

Somerset Suicide Prevention Strategy 2025-2030

APPENDIX 1

Suicide prevention is about more than providing mental health care and crisis support. Whilst these things are important, we want to address the root cause of poor mental health and suicide. This requires us to address the wider determinants of health, these are the conditions in which we live, grow, work and age. We could not include all the projects and services in Somerset, below is a selection of collaborative mental health and suicide prevention activities that have been delivered within the last 3 years (2022-2025), some are ongoing and some have been funded for a period of time.

Mindline 24/7 Mental Health Helpline

Mindline is Somerset's mental health telephone service, available for anyone, any age, 24 hours a day 7 days a week, call 0800 138 1692 or call 111 and select option 2. They also have a webchat service available on the Open Mental Health and Mind in Somerset website 8pm-11pm every day <https://openmentalhealth.org.uk/>.



Crisis Safe Space

This is an out-of-hours crisis service provided by Mind in Somerset and Second Step for anyone who feels like they are struggling with their mental health. Instead of going to A&E, making an urgent doctor's appointment, or suffering in silence, you can arrange a one-to-one session with a member of the Crisis Safe Space team, who will listen and be able to help you. Sessions are held face-to-face or virtually depending on the location.



Training

Public Health commissions and delivers a variety of mental health and suicide prevention training. These sessions are delivered to members of the public and people working with at risk groups to help to raise awareness, destigmatise mental health and suicide and provide evidence-based ways of supporting people experiencing mental health problems. Training that has been delivered in Somerset includes:

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Emotional Wellbeing E-learning

The e-learning has been developed by Public Health in partnership with colleagues across Somerset Council. The e-learning is available for all working age adults in Somerset. The purpose of the training is to help people to understand and manage their own emotional wellbeing but also to give them the confidence and skills to help others and create a more supportive workplace.



Mental Health Awareness (Adult and Youth)

Mental Health Awareness (MHA) is an internationally recognised training course which aims to raise awareness of mental health. The course covers a basic knowledge of some common mental health issues and how to challenge stigma as well as maintaining your own wellbeing.

This training is funded by Public Health and provided free at the point of delivery for frontline workers, typically from the following areas: Statutory and voluntary sector workers in health, education, welfare, and leisure. Community safety staff and volunteers, general practice staff and emergency service workers.



Mental Health First Aid (Adult and Youth)

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course which teaches people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. MHFA doesn't teach people to be therapists, but just like physical first aid, it teaches people to listen, reassure and respond appropriately.



This training is funded by Public Health and provided free at the point of delivery for frontline workers, typically from the following areas: Statutory and voluntary sector workers in health, education, welfare, and leisure. Community safety staff and volunteers, general practice staff and emergency service workers.

Every Life Matters – Suicide Prevention Training Suicide Awareness

This one-hour online training session is delivered by the Public Health team and is aimed at anyone in the local community who wants to understand more about suicide and what we can all do to make a difference. Courses are delivered online and face to face in community settings. Courses can be booked online via Eventbrite.



Suicide Alertness

This training is delivered by the Public Health team and is aimed at anyone who

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wants to understand more about suicide, how to know when someone may be having thoughts of suicide, how to talk directly and comfortably about suicide, and what we can all do to offer practical support. Completion of the training will also qualify individuals for the countywide Orange Button community awareness scheme. Courses are delivered online and face to face in community settings. Courses can be booked online via Eventbrite.

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

ASIST is a two-day face-to-face workshop featuring powerful audiovisuals, discussions, and simulations. Participants learn how to prevent suicide by recognising signs, providing a skilled intervention, and developing a safety plan to keep someone alive.



Studies show that the ASIST method helps reduce suicidal feelings in those at risk and is a cost-effective way to help address the problem of suicide. This training is funded by Public Health and provided free at the point of delivery for frontline workers, typically from the following areas: Statutory and voluntary sector workers in health, education, welfare, and leisure. Community safety staff and volunteers, general practice staff and emergency service workers.

Senior Mental Health Leads Training

This training equips school and college leaders with evidence-based strategies to promote and support the mental health and resilience of their pupils, learners and staff through a whole school approach. Take-up across Somerset has seen a strong uptake with over 3/4s of state funded schools and colleges joining the training offer.

RSHE curriculum emotional health and wellbeing / building mental resilience - Mental wellbeing education falls into the physical health and mental wellbeing part of the RSHE curriculum. It's a statutory requirement to teach this topic to both primary and secondary learners using an age appropriate approach.

