



Thinking Well Prospectus

January-March 2024

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Who are we?

Thinking Well offers dedicated social, educational and clinical sessions across three areas in East Sussex for people with a diagnosis of Personality Disorder or have significant difficulties with managing emotional intensity. The service operates from local Wellbeing Centres in Lewes, Eastbourne and Bexhill. We are now offering mostly face-to-face groups.

The Thinking Well Service is part of the Personality Disorder Pathway in East Sussex, which includes care coordination provided by the Assessment and Treatment Services, as well as telephone, respite and crisis support provided by the Sanctuary.

The Thinking Well Service has been co-produced with service-users and aims to keep this co-production ethos at the heart of the service going forward. The service aims to work together with



What do we offer?

- Dedicated community support delivered by a team of recovery workers and peer workers.
- Clinical in-reach provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This is a specialist team including clinical psychologist, occupational therapist and senior nurse.
- Joint working between the two teams to provide a holistic service to members

The Thinking Well service is group based, offering pre-trauma stabilisation work and therapy. Group sessions will include social, creative, therapeutic and psychoeducational groups as well as community activities. The service offers a range of evidence-based interventions in a group format.

Our Philosophy



We aim to work collaboratively with members to build healthy relationships, and support them to develop coping skills.

We are compassionate about what people have been through and how they came to be where they are.

We are optimistic about people's capacity to change, build their strengths and develop their identity.

What is the 'Therapeutic Community' model?

The aim of a therapeutic community is to provide a safe, secure and nurturing space where members can learn to re-experience or re-work things that went wrong in early life. In a therapeutic community, they are able to practice emotional regulation and learn to build healthy relationships through 5 key areas:

- **Attachment** - *a culture of belonging*

- ★ Being welcomed and accepted as part of a community

- **Containment** - *a culture of safety*

- ★ This includes unconditional positive regard as well as clear boundaries which allow members to begin to practice self-containment

- **Communication** - *a culture of openness*

- ★ Open communication between all members of the community, including staff

- **Involvement and Inclusion** - *a culture of participation and citizenship*

- ★ Everything that happens and every interaction can be used to therapeutic effect in the real and "live" context of interpersonal relationships all around

- **Agency** - *a culture of empowerment*

- ★ A shared responsibility for all that happens within the community,





Online Resources

The Box

The Box is a useful resource for the Thinking Well community. The Box can be opened any time from computers or phones to access a range of Thinking Well materials.

The materials can help members to practice the skills they learn with Thinking Well. The Box can be accessed via the link below:

<https://southdown.app.box.com/v/tw-dresources>



Padlet

Padlet is an interactive website which we have begun using in an effort to help keep the community connected.

There is a private part of the website for members to post and a site that is open to all, where we post service updates, group timetables, and our monthly newsletter:

<https://padlet.com/thinkingwell/3mbwihj0tgwhkfs0>



Professionals Booklet

We have devised a work booklet for professionals, aimed at supporting you to work with clients who have a diagnosis of Personality Disorder.

The booklet contains a range of skills that can be used to support our members. A copy of this can be downloaded via the following link:

<https://southdown.box.com/s/cwmat199smexsvwkssfssdq0unhohbhp>

Referrals process

Referrals open for a limited period of time ahead of each Welcome Process. To refer, complete our referral form (this can be downloaded via the following link: <https://southdown.box.com/v/twreferralform>) and email it to Eastsussex.personalitydisorder@spft.nhs.uk

Referral criteria:

- A diagnosis of Personality Disorder
- Must be open to the ATS and have a lead practitioner
- May have tried or have been offered STEPPS and other support in secondary care but are thought to need a higher level of support in the community

Please note that we will undertake an assessment of the referred individual to evaluate their suitability for Thinking Well before inviting to the welcome group. Therefore, we advise that individuals are not told about the referrals until we have offered an assessment.

