

NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Council supports Mental Health Awareness Week

To coincide with national Mental Health Awareness week, Wokingham Borough Council is reaching out to its residents to offer practical advice, emotional support and expert guidance.

With many of us struggling more than usual as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on our everyday lives, what we do to our bodies makes a big difference to how we feel.

The council continues to [raise awareness about the positive effect that being active](#) and having a healthy, balanced diet can have on how we feel.

As part of Mental Health Awareness week, the council is supporting the [Mental Health Foundation's](#) 'Connect With Nature' campaign which focuses on the benefits that bringing nature into our lives can have on mental health. Spending quality time in and around nature can reduce stress and help increase feelings of positivity.

Charles Margetts, executive member for health, wellbeing and adult services said: "Small changes to our everyday lives can have a big impact on our mental health. Leaving the car at home and walking or cycling to work, the shops or school where possible are great ways to help both our physical fitness and mental wellbeing, and provide a great opportunity to appreciate the nature around us."

"We have many green spaces across the borough and we encourage all our residents to support the Connect With Nature campaign and take a walk or cycle with nature in their local area."

The council's My Journey team have set up a QR code trail around the lake at California Country Park. Residents are invited to scan the codes with their phones and learn about how to use their senses to appreciate the nature around them and improve their mood.

The council is also running a 'connecting with nature' competition that invites residents to paint or draw something to do with nature or alternatively write a short poem about nature. The council hopes participants use this creative exercise to recognise and grow their connection with nature; reflecting on how it positively supports mental health. Further details can be found on the [My Journey website](#).

To find out more about Mental Health Awareness Week visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mental health support

If you need help to better manage mental illness such as anxiety and depression, you can contact the Wokingham Borough Council's Recovery College or the NHS Talking Therapies service. The Wokingham Borough Community Response's One Front Door service also provides support on 0300 330 1189 or visit citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk.

Mental Health support is available for the children of Wokingham Borough too. Kooth offer free online counselling and emotional well-being support for our younger residents and Arc Wokingham also provide a safe, non-judgemental and confidential space for children aged 11 and over to explore their thoughts and feelings.

-ENDS-

For further information contact CEM@wokingham.gov.uk