

## Supporting Children and Young People

It is essential that young people feel heard and are able to access help for their mental health. For those supporting young people, it can seem difficult to know where to start. We recommend opening conversations about mental health, allowing young people to express how they feel and to feel heard.

### Tips for talking to a young person about mental health

**Be empathetic** Try to put yourself in the young person's shoes, imagine how they are feeling. Listen to their tone of voice and notice their body language, as this will give you clues as to how they are feeling.

**Find a safe space to talk** Make it clear that they are not in trouble. Meet in a neutral space which is private and calm. Try to be on the same level - for example, both sitting down. Some may find it easier to talk whilst out for a walk in a relaxing environment, others may prefer to talk without direct eye contact - for example, in a car.

**Use 'active listening'** Active listening means allowing for silences and not filling them. Give the young person space to talk. Ask questions such as 'how can I help you?', 'how long have you felt like this?', 'how are you feeling at the moment?', 'what kind of support do you think may help?'

**Stay calm** Being as calm as possible can help young people feel supported and in turn can help them feel more calm and open to talking.

**Accept them as they are** Respect their feelings, experiences and values, even if they are different to yours. Try not to judge or criticise. Choose your words carefully and try to avoid language which may evoke shame, such as 'pull yourself together' or 'don't be silly'.

**When and where to get help** Always take their feelings seriously, it is never too early to get help if you have any concerns. Websites such as Young Minds have great resources and can signpost you to further support. You may want to contact your GP, with the young person's permission, or gently signpost them towards support.

**Aged 16-25? Struggling with challenges in your life?**

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

OUR FREE GROUP

**SAFE SPACE**

IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU



The chance to speak openly about how you are feeling

Join us on Zoom, Thursdays 5pm-6.30pm  
and monthly in person at Bath College

Contact Becky 07538 113890  
email: [wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@bathmind.org.uk)

Visit our website for more helpful resources  
[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)



**How are you sleeping? - The importance of sleep for our mental health**

On average, we spent around a third of our lives sleeping. When we sleep, our brains process and store new information and our bodies repair cells. These processes all support our mental and physical health. A lack of sleep can affect our overall wellbeing.

There is lots we can try to help improve our sleep:

**Look after yourself**

How we look after ourselves during the day can also affect how we sleep.

Try to avoid big meals before bedtime. Avoid caffeine for several hours before bed. Getting outside and taking in fresh air during the day can be beneficial to our sleep.

**Keep a sleep routine**

Going to bed and waking around the same time each day or going to bed when you feel ready to sleep, and waking up at the same time every day can help establish a sleep routine.

If you've had a bad night of sleep, avoiding activities because you feel tired may make sleeping that night more difficult.

**Preparing your sleeping area**

Experiment with different things such as temperature, light, noise and bedding.

Many sleep better in a slightly cooler environment. If your environment is light, you may find wearing a sleep mask helps. Most find they sleep better in quiet environments, but if you don't, try listening to music or a podcast. If your environment is noisy, you may find wearing ear plugs helps. You may sleep better with lighter or heavier weight covers; warmer or cooler bedding.

**Preparing for sleep**

Preparation can be very powerful in helping us sleep. Try to avoid screens for an hour or two before bed as the blue light emitted by screens can affect how we sleep. Avoid activities which may stimulate your brain.

Breathing exercises, meditation, listening to a relaxing podcast or drinking herbal tea may help some relax and get ready for bed. If your mind is racing with thoughts which are preventing you from relaxing, try writing those thoughts down, reassure yourself that you can address these issues tomorrow, replace them with visualising something that makes you feel calm and relaxed.

You may like to try this guided sleep meditation which can help prepare you for sleep:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/)

**Try to avoid clock watching**

If you are finding it hard to fall asleep, try to avoid checking the time. If you can't fall asleep, try getting up and doing a 'mundane' task for a few minutes, then go back to bed. Worrying about the fact that you are not able to sleep can make it harder to sleep. If you're struggling to sleep, do something to relax yourself rather than focussing on negative thoughts. Focussing on your breath can help bring you back to the present moment and calm your mind.

**On waking** in the morning, try to look at natural daylight before looking at screens - this can help your circadian rhythms and your body's natural 'sleep-wake cycle.'

**When to seek help**

If you are finding it difficult to sleep long term, talk to your GP.

**Information and support**

You can find more information and support here: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/)

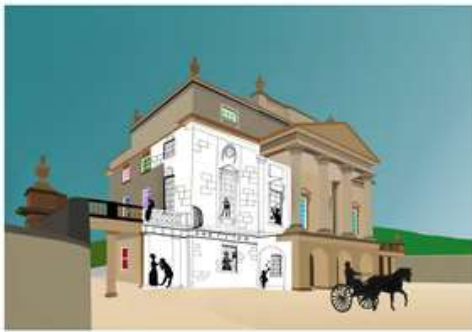
If you are experiencing difficulties with your sleep or would like support with your wellbeing, you can contact Bath Mind here [www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/)



'BEHIND CLOSED DOORS' – A collaborative Art exhibition by Bath creatives, Jason Dorley-Brown and Emma Taylor, in support of local mental health charity, Bath Mind

7th FEBRUARY – 31st MARCH 2022

ArtBar, Abbey Hotel Bath – A Tribute Portfolio Hotel



A chance to see a unique exhibition celebrating Bath's historic buildings and an unseen insight into the life and stories behind their doors. Beautifully created images depicting a slice of Bath history is entwined with contemporary art and a stroke of storytelling thrown in for good measure!

**Abbey Hotel Bath, Jason and Emma** are proudly celebrating and raising funds for local mental health charity, Bath Mind – with 35% of any sales being donated to the charity.

**Jason Dorley-Brown said**, "Emma and I have worked in the past together as curator and artist and as artist contributors in group shows. However it's been an ambition of ours to collaborate creatively on shared images and at last this has become a reality. We are so proud to be raising awareness, and hopefully much needed funds for the incredible Bath Mind."

