

# RICHMOND DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE

'Empowering Change Within You'

FEBRUARY 2025 BULLETIN

## MEET THE COMMISSIONEERS



The commissioning team needs your voice to shape how some grant money is spent that funds recovery support.

Refreshments and vouchers will be provided to attendees

**Share your ideas!**



**When:** Wednesday Feb 12th

**Time:** 11am - 1PM

**Where:** The Conservatory Room at The Exchange,  
75 London Rd, Twickenham TW1 1BE



## CHOIR GROUP



In January 2025 we launched a Choir group. 10 clients have been attending regularly, and the singing and breathing work has lifted their mood, allowed them to use these breathing techniques for mindfulness, whilst having fun and making new connections with other peers. One person said, "the choir leaves me feeling uplifted with childlike joy", whilst another said the choir has "re-ignited the joy of singing when I was a child. Remembering lyrics and rhythm is wonderful for my mind and memory. I find singing life affirming and creating a connection with my fellow singers is amazing."

Come along on the day and enjoy fun, laughter and connection, every Thursday at 117 Cedars Road, SW4 0PW from 1pm.

**No referral needed, just come along on the day**

## FEBRUARY AWARENESS EVENTS

### National HIV Testing Week - 10 to 16 February 2025

This is an initiative that invites people across England to get tested for HIV. During the whole week and beginning on Monday, the campaign aims to encourage and promote regular testing. People can live with HIV without developing symptoms, so taking the test is the only way to know. The test is as easy as taking a finger prick-test.

Testing is free, quick and confidential. There are different ways to get tested and it only takes a couple of minutes. You can visit your GP, sexual health clinic, or order a home test-kit.

During the week you can access and order a free self-test or postal test with the Terrence Higgins Trust by using the [Free HIV online test finder](#)



If you would like to have more information about services available for [Testing for HIV](#) and events that are taking place that week check [HIV Prevention England](#) or visit [Spectra](#).

RWCDAS clients can access BBV testing through the Hepatitis C Trust. The Trust provides support at St John's Therapy Centre on Thursday between 10 am and 3 pm, and at Ilex House on Friday between 10am and 3:30pm. They provide £5 incentive vouchers from Greggs.

Everyone can benefit from regular testing at least once a year and there is [free treatment](#) available

## 🌈🌟 February is LGBTQI+ History Month! 🌟🌈

This month, we honour and celebrate the incredible achievements and contributions of the LGBTQI+ community. From trailblazers in activism to icons in the sciences, arts, politics, education, and beyond, LGBTQI+ individuals have shaped history and continue to push for a future of equality, acceptance, and visibility.

LGBTQI+ History Month gives us the chance to reflect on how far we've come and to celebrate those who've paved the way for progress, while acknowledging the work that lies ahead.

There are many free events and activities happening across the city to shine a light on LGBTQI+ history. Here are some options:

- 🏛️ **Royal Museums Greenwich** are hosting several events for the whole family. 🌐 [History Month 2025 Events in Greenwich, London](#)
- 🖼️ Take a **free LGBTQI+ Highlights Tour** at the **National Portrait Gallery**.  
🌐 [LGBTQ+ highlights tour - National Portrait Gallery](#).
- 🏳️ **Queer Britain**, the UK's first and only LGBTQ+ museum. Book your visit through their website.  
🌐 [VISIT | Queer Britain](#)
- 📖 The **London School of Economics** is offering a **free archives tour** at the end of the month.  
🌐 [LGBT+ History Month: open archives + tour](#)

LGBTQI+ History Month reminds us of the power of solidarity, the importance of continuing the fight for equality, and the richness of LGBTQI+ culture. Whether you're attending an event, exploring resources, or simply learning something new, now is the perfect time to celebrate the diverse contributions that make our world more vibrant and inclusive. 🌐💖🌈

# Valentine's Day:

## a reminder that it's important to love ourselves

Valentine's day takes place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February every year. It is typically a day on which people celebrate romantic love. Whilst it is important to show love and care to important people in our lives, it is perhaps even more important to show love and care towards ourselves. This is called self-love.

Self-love is a positive feeling of appreciation for yourself and a way of treating yourself with kindness and compassion.

