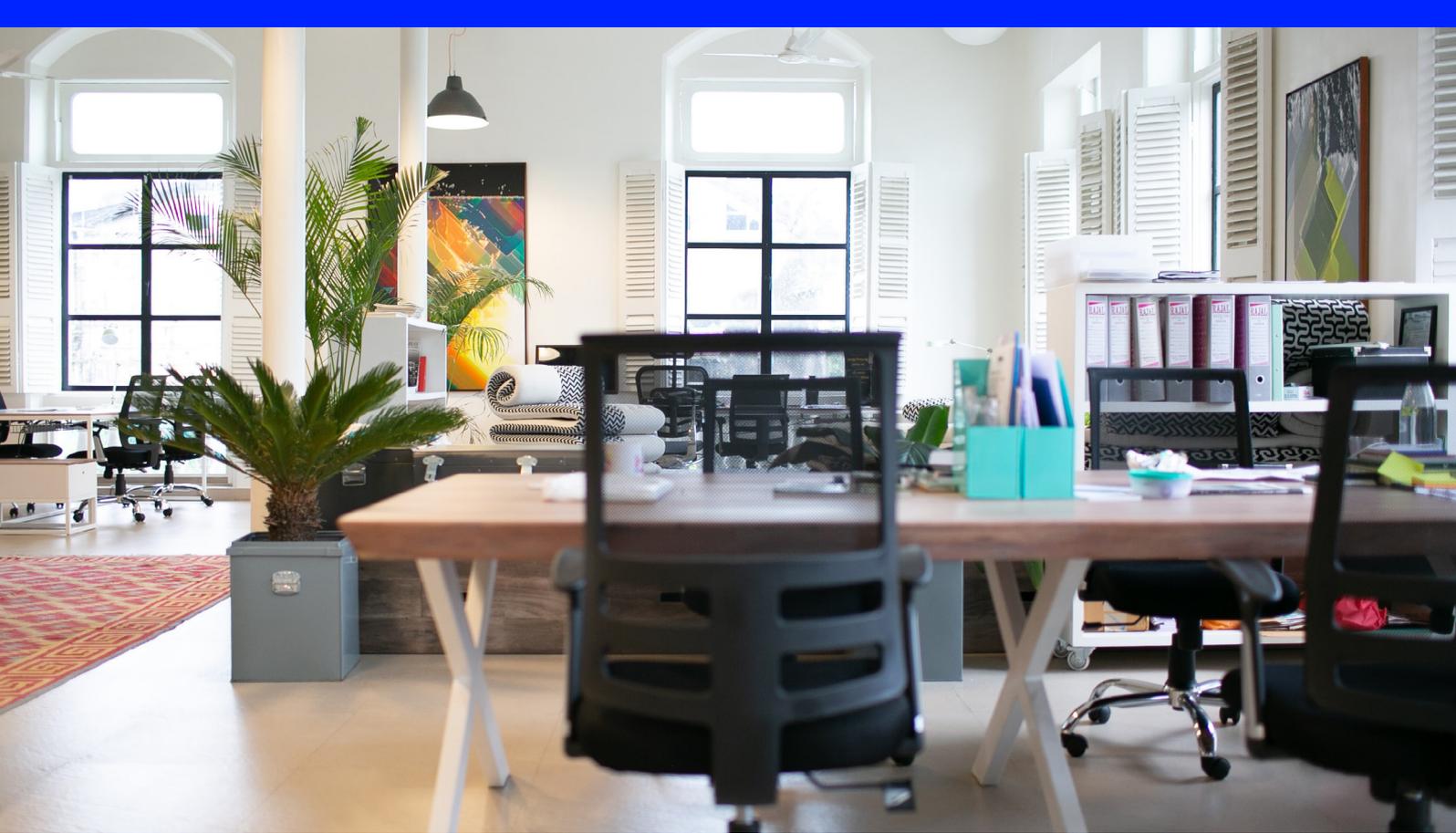


**LET'S TAKE CARE
OF WELLBEING AT
WORK. EVEN WHEN
WE'RE WORKING
FROM HOME.**

CONTENTS



- 3** Introduction
- 5** Why wellbeing is important
- 6** How to create a wellbeing programme
- 12** Helping employees stay active
- 13** Helping remote teams stay connected and supported
- 15** How employee volunteering helps everyone
- 17** Helping people, communities and businesses thrive
- 18** Later life planning
- 19** Mental health training for your organisation
- 20** Join the Norwich Together Alliance



HELPING EMPLOYEES FEEL HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER

How do you take care of your employees' wellbeing when they're not actually at work?

