

# Mental Health Awareness Week

Toolkit and resource pack

10-16 May 2021

**Thrive** LDN  
towards happier, healthier lives



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# Before we get started...

We would like to make these packs as useful and relevant to our partners as possible.

If your organisation has any tools or resources for us to share please do not hesitate to get in touch using Thrive LDN's contact information at the end of this pack.

# Introduction

Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

# Introduction to Mental Health Awareness Week and using this toolkit

**Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW)** is an annual event hosted by the Mental Health Foundation. Taking place this year between 10 - 16 May 2021, the theme of the week is 'nature'. The week offers scope to explore the mental health benefits of connecting with nature and accessing green spaces.

However, the week is also an opportunity to explore what the barriers and challenges are in ensuring everyone is able to share in the natural world and experience the mental health benefits.

You can find more information about the week on the Mental Health Foundation's website: [Mental Health Awareness Week 2021](#)

- **Thrive LDN** is a citywide movement to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Londoners. It is supported by the Mayor of London and led by the London Health Board.
- Thrive LDN is supporting Mental Health Awareness Week through a series of activities planned to explore the benefits and barriers of getting outdoors in London.
- This toolkit is designed to support partners when communicating to the general public about available resources and services throughout Mental Health Awareness Week.



# Aims and activities

Throughout the pandemic many Londoners have turned to both nature and getting outdoors as key coping mechanisms to support their mental health and wellbeing and keep connected with friends and family. Our aims for Mental Health Awareness Week are:

- Open up more conversations about mental health.
- Share citywide messages about the health benefits of connecting with nature.
- Highlight individual and community perspectives around the barriers and challenges to doing this.
- Provide insight and ideas for how we can work together towards more equal access in these important protective factors.
- Through social media and digital channels, seek insights and engagement from Londoners on these issues.

Thrive LDN's planned activities across the week:

- Learn from the experts - a conversation exploring the mental health and wellbeing benefits of nature and the barriers and challenges people face in accessing green space.
- Highlighting case studies and insights from community partners.
- A social media campaign to engage with Londoners.
- Launching a new mental health conversation starter resource.



# Schedule for the week

## Monday, 10 May

- Across social media an introduction to the theme and discussion on benefits and barriers of nature and mental health in London
- Launch of Thrive LDN's new mental health conversation starter resource

## Tuesday, 11 May

- Social media content around the theme of **Walking**
- Promotion of National Walking Month (hosted by Living Streets)
- Blog: Gardening is good for us - but don't expect instant results by Dr Camilla Royle (King's College London)

## Wednesday, 12 May

- Social media content around the theme of **Cycling**

## Thursday, 13 May

- Social media content around the theme of **Gardening**
- Online panel discussion broadcast at 3pm: Exploring the mental health and wellbeing benefits of nature and the barriers and challenges people face in accessing green space.
  - Access at: [www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021)

## Friday, 14 May

- Social media content around the theme of **Creativity in the outdoors**
- Promotion of Local & Community History Month
- Interview with spoken work artist, Yossi, and sharing of his latest single, *Nature Baby*
  - Access at: [www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021)

# Learn from the experts

Panel discussion on the benefits of nature on mental health and wellbeing, and what barriers exist to accessing our green spaces

Broadcast Thursday, 13 May at 3.00pm

## Panel Discussion: nature and mental health



#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek

# Panel discussion - Thursday, 13 May

## Panel discussion on nature and the effects and benefits on mental health.

We all know that spending time in nature and green spaces can have great benefits to both our physical and our mental health. But there are also barriers to accessing green space in London, whether cultural, geographic or economic.

In this one hour panel, the participants discuss: the benefits that Londoners have gained from using London's green spaces during the pandemic; some of the known benefits of accessing nature to our mental health and wellbeing; what are the barriers to accessing nature, and what can we do about them.

View online on Thrive LDN's website on **Thursday 13 May at 3.00pm.**

[www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw021](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw021)

### The Panel members:

- Chaired by **Dr Helen Fisher**, King's College London. A researcher in biopsychosocial and environmental risk and protective factors for young people's mental health.
- **Laura McMahon**, community programme officer, The Royal Parks
- **John Thorne**, parks for health project manager at Camden and Islington borough councils
- **Bhavini Kotecha**, youth bonds manager, Hounslow Action for Youth Association (HAY)
- **Nemone Mercer**, landscapes and community garden manager, Core Landscapes

### Panel Discussion: nature and mental health



# Social Media content

## Suggested Twitter post

For #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek, join @ThriveLDN for a free online panel discussion on the benefits of nature, and what we can do to help ensure all Londoners are able to lead happier, healthier lives.

