

# March 2024 Newsletter



[www.ewensroom.co.uk](http://www.ewensroom.co.uk)

[info@ewensroom.com](mailto:info@ewensroom.com)

## Spring has begun...



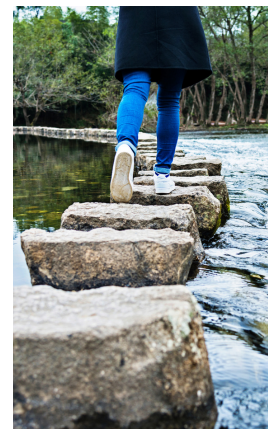
As we come into the season of spring, we sometimes make associations and think about what the new season may bring. Stereotypically spring is about the growth of new things with warming weather and flowers appearing from the desolation of winter. Spring has this connotation of starting something new and fresh opportunities. Winter as the predecessor to spring can be a challenging month for coping with our own mental health and wellbeing. The limited sunlight and colder weather can challenge some of us and we may feel desperate to see the buds of spring appear.

However, I think we need to acknowledge the fear and anxiety that can bring too. We may get used to our darkness and it may feel safe and the fear of putting ourselves out there for something new can make us want to creep back into winter. Spring may therefore bring hope and beauty but embracing that can be daunting. When we are in a dark place, we may want to see the glimmer of light but walking towards it can be very scary and we may stumble along the way. There are times when we are trying to get to the light, but we just feel stuck and although asking for help may speed up the process we become mute. Let's think about spring and how it must feel to be a bud growing and pushing out through slightly frosty mornings desperate to make an appearance. It is tough and maybe it's the only bud in its patch, but it makes it through, as do the buds in groups. They all have the core inner strength they need no matter if some bloom earlier than others alone or together.



We maybe don't need to be blooming, I think there is a lot of joy in seeing the shoots of spring and they deserve celebrating too. They are the first steps we are taking to try and find that glimmer of light and its ok if we stumble. I think for some of us that walk may feel never ending but the first step is always deciding to go on the journey knowing we deserve the light, and we deserve to bloom. In a very practical way, the steps may be talking to others, joining a group, getting out the house or seeking professional support. Every step may be taken with in trepidation, and it may be a bit wobbly like stepping stones or a swing bridge but with time, patience and lots of deep breaths we get there. There may be tears, grazes, falls and even laughter along the way but that's just one way we can recognise and face the fear and anxiety that sometimes lives in us all.

We want people to know that Open Doors provide one of those stepping stones, a place to pause on your journey with people who understand. If you want to embrace the theme of spring and try something new, then maybe trying Open Doors is something that could be useful. Coming along to a new place and seeing new faces may feel terrifying but we do our best to ensure everyone is greeted with a smile and there is never any pressure to talk. We are all unique and Open Doors can be useful for people in a variety of ways, maybe it helps with isolation or giving you a reason to get out the house for the day. Maybe you want to meet new people and connect with others in your community or have a non-judgemental chat about what's happening in your life in the past or the present.



So, let's celebrate spring but take it carefully as buds are fragile and we need to nurture their growth with patience and sometimes they need a little help.

## January Walk & Talk



It was fantastic to start 2024 with our January Walk & Talk focussing. Motivating ourselves as a staff to get outside was really beneficial as we all know how long January can feel. We ran a series of walks throughout January and it was fantastic to meet lots of new people and enjoy walking together, our family haggis scavenger hunt was also a great fun highlight. We may have not have made it around the coast of Scotland but we covered just about half the distance and had lots of positive experiences along the way.



We always aim to raise awareness of mental health but also offer practical solutions and support and getting outside is an accessible way to help so many of us with our own wellbeing. Living in beautiful Lochaber means we are spoilt for beautiful views however the weather sometimes stops us from really getting out. So this January we committed to getting outside and active no matter the weather, our wellies and waterproofs were well used but a few times the sunglasses made an appearance. We are thankful to everyone who supported this initiative and we are glad to say it will become an annual feature both to raise awareness and some funds. So if you walked and talked or donated or both thank you!



