

DEC 2020

Issue 59



**Merry Christmas
and a Happy New
Year 2021 from us all
MCSC!**

Christmas Eve - 8:30am-12pm

Christmas Day - Closed

Boxing Day - Closed

28th December - Closed

29th December - Closed

30th December - Closed

1st January 2021 - Closed

2nd January 2021 - Closed

3rd January 2021 - Closed

4th January - Open as usual



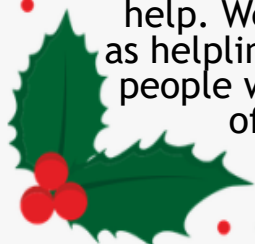
A shout-out to our lock-down volunteers

We're extremely lucky to have an amazing group of volunteers who support the work we do at Unlock. This support has never been needed more than during the challenging months of the Covid-pandemic and as always, our volunteers have done us proud.

Whether it was working on their own, from home rather than being part of an office-based team or dealing with the technicalities of a cloud-based phone system or Zoom meeting, they quickly adapted. And, it's thanks to them that we've been able to keep the helpline open providing information, advice and support to those that have needed our help more than ever.

Our volunteers are crucial to the work we do and their knowledge, skills and empathy can have a huge impact on the people they help. We're looking for more volunteers to join our friendly team as helpline advisors so, if you think you've got what it takes to help people with cautions and convictions deal with the ongoing effect of their criminal record, you can find out more here.

Debbie, Advice Manager



**Louise Bradshaw - Integrity Counselling
& Clinical Supervision**
louisebradshaw2@yahoo.com - 07834 223786



I offer 1:1 counselling for both adults and children and offer clinical supervision for qualified or trainee counsellors, I also offer supervision for other professionals working in helping professions.

I have worked in a wide range of settings including the NHS, Charity and Private sector I work with a variety of issues for more information please see the list in what we work with section, this list is not exhaustive so please feel free to contact me if you would like help with something that is not listed here.

I have been working as a fully qualified counsellor for the past 13 years and as a qualified supervisor for the past 7 years. I am an accredited member of the National Counselling Society and a registered member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.





A message from our CEO

Dear Colleagues

What a strange year this has been, but hopefully we are about to turn a corner and get back to some sort of normality in the New Year.

As we are approaching Christmas I would like to take this opportunity to firstly say a big thank you to all our Members, sessional hirers and visitors for your continued support to the Centre over the past year.

I know that this has been a difficult year for everybody but we are still here, we will keep going and I am sure we will come out the other side even stronger.

Secondly I would like to wish you all a very Happy and safe Christmas on behalf of all the team here at MCSC and we look forward to working with you and seeing you all next year.

Tad



HearSay Charitable Trust provide a service to support children, families or individuals through counselling and psychotherapy.

The service aims to help address difficulties that can arise from a range of impairing conditions such as psychological, mental health, behavioural, emotional problems and difficulties that could arise from A.D.H.D and the Autistic Spectrum. HearSay Charitable trust is accepting referrals.

We are pleased to be operating now from Marsham Street.

For more details please see our website

www.hearsay-trust.org.uk or email us at referrals@hearsay-trust.org.uk



Start a Christmas Savings Account for 2021!

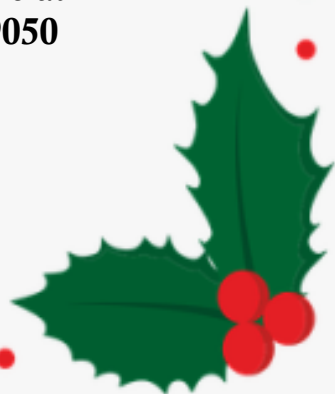
Let's hope Christmas next year will be back to normal with high-street shopping and restaurant and pub get-togethers!

Once this year's less-festive season is past, why not make a resolution in January to get the cost of Christmas 2021 wrapped up early?! Take some of the budgeting stress away by starting a Christmas Savings plan.

