



November 2020 Bulletin

Feedback from our open letter to North East MPs around improving the region’s Mental Health services

Four local MPs have been in touch to follow up on our campaign. **Alex Cunningham MP** (Stockton North) committed to write to the Health Secretary about this. **Alan Campbell MP** (Tynemouth) has said he was pleased to lend support, writing to the Chancellor to ask as part of the Spending Review that he restore funding to mental health services in the North East and invest in mental health services going forward.



Left to right:
Bridget Phillipson MP
Alan Campbell MP
Alex Cunningham MP
Peter Gibson MP

Bridget Phillipson MP (Houghton and Sunderland South) wrote to say “It is more important than ever that the Government take mental health seriously and provide the resources and facilities it needs. Their recent hospitals announcement was a missed opportunity to fulfil this, and it is an insult that mental health – which represents one quarter of all health need – again lost out. I can assure you that I will continue to press the Government on this matter”.

Peter Gibson MP (Darlington) contacted our Chairperson, Neil Kelly by phone. He said that mental health was certainly a bigger issue from recent contacts with constituents.

Peter also suggested much had been done by the Government to support voluntary sector organisations and that there were many sources of funding available. He then said that any organisations in Darlington experiencing difficulty should make him aware directly.

Finally he mentioned the Spending Review due in parliament soon, and we should look to this for the commitment to Mental Health. **MHNE** await the Spending Review with interest and will be publicising and requesting our member's comments on that Review.

Please [check this page of our website](#) for latest updates from our region’s MPs.



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MHNE nominated by staff charity group at MHA Tait-Walker



Rachel Matthewson got in touch with us to make a donation of £200 on behalf of the charity group at the Gosforth based independent accountancy practice.

Rachel said "We were delighted to support MHNE. Our mental wellbeing has never been so important and the work they do is invaluable to so many people from all walks of life across the North East."

"The money has been raised from a variety of ways over recent months and our 'charity pot' of all money raised is donated to charities chosen by staff at MHA Tait Walker. We ask all of our employees to nominate a charity every year that is close to their heart and we try to support as many of the nominated charities as possible over the course of the year."

Lyn Boyd, MHNE CEO responded "MHNE is a small charity and our team are all volunteers but we have seen our income drop slowly drop over these months. This donation will make a big difference to our work and also to the morale of our team. I would like to thank the staff at MHA Tait Walker for choosing us"

MHNE official charitable partner of North East ladies team

We are delighted to be approached this month by Will Robinson from **Billingham Synthonia Ladies Football Club** who got in touch to ask if we would like to be charitable partner to the team for the next two seasons.

Mental health awareness is growing in sport among fans and players alike - just because someone is physically fit doesn't mean they're not suffering in other ways. Players deal with many forms of pressure on and off the pitch and "everybody is aware of somebody who is struggling" be it an eating disorder, depression or self-harm. The club would like to make a positive contribution to mental wellbeing throughout the community.

MHNE will keep you abreast of sporting developments at the team and hope to hear an interview with someone from the club on the Mentally Sound Radio show at some point in the new year. Website: <https://www.synners.co.uk/Ladies/>



Lockdown Diaries: Keith Philips- Durham Countywide Forum



November rains are here, although there has been less rain for the last few days and it's been milder. I have been out for a walk in the local area when the weather has ok and I am doing some preparation for next year at the allotment. One of the photos (right) is a new raspberry bed which has been planted this Autumn. There are winter vegetables, kale, leeks and spring onions which are growing well. This time of year is mostly preparation for next year and "tidying up". Some of the jobs will need to be done next Spring, the allotment soil can be too wet for digging until next year.

I made green tomato chutney with the last tomatoes from the greenhouse. There isn't now enough sun and warmth to ripen the last of the tomato crop. There was a better fruit and vegetable crop this year at the allotment, overall. Some seasons are better than others to grow food.



Keith is Chair of Durham County Wide Mental Health Service Users and Carers Forum (aka the **Countywide Forum** or CWF). They discuss experiences of help and treatment in the area, exploring the issues with guest speakers and practitioners. Meetings are on hold for the present. But—to be added to the mailing list please email Peter Smith: psmith@waddingtoncentre.co.uk



Carers Rights Day — 26th November

On Thursday 26th November it is Carers Rights Day 2020 and the theme this year is 'Know Your Rights'

Carers need to know their rights wherever they are in their caring journey: whether they are in the workplace, in a healthcare setting, when interacting with professionals or at home.

