

Welcome to the November edition of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter.

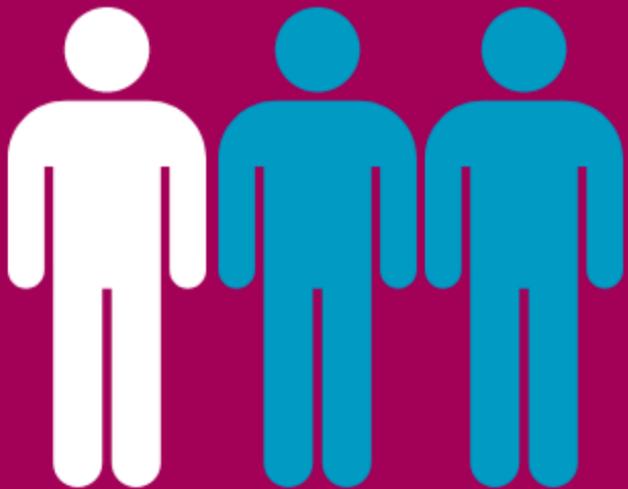
November is a month when there is a focus upon men's health, and a key aspect of men's health is their mental health. Many studies have shown that men are less likely than women to go and see a doctor when they have any symptoms of health problems - and even when they do, it takes them much longer to get around to it.

The reasons behind these differences vary - from men feeling that they should be more self-reliant, or not liking to admit that they have a problem, to men being afraid that something is wrong but too worried about what they might learn.

The same is true of men's mental health: an Australian study found that only 24% of men who have experienced high levels of stress discussed this with a friend or family member - leaving 76% to struggle on their own. Statistics about men's mental health are similar the world over: men are more likely to die by suicide, to turn to substance abuse to cope, and to keep silent about their struggles.



Mental Health
Foundation



1 in 3

men in the UK have experienced

suicidal thoughts

as a result of feeling stressed.

NOVEMBER: men's mental health focus

The taboo and stigma, including self-stigmatization, around mental health felt by many men are deep seated, and not easily challenged. However, in recent years, there has been a movement to open up among some men who have chosen to speak out publicly, and groups that have been established to create safe spaces for men to talk.

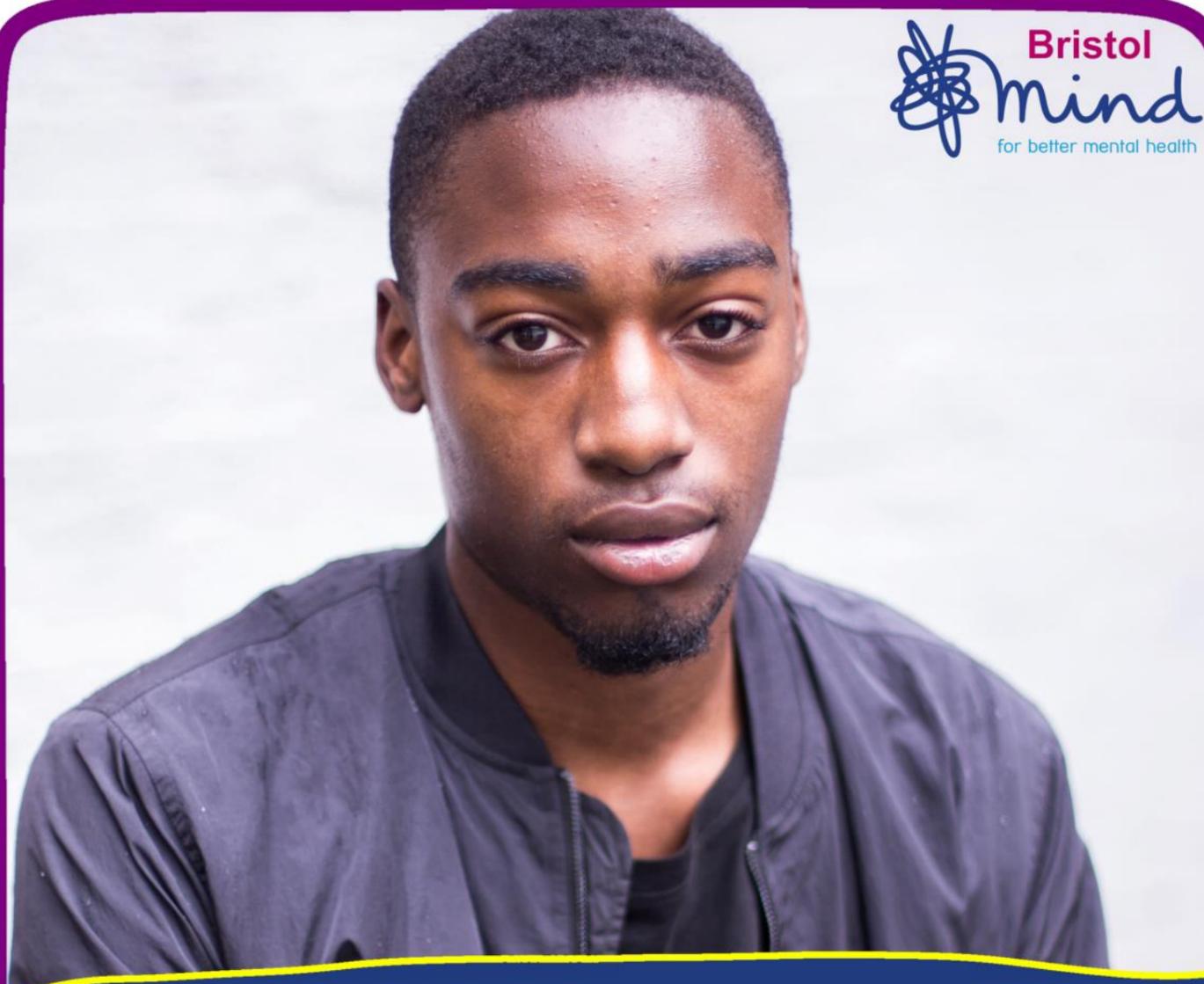
Every time the link between men and mental health is made more public, it chips away at some of the stigma. Tyson Fury, David Beckham, and Stormzy are all men in the public eye who have spoken publicly about their own issues; the partnership between Mind and the English Football League has seen the Mind logo displayed proudly to millions across the country on footballers' shirts; and small local initiatives have mushroomed across the country - such as Andy's Man Club and, closer to home, the Bristol-born Talk Club which now reaches as far as the US and Australia.