That's a good question. And one the Norwich Together Alliance – a team of over 25 organisations from across the city – has united to help answer, by sharing examples of best practice. Because we believe we can better combat loneliness and social isolation among remote workers when we take a place-based approach. And, more importantly, work together to make it happen.

OUR VISION

We want Norwich to build upon its reputation as a warm and welcoming place to live, work, study, retire or simply be. To become a city where everyone feels cared for, valued and respected. Not just within the city walls, but also within the communities in which people live and work.

Norwich should be a city that connects and comforts people – so no one has to suffer the poverty of loneliness and isolation.

Norwich Together is led by Business in the Community, the UK's oldest and largest business-led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business. We use our collective strength as a force for good, working to create a skilled and inclusive workforce; build thriving communities; and repair and sustain our planet.



**NORWICH
TOGETHER**



WHY EMPLOYEE WELLBEING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Employee wellbeing is even more of a priority now that teams are working remotely and loneliness is on the rise.

Loneliness and social isolation are fast becoming a national epidemic. But they're a local issue too. Half of us in Norwich have felt the effects of loneliness or social isolation, or know someone who has.¹ These issues are harmful to people's physical and mental health and can increase the risk of early death by 30%.²

LONELINESS IS AS DAMAGING AS SMOKING 15 CIGARETTES A DAY.

It's worth noting that loneliness is not the same as being alone. Mind, the mental health charity, describes loneliness as: 'the feeling we get when our need for rewarding social contact and relationships is not met. You may have lots of social contact, or be in a relationship or part of a family, and still feel lonely – especially if you don't feel understood or cared for by the people around you.'

As the pandemic has changed how many of us work and live, it's more important than ever to support employees' wellbeing. Loneliness is one of the biggest struggles for people working from home, and this is closely followed by the lack of connection or communication with teammates. This affects mental wellbeing. In the 2020 Health and Wellbeing Report, nearly two-fifths of respondents saw an increase in stress-related absence from work over the last year, while 60% reported an increase in common mental health conditions.

MENTAL ILL-HEALTH IS THE SINGLE MOST COMMON CAUSE OF LONG-TERM ABSENCE FROM WORK.

That's why the Norwich Together Alliance is bringing you this information, supplied by organisations including Aviva and Norfolk County Council, to help you tackle the issue before it becomes an even bigger problem.

1. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc
2. <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/the-facts-on-loneliness/>

HOW TO CREATE A WELLBEING PROGRAMME

A LOOK AT AVIVA'S APPROACH

Three things to think of first

To give your programme the best chance of success, you need to consider these three aspects before setting it up. Miss any of these out and, like a three-legged stool with one leg missing, your programme is likely to be less stable.

1 The right culture

Get the basics right first, otherwise any wellbeing benefits you offer won't make a difference. Your culture includes things like a good working environment, flexible working and an inclusive workplace where people can be themselves.

Even with these in place, you'll need to create acceptance within your organisation that wellbeing is important, not a nice-to-have. Colleagues need to know they won't be judged if they block out 30 minutes to do an exercise class, or if they finish on time so they can spend time with family.

Wellbeing benefits won't be effective if there's a culture of long hours or overworking that means employees can't make the most of them.

2 The right benefits for colleagues to use

Offering a selection of benefits is important. Wellbeing isn't a one-size-fits-all thing, so accept that not everything is for everyone.

Try to make sure you look at wellbeing holistically across all areas – physical, mental, financial and social.

3 The desire of the individual

Sometimes, no matter what your culture or what benefits are available, an individual won't be interested. Know that's their choice and you can't force it.

Employer-to-employee relationships are adult-to-adult and not parent-to-child, and it's important to respect that. So, for example, a parent-to-child decision would be to set up a virtual quiz evening and make everyone feel they have to attend. An adult-to-adult decision is to warmly invite employees and leave it to individuals to make their own choice.

