

### Introduction

**Welcome** to the August edition of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter. I hope many of you are having a very well-deserved and much needed break.

The last four months have been very tough for many people, with bereavement, restrictions on relationships and general movements, and financial and employment worries all taking a toll on our emotional and mental health. For those with responsibilities for children there has been the added pressure of home schooling, and **for millions of people this has also been the first time that work has physically become an integral part of home life** - the temporary office set-up in the corner of the kitchen, the lounge hosting Zoom calls.



As well as work occupying our physical home life, for many it's also been occupying a greater part of our days: checking emails first thing in the morning, responding to messages in the evening whenever the 'ping' from the laptop notifies the arrival of another message.

Schools have now officially finished for the summer, and August is the month when most people in work try to take some annual leave. **It's a good time to reconnect with people** and the things around us that matter. A chance to spend some proper time with children, other family members, and friends; and the good weather gives more opportunities for spending time outdoors.

With the immediate future still uncertain, **it's more important than ever to try and have some sort of break**. Breaks from work and holidays are the opportunity for us to recharge our batteries. So if you're working, make time for a proper lunch break every day and try to get outside. If you're on holiday from work, be on holiday (and **resist the temptation to check your emails**). If you don't have any holiday booked, or you can't get away, you can still try to work new things into your routine - you could go for a long walk along the river path, cook one of our delicious recipes, or take up sewing - or why not be inspired by our second new ambassador, Briony May, and hone your baking skills?

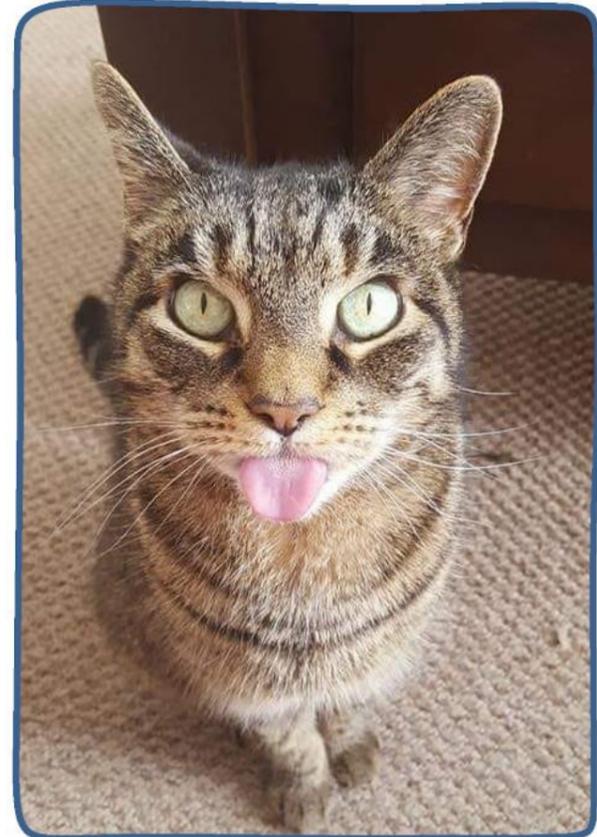
While on the subject of well-deserved breaks, further into our newsletter you'll read about Neil, who is leaving Bristol Mind after fifteen years as an advocate. Neil's been a wonderful colleague: friendly, supportive, and with some great stories about life on the high seas. Over his years with us, **hundreds of people have benefitted from his experience, knowledge, and commitment** in helping to resolve their often complex issues. We'll all miss him very much.

Like many of our staff - including our Hate Crime Case-worker, Sophie, who we'll hear from later in this issue - Neil started his Bristol Mind journey as a volunteer. **Volunteers make a huge contribution** to the work we do here at Bristol Mind, and we're currently looking for volunteers to support our Information & Signposting service - so if you have spare time, and want to get involved, please do take a look.

Tom Hore, Director



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# New Bristol Mind Ambassador!

We're excited to announce our second ambassador, the brilliant [Briony May](#)! Briony is a TV presenter and baker who won the nation's hearts during nine stressful weeks in the Great British Bake Off tent in 2018 - and won the Great Christmas Bake Off the very next year. She's also appeared on such shows as ITV's Loose Women and Beautiful Bakes With Juliet Sear; Channel 4's An Extra Slice and The Steph Show; CBBC's Blue Peter; and Something Special on CBeebies.

We recently caught up with Briony to hear more about what she's up to and why she's becoming a Bristol Mind ambassador...



## All About Briony...

"I'm a very **proud Bristolian** and mum to my beautiful 4-year-old daughter, Nora. I was a semi-finalist on the 2018 series of The Great British Bake Off, then went back into the tent in 2019 to win The Great Christmas Bake Off, which was great fun. I'm now working as a presenter on Channel 4's Food Unwrapped, and I split my time between work and looking after Nora. I'm so grateful for all the opportunities I've had since being on Bake Off."