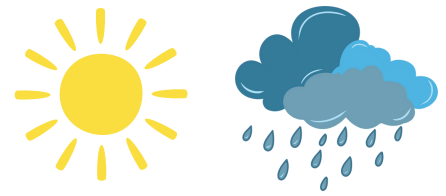
## Open Doors



All of our six Open Doors are now well established and up and running in Acharacle, Strontian, Fort William, Arisaig, Mallaig and Kinlochleven. Being able to offer weekly Open Doors across Lochaber has been a core part of What Ewen's Room represents since it began. Every Open Doors is unique and grows in accordance to the needs of the community it is within. Our aim is to provide a safe and non-judgemental space in which anyone is welcome. Check our facebook for the weekly What's On schedule.



# Whatever the Weather Walks



We are delighted that our Whatever the weather walks have become increasingly popular. Being outside can be refreshing and give us the physical breathing space that we sometimes need. Our walks are happening monthly and we try to keep them to a low level so they are accessible by most. Spean Bridge, Mallaig and Arisaig have been our usual walking spots so far but we hope to keep expanding these opportunities. We usually bring along a wee treat to energise ourselves and the chat is whatever it needs to be. Keep an eye on our facebook for any upcoming walks.



# FriendsDay Wednesday Returns!

We are delighted to have FriendsDay Wednesday started again in Acharacle. It is a safe space after school activity for young people to be creative, have fun and just enjoy themselves. This is so essential for our wellbeing as we grow. The smiles and enthusiasm of the young people every week are why it was so important for us to work out how to keep the group up and running.



# Youth Rugby



We are incredibly happy to be able to offer youth rugby in Acharacle and Mallaig. For young people social activities are so important for their wellbeing and for families having access to activities in your local area is beneficial. Building healthy habits and interests from childhood is so key to building resilience in our own wellbeing. Big thankyou as always to the amazing coaches who make this happen John in Acharacle and Rob in Mallaig. Thanks to everyone who makes it possible with the use of comm

# Bookbug



Ewen's Room is delighted to be able to deliver Bookbug sessions. It is great to engage families together in such a fun session. Connecting with other parents and carers is so important as parenting young children is a really tough and intense time. Not only are stories and songs fun for the children it can also but a smiles on the grown ups faces too! Helen has delievered fun Bookbug Sessions across the peninsular and Jenny is now also delivering sessions in Mallaig, we are delighted to be able to offer these additional sessions. We can find the joy in these things even it is amongst sleepless nights! So if you see a Ewen's Room Bookbug sessions come along and have some fun!

# Education Activities

We have been continuing to deliver our Wellbeing Heroes and Champions programmes in Lochaber schools. The young people are always so well engaged and really love the interactive elements of the programme. The programmes aim to enable young people not only to be comfortable in talking about their thoughts and feelings but also build their resilience. The programmes are very practical and provides ideas for how to deal with feelings to help support conversations. We are always so proud a how brave, honest and open the young people are. We are looking at developing our programme based on key themes which both schools and families have highlighted to us so we can continue to help children and young people feel positive in looking after their own mental fitness. Mallaig High School have just recently completed a block of training and we are seeing the impact of the programme develop there in similarity to Ardnarmurchan where the WellBeing Champions are exceptionally responsible and now well consolidated Thursday lunchtime session weekly.



# Counselling

We are delighted to be able to offer counselling both in schools and the community. We are very lucky to have two qualified and experienced counsellors. This is a service which is highly in demand in Lochaber and we are always doing our best to seek further funding to make our counselling services sustainable. Use our contact details below if you would like more information.

# Thankyou

We are always grateful and so appreciative of donations and fundraising events that people are kind enough to do for Ewen's Room. All the efforts really help us to continue our services and do make a difference in peoples lives. We would like to give a special shout out thankyou to both supporters and fundraisers. These are just some we need to mention: Lochaber Meeting, Jac-O-Bites in Mallaig, Wetherspoons in Fort William and The Clachaig in Glencoe, Prof.Hugh Cheape, Mowi, The Westword, Alexander Knapton , Nikki Fish and Robert Reid.



If you would like to get in touch about any of our services or activities then please get in touch.

**Phone: 01967 401130**

**Text: 07537 431637**

**Email: [info@ewensroom.com](mailto:info@ewensroom.com)**

**[www.ewensroom.co.uk](http://www.ewensroom.co.uk)**

**PROMOTING • EDUCATING • CONNECTING**

**Actively Improving Mental Wellbeing**

Scottish Charity no. SC048248

