

Sandwell Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan – 2022-2025

Recommendations and actions

Recommendations	Actions	Led by	Due by end
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>Raise awareness of suicide prevention and bereavement support through training for all frontline Council staff</p> <p>All staff across Sandwell Council who have direct contact with our residents will receive targeted training to recognise signs that someone may be having suicidal thoughts, initiate supportive conversations, and direct people to the right help and support.</p> <p>Delivering this alongside more basic training for all staff, and enhancing training in related areas through including suicide prevention elements, will help to create a culture of awareness and compassion</p>	<p>1a: Raising awareness across whole organisations</p> <p>ACTION 1: Universal online training - encourage all staff across the Council to complete brief online sessions from Zero Suicide Alliance as an entry point to developing awareness and understanding.</p> <p>ACTION 2: Develop a set of key principles for Suicide Safer Workplaces that will equip frontline staff with information to support residents experiencing suicidal ideation and/or refer or signpost them to appropriate services.</p> <p>1b: Workforce development</p> <p>ACTION 3: Link to the Sandwell Workforce Wellbeing Group, with representation from across services, to develop a workforce SP offer consisting of resources for staff to access support for themselves and colleagues, and to refer or signpost residents and service users.</p> <p>ACTION 4: Carry out a training needs analysis to assess current skills and training needs relating to suicide awareness and prevention across key service areas.</p> <p>ACTION 5: Map current training available through the voluntary & community sector, and promote via networks and SCVO's Route2wellbeing portal.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ HR and Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ HR and Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Community Mental Health Taskforce</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Community Mental Health Taskforce</p>	<p>Q2 2022/23</p> <p>Q2 2022/23</p> <p>Q2 2022/23</p> <p>Q2 2022/23</p> <p>Q2 2022/23</p>

<p>around suicide across the whole organisation. This will be complemented by training across partner organisations and multi-agency training (1c and Recommendations 5 & 6).</p>	<p>ACTION 6: Develop and deliver brief targeted training sessions on suicide prevention & bereavement support for services and sectors that work directly with specific groups across the life course (e.g. education and care workers).</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Q4 2022/23
	<p>ACTION 7: Develop and deliver SP awareness training for local elected members and support them to become advocates for suicide prevention in their wards.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Q4 2022/23
	<p>1c: Partnership working</p> <p>ACTION 8: Explore options to develop and deliver multi-agency training that can be delivered in person or online.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Q3 2022/23
	<p><i>Additional action specific to Children & Young people:</i></p> <p>ACTION 9: Embed suicide prevention into wider mental health training offered by Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP).</p>	Public Health and SCSP, SMBC	Q2 2022/23
	<p>ACTION 10: Ensure all frontline staff working with children and young people 10 years of age and over are supported to attend suicide prevention training (also known as "gatekeeper training", a short intervention available online)</p>	Public Health and SCSP, SMBC	Q2 2022/23
	<p><i>Additional Action specific to Adults (including older adults):</i></p> <p>ACTION 11: Embed suicide prevention into wider mental health training offered by Sandwell Adult Safeguarding Partnership</p>	Public Health and ASC, SMBC	Q3 2022/23
	<p>ACTION 12: Develop and deliver brief training on suicide prevention and bereavement support to businesses, services and groups (e.g. faith groups) across the wider community using a Train the Trainer approach, so that those who attend can inform and upskill others in their organisations and networks around suicide prevention & bereavement support.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership/Black Country SP Partnership CDWs	Q1 2023/24
	<p>ACTION 13: Work with Suicide Prevention leads across the Black Country to introduce and monitor SP training funded through NHSE/I National SP Programme.</p>	Black Country SP Partnership	Q1 2023