This Carers Rights Day, Carers UK want to empower carers with information and support, so they can feel confident asking for what they need. They also want carers to know how to challenge things when their rights are not being met.

Whether you are a new carer or have been caring for someone for a while, it's important that you understand your rights and are able to access the support that is available to you as soon as you need it. Each year, Carers Rights Day helps Carers UK to:

- **Ensure carers are aware of their rights**
- **Let carers know where to get help and support**
- **Raise awareness of the needs of carers**

If you are a carer and would like some help, you can call the Carers UK telephone helpline on 0808 808 7777 from Monday to Friday, 9am – 6pm or you can email them at advice@carersuk.org

Follow us 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/>



Mental Health NE

@MHNEtweets

Working together for better mental health and wellbeing in the North of England.

North East England [mhne.org.uk](https://www.mhne.org.uk) Joined August 2010

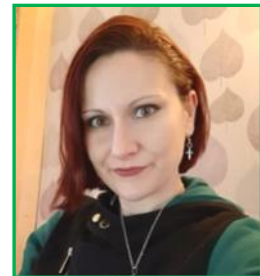
7,546 Following 7,512 Followers

Edit profile

MHNE thanks to Victoria, but not Goodbye!

Victoria has now moved on from being our Facebook group Admin due to work commitments. We have seen her go from strength to strength since we met her as a volunteer back in 2015. Victoria has set a standard that will be difficult to follow.

MHNE appreciates all the work she has done and we are pleased that she will remain with us as member of the wider team.



Mentally Sound Radio Show and Podcast is on Spice FM Broadcasts Tuesdays at 1pm



Mentally Sound: Life in Lockdown is a radio show, recorded as a podcast on a weekly basis, and then broadcast on Spice FM each Tuesday from 11am until noon.

Life in Lockdown featured in local news magazine

Host Ricky says “Huge thanks to Tyne Valley Express for featuring us in their magazine, and putting links to our #LifeInLockdown podcasts on their website! Chuffed we’ve partnered with them to promote positive mental wellbeing in the region!”

In the latest show this month, the 28th episode, therapists Nicky and Clint talk about hypnotherapy, and its benefits in relation to lockdown... and give a meditation exercise at the end of the show!

Ep 26 of #LifeInLockdown podcast is also now available. Emily of Wish talks womens mental health and the importance of specific treatment and David of the Newcastle Counselling Association talks of his profession in lockdown, and use of technology in therapy with the switch to online counselling. Link: <https://t.co/KRwHuomZ19>



Find them on Twitter [@mentallysound](https://twitter.com/mentallysound) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mentallysound) for the latest show information.

Please contact Ricky Thamman by email—studio@spicefm.co.uk if you would like to get in touch with the show or offer to be a guest on a future show.

Christmas Bake and Craft Activities with WEA



Add a touch of homemade charm to Christmas this year – bake and decorate your own Christmas Cake, make a Gingerbread Wreath, make personalised Gift

Bags and Boxes, a Snowman from felt or have fun learning Christmas signs / songs in Makaton.

21/11/2020 [Personalise your Homemade Christmas with Decoupage](#)

24/11/2020 [Makaton Christmas](#)

05/12/2020 [Easy Christmas Bakes](#)

12/12/2020 [A Christmas Gingerbread Wreath Making Workshop](#)

All courses and workshops are online via Zoom and are FREE if you receive a benefit.

You can find out more about these courses on www.wea.org.uk or follow the links above or contact sheptinstall@wea.org.uk 07899065285

NE & North Cumbria VCSE Sector COVID-19 Impact Survey – November 2020



VONNE are requesting our input to a new survey. This will be vital to get a picture of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the sector in the North East region and North Cumbria. It is a follow-up from the survey during the first lockdown in April 2020.

The information from this survey will help VONNE to understand the real impact of COVID-19, so that they can effectively represent the sector and influence how funders focus their support now and in the future. The findings will be shared with stakeholders including local authorities, LEPs, private sector organisations and the health system, helping to make the case for additional support and resources for the sector, and with national infrastructure partners to enable them to influence Government decisions affecting the sector.

The survey link here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R37S6RH>

Networking Event: Doing Things Differently Our local VCSE and responding to changing needs



Free event via Zoom hosted by Connected Voice. **Wednesday 2nd December 2020 from 1-3pm**

It will focus on showcasing the agility, ingenuity and resilience that local VCSE organisations have demonstrated in delivering services differently, and the challenges we've all faced in responding to the needs of our communities and people here in the North-East of England.

