**Issue 1 2021 Edition of Social, Wellbeing, EDI, Social Responsibility and Green Impact News**

[Wellbeing support during lockdown](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25626)

We know that some colleagues will be finding this latest lockdown challenging

[Wellbeing Lecture – Positive Psychology in Difficult Times](https://app.manchester.ac.uk/public/Login.aspx?PageRequest=/training/profile.aspx&Query=unitid%3d9203%26parentId%3d183%26returnId%3d183%26returntxt%3dReturn%2bTo%2bSearch%26returnQs%3d%253fterm%253dTSLD112%2526org%253d0%2526typeId%253d2&action=timeout)

Next week Sukh Pabial is coming back to deliver a wellbeing lecture - positive psychology in difficult times. Booking link above. To take place on Wednesday 20/01/2021, 13:00 - 14:00 on Zoom.

[PS in conversation: Flexible working](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25606)

On Tuesday, 26 January, 2021, 2.30pm – 3.30pm, Karen Heaton, HR Director, and Julian Skyrme, Director of Social Responsibility, will hold a session with a small group of colleagues to discuss the upcoming proposals for the University’s flexible working policy. Gemma Dale, Wellbeing and Engagement Manager, and Caroline Fellowes, HR Policy Manager, will also be present in the session. [Book your place](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ps-in-conversation-flexible-working-tickets-135697397569).

[Join the next meeting of our book club](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25570)

The book club will meet on Friday, 29 January from 12:30pm until 1:30pm

The next book is ‘The House of the Spirits‘ by Isabel Allende.

In a departure from our normal tradition, instead of starting with a recap of the previous book we are going to start with a discussion around what we read over the Xmas break, or what books we gave or received as gifts. Contact [Fiona.lynch@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Fiona.lynch@manchester.ac.uk) if you would like the Zoom link.

[Staff benefits update](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25602)

It’s the first staff benefits update of 2021 with updates on wellbeing support, Making a Difference Awards, WaterAid webinar, Rewarding Exceptional Performance, walking and free Mandarin taster sessions.

[Start your new year fitness regime with a Zoom](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25597)

The online store is now live for our #ActiveAnywhere courses with the Early Bird offer of eight weeks for the price of six commencing 11 January 2021.

[New Mandarin courses available](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25592)

Our next round of online courses will start from 18th January and run for 10 weeks, with the option to just take half of the course for greater flexibility.

[Information on our mental health support services](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25587)

We know that many of our staff will have found the announcement of the new lockdown restrictions difficult.

[2021 Diversity Calendar now available](https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=25578)

The 2021 calendar takes on a different format to reflect our current working practices and will be exclusively available online as an editable pdf.

[Action for Happiness – Happier January Calendar](https://www.actionforhappiness.org/happier-january)

How can we start this New Year happier? Things have certainly not been easy over the last year, and we are still in difficult and uncertain times. The best way to try to handle our difficult emotions and experiences is by focusing on what we can control. This month, we're encouraging everyone to focus on small steps to try to boost happiness – for ourselves and others around us – to spread kindness and hopefully inspire others to do the same.

Action for Happiness has some upcoming events you might be interested in:

* Weds 13 Jan: [Ruby Wax](https://actionforhappiness.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=38ea3e7c0a12909b5f17eb1ed&id=1121c26024&e=a0d0bb6dff) - Beyond Frazzled
* Thurs 28 Jan: [Shamash Alidina](https://actionforhappiness.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=38ea3e7c0a12909b5f17eb1ed&id=83840571f7&e=a0d0bb6dff) - Mindfulness Made Easy

[RED January - give your mental wellbeing a sporting chance this January](https://www.joinredjan.co.uk/)

Whether you run, swim, cycle, or choose your favourite fitness activity, set your goal and enjoy support from the RED community every step, splash and pedal of the way! Let's kick start 2021 in a positive way and raise funds for RED January’s official charity partner, Sport in Mind, the mental health charity that use sport to empower and improve people’s lives. Sign up for FREE [here](https://www.joinredjan.co.uk/).

[Free January Wellbeing Webinars From Happiful and RED January](https://happiful.com/happiful-and-red-january-by-your-side-in-2021/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=week_20_52)

We’re delighted to share our weekly programme of free webinars with Happiful's wellbeing experts in partnership with RED January.

[Looking for new activities to enjoy as part of your RED January experience?](https://www.joinredjan.co.uk/stats.axd?clthru=5ffddf692251ad07e43de917|https://play.decathlon.co.uk/activities?RED-January)

Decathlon UK have put together daily online activities for you to enjoy, including yoga, strength and stability and circuit workouts. Find something you enjoy or embrace a new activity here.

[Happy Mondays star Bez to launch lockdown fitness classes like Joe Wicks](https://ilovemanchester.com/happy-mondays-bez-fitness-classes)

After “mainly sitting on the sofa” during the pandemic, the star will launch YouTube fitness classes called Get Buzzin’ With Bez, which will launch on YouTube on 17th January, and Bez will encourage us to ‘step on’ every week for three months.

[Q&A with Physiotherapist Louisa Djuric organised by Innerfit](https://innerfit.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1345fa7327285de0d2854c89d&id=33476508b3&e=0ce4e36291)

Visit the recording of the session held on 12th January here.

[Give Blood – your NHS needs you this winter](https://www.blood.co.uk/)

This winter, we are facing extra challenges to provide hospitals with the blood, plasma and platelets they need. Please help your NHS by booking an appointment to donate in the next 3 months.