<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Pilot town-based, community-led forums</p> <p>We are working with stakeholders such as the police, fire service and community organisations to identify high-risk locations as part of the approach to reducing means of suicide. Thus far, this has identified motorway bridges and rail stations.</p> <p>Pilots undertaken in Tipton suggest that town-based forums led by local communities are effective in embedding awareness and vigilance around suicide prevention.</p>	<p>2a: Community-led, town-based approaches to Suicide Prevention</p> <p>ACTION 14: Use forums facilitated by Sandwell Public Health Development Officers (PHDOs) to support the adoption of the Tipton town-based approach focusing on rail networks across all six towns in the borough.</p> <p>ACTION 15: Carry out a similar pilot in one of the six towns focusing on highways, working with communities to raise awareness and vigilance around suicide, and sharing ideas on how to reduce risk.</p>	<p>Samaritans/Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>2b: Using community-led forums to inform and implement wider suicide prevention approaches</p> <p><i>Additional action specific to: Children & Young people:</i></p> <p>ACTION 16: Embed current good practice and continuous improvement across anti-bullying work via the SHAPE forum and partner agencies.</p> <p>ACTION 17: Improve information and advice available to parents/carers, primary care and community services about monitoring (signs to be concerned) and support for children and young people, including those who disengage with mental health services. This should include access to local crisis helplines and national resources.</p>	<p>Highways Agency</p> <p>SHAPE Partnership Board/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Service Providers commissioned via local authorities and the NHS, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and independent sector organisations.</p>	<p>Q4 2022/23 TBC</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>ACTION 18: Work with Black Country Community Development Workers (CDWs) to facilitate community-led Suicide Prevention forums that will feed into the Black Country Suicide Prevention Steering Group.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership</p>	<p>Q1 2023</p>

<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Support community organisations with funding applications</p> <p>Lack of capacity and resources are cited as key barriers to accessing funding by voluntary and community organisations, with this activity detracting from core business. Public Health and other partners with experience of the application process can work with community organisations to support them in writing bids for funding so that they can access the means to grow.</p>	<p>3a: Mapping suicide prevention & mental wellbeing activity</p> <p>ACTION 19: Work with PHDO in each town and SCVO to identify voluntary & community organisations already working towards suicide prevention and mental wellbeing promotion.</p> <p>3b: Helping organisations to access funding</p> <p>ACTION 20: Work with SCVO to maintain up-to-date information on related funding opportunities on their online funding portal, and to highlight key developments.</p> <p>ACTION 21: Work with SCVO to support voluntary & community organisations to develop funding applications and bids.</p> <p>ACTION 22: Liaise with Community Partnerships Team to identify opportunities to work collaboratively to best support community organisations to access funding to support suicide prevention.</p> <p>3c: Supporting communities through grant funding</p> <p>ACTION 23: Use available funding to provide voluntary & community sector grants to support suicide prevention activities and interventions (e.g. via the Prevention & Promotion Fund for Better Mental Health).</p>	<p>Public Health, SMBC/SCVO</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ SCVO</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership SCVO</p> <p>Public Health/Community Partnerships, SMBC</p> <p>Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Q3 2022/23</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>ACTION 24: Work with Black Country SP leads and CDWs to identify and build capacity within the voluntary & community sector.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>4: Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Work with Community Development Workers to identify gaps in accessibility</p>	<p>4a: Improving communications to increase accessibility and reduce stigma</p> <p>ACTION 25: Develop a Suicide Prevention Communication Plan for corporate communications and community marketing.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Q1 2022 Refresh annually</p> <p>Q2 2022</p>

