



Hello!

As the summer holidays draw to a close and children head back to school, September often feels like a fresh start. It's a chance to get back into routines, look ahead to the autumn months and think about the small steps we can all take to stay healthy and well.

This month's newsletter is packed with opportunities to start conversations and share important health messages in your communities. From Sepsis Awareness Month and Know Your Numbers Week to campaigns focused on mental health, suicide prevention and sexual health, there are plenty of ways to help people access support, information and advice when they need it.

As we begin to prepare for winter, it's also a good time to encourage healthy habits, whether that's being more active, making healthier food choices, quitting smoking or simply checking in on friends, family and neighbours. Looking after our wellbeing doesn't have to mean making big changes. Often, it's the small things that make the biggest difference.

Finally, there is an exciting opportunity to join our Public Health team. We are recruiting for two new public health practitioner roles at Worcestershire County Council. Find out more and apply here: Job advert [Public Health Practitioner](#).

Until next time...

Lisa McNally
Director of Public Health

Upcoming Health Campaigns

Sepsis Awareness Month

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that can develop when the body's response to an infection causes damage to its own tissues and organs. It can affect anyone, at any age, and early recognition is vital.

As part of Sepsis Awareness Month, we encourage everyone to learn the signs and symptoms of sepsis and seek urgent medical help if they are concerned. For information on the signs of sepsis, visit the NHS website . For further information, support and resources, please visit the UK Sepsis Trust website.

Snack-tember 2026

Snack-tember is back this September, helping children and young people aged 5-16 learn about healthier and more sustainable snacking. Through fun activities, recipes, posters and educational resources, children will be encouraged to explore better snack choices, try new foods and make their own healthy snacks. To find out more and download resources, visit www.nutrition.org.uk/snack-tember-2026/

7 - 13 September - Know Your Numbers Week

Around a third of people in the UK have high blood pressure, but most don't know it. High blood pressure can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and other illnesses. Once you know your numbers, you can get support to bring your blood pressure under control and prevent these diseases.

Know Your Numbers Week raises awareness and encourages people to get their blood pressure tested. The theme for this year is 'You know your age, do you know your numbers?'

To find out more about the national campaign, visit www.bloodpressureuk.org

10 September - 10 October – Local Action for Suicide Prevention Campaign

Public Health, together with NHS and local VCS organisations, will be running a system-wide mental health and suicide prevention campaign from World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September) until World Mental Health Day (10 October).

We will be working together to help people learn more about mental health, find support when they need it, and look after their wellbeing. We'll be encouraging open conversations, promoting help-seeking and reducing stigma around poor mental health.

To support this campaign, a resources centre has been created on the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust website www.hacw.nhs.uk/campaign-for-mental-health

Sharing positive messaging and available support throughout the campaign period is an easy way to take action. Look out for more on our social media channels over the coming weeks: #ActionForSuicidePrevention #StartTheConversation #MentalHealthMatters

Other local resources and materials are available:

- www.talkingtherapies.hwhct.nhs.uk
- [Orange Button Community Scheme Google Drive](#)
- www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mentalwellbeing

18 September - Youth Mental Health Day #BuildFutureYou

This year's theme, #BuildFutureYou, encourages young people to look ahead with hope, build resilience and take positive steps towards their goals, despite the challenges they may face.

A range of resources and activities will be available to help schools, organisations and communities get involved. Visit <https://stem4.org.uk/youthmentalhealthday>

News and updates

Coming this autumn: Fit for Life – Men's Health Programme

This autumn, Fit for Life, a new men's health programme, will launch across Worcestershire to support adult men who are overweight or living with obesity to become more active and improve their wellbeing.

Delivered in community venues, the programme will offer supportive group sessions and personalised health coaching to help participants build confidence, increase physical activity and develop healthier lifestyle habits in a welcoming, non-judgemental environment.

Further information on referral routes and how to access the service will be shared ahead of the launch.

