



Newsletter April 2026



Hello,

This month brings a number of important awareness campaigns, each highlighting a different aspect of our wellbeing, from managing stress and recognising early signs of cancer, to championing autism acceptance and celebrating the life-saving impact of immunisation.

The theme for Stress Awareness Month, #BeTheChange, feels particularly timely. It encourages us not only to understand the pressures we face but to take meaningful steps, however small, towards improving our own wellbeing and supporting those around us. Whether that's taking a moment to check in with yourself, starting a conversation with a colleague, or exploring the resources available, every action matters.

Finally, I'm delighted to share updates from local projects making a real difference, from peer support for parents of neurodivergent children to initiatives helping veterans navigate life after service. These stories reflect the strength, compassion, and innovation within our communities.

Take care and see you next month!

Lisa McNally
Director of Public Health

Upcoming Health Campaigns

Stress Awareness Month

Stress Awareness Month is dedicated to increasing public awareness about the causes, effects, and management of stress. The theme this year is #BeTheChange. There are free resources available to download, which are designed to help turn awareness into meaningful action throughout April. To find out more, [Stress Awareness Month 2026 - The Stress Management Society](#)



Stress Test - The Stress Test is a valuable tool designed to help individuals assess their current levels of stress and understand how it may affect their daily lives. To take the test, visit [Individual Stress Test - The Stress Management Society](#)

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

Bowel cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK, with 9 out of 10 people diagnosed over the age of 60. Symptoms of bowel cancer may include:

- changes in your poo, such as having softer poo, diarrhoea or constipation that is not usual for you
- blood in your poo, which may look red or black
- bloating
- losing weight without trying
- feeling very tired or short of breath – these are signs of anaemia, which can be caused by bowel cancer

Some of these symptoms are very common and can be caused by other conditions. Having the symptoms does not definitely mean you have bowel cancer, but it's important to get checked by a GP. For more information about symptoms visit [Symptoms of bowel cancer - NHS](#)

Testicular Cancer Awareness Month

Each year in the UK, around 2,400 people are diagnosed with testicular cancer. The most common symptom is a lump or swelling in a testicle, or a dull ache, pain, or heaviness in the scrotum. To find out more, visit [Testicular Cancer UK](#)

2 April World Autism Awareness Day

Following the introduction of its All-Age Autism Strategy, Worcestershire County Council is committed to making information and support easier to find for autistic people of all ages.

We have been working with our Community Services Directory to create the **Autism Virtual Hub**, a single place to find trusted, local autism-specific organisations offering information, advice and support.

Explore the Autism Virtual Hub: [Community Services Directory Autism Virtual Hub](#)

This aligns with World Autism Acceptance Month. For free resources for schools and workplaces, and to find out more, visit [World Autism Acceptance Month 2026](#)

24 – 30 April - World Immunisation Week

Promoting the life-saving power of immunisation to protect people of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases. Find out about vaccinations for babies, children and adults, including why they're important and how to get them by visiting [Vaccinations - NHS](#)

30 April - On Your Feet Britain

Get your workplace and co-workers to take part in On Your Feet Britain® when 2 MILLION desk-based workers across Britain participate in a variety of fun and simple activities to #SitLess and #MoveMore at work. To find out more, visit [On Your Feet Britain](#)



News and Updates

Connecting parents with neurodivergent children

A new robust peer support network for parents with neurodivergent children is helping families feel more supported and less alone. ARCOS, a Malvern-based therapy charity supporting children and adults with additional needs, identified that many families with neurodivergent children were experiencing significant social isolation.



