

# WINTER WELLBEING RESOURCE



**SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
HUB**

*Digital Communications Pack  
Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Suicide  
Prevention Campaign group*

# CONTENTS

- Mental Wellbeing & the festive period
- Cost of Living support
- Looking after your health
- Stay Alive App
- Local Support
- Messages to share
- Useful Links
- Urgent/Crisis Support



# MENTAL WELLBEING & THE FESTIVE PERIOD



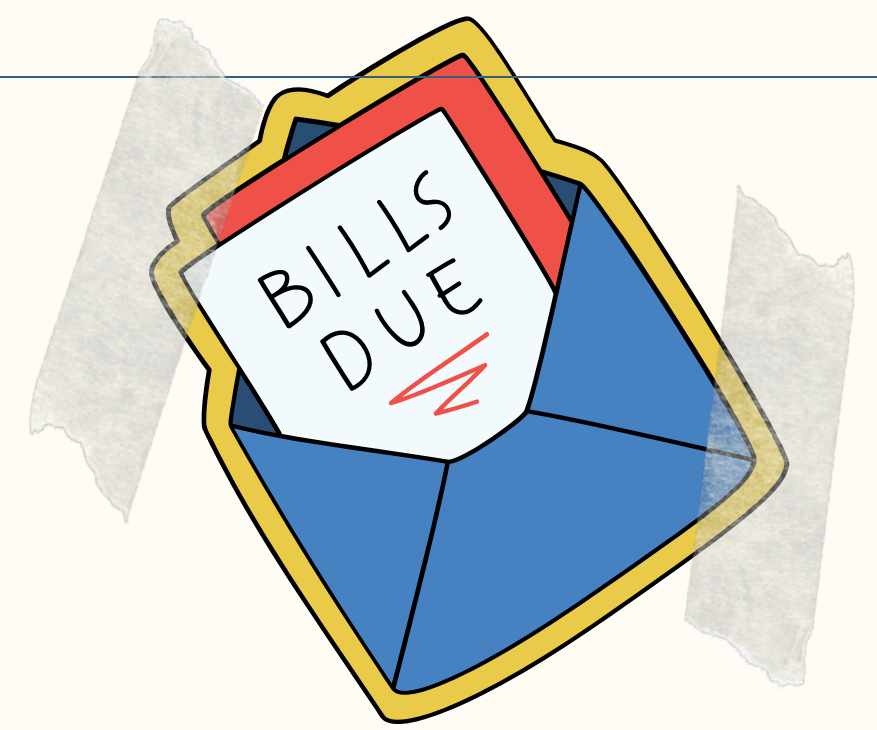
The festive period, can be difficult for many people. The cold weather, dark nights and pressure to feel festive can all take a toll. This time of year, which is supposed to make us happy can have a big impact on mental health and it is easy to lose track of when mental health is really starting to suffer. For many, Christmas can bring a sense of anxiety and stress, even more so with the extra financial pressures many people are currently facing and other events happening in the world. For those on their own it can exacerbate feelings of loneliness. It is important to check in on ourselves and others during this time. There is lots of support out there to help if you or someone you know is struggling. It is ok not to be ok.

## **For tips and information on coping with this time of year:**

- [Every Mind Matters](#)
- [Mind](#)
- [Samaritans](#)
- [Student space](#)
- [CALM](#)

ASKING FOR  
HELP  
IS OK

# COST OF LIVING SUPPORT- MESSAGES



- As the cost of living continues to increase, so has the pressure on people's mental wellbeing.
- In these uncertain times, the worry of how to pay our bills on top of all of life's other worries, is having a serious effect on mental health. It is important to reach out to each other and talk about how we are feeling. Let someone know you are there for them or reach out if you need support.
- Getting control of our finances will help with feelings of stress and anxiety. The [Mental Health & Money Advice](#) service can provide support with this and lots of tips supporting your mental health in relation to the cost of living crisis. There are also some useful tips on how to support your mental health on the [Mental Health Foundation](#) webpages.
- Uncertainty can increase our stress and anxiety levels, which can lead to feelings of low mood, and in some cases depression and panic attacks. We may also look for unhealthy ways to block out our feelings. It is important that if you or someone you know is really struggling with mental health and it is disrupting everyday life seek encourage them to professional help and talk to their GP.

