

WOKINGHAM
RECOVERY COLLEGE



PROSPECTUS
MAY - AUGUST 2026

WOKINGHAM RECOVERY COLLEGE





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WELCOME

Wokingham Recovery College delivers co-produced courses, workshops and support groups designed to teach skills for managing and improving wellbeing. All sessions are free to attend.

The service is designed and delivered by people with both lived and learned experience of mental health challenges.

We aim to help people become experts in their own self-care and enable everyone to better understand mental health.

Courses will either be delivered face to face in community venues or online including some evening sessions.



"The Recovery College helps with promoting better understanding and coping strategies in everyday life. The staff listen, offer a different perspective and they don't judge."

"I have enjoyed the courses I was able to attend and think that the Recovery College is an excellent initiative which fulfils a much needed role in the local community."

Wokingham Recovery College accepts registrations from anyone aged 18 and over living or working in the Wokingham borough

OUR VALUES

These are the principles that underline how we work and what we deliver.

EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE –

We believe that experience creates expertise, people know themselves best. We value people as assets recognising their strengths.

INCLUSION –

Inclusion involves equal opportunities to access for everyone. We value inclusivity by creating judgement free spaces for the people of Wokingham.

COMPASSION –

A compassionate approach involves acknowledging distress with a commitment to alleviate and prevent it. We normalise honest conversations about emotional distress and share ideas for responding to it.

HOW TO JOIN US

Visit

www.wokingham.gov.uk/recovery-college

for a link to our online booking portal. You can book yourself directly onto upcoming sessions through this and guidance is available if needed.

When you sign up to sessions for the first time, you will receive a welcome e-mail with helpful information and a call from a member of the team to answer any questions you may have.

If you need any assistance with booking, get in touch via phone **(0118 237 9366)** or email **recoverycollege@wokingham.gov.uk**



STUDENT CHARTER



WE AGREE TO

Handle your enquiries in a friendly and professional manner

Offer guidance for choosing courses

Give you details of our courses and activities

Celebrate diversity and difference

Provide you with a safe, comfortable and friendly learning environment

Respond to any disability or learning needs that you have informed us of

Maintain focus on learning, rather than treatment or therapy

Welcome comments and views about the College

Address any complaints and concerns in a confidential & professional manner

Be committed to creating a learning environment free from discrimination

Explain the safety policies and procedures of venues

YOU AGREE TO

Provide us with the information we require to register you

Show commitment to learn

Arrive on time

Celebrate diversity and difference

Take personal responsibility in contributing to safe, comfortable and friendly learning environments

Inform us of any disability or learning needs that you would like support with

Appreciate that the College exists as a place of learning and does not replace therapy or other treatment

Contribute to and respect the group agreement which is completed at the start of each course

Ask for clarification if there is anything that you are not sure about

Treat everyone with dignity and respect

Treat public venues and their facilities with respect



COURSES

Our courses cover a range of wellbeing related topics. Each course involves taught theory, peer discussion and activities. A group agreement is in place for all sessions to ensure that everyone feels safe and comfortable.



MANAGING ANXIETY

Living with anxiety can be challenging, but there are some things we can do to help lessen the impact it has. In these sessions we will look at different coping strategies to help us better manage our anxiety.

"Very well run course – friendly and informative"



3 SESSIONS
2 HOURS EACH

MANAGING LOW MOOD

We all experience low mood sometimes and it can be difficult to know how to help ourselves. In these sessions, we explore strategies and techniques for lifting our mood.

"The most useful thing was that people were open and honest, I felt safe"



2 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH





3 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH

BUILDING SELF-COMPASSION

Do you struggle to show yourself kindness? On this course, you will learn what compassion is and why it can be difficult to direct towards ourselves. We will explore why self-compassion is important, the inner critic and ways to increase our self-compassion.

"Brilliant. Facilitators are very welcoming, understanding, calm and make it enjoyable"





IMPROVING SELF-ESTEEM

Do you struggle with low self-esteem and wish to explore ways to build your confidence? This course will look at the impact low self-esteem can have on our lives and will explore techniques to help us look, and feel, more confident.