**Why should we practice self-love?** It can have a positive effect on your well-being and resilience, mental health and on your relationships. It can also be a helpful tool in sustaining our recovery from drugs and alcohol.

**What can block self-love?** Look out for things like self-doubt, perfectionism and expecting too much of yourself as this can make you think that love is conditional on you looking or being a certain way. For example, "I am only lovable if I always put other people first.". Certain mental health conditions like depression and low self-esteem can negatively influence how we think about ourselves e.g., "I'm not good enough", "I'm a bad person" and "I am unlovable". These negative beliefs can prevent us from demonstrating love, care, kindness and compassion for ourselves. Having more caring and compassionate thoughts about ourselves, such as "I am a good person", "I deserve good things" and "I am lovable" can help us in our recovery from drugs and alcohol.

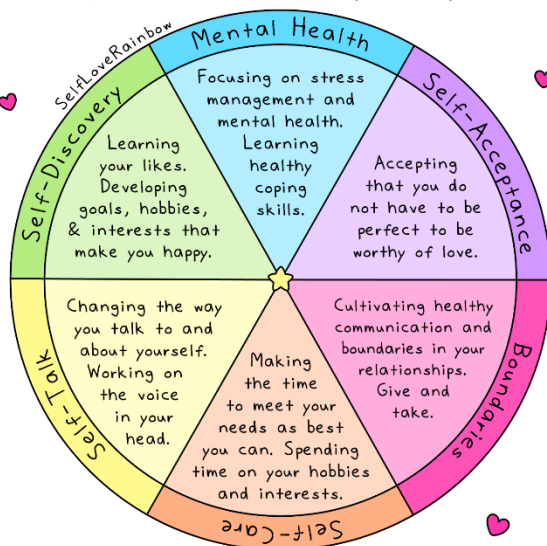
### What does self-love look like?

- Focus on the positives especially on your strengths
- Being patient and kind with yourself. Try telling yourself "It's understandable that I am feeling this way" or "It's ok to be struggling right now."
- Let go of toxic people. Some people may not treat you with the kindness, love and care you deserve; do you need to keep these people in your life?
- Setting personal boundaries in relationships with others, for example by saying 'No'.
- Asserting your needs and wishes to others if it is safe to do so.
- Surround yourself with supportive people. Attend RWCDAS groups and meet others in recovery by attending mutual aid like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and SMART Recovery.
- Allowing yourself to make mistakes and seeing them as an opportunity for growth and not a reason to punish yourself.
- Taking care of your needs. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, drink water, eat nutritious food, go for a walk, connect with nature or call a friend when things feel difficult.
- Focus on your own 5 ways to wellbeing: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, give.
- Not comparing yourself to others.
- Forgiving yourself for your past actions and learning from them for your actions moving forwards.

- Repeating a positive affirmation to yourself. Maybe you can start with one of these:
  - *I am worthy*
  - *I deserve good things like love and care*
  - *I am a good person*
  - *I have people that care about me*
  - *I am trying my best*
  - *The past does not define me*
- Trying new things like joining a new group or picking up a new activity.
- Putting yourself first. Always putting others first should not be a habit that costs you your mental or emotional wellbeing.
- Congratulating yourself on how far you've come and giving yourself a pat on the back.

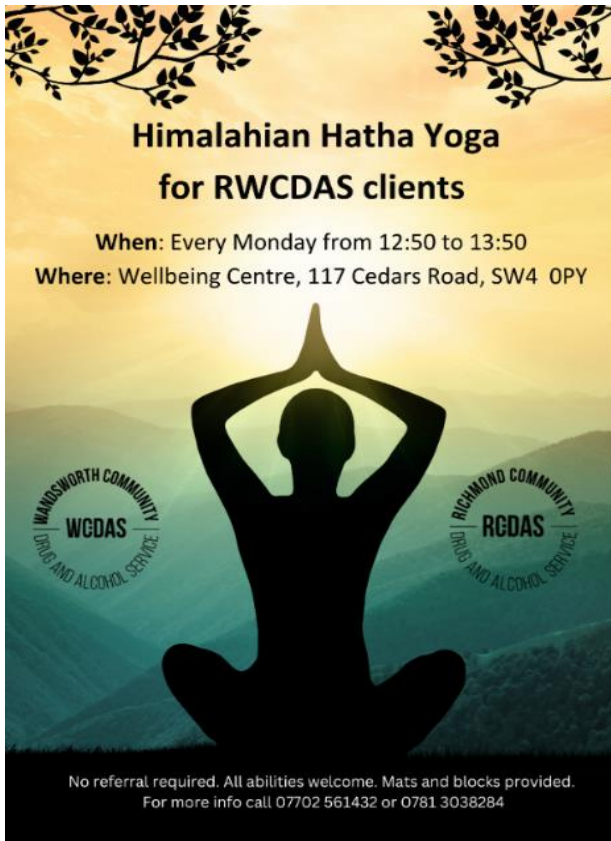
**Where do I start?** Try some of the ideas written above. If you're not sure where to start your self-love journey or feel that self-love would be particularly difficult for you, work with your keyworker and/or the Psychology team at RWCDAS to discover areas where you may need to build self-love and ways to accomplish it. Remember, you are deserving of love and care for yourself.