## Briony on Mental Health...

"I have been dealing with my own mental health issues for a long time and it's something that's incredibly important to me. So many of us struggle in silence and Bristol Mind offers people the opportunity to speak to someone about how you're feeling and what you're going through. They support those who may not have anyone else. Mental health is so often overlooked when we are taking care of ourselves and it is crucial that we acknowledge the significance of mental illness and the impact it can have on our lives. I'm so excited to be joining Bristol Mind as an ambassador and I can't wait to spread the word about this fantastic charity."



## Briony on Baking...

"I started baking back in 2013, when I was off work for months with an undiagnosed illness and a colleague suggested I try baking to keep my mind busy. **It became like a type of therapy** for me, it calmed me. From there I learned different skills using YouTube tutorials, I made lots of cakes for friends and family. Then I applied for Bake Off, not thinking I'd ever get on. Much to my surprise and delight I did, and it was the most wonderful experience - and now I get to bake as part of my job, which is awesome!

My top baking tip is to **start with the basics**, get them right, and then build up from there. If you can make a basic sponge and pastry, there is so much you can do with that - **practice really does make perfect** when it comes to baking!"



# Bristol MindLine

Open  
7 nights a  
week during  
the **COVID-19** crisis

Are you feeling...

Anxious? Depressed?  
Lonely? Angry?  
Distressed?  
Worried?  
Suicidal?



Or are you worried about someone else?

Call our emotional support helpline

**0808 808 0330**

During the coronavirus crisis we will be  
open every night 7pm-11pm

Here to listen when you need to talk

[www.bristolmind.org.uk/mindline](http://www.bristolmind.org.uk/mindline)



Bristol, North Somerset  
and South Gloucestershire  
Clinical Commissioning Group



For better mental health

# Eid ul-Adha 2020



The end of July marked Eid ul-Adha 2020! Many Muslims all over the world celebrated the second of the two Eids, the festival of Eid ul-Adha.

The first Eid, known as Eid ul-Fitr, is celebrated after the month of Ramadhan, a month of fasting, which Muslims believe was when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) received the first revelation of the Quran.

## But what is Eid ul-Adha?

Eid ul-Adha, which translates to “the Greater Eid”, is celebrated in the twelfth and last month of the Islamic year; the month of Dhul Hijjah. It is a time when Muslims remember a key person called Ibrahim. Muslims see him as a prophet of God, and his story can be found in the Quran; but you can also find him in the Bible and Torah - Jewish people and Christians know him as Abraham.

## How do Muslims celebrate Eid ul-Adha?

On Eid morning Muslims attend special morning prayers at the mosque. This is often followed by a visit to the cemetery - to remember and pray for loved ones who are no longer with us.

Then the fun begins: everyone visits family and friends to exchange money and gifts. Some families visit farms, or arrange for the slaughter of an animal and have the meat delivered to them. Others send money abroad, to have the sacrifice take place in poorer parts of the world. The meat is distributed over the next two days: one third to be eaten by close family and friends, one third to be given to friends, and one third donated to the poor. People are encouraged to open their hearts and share what they have, both with their friends and with those in need.

A huge feast of celebration takes place - some families will eat special food, like lamb biriyani, or if the weather is good, hold a spectacular barbecue.

Are you a Muslim looking to connect with other Bristol Muslims? [Join the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society.](#)

## Eid Biscuits Recipe (Crunchies)

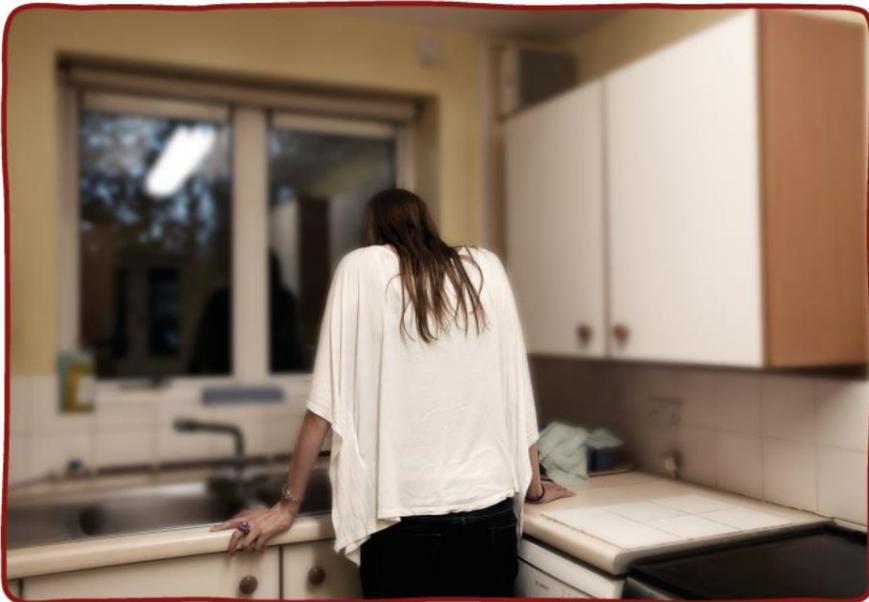
250g butter  
1 cup brown sugar  
3 tbsp golden syrup  
2 cups desiccated coconut  
2 cups oats  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C / Fan 160°C / GM 4. Grease an oven tray.
2. In a pot over medium heat, melt the butter and sugar, then add the golden syrup.
3. Mix in the coconut, flour, oats and bicarbonate of soda.
4. Flatten the dough out on to the greased tray.
5. Bake for 10 minutes, then lower the heat to 150°C / Fan 140°C / GM 3, cooking for a further 20 minutes.
6. Cut the biscuits into squares while still warm.