How we can support community teams

- Attend ward reviews
- Share formulations to help you understand your member and reinforce treatment goals
- Attend risk panels
- Update care plans collaboratively
- Support and arrange professionals' meetings
- Offer consultation
- Joint reviews

Thinking Well Timeline

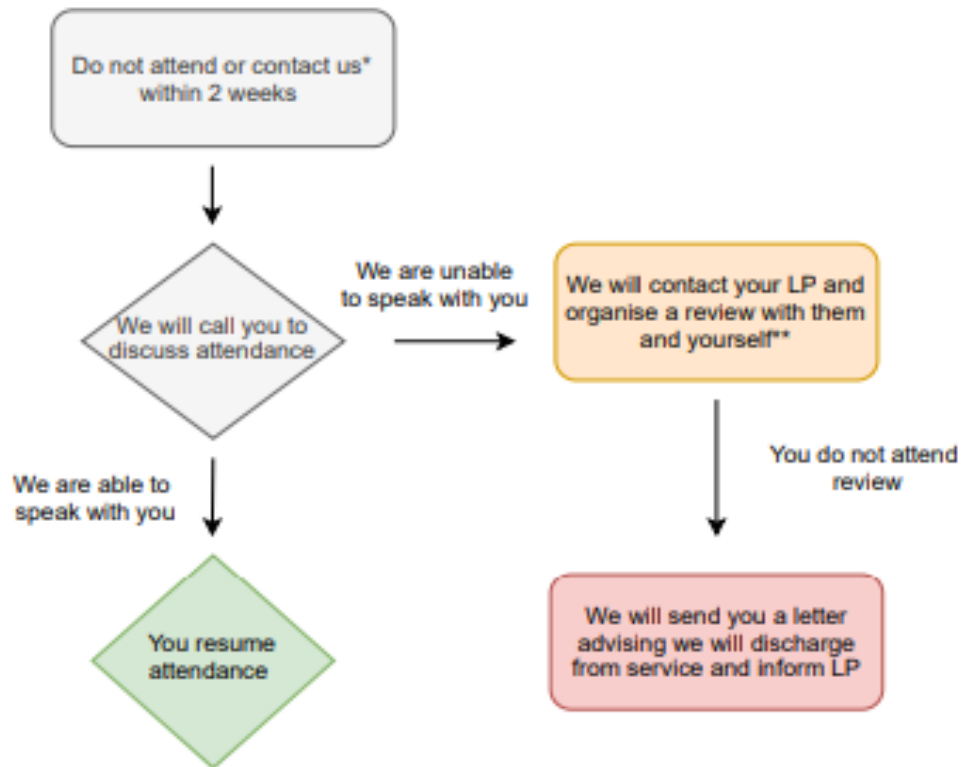
Members are usually with the service for up to three years. This typically includes three phases:



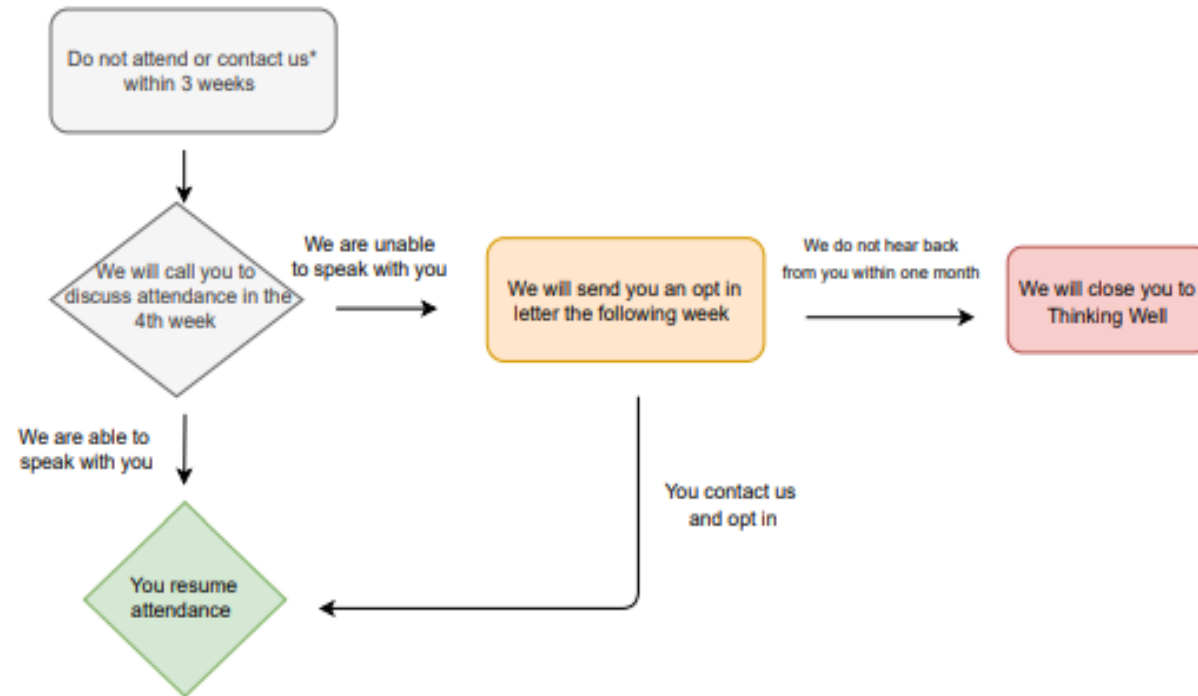
Engagement Policy

It is important that members regularly attend in order to get the most out of the service's resources as part of their recovery journey. Thinking Well has a limited number of spaces and it is therefore important that each individual is making the most out of their membership. Below are flow-charts illustrating our engagement policy:

