# MAD WORLD 2026

*Mental Health and Wellbeing at Work Summit*

Thursday 26th November, Convene, 155 Bishopsgate, London

## REGISTRATION, BREAKFAST & NETWORKING EXHIBITION · *08:00 to 09:00*

**08:00**

### Networking Breakfast and Exhibition

Doors open for registration, a hosted networking breakfast and the exhibition. The exhibition hall is open from the start of the day. Sponsors and exhibitors are available for conversation from 08:00, with a dedicated 1-to-1 meeting schedule running throughout the morning for delegates who have pre-booked time with exhibitors or sponsors.

**09:00** *Delegates move to main auditorium*

## MORNING PLENARY · *One Track · 09:00 to 10:30*

**09:00** **OPENING ADDRESS**

### Welcome to MAD World 2026

The chair welcomes delegates, sets the tone for the day and names what the room has in common: a shared belief that work can and should be better for the people doing it. A brief provocation to frame the day ahead, not a summary of what is coming but a challenge about what each person here is prepared to do differently by the time they leave.

**Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee**, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor

**09:10** **KEYNOTE**

### Taking Stock of Workplace Mental Health

After more than two decades of workplace mental health moving up the organisational agenda, where do we stand today? This keynote offers an honest stocktake of the current landscape, examining where meaningful progress has been made, where the evidence suggests change has stalled, and the challenges that

continue to shape the relationship between work and health. Looking beyond the headlines, it reflects on how attitudes have shifted, where organisations have made genuine advances, where significant gaps remain, and what the wider picture tells us about the future of workplace wellbeing, providing a clear, evidence-based assessment of the state of the nation and setting the context for the conversations that follow throughout the day.

**Dame Carol Black, GBE**

**09:30** IN CONVERSATION WITH

## Reimagining the Workplace ' how smart design and wellbeing strategies can help drive performance

Hybrid working didn't create workplace exclusion, it just made it visible. This conversation looks at what years of distributed work have exposed about offices and systems never really built with everyone in mind. It pushes past a narrow, accessibility-as-compliance view to explore what inclusive design really means: neurodivergent employees, different working styles, different life stages. And it grounds the case in evidence, unpacking what the data actually shows about the link between physical environment and retention, engagement and performance.

**Helen Beebe**, Managing Director, AJ Products
In conversation with
**Dr John Briffa,** Medical Doctor and Author

**10:00** FIRESIDE CONVERSATION

## The AI Question: What Is It Doing to Us?

Beyond the productivity debate lies a harder conversation: what is constant connectivity, algorithmic pressure and AI-mediated work actually doing to human cognition, identity and mental health? This fireside brings together an expert in digital wellbeing and a senior people leader for an honest exchange. Not a pitch for solutions, but a genuine grappling with the problem. The conversation covers hybrid fatigue, notification culture, the erosion of cognitive recovery time, and what digital wellbeing genuinely requires from employers as distinct from individual discipline.

**Petra Velzeboer**, Author, Digital Wellbeing
In Conversation with
**Sheikha Maytha Bint Maktoum**, Founder, MindFriend

**10:30** *Morning Break · 40 Minutes · Exhibition Hall Open · 1-to-1 Sponsor Meetings Active*

## PRE-LUNCH · TWO CONCURRENT TRACKS · *11:10 to 12:30*

| | TRACK A · STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP | TRACK B · PRACTICE & CULTURE |
|---|---|---|
| | **Chair: Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee**, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor | **Chair: Emily Warren,** Founder and Director, Flourisher |
| **11:10** | **PANEL DISCUSSION**<br><br>**Making the Case: How Do You Get Leadership to Actually Care?**<br><br>The most consistently cited frustration from wellbeing and HR professionals is the gap between evidence and action at board level. This panel opens with two short data-led case studies from practitioners who have built the business case successfully, then broadens into a frank discussion about what actually works. What data convinced decision-makers? What language landed? What failed completely? Panellists bring a CEO perspective, a wellbeing lead with measurable outcomes to share, and someone prepared to present the data from an initiative that did not deliver.<br><br>Moderator: **Bob Hughes,** Board Member, Engage for Success<br>Speakers:<br>**Susan Gee**, Head of Occupational Health & Wellbeing, Yorkshire Water Services<br>**Peter Cheese**, Former Chief Executive, CIPD<br>**Hayley Farrell**, Global Health Safety Wellbeing Director, Arcadis<br>**Claire Joseph,** Wellbeing Manager, Pinset Masons | **Interview**<br><br>**Good Mental Health as a Performance Strategy: Reframing the Whole Conversation**<br><br>The workplace wellbeing conversation is dominated by crisis, deficit and damage limitation. This panel argues for a different starting point: that good mental health is not the absence of illness but an active state that drives better performance, stronger relationships, more creative thinking and more resilient organisations. What does it look like to build for positive mental health rather than simply treating poor mental health? How do leaders normalise talking about mental wellbeing in the same breath as results and culture? And what happens to the data when organisations make that shift?<br><br>Moderator: **Navneet Rai**, Principal Business Psychologist, Flowy Consulting<br>**Lauren Lunniss,** Health & Wellbeing Manager, BNP Paribas |
| **11:50** | **IN CONVERSATION WITH** | **FIRESIDE CONVERSATION** |