"Friendly, informative and well presented."

1 SESSION
1.5 HOURS

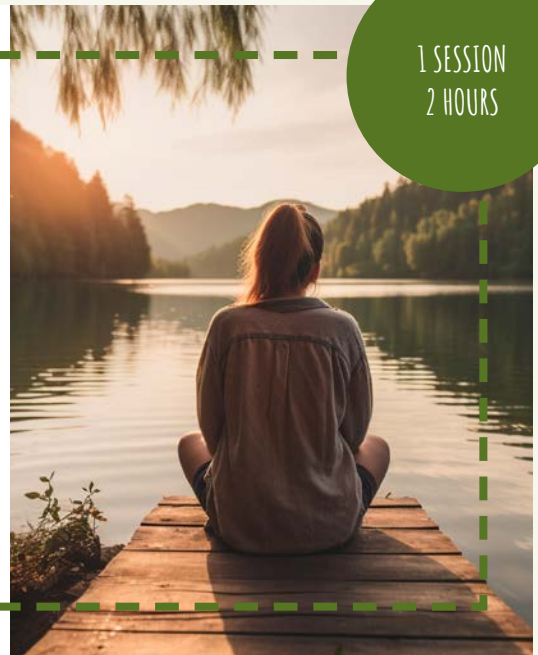


COPING WITH STRESS

Everyone experiences stress, especially when dealing with change or life's challenges. During this session, we will explore the stress response cycle and the impact of stress. We will learn how to recognise stress and identify strategies for reducing levels of stress

"the material was very well researched and presented. The teaching style was clear and engaging"

1 SESSION
2 HOURS



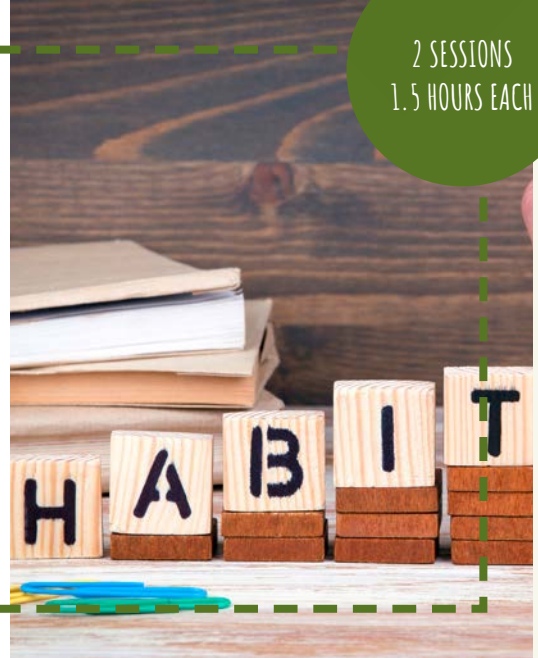


2 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH

MAKING GOOD HABITS STICK

These sessions will help you to embed wellbeing enhancing activities into your everyday life. This course explores why changing our behaviour is challenging and the common barriers to habit building. We identify and engage with practical steps for creating and maintaining helpful habits.

"I found it hugely helpful and it introduced to me lots of new ideas around this subject"





ART FOR WELLBEING

Exploring art and creativity can support us to find new ways to express ourselves. These single-session workshops are delivered with Lisa-Marie Gibbs, local artist and workshop facilitator. All materials will be provided and sessions are suitable for beginners.