First 6 months of attending Thinking Well



After 6 months of attending Thinking Well



*We expect you to contact us if there is a reason you will not be attending e.g. hospital stay or holiday



Thinking Well Phone Line

We have a Thinking Well phone line which members are able to call for support regarding their engagement or practical queries. This is not a psychological support line or emergency number. We are not a crisis service and we do not offer phone-based interventions.

Thinking Well Phone Line: 01323 405344

Phoneline boundaries:

- ✓ Members should use the phone line to discuss issues with engagement or practical difficulties.
- ✗ Members should not request specific members of staff.
- ✗ Members should not ring in crisis. In this case, they should ring their local ATS in the first instance.
- ✗ Members should not ring this line in an emergency.
- ✗ Members should not expect voicemails to be immediately responded to.

Welcome Process

Welcome Group and "Road to Recovery"

Following assessment, we invite new members to attend our Welcome Group. The group offers an opportunity for new members to meet staff, learn about the service and become used to group work before accessing the full range of groups on offer to the entire community.

The group provides a brief overview of the service including behaviour and engagement policies, an introduction to EUPD, an overview of our groups and therapies, and support with writing safety management plans. Senior members are present for some groups, to share their experiences of the service. After this course, members can then access the rest of the service.

Recently, we collaborated with our fellow members to develop our Thinking Well board game "Road to Recovery". We encourage both new and current members to join in playing this game, offering a fun way to explore the journey with Thinking Well.



Welcome Process

Safety Management Plan and Formulation

Following the welcome group, we would ask members to complete their safety management plan and meet with them individually to complete a formulation.

A formulation is a joint effort between the member and our service to summarise their difficulties, explain why they may be happening and to make sense of them. It may include past difficulties and experiences, if these are relevant to the present, and acknowledges members' strengths and resources.

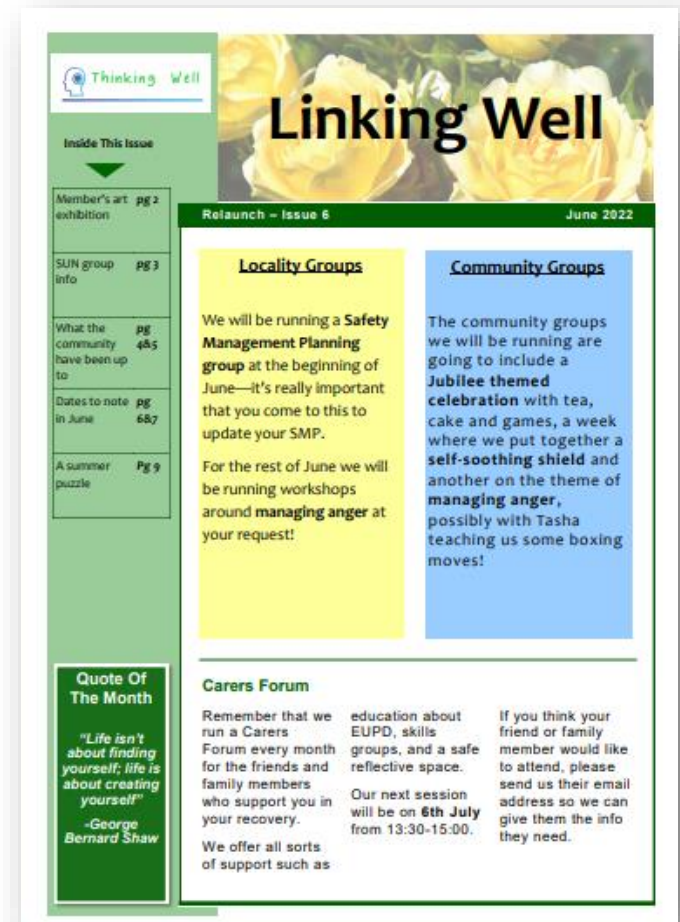
Formulations can inform us as to how we can best support members within our service and can be useful to other professionals involved in their care too. Safety Management Plans and Formulations can be shared with other professionals involved in the member's care to ensure that they are receiving consistent care across services.