[More information and booking link.](#)

Please get in touch to tell us about your Winter Events and Service Changes

We will help publicise any special arrangements or changes of hours for crisis and support services — adding information to our site and a special regional bulletin we will circulate.



Silver Talk—a Free Telephone Befriending Service for over-50s

Silver Talk is a free telephone befriending service, offering over 50s the opportunity to connect for a regular, social telephone chat.

Users are matched with one of our friendly volunteers, for an up to 30 minute chat at the same time each week. It's up to them what that they talk about, but their Silver Talk companion is there to provide both a friendly voice and a listening ear.

Volunteering with Silver Talk

Half an hour a week might not seem much, but it can really make a difference to someone's life.

"I find volunteering for Silver Talk really rewarding. It does wonders for my mental health and confidence and I feel happy knowing that I'm making a difference and giving something back."

Signing up to Silver Talk

It matters to natter and for many users their Silver Talk call may be the only conversation they have that day.

"I've been very very grateful for Silver Talk and through it I've made a new friend. It's nice to be able to talk about anything and nothing and know that someone is thinking about me."

To find out more about Silver Talk, or to make a referral, get in touch with the team today.

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/silvertalk E: silvertalk@karbonhomes.co.uk T: 0191 223 8662



Annual General Meeting - North East Together

Regional Network for People with Lived Experience of Mental Health Conditions:

Annual General Meeting—30th November 2020 via Zoom at 1.30pm

If you would like to join the network and attend the meeting, contact Secretary Mish at mish.loraine@netogether.co.uk

VCSE Health and Wellbeing Partnerships Officer

Fixed term 12 month Secondment or Fixed Term Contract

Part time (22.2-29.6 hours per week)

Salary: £27741-£29577 Pro Rata

VONNE are looking to recruit a Partnerships Officer to support the delivery and implementation of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) VCSE Leadership Programme and ensure VCSE input and engagement across the NENC Integrated care System (ICS).

The role is to support the development of networks in VCSE organisations who are involved in health and wellbeing across the North East and North Cumbria. The post holder will promote collaboration between these organisations and statutory health & care commissioners and providers, contributing to the collective aim which is to improve the health and wellbeing of our population.

VONNE are based in MEA House, a hub for charities in Newcastle upon Tyne city centre, but due to the nature of the role, travel across the region will be required.

Deadline: Thursday, 26 November 12noon

Full details : <https://www.vonne.org.uk/jobs/vcse-health-and-wellbeing-partnerships-officer-7659>

Mental Health support 

 **The Samaritans can be contacted by phone or email and are there to listen 24/7**
Call 116 123 from any phone or email jo@samaritans.org

YOUNGMINDS **The YoungMinds Crisis Messenger is a free 24/7 UK wide service**
If you are in crisis, text YM to 85258
Find out more at youngminds.org.uk/contact-us

 **Calm run a helpline & webchat to support men who need to talk or find information**
It is open 5pm - midnight, every day
Call 0800 58 58 58 nationwide
or 0808 802 58 58 from London
Or visit www.thecalmzone.net/help/get-help/

THE MIX **Free, confidential support for young via online, social and mobile.**
Visit www.themix.org.uk/get-support to find out more

Health and Street Homelessness

North East and Yorkshire and Humber webinar
2nd December 2020, 10am-12.30pm



**Public Health
England**

This webinar is aimed at any organisation involved in commissioning, planning or provision of healthcare to individuals experiencing street homelessness. This will include CCGs, local authority (public health teams and housing leads), primary care, criminal justice organisations and voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises.

The aim is to raise awareness, provide information and facilitate joint working between agencies in order to better meet the health and wellbeing needs of individuals experiencing street homelessness across the North East and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Speakers

- Olivia Butterworth, Lead on Homeless and Inclusion Health COVID-19 response and Elaine Goodwin, National Homeless Health Nursing Lead, NHS England and NHS Improvement
- Jez Stannard, National Lead for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping and Becky Green, National Programme Manager for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, Public Health England
- Samantha Dorney-Smith, Nurse Project Lead for the QNI Homeless Health Programme and Nursing Fellow for Pathway
- Gina Rowlands, Managing Director, Bevan Healthcare CIC

To sign up [please follow this link](#).

Volunteer with Healthwatch



Our Volunteers are positive ambassadors for Healthwatch County Durham. They act as our eyes and ears in the community, gathering information about health and social care issues.