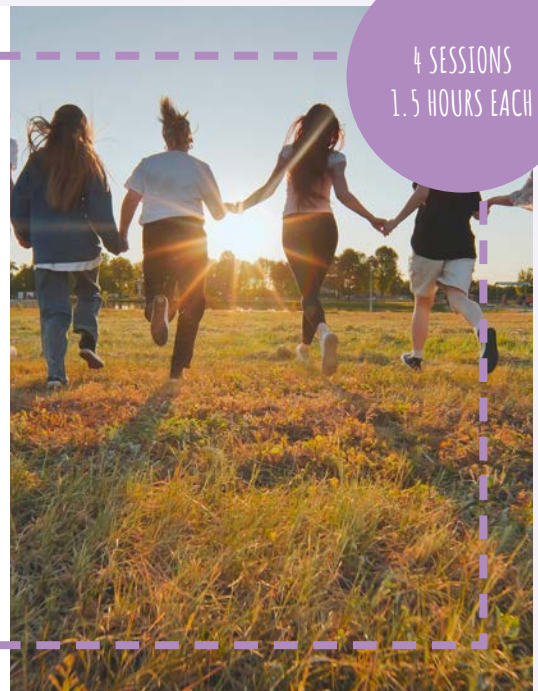
"Relaxed and creative environment. The right level of tuition and letting people do their own thing"



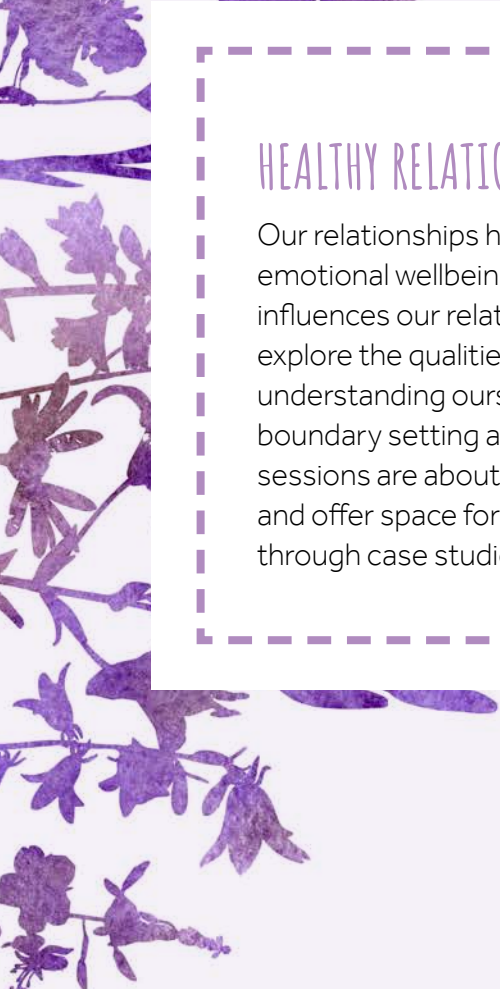
1 SESSION
2 HOURS

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Our relationships have a big impact on emotional wellbeing and our wellbeing influences our relationships. In this course we explore the qualities of healthy relationships, understanding ourselves in relationships, boundary setting and navigating conflict. The sessions are about all types of relationships and offer space for building understanding through case studies and self-reflection.



4 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH





2 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH

JOURNALING FOR WELLBEING

Journaling is a popular way to help work through feelings. On this course we look at the basics of journaling to help get you started with this practice. This will include exploring how journaling can help and making it work for you.

"This was a very good introduction, very thorough"





UNDERSTANDING SENSORY DIFFERENCES

This workshop looks at our different senses and how they contribute to our daily lives. We explore how our tolerance to sensory input can change, and how we can look after ourselves when experiencing sensory overload.

"I felt welcome to share and safe with everyone. I am making my own travel kit"

