mind in Hillingdon

Autumn Edition | 2026

MIND S.U.N. Service User Newsletter

Hillingdon Mind Group Activities

- Hearing Voices Online Group
- Online Social Group
- Creative Art Online
- Job Hub
- Wellbeing Walk
- Carers Support Online Group
- Wednesday Art Group
- Wednesday Evening Social Group
- Women's Group
- Online Creative Writing
- Online Social and Quiz
- Men's Group
- Allotment/Gardening

Welcome to the latest issue of the SUN, the Service Users Newsletter. We would like to thank you, the service users, for reading and engaging with us, and a special thanks goes out to all of you that have sent in your contributions so far. We always want to hear from you, whether it's with thoughts and feedback about what has been in past issues of the SUN, useful information and positive quotes that help you, anecdotes of your lived experience or how Mind has helped you, or creative contributions such as photos, artwork, poems, creative writing and more. If you have anything you'd like to be included in a future edition, please send them to

newsletter@hillingdonmind.org.uk

In this, the Autumn 2026 issue, you'll find some fun facts, as well as two thoughtfully shared accounts of some service user's lived experiences. As always, we are staying inspired with the showcase of your creative contributions. There's also some information about some service user-led groups, and updates about our partnership with CNWL Recovery & Wellbeing College, with a special focus on courses taking place in Hillingdon.

We hope you enjoy reading!

- The Newsletter Team



Picture by Alicia

Did you know?

Whilst some may refer to them as “useless trivia”, fun facts really do have a use. The act of attaining and remembering information can enhance our mental abilities, such as reasoning and problem solving. Taking the time to learn some tidbits can provide a welcome distraction and a moment of respite in times of unease. In addition to this, the inquisitive nature of gaining knowledge actually releases dopamine, meaning fun facts are effective mood boosters! Not to mention the joyful social connection that sharing fun facts brings.

Here are a couple of fun facts you might not know...

Human mind

Music can trigger unusually powerful autobiographical memories. There's a recognised phenomenon known as the reminiscence bump, in which people tend to recall disproportionately many memories from adolescence and early adulthood.



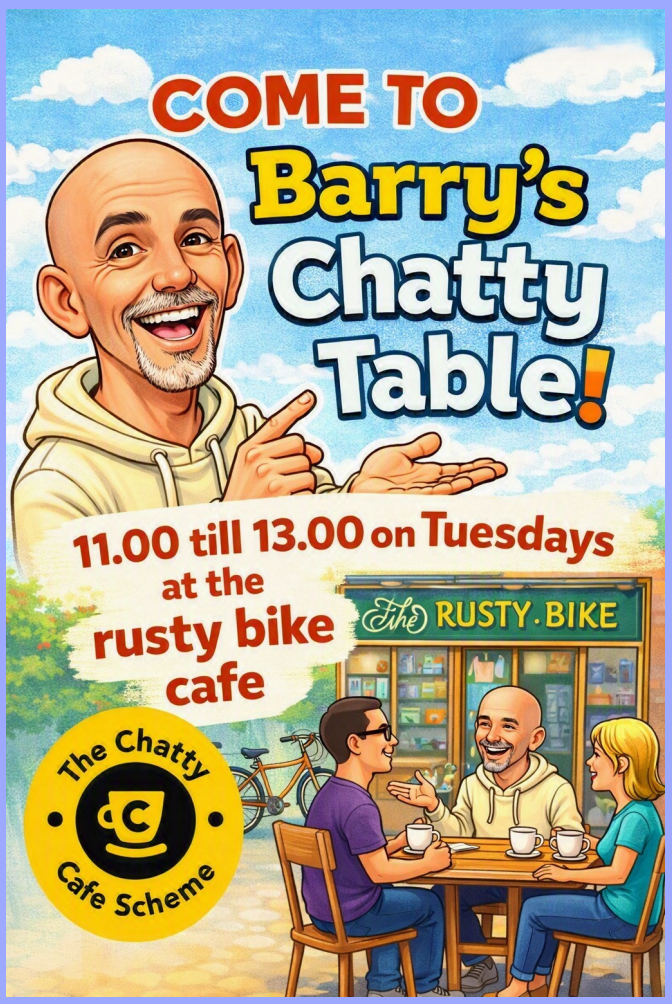
Britain

The London Underground is older than the telephone. The Metropolitan Railway opened in 1863. Alexander Graham Bell's first successful telephone experiments came later in the 1870s.



