

'tis the Season



What's on in December ...

Alongside our Community Life programme we are holding some special seasonal events in December.

Our *Winter Warmers* programme will run every Friday 9.30am-12.00pm from 21st November to 19th December. A FREE, hot breakfast is available for everyone, and specialists from a number of organisations have been invited along to share useful tips and information on subjects such as: staying safe in Winter, eating healthily, and how to keep energy costs low.

The *Christmas quiz* evening with FREE mince pies and mulled wine (non-alcoholic), is taking place on Tuesday 16th December. There are luxury festive prizes for our quiz winners and for whoever wears the best Christmas Jumper, so pull out your Christmas pullovers for a prize!

Christmas Card competition entries are all in, and we will be announcing our winner soon. Look out for the winning design which will be available to buy from our Wellbeing Centre to help raise funds for Maidstone Mind.

Book a *Christmas dinner* with the Maidstone Mind community at the Society Rooms in Week Street, Maidstone, on Thursday 18th December at 1.30pm (limited places). There is a delicious choice of 2 or 3 course Christmas meals.

Christmas opening hours
We are running our usual Community Life programme until 1pm on 24th December.

We will be closed on:

24th Dec from 1pm

25th Dec - Christmas Day

26th Dec - Boxing Day

1st Jan - New Years Day



News & events ...

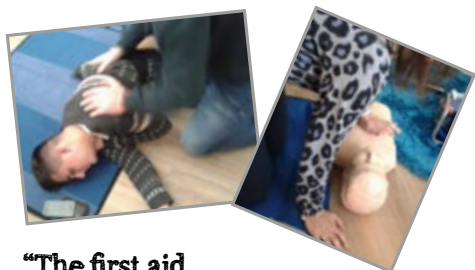
Our Team, with a few new faces.



Recently we have welcomed a few new members to our team, Gillian, Robin, Dan, Yvonne, Nikki, Lucy, Jonathan, Tim, & Anthony. We are very pleased to have them on board working with us, and supporting Maidstone Mind's growing services.

Staff training ...

Staff have been undertaking some essential training in the last month, including Emergency First Aid at Work, Mental Health First Aid, Autism Training & Mediation Skills.



"The first aid training refreshed my memory and made me feel more confident about dealing with situations where first aid might be required."

Gwen, Community Support Worker.

New programme with Job Centre Plus ...

We have just started running our new **Work & Wellbeing** programme with Job Centre Plus in Maidstone. This programme has been created for individuals who want to get back to work but are unemployed and experiencing mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and stress, which are preventing them finding and sustaining work.

ThinkWell courses ...

Maidstone Borough Council has been undertaking the Government's recent 'Troubled Families' initiative that has been created to help families deal with their problems before reaching crisis point. We are supporting the Council's Troubled Families programme with our new **ThinkWell Courses** that have been designed to support the adult

Talking Heads Campaign ...

Our Time to Change volunteers are passionate about changing perceptions of mental health, and are attending the Kent Fire & Rescue Services Mental Health Awareness day on 4th December to promote the campaign, talk to people about mental health, challenge perceptions, and ultimately tackle the stigma that surrounds it.

We asked one of our Time to Change volunteers what interested them in being a TTC volunteer, how they found the training and what they hope to achieve by undertaking a TTC volunteer role.

"I was interested in the opportunity of becoming a TTC volunteer to discuss ways of benefitting people with mental health disabilities within the local community, widening perspectives on attitudes and facilities for families carers and people involved on all levels in society.

The TTC training was excellent, a thoroughly enjoyable session, learning a lot about the topic in a friendly informative manner.

I feel individual input in this initiative is vital, to take small strides in making inroads in people's viewpoints on this topic, help highlight areas of concern, and to bring attitudes into 21st century thinking modes.

I hope to achieve a good working relationship between authorities and the public to highlight areas of interest and provide a source of information for the organisation to achieve its goals and aims.

At the Kent Fire & Rescue Mental Health Awareness day I hope to raise awareness to the fact that mental health and the stigma attached to it is a major concern. It affects everyone in its own way, and we should be open and frank about the effects it has and the methods to overcome the situation regarding mental health that society faces at the present time."

Jeannette, Time to Change Volunteer.