Volunteering roles are varied. You can help with everything from carrying out surveys, to telephoning people to get their thoughts on Health and Social Care services, in County Durham. Are you:

- Able to circulate our newsletter, flyers and leaflets
- Happy to gather health and social care issues in your community
- Interested in telling people about Healthwatch County Durham
- Willing to telephone residents and services to help us gather people's views and experiences

Healthwatch provides role-specific training to help you develop, as well as out of pocket expenses. They are particularly interested to talk to people who are comfortable with IT but will work with you whatever your area of experience, skill or interest.

If you are interested in volunteering for Healthwatch County Durham, or would like more information please contact Volunteer Support, Claire Sisterson, at claire.sisterson@pcp.uk.net or 07756 654223



Accessing dental care



Dental Practices are open, however practices will need to prioritise patients with the most urgent need.

If you need help from a dentist:

- Contact your regular dentist or if you do not have one, call any NHS dental practice.
- You will be given advice or offered an appointment if appropriate.
- For urgent dental care, out of hours or at weekends that cannot wait, please ring NHS111 or use the NHS111 online service



Please do not visit your dental practice unless you've been advised to. This will ensure the practice can continue to provide essential care safely.



Make YOUR voice heard on NHS Dental Provision

Have you had or tried to access NHS dental treatment in the last 8-9 months? If so then Healthwatch would like to hear your experiences of services during the pandemic. You can help shape the future of provision by sharing your story. If you have something to share, good or bad, then please complete the [Because We All Care](#) survey.

Alternatively you can contact Healthwatch directly—
Email jacqui@healthwatchnewcastle.org.uk or
text/WhatsApp/voice call on 07538857627

National Safeguarding Adults Week 2020

16–22 November 2020

#SafeguardingAdultsWeek

ann craft trust
acting against abuse

Recruitment for Registered Intermediaries in the North East

A recruitment round has been launched in the North East to recruit more **Registered Intermediaries (RIs)** in the Northumbria, Cleveland, and Durham Police Force Areas. In Northumbria, the Ministry of Justice will be targeting candidates with experience in assisting adults and children of all ages.

As you may know, RIs are one of the special measures under the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999. They provide specialist communication help to witnesses and complainants with particular needs, supporting them during the 'Achieving Best Evidence' interviews with the police and then later in court. This assistance can be invaluable, enabling those that otherwise may not be heard to provide their best evidence and ensuring vulnerable people have access to justice. In recent years the demand for RIs has increased significantly and a rolling recruitment campaign commenced from December 2017.



violence
reduction
unit

If anyone is interested, or knows anyone who will be interested, the following link has more information on the role and how to apply: <https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/csr/jobs.cgi?jcode=1694122>

The campaign closes on the 30th November and it is hoped that new recruits will be ready to support vulnerable victims and witnesses by Spring 2021.

BRAND NEW WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP LAUNCHING 3rd NOV

POSITIVE CHANGES

Tuesdays 1-2pm

Aspire listened to the women we work with and have responded with a brand-new support group **POSITIVE CHANGES**

It is a safe, online space for women to discuss how the current climate has affected us all and how we can manage and cope with changes brought about by Covid while also considering any hidden positives.

Women who are interested (or those enquiring on their behalf) can send enquiries or request further information by emailing: sisters@aspire-northeast.co.uk

Please note this is a Zoom hosted group so internet access is required. Places are limited so there may be a waiting list to join.

Supporting sisters

Our women only support services are funded by: **COMMUNITY FUND**



COURSES AND ACTIVITIES—MOSTLY ONLINE

ARCH Recovery college Online (TEWV) - [details here](#).

Crisis (Newcastle) - [Timetable and more details](#).

Durham County Council Adult Learning and Skills Service — [current courses](#)

Gateshead Clubhouse — <https://gatesheadclubhouse.com/>

NT LIFE Recovery College (North Tyneside) — [college details here](#)

PCP (Newton Aycliffe) — [activities list](#)

ReCoCo (Newcastle and Gateshead) — click here for [online courses](#).