 Thursday 13 May at 3.00pm

Register for more info: [www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021)

## Suggested Facebook / Instagram post

For Mental Health Awareness Week, join @thriveldn for a free online panel discussion on the benefits of nature and green space on our mental health and wellbeing, and what we can all do to help ensure all Londoners are able to lead happier, healthier lives.

 Thursday 13 May at 3.00pm

Register for more info now: [www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/campaigns/mhaw2021)



**Panel Discussion**  
for Mental Health Awareness Week

**Thursday 13 May, 3.00pm**

Panel Discussion: nature and mental health

Register now via Eventbrite for more info

#ConnectWithNature  
#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek

Thrive LDN  
towards happier, healthier lives



**Panel Discussion**  
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# Insights

# Benefits of nature and mental health

- Living in greener places is linked to longer life expectancy and better mental and physical health<sup>[1]</sup>
- Time spent in nature is linked to reduced risk of mental health problems, improved mood, and increased life satisfaction<sup>[2,3]</sup>.
- Significant inequalities persist in our society: Londoners are more likely to be socially isolated or lonely than people in the rest of the UK. Parks and green spaces are socially inclusive, providing free outdoor public space open to anyone regardless of who they are or where they live<sup>[4]</sup>.
- Covering almost one fifth of the city, green spaces save London £950m per year in avoided health costs<sup>[5]</sup>.
- Report by Vivid Economics and Barton Willmore showed that nearly 2/3 of people have appreciated local green spaces more due to Covid-19 and want them to be a higher priority for the government.
- Green spaces can serve as a space to connect with others, to be more mindful, and to reflect and recharge which all lead to feelings of wellbeing. During the pandemic, access to nature and green spaces was rated as a top coping mechanism<sup>[6]</sup>.

[1] [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/health\\_strategy\\_2018\\_low\\_res\\_fa1.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/health_strategy_2018_low_res_fa1.pdf)

[2] Gascon M, Mas MT, Martínez D, Davvand P, Forn J, Plasència A, et al. Mental health benefits of long-term exposure to residential green and blue spaces: A systematic review. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2015 Apr 1;12(4):4354-79.

[3] Houlden V, Weich S, de Albuquerque JP, Jarvis S, Rees K. The relationship between greenspace and the mental wellbeing of adults: A systematic review. *PLoS One*. 2018 Sep 1;13(9).

[4] <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/london-green-spaces-commission>

[5] [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4244\\_-\\_gla\\_-\\_london\\_green\\_spaces\\_commission\\_report\\_v7\\_0.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4244_-_gla_-_london_green_spaces_commission_report_v7_0.pdf)

[6] Mental Health Foundation, 2020. Resilience in the UK during the Coronavirus pandemic.



# Barriers to accessing nature in London

1. Nearly half of all London households live in areas officially defined as having poor access to local open space.
2. Nationally, 23 per cent<sup>[1]</sup> of ethnic minority adults visit nature less than once a month or never (compared to 14 per cent of white adults).
3. Adults in the most deprived areas of England are least likely to spend time outside once a week.

For more on the Mental Health Foundation's Mental Health Awareness Week campaign, visit: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week)

[1] [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4244\\_-\\_gla\\_-\\_london\\_green\\_spaces\\_commission\\_report\\_v7\\_0.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4244_-_gla_-_london_green_spaces_commission_report_v7_0.pdf)





# Further resources

# Further resources

- Black Nature Narratives Podcast: Offering black perspectives on issues relating to the natural world and our relationship with nature
  - Listen at: [Podcasts | Wild in the City](#)
- The Ramblers are campaigning for 6 new walking routes in London
  - [Access to nature for everyone, everywhere - Ramblers](#)
- Sustrans is working with TFL to help make London's streets more walking and cycle-friendly
  - [Healthy Streets Officers programme in London - Sustrans.org.uk](#)
- Core Landscaping posts videos about gardening and mental health- watch their film about making the Homerton Grove Orchard
  - [Core Landscapes online on Vimeo](#)
- Free roundtable webinar hosted by the Society of Occupational Medicine on 11 May, 10-11am
  - Register at Eventbrite: [Mental health and wellbeing - supporting you on your journey Tickets, Tue 11 May 2021 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](#)
- Sydenham Gardens are hosting a programme of live and pre-recorded wellbeing sessions throughout the week
  - Register at: [Mental Health Awareness Week 2021 - free nature and wellbeing sessions | Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind \(blgmind.org.uk\)](#)