# Looking after your health

There can be more pressure over the festive period to drink alcohol, especially while attending Christmas parties or get togethers.

Family and life pressures can also trigger you into drinking more at this time of year, so it is important that we try to look after ourselves.

If you think you may be using drugs or alcohol to cope with difficult feelings, it could help to be aware of it. It can help to talk with someone you trust. This could be a friend or relative, a colleague, a person working for a charity helpline, your GP, a counsellor or local services.

## Support & Advice Services:

- [Advice and support | Drinkaware](#)
- [Alcohol advice - NHS](#)
- [Luton Alcohol Helpline](#)
- [Path 2 Recovery Bedford Borough](#)
- [Path 2 Recovery Central Beds](#)
- [ARC Milton Keynes](#)

## Tips

- **Keep track of how much you're drinking.**
- **Make sure to have at least 3 drink free days a week**
- **Intersperse alcoholic drinks with soft drinks and eat while your drinking**

## What does 14 units of alcohol look like?

To keep health risks from alcohol low, it is safest to drink **no more than 14 units a week**, spread over three or more days with several drink-free days, and no bingeing.



# Suicide Prevention Support

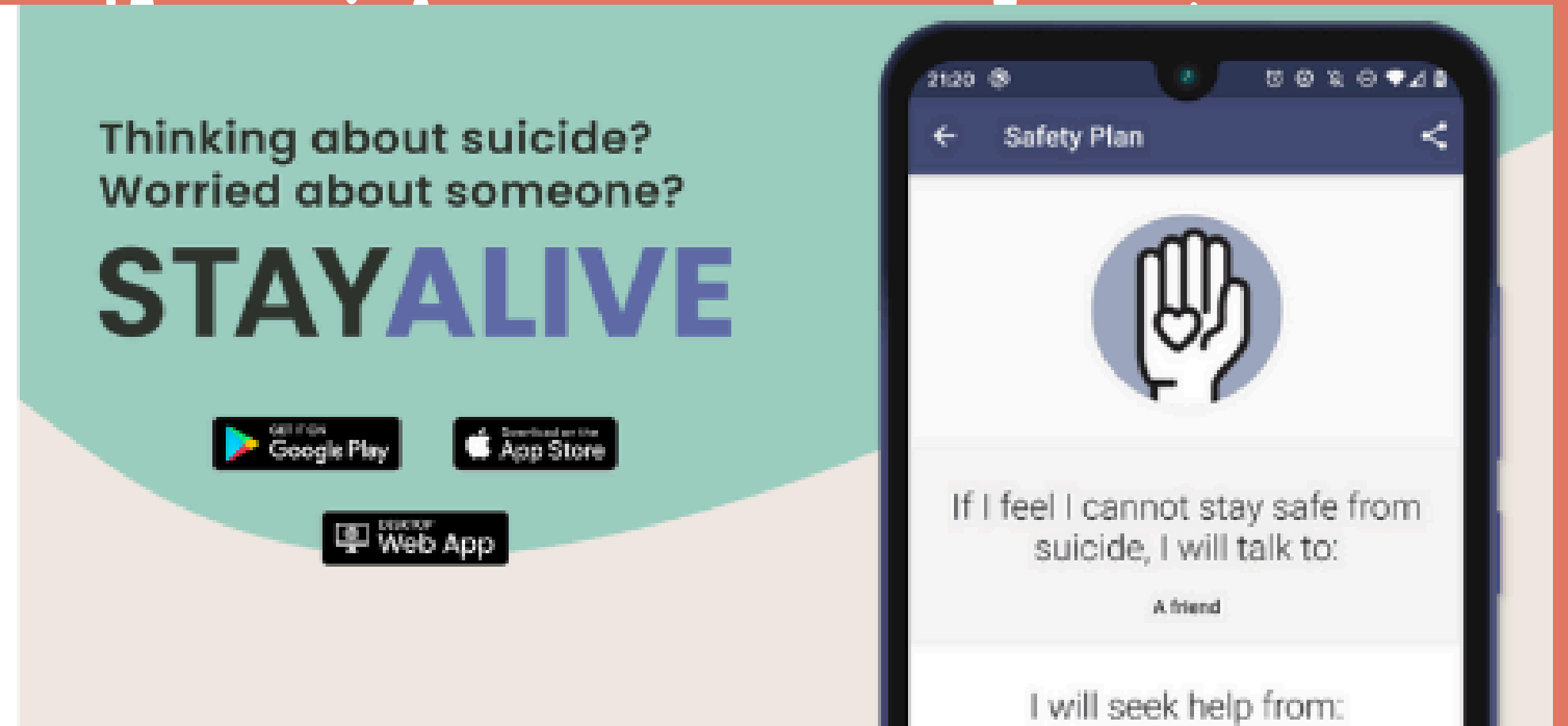


The Stay Alive app is a suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis. You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide.

The app includes:

- A safety plan with customisable reasons for living
- A LifeBox where you can store photos and memories that are important to you
- Strategies for staying safe and tips on how to stay grounded when you're feeling overwhelmed
- Guided-breathing exercises and an interactive Wellness Plan

The app also links you directly to local and national crisis resources, with space to add in your own as well. Please share information about the app widely.



# DIRECT SUPPORT OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

**Samaritans**- Samaritans' volunteers are available to listen to anyone who is struggling day or night, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone can contact Samaritans for free from any phone on 116 123, even a mobile without credit, or you can email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Shout** - Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text REFLECT to 85258. free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.