<p>Lack of accessibility to services supporting suicide prevention has been highlighted as a key issue in Sandwell. Here we focus on working together to identify barriers to access, in terms of both practical elements (i.e. language, format, digital literacy) and inclusion (i.e. cultural appropriateness and representation).</p>	<p>ACTION 26: Print materials (posters, leaflets, business cards) on suicide prevention in languages other than English, particularly those that are most widely spoken among Sandwell residents.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Refresh as required Q2 2022</p>
	<p>ACTION 27: Develop targeted resources for people who are non-literate or whose first language is not English, including radio and audio information and adding pictorial information to key messages.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Refresh as required</p>
	<p>ACTION 28: Produce resources in accessible formats for people who are deaf or hearing impaired, or blind or visually impaired.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>4b: Increasing representation within Suicide Prevention communications</p>		
	<p>ACTION 29: Use imagery and wording that is relatable to different communities and groups, including those in higher-risk groups.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>ACTION 30: Work with minority and/or marginalised communities and groups within Sandwell to understand how their unique lived experience affects their lives and mental health (e.g. experiences of discrimination).</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>ACTION 31: Share learning across professional and community networks to increase understanding of the experiences minority and/or marginalised communities and groups, and ensure that these experiences are reflected in their communications.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>4c: Disseminating information</p>		
	<p>ACTION 32: Work proactively to promote messages around suicide prevention and available support to local communities via a range of media, including approaching local networks and radio stations.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>ACTION 33: Work closely with community groups and the faith sector to build on existing infrastructure and embed support around suicide prevention.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	ACTION 34: All partners and delivery organisations to ensure materials are available via Healthy Sandwell and SCVO Route2wellbeing platforms.	Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
	<i>Additional action specific to: Children & Young people:</i> ACTION 35: Develop Just Youth platform to host all related information and resources.		Ongoing
	ACTION 36: Work with the CDWs to develop networks and communications across the Black Country footprint.	Black Country SP Partnership	Ongoing
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Encourage referrals from GP's to targeted services and establish an explicit pathway</p> <p>Partners can work alongside GPs to ensure that they are aware of non-medical services as well as increase confidence that there is support available for anyone who has been affected by suicide. Part of this will require GPs to have a working knowledge of all up-to-date services so information and communication flow will be critical.</p>	<p>5a: Developing referral pathways</p> <p>ACTION 37: Approach Sandwell Primary Care Networks to develop referral pathways for universal, targeted and specialist services.</p> <p>ACTION 38: Develop self-referral pathways, particularly where there may be barriers to accessing support via Primary Care.</p> <p>5b: Links to social prescribing</p> <p>ACTION 39: Ensure that up-to-date information on all community provision is available on SCVO Route2wellbeing to promote and support referrals.</p> <p>ACTION 40: Develop training for GP social prescribers to become Suicide Prevention champions in their practices and communities.</p> <p>ACTION 41: Support the continued roll out of children and young people's mental health services across community settings such as schools, local authorities and criminal justice to improve accessibility</p>	<p>Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Black Country & West Birmingham CCG</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership SCVO</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership Black Country SP Partnership</p> <p>Commissioners and Providers of Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Services, Department of Education, NHSE/I, Schools and Colleges, Local authorities, Youth</p>	<p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022 Regular review</p> <p>Q4 2023</p>

		Offending Teams and Liaison and Diversion teams	
	ACTION 42: Progress and monitor the provision of Black Country-wide training for frontline staff in GP practices, funded through NHSE/I National SP Programme.	Black Country SP Partnership	Q4 2023 onwards
Recommendation 6: Expand awareness and access of bereavement support to all First Responder and bereavement-related partners Knowledge of bereavement services by First Responders and wider professionals in contact with those who have been bereaved by suicide can help families and friends feel that help is available, at any time which they chose to take it. This includes not just emotional and psychological support, but also practical support in the period following a death.	6a: Developing the suicide bereavement support offer for Sandwell residents ACTION 43: Community engagement with people bereaved by suicide to identify gaps in support and provision and identify/inform policy and funding. ACTION 44: Identify opportunities to provide practical support to First Responders and people bereaved through suicide immediately after the death and in the weeks that follow, taking learning from Warwickshire.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC Kaleidoscope+ Group/Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing Ongoing
	6b: Information and training for First Responders ACTION 45: Develop and deliver targeted training sessions on suicide prevention, postvention & bereavement support for first responders ACTION 46: Create Z cards for all first responders containing details of local bereavement support services.	Sandwell SP Partnership Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q1 2023 Q1 2022
	ACTION 47: Ensure appropriate identification and targeted support and actions taken to support the community after someone dies by suicide.	Health and Local Authority commissioners, Emergency Response Team and Police	
	ACTION 48: Work with Black Country Suicide Prevention leads to develop, monitor and evaluate a Black Country SP Bereavement & Postvention Support programme, funded through NHSE/I National SP Programme.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	