# You may also be interested in...

- Accessible Countryside
- Black Girls Hike
- Camden & Islington Borough Councils
- Core Arts - Core Landscapes
- Hounslow Action for Youth Association
- Outdoor Lads
- The Royal Parks
- Sustrans
- Wild in the City
- [London \(accessiblecountryside.org.uk\)](https://accessiblecountryside.org.uk)
- [Black Girls Hike UK C.I.C \(bghuk.com\)](https://bghuk.com)
- [Camden and Islington Future Parks Accelerator](#)
- [Core Landscapes - Core Arts](#)
- [Youth Bonds Project \(YBP\) | Hounslow Action for Youth \(hayonline.org\)](#)
- [Welcome to OutdoorLads.com - A great new way to expand your social network](#)
- [The Royal Parks](#)
- [Sustrans.org.uk](https://sustrans.org.uk)
- [Wild in the City | Developing positive relationships in and with nature](#)



# Campaign materials

Suggested social media content

# Campaign Materials

To help during Mental Health Awareness Week, we have created:

- Panel discussion on nature and mental health
- Social media graphics and suggested content
- Blog article and newsletter content
- All content is available to download from Thrive LDN's [communications Dropbox account](#)



# Social Media content

## Suggested Twitter post

This #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek, @thrivedn is focusing on the positive impact spending time in nature can have on our mental health & wellbeing.

But for some of us, our local green spaces may not be places where we are happy or confident to go. What can we do to change this?

## Suggested Facebook / Instagram post

Spending time in nature and green spaces has been shown to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing. But about 1 in 8 people don't believe their local green space is of a high enough standard to want to spend time in. And for those on lower incomes, this number becomes even larger.

@thrivedn wants to ensure that all Londoners are able to live happier, healthier lives. What can we do to help ensure that all Londoners are confident in using their local green spaces?

#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek #ConnectWithNature



# Social Media content

## Suggested Twitter post

Spending time to #ConnectWithNature can have a real positive impact on our mental health & wellbeing.

London has over 4,000 parks and green spaces for everyone to explore. Take some time today to visit a new area local to you.

#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek

## Suggested Facebook / Instagram post

Spending time in nature and green spaces has been shown to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing. Even spending just 20 minutes a day has been shown to have real benefits.

London has over 4,000 parks and green spaces for Londoners to explore, from the huge Royal Parks, to local recreation areas and nature reserves. Why not take some time today to visit a new area local to you?

#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek #ConnectWithNature



# Social Media content

## Suggested Twitter post

Spending time in nature can have a positive impact on our mental health & wellbeing. But 1 in 5 Londoners have no access to private green space.

What can we do to help improve access to green spaces, and ensure all Londoners can [#ConnectWithNature](#)?

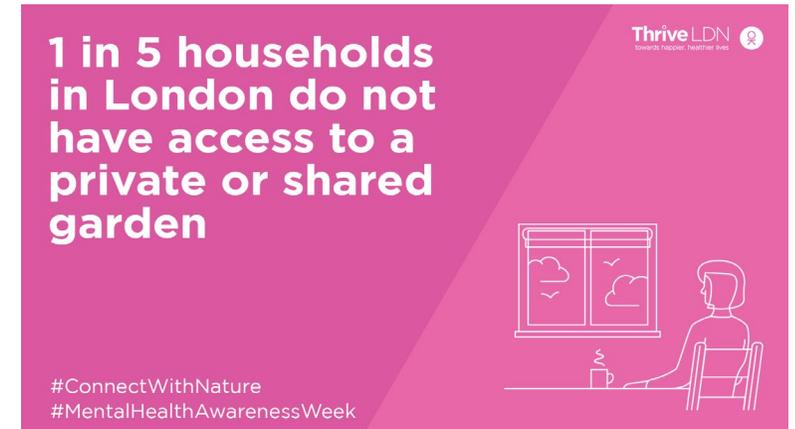
[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek](#)

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What can we do to help improve access to green spaces, and ensure all Londoners can [#ConnectWithNature](#)?

[#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek](#) [#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek](#) [#ConnectWithNature](#)



# Thank you

If you have any questions please get in touch.

[Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Tiktok](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

[thriveldn.co.uk](http://thriveldn.co.uk)

Look out for Thrive LDN's next toolkit on Creativity and Wellbeing Week (17-23 May).