### I Got It Wrong: What It Actually Takes to Change a Culture

Opens with a 10-minute structured case study: specific initiatives, specific data, specific outcomes both positive and negative. The senior executive then stays on stage for an extended conversation that goes deeper into the decisions behind the data. Not a polished retrospective but a genuine account of what systemic change costs, what breaks along the way, and what the numbers do and do not capture. Delegates receive a one-page takeout of the key data and learning points.

Speakers:
**Annisha** Taylor, Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Ofcom
In conversation with
**Louise Wilkinson**, Founder, Culture Minds

### Benefits Design and Financial Wellbeing: What Employers Can Actually Do

Opens with a 10-minute data-led overview: the statistics on financial stress and mental health, what benefits packages currently look like versus what employees say they need, and what the evidence shows about which interventions work. The fireside then examines what meaningful benefits design looks like in practice: moving beyond generic EAP signposting, connecting financial, physical and mental health support, and what personalised provision actually requires. Delegates leave with a practical framework for auditing their own benefits offer.

**Jane Clifford,** People Director, Brewers Decorator Centres
In conversation with **Jane Vivier**

**12:20** *Lunch · 1 hour · Buffet in Exhibition Hall · 1-to-1 Sponsor Meetings Active*

## POST-LUNCH · TWO CONCURRENT TRACKS · *13:20 to 14:35*

| TRACK A · STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP | TRACK B · PRACTICE & CULTURE |
|---|---|

**13:20**

**PANEL DISCUSSION**

### From Risk Assessment to Real Change: Psychosocial Hazards in Practice

The regulatory landscape around psychosocial risk is shifting, but most organisations are still treating it as a compliance exercise rather than a genuine lever for culture change. This panel brings

**PANEL DISCUSSION**

### Men's Mental Health: Why Generic Wellbeing Fails Half the Workforce

Men remain significantly harder to reach through conventional wellbeing programmes and the gap is widening. This panel is a direct, unvarnished conversation about why that is, what

together practitioners who have moved beyond tick-box risk assessments to systemic approaches. What does a meaningful psychosocial hazard framework look like from end to end? How do you win management buy-in when the evidence feels abstract? What do measurable outcomes actually look like, and what do you do when the results are disappointing? Contributors bring perspectives from organisations at different stages of the journey.

**Kerrie Smith,** Global Health and Wellbeing Lead, Mace
**Sally Belcher,** Wellbeing Director, The Crown Estate
**Laura Hague,** EHS Director, Mott MacDonald,
In conversation with **Nathan Palmer**, Senior Consultant, Affinity Health at Work

approaches have broken through, and what the workplace can realistically do. Contributors address the cultural and social dynamics that make men reluctant to engage, what peer-led and community-based approaches look like in practice, and the difficult question of how to create safe spaces before a crisis point rather than after.

Moderator: **Gemma Gardner**
Founder, AURIS™ Framework

Speakers:
**Jamie Broadley,** Head of Health & Wellbeing, Serco Group plc
**Fiona McAslan**, Head of Wellbeing and Occupational Health, Royal Mail Group
**Dr. Dapo Olafimihan,** Lead Clinical Psychologist, Latitude Psychology
**James Sutton**, Founder, Protocol
**James Elliott**, Psychotherapist & Mental Resilience Coach, Think Yourself Resilient

**14:05**

CASE STUDY

## Building Modern Occupational Health Services: Lessons from the European Patent Office's Transformation

This session examines how the European Patent Office redesigned its Occupational Health and Wellbeing services to create a digitally enabled, trusted and employee-centred operating model. Through a practical case study, it explores the role of governance, AI, digital self-service and integrated HR workflows in delivering more efficient, accessible and sustainable services while safeguarding sensitive health data and supporting a hybrid organisation.