Linking Well

Linking Well is Thinking Well's quarterly newsletter.

Linking Well encompasses all the latest updates and news at the Thinking Well service as well as all the fantastic work that is produced by our Thinking Well members which is a pleasure to see.

At Thinking Well, we are proud of the inclusion and empowerment that we are trying to develop. The members are all encouraged to send in items, articles, pictures, poems and tips.





There are many community groups on offer at Thinking Well. These are psycho-social and creative in nature, and may include groups such as arts & crafts, self-care, life skills, physical activities, cookery, and trips out to the local area.

The community programme at Thinking Well is important to help clients build their identity, connect to each other and the service, and to allow play. They allow members to:

- Interest share and find things they enjoy, which can contribute to sense of fulfilment and achievement.
- Take steps towards accessing well-being centres, voluntary work, education and employment.
- Build trusting, stable and boundaried relationships with each other.
- Experience and learn to value 'play' which may have been absent or not allowed in their childhood.
- Laugh through playing games together or messy play (e.g. during art/cooking).
- Put into practice some of the skills introduced in the psychoeducational groups.



Community Group

Group Length: Rolling group

When: Weekly

These groups are psycho-social and creative in nature, as outlined on the previous page.

Previous groups have included Macramé classes, cooking classes, interest sharing, arts and crafts, bullet journaling, and games such as Pictionary or Articulate. We offer a different topic each week; these are often suggested by members or are topics which link in to other Thinking Well groups such as the locality groups.

As detailed later on in the prospectus, senior members can design and lead these groups. This helps them to develop confidence and skills in peer work.

Committee Meeting

Group Length: Rolling group

When: Monthly

We regularly hold a committee meeting which is open to all members.

During these meetings we announce service updates and answer questions that members may have around any service changes. We might also identify any difficulties that the group are experiencing and explore how we can support members to overcome these.

In these meetings, we also encourage members to contribute their ideas and suggestions for the service.

We run psychoeducational “locality” groups on each area’s allocated day (Lewes: Monday, Bexhill: Tuesday and Eastbourne: Thursday). Examples include Recovery Through Activity sessions, relationships and boundaries, identity, self-care, and DBT skills workshops. The current and upcoming groups are below:

Upcoming Group - Structured Clinical Management

Each month, we have a rolling rota of different groups that we offer alongside therapy and community groups. We are running the workshops based on the SCM (Structured Clinical Management) model from January 2024 until June 2024. It is an evidence-based approach to care and treatment for people diagnosed or presenting with complex emotional needs. SCM group modules help you develop and use practical skills to cope with daily life problems, such as managing your emotions, relationship problems, such as feeling abandoned or sensitive to rejection, or behavioural difficulties, such as using alcohol, drugs or self-harm to cope with problems or unbearable feelings. There are 4 main modules, where you can learn and practice skills which relate to the problems you find yourself in coming up against in your life. These include:

Problem-solving, Mindfulness, Mentalising	Impulsivity and self-destructive behaviour
Emotion tolerance & Mood management	Enhancing relationships & mentalising attachment

Senior Members' Group

When we have a cohort of Senior Members who have completed therapy and are working towards an ending with Thinking Well, we run a Senior Member’s Group every month on Wednesday afternoons. This group involves therapy recaps, buddy group workshops and the Moving on Group. See pages 17 and 18 for more information about these.

We hope that once members have engaged in stabilisation group work with us for a year, they may want to think about therapy. The two main therapies offered by Thinking Well are MBT and Schema Therapy. These are both group-based therapies and we offer a one-year course.

Mentalisation-Based Treatment (MBT)

Mentalising is a capacity we develop in healthy and secure attachments as children to make sense of what is going on in our mind and the minds of others, particularly in close relationships. People with EUPD can struggle with mentalising, particularly when interactions with significant others trigger intense feelings, which may lead to negative assumptions about the intentions of others. Some people will feel overwhelmed and distressed by these feelings; other people might disconnect or dissociate.

MBT focuses on helping people to re-gain their mentalising i.e. to manage and understand what they are feeling and to think about the minds of others in a more balanced way.

Group members bring their own events to the group. This involves trying to make sense of their own and other people's reactions, and developing their ability to look at their interactions with others from different perspectives.

We combine MBT with psychodrama, which enhances mentalising skills by enabling group members to re-enact difficult encounters with others and to look at these from the outside.