**Emma Taylor, Artist and Curator said**, "I'm so excited to be collaborating with ArtBar, Jason and Bath Mind on this project. Bath Mind provide an incredible and sadly much needed service to our community, particularly during times of late. This exhibition is also a chance to celebrate Bath's heritage and peek 'behind closed doors', highlighting human stories and emotions both good and bad – the fact these stories and the way humans interact, the emotional battles we can face and the way these haven't changed over hundreds of years."



EDITOR'S LETTER

above: The Behind Closed Doors exhibition (page 22)  
below: We're going big on the colour purple (page 54)



Some of things we have to do for this job are, well, just sublime. Like dining wine-light style at Quicquiberry Hotel's Olive Terrace where Chris Cleghorn is the head chef. It was just one of those lightbulb moment experiences where I understood what a Michelin Star really meant and was immediately resolved to try and represent the wonder of Chris's mastery through these pages – hence our cover depicts the sweetly kissable amuse-bouche chocolate lips we were served filled with miso and salted caramel. Turn to page 48 where I try not to overuse the word 'sublime'.

The kisses also work as a SWALK intro to our Valentine's Day feature on page 18 where we chat to 12 Bath couples who happen to be working together. The stories from the likes of the legendary Huey and his amazing wife and manager Becky Morgan, and The Happy Donut Bakery's founders Meg Smith and Nat Morris, about meeting, falling in love, and creating phenomenal businesses together is heartwarming, fascinating and utterly swoonworthy read.

Over on page 68 six local and hugely successful tech companies tell us why they love Bath and why they're staying faithful and keeping their talent and growth within the city.

All in all, we bring you yet another divine, exalted, glorious, superb and heavenly issue. (Apologies for the synonyms but I have used up my quota of the word sublime...oops)



Sarah

SARAH MOOLLA

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Instagram @bathlifemag

# THE ARTS

SNAPSHOTS OF BATH'S CULTURAL LIFE

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

The *Behind Closed Doors* exhibition, which will soon be on display at the ArtBar in Abbey Hotel, is a thought-provoking collaboration between two Bath artists Jason Dorley-Brown and Emma Taylor to help raise funds for the charity Bath Mind.

Emma explains, "This exhibition is a chance to celebrate Bath's heritage, but to also peek behind closed doors", highlighting human stories and emotions both good and bad. It explores that these stories and the way humans interact, the emotional battles we can face, these haven't really changed over hundreds of years.

"Myself and Jason both wanted to show our support for Bath Mind who have provided an incredible, and sadly much needed, service to our community, particularly during times of late."

*Behind Closed Doors* by Jason Dorley-Brown and Emma Taylor runs 7 February – 31 March at ArtBar, Abbey Hotel Bath on North Parade, which is a Tribute Douglas Hotel. The exhibition is to help raise awareness and funds for Bath Mind, with 3% per cent of sales being donated to the local mental health charity.

For more visit [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

www.mediabath.co.uk | BATH LIFE | 33

Time to Talk Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> February invites us all to start talking openly about mental health. We all have mental health, and one in four of us will experience a mental health problem, so Bath Mind would like everyone to be able to feel comfortable talking about mental health which can help support both ourselves and others. Follow Bath Mind on social media for Time to Talk Day updates with some great tips on how to start a conversation about your mental health, or someone else's.



**Artist and photographer Jason Dorley Brown shares his story with Bath Mind for encouraging us all to start conversations about mental health.**

"As I have aged, I have become much more aware that my mental health, good and bad, is very much a part of what makes me 'me' and it is as important to work on as my physical health. Neither should ever be taken for granted.

It was in 2011 that I first realised and admitted to myself, that I had been struggling with depression. For many years, I had experienced a couple of days during each year when I would hide away. I would spend that time under my duvet, not answering the phone, not wanting to interact with anyone, not having the energy to get up, unable to function normally. I told myself I just needed to 'man up' and I would eventually come out the other side and rejoin society. However, the once a year became once a month, then once a week...

What I experienced during these periods of depression was for me, almost like having a panic attack; an out of body experience. I wouldn't be able to get out of bed, I would feel incredible self-loathing, a total lack of confidence and self-belief; it was as if I was floating above my body looking at myself, not understanding why I felt that way. I soon realised that I needed to seek professional help.

My GP suggested I see a counsellor. I realised that living in New York and experiencing 9/11 had been a catalyst for my depression; I had wanted to discuss this, but my counsellor had disagreed. So, rightly or wrongly, I didn't return after two sessions.

9/11 also became a catalyst for me to grieve the passing of my beloved grandmother, Lola, the year before. I didn't have a close relationship with my parents and she was the one adult that showed me true love and seemed to 'see me'. When she died, I didn't grieve, I didn't feel any true sense of loss. However, four days after 9/11 I was in my apartment in

NYC and I burst into tears. I cried for hours. My tears were for my grandmother. Looking back, I now realise that the loss of my grandmother and the events of 9/11 made the protective wall that I had built around my emotions crumble. Up to that point in time I had felt bombproof, now I felt an oversensitivity. This still exists in me today.

Despite making lifestyle changes, my depression continued. I went back to my GP and decided to start on medication. After two or three days of taking a pill daily, it was as if I had a firewall protecting me from the debilitating affects of my depression. I was able to consider my challenges rationally. I was no longer crippled by huge self-doubt and self-loathing. I could see paths out of my challenges and I could see the potential in myself.

If sharing my story results in one person realising that they are not alone in their struggles and they feel comfortable enough to reach out and seek help, then it is worth it. I know that by sharing my story I am not admitting to a weakness or a failure, rather that I am discussing my humanity.

I have found great solace and joy in my art practice and I soon understood that my creative outlet has incredibly beneficial effects on my mental wellbeing. The relationship with my creativity is an incredible tool for achieving positive mental health.

I have never been more happy with who I am than I am today and that is due to my increasingly positive mental health. I put that down to a mixture of my art practice, and the incredible support network of friends. Those two things are inextricably linked in providing me with a foundation to live a positive, creative and fulfilling life.