You'll see themes of men's mental health on all of our channels this month. In the newsletter, we have a guest spot for our partners at Old Redcliffians RFC, and on our social media we're running an awareness campaign, "It Starts With You", fronted by our ambassador Herbie Kane. **Men's mental health is a topic for the whole year, not just November - but this is a great time to start. It's OK to say you're not OK!**

Tom Hore, Director



Inside this issue



It starts with you.

Men's Mental Health Month - November 2020

Short Survey

“Knowledge rests not upon truth alone, but upon error also.”

We'd love to hear what our supporters and regular readers think! Please fill out our newsletter survey [here!](#)

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Old Redcliffians RFC

This month, November, is men's mental health awareness month - so we've caught up with Chris from Old Redcliffians RFC, to learn about their plans for their partnership with us, and their focus on men's mental health.



About Chris...

"Hi! I'm Chris Pursall, Club captain of Old Redcliffians RFC. We were founded in 1918 by former pupils of Redcliffe Boys School (which was itself founded in 1571) who had returned from service in WW1. Over a hundred years on, we now consist of three adult teams and a bursting junior section, which has long been the pride of our club; many of our adult members represented the club as juniors first!

I myself joined the club at four years old - my granddad, Cornelius Smith, was a school boy at Redcliffe School and my uncle Tony Smith played for Old Reds, so my affiliation for the club started early! **Twenty-three years later, having played for all age groups and sides available to me on my way up, I find myself where I am today as Club captain.**"

Why Bristol Mind?

"Mental wellbeing is rightly coming to the forefront of general conversation. **We at Old Reds wanted to help tackle any remaining stigma in our sport, and want to promote a positive view of mental health as leaders within our community.** By doing this we want to demonstrate to all sections of our club, our sport, and our community that all actions, no matter how large or small, can really make a difference.

Sport has a magical power to take you away from the world. Whether it's joining in or spectating, its ability to transport you away from the norm, facilitate socialising, and generally help you to be active are unrivalled. These links to mental health are hugely important, especially now - as an individual and as a club we're working hard to facilitate an environment where everyone can get what they need to help manage their own mental wellbeing."