A Kent Savers Christmas Savings Account can be opened at any time of year. There are lots of ways to pay into the account, including with PayPoint at Post Offices and newsagents, over the phone with a debit card, a regular Standing Order or online banking. You can save as much or as little as you like each month, with an option to change the amount you save or stop saving at any time. Christmas Savings withdrawals are only permitted in November and December, so there is no temptation to spend it on something else earlier in the year!

Once you've applied to be a Kent Savers member, you can elect to save contributions to a Christmas Savings Account. No matter how big or small, your regular contributions soon add up and your traditional no-social-distancing Christmas preparations will go with a swing!

It only costs £5 to join and it's easy to apply online at KentSavers.co.uk or call the office on **0333 321 9050**





Maidstone's community radio station has been shortlisted for a prestigious Community Radio Award.



The project which is run entirely by volunteers has been on air for just under a year and is up for a gong in the Best Digital Radio category for the annual Community Radio Awards.

They celebrate the best of the UK's community radio sector by showcasing the work of community radio volunteers. More than 460 entries from 90 have been whittled down to five per category.

Maidstone Radio provides locally based programmes that focus on local people, business, and charities and groups from across the borough. The station can be listened to online via their website wearemaidstone.com or via smart speakers.

Ordinarily the team provides a combination of live and pre-recorded programmes from the station's purpose-built radio studio based at the Maidstone Community Support Centre in Marsham Street, but during lockdown the presenters have been creating shows from broom cupboards and bedrooms in their homes to keep the station on air.

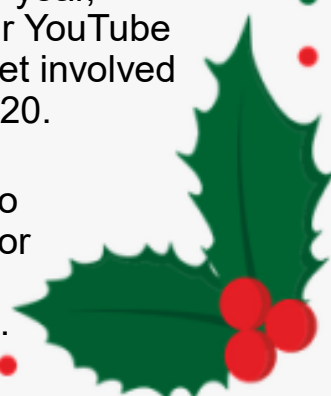
According to Maidstone Radio co-founder Jason McCrossan – “This is a special achievement and recognition of a dedicated group of volunteers, presenters, producers and the backroom team, many of whom have never been involved with radio before but all who have come together to create a community radio station for Kent's County Town.”

Community Radio Awards chair Martin Steers said: “This year has been a challenge for the sector, with studio lockdowns, loss of income and cancelled events. However, community radio stations have responded by stepping up engagement with their local communities, with more programming and innovative presenters across the country broadcasting from home.

“It is clear to see from this, that passionate presenters, volunteers, and staff are really there for their audiences. These local radio stations are truly at the heart of their communities.”

The awards ceremony is taking place virtually this year, on December 12 – wherever you are. Streamed on our YouTube and our Facebook page from 7pm, follow along and get involved in the chat, and on social media with #CRAs2020.