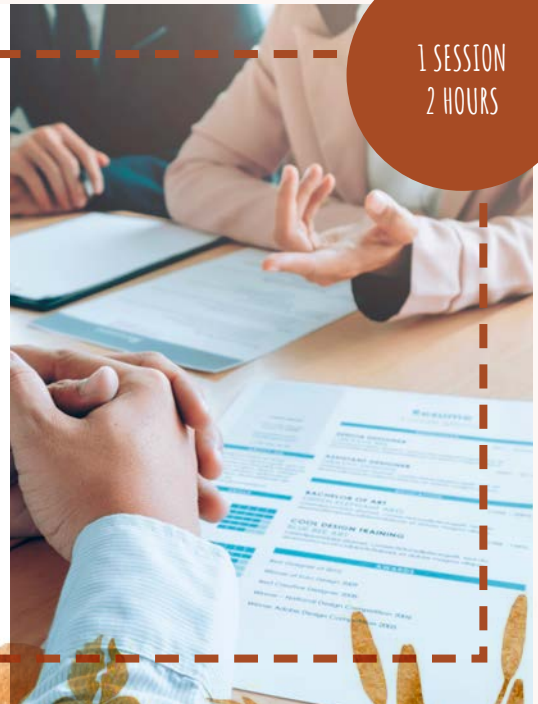
1 SESSION
2 HOURS



EMPLOYMENT: REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Getting the right support to succeed in work can feel daunting, especially if we're unsure about our rights or what help is available. In this session we will be looking at what 'reasonable adjustments' are, exploring how and when we might disclose support needs to an employer, and offering space to share experiences.

1 SESSION
2 HOURS





1 SESSION
2 HOURS

COPING WITH CHANGE

Big or small, planned or unplanned, change can be a challenge for everyone. In this workshop, we explore why change is difficult. We will focus on common responses to change and strategies for coping with it.

"I found it very helpful to hear other people's views and strategies"

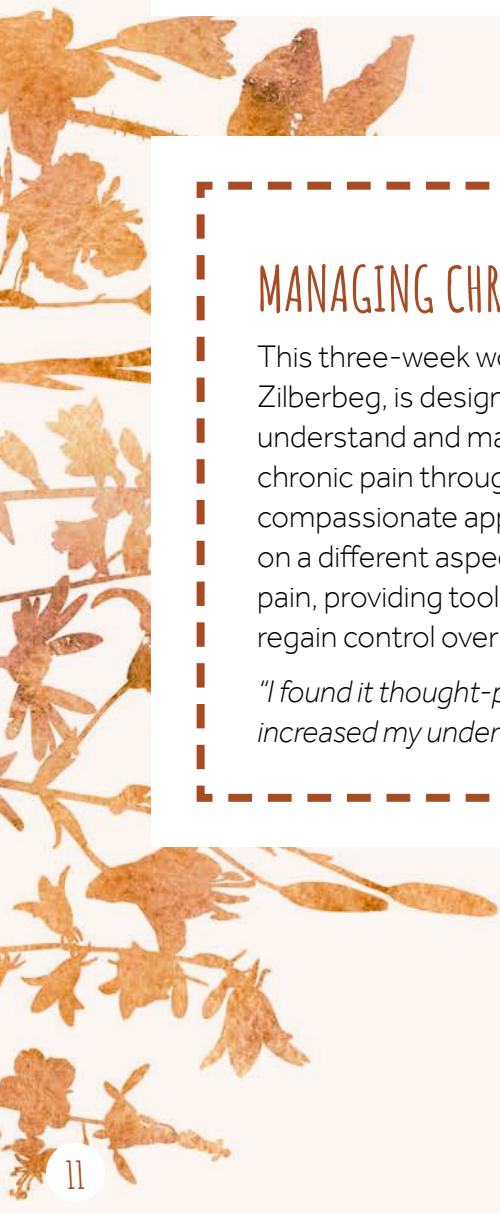
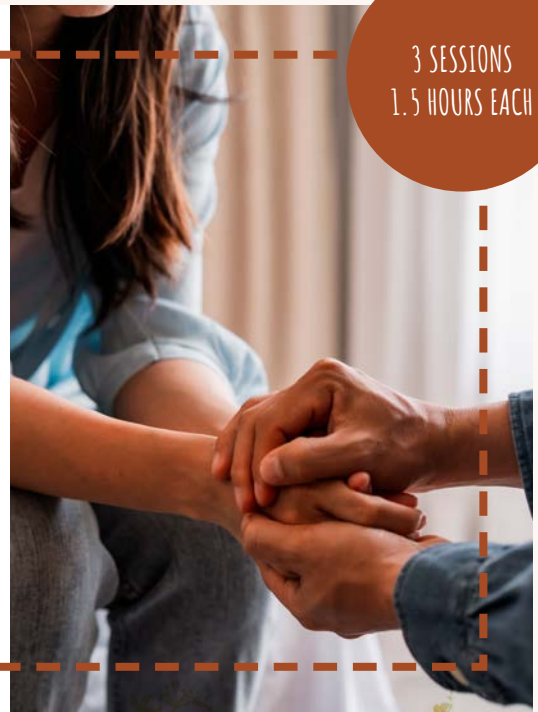


MANAGING CHRONIC PAIN

This three-week workshop, delivered by Olga Zilberbeg, is designed to help participants understand and manage the complexities of chronic pain through practical strategies and a compassionate approach. Each week focuses on a different aspect of living with chronic pain, providing tools to improve well-being and regain control over daily life.