County Councillor for Health impressed by support available for families at Best Start Family Hubs

Councillor Alan Bailes visited Best Start Family Hub Buttercup in Worcester and praised the wide range of support available to local families. During the visit, he met parents and children attending a SEND Stay and Play session, visited the sensory room and learned about services including maternity clinics, child development checks, speech and language support, parenting advice and emotional wellbeing support.



He also met award-winning Family Hub Navigator Kim Pouch and volunteer Sam Richins, who has supported local families through the Family Hubs for the past five years.

Councillor Bailes highlighted the positive impact of the hubs, which support families from pregnancy through to early childhood at 10 locations across Worcestershire.

The hubs also offer parenting support, counselling and emotional wellbeing services, stop smoking support, clothes banks and food support.

Read more on our website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news

Smoking during pregnancy falls to record low in Worcestershire

Smoking rates among pregnant women in Worcestershire have fallen to around 3%, the lowest level recorded in the county.

Worcestershire's specialist support, including personalised advice and free nicotine replacement therapy, is helping more families become smoke-free. Worcestershire County Council highlighted the story of local mum Jodie, who successfully quit smoking during pregnancy with support from the service. Free stop smoking support is available for pregnant women, their families and all Worcestershire residents.



Find out more at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/stopsmoking

New: Free support to quit smoking for children and young people in Worcestershire

From 14 September 2026, young people aged 12 to 17 years in Worcestershire can access free specialist support to help them stop smoking through the Smoke Free Homes service. The service offers two weeks of personalised one-to-one support, flexible appointment locations and access to nicotine replacement therapy where appropriate.

Referrals can be made by young people or professionals at www.hacw.nhs.uk/smokefreehomes

For information on stop smoking support available to adults, visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/stop-smoking-support

This month our Healthy Worcestershire sessions will help residents stay heart healthy, learn more about how their bodies work and make meaningful connections.



- **7 September** – Keeping your heart healthy: Discover simple ways to look after your heart through healthy eating, regular physical activity and managing your blood pressure.
- **14 September** – Understanding Blue Badges: Learn what Blue Badges are, who may be eligible and how to apply for one.
- **21 September** – The hidden human senses: Explore the three lesser-known senses that help us navigate everyday life: proprioception (body awareness), vestibular sense (balance) and interoception (understanding signals from within the body).
- **28 September** – What's happening in your community: Find out about local groups, activities, services and events available in your area and how to get involved.

Healthy Worcestershire sessions take place at more than 30 venues across Worcestershire. They are free, open to everyone, and there is no need to book. To find your nearest session, visit healthyworcestershire.org.uk

Community Stories

New school pond offers tranquil spot for calm reflection

A new pond at Bayton C of E Primary School is providing pupils across the setting with a peaceful place to sit, chat, observe wildlife and practice mindfulness.

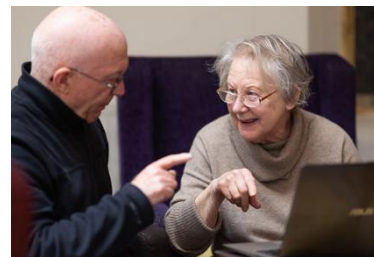
The pond, funded through a Worcestershire County Council public health community grant, features a bug hotel, plants, a shady seating area and is already well-loved by the children, who all delight in using the space, especially during the hot weather. To read more visit <https://insights.worcestershire.gov.uk/>



Training & Resources

Free Digital Skills Training

AbilityNet and BT Group are offering free digital skills training for older people and disabled adults. Sessions can be delivered one-to-one or in groups and cover topics including using smartphones and tablets, email, online services, shopping, banking, and staying safe online.



Free tablets may also be available for eligible disabled adults and people aged 55+ in selected areas, including Worcestershire. To find out more Tel: 0300 180 0028, email digitalskills@abilitynet.org.uk or visit their website <https://abilitynet.org.uk>

Research Engagement Grants Available

The Research Engagement Network is offering grants to VCFSE organisations working with communities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



Grants of £1,000 are available, with organisations able to apply for up to £5,000 in total.