**Mental Health Crisis – Milton Keynes** .If you are experiencing significant emotional or mental distress, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option. The service offers 24/7 advice and support

**Mental Health Crisis – Bedfordshire & Luton.** 24hr Mental Health Crisis support for all ages Call NHS 111 Option 2

# Mind BLMK's Crisis Cafés and Recovery Lounges



For **Bedfordshire and Luton**, please use the timetable below:

**MONDAY:** The Lighthouse, Whichellos Wharf, The Elms, Stoke Road, Leighton Buzzard LU72TD

**TUESDAY:** The Lighthouse, Whichellos Wharf, The Elms, Stoke Road, Leighton Buzzard LU72TD

**WEDNESDAY:** Luton Wellbeing Centre, Dumfries Street, Chapel Langley, Luton LU1 5BP

**THURSDAY:** Bedford Wellbeing Centre, 3A Woburn Road, Bedford MK40 1EG

**FRIDAY:** The Lawns Mental Health Resource Centre, The Baulk, Biggleswade SG18 0PT

**SATURDAY:** Luton Wellbeing Centre, Dumfries Street, Chapel Langley, Luton LU1 5BP

**SUNDAY:** Florence Ball House, Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PU

**Each site is open 5pm – 11pm on their dedicated day.**

Mind BLMK Recovery Lounges (formally known as Crisis Café) are open each evening in Bedfordshire and Luton. Anyone from Bedfordshire, Luton, and Milton Keynes is welcome at any location. The service operates from 5pm–11pm 365 days of the year and can support you to get well, stay well.

For **Milton Keynes**, the crisis café is at the Queensway Clinic MK22TE – Open 365 days per year between 5pm and 11pm.



# Support for Young People - Mind BLMK

## Mind BLMK Young Person's Sanctuary's -

Our Young Person's Sanctuaries are safe, non-judgemental spaces that you can come to if you find yourself in crisis or mental distress in the evenings. You will be met by a trained youth mental health worker who will listen and help you identify ways to address problems you are facing.

- Milton Keynes - Milton Keynes CAMHS, Eaglestone Health Centre, Standing Way, Milton Keynes, MK6 5AZ open Monday - Sunday 4pm - 10pm

## Mind BLMK Young Person's Wellbeing Navigator Service

This service supports young people aged 16-25 in Central Bedfordshire to navigate challenges and life transitions with 1:1 support of up to 8 x 1 hour sessions. Enabling them to positively manage their own mental health and wellbeing, whilst promoting independence and resilience.



