

April 2026 Newsletter

Hello Healthwatch members. Welcome to your May update, bringing together important health awareness dates, community news, and useful local resources to support you and your family.

Bank Holiday Pharmacy Opening Times

To help you plan ahead, please find details of pharmacies open over the Early May and Late May Bank Holiday weekends enclosed with this newsletter. These pharmacies will be available to support your urgent medication needs during the holidays.

Digital Support at St Helens Library Service

St Helens Library Service is offering digital support sessions to help residents build confidence using computers, smartphones, and online services.

Please see the enclosed flyer for full details on locations, dates, and how to access support.

Health Awareness Dates in May

May highlights a number of important national and international health awareness campaigns:

- Mental Health Awareness Week, First week of May - A focus on improving mental health, reducing stigma, and encouraging conversations.
- Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week, 4 – 10 May - Raising awareness of mental health conditions during pregnancy and the postnatal period.
- Deaf Awareness Week, 4 – 10 May - Promoting understanding, inclusion, and accessibility for deaf people.
- International Day of the Midwife, 5 May - Recognising the vital role midwives play in supporting families and communities.
- World Blood Cancer Day, 28 May - Increasing awareness of blood cancers and the importance of early diagnosis.
- World MS Day, 30 May - Highlighting multiple sclerosis and supporting those affected by the condition.

•

Living Well Bus Timetable

Please also find the Living Well Bus timetable enclosed. The bus offers local health information, advice, and support services, helping residents access care closer to home. Please see attached flyer for spring covid booster also.

Pharmacies open early May bank holiday and late May bank holiday 2026

Boots Pharmacy – Ravenhead Retail Park – St Helens, WA9 1JF

Monday 4th May 2026 09.00 – 17.00

Monday 25th May 2026 09.00 – 17.00

Millennium Pharmacy – Shaw Street – St Helens, WA10 1DG

Monday 4th May 2026 10.00 – 16.00

Monday 25th May 2026 10.00 – 16.00

Tesco Pharmacy – Linkway – St Helens, WA9 3AL

Monday 4th May 2026 10.00 – 16.00

Monday 25th May 2026 10.00 – 16.00



Digital Support

with St Helens Library Service



Join St Helens Library Service's Outreach Team and partners to learn about digital support available to help you improve your confidence using technology and the internet. Unlock a whole new world of resources and information at your fingertips.

Practice your digital skills with Learn My Way; collect a free Helping You Online Brochure; view and find out how to access our new library website, app and digital library; and find out more about educational courses from ACL.

Light refreshments will be served.



Friday 15th May
10:00am - 13:00pm
Rainford Village Hall
Drop in any time



Libraries
Development
Framework



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL





Maternal Mental Health Week 2026 May 4 to May 10

Maternal Mental Health Week is a week-long campaign dedicated to discussing mental health challenges experienced by parents during pregnancy and up to a year after birth. It aims to help families access information, care and support to recover and thrive and is organised by the Perinatal Mental Health Partnership UK (PMHP UK), which includes parents with lived experience and clinicians who advocate for maternal mental health awareness.

The official theme for 2026 is "A Decade of Voices". Marking ten years of progress and highlighting the importance of listening to women's experiences and needs regarding mental health. The week emphasises that it is ok for women to express their feelings and seek support.

Find out more: <https://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/get-involved/maternal-mental-health-awareness-week/>



Deaf Awareness Week 2026

4th to 10th May

Deaf Awareness Week 2026 is an annual event dedicated to raising awareness of the deaf and hard of hearing community, celebrating deaf culture and promoting inclusivity and accessibility. The theme "Right to understand – Together, we break barriers", emphasises the importance of removing communication obstacles and ensuring equal access to information, education and social participation for people with hearing loss.

More information: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/deaf-awareness>





International Midwives Day

5th May 2026

International Midwives Day (IDM) is observed annually on May 5th recognises the vital role of midwives in maternal and newborn health and to promote the profession worldwide. The official theme for 2026 is “One Million More Midwives”, emphasising the global shortage of midwives and the need for at least one million additional midwives to meet essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health (SRMNAH) needs during and after childbirth, including contraception, breastfeeding support and comprehensive reproductive health services.

More information: <https://internationalmidwives.org/>





Mental Health Awareness Week First full week in May

The journey to mental wellness is a vital part of our overall health. Mental Health Awareness Week serves as a crucial time to focus on and promote mental well-being, aiming to reduce stigma and encourage open conversations about mental health. This annual event is a call to awareness and action, providing the tools and resources needed for better mental health across communities.

What is Mental Health Awareness Week?

Mental Health Awareness Week is an annual event dedicated to increasing awareness about mental health and well-being. It seeks to educate the public on issues surrounding mental health, promote open dialogue, and encourage individuals to seek help if needed. The week is marked by activities, discussions, and outreach programs designed to break the stigma around mental health conditions.

More information: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/public-engagement/mental-health-awareness-week/support-mental-health-awareness-week-2026>





World Blood Cancer Day (WBCD) is an annual event established to highlight the impact of blood cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma, and to emphasise the importance of blood stem cell donation in saving lives. Leukemia affects white blood cells in the bone marrow, lymphoma develops in the lymphatic system, and myeloma originates in plasma cells, disrupting antibody production. Treatments include chemotherapy, radiation, immunotherapy, and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT), which often relies on donor stem cells.

More information: <https://bloodcancer.org.uk/>



World MS Day is an international awareness day dedicated to supporting people affected by multiple sclerosis (MS), raising awareness and advocating for better care and research. In 2026, it falls on Friday 30th May, though activities and campaigns often extend throughout May and into early June. The day is led by the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation (MSIF) and supported by organisations in over 100 countries.

Find out more: <https://worldmsday.org/about/>

Living Well Bus timetable.

10:00am – 4:00pm

LIVING WELL BUS

DATE

LOCATION

Friday, 1st May

Reeve Court

Thursday, 7th May

TBC

Tuesday, 12th May

TBC

Friday, 22nd May

TBC

Saturday, 23rd May

Queens Park Leisure Centre

Tuesday, 26th May

St Philip's Church, Parr

Friday, 29th May

Parish Church, Town Centre

Spring Covid booster: Who's eligible this year



Adults aged 75 and over (including anyone turning 75 by 30 June 2026)



Residents in care homes for older adults



People aged 6 months and over with a weakened immune system

Booking & key dates

HOW TO BOOK:

- Book online via the **NHS National Booking System**
- Or **call 119** if you can't get online
- You don't need to wait for an NHS invitation

KEY DATES:

- **Appointments available from April 13**
- **Last day to book: June 29**
- **Last appointments: June 30**

Examples of weakened immune system

Organ, bone marrow or stem-cell transplant patients

People on long-term systemic steroids

Those living with HIV

Patients on immunosuppressive or immunomodulating therapy

Anyone undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy

People with long-term immunosuppression treatment

Those with blood cancers such as leukaemia or lymphoma

People with genetic immune disorders

Source: NHS

Want to share an experience with us?

Have you accessed health and social care services in St Helens lately? Have your say about your experience by completing our survey.

Patient and service user stories help us to find out what local people think of the services they use - what's going well and what's not so good.

Information - We give you information about the care choices you have and help you to navigate the health and care system.

Scrutiny - What's good or not so good about the services you use? We gather the views and voices of local people and hold services to account.

Advocacy - If you need help to resolve a complaint about a health service, Healthwatch Advocacy could help.

Telephone: 0300 111 0007
Email: info@healthwatchsthelens.co.uk