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<p>Recommendation 7: Identify and prioritise high-risk populations through working groups</p> <p>Through the Suicide Prevention Needs Assessment and ongoing work through the Sandwell SP Partnership, we are continuing to identify groups and circumstances that may be associated with increased risk of suicide. This goes beyond consideration of mental health issues and includes wider social, economic and environmental factors.</p> <p>It is important to actively engage with our communities to fully understand and begin to address emerging needs and concerns – including direct and indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Links to related strategic priorities and groups, including the Sandwell Better Mental Health Strategy and Children & Young People's SP subgroup, will enable a stronger and more co-ordinated approach.</p>	<p>7a: Reviewing local, regional and national evidence</p> <p>ACTION 49: Continue to ensure that new and emerging evidence and local intelligence on suicide and suicide prevention is discussed regularly through the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership.</p> <p>ACTION 50: Continue to work with the Black Country Coroner's Office and Child Death Overview Panel to understand the factors linked to deaths by suicide in Sandwell.</p> <p>ACTION 51: Update the Suicide Prevention Needs Assessment in 2024 to inform update of subsequent SP Strategy & Action Plan.</p> <p>7b: Links to mental health and other services</p> <p>ACTION 52: Conduct an audit of referrals into child and adult mental health services to determine where referrals are coming from and to understand more about the people accessing support.</p> <p>ACTION 53: Analyse data on hospital admissions for self-harm to identify associated risk factors.</p> <p>ACTION 54: Improve awareness of the impact of domestic abuse and strengthen links between multi-agency partnerships and strategies for domestic abuse and suicide prevention.</p> <p>7c: Links with community-led forums</p> <p>ACTION 55: Regular engagement with community-led forums in each of the six towns in Sandwell to identify new and emerging concerns.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Black Country & West Birmingham CCG</p> <p>Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2024</p> <p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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	<p><i>Additional actions specific to: Children & Young People:</i></p> <p>ACTION 56: Issue revised guidance to schools on the use of exclusion, recognising that when a child or young person is permanently excluded from school or college, any relationships with universal services are at risk of becoming fractured and should be identified as a potential risk factor for suicide. If a school or college is considering excluding someone there should be multi-agency engagement to discuss other potential solutions.</p> <p>ACTION 57: Improve awareness of the impact of domestic abuse, parental physical and mental health needs and conflict at home. In addition, agencies should ensure that where a parent or carer is open to adult mental health services, existing processes include systematic risk assessment (including thoughts of suicide) of the needs of the child or young person by all partner agencies to ensure they receive appropriate support</p> <p>ACTION 58: Ensure all schools and colleges (including independent and faith-based schools) have clear anti-bullying policies that include guidance on how to assess the risk of suicide for children and young people experiencing bullying and when and under what circumstances multi-agency meetings will be called to discuss individual children/young people.</p> <p>ACTION 59: Review existing local policies and guidance to ensure they emphasise the range of indicators identified to improve awareness of the possibility of child suicide.</p>	<p>Public Health/ Education, SMBC / School & College Leadership Teams & Governors</p> <p>Integrated Care System Suicide Prevention Leads, GPs, Adult Mental Health Services, Children and Young People's Mental Health Services, Social care, Alcohol and Drugs Services, Children Services</p> <p>Public Health/ Education, SMBC / School & College Leadership Teams & Governors Health, Social Care, Education, Local Authorities, Schools Colleges, Criminal Justice System,</p> <p>Acute Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Childrens Services, Local Authorities, Primary Care, Education departments, Schools, Colleges, Youth Offending Teams, Liaison and Diversion Services, Commissioned services</p>	<p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Q3 2023</p>
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	ACTION 60: Share learning with Black Country Suicide Prevention leads to identify priority areas for collective action and ensure alignment to CYP action plan.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	
<p>Recommendation 8: Improve data collation and intelligence-gathering</p> <p>There are multiple sources for statistical data that can be shared on a regular basis to identify developing trends. Equally, there should be encouragement for recorded and anecdotal evidence from across the borough to be shared among partners so that we can continue to understand what is happening at every level. This also feeds into the requirement to link to the Police's real-time surveillance activities.</p>	<p>8a: Monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>ACTION 61: Improve monitoring of protected characteristics for mental health and wellbeing programmes, project and services delivered or commissioned by SMBC and partner organisations.</p> <p>ACTION 62: Develop a set of key outcome indicators to inform evaluation frameworks for suicide prevention interventions and projects.</p> <p>8b: Effective information sharing</p> <p>ACTION 63: Work with Sandwell Council Information Management Unit to establish Information Sharing Agreements between the Council and partner organisations.</p> <p>8c: Sharing learning between partner organisations</p> <p>ACTION 64: Continue to share information and intelligence via the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership to inform local policy and practice.</p> <p><i>Additional action specific to: Children & Young People:</i></p> <p>ACTION 65: Review local policies on information sharing and escalation to ensure children and young people at risk of suicide can be identified and supported.</p>	<p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health/IMU, SMBC</p> <p>Sandwell SP Partnership</p> <p>Acute Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Childrens Services, Local Authorities, Primary Care, Education departments, Schools, Colleges, Youth Offending Teams, Liaison and Diversion Services, Commissioned services</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
	ACTION 66: Develop a Real Time Surveillance system across the Black Country to improve use of data and intelligence to develop timely postvention support.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	Q4 2023