The year-long MBT course has been offered to all localities. Lewes group started their therapy group in late 2022. Hastings group started their therapy group since the beginning of January 2023.



Schema Therapy

Schema therapy is a form of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) developed for people with more complex and ongoing emotional and relational problems. It seeks to identify 'schemas'.

Schemas are self-defeating, themes or patterns that keep repeating throughout a person's life. Schemas develop through childhood experiences and unhelpful schemas are developed when basic needs are not met. This can influence how individuals see themselves, how they interpret events and how they feel about the future.

When maladaptive schemas are activated, intense states occur, described in Schema Therapy as 'modes'. A mode is defined as the current emotional, cognitive, behavioural state that a person is in.

Group Schema Therapy utilises interpersonal, cognitive and behavioural techniques, as well as powerful experiential techniques (such as imagery re-scripting, chair-work, and roleplay) designed to provide corrective emotional experiences with the primary goal of helping individuals to get their needs met in healthier ways.

Eastbourne group started their Schema Therapy in late 2022. This will last for 12 months before the members join the Moving On group (see information on pg. 18).

When members have been with service for at least one year and are either in therapy or have completed therapy with us, they can opt-in to become a 'senior member'. This group will be run monthly and was launched since 25th January 2023. Some of the activities that senior members can take on are detailed below:

Peer-Led Groups

Senior members can design and facilitate community groups. Past peer-led groups have involved interest-sharing and games such as Articulate.

Senior members have also co-facilitated and consulted in the development of our specialist groups.

Service Development Forum

The service development forum runs once a month. Staff and senior members work collaboratively on new service developments and co-design aspects of the service.

The service development forum is central to the service running whilst also giving senior members the opportunity to develop skills that may be useful should they wish to undertake peer work in future.

Buddy Workshop

Buddy workshops provide training to senior members to take on buddy roles. 'Buddies' will support with the welcome process and with new members settling in. This provides the opportunity for senior members to build confidence in using and practicing skills they have learnt at Thinking Well, grow in self-esteem, feel a sense of purpose, and build skills to look at peer and volunteering work in future.

Presentations, Training and Interviews

Senior members have presented about their lived experience during our annual stakeholders' open day as well as during the Personality Disorder training run across Sussex Partnership NHS Trust.

Senior members are also involved in the interview process when recruiting new staff to the service.

The Moving On group takes place over the final months of members' time in Thinking Well. The group aims to help members to leave the service and transition into third sector care. We hope to support our members to continue to build up their lives, relationships and occupation over their final months.

The group provides a space to grieve the loss of Thinking Well, express feelings of anger, frustration or sadness about what might not have been achieved or at the loss of the service. The group aims to validate and acknowledge all feelings, and enable members to feel proud and grateful for what they have had, and able to say goodbye in as healthy a way as possible. Finally, there will be a graduation day, providing an opportunity for family, friends and professionals to recognise members' achievements within the service and to wish them well on the next part of their journey.

Topics covered in sessions include:

- Feelings about leaving/endings
- Taking stock of progress
- What still needs to change
- Building a memory box
- Key speakers from Recovery College, Southdown and People Participation to share how to access peer support and volunteer work
- Thinking about building a life outside of the service



We strongly encourage carers of Thinking Well members to join one of the two initial assessment sessions and the subsequent formulation sessions. We provide feedback on the members' individual experiences, needs and treatment goals to support their journey throughout the service.

We recognise the importance of offering a space for carers and supporters to gain a deeper understanding of Complex Emotional Needs and personality disorders. Additionally, connecting with fellow carers can provide opportunities to share experiences and improve their own well-being. **Carers and supporters can self-refer to a 6-week psychoeducational course run by East Sussex Complex Emotional Needs (CEN) team.**

- **Spring: 16th February - 22nd March 2024 (Fridays, 1-3pm)**
- **Summer: 20th May - 24th June 2024 (Mondays, 6-8pm)**
- **Autumn: 24th September - 29th October 2024 (Tuesdays, 6-8pm)**

Please email CERN@spft.nhs.uk leaving your name and a contact number indicating which course you would like to join, or if you require further information.

We also recommend all carers and supporters of Thinking Well members to sign up with **Care for the Carers**. By doing so, you can receive additional support beyond what Thinking Well can offer independently. To register with **Care for the Carers**, please visit cftc.org.uk or reach out to them through the contact information provided below:

Phone: 01323 738390 | Text: 07860 077300 | Email: info@cftc.org.uk