

# Involvement Members Newsletter December '20

## Thank you for your support during 2020

We don't usually send out a newsletter to members, but this year has been a particularly tricky one for everyone and many of our members have told us that communications can sometimes support feelings of connectedness that feel increasingly important at times like these – with social isolation and quarantine being the focus of many of our lives for the past 10 months.

As a group of individuals with lived experience of mental health issues ourselves, the Involvement Team have been talking about how this time of year isn't like the John Lewis adverts for most of us and can bring extra stress and pressure, especially if you are balancing your emotional health needs.

We hope this newsletter will remind you to take time for yourself, offer information if you are struggling and news about what we have planned for 2021.

Thanks for your support in 2020 – together, we make a difference.

Best wishes, The Involvement Team  
(Vanessa, Amy, Nada, Jess, Laura, Helen & Amanda)

The Involvement Team are available as usual during the holiday period, except for bank holidays. Please email [involvement@swlstg.nhs.uk](mailto:involvement@swlstg.nhs.uk) with any enquiries.

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INVOLVEMENT ART PROJECT  
**Flock Of Birds**





## News from the Involvement Team

### Who are the Involvement Team...

The Involvement Team consists of seven roles (four of which are part time) that focus on four primary aims:

- \*To change the Trusts culture
- \*To increase service user and carer influence and control
- \*To provide personal opportunities for people to be involved
- \*To extend the reach of involvement activity in the Trust

It is well recognized that by working with people who have experience of using services the biggest and best improvements to services can be made.

The team was started in 2019, overseen by the Head of Therapies (Helen) and consisted of a Team Leader (Vanessa), two Peer Support Workers (Amy & Nada) and an Admin Co-ordinator (now this is Jess), as well as a Carer Involvement Worker (Jennifer is due to start in the New Year). Laura joined in July as Volunteer Involvement Worker and Amanda joined the team in October as Deputy Head of Coproduction & Involvement.

The roles and work have evolved but we are still working towards the same primary aims.

Last year, we saw:

- \*The number of people on the involvement register up by 61%
- \*Paid Involvement on recruitment & selection up by 73%
- \*Paid Involvement opportunities up by 1/3<sup>rd</sup>

As a team of people with experience of using mental health services ourselves, we know the impact involvement can have both on service improvement and on a persons recovery journey.

Covid has had an impact on progress but we are determined to rebuild this in order to continue our ambitions next year and alongside our members and staff allies make a significant difference to local mental health services.





Co-production  
and Involvement

## News from the Involvement Team

### Plans for 2021...

We plan to build on the achievements of last year, that were slowed down as a result of the pandemic. With our members help and support from our colleagues and allies, we believe we can really make a difference to services. This might feel slow whilst you are in it, (it feels slow to us too sometimes), but there does seem to be an appetite for positive change and we have plenty of plans.

### Save the Date...

On **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February '21**, we are arranging an Involvement Open Day. This will be an opportunity for all of us, whether experienced or new to involvement, staff, people who use services and carers to work together and develop and plan the Involvement agenda. This day will be about working together but we also hope to be able to plan for a face-to-face celebration once Covid restrictions allow.

### Meet the team.

“My name is Amy Sharp and I am a Peer Involvement Worker.



As someone who has been using mental health services for over 15 years my drive at work is to support others like myself who have an experience of mental health distress. I've really enjoyed meeting so many different people, it's inspiring to hear others stories and identify where change needs to happen. It feels good to be part of something that amplifies Service User and Carer voices, and although change is slow I feel we are going in right direction”

To find out more about the difference your involvement can make and why it's so important, please click on the link for this short video:

[The Parable of the Blobs and Squares - YouTube](#)





## Support over the holiday period

When services close down over holiday periods it can leave you feeling isolated or unsupported. Alongside the Trust some organisations do extend existing services to try and cover the gap.

You may wish to plan how you would get support for yourself or someone else should you need it and the following pages indicate some services that are available.

One of our Involvement members, Laura Campbell, has written a piece specifically regarding [How to survive Christmas with an Eating Disorder.docx](#).

If this effects you or a family member then do follow the link for some personal hints and tips from someone with lived experience.