Funding can support activities that raise awareness of health and social care research, promote opportunities to get involved, and engage communities that are often underrepresented in research.

To find out more and apply, visit <https://communitypower.org.uk/small-grants-fund-vcfse-sector/>. Application deadline: 9 am, Monday 14 September 2026

Information sessions: Thursday 3 September 2026 at 12.30 pm or 6 pm. To book, visit <https://communitypower.org.uk/small-grants-fund-vcfse-sector/>

Adult Learning Digital Skills Courses Now Open

Worcestershire Adult Learning has launched its new Digital Skills courses, with classes available across Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Redditch, Worcester and Malvern. Courses include:

- Digital Skills for Absolute Beginners
- Smartphone & Tablet Skills
- Essential Digital Skills for Life
- Essential Digital Skills for Work

You can book by telephone on 01905 728537, email

AdultLearning@worcestershire.gov.uk or by visiting their website booking form:

[Worcestershire County Council - Courses search](#)

Free Energy Advice Training

Act on Energy is offering free one-hour online training sessions for frontline staff and volunteers supporting residents with energy costs.

Topics include energy support schemes, billing updates, tariffs, switching suppliers and practical energy-saving advice.

Training dates:

- 2 September, 2 pm to 3 pm
- 15 September, 11 am to 12 pm
- 1 October, 11 am to 12 pm
- 27 October, 2 pm to 3 pm

To book your free place, follow this link eventbrite.co.uk/e/practical-energy-saving-advice-save-money-on-your-energy-bills-tickets

Research and Development Conference 2026

Bookings are now open for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust's 6th annual virtual Research and Development Conference, taking place on 13 and 14 October 2026.



The conference will showcase innovative research from across the country through four virtual sessions:

Monday 13 October

- 10 am to 12.15 pm: Learning Disability
- 1 pm to 3 pm: Psychosis

Tuesday 14 October

- 10 am to 12 pm: Management of Long-Term Conditions
- 1 pm to 3.15 pm: Health Inequalities (hosted by the University of Worcester)

The event is free, open to everyone, and attendance certificates are available on request.

Book your place: www.trybooking.com/uk/GLAO

View the full agenda: www.hacw.nhs.uk/evidence-based-practice-conference

For enquiries, contact alice.madden1@nhs.net.

Work Well Live Better - Upcoming webinars and workshops

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 in doing this, 'Work Well Live Better' has the following upcoming events:



Free Workplace Health Workshop for Worcestershire Employers

Thursday 10 September – 2 pm to 2.30 pm

Free 30-minute Work Well Live Better workshops are available to Worcestershire businesses, charities, schools and employers to help identify workplace health priorities, access free support and resources, and learn practical approaches to improving employee health and wellbeing.

Book your place using this form: [Introduction to Work Well Live Better - Webinar sessions](#)

Quarterly Breakfast Event

Monday 21 September 9:30 am to 11:30 am

University of Worcester Arena (topic TBC)

Join us in person for networking, insights, and great conversations with like-minded organisations. Book using this form: [Quarterly Breakfast Event](#)

Coping with Anxiety

Thursday 22nd October 1 pm to 2 pm (online)

Understand the nature of anxiety and its impact on thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Explore strategies and approaches that support managing anxiety and building emotional resilience. Book using this form: [Coping with Anxiety Webinar](#).

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

Have your say!

Carer Friendly Worcestershire: All-Age Carers Strategy Refresh 2027 to 2032

Worcestershire County Council is refreshing the All-Age Carers Strategy and would like to hear from unpaid carers across the county, including adult carers, parent carers, young carers and young adult carers.

The survey will help identify what is working well, where improvements are needed, and the priorities for supporting carers over the next five years.

You can access the survey via this link: [Carers Strategy Refresh 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: Survey link: [worcestershire.gov.uk/dads](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/dads)

Social media



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.