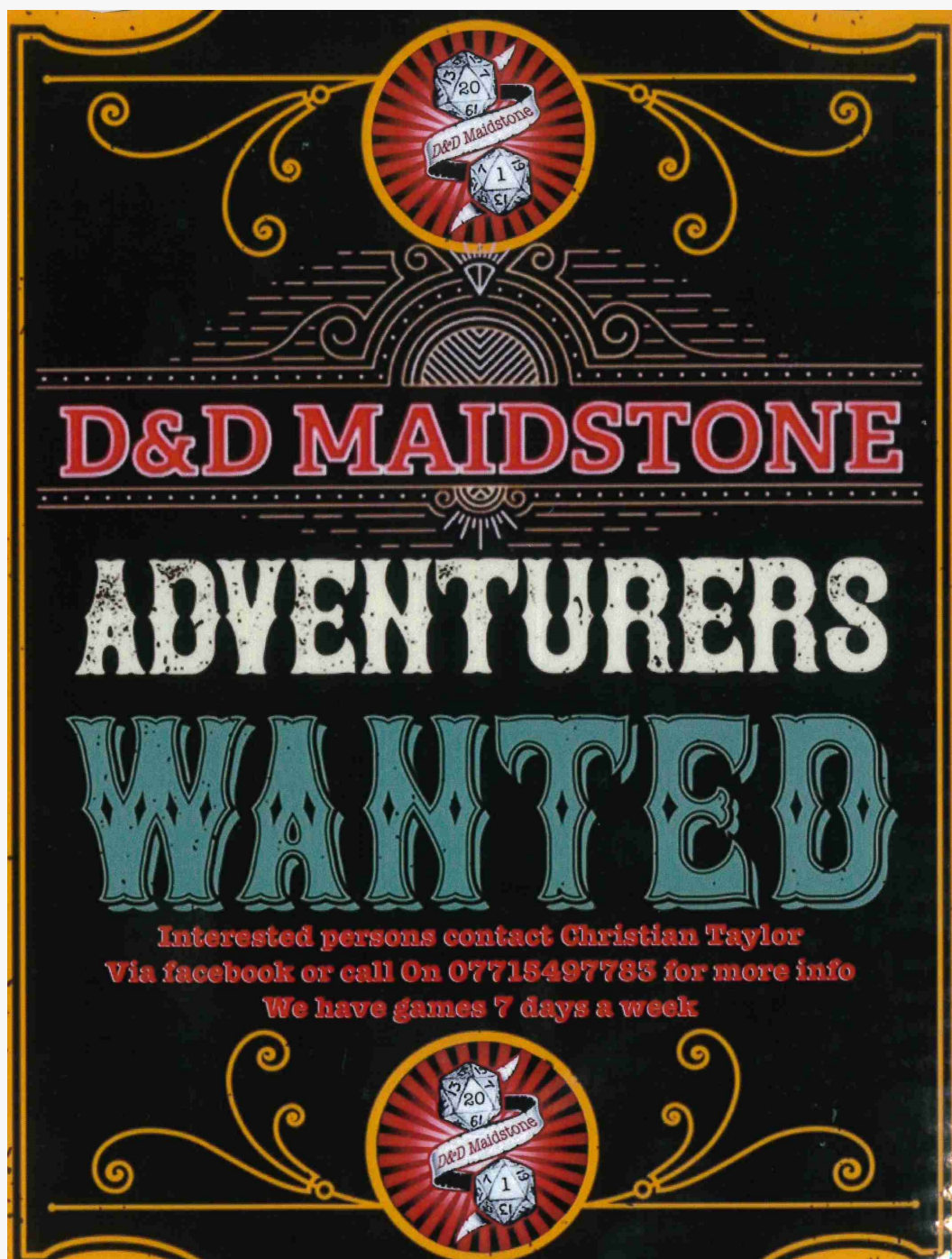
You can find out more about Maidstone Radio on their website: www.wearemaidstone.com or by following their social media @wearemaidstone on Twitter and Facebook.





Dungeons and Dragons

We are now based here at Maidstone Community Support Centre, for those who enjoy gaming and helping those who may suffer with Mental Health to make new friends, have a support system and fun time doing so, if you are interested in joining us please contact me (Christian) on 07715 497783.





One in Four @ Maidstone



We have been operating and supporting the **Maidstone** area now for 3 months and I cannot believe how fast the time has flown by! During this time our clientele has excelled to having a waiting list.

Don't Suffer in Silence

With Christmas looming, lockdown tier 3 upon us in Kent, **do not** suffer in silence. We are offering a beneficial Telephone Helpline Service during the pandemic, now until the end March 2021. Here you can speak to a Counsellor for **30 mins free** on **0800 170 0314** 7 days a week.

Times are 10 – 12pm, 2 – 4pm and 6 – 8.30pm!

