

Malvern Hills District Council (MHDC)/Wychavon District Council Tackling Inactivity and Mental Health

A joint approach undertaken by both councils is to tackle inactivity within their workforce by supporting colleagues to improve their physical activity and health and wellbeing through advice, training, campaigns and programmes. The approach includes:

- Six Health and Wellbeing Champions from existing staff members were recruited and trained in Mental Health First Aid along with several managers and HR officers
- All service managers and Senior Management team attended Mental Health Awareness training. All staff were asked to complete a mandatory Mental Health Awareness e-learning course in support of this. Both councils rolled out another awareness course for team leaders/managers.
- A number of policies are available for staff to support their mental health and wellbeing including flexible working, opportunities to buy more leave, have a career break, work in a more agile way including, homeworking and one day per year to volunteer with a local charity.
- The councils offer free health MOTs, Heartstart training, menopause awareness training, flu jabs and organise 'walk and talk' events.
- The Physical Activity and Wellbeing Officer, supported by the champions, is a dedicated resource at MHDC supporting community and council staff to increase their physical activity, health and wellbeing.
- Throughout the year both councils celebrate and link in with a number of campaigns encouraging staff health and wellbeing.
- There is an Employee Assistance Programme which provides 24/7 advice and support online and over the telephone for concerns such as finance, relationships, work and health. Employees are also able to access face to face counselling through the EAP
- Staff are also actively encouraged to socialise through planned outings after work such as paddle boarding.



The Depot is an area of the council where staff sickness can be higher than average. Through proactive management of absence and a supportive and cooperative approach, the cost of absence at the Depot has been reduced over a two year period between 2017-19 and a number of long-term absence cases have also been positively resolved. To support healthy eating the councils have provided free fruit and hold dedicated briefings to staff at the Depot promoting health and wellbeing messages as they are hard to engage with electronically. Concentrated sessions have been held in relation to smoking as this is prevalent within this service area.



MHDC won the Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace award at the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce Business Awards in June 2018 and as a joint nomination, Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils were finalists in July 2019.

“Staff are now more physically active with an increased awareness on how to improve their own mental health through training, support, peer support and a variety of targeted activities”