I believe that feeling loved, supported and safe are incredibly important and integral to a truly happy and rewarding life. That, for me, is the greatest gift you can share."

Jason Dorley Brown for Bath Mind January 2022

If you'd like help, more information or support with your mental health, visit [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk).

Bath Mind is a local, independent charity supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people throughout B&NES.

Anxiety - Anthem Publishing - Planet Mindful - February 2022

The pandemic has made us all more aware of the importance of our mental health and wellbeing. More and more people are talking about their mental health difficulties, which, for many, may have increased over the past two years. It can be hard to know when to manage our mental health on our own, and when it is time to seek help.

There is a plethora of information on websites, social media and apps, and there are numerous books available. With so many different and varied sources of information, some may feel overwhelmed and not know whether they need professional help, or what may suit them best.

Check-in with yourself regularly, ask yourself how you are feeling. We all feel different ways on different days. Notice if how you feel changes or if anxiety or low mood last for a prolonged period of time. You may like to keep a diary noting how you are feeling. Try to maintain good self-care, including relaxation, exercise, good nutrition and sleep, all of which support your mental health.

Talking things over with a friend or family member can be a good way to start a conversation about your mental health and explore how you are feeling. Sharing how we may deal with difficult times can be helpful to others and we can learn by sharing our experience and listening to others.

For some, mental health difficulties can escalate. Taking action at an early stage can help to prevent symptoms worsening. If you or someone you know are experiencing difficulties with your mental health, it's never too early to seek professional help. There is no fixed timeframe for when you should seek professional help; everyone is different. If you are unsure or you are struggling, it is always best to check at as early a stage as possible.

We all have mental health, in the same way as we all have physical health. Seeking appropriate help for either our mental or our physical health is an important step in improving our overall wellbeing. Mental health is not something to be trivialised; though we cannot see it as we can see our physical health, this does not mean it is any less important.

Some may not find it easy to ask for help. We may feel vulnerable or uncomfortable discussing our mental health issues. You are not alone – thousands of people every year seek support for their mental health, and you can be proud of yourself for wanting to make positive changes in your life.

It is best to talk with your GP in the first instance. Never feel that your problem is 'too small' to talk to your GP, they are there to help you. If you find the thought of talking with your GP daunting, there is lots you can do to make this a little easier.

If you find it difficult to take the step to making an appointment, you could ask a friend or family member to book the appointment for you, with your permission.

If you are not comfortable talking on the phone, ask for a face-to-face appointment. If you feel able to, let the receptionist know when booking that you need support with your mental health. This will help them prioritise your appointment.

Try to write down how you are feeling, and take some notes with you to the appointment. Include a few notes on how your mental health has been affecting your daily life. You do not need to have any special words, or try to self-diagnose yourself beforehand, just explain how you are feeling.

You can let your GP know that you are feeling nervous about talking with them, and if you are unsure about talking to your GP alone, you can ask a family member or friend to be with you.

Your GP will be able to decide what type of support you need. Different types of support are available depending on where you live. . Some services may be online; others may be face-to-face. If you have a preference, mention this to your GP. Some services may be online. Let your GP know if

you don't have access to the internet. They may recommend talking therapies in the first instance. This may be available via the NHS, a local charity or through the private sector

There are various different types of talking therapy available, which use different approaches. Some may focus on a specific problem, or may involve talking about your past, others may be based around how you think and/or behave, or looking at how to support you to achieve your hopes for the future. Many therapists have trained in more than one type of therapy and can adapt their approach to suit you and your individual needs.

CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) is a talking therapy which is widely used to support a broad range of mental health difficulties, including stress, anxiety, low mood, anger, OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder), PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), sleep problems eating disorders and self-harm. CBT is a combined therapy, based around the idea that how we think (cognitive) affects how we behave, and feel (behaviour). Through talking with a therapist, we identify our negative thought and behaviour patterns and challenge them.

CBT may not be the most suitable type of therapy for everyone, and you may not always find that the first therapist you see is the best 'fit' for you. Don't let this deter you, as finding the most appropriate support is very individual and you will know when it is right.

Other types of talking therapy include

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) which is an adaptation of CBT, designed to support those who feel emotions intensely.

Solution focussed – looks at finding solutions based around what you want to achieve in the future.

Psychoanalytic – focusses on issues which may be deep-rooted, or from your childhood.

Person-centred – based around utilising your personal strengths and insight.

Humanistic – a holistic approach exploring the mind, body, spirit and soul.

Your GP may recommend other types of support such as peer support – where people with similar experiences meet and are able to empathise, including art and creative therapies, and local groups which may spend time in nature – such as eco-therapy groups.

If you have tried something and you feel it isn't working for you, there are always other options, so do go back to your GP or health professional to discuss what is, or is not working for you, and ask what alternatives may be available.

Bath Mind's website offers helpful resources to support your mental health, visit [www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/). You can find lots of information on mental health conditions and types of support available at [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk), where you can also find details of your local Mind network independent charity and the services they provide where you live.

Christine Swift, Bath Mind. 1-22.

Christine has worked in book publishing for many years. In 2020 she started work at Bath Mind. She finds it hugely rewarding to be working within a team dedicated to promoting good mental for all, and hopes that her small contribution in sharing supportive information and encouraging conversations about mental health will help tackle stigma and change lives.

## Bath Mind – Creativity for Wellbeing in Young People

Bath Mind's Room 627 project is delighted to be working with young people in local schools, helping them to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Room 627 is a project created to help young people navigate the changes of moving from year 6 to year 7 with kindness, compassion and creativity. Funded by the #iwill fund, the project is run by Bath Mind, The Dept of Kindness and a creative group of young people from Oldfield School. Together they have created a space where young people can explore different activities, share ideas and get creative to build confidence in the changes created by 'moving up'.