Our service also

Supports clients face to face and by video

Offers a sliding scale for new clients on low income from **£18**

Provides placement opportunities for Honorary Counsellors

Offers Counselling Supervision

Signposts, respond to queries,

Welcomes new referrals

For further information contact us on:

Freephone 0800 170 0314

Telephone Helpline Service

November 2020 to March 2021

01622 230 735 or

Kent@oneinfour.org.uk

Our gift to you

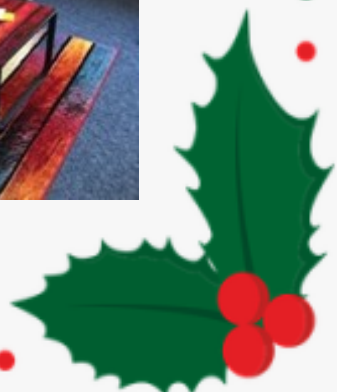
New Chapter

As your glare consumes these pages
May your eyes be lifted of a sadness that
has never left you

As you go through the stages
May One in Four guide you
On your journey to recovery
As you find your warrior within
Your new Chapter in life can begin.

written for One in Four By *Joy Hussein*

May we take this opportunity to wish you
all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New
Year!!! **One in Four**





“Listening attentively shows that you are fully engaged in what the other person is saying and makes them feel valued and encouraged to open up.”

Is listening the cure for loneliness?

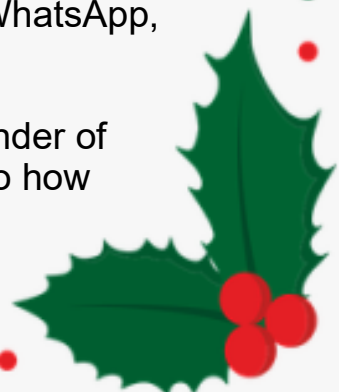
A survey conducted by the British Red Cross and the Co-operative found that nine million adults are plagued with a feeling of loneliness. And research by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) who have been researching people's well-being for nearly a decade showed that in the first month of Coronavirus, 7.6 million people said their mental health and wellbeing had been affected by loneliness.

For many people, lockdown changed the interaction with their usual support networks overnight. For some, this meant turning to their local community when they needed it, including befriending groups, which can be accessed through GP social prescribing services and charities like the Samaritans. The inevitable shift to online and telephone communication is no emotional replacement for face-to-face get-togethers but the power of listening can enrich the quality of the conversation and more importantly, make people feel more positive and less lonely.



People across global communities are learning to adapt to this new world because we can't do the normal things we're used to. Like friends having a chat over Zoom with a beer in hand instead of a conversation in the pub. Or workplaces holding thematic meetings to foster a sense of community and families maintaining connections over virtual platforms like WhatsApp, Zoom and FaceTime.

Alan Heyes, managing director of Therapy Partners and founder of charity, Rewrite Your Story has some compelling insights into how listening can help reduce loneliness and practical tips about how to use listening as an effective tool, which can make a difference to someone's life.





1. Get rid of distractions to have a deep and meaningful conversation. Find a quiet space, turn off your phone, and check in with yourself first. Practice mindfulness and relaxation to park personal stresses and have a clear mind to ensure you are fully present and focused on what the other person needs.
 2. Make an effort to listen actively to help strengthen your emotional understanding and empathy. Listening attentively shows that you are fully engaged in what the other person is saying and makes them feel valued and encouraged to open up. When we are listening to someone, we are already thinking about how to respond to what they are saying. When we try to anticipate the conversation or interrupt while the person is speaking, we can often respond in the wrong way, which reinforces that we are not listening. We have two ears and one mouth and should use them proportionally.
 3. Show empathy by reflecting back, paraphrasing what has been said to show you have understood and withhold judgement or offering your advice or opinions.
 4. Validate the person's experiences and be patient while you listen. They may have carried something for a long time and not have been able to talk about it.
 5. Listen for what's not being said and make an effort to notice the signals and non-verbal behaviour like facial expressions and tone of voice people are showing that can indicate what they are feeling.
- Peer support groups can be life savers. They provide a safe environment where like-minded people can talk about and listen to others with shared experiences. By allowing ourselves to be vulnerable we enable others to do the same and through that honest exchange, genuine connection occurs, and loneliness diminishes.
- Even the smallest gesture can shift someone's perception of the world and restore their faith in humanity. It's in times like these when people are anxious about making new relationships - and it can be challenging to start having conversations with people again. A simple nod and a smile or a 'How are you getting on?' may be the only human exchange someone has all day and can reinforce that their world is not such a lonely and dark place after all.
- If you need someone to talk to, or someone just to listen, Therapy Partners can help you. Visit our website at www.therapypartners.co.uk or call us on 0845 527 4809.