Old Reds have chosen to partner with Bristol Mind to help raise monies at a unique time. We have started our fundraising by selling Bristol Mind branded training wear (if you're in the market for some new gym wear, you can buy our tops [here](#) - 20% of the sale price will go straight to Bristol Mind!), and we've donated the advertising space on our away shirts to help spread the cause of mental wellbeing around the South West - when the season gets up again, that is!

We've got big plans for the future, too: we're planning to cycle the distance to Japan next summer to link in with the Olympics, and we're braving the clean-shaven, baby-faced look for the start of Movember, which you can sponsor [on JustGiving](#).



Our new BAME Refugee & Migrant Counselling Service

At Bristol Mind, we are working hard to expand our services and lending particular focus to people whose wellbeing is at greater risk during COVID-19. We are excited to announce that we have launched a new counselling service in Bristol for BAME refugees and migrants.

Recent studies indicate that people of Black, Asian, and other minority ethnic refugee groups may be more exposed to COVID-19, and therefore more likely to be diagnosed. **These health risks and stresses, coupled with the existing socioeconomic difficulties faced by refugees and migrants, mean that they benefit greatly from counselling support.** We have worked with refugee agencies in Bristol for some years as part of our [Women Without Borders](#) work, and together with these organisations we have identified several stark concerns:

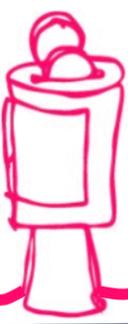
- There is a lack of resource available to charities and groups who work with refugees - meaning that there is currently no provision for emotional and mental wellbeing in the form of counselling.
- NHS therapy has a high threshold and the waiting list for refugees is very long - meaning that refugees aren't able to access vital mental health support when they need it
- Within some cultures, there is stigma surrounding poor mental health - and due to institutional racism and previous bad experiences, many refugees mistrust statutory mental health services. Those needing support are fearful of asking for it.

In answer to these concerns, we have launched a new refugee counselling service during COVID-19, which is set to expand further with the help of some newly-secured funding. We've welcomed Nigel, a BAME counsellor experienced with refugee issues, to the team to deliver this service locally. The service will make a difference by equipping people emotionally to process trauma, giving them the tools to have a more meaningful life; furthermore, it will help to protect badly-hit BAME communities from the short- and long-term impact of COVID-19. To get in touch with the service, send an email to counselling@bristolmind.org.uk

The service has been funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust and the National Lottery Community Fund. The Barrow trust is an independent charitable foundation committed to bringing about socially just change.

Bristol Mind work to improve mental health outcomes for BAME communities through our existing services:

- [BME Advocacy](#), supporting BAME patients detained under the mental health act. BAME groups are overrepresented in the mental health system; we work to ensure that their voices are heard.
- [Women Without Borders](#), providing emotional support to refugee women in Bristol
- [Bristol Hate Crime and Discrimination Services Partnership](#), providing case work to victims of hate crime.



Fundraising Update

Thank You!

Thank you to our supporters, fundraisers, and outspoken awareness-raisers! With your help, we continue to provide local mental health services. 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.

If you have any questions or need anything to help you along in your fundraising, check out our [resources page online](#) and send an email to fundraisingcoordinator@bristolmind.org.uk to get started.



Workplace Training

To learn more about either of these courses, please contact Lisa Foote at training@bristolmind.org.uk

Redundancy Toolkit: Supporting Remaining Staff

Staff who remain after redundancies are often very affected by the experience. Seeing colleagues and friends being made redundant can have long-term implications on staff morale, motivation, productivity, and stress levels. We have responded to this by developing a supportive and sensitive online course to help sustain and look after remaining staff. **The two-hour course acknowledges the many impacts that redundancies in workplaces have on staff, and it gives people an understanding of the psychological impact of “surviving” redundancy.** We look at unpacking feelings of guilt, fear, and sadness, and how to work through these emotions. Staff learn a framework for managing stress, handling uncertainty, and practical tools to build a positive, focused mindset and set up a plan for self care. Delegates will take away a helpful Redundancy Toolkit. **This course is appropriate for both remote working and on-site working, and is suitable for employees, managers, and HR people.**

Wellbeing and Work

Many of us are now working from home due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and the usual support we access in our workplaces may not currently be there for us. It is more important now than ever before to reflect on what keeps us well and identify what can impact our wellbeing during this time.

