

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Communities & Inclusion Network Meeting



Winchester
City Council

THRIVING & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

FACTOR	FOCUS – PLACES AND PEOPLE MOST IN NEED
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Mental health of young people emerged as a particular concern - evidence showing elevated self-harm rates in urban wards including St Michael, St Paul, and St Bartholomew.





**Winchester Youth
Counselling**



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We have probably helped someone you know....

Since **2002**, WYC has supported over 3000 young people in Winchester with **life-changing** counselling and therapy.

WYC has been supporting a young person in **1 of every 3 classrooms** across Winchester for nearly 25 years.



“A Youth Mental Health Crisis”

1 in 5 young people have a probable mental health disorder

Suicide is the main cause of death in young people under the age of 35 in the UK.

Over 200 teenagers are lost to suicide every year.

Source - Papyrus, 2025



We receive over 300 referrals a year from young people and their parents/carers.

“Just knowing I had somewhere safe and supportive was enough to keep me going some days.”



“With the support received from WYC, we as a family have hope for the very first time. WYC has meant the world to us as a family. To have a service like this is quite frankly saving children’s lives. Thank you”

- **NHS waiting times are growing: we provide the timely, trusted support young people need now.**
- **Our model creates early intervention, emotional resilience, and lifelong transformation of mental health.**
- **Our emphasis on nature and the environment gives young people confidence through activity: getting outside and promoting a healthy lifestyle.**



“Phenomenal Support”

- Free, longer term one-to-one counselling sessions in our centre and in schools.
- Award Winning Walk & Talk and Nature Therapy.
- Drop-in support for young people and parent groups and training across the district.



In the last 2 years, we delivered over 5,000 individual counselling sessions.

This year, we're on track for 3,300+ sessions

Our priorities are:

- To support more young people across Winchester
- To keep sessions free and reduce waiting times
- Sustain expert staffing and innovative therapy programmes

& to ensure that all those who need us, know us



"I no longer have negative thoughts about suicide or harming myself. Counselling has made a huge difference to me. I finally feel confident in myself and as though I can accept and overcome the things in my head."

Youth Board:

Our Youth Board are the heart of who we are. They ensure our charity is youth-led, by using their voice to better our services. Our youth board influences WYC decision-making, engages in key processes, such as strategy and governance, and reviews and advises on current services.

They can take part in and create fundraising opportunities, collaborate with local partners, and assist with the recruitment of internal staff and trustees.



Oak Tree Counselling is a private youth counselling service offering mental health support to 11 to 25 year olds in the Winchester area.

The service is a community-based initiative of WYC, grounded in youth voice, and set up to support the ongoing work of WYC. All profits generated by Oak Tree Counselling go towards supporting the charity's vital work with young people in the local area.



My story...

Kaleigh, aged 22

We have permission to
share this story.

Actors have been used and
some details changed to
protect people's identities.





Mental Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention Offers in Hampshire

2026



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Mental Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention Support for *Frontline Roles and Managers*



- Online, free 30 mins [Zero Suicide Alliance training](#) to gain skills and confidence to have a potentially life-saving conversation with someone you're worried about
- **Fully-funded mental wellbeing training: Connect 5** (all x3 3-hour sessions must be attended to complete the course, F2F and online options). [Connect 5 – Havant & East Hants Mind](#)
- **Fully-funded Suicide First Aid/SFA Lite training:** [Suicide Prevention Training – Havant & East Hants Mind](#) + [Domestic abuse and Suicide specific training](#)
- [MindEd for Older People](#) online resources for older people and those who care for them
- Explore other free/funded training opportunities in this [Mental Health and Wellbeing Training guide](#)



- [Self Harm Support Hub](#) for anyone who is supporting young people who self-harm in Hampshire, by Solent Mind
- **Create a mentally healthy organisation** for volunteers, staff and managers. Use the free tools and frameworks in this [Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Guide](#)
- **Printable resources** to guide 'healthy conversations' with residents, put on notice boards etc: [Hampshire Adults Guide](#), [Support for Volunteers Guide](#), [Support for Managers Guide](#)
- [Trauma Informed Language Guide](#) to support the use of person-first language and reduce stigma
- Look after yourselves – embed the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#) routine!



Mental Wellbeing Signposting for *residents*



- [Five ways to Wellbeing](#) five key elements which contribute to mental wellbeing and preventing mental ill-health
- [Mental Wellbeing Hampshire](#) for trusted local and national information and support including pages on mental health and money worries, sleep, bereavement, nature, and creativity
- [Connect to Support Hampshire](#) for information and support to remain living independently
- [Money Helper](#) offers government-backed money, debt, pensions information including for those experiencing poor mental health
- [Help in a Crisis](#) local NHS Trust info
- **Printable help:** [Hampshire Adults Wellbeing Guide](#)
- **Mental Health services** are delivered by [Mental health services : Hampshire and Isle of Wight NHS Foundation Trust](#) (or for those in Rushmoor/Fleet see [Your mental wellbeing | Frimley Health and Care](#))
- [Inclusion Recovery Hampshire](#) offers support with drug and alcohol issues. Those aged 25+ can call 0300 124 0103.
- [Stop Domestic Abuse](#) provides the Hampshire Domestic Abuse Advice Line 03300 165 112
- **Cruse** [Support After Suicide Support Service](#)
- **Support for carers:** [The Princess Royal Trust for Carers in Hampshire](#)
- **Future Planning** for those with health conditions or approaching palliative care: [The Future Planning Project](#)

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Where do you currently get information about local mental health support?
- How confident are you in signposting people to support?
- What examples do you have of effective partnership working
- Where are the gaps or disconnects?
- What would make collaboration easier?

