

# Call to Action: Role of Partners for Suicide Prevention in Shropshire

The suicide rate in Shropshire has increased in the latest reporting period from the Department of Health and Social Care Fingertips data<sup>1</sup> (three-year average 2022–2024).

Shropshire has a suicide rate of 13.5 per 100,000, which is statistically higher than the England average (10.9 per 100,000) and currently the highest in the West Midlands.

While this position is concerning, Shropshire remains mid-range compared with its statistical neighbours (ranked 7th of 16), suggesting that broader demographic and geographic factors may be influencing risk.

Every death by suicide is a tragedy for families, friends, and communities. Reducing suicide is a shared responsibility across our whole system and communities. **No single, organisation can prevent suicide alone – it requires every partner, employer, service and resident to play their part in creating hope, reducing stigma and ensuring that people in distress receive timely and compassionate support.**

## **Suicide has a significant, lasting and often devastating impact**

- Economically, psychologically and spiritually - on individuals, families, communities, and the wider **society**.

## **Suicide prevention is everybody's business**

- 1 in 5 people have had suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives. Most of us may have been affected by suicide in some way either directly or indirectly.

## **Suicide is not inevitable and can be preventable**

- Suicides are preventable with timely, evidence based interventions. Everyone has a role in suicide prevention. Many people who die by suicide have been in contact with Primary Care during their final year and commonly in the final month of their life which is why this pack has been produced

The multi-agency Shropshire Suicide Prevention Action Group have undertaken a number of new initiatives during 2025 with intention to address suicide risk, however, we recognise a wider system approach is needed to keep people safe from suicide and we all have a role. As such we are proposing this call for action.

Suicide remains preventable through collective action, early intervention, and strong partnerships.

## **Request to All Partners in Shropshire**

### **1. Safety Planning rather than risk assessment**

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: [Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

- New **Staying Safe from Suicide Guidance** published in 2025 by NHS England but applicable to all agencies- identifies a strong evidence base that effective safety planning is highly impactful in keeping people safe from suicide risk but low evidence for risk assessment
- Adopt the new **Staying Safe from Suicide** guidance published earlier this year within service/organisation policy and procedures
  - Guidance available here: [NHS England » Staying safe from suicide](#)
- Promote the free online guidance training on how to implement in different settings (including non NHS settings)
  - Free online training available here: [MindEd Hub](#)

### **Additional Useful Resources to use and promote**

- **Safety Planning Tools** – available at [Staying Safe](#) hosting a safety plan template to complete electronically online or download **to complete with the patient if expressing suicidal thoughts** and guidance on how to use
- **StayAlive app** – <https://prevent-suicide.org.uk/stay-alive-app-grassroots-suicide-prevention> – free resource with information and tools to help you stay safe if you are having thoughts of suicide or concerned about someone else

## **2. Promote and actively encourage workforce to access Suicide Prevention and Awareness training**

- A range of suicide prevention training is available in Shropshire aimed at a range of audiences to build confidence, skills and knowledge on how to identify and respond to suicide risk
- Review workforce knowledge and confidence in responding to suicide risk (particularly who regularly interact with vulnerable groups) to consider who could most benefit from access to training
- Encourage all staff (including senior leaders and managers) to complete the free to access online 20 minute training provided by the Zero Suicide Alliance and consider opportunity to introduce as mandatory
  - Available at: [ZSA suicide awareness training courses](#)
- Review and promote the new Training Matrix highlighting the range of suicide prevention, bereavement and self-harm training offers recommended by the Shropshire Suicide Prevention Network available at: [Training Matrix Version 2. Jan 2026](#)

## **3. Promote the Orange Button Community Scheme**

- A new community ambassador programme set up across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin to recruit a network of trained volunteers who are comfortable to speak with people about suicide, are able to signpost to support and with a role to reduce stigma speaking about suicide
- Volunteers are identified through wearing a visible orange button provided as part of their welcome pack following completion of training
- Further details about Orange Button can be found here along with details on how to apply to become a volunteer;
  - Shropshire: [Orange Button Community Scheme | Shropshire Council](#)
  - Telford & Wrekin: [Telford & Wrekin Council | Orange button](#)

## **4. Promote support available for concerns about suicide or impacted by suicide**

- **Samaritans** – Call or text **116 123 (24/7)** | Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- **Papyrus** – For under 35s | Call **0800 068 4141** | Text **07860 039967**

- **Shropshire Mental Health Support** – Visit [www.shropshiremhs.com](http://www.shropshiremhs.com) | Call **01743 368 647**
- **Shout Mental Health Text Line** - Text '**STW**' to **85258**, free of charge and at any time, to start a conversation with a trained mental health professional
- **NHS 111** – Select the mental health option (24/7)
- **FREEPHONE 24/7 Urgent NHS Mental Health Helpline** 0808 196 4501 or email [access.shropshire@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:access.shropshire@mpft.nhs.uk)
- **Shropshire Rural Support** – Call 0300 123 2825 (or text 85258) [www.shropshireruralsupport.org.uk](http://www.shropshireruralsupport.org.uk)
- **Bereavement Support** – Call **0345 678 9028**
- **Local & National Resources** – Visit [shropshire.gov.uk/suicideprevention](http://shropshire.gov.uk/suicideprevention)