## The Foundations of Self-Love





# WELLBEING ACTIVITIES



**Himalayan Hatha Yoga  
for RWCDAS clients**

**When:** Every Monday from 12:50 to 13:50  
**Where:** Wellbeing Centre, 117 Cedars Road, SW4 0PY

**WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY  
RWCDAS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE**

**RICHMOND COMMUNITY  
RWCDAS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE**

No referral required. All abilities welcome. Mats and blocks provided.  
For more info call 07702 561432 or 0781 3038284



**Indian Head Massage**  
Available to all RWCDAS clients

6th February, 12-4pm  
Ilex House | 94 Holly Rd | TW1 4HF

Indian Head Massage aims to release tension in the muscles and joints of the head, face, neck, and shoulders. The experience is deeply calming and relaxing, leaving a feeling of increased energy, concentration, and revitalisation.

If you are interested, please ask your key worker to book you a spot

**RICHMOND & WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY  
RWCDAS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE**



Available to all  
RWCDAS clients

**REFLEXOLOGY WITH ZOE**  
16TH FEB 12-4PM  
WELLBEING CENTRE  
117 CEDARS ROAD LONDON  
SW4 0PW

Reflexology is a type of massage that involves applying pressure to the feet, hands, and ears. Some benefits of reflexology include reducing stress, anxiety, and minimising pain.

If you are interested, please ask your key worker to book you a spot.

**RICHMOND & WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY  
RWCDAS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE**



**Valentine's day  
Sewing bee at  
RWCDAS**

Join us for a day of  
crochet and stitching

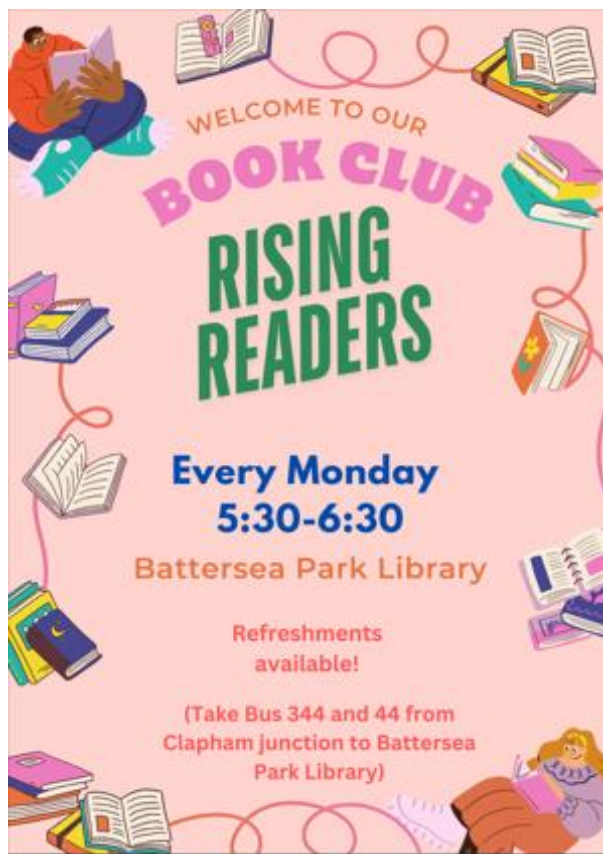
We will have easy sewing  
patterns to follow

11 February | 11:30am  
Wellbeing Centre, 117 Cedars Road, SW4 0PW

If you would like to come, please ask  
your key worker to book you a spot

Refreshments will be provided

**RICHMOND & WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY  
RWCDAS  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE**



# Walk & Talk

Join our friendly walking group for a relaxing stroll along the riverside and Marble Hill park.

