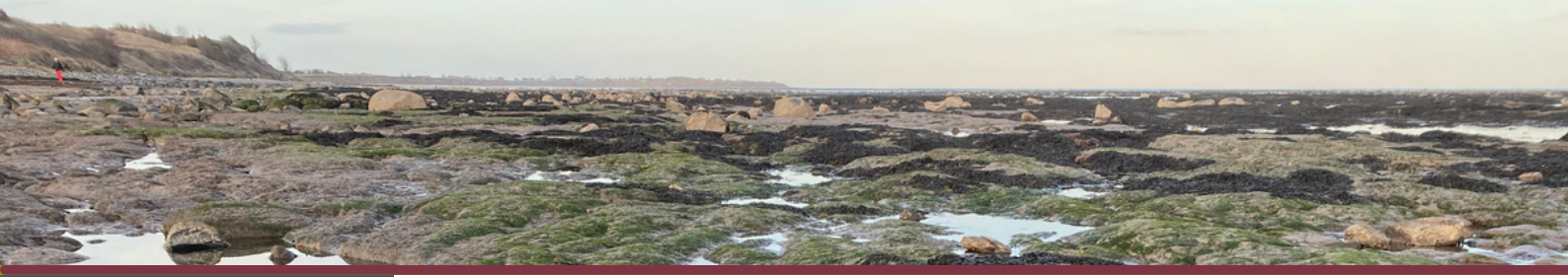
  
**County Durham**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys   
NHS Foundation Trust

County Durham  
**Care Partnership** 







# Energy Advice & Support Event

Friday, 18 March  
10 am to 12 pm

From April, the average household energy bill is set to rise by £700 per year.

Join us to hear from an impartial expert panel about

- saving energy
- understanding your fuel bills
- maximising your income

After the presentations, there will be a Q&A session with the experts, followed by a chance to speak to them one-to-one.



Action for Warm Homes



Gateshead



GATESHEAD  
OLDER PEOPLE'S  
ASSEMBLY

178 Split Crow Road  
Deckham NE8 3UB  
[www.gatesheadopa.org.uk](http://www.gatesheadopa.org.uk)

Please ring  
0191 438 1721 to  
book your place.



## About us

Mental Health North East (MHNE) is a unique network of member organisations, formed in 2005 to promote joint working and partnership across the not for profit mental health sector in the North East of England.

MHNE offers access to over 450 voluntary and community organisations working in the field of mental health and wellbeing in the North East, Cumbria and North Yorkshire.

Our organisation is built around a core belief that a strong, vibrant, diverse yet united voluntary and community sector is essential for the development of mental health services and for the improvement of the emotional health and wellbeing of this region. MHNE works collectively with members to improve and protect mental health service provision.

We pride ourselves on having an open mind to innovative approaches which will enable people suffering from mental distress to move towards recovery.

Charity Number: 1119652  
Company Number: 5552172



## Contacting us

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Twitter: @MHNETweets  
Facebook: [MentalHealthNE](https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthNE)

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our bulletin or to place  
information in future issues  
please contact:  
[beth.boyd@mhne.org.uk](mailto:beth.boyd@mhne.org.uk)

This issue edited by  
Gareth Cooper