The Recovery College has an e-learning hub which offers a wealth of information:

<https://www.swlstg.nhs.uk/about-our-courses/e-learning>

### Sunshine Recovery Café

296a Kingston Road, SW20 8LX

**Phone:** 07908 436 617

**24 helpline:** 07944 506036

**Email:** [info@cdars.org.uk](mailto:info@cdars.org.uk)

**From Weds 9th Dec-Friday 8th Jan '21** the Café will be open **from 4pm daily** on weekdays and **every Weds 11am-3pm**

### Hestia Recovery Café

966 Garratt Lane, SW17 0ND

**Phone:** 07794394920

**Website:** [www.hestia.org](http://www.hestia.org)

**Open from Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Dec-Sun 10<sup>th</sup> Jan '21** from 12pm-11pm incl. bank holidays.

Cafes are for anyone over the age of 18 and are usually open Mon-Fri 6pm-11pm & Weekends and Bank Holidays 12pm-11pm.

Richmond & Kingston residents can see here for information regarding a café in their area that offering extended opening hours: <https://www.rbmind.org/our-services/recoveryhub/>





# Support over the holiday period

## Mind

Many of you will have heard of Mind,



the national mental health organisation who provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health issue. They also campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. They have some great information on their website including a specific page with hints and tips for coping over Christmas and New Year.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-and-mental-health/>

**The Mind Infoline** provides information and signposting.

Infoline: 0300 123 3393  
Email: [info@mindorg.uk](mailto:info@mindorg.uk)  
Text: 86463

## Infonline opening hours

- Thursday 24th December - Open 9am - 6pm
- Friday 25th December - Closed
- Monday 28th December - Closed
- Tuesday 29th December - Open 9am - 6pm
- Weds 30th December - Open 9am - 6pm
- Thursday 31st December - Open 9am - 6pm
- Friday 1st January - Closed

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>

Colleagues at Talk Wandsworth have developed a series of podcasts featuring special guests talking about how they manage their wellbeing during lockdown and beyond: [Lockdown Lesson 1: “Our wellbeing needs to be flexible...so we bend rather than topple over.” - YouTube](#)





# Support over the holiday period

## Hub of Hope

Can help someone to find the most relevant and readily available support nearby.

With more than 1,800 local, regional, grassroots and national services currently listed, and that number growing each day, the Hub of Hope is the UK's go-to mental health support signposting tool.

It includes a "Get Help Now" function which allows you to talk directly to Samaritans or access text message support via Crisis Text line.

It can be accessed FREE online or downloaded from the App Store or Play Store.

There is always help and there is ALWAYS hope.

<https://www.chasingthestigma.co.uk/hub-of-hope/about-the-hub/>

## The Dragon Café

We know many of our members enjoy arts and crafts as a way of maintaining their wellbeing. **At The Table Project.** offer four free online sessions with acclaimed artist Liz Atkin, whose lived experience plays a pivotal role in her artistic process.

To find out more and sign up: <https://dragoncafe.co.uk/atthetable/>

All sessions will take place at 11am and last 50 minutes.

**21st Dec:** Shading Techniques  
**11th Jan:** Soft Pastel Techniques  
**25th Jan:** Charcoal Texture  
**8th Feb:** Mixed Media

Materials can be provided by the Dragon Cafe if needed.

**To book on to other Dragon Café online sessions in January go to:**

<https://www.dragoncafeinthecity.com/whats-on>





# Support in a Crisis

## 24/7 Mental health support line

If you need mental health support in a crisis you can call SWLStG's 24/7 Mental Health Support Line on **0800 028 8000**. The Mental Health Support Line offers emotional support and advice to people who are affected by urgent mental health issues, at any time of the day or night. The Mental Health Support Line can help and direct you to the right service for your mental health.

## Medical Emergency

If someone's life is at imminent risk or in a medical emergency call 999 but please only attend A&E in an emergency.

## Get advice from 111

111 will tell you the right place to get help if you need to see someone.

Use the [NHS 111 online service](#), or call 111.

## Free listening services

These services offer confidential advice from trained volunteers.

Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) for a reply within 24 hours.

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Service.

## If you feel suicidal

**The Listening Place** accepts self referrals and offers counselling by appointment.

**Call:** 020 3906 7676

**Visit:** <https://listeningplace.org.uk>

**The Maytree Respite Centre** is currently open for telephone calls for people who are suicidal between 8am and 8pm.

**Call:** 020 7263 7070

**Visit:** <https://www.maytree.org.uk/>

Residential stays are on hold due to covid but will resume at a later date when the house re-opens.

