

Newsletter from

THE ARCHITECTS' MENTAL WELLBEING FORUM

AMWF

INTRODUCTION

This is the first newsletter from the Architects' Mental Wellbeing Forum which was set up in 2018 by Ben Channon of Assael Architecture in response to alarming stories and statistics relating to mental health issues in the studying and practicing of architecture. Representatives from leading practices are joined by the RIBA and Architects' Benevolent Society, to talk freely about our profession, its practices and how we can better serve our current peers and those aspiring to join our ranks in terms of mental wellbeing.

Some of the key issues that we have identified are:

- Long hours and undervaluing ourselves
- Poor self-care
- Poor work-life balance
- Striving for perfection.

We believe that this toxic mix starts in schools of architecture then follows us through to the workplace.

One of the first things the Forum will be producing is a 'Toolkit for Practices' providing guidance for architects and employers on how to promote healthy mental wellbeing within the workplace. If you want to be kept informed of progress, the contact details are at the bottom of the page.

We have been overwhelmed with interest from practices and individuals who want to get involved with the Forum. Sadly we have to cap numbers at the moment but please do leave your details if you want to hear more from us, be invited to events, have useful contacts or insights for us, or are just generally interested in keeping your finger on the throbbing temple of mental health awareness. You can also follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

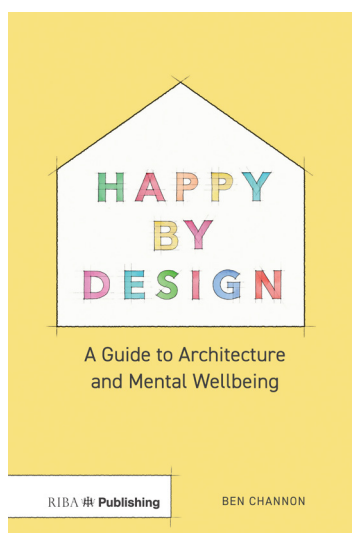
ABS
AHMM
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DARLING
ASSOCIATES
GLENN HOWELLS
HAWKINS BROWN
HTA DESIGN
KSR ARCHITECTS
MAKE ARCHITECTS
ORMS
PDP LONDON
RIBA

HAPPY TO BE LAUNCHING A BOOK

We are thrilled to announce that our very own Ben Channon's book 'Happy By Design' is being launched on 4 October. Published by RIBA Publishing, the book explores the way in which buildings, spaces and cities affect our moods, and proposes ways that we can design happier spaces that support good mental health.

Presented through a series of easy-to-understand design tips and accompanied by beautiful diagrams and illustrations, Happy by Design is a fantastic resource for architects, designers and students, or for anybody who would like to better understand the relationship between buildings and happiness. The book is available from RIBA Bookshops:

<https://www.ribabookshops.com/item/happy-by-design-a-guide-to-architecture-and-mental-wellbeing/40070/>



ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS – ANXIOUS BUT CARING

The Forum is very pleased to welcome **Melissa Kirkpatrick** who is just concluding her Masters at Sheffield University with her dissertation 'What impact do studio tutors and studio culture have on architecture students' mental health?' She has examined the statistics relating to mental health issues in schools of architecture and compared them with those of the average student in order to establish whether we really are 'special'. Guess what? We are!

Initial findings were that Architecture students are 31% more likely to say they experienced Anxiety than the average student and 43% more likely to say they experienced Panic. But interestingly, we are a caring, sharing group as Architecture students are 13% more likely to say they have told friends about their mental distress. We look forward to publishing some highlights from this important research in our next Newsletter.

Melissa was supported by the Architects Benevolent Society (<http://absnet.org.uk>) in her research, and will be presenting her findings on 10th October, World Mental Health Day at 'Must Do Better: Architecture, Students and Wellbeing' an event organised by RIBA and ABS, hosted by the University of Sheffield. Find out more and sign up to attend at <http://bit.ly/sheffieldmhd>.

ABS can help

Call 020 7580 2823

or email help@absnet.org.uk

THERE IS HELP OUT THERE

And whilst we mention **ABS**, did you know that they are able to offer mental health support to anyone who has worked for over a year in the UK in architecture, architectural technology or landscape architecture, and is experiencing stress, anxiety or anxiety based depression?

Through their partnership with Anxiety UK, they can give quick access to:

- Helpline support
- Email support
- Wellbeing assessment (including one year's membership to Anxiety UK)
- One to one therapy (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - CBT, counselling, clinical hypnotherapy, acupuncture) via a network of approved therapists.

Please spread the word!

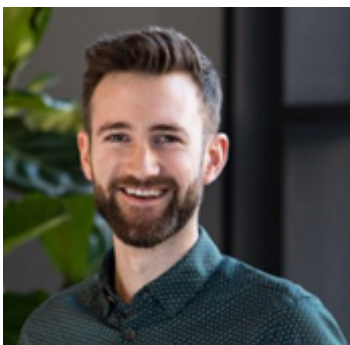
Join our social media campaign!



AND FINALLY...

We are so proud that our very own **Ben Channon**, Senior Architect and Mental Wellbeing Ambassador at Assael, has been shortlisted in **Construction News' Talent Awards 2018**. As a finalist for the Health & Wellbeing Leader of the Year category, Ben has been recognised for his contribution to mental health awareness within the built environment and the architectural profession.

We wish him success!



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@AMWForum