Creativity makes a difference. It connects us to our senses, body and mind. It makes the world felt. It helps us find our voice and display our own unique strengths. Being involved in art and creativity can spark new ways of thinking about things, help us find solutions to problems, find out more about ourselves, create bonds and nurture friendships. Arts-rich experiences make it more likely for young people to do better at school, volunteer, vote and participate in social change.

Through Room 627, young people are encouraged to voice their worries, and show compassion in supporting one another through creative thinking. The work undertaken culminated in a fabulous 'Burn and Bury our Worries' ceremony at Oldfield School, on 28<sup>th</sup> January. Designed by the 'Wellbeing Ambassadors' at Oldfield school, this event gave a nod to a winter solstice, where pupils' worries were written down, collected and burned on a ceremonial fire.

Wera Hobhouse, who attended the event, said "I was honoured to attend the lively and uplifting 'Burn and Banish Our Worries' ceremony at Oldfield School. It was wonderful to speak with some of the students and take part in activities that they had arranged. I am keenly aware of the huge toll the pandemic has taken on our collective mental health. Our young people have been particularly impacted and it is vitally important that we support their mental health and wellbeing. My warmest thanks to Bath Mind, Oldfield School and the Natural Theatre Company for facilitating this creative, student-led initiative and for their excellent work in our community."

Writing down worries and sharing notes of compassion and kindness can be useful tools in supporting well-being. This enables young people to express themselves, which can help to start conversations around mental health. Bath Mind is passionate about encouraging everyone to talk about their mental health, in the same way as we talk about our physical health.

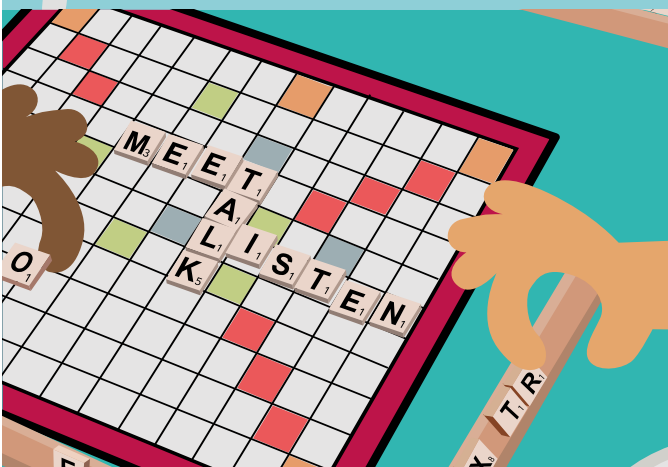
Creative projects are a great way to engage young people, build confidence and nurture positive relationships. Creativity is all around us, so encourage young people to be creative, whether that is through art, writing or any other form of creative expression.

Moving forward Room 627 has exciting plans, including further creative wellbeing training in schools; a 'take over' of the Egg Theatre and an interactive online event. You can find further information on supporting young people's mental health and Room 627 at [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk) and [www.room627.com](http://www.room627.com).

Christine Swift  
For Bath Mind

# However you do it, start a conversation about mental health

Talk, Listen, Change Lives



**time to  
talk day**  
03/02/22



## talk to us!

Breathing  
Space

**01225 983130**

Telephone support 5.30pm-11.30pm Monday-Thursday  
Face-to-Face Service 6pm-10.30pm Monday-Sunday

Befriending  
Service

**0300 247 0050**  
9am-5pm Monday to Friday

Visit our website for more information and support  
[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)



### Understanding Worry – for children and young people

It's normal for us all to worry from time-to-time. Difficult times and circumstances may cause children and young people to worry more than usual. Bath Mind's Room 627 project has been working with students at Oldfield School, helping them understand their worries and working on creative strategies to 'banish' worries.

Room 627 is a project created to help young people navigate the transition of moving from year 6 to year 7 with kindness, compassion and creativity. Wellbeing Ambassadors from Oldfield School have taken part in creative wellbeing sessions and have co-created an amazing website: [www.room627.com](http://www.room627.com)

Bath Mind would like to share some strategies to help you support children and young people, which can help to build resilience and reduce the chance of worries escalating:

- Encourage young people to talk about their worries. This can help them feel reassured, and find potential solutions.
- Suggest one 'worry time' each day, to help reduce the time spent worrying, whilst not dismissing the worries in any way. This may be, for example, 15 minutes at lunchtime. Worry time should not be near bedtime.
- Writing down worries can help young people to see them more clearly and some may find writing, or drawing pictures an easier way to express their worries.
- Encourage a positive mindset. Think about what they have to be thankful for, do something fun which they enjoy.

Head to Bath Mind's website to download a copy of our 'Let's talk about worry' booklet, which gives more tips and interactive tools to support children and young people.

[www.bathmind.org.uk/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/)

Worries are usually temporary, but can lead to anxiety, so do talk to your GP if worries are frequent and persistent.

Bath Mind have exciting plans moving forward for the Room 627 project including further creative wellbeing training in schools; a 'take over' of the Egg Theatre during October half term 2022 and an interactive online event. The Room 627 project is funded by the #iwill fund, and is run by Bath Mind, supported by The Dept of Kindness and Oldfield School.

You can find more information and support for young people on national Mind's website <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>

There are lots of organisations that offer support to young people, including:-

[www.boysinmind.org.uk](http://www.boysinmind.org.uk) – reducing stigma and isolation for boys and young men.

Shout 85258 – a free, confidential text messaging service for anyone struggling to cope. To start a conversation, text 'SHOUT' to 85258.

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) – Childline trained counsellors to support you any time.

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) – mental health support for young people.

Bath Mind ([www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)) is an independent charity. We directly support the mental health needs of individuals in Bath and North East Somerset.

For more information on our services, to find support, or to get involved, please visit our website:

[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

“I literally couldn’t breathe when I called this evening. You helped me through my panic attack and I believe you have saved my life this evening...”

Please help our crisis support service continue saving lives.

# Run for Bath Mind

in the

# Bath Half

29th May 2022

Free running vest  
Support on your fundraising journey  
Heaps of big cheers on the day  
Possibly the best post-run cakes!



