

# SURF THERAPY COULD HOLD THE KEY TO IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AT A TIME OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

*The UK is at a tipping point when it comes to mental health. It is a national emergency and we need to take action to turn the tide.*

LONDON, KENT, UNITED KINGDOM, January 25, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The UK is at a tipping point when it comes to mental health. It is a national emergency and we need to take action to turn the tide. Recent figures highlight the alarming growth of mental health issues, with a 16% increase in people using NHS mental health services and 1.8 million people on waiting lists for mental health support. What is equally alarming is the 30% rise in use by under-18s.1 With the NHS at breaking point, we simply have to find alternative solutions to equip people with the tools, mindset and safe spaces to overcome mental health issues. Surf therapy is, without doubt, one of them.



The Seahive

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Mental Health stats

Such is its proven benefits, NHS Mental Health Trusts are beginning to prescribe surf therapy to young people as part of addressing mental health challenges. The healing, therapeutic powers of surfing - and being in and around moving water - are profound. Not only does it reduce stress and anxiety, but it bolsters confidence and resilience in a safe, non-judgemental and supportive environment; key values which are transferable into everyday life. It's also brilliant fun. So it's therapy without feeling like it.

Testament to the life-changing benefits is the Surfwell scheme run by Devon and Cornwall Police. At a time when 69% of frontline emergency service responders said their mental health had deteriorated since the pandemic<sup>2</sup>, Surfwell offers relief and support from stress or traumatic experiences for emergency workers in the police, ambulance, fire and coastguard services via a hugely impactful, evidence-based surf therapy programme which features group



Club house - The Seahive

discussions, surfing and mindfulness activities in a highly supportive, collaborative environment. Benefits have proven to be enormous, enabling participants to (re)-build emotional resilience and overcome trauma such that they can cope with the daily pressures of their work with renewed optimism whilst improving performance and overall wellbeing.

Equally successful and transformative is the Wave Project, which supports over 2,000 children each year who struggle with mental health. Their pioneering surf therapy programmes have positively impacted the lives of many kids who have been able to build greater self-belief and resilience, cultivate stronger friendship groups and support networks, and establish more positivity, courage and ambition in terms of their futures. Their programmes have also, undoubtedly, saved lives.

Surf therapy is also proven to be a hugely effective treatment for many others dealing with trauma and depression (Resurface UK) as well as people recovering from cancer, veterans with PTSD and stroke victims.

The healing power of blue health is central to an exciting new scheme planned in Kent, which will see the creation of a surf wellness resort on the site of a former colliery in Bettershanger Country Park, near Deal. The Seahive will feature a Wavegarden Cove surf lagoon at its centre, which can generate over 20 different wave types from 50cm to 2m, providing rides of up to 15 seconds long for all ages and abilities.

At its core, the controlled environment of The Seahive will leverage the proven power and therapeutic benefits of blue health to improve and support positive mental wellbeing at an inflexion point in time where it has become a national crisis. A dedicated learning hive will run a full-time schedule of courses to support local children via surf therapy and educational intervention programmes to enhance and protect their mental health.

As part of their social impact and community focus, The Seahive also plans to run holiday camps for local underprivileged kids as part of the government's 'Holiday Activities and Food

Programme', offer free space to selected charities who are aligned with their therapeutic and educational objectives, provide a meaningful number free surf sessions to local schools as part of organised trips, and offer numerous apprenticeship opportunities with priority to school leavers within the local area. It also plans to organise ocean safety and awareness courses as well as arrange outdoor learning programmes to encourage young people to reconnect with the great outdoors, leveraging some of the philosophy from the Green School, where founder Jim Storey has been educating his kids for the past 18 months.

Jim Storey, Founder and CEO of The Seahive, said: "My vision has always been far greater than just creating an inland surf lagoon. The Seahive is a purpose-driven, inclusive destination anchored around the power of blue health and its impact on both physical and mental wellbeing."

"Through running surf therapy programmes, I don't just believe or hope that The Seahive can create positive life-changing outcomes for children – and adults - who struggle with anxiety, confidence, social exclusion, depression, bereavement, or even suicidal thoughts. I know it can. It is a critical component of the scheme."

The growth of mental health issues has to be addressed and with NHS services stretched to capacity and under 'unsustainable pressure' projects such as The Seahive have never been more important, particularly for young people.

1 <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2022-follow-up-to-the-2017-survey#highlights>

2 <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/mind-survey-reveals-toll-of-pandemic-on-ambulance-workers-mental-health/>

For more information about The Seahive visit [www.theseahive.com](http://www.theseahive.com)

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