## Bristol Mind's Hate Crime Service

Sophie Jansen, Hate Crime Caseworker, Bristol Mind

Bristol Mind works in collaboration with six organisations to provide Bristol Hate Crime and Discrimination Services. The other organisations are SARI, Brandon Trust, Off the Record, Bristol Law Centre, and Resolve West. The collaboration began when Bristol City Council commissioned a service for all strands of hate crime to have a central reporting place whilst retaining the expertise of specialist organisations, and has moved through several iterations since its inception. We asked Sophie Jansen, our Hate Crime Caseworker, for the low-down on the service:



A Hate Crime is a crime motivated by prejudice against another person because of their **ethnicity, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief**. At Bristol Mind we support victims who have been targeted because of their mental health; this is a form of disability hate crime.

I first became aware of Bristol Mind when **I saw an advert calling for MindLine volunteers**. I was working for a corporate organisation at the time, and had just been informed that I was spending too much time on the telephone trying to resolve issues for customers, and that I should instead try to get callers off the line quicker. **The advert struck a chord** and I thought that I might be better suited to a different role. Though I started as a volunteer, I changed careers to become Bristol Mind's administrator, before taking on the hate crime caseworker role.

I am passionate about reducing stigma around mental health and working with people to access the services and support they need. I am keen for disability hate crime to be properly recognised and dealt with accordingly. As part of my role, I actively promote the service to encourage more people to report. As a service, **we provide both practical and emotional support to victims of hate crime**. We only take actions that are fully discussed and agreed with our clients. We can support people to report issues to the police if they wish to, and can liaise with other organisations on their behalf.

Some of the clients we support are victims of a type of hate crime called **"mate crime"**. This is where a person is befriended and then taken advantage of because of some mental health issues, learning disabilities, or autism. For one client, this involved a neighbour "borrowing" money and not paying it back, asking the client to run "errands" on his behalf, as well as being verbally abusive and threatening. This resulted in the client becoming too frightened to stay at home. We were able to help the client report this to the police and supported them to move to a new place.

During the lockdown, all our staff have been working from home and I have continued to provide the same service, but over the telephone instead of face to face. The lockdown has meant that people have been spending more time at home, and as such, **pre-existing tensions between neighbours have been exacerbated** - resulting in the escalation of some situations. It's been particularly hard for people waiting to move as it has not been possible to bid on Bristol City Council properties during the lockdown.

If you think you may have been targeted by someone because of your mental health and could be a victim of hate crime, or you're a professional concerned about a client, you can give me a call to talk it through.

call: 0117 980 0388 | email: [hatecrimework@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:hatecrimework@bristolmind.org.uk) | visit [our website](#)

You can report any hate crime to BHC&DS centrally by:

freephone: 0800 171 2272 | emailing: [report@bhcds.org.uk](mailto:report@bhcds.org.uk) | visiting: [www.bhcds.org.uk](http://www.bhcds.org.uk)

A hate crime can be reported to the police on 101, or if it is an emergency call 999.

# Bristol Mind are looking for Information & Signposting volunteers!

Our **Information & Signposting Service** provides a free and confidential first port of call for those who would like to know more about mental health resources in the Bristol area.

**Our volunteers work from home once a week**, answering calls and emails from members of the public.

**We are looking for volunteers who have:**

- A passion for contributing to mental wellbeing in the Bristol area
- Good listening, verbal communication, and written communication skills,
- A commitment to diversity and equality
- A few hours a week to spare
- Basic computer skills



**As a member of our friendly team, you will:**

- Receive full, comprehensive training, covering everything you need to do the role - no previous experience required
- Work from the comfort of your own home, with 3.5 hour shifts once a week
- Contribute to the wellbeing of your local community in a rewarding role, speaking directly with members of the public
- Gain experience in working with mental health
- Receive monthly supervision as well as ongoing support from the team
- Be invited to Bristol Mind social events

**If you'd like to find out more about the role and training schedule, please request an information pack from [info@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolmind.org.uk) by Monday 31st August 2020.**



Training will take place between the 14th and 28th September 2020, with a view for new volunteers to start working from September 30th.