We then head to a local cafe for coffee and possibly take in a walk around the Stables Art Gallery.

It's a great activity to take in sights and sounds of nature.

Taking place every Wednesday,  
leaving Ilex House, Twickenham at  
1:30pm finishing at around 3pm.

Please speak to your RCDAS  
keyworker if you'd like to be  
referred.

The poster features a yellow background with a sun and trees illustration.

# Auricular Acupuncture

Ear acupuncture stimulates endorphins in the brain and assists with both detoxification and addiction.

Drop in takes place:

- Every Wednesdays from 13:30 - 14:30 pm, Unit 2, Ilex House, 94 Holly Road, TW1 4HF.
- Every Thursdays from 13:30 - 14:40 pm, Wellbeing Centre, 117 Cedars Road, SW4 0PW.

Call TC on 07874 874823 or Paul on 07872 871 767 for more information

The poster features a purple background with a diagram of an ear and acupuncture points.



# ALLOTMENT WELL BEING DAYS

"To see things in the seed, that is genius." – Lao Tzu

**When** Tuesdays and Wednesdays  
From 11:00 - 2:00 PM

**Address** Curiosity Gardens  
Shackelgate lane Allotment  
Teddington  
TW11 8UJ

Please speak to you keyworker about referral into these sessions OR  
TEXT Sue on 07769686539 to get address and access details

# WANDSWORTH WEDNESDAYS

Connect with others, through food, workshops and other activities weekly.

Food , Chai , Chat and Chill - plus games and connection

Just come along on the day,  
No referral needed!

Every Wednesday during September at 117 cedars Road , SW4 0PW

DEEN CITY FARM & RIDING SCHOOL

HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAMME WITH DEEN CITY FARM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CDAS

**Every Thursday, Starting 5th October 10am-1pm**

Anxious?  
Struggling to connect?  
Mental health getting in the way?

**If so, come and get involved with activities at Deen City Farm.**  
Some of the activities will include:

<b>Garden</b> Helping to maintain our community gardens and growing produce in the nearby allotment	<b>Livestock</b> Assist in the day to day running of the farm, finding out about our animals and how to take care of them.	<b>Riding School</b> Learn to groom the horses and help with the day to day running of the stables.
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**Sessions will include an opportunity to meet and greet with the animals themselves!**



BREAKFASTS AT WELLBEING CENTRE, 177 CEDARS ROAD, SW4 0PW

EVERY LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

EVERY MONTH THERE IS A BREAKFAST, OPEN FOR ALL CLIENTS TO ATTEND AND MEET AND CONNECT WITH OTHER PEERS, ENJOY SOME GREAT FOOD AND FIND OUT WHAT ELSE IS GOING ON THAT YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN TO DRIVE FORWARD IN YOUR SUPPORT AND RECOVERY JOURNEY.

IF YOU WANT TO ATTEND PLEASE TEXT TERRY ON 07791 445700 AND STATE BREAKFAST AND THE DATE ATTENDING AND YOUR NAME.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE ...FOR FOOD , FUN AND CONNECTION.

# RECOVERY BASED GROUPS

RWCDAS offers a variety of recovery- based groups in a safe, non-judgemental environment. These groups provide opportunities for clients to share their experiences, gain insights, and support one another, enhancing the likelihood of long-term recovery.

Below is the list of available groups. **To attend, please request a referral from your keyworker.**

## Monday

- **Therapeutic Recovery (Abstinent clients)**

**11:00 -12.30 @117 Cedars Road**

This group looks at theories of personality development within environments and connections, personal development, relationships and conflict resolution.

- **Harm Reduction (Non-abstinent clients).**

**14:15- 15:30 @ 117 Cedars Road**

This group explores strategies to reduce harm from substances use and provide support for personal and family wellbeing.