Bristol Mind’s training project have a helpful, live, and interactive one-hour long webinar that introduces a very useful tool for employees called The Wellness Action Plan. This is for employees working from home during the COVID-19 outbreak, and is for any employee working from home — whether they have a mental health problem or not. It explores how to recognise your early signs of negative stress, how to identify your triggers and what keeps you mentally well. **It looks at practical steps for supporting your own mental health while working from home, and introduces new tools to build better focus and positive wellbeing.**

We show you how to get started, how to complete a Wellness Action Plan, and how to regularly review your own plan. A wellness action plan is just that: knowing what keeps you **well**, knowing when to take **action**, and a **plan** to keep yourself on track. Understand how to use a Wellness Action Plan to promote good mental health while working from home in this hour long, interactive and helpful online session.

Guest Article: Self-Injury Support

We spoke to Sabita Burke, Communications Project Assistant at Self-Injury Support to learn about their organisation and the new service they've launched during lockdown.



“At Self-Injury Support, **we're dedicated to improving support and knowledge** surrounding non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI), or self-harm.

Our mission is to offer safe spaces, where our trained volunteers listen and provide non-judgmental support. We do this by providing **support for women and girls affected by self-harm, abuse, or trauma.**

Having just passed our 30th anniversary, Self-Injury support has come a long way from where it began. Back in 1988, a group of women decided that transformation was needed in what was then a largely physical treatment-based approach to self-harm care in their Bristol community. They established the **Bristol Crisis Service for Women**, opening a helpline aiming to help women in emotional distress. As awareness around self-injury slowly grew, the organisation gathered publicity. The number of calls received burgeoned, and as it did the organisation released **resources for working with and understanding people who self-injured** and participated in research, before becoming Self-Injury Support in 2014.



More than 30 years on, **we have helped almost 92,000 people** through our phone, text, webchat and email support lines in the last seven years alone. Our focus is on non-judgmental support, and **offering acceptance to all no matter what stage of their self-harm journey they are in.** This led one of our users to state that self-injury support “enabled me to move on at a time when nothing else felt safe enough to allow me to do this.” Another user declared that **“you're proof that not all superheroes wear capes!”**

I am passionate about the work the charity does. Having suffered with anxiety for a decade before volunteering for the crisis text line Shout 85258, I know first-hand how transformational the cathartic power of mental health support can be. Although working with a charity that deals with such sensitive issues is not without its challenges, **there is nothing more powerful than knowing your work has the possibility of helping increase relief for women in emotional distress.**

We have recently launched [a new service for Information and Navigation](#), helping people who self-harm, their friends, their family, and healthcare professionals find the resources they need.

If you're in need of support or would like to find out more about us, please visit our website (www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk). Alternatively, you can call us for information at **0117 927 9500**, or email info@selfinjurysupport.org.uk. And, if you like social media, we always love welcoming new followers on our Twitter ([@sisupoortorguk](https://twitter.com/sisupoortorguk)), Facebook ([Self Injury Support](https://www.facebook.com/SelfInjurySupport)), and Instagram ([@self_injury_support](https://www.instagram.com/self_injury_support)). We are currently offering three short online training courses in self-harm, open to professionals and anyone wishing to improve their understanding of self-injury or develop skills in supporting its users. Please visit our website to book.”



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TRANS AWARENESS WEEK

NOVEMBER 13-19

Each year between November 13th and 19th, people around the world participate in Transgender Awareness Week to help raise the visibility of transgender people and address issues that members of the community face.

This week is a time when transgender people and their allies help to educate the public about who transgender people are, sharing stories and experiences, and advancing advocacy around the issues of prejudice, discrimination, and violence that affect the transgender community. The week ends with [Transgender Day of Remembrance](#), which takes place on November 20th each year.

This day of remembrance was founded by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honour her memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998. The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence that year and began an important memorial that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

We caught up with one of the listeners from our MindLine Trans+ helpline, to hear more about why they love volunteering for the line, and the benefits it brings to the trans+ community.

“Volunteering for MindLine Trans+ is a good way to use your experience to benefit other people - it makes sense to me to help in this way. Taking calls on the line can be challenging, but it’s rewarding too; it’s great to know you’re making a difference when you do a shift.

The challenges people face, speaking from my own experience, really vary - but the main thing we try to do is **make sure that people are understood**. Trans people aren’t always able to open up and trust that it will be well-received; there’s a real fear of discrimination which often limits trans+ people’s access to support.