Do you have any fun or unusual facts that others reading might not know? We'd love you to share them with us! Send your nuggets of knowledge to **newsletter@hillingdonmind.org.uk**. All sensible contributions will be gratefully received! Stay curious!

Community Noticeboard



" My name is Barry and I was introduced to the Chatty table by my friend Bob who runs a table at The Watersedge, Ruislip lido.

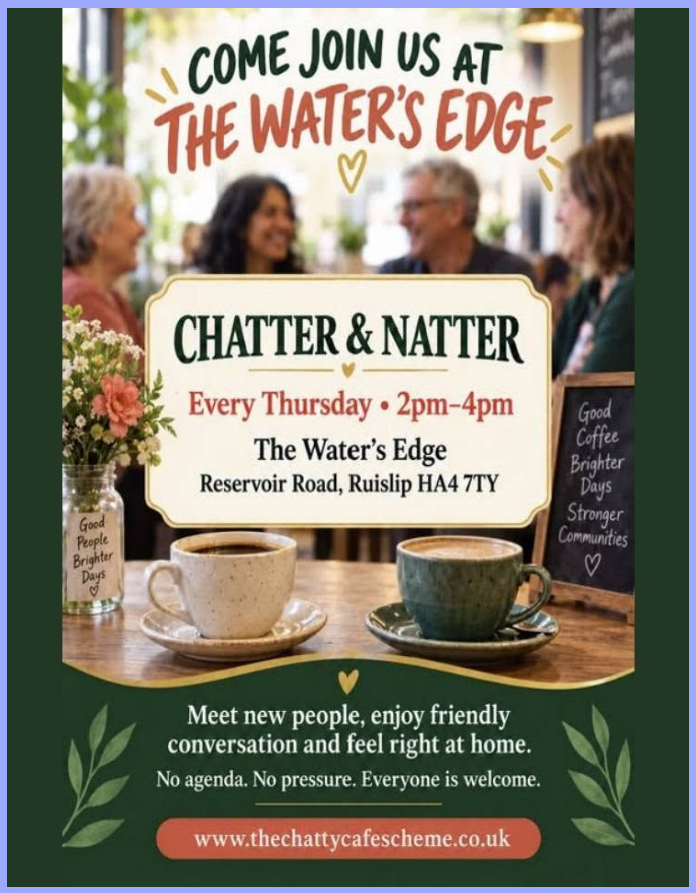
I have lived in Uxbridge all my life and had my own ups and downs with my mental health....being little in the Uxbridge area to support people like myself with loneliness and mental health, the cafe gives a friendly space for anyone to chat about life and troubles with no judgement. Come along to the Rusty bike cafe and show support as well as make new friends. Together we will make a difference. "

" Staying connected is one of the best things we can do for our wellbeing. Good conversations reduce stress, ease loneliness and remind us that we're part of a community.

So, come & join us, Bob and Sue, at 2pm Thursday, for another Chatty Café Session at the Ruislip Lido. We'll be in The Water's Edge – Stonehouse Pizza & Carvery. That's every week.

Pop in, cool down, and enjoy some friendly faces.

Let us know if you'd like to be met outside, before entering the restaurant. If you prefer to just have a glass of water that's ok and your little four legged friend is welcome too. "



Community Noticeboard

THE PROPER BLOKES CLUB

TEAM UXBRIDGE

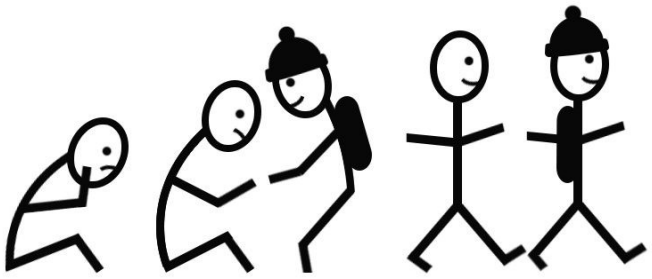
Tuesdays at 7pm

Meet outside Uxbridge Tube Station

Why not come down and join our peer to peer **walk** and **talk** groups... It's **FREE**!