## Tuesday

- **Ketamine Group**

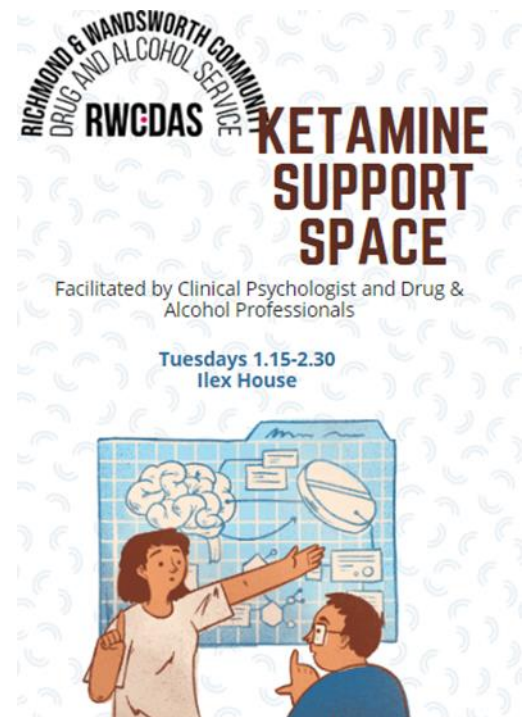
**13:15- 14:30 @Ilex House**

A 6-session programme covering ketamine' facts and legalities, physical and emotional impact, harm reduction, social re-engagement and recovery planning.

- **Moving Forward Group (Abstinent clients)**

**18.15- 20:00 @ 117 Cedars Road.**

The group looks at developing further strategies of resilience, coping and maintaining foundations of change post-treatment.



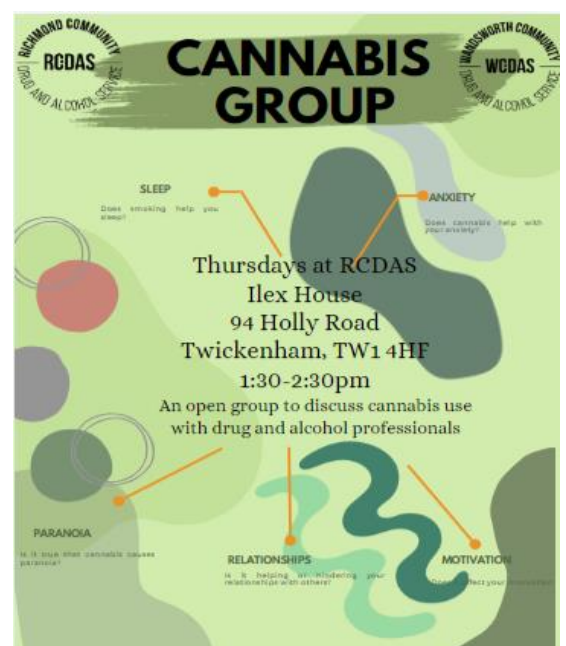
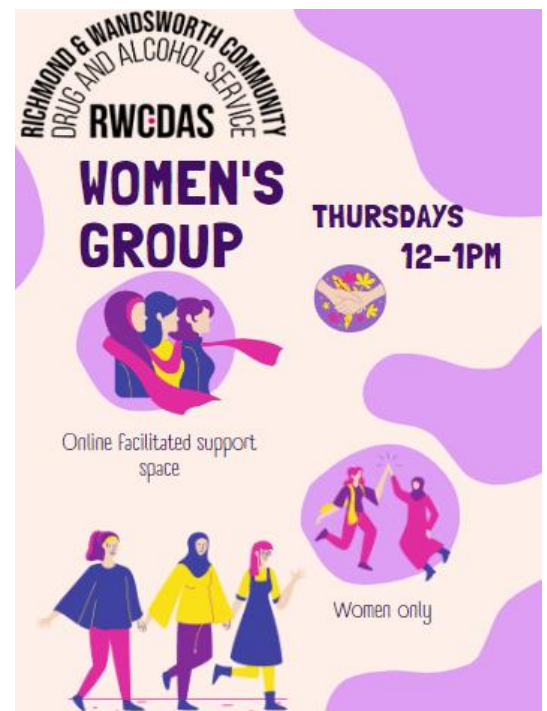
## Thursday

- **WCDAS Breakfast Club (Abstinent and non-abstinent clients)**  
**10:00 – 11:00 @ St John's**  
This group provide support for alcohol harm reduction, ambivalence and relapse prevention whilst providing a healthy breakfast
- **Women's group**  
**12:00-13:00, online**  
Safe space for women to discuss trauma, drugs, and alcohol use.
- **Stimulant group (for individuals who primarily use cocaine and/or crack cocaine)**  
**12:00-13:30 @ 117 Cedars Road**

The group provides support for reducing stimulant use and setting and achieving recovery goals. It covers topics including the cycle of change, Johari window, triggers and cravings and preventing lapse and relapse.