St. Margaret's Centre (Durham) — <http://www.stmargaretscentre.co.uk/>

Sunderland Recovery College—<https://www.sunderlandrecoverycollege.com/>

Waddington Street Centre (Durham) — <https://www.waddingtoncentre.co.uk/>

aspire | learning support wellbeing

Join Aspire for our safe, friendly weekly women's social groups

- Monday Social (women aged 18+) @ 11.15–12.15
- Mature Friends (women aged 50+) @ (Mon) 10–11.00

A chance to socialise, chat and connect online via Zoom

Email to register: sisters@aspire-northeast.co.uk

Improve Mental Wellbeing with FREE Online Inclusive Dance and Yoga

Synergy Dance Outreach has just launched a diverse programme of 174 online dance and yoga classes, including lessons for those with a disability, long term health conditions, Visually Impaired/Blind, Special Needs and older adults. Their National platform is in partnership with EMD UK and Sport England and the classes are free as they were funded by The National Lottery for this project using the Tackling Inequalities Fund. As the COVID situation is far from over, they are sharing the link to the platform of classes with members for continuation and inclusion?

The dance and yoga are for all ages including seated ParaStars Dance™ and ParaStars Yoga®, audio yoga & dance and more, all via an easily accessible national online platform. There is content for children - and they are also supporting adults and seniors.

You can view an online video here: <https://youtu.be/JkCI0yaMN2A>

The lessons are innovative and fun and tailored to each type of group. The platform includes courses for: children, teens, adults and seniors – who may choose from a wide range of activities and courses to keep fit, social and active:

- Special Needs including Autism & Cerebral Palsy
- Visually Impaired and Blind
- The Disability Community
- Long Term Health Conditions
- Seniors



Here is the link to the platform of free classes which is now live:

<https://inclusive-dance-yoga.teachable.com/>

Via this link you will be able to share 174 inclusive online dance and yoga classes with your clients and service users. These lessons include classes for special needs, disabilities, seniors and those with long term health conditions. It's a great way to stay in touch with clients and service users and these classes will also reach out to a lot of home workers.

There ay be other services Synergy Dance Online can provide such as live zooms.

You can contact Synergy on kathryn@synergydance.co.uk or at <http://synergydance.co.uk/>



Self Care Week

16-22 November 2020



UNITED

AGAINST

BULLYING

#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

What part will you play
this Anti-Bullying Week?

**ANTI-BULLYING
WEEK 2020**

16th – 20th November

**ODD SOCKS
DAY 2020**



Monday 16th November

**Alcohol
Awareness**

Week

16 - 22 November 2020.

For the facts on alcohol and mental health.

**ALCOHOL
CHANGE^{UK}**

www.alcoholchange.org.uk

#AlcoholAwarenessWeek

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

FOR THE PHD PROJECT:

This project explores the identities and experiences of homelessness and houselessness, as well as the ways that media can be used to have a positive impact on issues to do with homelessness and houselessness.

This project aims to be as inclusive as possible. If you:

- face problems with taking part (e.g. lack of internet access).
- need additional support.
- need signposted to services that can offer support with homelessness/houselessness.

Please let the researcher know.

Please note: research activities may occur in person or online. The project will adapt to follow any government/university guidelines on coronavirus.

For more information, please email Leah Chan at l.s.c.chan@newcastle.ac.uk

'CONTESTED SPACES OF HOMELESSNESS AND BEING HOUSELESS: MOBILISING MEDIA IN ACTION-ORIENTED RESEARCH'.

Get in touch if you are experiencing/have experienced homelessness or houselessness in Newcastle upon Tyne, and are aged 16 and over
OR if you are/have worked on a media/creative arts project or service that addresses issues surrounding homelessness (whether voluntary or paid).

This research sees homelessness as inclusive of, but not limited to rough sleeping, living in temporary or unstable housing, sofa surfing, squatting, or simply not feeling at home.
Please get in touch even if your experience is not mentioned here.

You are invited to take part in an interview- either online or in person.
There will be opportunities available for people to take part in follow up research activities.
Support will be provided throughout the project.



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.



Contacting us

Mental Health North East
Birtley CDC,
Drum Park Lane Industrial Estate
Chester Le Street
Co Durham
DH2 1AE

0191 411 1962

lyn.boyd@mhne.org.uk

neil.kelly@mhne.org.uk

Find us Online:

www.mhne.org.uk

[@MHNEtweets](https://twitter.com/MHNEtweets)

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MentalHealthNE/)

[MentalHealthNE/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MentalHealthNE/)

For further information about our bulletin or to place information in any future issues please contact:

beth.boyd@mhne.org.uk

Charity Number: 1119652

Company Number: 5552172

This issue edited by Gareth Cooper



Lyn Boyd

**Chief Executive
Officer**



Neil Kelly

Chairperson