FIVE STEPS TO CREATING A WELLBEING PROGRAMME

1 Review your existing benefits, offers and activities

Have you already got a discount deal with a local gym (great for physical wellbeing)? Or do you currently offer pension contributions and pay the Real Living Wage (great for financial wellbeing)? Perhaps you already have a virtual social event once a week or month (great for both mental and social wellbeing)? You might not have previously thought of these as wellbeing initiatives, but they are, so make a list of what's available.

2 Perform a GAP analysis

Look at your list to work out what's missing from your organisation's viewpoint and ask your employees for feedback too. That could bring the biggest benefits. For example, if you think you need a better deal with a gym for physical wellbeing, but your employees want support for their mental wellbeing, you could avoid investing budget in the wrong place.

3 Agree priorities of what to add

Using your employee and stakeholder feedback, create three new lists headed up 'must have', 'should have' and 'could have' to prioritise your spend. Then cost up the ideas to see what budget you might need.

Remember that not everything that supports wellbeing costs a lot of money. Things like flexible working policies, a well-managed workload, support from charities on things like alcohol use and eating disorders, an internal campaign to reduce the stigma around mental health, and sharing where to get support are all available for little or no cost.

4 Get stakeholder engagement and approval

Share your plan and budget request with stakeholders to get approval.

5 Launch and evolve your programme

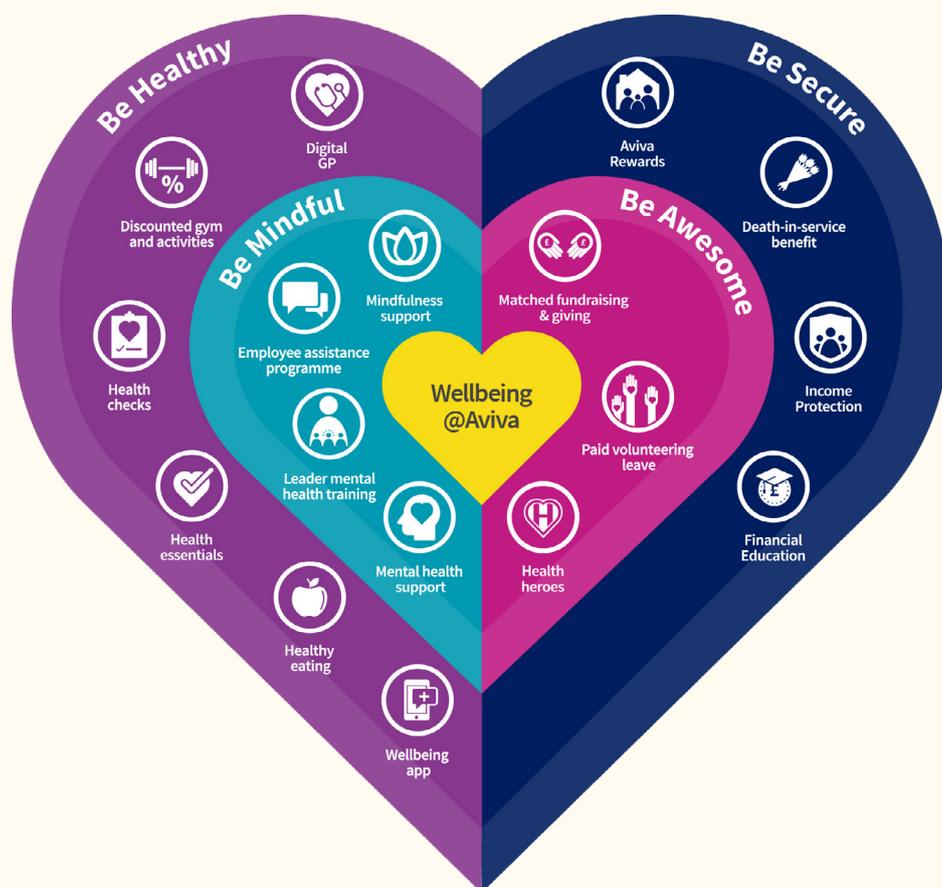
Launch the programme with the involvement of your senior business leaders to show it is business critical. Once you've launched, monitor how each benefit is used, and its impact, so you can regularly look at how to evolve the programme.

HOW TO ENGAGE EMPLOYEES

♡ Create your own wellbeing brand

A brand helps your wellbeing programme become more memorable and easier to identify. For example, Aviva named their focus areas Be Healthy, Be Mindful, Be Secure and Be Awesome (to reflect physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing), and created their visual Wellbeing@Aviva heart to highlight the elements in each programme.