- **Cannabis group**  
**13:30-14:30 @ Ilex house**

The group explores relationship between cannabis use and mental health, goal setting, psychoeducation on sleep and anxiety, cannabis reduction and relapse prevention.





## Thursday

- **Neurodiversity Group**  
**13.45-3.00 @ 117 Cedars Road.**  
CBT-based support for clients managing substance use and neurodiverse needs.
- **Evening Group (Abstinent and non-abstinent clients)**  
**19:00- 20:30 Online.**  
Focus on motivation, goals and recovery support in the community

## Friday

- **Relapse Prevention (Abstinent clients)**  
**12:00 – 14:00 @ 117 Cedars Road,**  
This group focuses on strategies for maintaining abstinence, overcoming barriers and achieving full potentials



## Saturday

- **Saturday Morning Group (Abstinent and non-abstinent clients)**  
**11:00 - 13:00 @117 Cedars Road**  
The group is a forum where clients explore their relationship with substances in a nonjudgmental, empathic and organic way. It aims at empowering individuals and at building internal resilience.



## OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

**withyou  
webchat**

Our online chat service offers **free, confidential advice** to people facing challenges with drugs, alcohol or mental wellbeing.

Simply visit our website to connect with a trained advisor.

**withyou** **wearewithyou.org.uk**

We are WithYou, a registered charity in England (100907) and Scotland (SC040008), and a private company incorporated in England & Wales with company number 02080271. Registered office: First Layer Ground Floor, Gate House, 1-5 St. John's Square, London, England, EC3N 4DP.

**withyou** **wearewithyou.org.uk**

We're open 364 days a year, closing only on Christmas Day.

Monday - Friday: 9am - 9pm  
Saturday - Sunday: 10am - 4pm

We know that many people find the thought of attending an in-person service overwhelming, and that it's not always easy to find support outside of working hours.

Through our webchat service, you can speak to us about drugs, alcohol, or your mental wellbeing - whether you're looking for advice for yourself or for a loved one.

**withyou** **wearewithyou.org.uk**

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**CHANGE PLEASE  
COFFEE**

**DRIVING FOR CHANGE  
RICHMOND**

Come and see the services that we can provide for the homeless and vulnerable on board Driving for Change:

Oral Health Care | Nurse | Hairdresser | HSBC No Fixed Abode Bank Account information | Drug and Alcohol Services | Pathway services for people experiencing homelessness and the vulnerable | Virgin Media Q2 data bank

Civic Centre 44 York House Twickenham TW1 3BZ	22nd Aug	- 10am to 4pm
	26th Sept	- 10am to 4pm
	24th Oct	- 10am to 4pm
	21st Nov	- 10am to 4pm
	19th Dec	- 10am to 4pm
	23rd Jan	- 10am to 4pm

**RICHMOND & WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE  
RWCDAS**

### THE VINEYARD

**Crisis Drop-In Richmond  
- Monday to Friday 09:00-11:00**

**Vineyard Community Centre, 2  
The Vineyard Richmond TW10 6AQ**

Open to all in need. An all-in-one hub supporting people facing homelessness, unemployment and food poverty. Support available: A safe warm space where you can access companionship, free hot breakfast, showering facilities, clean new clothing and access to computers.

# NEEDLE EXCHANGE



## NEEDLE EXCHANGE

We have Needle Exchanges at both Wandsworth and Richmond Services

Open to all, both clients and drop ins/non clients.