“Because all of our listeners are themselves trans or non-binary, the callers don’t have to explain basic concepts about their identity - which gives us more time to get to what matters. When you call the line, **being trans isn’t going to be singled out as the issue** - but when trans+ people access non-targeted support, they often find that the discussion is derailed: a doctor might focus on the person’s trans+ identity rather than the purpose for the visit.

Often, a lack of understanding by other health care professionals or organisations can stop people from accessing treatment or receiving a necessary diagnosis. Sometimes this is caused by simple ignorance, and others outright discrimination - but either way, it leads to feelings of **anxiety and unwillingness to engage with support services**.

There is a dual benefit for people calling MindLine Trans+ - our callers can talk about what matters to them. Some callers want to talk about being trans+ and to feel the sense of kinship that comes with speaking to someone who understands - **others sometimes just want to talk about what’s going on in their life**, and their being trans+ is an incidental detail.

Trans+ people are more likely to experience violence, mental ill health, and to be discriminated against at work over a broad spectrum of issues. On top of this, they are often less able to access support - so it means the world to have a reliable space where we can be heard. **MindLine Trans+ is valuable because it fills gaps in support** - and it’s useful for people in isolated places where LGBTQ+ support doesn’t exist. We take calls from all over the UK”

MindLine Trans+ is a national helpline, open Mondays and Fridays between 8pm and Midnight. Soon, we’ll be expanding to open three nights a week. Call us on **0300 330 5468**, and find out more [here](#).

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Baked Cinnamon Apples

A delightful autumnal dessert, sure to please the whole family

Ingredients

4 large, crisp apples, cut in half
100g softened butter
50g porridge oats
50g brown sugar
50g chopped pecans
1 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
pinch of salt
ice cream, to serve

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190C
2. In a medium bowl, mix together the butter, oats, brown sugar, pecans, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
3. Coat the top of each apple half with the mixture.
4. Place the coated apples in a small baking dish and cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes.
5. Remove the foil and bake for a further 20 minutes.
6. Serve warm with ice cream.



Pumpkin Soup

Use up Jack-o-Lantern leftovers with this warming pumpkin soup.

Ingredients

For the soup

2tbsp olive oil
2 onions, finely chopped
1kg pumpkin or squash, peeled, de-seeded, and diced
700ml vegetable or chicken stock
150ml double cream
salt and pepper to season

For the croutons (optional)

2tbsp olive oil
4 slices wholemeal seeded bread, crusts removed
a handful of pumpkin seeds



Method

1. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, then gently cook the onions for five minutes until soft, but not coloured.
2. Add the pumpkin or squash chunks to the pan, then continue cooking for eight to ten minutes, stirring occasionally until it starts to soften and turn golden.
3. Pour the stock into the pan and season with salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then simmer for ten minutes until the squash is very soft.
4. Add the double cream to the pan, bring back to the boil, then take off the heat and puree with a hand blender.
5. For an extra velvety consistency, you can pour the soup through a fine sieve.
6. If you don't want to serve straight away, the soup will keep in the freezer for up to two months.
7. For the croutons, cut the bread into small squares.
8. Heat the oil in a frying pan, then fry the bread until crisp.
9. Add the pumpkin seeds to the pan, then cook for a few minutes more until they are toasted.
10. Reheat the soup if needed, taste for seasoning, and then serve scattered with croutons and seeds.

Green and Growing

November is a good month to plant bulbs. While it may feel difficult at the moment to look beyond a winter which will be dominated by COVID-19 and the restrictions accompanying it, the seasons will carry on, and spring will come regardless of what else is happening. So now is the time to plant for a bit of colour and brightness at the end of the darker days. Tulips, daffodils, and hyacinth are just a few of the flowers to look forward to if you plant bulbs now.