Teach Me Too

Every child deserves the chance to learn

100 +
FAMILIES



We are fundraising to make Teach Me Too, an online library of educational videos, available to every child with Down's syndrome. We have hit over 100 families signed up for the programme?

Imagine what 100 families, each doing their own fundraiser, could achieve!

Fundraising isn't all about the one off, big donations (although we would love some of those too!). Fundraising starts with each individual, doing what they can. Whether that is £1 or £1000, a personal donation or a family fundraiser, it all makes a difference.

We are so grateful that some of our families going above and beyond to help make this happen, so here is a bit more about some of them.

Joe is 4 and lives with his twin brother and family in Kent. Joe's family believe so strongly that every child should have access to the programme, that along with his family Joe has taken on the awesome task of walking a mile a day for 26 days!

They have raised a whopping £1900 so far! Joe already has access to this resource, so it just shows how much his family believes in this project.

21 Day Learnathon

12 mums, 12 kids and a magical extra chromosome?....

A 21 day learnathon packed with giggles, signing and fun.

The team are raising funds for the Teach Me Too with fun education videos posted daily online. Why not like their Facebook page, get some great hints and tips and watch their journey. They are well over the £1800 so see if you can help them meet their target and support them.

They have some special celebrity guests coming up, and a special surprise once they reach £2000, so why not follow them and see what it is all about.

What can you do to help?

Start your own FUNDRAISER, from sponsored silences to marathons, (Covid safe of course), anything is possible. You can raise funds online via this campaign page.

www.21together.org.uk/teach-me-too

Together we can make this happen!





Maidstone Mediation has downsized offices! As from January 2021, we will be upstairs in the Annex of Maidstone Community Support Centre in a smaller room. However, a smaller room does not mean that we will be downsizing our service in any way. Kim, Caroline and Sue, alongside all the volunteers, will continue to offer Free mediation services in the community, in the home, in the workplace and in schools. Added to this, we will continue to offer free Anger Management/Building Resilience courses to anyone over the age of 12 years.

Due to this awful pandemic, many people in our community have had a very difficult few months; loss of jobs and earnings and sadly, in some instances, loss of lives. Families have found themselves in conflict with one another and with neighbours and sometimes one or other parent have found themselves without access to their children and loved ones. Feelings of frustration have bubbled up and tempers have been lost.

Maidstone Mediation has continued to be open for business during this time; we have continued to support and facilitate agreements that have meant good outcomes for the participants. We have given our clients the 'tools' to manage their frustrations and anger, making for a calmer more peaceful environment.

Sadly with Christmas there often comes unrest and interfamilial conflict so we know that we will be busy in the New Year, but there is real hope for everyone and a feeling of positivity for 2021. In the meantime, as ever, everyone at MMS will continue to be 'peacemakers' in our community.

So from all at Maidstone Mediation Scheme, we wish you a Peaceful and Very Merry Christmas.



Andrew's Noticeboard (our Caretaker)

The Bin Room

Please only use the recycling bin for recyclable empty items! We had a recent issue of milk and other food items being put in the recycling still full. The general waste is to the left of the bin room and recycling is to the right.



Heating over the Christmas period

Please could you all let Andrew know when and if you will be on over the Christmas period as this will allow him to set the heating to come on whilst you're in the Centre.

Andrew would also like to Wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year...

PS. He prefers Red over white 😊



MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY
SUPPORT CENTRE

Affordable office and counselling rooms available at MCSC

More information and eligibility www.mcsc.org.uk/services/office-space-to-rent

Register your interest with the Centre Lettings and Finance Manager today
jackie@mcsc.org.uk or call 01622 690369