Look at how you could use a name, tone, colours or imagery to give your programme a look that reflects your organisation and makes the wellbeing resources easy to find.



📣 Make some noise at launch

Even if you're just collating what was previously available and adding a few small things, you can still have a launch led by your senior business leaders. It shows that your organisation and its leaders are taking wellbeing seriously. Aviva had calls for all their people leaders, then all-employee calls, as well as stalls and events pre-pandemic.



Ask for volunteer champions

Consider asking for colleagues to become wellbeing champions and make sure they know exactly what wellbeing benefits are available to champion before they begin. It's best if this is voluntary as people with a passion for the topic will be your best advocates.

Wellbeing champions can help deliver messages to hard-to-reach colleagues. You can involve them when considering changes to the wellbeing programme or ask for feedback about new communication ideas. Plus, they can help with any events you may want to hold.



Keep communicating

Launching the programme is a great start, but it is just the start. You need to keep on communicating the services and support provided by your organisation, reminding people of what's available so that, if a time comes when they need support, people can remember it and use it. That's another reason why it's important to make the information easy to find. For example, Aviva added their Wellbeing heart logo to the start menu on all company computers. This takes colleagues to the wellbeing intranet site, so they can find all the relevant details with just one click.



Tell real stories

Storytelling can be part of your constant communication and will help keep it fresh. People are more likely to engage if they hear from a colleague who has used, and benefited from, your wellbeing programme. Consider asking your wellbeing champions, or other early adopters, to share their stories and use them in your communications.



Have senior role models

In the same way, senior leaders have a key role to play in authentically sharing their personal stories and also modelling the right behaviours to support wellbeing. This links back to needing to foster the right culture in order for wellbeing to be successful. If senior colleagues are working long hours, never taking lunch, 'always on' and not looking after themselves, employees will think that is what they must do to succeed. Leaders need to walk the walk, not just talk the talk.

HOW TO MEASURE YOUR WELLBEING PROGRAMME'S EFFECTIVENESS

Think long-term

Wellbeing programmes are about long-term difference, not a short-term gain, so don't expect an overnight change in data, such as fewer absences. Deloitte has done some extensive research to suggest that, on average, for every £1 you spend on supporting colleague mental wellbeing, you will see a £5 return on that investment. The methodology is robust, but hard to put into place at individual business level for all the different programmes.

Measure engagement in the different elements

Capturing the use of individual wellbeing programme elements is the easiest form of measurement. It indicates the value colleagues place on them. Remember, as wellbeing is not one-size-fits-all, it's unlikely any individual element will get 100% involvement.

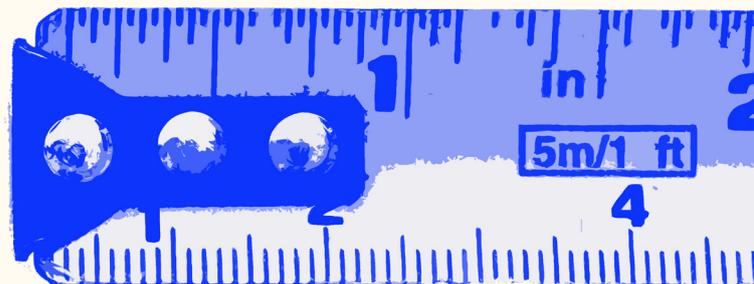
Consider morale and engagement

Wellbeing, if it's well-communicated, also has an impact on morale and engagement, and recruitment and retention. However, be careful about attributing these improvements to a part of the wellbeing programme. Morale and engagement are made up of so many things and wellbeing will only be one small part of what colleagues consider.

Look into reduced absenteeism and presenteeism

Absence is the obvious metric to measure wellbeing, but this is where long-term thinking has to come in. For example, absence went up at Aviva for the first two years after they introduced their wellbeing programme – particularly mental health absence, as they removed the stigma and made it okay to reveal this as the real reason for being off work. It then levelled out before they started to see a reduction. Then the pandemic happened, changing things and making comparisons irrelevant, due to a big impact absence.

You should also consider presenteeism – this is when people are at work but not at their best. Wellbeing can help reduce presenteeism as well as absence, but is equally as hard to measure.