# Support for Rural Communities

Those who live and work in rural areas and in the farming and agricultural industries face particular challenges including access to services, financial difficulties, long working hours etc.

This winter we want to encourage those in rural areas who are facing difficulties, are feeling isolated, and maybe going through an emotional or mental health crisis to seek support from Samaritans and other partners.

**Samaritans:** Those in distress or in crisis can contact Samaritans on 116 123 (24/7) for free or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

The [national website](#) provides useful insight and guidance.

**Rural Communities Mental Health Foundation:** Offer support to improve the mental health of those living and working in rural and agricultural communities.

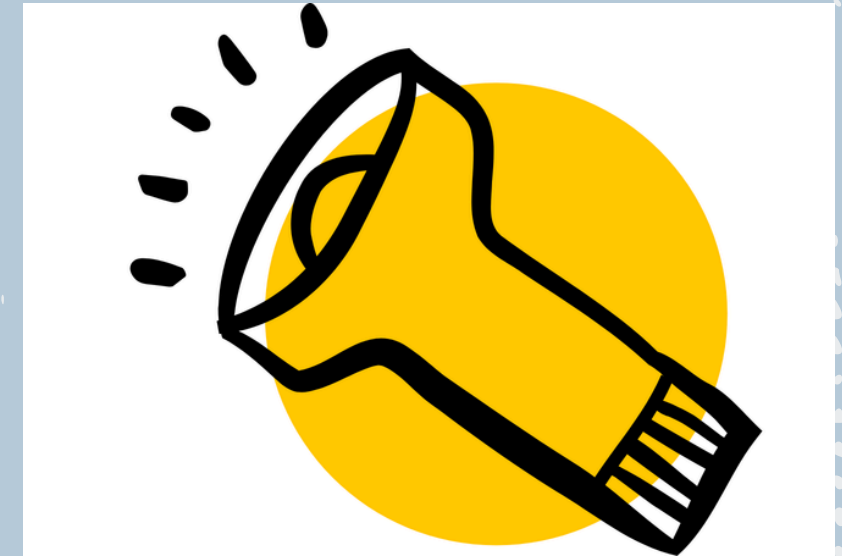
**Farmwell:** FarmWell is all about farming well – making sure that we all find a healthy work-life balance on the farm that allows for us to look after our mental and physical health while operating the farm business.

TAKE CARE  
OF  
YOURSELF

# SUICIDE PREVENTION HUB

The Hub is a single point of reference for suicide prevention information and resources for those working across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. The content is supported and maintained by the BLMK Integrated Care Partnership and BLMK Suicide Prevention Network.

A list of local and national mental health and suicide prevention organisations can be found, which can be filtered by location or support type.



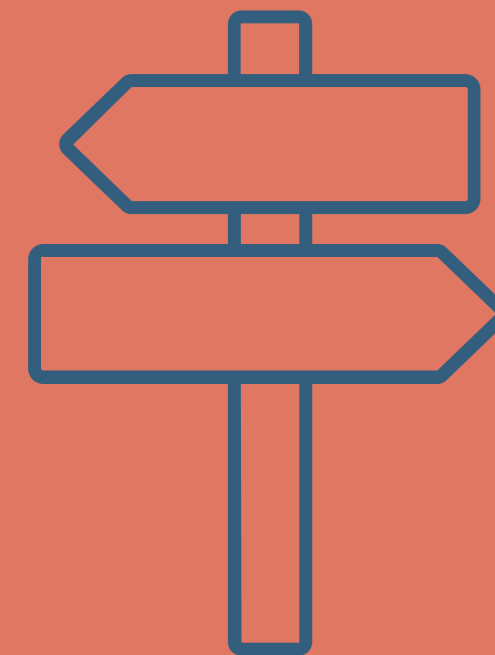
# HOW TO SHARE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE



Share the prepared wellbeing, support and mental health crisis messages in this pack on social media or other comms



Put information on local services, campaigns and support in newsletters and email briefs.



Signpost to local support and campaigns on your website. Or display information on notice boards.