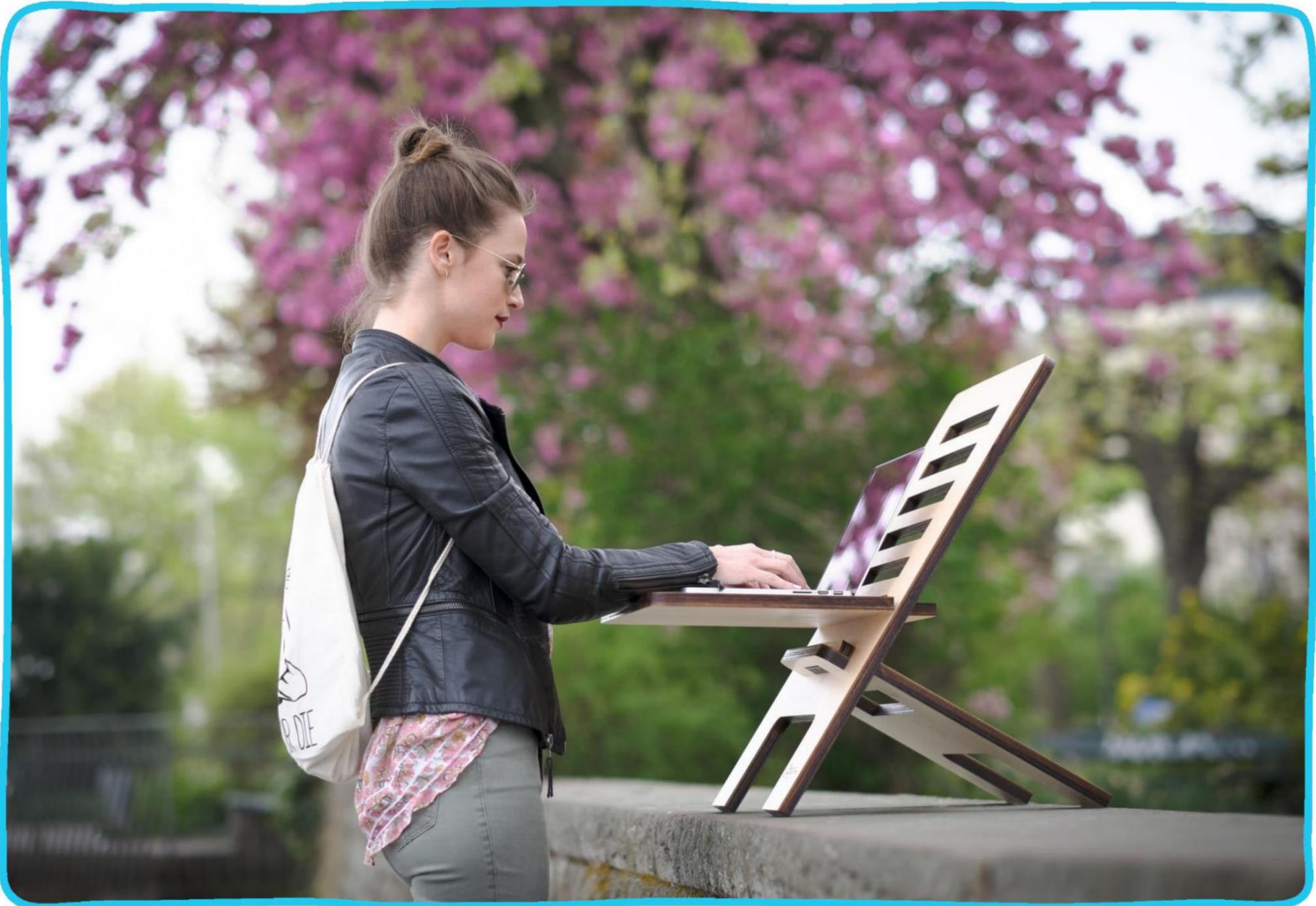
How to plant them?

Plant directly into the ground in a sunny spot, or in containers. Dig a hole three times as deep as your bulb is tall; if the bulb has a pointed end, that's the side that faces up - or look for the roots, which face down. Water them a little if it's dry, and remove weeds as they grow.

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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/active-workplaces



Keeping Active While Working from Home

Many of us are currently working from home, meaning we are spending most of our time sat staring at a screen. As we head into winter, the days are getting shorter and the weather is only getting worse, making it even more difficult for us to exercise regularly.

However, this does not need to be such a challenge, as there are plenty of little things you can do to keep yourself active while working from home - which could also boost your mental wellbeing.

Here are a few tips and tricks we like to use to keep active, but you can get creative and come up with your own ideas!

- Stand up and stretch while at your desk - take phone calls standing up, do some heel raises.
- Go for a walk at lunch time - getting some fresh air will do wonders, no matter what the weather!
- Start your day with a short exercise routine - there are plenty of 15-20 minute videos online. Click [here](#) for inspiration.

If you would like more information on how physical activity can help you to look after your mental health in the workplace, then why not arrange a Physical Activity for Good Mental Health webinar? Click [here](#) for more information.

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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, or fill out our survey [here](#).

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