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HEALTH PRIORITIES



WHY A HEALTH PRIORITIES DOCUMENT?

The Health Priorities Statement provides an evidence-based framework to support delivery of the Council Plan 2025–2030 and improve health and wellbeing across the district. It was published to:

- Understand how healthy Winchester district is and where inequalities exist.
- To identify the health issues where the council can make the greatest difference.
- To align council investment, services and partnerships around shared health priorities.
- To focus attention on reducing disadvantage and supporting vulnerable communities.
- To establish a baseline against which progress can be monitored over the next five years

Health is influenced by much more than healthcare. The council's decisions around housing, communities, leisure, planning, transport and the environment all play an important role in improving wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.



AREAS FOR ACTION

CATEGORY

PRIORITY AREAS

Healthy People

Mental Health & Wellbeing, Inclusion Health Groups, Older Adults

Healthy Lives

Physical Activity, Healthy Weight & Diet, Employment & Income, Cost of Living

Healthy Places

Access to Green Space, Housing, Social Isolation & Digital Access, Crime & Community Safety, Transport & Active Travel, Energy Use, Climate Change, Air Quality

CREATING CONDITIONS FOR BETTER HEALTH

The Council can influence many of these priority areas...

Reducing Health Inequalities

- Target support in communities experiencing greater disadvantage.
- Affordable housing and homelessness prevention
- Support for inclusion health groups and vulnerable residents.

Creating Healthy Places

- Investment in parks, play areas and green spaces.
- Improving walking and cycling opportunities.
- Support and promote active travel
- Action on air quality, climate change and energy efficiency
- Strengthening local community infrastructure and facilities.



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MENTAL HEALTH

While Winchester performs relatively well on many health measures, local data shows that:

- 29% of residents report high anxiety
- 12.5% report low happiness
- Mental wellbeing concerns are particularly evident in communities experiencing deprivation, isolation and financial pressures.

The Council can support Mental Health & Wellbeing by...

- Funding community & voluntary organisations.
- Delivering the Cultural Strategy to encourage participation and connection.
- Investing in leisure and sports facilities.
- Supporting Dementia Friendly and older people's initiatives.
- Providing physical activity programmes for young people and older adults.



OUTCOMES WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- Reduced health inequalities
- Stronger, more connected communities
- Increased independence for older residents
- Greater access to healthy lifestyles and healthy places
- Better health outcomes for residents across the district.



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Community Engagement Update

8 July 2026

Impact of community buildings on wellbeing

- Community buildings play a vital role in supporting community health and well-being. They provide safe, welcoming and inclusive spaces to:
 - social interaction,
 - learning new skills
 - taking part in physical activity.
- Learnings from Big Local [Learning from Big Local | Learning from Big Local](#)
 - Evidence for impact that community buildings make on people's mental wellbeing by getting the active and talking - [community-buildings-strong-foundations-for-renewal-february-2026-2.pdf](#).
- Village Halls Week 2026 – theme of '*connecting communities to health and wellbeing*.' Linked to NHS 5 steps to wellbeing.



Community buildings support

- Launched Winchester Community Buildings Forum - opportunities for community asset operators to hear from speakers, network and knowledge share
- Next forum meeting will have particular focus on volunteering – Thursday 24 September at Colden Common Community Centre
- Training support provided through Action Hampshire as a delivery partner – next training scheduled for October



Volunteering

- National survey on the impacts of volunteering on the individual in 2019 - over three-quarters of volunteers (77%) reported that volunteering improved their mental health and wellbeing. This benefit was more widespread than physical health benefits (53%). [Volunteer impacts - Time Well Spent: A national survey on the volunteer experience | News index | NCVO](#)
- Benefits to mental health through volunteering go across all age groups and include feeling less isolated and increase in confidence
- Stanmore network initiative – aim this year is to promote community involvement and improve health outcomes. We are
 - encouraging the Stanmore network to collaborate on volunteering
 - bringing more health partners into the network
 - delivering activities with partners to promote community involvement and improve health outcomes

QUESTIONS

SLIDO



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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



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NEXT MEETING:

online in November

Which topic would you like to focus on?

Are there particular aspects you would like us to focus on?

- Employment
- Healthy living
- Rural poverty and loneliness
- Community integration / engagement
- Access to community spaces



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