With every walk you are helping bring an end to the stigma of mens mental health.

Let's start chatting about what really matters.



07397 501110
theproperblokesclub@gmail.com
www.theproperblokesclub.co.uk
theproperblokesclub
the_proper_blokes_club
BlokesClub

" The Proper Blokes Club is a group of men who meet once a week for a walk and talk. I go because it supports my mental health and reminds me that I'm not alone. Being able to walk, chat, and spend time with other men who understand makes a real difference. " - Steve

Positive Mental Health



A few years ago, I walked through this canal tunnel while I was deep in alcohol addiction. At the time, I couldn't see any light ahead — not in the tunnel, and not in myself.

A year later, sober and fighting for my life back, I returned. This time I could see the light. I walked toward it on purpose, as a symbol of the future I wanted. I asked my wife to take this photo because it marked the beginning of my new life.

Today, I'm five 1/2 years sober. If you're struggling, keep going. The light might feel far away, but it's there — and you're stronger than you think. - Steve

Positive Mental Health

From Recovery to Writing My Story

A little while ago, I never would have imagined that I would one day be writing a book/ memoir about my journey through addiction and recovery and finally discovering who I really am.

My book, I Swear I am Sober, is now available on Amazon. It tells the story of my life from childhood, through years of alcohol and cocaine addiction, dependency, psychosis, paranoia and depression and eventually into recovery, discovering my ADHD and finally learning who I really am without the things that once controlled my life.

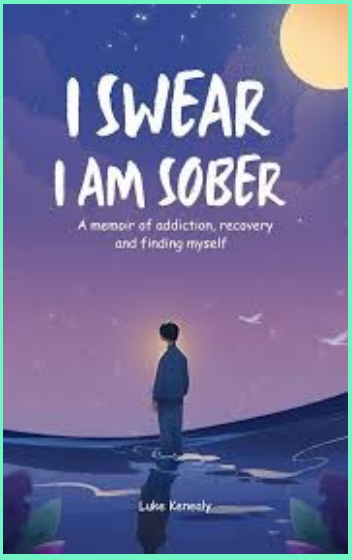
Mind played an important part in my early recovery. I was fortunate enough to receive a number of free therapy sessions and by an amazing coincidence, my therapist was also around 20 years sober. Having someone who understood both mental health and recovery was incredibly valuable to me and those sessions became a really important part of rebuilding my life and helping me understand sobriety, addiction and dealing with childhood trauma and finally grieving properly. I was given a huge amount of tools that I still use 2 years later and will carry them with me and use them forever when needed.

I also attended Mind walking groups and a Hearing Voices group. These gave me structure, helped me reconnect with people and perhaps most importantly, allowed me to spend time around other people in a safe and supportive environment. I got to listen to others and I also got to share as well, which is never an issue for me (I can talk for England if I'm not politely told to take a breath).

As my recovery progressed, I wanted to give back anywhere I could. I set up a GoFundMe page and raised £500 for Mind, before taking part in a 5K charity run at the Olympic Park in London. I completed the 5K in 28 minutes and it was a really proud moment for me, especially because exercise and looking after my mental health had become such an important part of my recovery, I was even using the couch to 5K app to train myself, I did document my training and progress on TikTok, not for clicks but to share how important exercise was and is for recovery/ mental health and to show what I could give back as I spent years just taking.

Recovery wasn't something that happened overnight. It was built from lots of small steps, different forms of support and learning how to live my life differently.

Writing I Swear I am Sober has been another part of that journey. My hope is that people who have struggled with addiction, mental health or simply finding their way in life might read it and recognise something of themselves in my story.