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

Bristol Mind's Information and Signposting Service is open between 9:30am and 3:30pm, Monday to Friday. Our friendly team can point you in the right direction to find support, but can't directly offer advice. You can give us a call on 0117 980 0370, visit our [website](http://www.bristolmind.org.uk), or email [info@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolmind.org.uk).

# August's Guest Contributor: The Care Forum

Rossanne Hamilton, Social Prescribing Officer, The Care Forum

This month we wanted to shine a spotlight on the important work that The Care Forum are doing across Bristol.

The Care Forum is an independent voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisation. They work across the local area to improve health and social care, involving and promoting the opinions and needs of local people, and providing direct advocacy services and signposting. They're responsible for [Well Aware](#), Bristol's most comprehensive local signposting website, and are a leading organisation in many of the city's community partnerships.

We've been talking to Rossanne Hamilton, Social Prescribing Officer, about their "Ways to Wellbeing" service for the Greater Fishponds area.



## What is "Ways to Wellbeing"?



"The 'Ways to Wellbeing' service is a free and confidential social prescribing service available to anyone over the age of 18, living in the Greater Fishponds area of Bristol. We tend to work with people who have a disability, are under stress, or have a mental health problem, and who need support to access housing, benefits, employment advice, or mental health care.

We also help people who are unwell or isolated to find interesting and helpful things in their community. This could be anything from support and advice organisations, to social or activity groups. There are current opportunities for people that are ongoing during social distancing and lockdown - this is vital so that people can stay connected and get the support they need now!

During lockdown we've seen remote activities such as virtual choirs and classes (including local groups who will return to face-to-face activities after restrictions lift), mental health services, housing services, and organisations that directly cater to those who are shielding - helping with grocery shopping and collecting prescriptions.

## So how does it work?

We partner clients with a social prescriber, who can give them 5 sessions over 5 months. They'll help the client to find the right things for them, and support them to get involved in the opportunities they would like to try.

Our team recognises that a lot of people are feeling more isolated and unwell at the moment, so we'd like you to know that we're here to support. In the past, we've mostly received referrals from GP surgeries - but with people staying at home, we've had fewer referrals. Our service is open, support is still available, and if you live in the Greater Fishponds area you can get in touch with us directly for help - so please get in touch!"



Some of the friendly Ways to Wellbeing team

## Where is Greater Fishponds?

If you're not sure whether you qualify for the service, you can take a look at the [boundary map](#) - where you'll also find some helpful information on resources across Bristol.

The Ways to Wellbeing Service accepts referrals from GPs and self-referrals from clients. You can give them a call on 0117 958 9360, send them an [email](#), or visit their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).



## A Fond Farewell

Neil Ashmore, our Mental Health Advocate - who has run our Advocacy Drop-ins since 2007 - is leaving Bristol Mind. Claire Barnard, Outreach Advocacy Coordinator, reflects on his time with us.

Neil first joined the Outreach Advocacy team when he trained as a volunteer in 2005, and became a member of staff in 2007, running our Filwood drop-in. He's stayed with us through several iterations of the Drop-in - first moving to Windmill Hill City Farm, then taking on our Tuesday afternoon Drop-in in Old Market, and for some time providing advocacy directly to patients on the "Continuing Care" wards at the Priory Hospital in Stapleton.

Neil has been a stalwart of the service, **providing support, signposting, and advocacy** to the wide range of people who come to see us. He has often had volunteers working with him at our office Drop-in, which has enabled us to see more people, and has developed a reputation amongst them as someone who knows his role inside-out and has a wealth of information and knowledge at his disposal. As one of our volunteer advocates says, "he has an amazing blend of kindness and firmness, and expert knowledge of all the resources that support people moving forward."

As the name suggests, **anyone can walk in without an appointment** to see one of our advocates during the times of the Drop-ins. This means that the advocate can be presented with any issue, and cannot know what to expect - which can be challenging, but very interesting!

The level of attendance at our Drop-ins can fluctuate, and Neil has kept a record of the weather for some time to see if this has any influence on people visiting. It doesn't appear to at all, which is a bit of a surprise!

During this period of COVID-19 restrictions, obviously we haven't been able to see people face to face, but Neil has still been putting his skills to good use with ongoing casework - communicating by phone or email. **We've still been busy despite the circumstances**; we're able to contact authorities or professionals on behalf of service users by phone, email, or letter, so in that respect there has been little change.