Contact Jodie to sign up!

[jodiehoskin@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:jodiehoskin@bathmind.org.uk)

Thank you

If you or someone you know needs support with their mental health, we are here for you. Head to our website to find out how to get in touch.



[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

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For more information on our services, to find support, or to get involved, please visit our website: [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)



# Community Unity Day

**Come along and meet your community!**

**Find out more about how to support your wellbeing**

**Thursday  
7th April**

**1.30-3.30pm**

Monksdale Road Allotments  
Bath BA2 2JD



- Tasty bakes
- Stalls
- Live music
- Hot drinks
- Activities
- Wellbeing Information

**Limited car parking available. Please try to walk or cycle.  
This is an accessible venue.**

Any questions? Contact: [AngelaFarr@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:AngelaFarr@bathmind.org.uk)

For further information and details of all our services please visit our website [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)



**BATH MIND****MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK 9-15 MAY 2022****SUPPORTING LONELINESS THROUGHOUT B&NES**

This Mental Health Awareness Week, we focus on the theme of loneliness. Recognising the many different causes and effects of loneliness has never been more important.

We often picture 'lonely' as affecting those who are alone, but this is not always the case. Loneliness and isolation can be experienced by anyone, whether we are alone or part of a wider family or network. For some, being alone can be a positive situation, in which they do not feel lonely, they may enjoy spending time alone by choice. Those who are part of a family or group may feel disconnected and isolated, despite not being 'alone' they may experience loneliness.

Loneliness can affect our mood and wellbeing on many levels. Meaningful connections with others are beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing. A chat with a friend, or close relative can lift our mood if we are feeling low. A walk in the park, when someone may say 'hello'; or a chat as we bump into a friend, or check-out at the supermarket; can often brighten our day. It is these little moments which combine to reduce feelings of isolation and help keep us mentally well.

As a result of COVID-19, we are now living more separately than ever. Many living alone, who previously relied on a little impromptu social contact when out, may be feeling lonely. Local groups have been cancelled, places of worship have been closed and many people who have been shielding are not comfortable returning to these.

For some, being in a relationship or a family can be a lonely place. Some may feel isolated or anxious, and it may be difficult for them to find someone to turn to for support. It may be hard to make or maintain connections outside of their home unit; they may be feeling isolated and disconnected.

Those working may have changed from working in an office, to working at home ongoing. They may miss seeing a friendly face, having a chat whilst they make a coffee, or meeting a friend for lunch. Those whose work situation has changed may have lost the financial and emotional support which their work provided, finding themselves with a lot of time to think, and fewer positive interactions to lift their mood.

Some may be separated from their family and/or children. They may experience low mood and loneliness, despite a busy study or work schedule.

Many of us may feel anxious. Changes and new experiences can make it hard for us to feel like connecting with others; we may withdraw and cut ourselves off from our support network.

**Greenlinks**

Monksdale Road  
Alice Park

Bath Mind understand that taking that first step can be daunting. Bath Mind's members offer their suggestions for how to help improve your mental health and wellbeing and feel more connected:-

*"I have found friends at Bath Mind, people listen."* Sarah

*"The Bath Mind groups are really good and have helped me to feel less lonely."* Tom

*"I take my camera and I go for a walk it helps me to feel better."*  
Heather

*"Just being in a group with other people who understand mental health difficulties, it helps me."* Anon

*"I am trying to be braver, just a little bit each day."* Jenny

*"I try and write down what I am going to do each day, to make a plan and then imagine myself doing it and it going well. I am trying to make more room for the positives."* Maria

*If you live in B&NES and need support with your mental health and wellbeing, please contact Bath Mind:*

*Befriending - Monday to Saturday 9am to 5.30pm. Call 0300 247 0050*

*Breathing Space - 365 days a year 5.30pm to 11.30pm. Call 01225 983130*

**BATH MIND**

April 2022

# Mental Health Awareness Week 9-15th May



## Reducing Loneliness, Together

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Loneliness can affect our mood and wellbeing on many levels. Meaningful connections with others are beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing. A chat with a friend or close relative can lift our mood if we are feeling low. A walk in the park when someone may say 'hello', or a friendly check-out in a shop, can often brighten our day. It can be easy to overlook these little moments which combine to reduce feelings of loneliness and help keep us mentally well.

### Join us at our free events



- **Food for Thought Lunch Club\*** - Thursday 12th May, 12.30pm  
Join us for lunch! Contact [foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk) to book.
- **Football for all!** - Thursday 12th May, 5.30-7pm  
Fun football, tea and cakes at Bath Recreation Ground.
- **A Mindful Walk in Nature** - Thursday 12th May, 11am  
A gentle walk at Greenlinks, Monksdale Road Allotments.
- **Picnic in Alice Park** - Tuesday 10th May, 10.30am-1pm  
Come along to our shared picnic at Alice Park Community Garden.
- **Tea and Cakes at Greenlinks** - Thursday 12th May, 1-2pm  
Join us for tea and cakes at Greenlinks, Monksdale Road Allotments.

**No need to book in advance** (\*except Food for Thought Lunch Club).  
**Just come along!** or contact Becky on 0753 8113 890.

Follow us on social media  
for news and updates.



Visit our website for support,  
information and resources  
on mental health and wellbeing.  
[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

Bath Mind is a local, independent charity. Registered Charity No: 1069403.



**Need help with your  
mental health but don't  
know where to start?**

**Bath Mind can help.**

### **Community Services Framework (CSF)**

We can walk alongside you every step of the way, making sure you can access the support you need.

**Freephone: 0808 175 1369**

**Email: [csf@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:csf@bathmind.org.uk)**



### **Breathing Space**

Face-to-face and telephone service offering calm, non-clinical support for individuals experiencing or at risk of a mental health crisis.