"I found it thought-provoking and it has increased my understanding"

3 SESSIONS
1.5 HOURS EACH



PEER SUPPORT GROUPS



Peer support is when people use their experiences to help others. Wokingham Recovery College offers a range of peer support groups to facilitate making connections and sharing ideas for improving wellbeing. Peer support groups can reduce loneliness, increase confidence and help you recognise your strengths.

"There is something about sitting in a room with others, listening to their stories and relating to them, that makes you feel like you are not alone."

WALK AND TALK

These monthly 'walk and talk' sessions will take place at Dinton Pastures lakes. This is an opportunity to enjoy some time in nature in the company of others. Please ensure you dress appropriately with sensible footwear and bring water.

RECOVERING TOGETHER

Recovering Together is our peer support group available to all students.

The regular meetings are an opportunity for students to have topical discussions and share lived experiences in a friendly and welcoming environment. Our hope is, that as a community, united by each other's support, we journey through recovery together.

"It is great to share feelings with others and discuss coping strategies"

Online: 3rd Wednesday every month, 12pm – 1.30pm



BYOC (BRING YOUR OWN CRAFT)

Open to anyone who would like to work on their creative pursuits in the company of others. These are not taught or guided sessions, and they are open to all abilities and disciplines. You may already have a project in progress or be embarking upon something new. Whether you want to develop new skills alongside peers, or simply craft quietly in a friendly shared space, everyone is welcome.

"I've been finding it hard to go out to new places [due] to anxiety, I managed to go and loved it, everyone was so welcoming"

Woodley: 1st Friday every month, 10am to 12pm

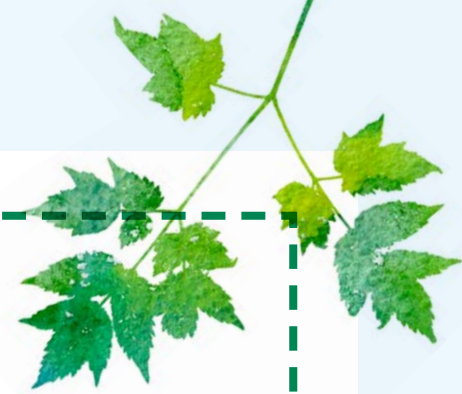
Central Wokingham: 3rd Friday every month, 10am to 12pm

CHRONIC PAIN PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Living with chronic pain can place an immense strain on a person's mental health. This peer support group allows individuals who identify with chronic pain to come together and share experiences, whilst offering each other support in a friendly, non-judgmental manner.

"The session was meaningful, and I gained insight from hearing about other's experiences"

Online: 1st Monday every month, 11am to 12.30pm



COLLABORATION

Everything we do at Wokingham Recovery College is the result of working in collaboration with our students, volunteers, staff and partners. We use lived and learned experiences to design and deliver the service.

The sessions we deliver are always changing based on student feedback provided in evaluation forms. We host regular focus groups which everyone is invited to attend to share ideas about what they want to learn about new topics being introduced to our offer.

"I really appreciate the recovery college and the work you guys do, especially on listening first, before creating a course to make sure it's of benefit to those who it is designed to help."

YOU SAID

Relationships are difficult when struggling with mental health

More ongoing support for chronic pain would be helpful

Mindfulness sounds good but feels inaccessible

We can't join daytime sessions

WE DID

Co-created 'Healthy Relationships' course

Delivering 'chronic pain peer support group'

Co-created 'Everyday Mindfulness' course

Offering at least 1 workshop a month in the evening



STUDENT EXPERIENCES



"There isn't a course I have done that I regret. The staff are welcoming and supportive, I like how staff start the conversation and how it develops into conversations between ourselves.