**Silvia Analia Echagüe-Wehling,**
Director People Services and Well-being - D423, European Patent Office

INTERVIEW

## Inclusion, DEI and the Geopolitical Moment: Holding the Line When the Ground Is Shifting

Opens with a 10-minute case study presenting real data: what happened to psychological safety scores, engagement, and mental health indicators in an organisation that navigated DEI pressure publicly. The fireside then broadens the conversation to examine what employers face more widely: the direct connections between inclusion commitments, psychological safety and employee mental health, how different communities are experiencing the current climate, and what leadership on inclusion looks like when the external environment feels hostile.

Interviewer: **Emily Warren,** Founder and Director, Flourisher
**Simon Blake** OBE, CEO, Stonewall

**14:30** *Afternoon Break · 40 Minutes · Exhibition Hall Open · 1-to-1 Sponsor Meetings Active*

# WORKSHOP ROUND ONE · CHOOSE ONE OF THREE ·

*15:10 to 15:55*

| | WORKSHOP A | WORKSHOP B | ROUNDTABLE C |
|---|---|---|---|
| **15:10** | **WORKSHOP**<br><br>**WORKSHOP A1**<br><br>**Burnout: Spotting It, Stopping It, and Building Systems That Do Not Create It**<br><br>This workshop moves away from individual resilience frameworks and into organisational design. Working in small groups, delegates map the conditions in their own organisations that generate burnout risk: workload, role clarity, autonomy, recognition, fairness, community. Using real examples brought by participants, the group develops a practical prevention framework that targets the system rather than the symptom. Output: a draft intervention map each delegate takes away. Facilitated small-group workshop. Chatham House rules.<br><br>Workshop Lead: **Louisa Scanlan**, Director of Collaborate Business Solutions Limited | **WORKSHOP**<br><br>**WORKSHOP B1**<br><br>**Early Careers and the Next Generation: What They Actually Need**<br><br>Organisations are finding that early-career talent has different expectations, communication norms and mental health challenges than previous cohorts, and that programmes designed for an earlier era are failing them. This workshop examines what sustainable high performance looks like for a generation entering work in an AI-accelerated world, what managers need to do differently, and how to build wellbeing into early careers programme design from the ground up. Includes perspectives on retention, post-programme engagement and the growing value of human skills alongside technical ones. Discussion and practical design workshop.<br><br>Workshop leads: **Rosie Ellis,** Early Careers Lead – EMEA and APAC, Aon &<br>**Helen Payne**<br>Principal Human Capital Consultant, Aon | **ROUNDTABLE**<br><br>**ROUNDABLE C1**<br><br>**The Wellbeing Gaps Facing Women at Work**<br><br>Menstrual health, debilitating conditions such as endometriosis and fibroids, fertility and pregnancy challenges, menopause, and gynae cancers: all needs that shape working life for millions of women, and that most organisations still design around rather than for. This roundtable opens up an honest, collaborative conversation about where workplace wellbeing falls short for many women experiencing these issues, and what gets lost when policy is written without their experience in the room. Participants bring their own views, experiences and unresolved questions, and the group works through them together, on the understanding that the room collectively holds more insight than any one voice could. The aim is not consensus, but a clearer, shared picture of what needs to change and where to start.<br><br>Roundtable Hosts:<br><br>**Mel Islin**,<br>Membership Manager. |

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## WORKSHOP ROUND TWO · CHOOSE ONE OF THREE ·

*16:00 to 16:45*

| | WORKSHOP A<br>WORKSHOP B | ROUNDTABLE C |
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| 16:00 | **WORKSHOP**<br><br>**WORKSHOP A2**<br><br>**Neurodiversity, Inclusion and the Wellbeing Environment**<br><br>How organisations design physical environments, communication norms and support structures has a disproportionate impact on neurodivergent employees, and often improves things for everyone else too. This workshop examines the direct connections between neurodiversity, psychological safety and mental health outcomes, with practical focus on how wellbeing infrastructure can either welcome or exhaust people who process the world differently. Includes an environment audit tool and communication design frameworks delegates can take back and apply. Discussion and practical workshop<br><br>Workshop Lead: **Daniel Curtis,** Educator, Speaker and Storyteller | **ROUNDTABLE**<br><br>**ROUNDABLE C2**<br><br>**Beyond the Office: Building Wellbeing for Shift Workers, Night Workers and Field Teams**<br>Standard wellbeing programmes are built around office hours and desk-based work. This workshop is for practitioners trying to reach the rest of their workforce: shift workers, night workers, those in manufacturing or production environments, field-based and customer-facing staff, and employees working across time zones. In small groups, delegates map the specific barriers in their own organisations and develop targeted approaches that go beyond repurposing office-based content. Includes practical tools for reaching disconnected or hard-to-reach employee groups. Facilitated working session. Chatham House rules.<br><br>Roundtable Host: **Sarah Douglas:** Founder, Night Club, Night Club |