Neil has decided to leave for personal reasons after a long deliberation. **We are going to very much miss his presence in our team**, his distinctive resonant voice and his sense of humour. It will take some adjusting to not having him with us, but we'll stay in touch.

Neil says, "I've really enjoyed my work, and the support and camaraderie of both staff and our amazing volunteers. It's been rewarding for me and I've been very proud to have helped Bristol Mind in their sterling work."

One of Neil's interests is sailing, so we hope that at some point in the near future he can resume this activity. Bon Voyage Neil, and thank you for all that you've done for the Outreach Advocacy service - **we wouldn't have been so successful without you**. We shall miss you and look forward to when we can have that leaving party!

**Bristol Mind's Outreach Advocacy Drop-ins are currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but new clients are still being accepted. Advocacy is currently available to Bristol City residents by phone, email, and text. See [our website](#) for more information.**

# International Cat Day 2020

Here at Bristol Mind we know that owning a pet can make a huge difference to our mental health. Whether it's knowing that your cat needs you, the companionship an animal brings, or just the soothing sound of a cat's purr, 75% of cat owners think that they cope with everyday life much better thanks to the company of their cats.

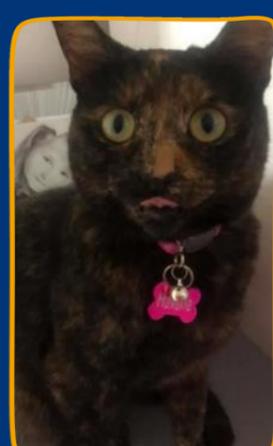
To mark International Cat Day, which falls on August 8th each year, we asked you to send in pictures of your furry companions and tell us all about them - and the response was overwhelming! In this two page spread, we've collected some adorable cat pictures and heartwarming stories from our friends and supporters.



"I adopted Pumpkin a few years ago from Holly Hedge animal sanctuary. She had a hard start in life, after coming into the sanctuary as a pregnant stray when she was just a baby herself. I'm always telling people that she makes such a difference to my mental health.

I suffer from anxiety and depression, and she's always there - but especially on a bad day, she just knows I'm not okay. There have been days where I wouldn't have gotten out of bed without her.

Through some really hard times over the years, she's been my little ray of sunshine. Even though life is still hard, it would be so much harder without her!"



# International Cat Day 2020



"I don't know where I'd be without my cats in my life. They're unconditionally loving: I suffer with BPD and dissociative disorders, and they love me when I haven't showered for a week, and when I cry for hours on end - they sense when I'm down, and they offer cuddles and headbutts to remind me I'm not on my own."



"They're like my furry therapists - they always seem to know when I need an extra snuggle."



"My cat, Kitty, is my protective factor. She saved my life. I was early recovery from drug use, and she stopped me from using because I didn't want to go to prison and lose her. I've been clean for ten years now, and although I still struggle with my mental health, she keeps me grounded and protects me when I have suicidal thoughts."



"Bee, my rescue cat from Forgotten Felines, has been with me for nearly a year. She has made such a big difference to my life, and she travels with me to see my dad - she even made friends with him and his care team!"



"Barney isn't my cat, but when I moved back in with my parents over lockdown, he came to visit me almost every day.

He always meowed for pats and loved to play in the garden, which was a really nice way to keep my mind off of things.

I've moved back to Bristol now, but my Mum always sends me pictures and videos of him when he visits!"



If you'd like to find out more, you can visit the [International Cat Day website](#).

For more on pets and your mental health, take a look at the Mental Health Foundation's [page on pets](#).