Luke Kenealy

CNWL RECOVERY & WELLBEING COLLEGE

Workshops in Hillingdon

Understanding depression

Venue: Christ Church, Redford Way, Belmont Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1SZ
Date & Time: 11 September, 10am to 12pm

Beating mental health stigma & discrimination

Venue: Mill House, 38 Riverside Way, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2YF
Date & Time: 1 & 8 October 2026, 10am to 12pm

Introduction to developing resilience

Venue: Christ Church, Redford Way, Belmont Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1SZ
Date & Time: 9 October 2026, 10am to 12pm

Introduction to self-compassion

Venue: Christ Church, Redford Way, Belmont Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1SZ
Date & Time: 16 October 2026, 10am to 12pm

Introduction to hearing voices

Venue: Mill House, 38 Riverside Way, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2YF
Date & Time: 24 November 2026, 10am to 12pm

Interview Skills

Via Zoom
Date & Time: 27 November 2026, 10am to 12pm

Coping with Christmas

Venue: Christ Church, Redford Way, Belmont Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1SZ
Date & Time: 4 December, 10am to 12pm

To book, please email:
cnwl.recoverycollege@nhs.net
or call 0203 214 5686

Creative Contributions



Painting by Caroline

Inspiration

I search for inspiration
Yes all the time you see
Yes inspiration's what I need
to write my poetry

Inspiration keeps you going
It helps you get along
It helps you to improve your life
You won't be bored for long

Where would we be without it
With this you might impress
When inspired by what you might
achieve and all you might address

So maybe this is all you need
To help to make a start
Just think of all that you might need
of all that's in your heart

Yes just think about what's in your heart
It's what you might like to do
Search for inspiration, you might find
you inspire others too!

Poem by Lynn



Picture by Ann

Creative Contributions

Minds Weekly Women's Group

I'm in a weekly women's group
It gets me about
Where we often meet and greet a lot
And we sometimes have days out.

We're a caring and friendly lot
Loving and happy too
Always glad to see each other
Finding lots more things to do.

We meet on Thursdays every week
At 2pm you see
Have tea & cake and sandwiches
And a lovely cup of tea.

We're such a lovely group of girls
We stick together too
Supportive in our company
We see each other through.

But most of all we have a laugh
That's when we all can be together
All together for another cup of tea.



Picture by Ann

Looking for Lyrics

Just trying to find some lyrics
to write a lovely song
but somehow all my lyrics
just seem to turn out wrong

But maybe inspiration
will just come shining thru'
if I try to write the lyrics
here while I look at you

'cos surely there's no loveliness
that I could ever show
quite like the beauty in your face
when your eyes are so aglow.

When melting into tenderness
your soft sweet love appears
encaptured in your lovely smile
and crystal clear like tears

Then surely I will find the words,
they'll flow more easily,
I'll find that inspiration's
just staring right at me

So 'tho I can't find lyrics,
Well it's becoming clear,
I guess I've just discovered
I've written them right here!!

Poems by Lynn

Creative Contributions

Martin’s musings: Dry the Rain by The Beta Band

What is your favourite track?

Some songs have more straightforward lyrics than others, but others invite the listener to explore deeper meaning. For me, the folktronica, neo-psychedelic, and indie rock song Dry the Rain – featured in the rom-com movie High Fidelity (2000) – falls into the second category.

It may be one reason it remains such a beloved, yet underrated, song edging towards its 30th year.

The opening lyrics speak of a lived experience: -
“This is the definition of my life,
Lying in bed in the sunlight,
Choking on the vitamin tablet,
The doctor gave in the hope of saving me,
In the hope of saving me.”

The heart of the song, a continued plea, repeats its chorus: -
“I asked him time again,
Take me in and dry the rain,
Take me in and dry the rain,
Take me in and dry the rain,
Take me in and dry the rain,
The rain, the rain, the rain now.”

The image of rain evokes difficult times and uncertainty for many. But following an indulgent bridge and a catching trumpet passage, the song transcends to a message of positivity: -

"If there's something inside that you want to say,
Say it out loud, it'll be okay,
I will be your light."

It encourages speaking freely while appreciating having someone who is willing to listen. The message is then interspersed with another simple but powerful phrase: - "I need love."

This line expresses a desire for support through shared connection and understanding. And then, when all is said and done, the song fades out having turned darkness to reassuring optimism.

Go on, sing it!

“If there's something inside that you want to say,
You can say it out loud, it'll be okay,
I will be your light, I will be your light,
I will be your light, I will be your light,
I need love, yeah,
I need love.”

by Martin

Current Group Activity Details

Hearing Voices Online Group - Monday 10.15 am – 11.15 am

Hearing Voices Groups are people with shared experiences coming together to support one another. They offer a safe haven where people who hear, see or sense things that other people don't can feel accepted, valued and understood.