[GM Health Hub – Let’s Stop Smoking Together](https://www.gmhealthhub.org/smoking)

Stopping smoking is good for your health, your pocket and your peace of mind. With the help of stop smoking services, you’re even more likely to quit for good. And that means the world to people who love you.

[NHS Better Health – Kickstart your health](https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/?WT.mc_ID=SEARCH_HOME&)

Healthy changes start with little changes. Whether you want to lose weight, get active or quit smoking, Better Health is here with lots of free tools and support. You can also find simple ways to lift your mood with Every Mind Matters. There has never been a better time to kickstart your health. Let’s do this!

[Manchester – Let’s Meditate](https://www.manchestermeditates.com/)

This is a new community of mindfulness and meditation teachers and events in Manchester in response to the effects of the COVID pandemic. It's starting up in February, but you can register your interest now. Feel free to share with anyone and everyone :)

[RSPB Nature Calendar](https://community.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/b/natureshomemagazine/posts/connecting-to-nature-in-winter?utm_source=notes_on_nature_210109&utm_medium=email&utm_term=&utm_content=15&utm_campaign=notes_on_nature)

Our nature calendar has been created to help you stay connected throughout the next month and beyond, and we would love to hear about your relationship with the natural world and how it changes during winter.

[Big Garden Birdwatch](https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/)

Join in from 29 - 31 January. Enjoy an hour with nature and discover the wildlife on your doorstep. [Sign up](https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/packrequest/) for all you need to take part, including your free guide, help with identifying what you see and expert advice on feeding the birds.

[10 secret walks around Greater Manchester](https://ilovemanchester.com/secret-walks-parks-greater-manchester)

The least reviewed but best rated parks, reservoirs and nature reserves for a quiet walk.

[Levenshulme group to transform former bowling green into community garden](https://ilovemanchester.com/levenshulme-park-community-garden?mc_cid=6f23ba8577&mc_eid=f86f6b0f4f)

The local Friends of Chapel Street Park group want to create areas dedicated to vegetable growing, wildlife and wellbeing - and you can help.

[Greater Manchester musicians play virtual festival to fight food poverty](https://ilovemanchester.com/music-feeds-virtual-festival)

Performances by bands including Blossoms and The Slow Readers Club will raise funds for FareShare, Stagehand and Help Musicians. Music Feeds takes place during the evenings of 28th and 29th January 2021, with a single £15 ticket giving access to both nights. More information and tickets available at [MusicFeeds.org](https://musicfeeds.org/).

[Manchester brewery launches charity calendar to help local food banks](https://ilovemanchester.com/joseph-holt-charity-calendar-food-banks?mc_cid=45efdb2a6a&mc_eid=f86f6b0f4f)

The calendar features uplifting images drawn by local children, and will raise money for six North West food banks: Mustard Tree in Ancoats, Compassion Acts in Southport, Lucie’s Pantry in Salford, Atherton & Leigh Foodbank, Stockport Foodbank and Porch Boxes in Bury. The calendar is now being sold for £5 through all Joseph Holt pubs and the company online shop, [Holts at Home](https://www.joseph-holt.com/shop/joseph-holt-2021-charity-calendar).

[Photo book of Manchester life in lockdown to raise money for homeless](https://ilovemanchester.com/photo-book-lockdown-support-homeless)

Manchester photographer Sushil Nash collected images and emotional stories from people across the city after asking for submissions.

Stay Home: Manchester is available to pre-order now at [stayhomemanchester.com](http://www.stayhomemanchester.com/) until 31st January 2021, with copies arriving in February.

[Winter Book Challenge 2021](https://irisreading.com/winter-book-challenge-2021/)

I recently issued a Winter Book Challenge encouraging participants from my Speed Reading & Memory Workshops to read more than they did last year. From most difficult to least difficult, these [Reading Challenges for 2021](https://email.irisreading.com/send/l/SkK3baaOtehO6byZH0CMAA/f16WRZQrGxUPOetGruwrqA/StUGa7dD9Fob763gflZieDuA) have been posted to our blog with tips, strategies and even some book recommendations:

* + 30 Books in 30 Days
  + 52 Books in 52 Weeks
  + 12 Books in 12 Months
  + 365 Chapters in 365 Days (Reading Tolstoy's Classic, War and Peace)

I hope this challenge reinvigorates your passion for reading and leads you to an amazing year ahead. Have a happy, healthy and productive New Year!

Paul Nowak Founder | Iris Reading Direct: 312-857-4747

[Manchester Science Festival](https://www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk/manchester-science-festival?utm_source=Wordfly&utm_medium=MSF%20email&utm_campaign=Event%20%3D%20MSF%20announcement%20Date%20%3D%2014%2F09%2F20&utm_content=version_A&sourceNumber=18735)

Manchester Science Festival returns from Friday 12 – Sunday 21 February 2021 with a programme of digital events and socially distanced experiences that explore our changing climate and ideas for a better world.

[Race for Life is back in Manchester in 2021 – with socially distanced measures](https://ilovemanchester.com/race-for-life-manchester-2021?mc_cid=6f23ba8577&mc_eid=f86f6b0f4f)

Money raised will help scientists find new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer, helping to save more lives. The Manchester Race for Life events take place at Heaton Park on Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th July 2021, and are open to people of all ages and abilities.

**Links to other relevant mailings:**

[Manchester Strollers Weekly Update, 8 January 2021](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=52786)