THINK YOU MIGHT BE CHALLENGED ABOUT MEASURING THE IMPACT?

Or asked about why or how you're spending money if you can't measure the success? Consider turning the question around – what's the cost to the business if you don't invest in your employees' wellbeing?



**NORWICH
TOGETHER**



HELPING YOUR EMPLOYEES STAY ACTIVE

TIPS FROM ACTIVE NORFOLK

While so many of us are working from home, employees may be missing some of their regular exercise on the way to work – or even just added steps around the workplace.

Staying active is good for keeping us fit and healthy, but being physically active provides so many more benefits than that. Exercise is good for mental health, helping to reduce stress and anxiety, and giving our energy levels a boost.

So, if you'd like to give your employees some ideas of how to look after their wellbeing, Active Norfolk has these top tips you can share with them.



Add some physical activity into your day if you can. Going for a walk, run or cycle, if you feel safe to do so, can help boost your mood and reduce feelings of stress or anxiety. If you can't get outside, you could follow an online workout, do some housework, or simply have a little dance around the room to your favourite music.



Keep connected. Government restrictions on mixing with other households in-person having been changing all the time, as we all come together to fight the pandemic. But that doesn't stop you from connecting online, using software like Zoom. You could even use it to join an exercise class. Then, when restrictions ease, look to meet up with people for exercise if and when you can. And only if it's safe, of course!



Look to the future. You could research walks you want to do, plan a new cycle route, or, if you have children, get them to make a list of five new activities they'd like to try.

You can find more ideas and inspiration to share with your employees at www.activenorfolk.org/active-at-home

HELPING REMOTE TEAMS STAY CONNECTED AND SUPPORTED

IDEAS FROM ADULT LEARNING

Adult Learning is part of Norfolk County Council. They offer a wide range of courses and life-changing opportunities to everyone across the county. They also have a wellbeing team who support their staff. They've shared these hints for helping remote working teams stay connected and supported, promoting staff wellbeing and health, and encouraging a culture that values individuals.



Host virtual coffee mornings – set a date and time and let colleagues join the session as and when they can, like they would in the workplace.



Send a regular staff/wellbeing newsletter – include snippets of news and points of interest (think: the sort of things that might have been caught up on in the kitchen or at the water cooler in the workplace) as well as work updates.



Direct people towards wellbeing resources – make sure there's clear signposting to wellbeing resources and information, inside and outside of the organisation.



Set up a dedicated wellbeing email or telephone line – somewhere employees can make easy contact should they need to. Make sure someone is available to answer this within a reasonable amount of time.



Adapt the induction for new staff and provide them with a 'buddy' – this can help new starters settle in when they can't meet colleagues face-to-face.



Provide wellbeing workshops – for example, Adult Learning provided hundreds of Norfolk County Council staff with workshops across a range of topics, to help them thrive and empower their health and wellbeing. Subjects included mindfulness, stretch yoga and British Sign Language.

You or your employees can find out more about the workshops Adult Learning offer by emailing adultlearning@norfolk.gov.uk

“I REALLY APPRECIATED THE SESSION

– I have thought for a while I need to take a few minutes to consciously relax and de-stress. Now I know some simple techniques, I’ll definitely do this in future. I feel much better for it.”



Mindfulness workshop participant



HOW EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING HELPS EVERYONE

IDEAS FROM VOLUNTARY NORFOLK

Do you offer your employees the opportunity to volunteer, or connect them with volunteering opportunities? Helping others can help them too, which in turn has benefits for your organisation.



Research from the Mental Health Foundation shows volunteering and helping others can benefit our own mental health and wellbeing, reduce stress, and improve our mood, self-esteem and happiness.



A survey by United Health Group shows that 94% of people who volunteered said it improved their mood.



Research also shows that feel-good hormones and brain activity are higher during volunteering activities: “Even people who suffer from mental illnesses can see improvement in their outlook and mental health through volunteering.”

Find volunteering opportunities

Voluntary Norfolk is dedicated to improving the lives of people and communities in Norfolk. They have a database of opportunities where your employees could find a volunteering role that’s right for them. Take a look at

www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk

onHand, the volunteering app, has also just launched in Norwich. It makes it simple for employees to find opportunities close to them and tracks the impact for corporates. Find more details at

www.beonhand.co.uk/onhand-for-work



WHY DOING GOOD MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD: THE SCIENCE

Doing something kind for someone else releases oxytocin, the love hormone. Employees don't even have to leave home if they don't want to. It's as easy as having a chat over the phone with someone who's feeling a little lonely.