Wandsworth:

Mon, Tues, Fri 9-4:30pm    Weds 1-4:30pm    Thurs 9-4:30pm-  
(women's only until 1pm)

Richmond:

Mon and Fri 9am - 4.30pm    Tues 9-4:30pm- (women's only until 1pm)  
Weds 1.30pm-4.30pm    Thurs 9-11:00am and 1:00-4.30pm

We stock:

- Safer Injecting Equipment
- Needle Bins
- Condoms
- Lube
- STI Kits

Please feel free to ask staff any questions that you may have!

# SUBSTANCE USE ALERTS

## Substance Alert

We have been alerted to overdoses of people who use non-opiate powders and liquids

01

Please be aware, if you use non-opiate powders/liquids/tablets (cocaine, crack cocaine, benzos, ketamine etc), we have seen a rise in overdoses, due to these substances being cut with opioids such as Nitazenes.

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE HAS AN OVERDOSE, ADMINISTER NALOXONE AND CALL 999**

02

These opioids are stronger than heroin and fentanyl.



**PLEASE TAKE NALOXONE IF YOU USE ANY SUBSTANCES**

**Naloxone is available at WCDAS and RCDAS, so please talk to your keyworker. We have both Nasal and IM available and will provide training.**

03

## Signs of overdose

Loss of consciousness or unresponsiveness  
Shallow, slow, or stopped breathing  
Pinpoint pupils  
Choking, gurgling, or snoring sounds  
Vomiting  
Limp body  
Pale, blue, or cold skin  
Faint heartbeat

04

If you believe your substance has been changed or you've had a different than normal reaction, please let us know, with as much detail as possible.

This alert has been produced and distributed by Merton Public Health on behalf of the Merton Local Drug Information System (LDIS) Panel

**DRUG ALERT**  
**(No' 130)**  
**Vape containing THC used by Year 11 children in Sutton.**

Merton Public Health has received information from Sutton Council relating to an incident which occurred in a school in Sutton on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024, a Year 11 pupil brought a vape containing THC into the school. THC, (Tetrahydrocannabinol), is the main psychoactive constituent of cannabis. Four pupils are known to have used this vape; one was taken to St Helier Hospital via ambulance, and two were reported as 'looking green'.

The student who was taken to hospital experienced the following symptoms:

- Drowsiness
- Slurred Speech
- Breathing difficulties
- Unconsciousness
- High heart rate
- Dilated pupils

The student, who brought in the THC vape, has been asked to provide further details in relation to how they acquired the vape, initial indications suggest it was purchased on the internet.

Please share this information with the staff within your service or organisation and please take this as an opportunity to remind young people and their parents/carers that some vapes can contain substances, such as THC, which, when consumed, can produce negative physical and mental health outcomes.

Merton residents wishing to receive support or advice in relation to drug and alcohol use can access the services below:

- The Young Persons Drug and Alcohol Treatment service is Catch-22, Merton Civic Centre, SM4 5DX, 0203 701 8641
- The Merton Adult Drug and Alcohol Treatment service is Via, 7, Langdale Parade, Mitcham CR4 2PF, 0300 303 4610.

Please continue to report any intelligence on increased drug related risks to Merton Council using the following email addresses – [drug.alerts@merton.gov.uk](mailto:drug.alerts@merton.gov.uk) and to OHID [london.drugalerts@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:london.drugalerts@dhsc.gov.uk)



# HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT

*'Empowering Change Within You'*

*Walk-in for an assessment*

*Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9am*

*Opening times: 9am - 4.30pm Mon, Tue, Fri; Wed 1.30pm-4.30pm (closed am for staff training) and Thurs closed between 11:00am – 1:00pm for staff meeting.*

**Tuesday women only until 1pm.**

*Please note walk in assessments are not available for criminal justice clients who are seen by referral only. This includes Prison, Courts, Probation, Police, Approved Premises.*

*Address: Unit 2 Ilex House, 94 Holly Road, TW1 4HF*

*Tel: 020 3228 3020*

*Recovery Hub: Tel: 0207 501 2615*

*Day Programme: 0207 498 6149*

*Website: <https://www.rcdas.co.uk>*

*National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247*

*Webchat: <https://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/help-and-advice/about-our-online-chat/>*

*'Making Every Contact Count'- Signposting to Better Health and Wellbeing - [www.mecclink.co.uk](http://www.mecclink.co.uk)*

<https://richmond.drinkchecker.org.uk/>

**'Empowering Change Within You'**