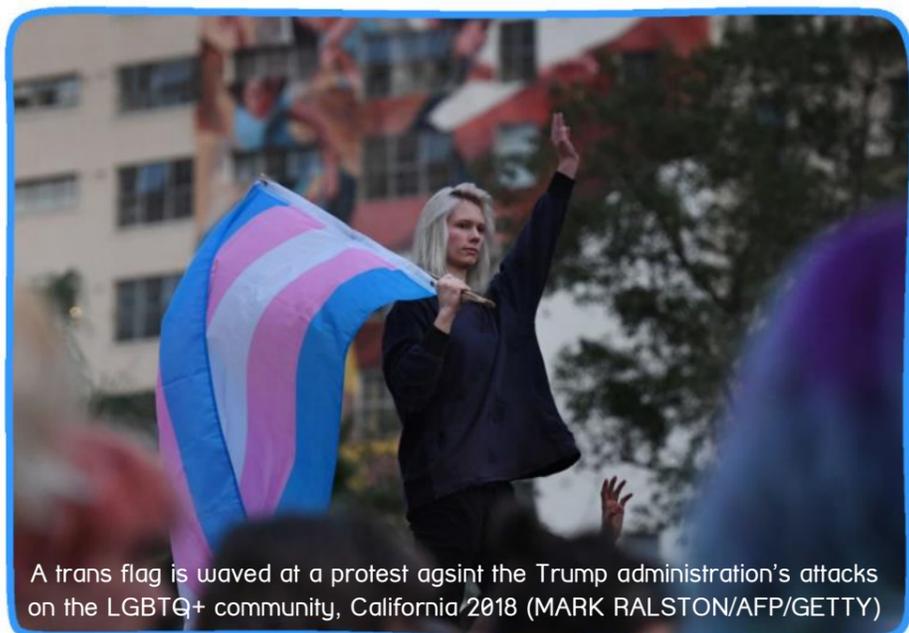
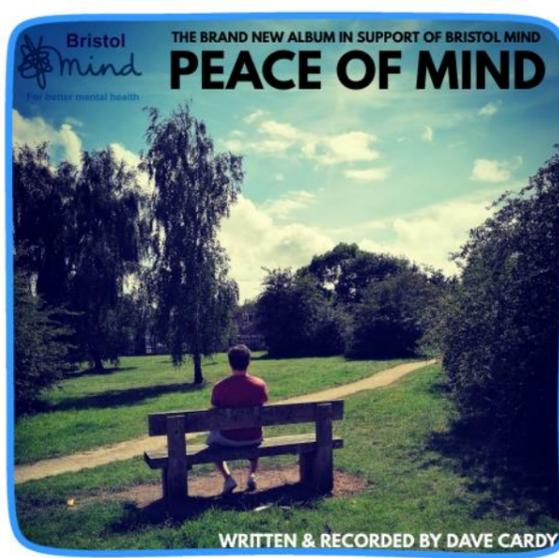
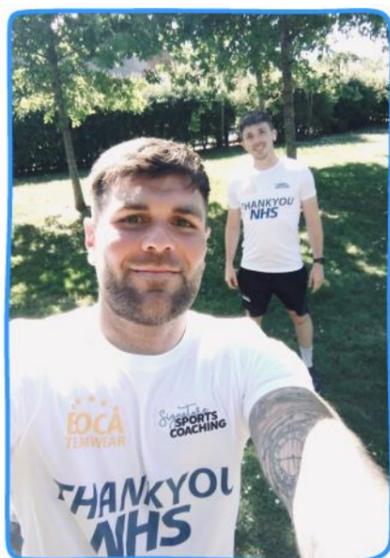
Remember: a pet is for life, so you should only adopt a cat if you know you have the time and resources to care for it.

# Fundraising Update

Thank you to our supporters, fundraisers, and outspoken awareness-raisers!

With your help and support we will continue to provide vital mental health services, which include advocacy, counselling, information and signposting, and helplines. From a regular donation, to running a marathon; from making us your charity of the year to partnering your sports team with us - there are so many ways you can make a difference to your community!

Check out our fundraising pack and resources [here](#). They're jam-packed with tips and advice for getting the most out of your fundraiser. If you have any questions, or need any resources to help you along in your fundraising, we're here to help! Send an email to [fundraisingcoordinator@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:fundraisingcoordinator@bristolmind.org.uk) to get started.



## MindLine Trans+ Crowdfunder - Urgent Appeal

We're currently running a [Crowdfunder](#) to expand the MindLine Trans+ service to three nights a week - and we've only got one month left to hit our target.

We've had an incredible response from generous donors so far, raising £5,488 to expand this vital service for one of our community's most marginalised groups, but we still need your help. **The project will only be funded if at least £10,000 is pledged by September 1st at 11:55pm**, so there's still a long way to go.

MindLine Trans+ is an emotional support listening service for trans and non-binary people all across the UK, staffed by trans+ listeners. The people who use our service often experience discrimination, prejudice, and mistreatment, even from people who are supposed to help - **but when they call us, they know that the person on the other side of the phone will understand**. Our caller numbers have been increasing steadily throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as people are finding themselves isolated and losing access to the spaces where they feel safe to be themselves - so now, more than ever, it's important that we expand and offer a listening ear to as many people in the trans+ community as we can. MindLine Trans+ is open 8pm to Midnight, Mondays and Fridays. If you, or someone you know, needs our support, you can call us on [0330 330 5458](tel:03303305458).

[Read more about the Crowdfunder and pledge your support here!](#)



The **West of England Sport Trust (Wesport)** are pleased to be a sport and physical activity contributor to the Bristol Mind – Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter. [www.wesport.org.uk/](http://www.wesport.org.uk/)

## Nature and Open Spaces

It is well known and understood that the great outdoors benefits our physical health, but it is also now increasingly recognized that spending time in parks, gardens, woodlands and other green spaces can also have a noticeable effect on mental health and wellbeing; it can help reduce stress and anxiety and help ease symptoms of depression.