**Telephone: 01225 983130**

**Email: [breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:breathingspace@bathmind.org.uk)**



**These services are free and open to all those  
aged 16 years and over, living in BaNES.**

**“We just wanted to say a huge THANK YOU for  
the support you offer to our patients.”**

*Hope House Surgery & Hillcrest Surgery*

**We have a broad range of services and  
support information on our website**

**[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)**

**mind  
Bath**

# Spend Time in Nature Take a mindful moment in Bath's green spaces

Photographs by Jason Dorley-Brown

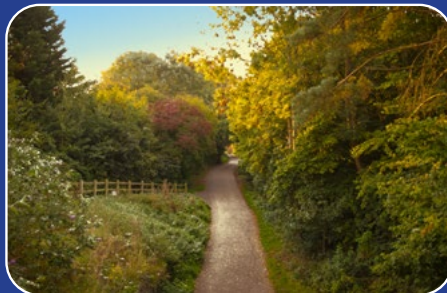


## Connect with your senses:

What can you see, hear, touch, smell, taste?

## Feel grounded:

Place your feet on the ground. Imagine you have roots like a tree, going deep into the earth, helping to keep you strong with a solid foundation.



## Notice your breath:

Inhale slowly through your nose, exhale slowly through your mouth. Try to think of the word 'relax' as you exhale.

## Enjoy Nature with Bath Mind:

Ecotherapy at Greenlinks  
Wellbeing Walks with Bathscapes  
Photography Groups  
Online course on our website



Jason Dorley-Brown  
Bath Mind Ambassador



"Whenever I can, I spend time in nature. I love to be surrounded by trees. I take time to sit quietly and clear my mind, being in the moment."

Visit our website for more information, resources and support.

[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)



## SWIMMING FOR WELLBEING



Swimming of course has been with us for many years, from swimming in the sea, to dips in rivers and lakes. Whilst wellbeing benefits of swimming in the sea have often been highlighted, in more recent years there has been a focus on the benefits of cold water swimming.

The hot springs in Bath, open air swimming forms part of our local history, from the Roman Baths to the Cross Baths and more recently the Thermae Spa. Many will recall the wonderful Cleveland Baths, due to reopen soon.

Swimming itself has many health benefits. According to the NHS, regular swimming can reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke. Cold water swimming purports further benefits, "Studies show that the inflammatory response of regular cold water swimmers is lower than that of those who aren't acclimatised to the cold. There are a number of health conditions which are associated with inflammation, including but not limited to allergies, depression, fibromyalgia and asthma." [wildswimmingcornwall.co.uk/about](http://wildswimmingcornwall.co.uk/about)

I started cold water swimming during Lockdown. She joined 'Bath Open water Beauts' on Facebook for tips on what to expect. Initially she was in for a couple of minutes because it was quite cold, then she built it up gradually. Connection to nature is quite hard to find if you are living in a city but when you are in the river it's not as populated, it's a lush park, it's just you and a few other people. So if you want that special connection to nature water can give you. You can read Emily's blog on how Wild Swimming has helped her here <https://www.bathmind.org.uk/wild-swimming-emily/>

My introduction to outdoor swimming came from a neighbour. I was immediately interested and didn't wait to do something new and slightly scary.

It was November, so quite cold. The shock of getting into cold water was interesting and I soon realised that my body was adapting to the cold. The human body is an amazing thing!

It was 2 years ago. Since then I have continued swimming 2 or three times a week. It always makes me feel alive. Problems become solvable and moods lift.

Watching the wildlife whilst in the river is totally different, you are immersed in their world.

I have made some lovely friends and got to know some interesting people through wild swimming. There is something about getting into cold water with others, and swimming along, it helps you bond - sharing ones' problems and life's journeys.

The people I have met are all so happy, kind and accepting. It doesn't matter what shape you are, we're all the same inside!"

Amanda Lewis Starks is a Director at Neals Yard Remedies in Bath ([www.nealsyardbath.com](http://www.nealsyardbath.com)). Her wild swimming has been further inspired by the late Roger Deakin's book, *Waterlog*, as discussed in this BBC Documentary by Professor Alice Roberts [https://youtu.be/\\_TlhpGZ7OuU](https://youtu.be/_TlhpGZ7OuU)

Jodie remembers the first time she got into a lake and immediately it was so clear how much better she felt swimming in cold open water. There was a real sense of freedom in the water. "That feeling when you get out, a rush of achievement as you realise your body is so resilient – you feel like a super human afterwards.". Jodie feels it really helps her with fibromyalgia. Difficulty with regulating heat is a big part of fibromyalgia. "20 minutes of really casual breast stroke will keep me pain free for a few hours, if not the rest of the day".

Both Jodie and Emily have benefitted from having to regulate their breathing. "The more you do it in cold water, the more you can do it in daily life. You can coach yourself through situations out of the water as well using that same kind of 'you're safe, you're ok, breathe' as if you were in cold water."

Remember - you can get some of the benefits of wild swimming without leaving home! Cold water showers give many of the benefits, without the exercise of wild swimming.

**IMPORTANT: Water activities can be dangerous. Always check safety conditions. Never swim alone - it's best to join a club. Ensure you are physically safe and able to start (check with your GP).** All of those we interviewed swim responsibly and safely.

**There are many things to consider prior to wild swimming.** This site gives basic information on safety: [www.outdoorswimmer.com/featured/features/starting-out-basic-guide-to-outdoor-swimming/](http://www.outdoorswimmer.com/featured/features/starting-out-basic-guide-to-outdoor-swimming/)

Also check for safety and water pollution here:

- The River App (if river level is high, the current can be strong and an increased risk of fallen trees or large debris beneath the surface)
- Safer Seas and Rivers app from [Surfers Against Sewage](http://Surfers Against Sewage) gives a Pollution Alert for areas where sewage has been recently discharged
- 

These groups offer the opportunity to find out more and be part of a swimming community:-

- [Bath Openwater Beauts](http://Bath Openwater Beauts) group on Facebook – a community for people in Bath who love swimming outside. A very welcome and helpful community (@bathopenwaterbeauts on Instagram)
- [Mental Health Swims](http://Mental Health Swims) (@mentalhealthswims on Instagram) works with a team of volunteers to make safe, welcoming spaces for anyone struggling with their mental health.