Online Social Group - Monday 5.30 pm – 7 pm

We run online and face to face groups to help you meet new people and enjoy a range of social activities. The group offers light refreshments and the opportunity to talk with others. The group provides various activities to get involved in or you can just sit and spend time with oth-ers, there are no expectations.

Creative Art Online - Tuesday 2.30 pm – 4 pm

Our weekly Creative Art group aims to improve mental health and reduce social isolation though creativity and conversation. You don't need to have any skills or experience in art to join the group. People of all abilities are welcome.

Job Hub - Wednesday 11 am – 1 pm

Employment Support is a service designed to assist anyone with mental health problems to find work and live independently in the community. Through the service people can access support in many areas to help increase your independence and work related skills.

Wellbeing Walk - Wednesday 2 pm – 3 pm

The Walking Group meets weekly, it's a mixed group of all ages, and walks take around an hour to an hour and half, taking place in local parks. Both walking and being in nature hold many bene-fits for your mental health. So, combining the two is a fantastic way to support your wellbeing.

Carers Support Online Group - Wed pm

This support is offered by the Mental Health Recovery team at Hillingdon Mind; they offer practical and emotional support and can assist you in supporting both you and the person you are caring for. Our weekly peer support group is known as Coffee and Chat on-line.

Wednesday Art Group - Wednesday 5.15 pm – 6.15 pm

Our weekly Creative Art group aims to improve mental health and reduce social isolation though creativity and conversation. You don't need to have any skills or experience in art to join the group. People of all abilities are welcome.

Current Group Activity Details

Wednesday Evening Social Group - Wednesday 5 pm – 7 pm

We run online and face to face groups to help you meet new people and enjoy a range of social activities. The group offers light refreshments and the opportunity to talk with others. The group provides various activities to get involved in or you can just sit and spend time with others, there are no expectations.

Women's Group - Thursday 2 pm – 4 pm

Our weekly support group is for women experiencing mental health issues, feelings of isolation, loneliness, lack of confidence or low self-esteem. The session offers a safe, informal and non-judgemental space to have a chat, share experiences and learn new coping strategies.

Online Creative Writing - Friday 10.30 am – 12 pm

Creative Writing can be a form of self-expression and therapy that can offer many benefits for your mental health. Our weekly Creative Writing group provides a relaxed, informal get-together for people experiencing mental health issues who are interested in writing and want to improve their wellbeing. The group is suitable for people of all abilities. You don't need to have any writing skills or experience.

Online Social and Quiz - Friday 5.30 pm – 7.30 pm

Our weekly social groups run online as well as face to face.

Men's Group - Saturday 12 pm - 1 pm

Our weekly support group is for men experiencing mental health issues, feelings of isolation, loneliness, lack of confidence or low self-esteem. The session offers a safe, informal and non-judgemental space to have a chat, share experiences and learn new coping strategies. Activities and Workshops will be offered and the sessions will be supported by peer support volunteers and staff.

Allotment/Gardening - Saturday 1.00 pm – 2.15 pm

The Gardening group meets weekly and is a chance to get together to grow and nurture plants, develop your gardening skills, get some exercise and socialise. No gardening knowledge is necessary just a willingness to get involved and help where you can.

If you would like to know more about any of these please contact a member of Hillingdon Mind staff on 01895 271559.

Feeling overwhelmed?

Our Support line is a safe, confidential space for you to talk about your mental health. Our advisors are trained to listen to you and help you find specialist support if you need it.



To speak to an advisor, call our Support line:

0300 102 1234

The Support line is open Mon-Fri 9am - 6pm

National Mind provide a wide range of information about all sorts of mental health issues. Please see this link for all the topics we cover on our website:

A to Z of mental health | Information and support | Mind

in a crisis and wish to speak to someone, contact:

Single Point of Access (SPA)

Urgent Advice Line: 0800 0234 650

Hillingdon Samaritans: 116123

Your GP/ and or 999

Contact us at Hillingdon Mind

www.mindinhillingdon.org.uk

In person (by appointment only)

40 New Windsor St, Uxbridge, UB8 2TU

Phone: 01895 271559

"As always, a big thank you to all the service users and volunteers who have worked on putting this newsletter together" – Hillingdon Mind

Please keep your contributions flowing in for our new regular newsletters by email to:
newsletter@hillingdonmind.org.uk

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