*“Nurturing your own health and wellbeing - being outdoors and experiencing local wildlife can have a calming effect and instantly make you feel refreshed!” (The Wildlife Trusts)*

With this in mind we have pulled together some useful information and inspiration on where, how, and all the different ways you can enjoy the great outdoors, [here](#).

Our partner Open Minds Active have pulled together a great blog about the benefits of [wild swimming and being outdoors](#). Full of great tips for newbies and signposting to communities who can support with advice and guidance, please visit their website to access the blog [here](#).

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## Park Yoga



Another great way to connect with people and the natural outdoors is through Park Yoga. We have collaborated with Park Yoga to bring yoga to St George Park in Bristol and Millennium Park in Nailsea!

Due to the current restrictions this is a **Virtual Yoga Session**, the sessions are **free**, easy to access, open to all, and **live** every Sunday. So if you're looking to experience yoga for the first time, try a new class, or just enjoy practicing in natural surroundings, then why not join in on Sunday morning from your garden or living room?

To join the community and learn more about Park Yoga, please visit the Facebook pages for each site via [Park Yoga Bristol](#) or [Park Yoga Nailsea](#). Park Yoga is hoping to commence delivery in parks from 2021.

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## Sustainable Travel Grants

A great opportunity for any Bristol based company, Travel West are offering fully funded grants of up to £250 for sustainable travel initiatives in Bristol. This can be used for any initiative that supports staff using sustainable transport, keeping active, and ensuring good mental health, including the chance to have one of our [workshops](#) tailored to your workplace for your whole team. You can apply for the small grant [here](#).

# Sewing for Wellbeing

Kim Dean, MindLine Assistant Coordinator



My first memories of sewing are of watching my Nan knit clothes for my dolls to wear. I attempted to learn but couldn't quite get the hang of it, so I decided instead to try cross-stitch. The first thing I made was a cross-stitch pattern of Mr. Blobby, which I proudly hung in my room. I dabbled with more cross-stitch patterns and tried crochet, too, before I finally got my own sewing machine at 16 - which gave me the freedom to make whatever I wanted.

When I moved to Bristol I found myself stuck in a 9-5 job with no outlet for my creativity, which wasn't doing my mental health any good - so I turned to sewing. I started to make things for friends' birthdays such as eye masks and pants(!), but I quickly got my skills back. Since then I've made dresses, tops, a patchwork quilt, and turned tops into pants and outfits for my baby (all with varying degrees of success)!

Sewing allows me to completely switch off from everything around me and focus on the here and now. My favourite thing to do is put on some music or a podcast and just spend the afternoon sewing. It's space and time for me to do something that I have to fully concentrate on; I can't be thinking about work or the pile of washing up that needs doing! There's also no better feeling than someone complimenting me on what I'm wearing and being able to reply "I made it myself!"

I don't always get the time I want to sew so instead I sort out my sewing box, organise my fabrics, cut out a pattern, watch YouTube sewing videos or decide what I'm going to make next. It may not be actual sewing, but it helps get my creative juices flowing, which is great for my wellbeing.

## Top Tips to Get Started

There's no better time than now to begin sewing, so here are my top tips to get you started:

- Don't worry if you don't have a sewing machine, there are so many different types of sewing to choose from: knitting, crochet, cross-stitch, macramé, or embroidery, to name a few!
- You don't need to spend a fortune on fabric or materials - Fabric Land has a great affordable range, and there are lots of independent sewing shops in Bristol that sell remnants of fabrics at cheaper prices.
- Follow the instructions on the pattern! You can make adjustments to the length, type of sleeves, neckline, etc. but make sure you don't miss out any of the construction steps!
- Don't give up! Sometimes things don't always go right, but mistakes are part of the process (that's why seam rippers were invented!) and it's OK to put your sewing to one side and come back the next day with a fresh pair of eyes.
- I'm an avid fan of the Great British Sewing Bee and I love being inspired by other sewists who I follow on social media. My favourites are: [Tilly and the Buttons](#), [Sew Over it](#), [Like Sew Amazing](#), [The Bristol Stitchery](#), and [Sew Me Sunshine](#).



## Fasolakia Freska (Green bean casserole)

We've been telling you to grow beans all summer, so it's about time we gave you a recipe for them! This simple Greek dish is deliciously hearty, practically no effort to make, and suitable for vegans to boot.