If employees can leave the house, walking someone's dog, or popping to the pharmacy to grab medication for them, also gives the volunteer the bonus of getting some vitamin D and much-needed serotonin and endorphins.

Doing good deeds can boost productivity levels and motivation. When we tick something off our to-do lists, we usually feel good about it because of the compound dopamine.

Helping someone vulnerable can increase self-esteem. Studies show that volunteering boosts your sense of self-worth and can increase your confidence by giving you a sense of purpose.

Volunteering can give people more support during times of hardship. It helps build 'social capital', increasing people's access to help from others and creating a network of support for people to draw on to help them cope with difficult times. It cultivates resilience as people work together and help each other through hardship.

HELPING PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESSES THRIVE

GET EXPERT WELLBEING SUPPORT FROM BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Business in the Community (BITC) leads the way on workplace health and wellbeing. Our evidence-based methods help businesses promote both physical and psychological health, using a whole-person, whole-organisation approach.

To get started, take a look at the suite of toolkits we've developed alongside Public Health England. They can help you take positive actions and build a culture that champions good mental and physical health. You'll also find advice on how to help those who might need more support.



Diagnostic



Leadership
Engagement



Measurement
and Data



Line Manager
Training



Facilitated
Group Work



Policy and
Strategy



Research
and Insights



1:1 Advice and
Upskilling

Take a look here:

<https://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/take-a-whole-system-approach-to-health/>

You can also find our full range of handy, free resources at www.bitc.org.uk/wellbeing. Or find out more about our advisory service, if you'd like more hands-on assistance based on the needs of your organisation.

Want to get in touch? Call Kate Hinder on 07920 506231 or email kate.hinder@bitc.org.uk.



COULD YOU SUPPORT YOUR EMPLOYEES THROUGH LIFE'S MAJOR EVENTS?

AGE UK OFFERS A LATER LIFE PLANNING SERVICE

Age UK Norwich is a charity with 75 years' experience supporting local families as they get older. Whether your employees need support for themselves or their parents, Age UK Norwich's independent advice and hands-on help can give them the space to focus on their job and their loved ones.

Through our Later Life Planning Service, a dedicated advisor can give your employees information, advice, and practical help with areas including:

- **Housing**
- **Money and benefits**
- **Care options**
- **Bereavement**
- **Recovering from illness or injury**
- **Social activities and volunteering**
- **Planning for retirement**

To learn more, email Corporate Charity Relations Manager Jeremy Goss at jeremy.goss@ageuknorwich.org.uk

WOULD YOUR WORKPLACE BENEFIT FROM MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING?

RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS OFFERS TOOLS AND COURSES

Rethink Mental Illness is a charity that leads the way to a better life for everyone severely affected by mental illness. They support tens of thousands of people through their groups, services, advice and information. And they train employees, employers and members of the public on how best to support someone affected by mental illness. All of this work guides their campaigning for the rights of people with mental illness and their carers. Working alongside the people they support, Rethink Mental Illness is saving lives.

The organisation offers a range of tools and training to help employers better support and meet the mental health and wellbeing needs of their employees. This includes:

- **An employer's toolkit**
- **Training courses covering topics such as:**
 - Mental Health Awareness
 - Mental Health for Managers
 - Rethinking Resilience
 - Mental Health Champions
 - Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid
- **One-hour 'Lunch and Learn' sessions on topics such as:**
 - How to Have a Supportive Conversation
 - Managing Stress in the Workplace
- **Consultancy and communications support**

To learn more, visit

www.rethink.org/training or email
training@rethink.org



GET TOGETHER WITH THE NORWICH TOGETHER ALLIANCE

Are you a local business, not-for-profit or public sector organisation? Would you like to join The Norwich Together Alliance and collaborate on tackling the growing issue of loneliness in our city?

You could join the organisations shown below, and help make a meaningful change to the people of our city.



Interested in working together to combat loneliness and social isolation?
Get in touch to find out more...

NorwichTogether@bitc.org.uk