**1645** *Room Reset*

## CLOSING PLENARY · *16:50 to 17:15*

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| 16;50 | **KEYNOTE** |

### Even a bunny can make a difference: How to connect your team to the feeling of purpose.

Purpose is powerful—but only when people feel connected to it.Ross creates a deep connection to purpose through warmth, humour, and raw emotion. With stories from his time as an Opera Extra (including a stint on stage as a giant rabbit), playful interaction, and thoughtful reflection, Ross shows leaders how to help their teams feel more motivated, fulfilled, and energised—by reconnecting them to the impact of what they do.

**Ross Reekie,** Founder, Rise Consulting & The Fun Jobs Project

**17:10** **CLOSING ADDRESS**

### From Conversation to Commitment

The chair draws together the threads of the day, not as a summary but as a challenge. What has the room decided? What is the one thing that has to change? The closing address names the gap between knowing and doing, and asks directly what each person in the room will do differently in the next working week. High energy, personally challenging, deliberately direct..

**Dr Amrita Sen Mukherjee**, Founder and Wellbeing Expert, Your Wellbeing Doctor

**17:15** **NETWORKING RECEPTION**

### Drinks Reception, Exhibition Hall and Peer Networking

The formal programme ends. The exhibition hall reopens with provider stands, informal conversations and space to follow up on connections made during the day. A colour-coded badge system allows delegates to identify others by role. QR codes on badges enable instant LinkedIn or email connection without exchanging cards. A quiet, low-light room is available for those who need to step away from the noise.

Themed networking opportunities will be available

*Close of Day*

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# Programme Design Notes

## What this programme is built on

The research that informed this programme was unambiguous: attendees want less surface-level discussion and more practical, implementation-focused content. They want to hear from people willing

to share what went wrong, not just what worked. They want formats that create genuine exchange rather than one-way transmission. This programme has been designed with that feedback as its foundation: fewer presentations, more conversation; smaller groups where honest sharing becomes possible; sessions that end with something delegates can actually use.

## Format philosophy

Every session has been assigned a format chosen for the content, not chosen because it is the default. Fireside conversations are used where personal candour matters more than comprehensive coverage. Panels are used where genuine disagreement and multiple perspectives are needed. Roundtables are used where peer exchange between delegates creates the value rather than the speaker. In conversation with sessions are used where one voice, held to depth by a skilled interviewer, serves the audience better than a group. No session in this programme relies on slides as its primary mode of engagement.

## Two tracks across the full day

Both the pre-lunch and post-lunch blocks run two concurrent tracks. Track A is oriented towards strategy and leadership: making the case, building the business argument, influencing at board level, and understanding the systemic conditions that drive or undermine wellbeing. Track B is oriented towards practice and culture: what is actually happening with specific groups of employees, what tools and approaches work in practice, and how to create conditions for genuine change at team and organisation level. Delegates are encouraged to move across tracks.

## Chatham House rules

All six workshops operate under Chatham House rules. Information shared may be used but not attributed to a named individual or organisation. This is the condition under which honest sharing becomes possible, particularly for practitioners willing to discuss what has not worked in their own organisations. Facilitators are briefed to protect this environment actively.

## Workshop design

Six workshops run across two rounds of three concurrent sessions. The venue has two main session rooms and two smaller breakout rooms, so workshop capacity varies by room. Two workshops per round will run in the main halls for larger numbers; one will run in a breakout room with more limited capacity. Delegates pre-register for workshops via the event app. Facilitators are briefed to prioritise participant knowledge over their own expertise. The room collectively knows more than any single expert in it, and the best facilitation draws that out.

## Delegate experience

Colour-coded badge system by role type. QR codes on badges for instant contact sharing. Buffet lunch in the exhibition hall with exhibitors and sponsors available throughout. Pre-bookable 1-to-1 meeting schedule for sponsors and exhibitors running during breakfast, both breaks, and lunch. Quiet, low-light recharge room available throughout the day. Speed networking structured rotations during the evening reception. 30-day accountability prompt after the event. App for day planning, session reminders, group pre-assignment for the closing roundtable, and connection to other delegates.