### Ingredients

500g fresh green beans, topped and tailed	2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
1 large onion, finely sliced	150ml olive oil
2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed	400g tin of chopped tomatoes
	Salt and pepper to taste



### Method

1. Carefully slice the beans into halves lengthways, then rinse under cold water and drain.
2. Heat the oil in a large saucepan (for which you have a lid), then add the garlic and onions and cook until they reach a pale golden brown colour.
3. Add the beans and potatoes, sautéing together until everything is well-coated in oil.
4. Add the tomatoes and some seasoning - you can experiment with herbs of your choice if you'd like (try oregano, parsley, or bay leaves), but it's great with just salt and pepper too!
5. Cover and cook for around 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally. The beans should be tender, and the tomatoes cooked down significantly - if it looks like it's in danger of drying out, you can always add a little water.
6. Serve hot or at room temperature. If it's a filling meal you're looking for, serve traditionally with fresh crusty bread (bonus points for homemade!) and crumbly feta cheese.

## Matar Paneer

This vegetarian dish is a classic in India and Pakistan, often served with basmati rice or naan bread. It makes a perfect mid-week meal, with a cooking time of just 25 minutes from start to finish.

### Ingredients

1 onion, chopped	chopped fresh coriander
1 clove garlic, crushed	1 small piece ginger, grated
1 green chilli, finely chopped	1tsp turmeric powder
1 400g tin chopped tomatoes	1/2tsp garam masala
1 225g pack paneer, chopped into cubes	1/2tsp cumin seeds
200g frozen peas	1/2 tsp salt
	vegetable or corn oil



### Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan and add the cumin seeds, frying until fragrant (they should start to gently "pop")
2. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook until golden brown
3. Add the chilli, turmeric, and garam masala, stir frying for a further 30 seconds.
4. Pour in the chopped tomatoes, then sprinkle in the salt and the coriander.
5. Bring to the boil, stir, then reduce the heat and simmer for 8 minutes. The sauce will thicken, and the oil will separate, giving it a shiny appearance.
6. Meanwhile, in a separate pan, fry the paneer until golden brown, then add to the sauce. Simmer for a further 5 minutes.
7. Add the frozen peas and 200ml of boiling water. Stir, and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and simmer for ten minutes to absorb excess liquid.
8. Serve with sides of your choice - we recommend naan, fresh salad, and natural yoghurt.

# Green and Growing

August is a great month for vegetables - both a time to pick, and a time to sow. We've got some tips for you on what you can plant now to reap the rewards when the evenings start to get darker this autumn. For extra tips, see [Gardener's World](#), [Sunday Gardener](#), or [Sarah Raven](#).

## Turnips

You can plant turnips throughout August. Turnips generally require a full sun location, but they'll tolerate partial shade - especially if you plan on harvesting the plant for its greens!

Preparing the bed for turnip plants is easy - just rake and hoe it as usual for planting. Sprinkle the seeds (make sure the soil isn't too wet) and gently rake them in.

The seeds should be half an inch deep, and between three and twenty seeds per foot. If you're low on space, they'll suit a 12-inch deep container, although you won't get as many!

Water immediately after planting to speed germination. Once your turnips start growing, you'll want to thin them out - they should be 4 inches apart to form good roots.

Turnips are a versatile vegetable, making an excellent substitute for potatoes in many dishes.



## Rocket

Rocket is very easy to grow, and adds a distinctive peppery flavour to salads, and makes a delicious pesto.

Forget the propagator - the seeds are simple to sow. Just give them 1cm depth and put them directly into larger pots; any time from late spring to August will do.

Seedlings will appear after roughly a week. When they're large enough to handle, ease the plants apart (carefully!) and plant them in a raised bed, container, or straight into the ground 20cm apart. The plants like light shade.

The leaves will be ready to pick after about 30 days - sow a new pot every couple of weeks for a continuous supply.



## Swiss Chard

Another vegetable you can start in August, and one that grows just as well in containers as it does in a garden.

Soak the seed prior to planting to give them a head start, then bury seeds under half an inch of soil. If you're using a container, spread out five or six seeds evenly - in a garden bed, just make sure they're four to six inches apart. Sprinkle with water daily, and the first sprouts should appear within a week. The soil should be kept moist, but not overly wet, like a wrung-out kitchen sponge.

When leaves reach four to six inches tall, start by harvesting just a few of the outer leaves on each plant, allowing the plants to continue producing. As they get more robust, you can harvest more leaves, cutting from near the base of each plant; just make sure to leave several leaves growing every time you harvest.



# About Bristol Mind

Bristol Mind is a mental health charity for people in Bristol and surrounding areas. We promote wellbeing and recovery through a range of services. We recognize that each individual is a resource for their own recovery: many of our staff, volunteers, and trustees have themselves experienced the impact of emotional and mental distress.

Although affiliated to Mind the national charity, Bristol Mind is an independently registered and funded charity. If you would like further information on any of the services offered by Bristol Mind, please don't hesitate to get in touch, using the contact details below.

The information provided in this newsletter is for guidance only. You should contact a doctor or health professional if you need urgent help or medical advice. If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the newsletter, please email us at [newsletter@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@bristolmind.org.uk)

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