We all come with past troubles, but I like how we can speak in general terms and apply what we learn in private. However, it is nice to speak to others and know we are all in the same boat one way or another.

I have tried things that I would not have done without the Recovery College, such as journaling. I use it alongside other activities that support my mental health, and I like the fact I can dip in and out, and that if I miss a course it will likely run again.

I have recommended the Recovery College to others, and feel lucky we have this service. It has had a positive impact on my mental health and I always look forward to sessions."

"I found Wokingham Recovery college after it being suggested to me by CMHT. I have a lot of spare time so I thought I would give it a go. The people were nice and friendly so I decided to attend more regularly. Since attending, my confidence has increased so much.

All the staff are lovely and I feel very comfortable around them. I trust all the staff and enjoy the balance of seriousness and sense of humour within sessions.

I really enjoy the craft sessions when I can attend but it often clashes with other appointments I have. The college gives me a reason to get up and go out. I like the fact that I am mixing with people that are similar to myself. I feel more normal when I am there as opposed to feeling different to everyone outside that environment.

The sessions never come across as heavy and the staff make everyone feel at ease. Listening to other students and staff has helped me become more open minded and changed my perspective upon things that I previously viewed in a different light. The college, the staff and the students help me appreciate the smaller simpler things in life."

LOCAL SERVICES



OPTALIS SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Optalis Supported Employment Service supports vulnerable adults and transition age to gain the necessary skills to access paid or voluntary work, education, work experience and training. The service also enables people to retain their employment or return to work after a period of illness.



Our service works with clients who are covered by the disability provision of the Equality Act (2010). We also provide a service to carers.

Individual tailored support packages are provided through one to one contact with an allocated employment coach, who assists clients to reach their goals through help with CV writing, application forms, interview training, information advice and guidance and vocational profiling..

Tel: **0118 977 8600**

Website: <https://www.optalis.org/services/ses>

Email: employmentservice@optalis.org

SPORT IN MIND

Sport in Mind is an independent multi-award winning mental health charity that was formed in Reading, Berkshire in 2010 with a simple mission: "To improve the lives of people experiencing mental health problems through sport and physical activity"



We are the UK's leading mental health sports charity and deliver free & fun physical activity sessions every week in partnership with the NHS in order to aid recovery, promote mental wellbeing, improve physical health, combat social isolation and empower people to move their lives forward in a positive direction. The sessions are for all abilities, anyone aged 17+ who is feeling low mood, lonely or isolated or with a mental health diagnosis and all equipment is provided.

You can find out more about Sport in Mind sessions near you here -

www.sportinmind.org/timetables -

or using our Activity Map <https://www.sportinmind.org/find-an-activity>

Email: info@sportinmind.org

Website: www.sportinmind.org





CITIZENS ADVICE WOKINGHAM

At Citizens Advice Wokingham we help people find a way forward – whoever they are and whatever their problem.

The information and advice we provide is independent, confidential and impartial and we use the evidence of our clients' experiences to champion a change in policy and practices at a local, regional and national level.

Citizens Advice Wokingham is a registered charity, working hard to ensure people across Wokingham Borough have access to the information and advice they require.

Our priority is to empower people to resolve their money, legal, consumer and other problems that are affecting them.

Contact number: **0808 278 7958**

Website: www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk



WOKINGHAM DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

Domestic abuse affects 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men during their lifetimes and can have a significant impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing. The Wokingham Domestic Abuse Service delivered by Cranstoun supports men, women and children in Wokingham who are, or have been, living with domestic abuse. A telephone helpline; outreach; group based support; help accessing safe accommodation, including refuge and help for those who are concerned about the impact of their behaviour on others is available. Support includes safety planning; practical and emotional support.