With support from a Worcestershire County Council, Public Health grant, ARCOS developed a peer support network, shaped by feedback from families. To read more, visit: [Understanding and connection for parents with neurodivergent children](#)

New projects for young people with SEND

Do you know someone who would like to share their opinion to help the young people in the county improve services? We have a variety of ways they can contribute and make their voice count. To find out more, visit [Co-production and how to get involved \(SEND\) | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Stepway supports veterans on the road back to civvy street

Veterans leaving the Armed Forces can have difficulty adjusting to everyday life, with many finding the change in pace, structure, and identity extremely challenging. STEPWAY's 7 Step Civilian Skills Program, funded by a Public Health grant, is helping veterans and their families rebuild confidence, improve wellbeing, and regain a sense of direction. Find out more here: [Stepway supports veterans on the road back to civvy street](#)



New Family Hub in Birchen Coppice

A new Best Start Family Hub has opened at Birchen Coppice Primary Academy. The hub is open every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30am to 4:30pm.



Family Hubs are a welcoming place that offers support to all expectant parents, children, young people and their families. They provide a single place to go for support and information from a variety of services, including parenting groups, midwifery appointments, stay and play sessions and much more.

Find out more at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familyhubs

NHS WorkWell

This programme supports people who are currently in employment and experiencing health related challenges that put them at risk of being signed off sick, as well as those who have recently gone on a fit note and need tailored help to stay connected to work and return sooner.

The NHS WorkWell programme has recently been awarded a three-year extension following a successful first year.

The programme offers personalised guidance, linking individuals to physiotherapy, counselling, workplace adjustments and employment advice, all delivered by trained Work and Health Coaches working within Primary Care.

The service is free, confidential, and available to anyone aged 16+ who is registered with a GP in Worcestershire and facing work barriers due to their health. If you know someone who needs this support, residents can self-refer by contacting their GP surgery or visit:

www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/workwell

Healthy Worcestershire

Healthy Worcestershire sessions help people stay active, meet others and feel part of their local community. Throughout April, sessions across the county will focus on different aspects of positive mental health.



- **w/c 6 April: Pranayama: Hack your wellbeing through breath** - learn to regulate your breath and how it could benefit physical and mental wellbeing
- **w/c 13 April: Improving confidence** - the role of confidence for our mental health, addressing common challenges like negative self-talk and perfectionism, and strategies to build confidence
- **w/c 20 April: Increase your support circle** - why it's important to have a support network and how to create one within your community
- **w/c 27 April: Mindfulness** - tips on being more present in the moment, connected within oneself, being compassionate towards our thoughts and emotions.

Healthy Worcestershire sessions take place every week in 30 venues across the county, as well as online. Find your nearest session at healthyworcestershire.org.uk

Community Stories

Sensory Matters breaks down barriers

In Worcester, Sensory Matters is helping visually impaired people get active, build confidence and access inclusive physical activities thanks to a Public Health Community Wellbeing grant.

The funding enabled the organisation to launch a dedicated physical activity project, offering accessible sessions and healthy walks, and working with local leisure providers to ensure their facilities and programmes are welcoming to all. To read more, visit [Community Stories 2025 | Sensory Matters breaks down barriers](#)



Training and resources

VCSE Impact & Storytelling Workshop

Active Herefordshire and Worcestershire will be hosting a fully funded Impact and Storytelling Workshop for VCSE organisations across the two counties.

Date: Thursday, 7 May 2026

Time: 10:00–16:30 (core workshop 11:00–15:30) includes networking, optional marketplace stands, and lunch.

Location: University of Worcester, Severn Campus, Hylton Road, Worcester, WR2 5JN

Join charity-sector impact expert Emma Insley for a practical, interactive session designed to help you communicate your impact clearly and confidently. To find out more, visit [Impact and Storytelling Workshop for the VCSE sector | Active Herefordshire & Worcestershire](#)

NEW event for children and young people to share their opinions!

Open to children and young people (up to the age of 25 years), with a special education need and/or disability

Date and time: Thursday 16 April, from 4 pm to 7 pm

Location: Graeme Hick Pavilion, Worcestershire County Cricket Club, New Road, Worcester, WR2 4QQ

Refreshments: A meal and snacks will be provided for children and young people, and light refreshments for accompanying adults.