# Messages to share - Wellbeing

TAKE CARE  
OF  
YOURSELF

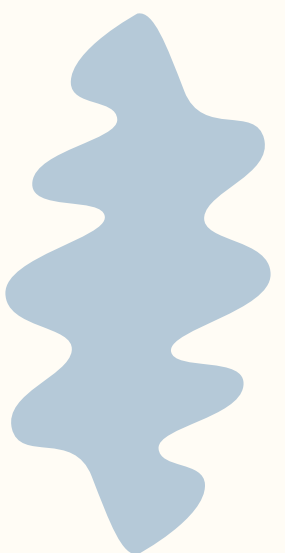
- Be kind to yourself - the festive period can be a difficult time. It is important to try and create a wellbeing routine. [Every Mind Matters](#) can help with this
- Christmas can be a very difficult time for those who are on their own. [Every Mind Matters](#) provides some tips on how to combat loneliness and stay connected.
- The cost-of-living crisis has affected many people financially, which can have an impact on your health and wellbeing. For support this festive period visit [Money Advice Services](#)
- If you find Christmas or New Year a particularly difficult time to manage your mental health try to take time out to do something you enjoy, whether it's reading a book, painting, crafting, phoning a friend, relaxing or doing physical exercise. [Every Mind Matters](#)



# Messages to share - Support



- Christmas can be a particularly difficult time of year for people suffering from an addiction, and some may struggle to cope. Visit the [NHS](#) pages to start getting the support you need.
- If you think someone isn't OK - Samaritans can give you some tips and guidance:
- If you feel like there is nobody you can talk to, Samaritans are there to help.
- A cup of tea (or your brew of choice) can bring us back to basics and help break down barriers. Talk to your local Samaritans branch [#BrewMonday](#).
- Have you heard of the [Stay Alive app?](#) The app is a pocket suicide prevention resource packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide.



# Messages to share - Mental Health Crisis



- Milton Keynes – This Christmas, If you are experiencing significant emotional or mental distress, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option. The service offers 24/7 advice and support
- Bedfordshire and Luton – This Christmas if you or someone you know needs urgent mental health support call 111 option 2.
- Mind BLMKs Recovery Lounges are here for you over Christmas if you or someone you know needs urgent or crisis support with their mental health. .
- If you are struggling this festive period remember you are not alone. Samaritan volunteers will be on duty throughout the Christmas and New Year period every day, 24 hours a day. Telephone for free 116 123 or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)



# Useful Links –

- [Every Mind Matters](#) – for expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing
- [SHOUT](#) – Text REFLECT to 85258 24/7. The service is focused on supporting young people aged 11-25. However, there is no age limit on who can use reflect across Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.
- [Calm](#) – Our suicide prevention helpline is for anyone affected by suicide or suicidal thoughts
- [Heads Up](#) – Men Mental Health support and information
- [Mind BLMK](#) – Mental health support across BLMK Phone: 0300 330 0648
- [Samaritans](#) – offers a listening service which is open 24 hours a day, PHONE on 116 123 [www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)
- [THE HUB OF HOPE](#) – is the UK's leading mental health support database
- [PAPYRUS](#) – Prevention of Young Suicide is the UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people.
- [Hub of Hope](#) – The UK's leading mental health support database, finding services available close to you.



# URGENT & CRISIS SUPPORT

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis for the first time you should contact your GP or call NHS 111. If you are in Bedford or Central Bedfordshire you can call NHS 111 and select option 2. If you are in Milton Keynes you can, call NHS 111 and select the mental health option. The service offers 24/7 advice and support. The Samaritans are there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to listen. Call them any time on 116 123 if you need somebody to talk to.

Mind BLMK's Crisis Cafés and Recovery Lounges are a free service available 365 days of the year, 5.00pm-11.00pm. Visit [www.mind-blmk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/crisis-support](http://www.mind-blmk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/crisis-support)

In an emergency if you or somebody else's life is in danger contact the emergency services on 999 or go to A&E



# Thank you for your support

This toolkit has been produced by the BLMK Suicide Prevention Campaign group and Public Health. For further information on the toolkit please email [kelsey.broomhead@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:kelsey.broomhead@milton-keynes.gov.uk)