Tel: **0118 402 1921**

Website: www.cranstoun.org/dass

For more information about domestic abuse and support in Wokingham, see www.wokingham.gov.uk/domesticabuse



LINK VISITING SCHEME

The Link Visiting Scheme is a charity based in Wokingham Borough. Our mission is to tackle the serious impact of loneliness and celebrate and enable friendship. Our focus is on older people but we welcome people of all ages. Our core service is one to one befriending either face to face or over the phone. We also run small Friendship Groups and run various activities all with the aim of enabling friendships and broadening our social circle.

For more information on receiving support or to volunteer, please contact the Link Visiting Scheme Office on **0118 9798019** or visit www.linkvisiting.org



FRIENDSHIP ALLIANCE

The Friendship Alliance is an initiative brought together by The Link Visiting Scheme, Age UK Berkshire, Involve Community Services and the Wokingham Volunteer Centre to tackle loneliness and improve the mental and physical wellbeing of older residents in Wokingham Borough. We promote the services of each organisation as well as local community events and activities via a fortnightly e-newsletter. We hold a weekly online Friendship Café and also identify Friendship Tables which are places where there's a warm welcome and always someone to chat with. We encourage people to be active in the community to be able to enjoy connecting with others.

To sign up to receive our newsletter, calendar of Friendship Tables or further information, please contact Jayne on **07464 834 949** or visit www.linkvisiting.org/friendship-alliance



CRANSTOUN DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICE

Cranstoun, Wokingham provides support and treatment to all Wokingham residents who are affected by problems with drugs and alcohol. The services assists recovery and promotes harm reduction through advice and information, one to one and group support and access to medical interventions. There is a dedicated and separate young person's service, Here4YOUth, delivering support and information and helping under 18s to develop the life skills to make healthy choices around their alcohol and drug use. Support for children/young people who are affected by someone else's alcohol or drug use is also available.

T: **0118 977 2022**

E: wokinghamreferrals@cranstoun.org.uk

W: <https://cranstoun.org/help-and-advice/alcohol-other-drugs/wokingham/>





WOKINGHAM WELLBEING SERVICE

Low mood? Feelings of anxiety? Perhaps you're struggling to sleep, dealing with multiple responsibilities, or feeling overwhelmed and unsure where to start?

Mind in Berkshire Wellbeing Workers can offer free one-to-one appointments for people aged 18 and over in Wokingham. These sessions enable people to put practical things in place that can help them feel more able to manage everyday stress and wellbeing challenges.

This service is available at all GP practices in Wokingham and the Wokingham Charity and Community Hub, via face-to-face, telephone or video sessions, whichever suits your needs.

Website: <https://services.thejoyapp.com/en/listings/489>

Phone: **01865 24 77 88**

Email: wokinghamwellbeing@mindinberkshire.org.uk



KALEIDOSCOPIK UK

Kaleidoscopic UK is a charity of domestic abuse survivors for anyone subjected to any form of abuse, providing peer support locally and nationally through open ended free support that is confidential and independent. We run support groups and recovery programmes for all as well as prevention and education.

We believe survivor led regular support is essential throughout a survivor journey, being there when needed with no limit, allowing survivors to dip in and out when they wish is vital to ongoing recovery as is being independent.

Website: www.kaleidoscopic.uk

Email: kaleidoscopicuk@gmail.com



WOKINGHAM ADULT EDUCATION

Wokingham Adult Education offers short courses either online or in community venues that include:

- Developing employment and employability skills including IT skills
- Supporting parents to help with their children's learning
- Improving maths, English and digital skills
- English for Speakers of Other Languages

Website: www.webenrol.com/wokingham

Email: adulthoodeducation@wokingham.gov.uk

Phone: **0118 974 3797**

AUTISM BERKSHIRE

Autism Berkshire provides a wide range of advice, support and activities for autistic people of all ages and their families.

On behalf of the NHS, we run the Berkshire Adult Autism Support Service throughout the county, to help autistic adults and their parents/carers, and the Berkshire West Autism & ADHD Support Service, to help families of autistic children and young people living in Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire.

Both services provide helpline support and one-to-one advice, plus autism advice workshops and courses.

We also offer social and leisure activities for families and autistic adults.

Visit our website for more information or contact us using the details below.