	ACTION 67: Develop a Black Country Suicide Prevention Dashboard, hosted by Walsall MBC.	Walsall Council/ Research & Intelligence, SMBC	Q4 2023
Recommendation 9: Engage with media organisations to work co-operatively on the reporting of suicides Media organisations have a responsibility to report accurately and compassionately on deaths by suicide. Working proactively with media organisations and reporters to embed good practice reporting guidelines can help to ensure that they understand the impact of their messages on bereaved families and friends.	9a: Promoting responsible reporting of suicides ACTION 68: Provide opportunities for media organisations and staff to participate in multi-agency training to advocate towards responsible reporting. ACTION 69: Actively engage with local media organisations to encourage and support them to adopt the Samaritans' media guidelines for reporting suicide.	SMBC Press Office/Samaritans	Q1 2024
	9b: Developing key messages for the public ACTION 70: Produce a set of key messages around local suicide rates and support available that should be included in all relevant press releases and media communications, highlighting where these may be subject to change so that they can be updated as required. ACTION 71: Develop and deliver a general awareness campaign around the sharing of media stories on suicides online and how it can be traumatic for those affected.	Samaritans Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
		Samaritans Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q3 2022
		Samaritans Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q1 2023
	ACTION 72: Work with Black Country Suicide Prevention leads to develop and promote consistent messages.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	Ongoing
Recommendation 10: Conduct further assessments to consider specific populations We have already begun to identify key groups including rough sleepers, migrants, those with who misuse drugs and alcohol and people who are	10a: Increasing resources and capacity ACTION 73: Identify potential funding sources to support local suicide prevention activity. ACTION 74: Align with related strategies (including Sandwell Better Mental Health Strategy; Autism Strategy; Carers Strategy and End of Life Strategy). ACTION 75: Ensure that suicide prevention considerations are included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Sandwell.	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
		Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
		Public Health, SMBC	TBC

<p>unemployed. We will continue to work as a multi-stakeholder group to review and update these groups.</p> <p>We are working with the community and voluntary sector to ensure that there is appropriate support for those who do not access traditional services and review commissioned services which target the mental health of target groups highlighting suicide prevention/interventions/effectiveness.</p>	<p>10b: Focus on specific groups</p> <p>ACTION 76: Continue to identify key groups for targeted action including rough sleepers, migrants, those in the criminal justice system, those who misuse drugs and alcohol, people who are unemployed and those who are LGBT+, working as a multi-stakeholder group to review and update these groups.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	<p>ACTION 77: Continue working with the community and voluntary sector to ensure that there is appropriate support for those who do not access traditional services and review commissioned services which target the mental health of target groups highlighting suicide prevention /interventions/effectiveness.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	<p>ACTION 78: Carry out more detailed work on self-harm, following on from preliminary analysis of hospital admissions data (Action 49) to understand more about potential risk factors.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q4 2023
	<p>ACTION 79: Continue to work together to identify emerging risk factors and key issues.</p>	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	<p>ACTION 80: Identify potential funding sources to support suicide prevention activity across the Black Country footprint.</p>	Black Country SP Partnership	Ongoing