# How are you sleeping?



The importance of sleep for our mental health.

On average, we spend around a third of our lives sleeping. When we sleep, our brains process and store new information and our bodies repair cells. These processes all support our mental and physical health. A lack of sleep can affect our overall wellbeing.

## There is lots we can try to help improve our sleep:

### Look after yourself

How we look after ourselves during the day can also affect how we sleep. Try to avoid big meals before bedtime. Avoid caffeine for several hours before bed. Getting outside and taking in fresh air during the day can be beneficial to our sleep.

### Keep a sleep routine

Going to bed and waking around the same time each day or going to bed when you feel ready to sleep, and waking up at the same time every day can help establish a sleep routine. If you've had a bad night of sleep, avoiding activities because you feel tired may make sleeping that night more difficult.

### Preparing your sleeping area

Experiment with different things such as temperature, light, noise and bedding. Many sleep better in a slightly cooler environment. If your environment is light, you may find wearing a sleep mask helps. Most find they sleep better in quiet environments, but if you don't, try listening to music or a podcast. If your environment is noisy, you may find wearing ear plugs helps. You may sleep better with lighter or heavier weight covers; warmer or cooler bedding.

### Preparing for sleep

Preparation can be very powerful in helping us sleep. Try to avoid screens for an hour or two before bed as the blue light emitted by screens can affect how we sleep. Avoid activities which may stimulate your brain. Breathing exercises, meditation, listening to a relaxing podcast or drinking herbal tea may help some relax and get ready for bed. If your mind is racing with thoughts which are preventing you from relaxing, try writing those thoughts down, reassure yourself that you can address these issues tomorrow, replace them with visualising something that makes you feel calm and relaxed. You may like to try this guided sleep meditation which can help prepare you for sleep: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/bedtime-meditation/)

### Try to avoid clock watching

If you are finding it hard to fall asleep, try to avoid checking the time. If you can't fall asleep, try getting up and doing a 'mundane' task for a few minutes, then go back to bed. Worrying about the fact that you are not able to sleep can make it harder to sleep. If you're struggling to sleep, do something to relax yourself rather than focussing on negative thoughts. Focussing on your breath can help bring you back to the present moment and calm your mind.

### On waking in the morning.

Try to look at natural daylight before looking at screens - this can help your circadian rhythms and your body's natural 'sleep-wake cycle.'

**When to seek help: If you are finding it difficult to sleep long term, talk to your GP.**

### Information and support

You can find more information and support here: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/)

**If you are experiencing difficulties with your sleep or would like support with your wellbeing, you can contact Bath Mind here:  
[www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/resources/get-help-now/)**



# Nutrition, Physical Activity and Mental Health for over 55's



If you're over 55 and would like to get active, meet new people and learn more about how to support your wellbeing, get in touch to find out more about our **FREE** workshops and courses.

**We discuss and find out more about how to support our mental and physical wellbeing, including through:**

- The importance of healthy, nutritious food
- How to eat well on a budget
- How to plan meals and reduce cooking time
- The benefits of being active
- The importance of good sleep
- Why it's important to stay hydrated
- **Plus some fantastic recipes and food tasters!**



**Join us in September!**

## **Nutrition for Wellbeing**

Join us for a series of workshops and learn how to improve your wellbeing through cooking together and sharing nutritious food. The workshops are **FREE** to attend. Bath Mind's Food for Thought team will share their expert knowledge, with discussions around nutrition and mental health, food demonstrations and tasters!

**Wednesdays 12pm-1.30pm at St John's Foundation, BA1 1SQ  
Starting Wednesday 14th September, for 4 weeks.**



**If you'd like to come along, contact**  
**[foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:foodforthought@bathmind.org.uk)**  
**Telephone/Text: 07960621681**

This programme of courses is for Over 55s. If you are under 55 and interested in finding out more about how to support your mental health and wellbeing, there are lots of resources on our website.

 **Bath Mind**  
**[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)**

## Bath Mind's Top 5 Anti-Ageing Exercises

As we grow older, many of us invest a lot of time, thought and money into attempting to avoid the natural process of ageing. If you are searching for an all-natural method that could protect your brain, bones and muscles from some of the effects of ageing, the answer could in fact be as simple as incorporating a balanced exercise programme into your life.

### 1. Cardiovascular exercise

This form of exercise is essential for heart health. Walking is a great form of this type of exercise. Trying to reach the often mentioned ideal of 10 000 steps a day may not be possible for everyone, but aiming for 30 minutes 5 days a week may be more achievable. Remember that this can be broken up into chunks, for example walking for 10 minutes three times per day. Swimming and cycling are also great examples of cardiovascular exercise.

### 2. Strength training

This type of exercise may help to prevent muscle wastage. Squats and lunges are examples of these and can be performed in your own home without any specific equipment. Always ensure you have the correct technique, and consult a professional if you are unsure. Two to three times per week and 10-15 reps for each exercise is a good guideline. HIIT or High Intensity Interval training is a great way to combine strength training and cardiovascular exercise.

### 3. Flexibility

Try to include stretching exercises at least twice a week and hold each stretch for 30-60 seconds. Yoga is a great way of building up and maintaining flexibility - try to find a beginners class near you.

### 4. Focus on core strength

Our core muscles form part of our inner musculature that helps to support our spine and keep us upright. This helps to ensure we maintain a good posture and can help to prevent back problems. Pilates classes can benefit core and back strength as well as exercises using stability balls.

### 5. Balance

Falls can become more common as we grow older and become more unstable on our feet. It is therefore very important to work on maintaining our balance. This should ideally form part of any exercise programme. Simple movements like supporting yourself while trying to stand on one leg at a time may help to improve balance.

Join our over 55s group to meet like-minded people who are looking to stay healthy mentally and physically.