Website: www.autismberkshire.org.uk

Email: contact@autismberkshire.org.uk

Telephone: **01189 594 594**



Talking sense about autism.



SHARED READING GROUP

The Reader is a national charity that uses the power of literature and reading aloud to transform lives. Shared reading groups allow you to sit back, relax and enjoy being with others to hear great stories and poems read aloud.

There is no pressure to read aloud yourself, or to share any thoughts and feelings, though you are welcome to do both. Whichever it is, you will certainly receive a warm welcome at this shared reading group, so why not go along and try it out.

Every Tuesday, 12.15pm to 13.45pm at Wokingham Library, Carnival hub, Wellington Road, Wokingham, RG40 2AF



SERVICE USER NETWORK (SUN) SERVICE

We can help if you're having difficulties with managing your emotions, relationships, being impulsive or your own identity.

We offer open peer support groups, where you can share your experiences and support each other with advice. You don't need a diagnosis to attend and can sign yourself up. Our groups are delivered both face to face in the community and online.

Call: **0300 365 8000**

Email: **SUNTeam@berkshire.nhs.uk**



FAQS



WHO CAN ACCESS THE COLLEGE?

Anyone over the age of 18 living or working in the Wokingham Borough. This includes anyone looking for new ways to manage their wellbeing. There is no requirement to have a diagnosis or to have had contact with mental health services previously.

WHAT WILL THE FORMAT OF THE SESSIONS BE?

Our trainers will provide resources and information, we will hold discussions and suggest activities for you to complete. You will not be expected to share anything which you do not feel comfortable disclosing.

WHAT EQUIPMENT WILL I NEED FOR THE ONLINE SESSIONS?

You will need access to an e-mail address. You will need a PC/laptop/tablet or phone and internet connection. We will use Microsoft Teams. When you sign up to a session, we will send you guidance on using the software. You will need a private space where you cannot be overheard to protect everyone's confidentiality.

WHERE WILL FACE TO FACE SESSIONS BE DELIVERED?

Our sessions will be delivered in community venues. We will provide details and directions when sharing course information. Currently we are using the following venues: The Bradbury Centre, the Carnival Hub and the Oakwood Centre.

I'M NERVOUS ABOUT COMING ALONE. CAN I BRING SOMEONE?

Let us know if you plan to bring along someone as a support for you. Alternatively, we can arrange staff or a volunteer to meet you outside the venue if this would be helpful.

I CAN'T FIND CHILDCARE. CAN I STILL ATTEND?

Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate children in any of our sessions. We hope that you can find space online and in person where you can be fully present and focused on the sessions for yourself.

I CAN'T DECIDE WHICH SESSIONS I WANT TO ATTEND. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Get in touch and we can help with this. Our Recovery Workers can support you to identify which sessions will best support you to meet your goals.

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO DELIVER THE COURSES?

All of our trainers have varied experiences of working in mental health settings. They have delivered courses for Recovery Colleges previously. Our trainers, unless otherwise stated, are not clinically trained. Any issues with your clinical care should be directed to the relevant professionals.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE IN THE SESSIONS?

The maximum number of students in a session will be 12. We usually have between 5 and 8 students.

I HAVE SOME FEEDBACK OR AN IDEA FOR A COURSE YOU COULD RUN. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

We welcome all feedback, send us an e-mail with any ideas, compliments or complaints. Your feedback will shape our service and what we offer.

CAN I VOLUNTEER WITH THE COLLEGE?

Yes! We welcome those with lived experience to volunteer. Find out more by getting in touch and asking to speak with our Peer Team Lead.

MY QUESTION WAS NOT ANSWERED HERE. WHO SHOULD I SPEAK TO?

Contact us via recoverycollege@wokingham.gov.uk and a member of the team will get back to you.



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NOTES



SESSIONS I WOULD
LIKE TO ATTEND

QUESTIONS I WOULD
LIKE TO ASK

WOKINGHAM RECOVERY COLLEGE



0118 237 9366

recoverycollege@wokingham.gov.uk

www.wokingham.gov.uk/recovery-college