To reserve a place, visit [Expression of Interest: SEND and AP Partnership Event](#)

Funding opportunity for charities in Worcestershire

The Prime Foundation has reopened applications for funding. Charities, community groups and CICs can apply for funding of up to £6,000 for projects that align with the Foundation's aims of improving education, physical and mental health, and social wellbeing at a local level.



The Prime Foundation is funded by Worcester-based property developer Prime plc. To date, 25 local charities and community groups have benefitted from foundation funding.

A strong application is one which tells the story of the group, explains how the project being applied for benefits the community, and how it meets the Foundation's aims. There are lots of support materials on the Prime Foundation website to help with writing the application; no experience in application writing is necessary. To apply, please visit the Prime Foundation website here: [Apply for funding from the Foundation | Prime plc](#)

Webinar for health professionals: exercise in pregnancy and postnatal

A free webinar for health professionals about exercise in pregnancy and the postnatal period, as well as information about the Glowing Mamma free exercise class for referred families, is now available.

The webinar is suitable for healthcare professionals working in Worcestershire including midwives, health visitors, family hub staff, GP's/ nurses as well as other staff supporting pregnant women and families postnatally.

The webinar will take place on Tuesday 28th April 1.30-2.30pm, to find out more and to book visit [Webinar for health professionals: exercise in pregnancy and postnatally Tickets, Tuesday, Apr 28, 2026 from 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm GMT+1 | Eventbrite](#)

Work Well Live Better - Upcoming webinars

Work Well Live Better is a Worcestershire workplace health programme aimed at businesses to help them improve the wellbeing of their workforce. To support businesses to do this, 'Work Well Live Better' has the following upcoming events:

- Embracing Change for Personal and Professional Growth - Thursday 23 April 1pm - 2pm. Online event. To register or to find out more, visit [Embracing Change for Personal and Professional Growth webinar](#)
- Supporting the Mental Health of Your Colleagues - Wednesday 20 May 1pm - 2pm. Online event. To register or to find out more, visit [Supporting the Mental Health of Your Colleagues](#)
- Work Well Live Better Bi-Annual Showcase Event. Tuesday 30 June 9am - 1.30pm in person at The University of Worcester Arena. To register or to find out more, visit [the Bi-Annual Event](#)



To find out more about Work Well Live Better, visit workwelllivebetter.co.uk

Have your say

Schools White Paper, 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving'

The Schools White Paper, 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving', sets out the government's proposals for reforming the SEND system in England. The consultation is now open - giving families and practitioners the chance to read the proposals and respond to them. You can find the documents and consultation here:

Full White Paper: <https://tinyurl.com/y4vyeymu>

Proposed SEND Reforms (various formats): <https://tinyurl.com/mv3d4k3b>

Summaries and supporting documents: <https://tinyurl.com/vdj72w3a>

Respond to the proposals: <https://tinyurl.com/msh739sz>

The consultation closes on 18 May 2026.

Time for dads to have their say

Calling all dads and male carers: Let us know what matters to you. What support would make family life easier? What do you find most challenging? What activities interest you? How do you find events and information?



Complete this survey, and support dads and male carers in Worcestershire: worcestershire.gov.uk/dads

Social Media

How to like and follow us



Like and follow our social media channels to stay up to date with all the latest local health information and opportunities.

Don't forget to tag us in your posts so we can re-share your health messages. You can also share any information and activities that help you and others stay well in our [Facebook group: How are you doing Worcestershire?](#)



Better Health in Worcestershire



Better Health in Worcestershire



How are you doing Worcestershire?



[Insights Worcestershire](#)

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/healthchampions



worcestershire
county council

If you no longer wish to receive information from the Public Health Team about campaigns and would like to be removed from the Worcestershire Health Champions mailing list, please email hwbadmin@worcestershire.gov.uk.