Find out more and self-refer here:-

<https://www.bathmind.org.uk/movement-for-wellbeing-over-55s/>

# Our Top 5 Anti-Ageing Exercises



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[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)

Bath Mind is an independent charity  
dedicated to supporting people in B&NES.  
Charity Reg No: 1069403



## **Mental Health Support Services OPEN EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR**

### **Access Community Mental Health**

**Telephone: 0808 175 1369**

**Open from 9am to 5.30pm every day**

A daytime phone line service, helping individuals to access the correct mental health support for them, and learn more about other services in the local community.

### **Breathing Space**

**Telephone: 0808 175 1369**

**Telephone line open 5.30pm-11pm every day**

**Face-to-face service open 6pm-10.30pm every day**

An evening service offering calm, compassionate and non judgemental support to those in need of mental health support.

Visit our website for more information  
and support resources

**[www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk)**

Bath Mind's Access Community Mental Health Support is here for you

Access Community Mental Health is a dedicated team of Bath Mind staff that help individuals to access the right mental health support for them. We had a chat with Katie, who manages the team, to find out a bit more about what the service provides and who it supports.

Can you tell us about the Access Community Mental Health (ACMH) service?

The Access Community Mental Health service offers a 'walk alongside' approach, providing support to those accessing the service whilst they are also receiving adjacent support from other providers and services. The service provides an accessible, direct and flexible mental health and wellbeing support with a focus on prevention, intervention, postvention and complementary support, based on the person's individual needs. A team of skilled practitioners support each person to identify their support needs, set goals and engage with local services and groups to achieve these goals.

Why is ACMH an important service?

We offer a person-centred approach which is truly orientated towards the promotion and maximisation of the person's health, wellbeing and independence. This ensures people stop 'bouncing around the mental health system' and support people to get the right help at the right time.

We are a new service and are part of an important change in the way mental health support is offered in the community by integration of care and support across 'secondary' mental health services, the Voluntary & Community Services, primary care and social care.

What sorts of challenges do your clients face?

Clients face a wide variety of mental and physical health challenges which can directly impact on their ability to access the support they need. By offering support that is tailored to the individual's needs, these challenges are not a barrier to them succeeding.

What are some of the successful outcomes you see from clients after they've utilised ACMH?

People achieving small meaningful goals which boosts their confidence to do more and take steps on their own, and people engaging with other services which they previously struggled to access but will really help them – such as Citizens Advice, DHI and Bath Mind's wellbeing groups.

What's your favourite thing about the Access service?

The team! We have an amazing team of practitioners who are passionate about supporting people and each other, which makes them a joy to work with.

If you need support with your mental health, the team will walk alongside you every step of the way.

This includes:

regular check ins with you to support you to achieve your goals  
discussions around local services for you to try  
encouragement and support to access mental health services such as counselling  
a trained and friendly team member that you can rely on  
The ACMH team will also help you to plan your next steps, with a focus on future independence.

If you would like support accessing services available, please get in touch (For those Age 16+ living in BaNES).

Email: [access@bathmind.org.uk](mailto:access@bathmind.org.uk)

Freephone: 0808 175 1369

Website: [www.bathmind.org.uk/access-community-mental-health/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/access-community-mental-health/)



# Bath Mind's Access Community Mental Health Support is here for you

Bath Mind's Access Community Mental Health team help people to access the correct mental health support for them, and learn more about other local services.



**A trained, friendly team that you can rely on**

**If you need support with your mental health, the team will walk alongside you every step of the way.**

- Regular check ins to support you to achieve your goals
- Discussions around local services for you to try
- Encouragement and support to access mental health services such as counselling
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**Freephone:** 0808 175 1369

**Website:** [www.bathmind.org.uk/access-community-mental-health/](http://www.bathmind.org.uk/access-community-mental-health/)

**Open 9.00am to 5.30pm, every day**

## Support Bath Mind this Christmas

Donated by Emma Taylor Art, Jason Dorley Brown and Minuteman Press, these beautiful cards are both a card and work of art to frame!

**Available Online Now!**



In aid of  
**Mind Bath**

visit [www.bathmind.org.uk](http://www.bathmind.org.uk) SHOP to buy!



## Money and Mental Health

According to a survey conducted by Money and Mental Health, almost four in ten (39%) people with a mental health problem said their financial situation had worsened their mental health problems. And with the cost of everyday living, such as groceries, energy bills and fuel, having risen recently, many of us are worrying about money for the first time.

Bath Mind share further information to help you understand the link between money and mental health, plus tips on how to organise your finances, speak to services and where to go for support with your mental health.

### The link between money and mental health

Worrying about money can impact your mental health, while living with a mental health condition can make earning and managing money more difficult. This can feel exhausting and create the feeling of being stuck in a 'vicious cycle' – money worries lead to difficulty managing money and vice versa.



Some common ways your mental health can affect the way you deal with money are:

- You may lack motivation to manage your finances if you're feeling low or depressed.
- Spending may give you a brief high, so you might overspend to feel better.
- You might make impulsive financial decisions.
- Your income may be reduced if your mental health affects your ability to work or study.
- You might avoid doing things to stay on top of your money, like opening bills or checking your bank account.

Some common ways that money worries can affect your mental health are:

- Worrying about money may feel like your mind can't focus on anything else.
- You may start to feel low and experience feelings such as shame, embarrassment, or guilt.
- You could find yourself beginning to withdraw, avoiding certain people, place bills, or activities.

### Organising your finances

There are things you can try to help organise your money. Some tips are:

- Make sure you're claiming any extra money or support you're entitled to. Bath Mind are part of a joint partnership with [Citizens Advice BANES](#) which can advise you on welfare benefits, support you in maximising your income, and appeal decisions. To access this service, contact Citizens Advice on 0808 278 7897 and ask for the Welfare Benefit Service. You could also use [Clean Slate's Money Health Check](#).
- Create a budget. [The Money Helper website](#) has helpful budgeting advice as well as a [free budget planner](#).
- Put all your important documents in one place so you can find them easily. This could be bank statements, bills and payslips.