Public Health offer a range of funded training programmes available for Somerset Schools, Colleges and Children & Young People Practitioners. Our training supports settings to develop and implement a Whole School & College Approach to Health and Wellbeing and links with The Somerset Health & Wellbeing Framework and supports the RSHE emotional health and wellbeing curriculum.

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Orange Button Scheme

The Orange Button Scheme is a community suicide awareness scheme, established in Somerset in 2022. We have trained thousands of people in Somerset in suicide prevention and have 1200

people who have become Orange Button holders since completing their training. The scheme is a way of recognising people in the community that have completed quality assured mental health or suicide prevention training. By wearing the Orange Badge they are displaying that they are:

- Ok to say/hear the word suicide
- They can listen non-judgementally
- They can signpost you to support locally.

Anyone that has completed Mental Health First Aid or at least a half day of quality assured suicide prevention training can apply to become an Orange Button holder on the Mind in Somerset website.



**Orange Button
Community Scheme**

Schools Wellbeing Framework

The Somerset Health & Wellbeing Framework (SHWF) is a model for developing a Whole School Approach (WSA) to health and wellbeing and is our local model for helping to build health and wellbeing into the ethos, culture, routine life, and core business of a school, college or other educational setting.



The SHWF supports schools to continue the good work they are already doing to promote the health and wellbeing of children and young people, families and staff, but with the added support of online resources and an audit tool to self-record and monitor progress.

The SHWF acts as a process that focuses on the whole school community developing, trusting and compassionate relationships, where everyone feels they have a sense of belonging and healthier lifestyles are encouraged and supported.

Young Somerset Offer

Mental Health Support Teams and Community Wellbeing Practitioners

Young Somerset, have Wellbeing Practitioners (community and school based) who are trained in Low-Intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapies (LI-CBT) for mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

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The practitioners use practical methods, tools and techniques, to help the young person learn ways of coping with anxiety, low mood and phobias. Young people may be offered support in a group or 1:1.

Jigsaw

Jigsaw is for young people who have had a recent hospital admission for their mental health difficulties or low emotional wellbeing. Using a youth work approach, our youth workers will support the young person, and their family, through the use of activities and 1:1 work using a strengths focussed outcomes model so the young people we work with can go on their own journey to alleviate their mental health difficulties.

The aim of the Jigsaw project is to reduce readmissions to hospitals for young people as they make their own informed decisions for change in the future. Our youth workers can also provide some support, advice and guidance and signposting for the whole family within the home and will do our utmost to advocate for the family in situations where they do not feel like they have a voice.

Kooth Offer

Kooth is a free, safe and easy to access mental health service for children and young people. We're commissioned primarily by the NHS and are the only digital mental health service to be accredited by the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy).

Kooth is an anonymous site which assists children and young people to feel safe and confident exploring their concerns and seeking professional support. Our service has no referrals or waiting lists and provides a unique out of office hours' provision. We are open 7 days per week, 365 days a year from 12pm-10pm weekdays and from 6pm-10pm on weekends.

Kooth provides added value with moderated forums to facilitate peer led support and self-help articles (many written by service users) to provide practical support. Young people can access a safe, secure and anonymous place where they can seek support online. They can also access:

Drop in Counselling Service

Young people can instantly 'drop in' to a chat session with a qualified professional.

Schedule Counselling Sessions

Users can establish a routine set of 6 sessions with the same counsellor, at a time that suits them.

Instant access to self-help content

Service users can seek support or advice on any topic, from coping with exam stress

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or bullying, help with an eating disorder, dealing with suicidal thoughts or handling sexual abuse.

Participate in or browse through peer support forums

Our live moderated forums give users the chance to share their experiences and learn from others.

Track changes in their feelings

Users can log their thoughts and feeling through journals and goal trackers

We've Got This (Open Mental Health)

We've Got This is a Peer Mentor Support Service for Young Adults aged 16-25. Peer mentors have experienced challenges with their mental health and can use their experiences to offer young people support to help them feel better about themselves, recognise self-worth, as well as help them build positive social networks through community groups. Each peer mentor has their own areas of interest and individuals are matched to a mentor that has similar interests. They offer 1-2-1 or group based support. This project ended March 2025.



ChatHealth

0 – 5 (Health Visitors)

A text service for parents and carers to confidentially ask for help about a range of issues from a Health Visitor. This could include advice and support on infant feeding and nutrition, parenting and child development, to oxytocin, bonding and attachment. You can also find out how to access other local services, for example breastfeeding support. The service is staffed by qualified Health Visitors who have a wealth of experience of working with young people and parents.

School Nursing Team

Is your child 5 – 19 and are you looking for confidential help and support? ChatHealth is a safe and easy way to contact your school nursing team via text. This service can support with Parent advice & support, Healthy lifestyles, School transitioning and Emotional health.

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Somerset Suicide Bereavement Support Service

Bereavement by suicide is usually shocking and unexpected. The grieving process can be more challenging to navigate than other types of bereavement. This is a specialised service to help people through this difficult time.

It is a free service and they support anyone that is bereaved by suicide, at any time during the bereavement. We support anyone aged 14+ in Somerset who has been affected by the death of someone through suicide, be that personally or professionally.



Data and Intelligence – Mental Health Needs Assessment (2023)

In 2023, Public Health undertook a mental health needs assessment which reviewed population measures of wellbeing, the prevalence and incidence of mental illness and addressed these alongside a review of the data available around the social determinants of health in Somerset which are known to impact on public mental health.

A key finding of the needs assessment was that the prevalence of common mental disorders and the demand for mental health services has increased since 2020. This need and demand for services is greater in certain areas, including urban and coastal areas and those which have higher levels of deprivation.

There were several areas in which Somerset was an outlier including, suicide, self-harm, dual diagnosis and the mental health of social care users. Although self-harm and suicide are not in themselves mental disorders, they are associated with mental distress.

The needs assessment can be viewed here: [Mental Health Needs Assessment 2023.pdf \(somersetintelligence.org.uk\)](https://somersetintelligence.org.uk/MentalHealthNeedsAssessment2023.pdf)

Stepladder

Stepladder is an Open Mental Health project run by Second Step. Stepladder was set up for all men in Somerset and aims to reduce the number of men who take their own life. They work with communities, groups and organisations to find ways men can connect, support each other and get help.



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Through their Winston Innovation Fund they have helped to get 43 projects off the ground which has enabled more than 350 men to engage in activities/sessions county wide. Their website hosts an interactive map which promotes projects and organisations that they have funded, alongside other partner projects and activities. There are currently 80+ projects/organisations on the map. This project ended in March 2025.

Unbreakable Men

Unbreakable Men is an Open Mental Health project that aims to raise awareness around Men's Mental Health in Somerset and actively encourage Men to take ownership over their mental wellness, whilst positively impacting their mental and physical wellbeing through physical activity. This is done in a simple and practical ways with both online and face to face physical activities.



They offer a Mental Health MOT Quiz, an App and also run regular events around Somerset. The Unbreakable Men MOT Quiz aims to encourage men to be proactive about checking in with their current mental well-being, by answering a series of point-based questions which result in a score indicator of where you may benefit from some mental health support.

Citizens Advice Somerset

The Citizens Advice in Somerset team focus on meeting the advice needs that are causing individuals distress or problems. These are varied and can include issues around any of the following:



- Housing
- Debt & money advice
- Benefits
- Employment
- Relationships matters
- Discrimination

The advice team are skilled and qualified advisers, who can support people experiencing mental health difficulties to create a plan to tackle any of the above issues.

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Farmerados

Farmerados is a project based on the principles of Camerados, a global social movement, focussed on providing informal spaces for people to get together and talk. Farmerados is aimed specifically at farmers and run by volunteers who understand agricultural life and know how tough it can be at times.



Many farmers are struggling in silence with devastating consequences, but Farmerados believe that a conversation can have a big impact on somebody's day by helping farmers to realise they are not alone and that sharing their worrisome load can really take some weight off. They operate pop up kitchen tables at local farmers markets, providing a space to chat with people who get it. Open Mental Health funding ended March 2025 however, the project is ongoing.

Support Benches

The 'Support Benches' are easily identifiable by their green colour and the words "come sit with us" on the back. They are equipped with SHOUT and Samaritans numbers on plaques, as well as a QR code that links to various support resources, including options to call Samaritans, text SHOUT, listen to or read the Somerset Letter of Hope, or visit the Open Mental Health website. The project has been funded by the charity Safe South West, who have worked alongside Somerset Council and Experts by Experience from Open Mental Health to develop the benches. The first bench was installed in Vivary Park, Taunton in September 2024, with plans to install benches in various other locations across the county over the next year.



Starting the Conversation – A guide to talking about suicide

As part of our campaign for World Suicide Prevention Day 2025, we created a short guide with simple steps for people to follow when having a conversation about suicide – it is available to view here and download here: <https://healthysomerset.co.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing/support-with-your-mental-health/working-together-to-prevent-suicide/>

Talking about suicide can be scary.

But **talking openly about suicide can reduce the likelihood** that someone will act on their thoughts.

Don't know where to start?
Here are some tips...

our SOMERSET
Together we care