

Newsletter June 2025

**Suicide Prevention
Scotland.**

Working to deliver Creating Hope Together

Welcome to the June 2025 edition of the Suicide Prevention Scotland newsletter.

This newsletter is a way of keeping the Suicide Prevention Scotland Network up to date with progress on implementation of the new national suicide prevention strategy and also any other relevant information.

Please share this newsletter with others.

If there is anything you would like to see included in future editions or a contribution you'd like to make, please let us know via email:

phs.suicidepreventionteam@phs.scot

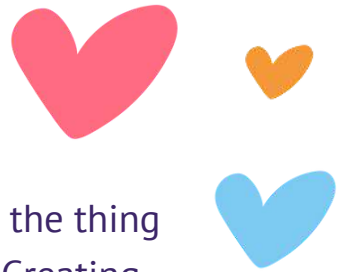
The document contains some hyperlinks. For example if you hover over the pictures of Creating Hope Together Strategy and Action Plan below, it will take you to the online version of the strategy and action plan.



If you've been forwarded the newsletter and would like to sign up to receive it directly please complete the form [here](#).



National Update



I'm going to stop saying things have been really busy because, the thing is, every week is busy now. We are in the final year of our first Creating Hope Together action plan which means things have really stepped up, we're shifting from understanding what needs to be done to deliver all the actions into really putting the work in place. It's a great place to be, working with so many people and organisations and really seeing Suicide Prevention Scotland as community come together feels like something really hopeful.

This community was most visible at our conference in May which created the space for almost 300 people working across different organisations and sectors to come together to hear more about suicide prevention and its links to inequalities. It was brilliant to have members of our Lived and Living Experience Panel and Youth Advisory Group help to shape the event and also host and support all the sessions throughout the day. We had some great speakers and workshops – you can read more later on in this newsletter and also on our website www.suicideprevention.scot I'm incredibly grateful to everyone who spoke and also to all the team who helped pull the event together and share the work on the day – the fact the event ran so smoothly is testament to all the hard work that went in beforehand.



Haylis Smith
National Delivery Lead

The day before the conference, we also held an event for all our local suicide prevention leads from across Scotland. It was an opportunity for them to come together, to connect with each other and members of the national team and take part in some discussions around their roles and what we can do at a national level to support them and the work they are doing and vice versa. Always a real pleasure to connect with so many passionate and committed people from across the country and have the time to explore some of the challenges and opportunities around suicide prevention.



National Update (cont)



One thing that has also been a recurrent theme of meetings over the last few weeks is our farewell to Shirley Windsor who retires from PHS on the 30th June 2025. I have had the pleasure of working alongside Shirley for a number of years in my various suicide prevention roles and particularly closely over the last 5 years since I began working at a national level. Shirley has been a constant, beavering away quietly in the background, leading on many aspects of our suicide prevention work. She has consistently and tirelessly worked to help ensure that all our work is supported by evidence, data and intelligence building connections across various sectors and areas of work. I want to say a huge thank you to her for all her work and support over the years and wish her many happy years of retirement – she has very much earned it.



Shirley Windsor & Haylis Smith

Finally, I hope everyone reading this has time over the summer to rest and recharge, I'm hoping the lovely weather remains encouraging me to get outdoors and enjoy the best of the summer time

Take care

Haylis



Thank U and Au Revoir



Shirley Windsor, Organisational Lead (Public Health Scotland) asked us to share a short message with you all as she heads off to enjoy a very active retirement!

“As my actual retirement day is ever looming, I wanted to reiterate my appreciation of the support our Suicide Prevention community have given me over the years (and also a big thank u for the various send offs in the last few weeks!).

Together, we are striving to make a difference to the lives of our colleagues, friends, families and communities – still some way to go but I have confidence in all of you that progress will continue to be made.

Remember to look after yourself as well as looking after others

Take care
Shirley”



Shirley Windsor (centre)
with members of the PHS Public Mental
Health Team



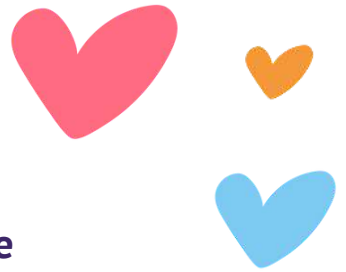
What if...

a **conversation**

about **suicide**

could **save a life?**

Campaign update



It's official - we're having more conversations about suicide

- +8% increase in conversations about suicide between December and May
- +6% increase in the confidence to talk to family about suicide
- Paid media campaign exceeds all targets - in some cases substantially

Research conducted by YouGov on behalf of Suicide Prevention Scotland has shown people in Scotland are having more conversations about suicide.

We also know that people are now more confident to talk about suicide with family.

These findings apply to family, friends and colleagues. They are based on an online survey of 1,002 adults (15-19 May 2025) using identical questions to previously asked in December 2024.

Figures have been weighted and are representative of all Scotland adults (aged 18+).

This new data is revealed as Scotland's biggest conversation about suicide continues, following the launch of a groundbreaking national campaign.

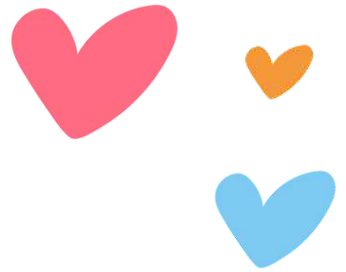
Co-produced by people with lived and living experience of suicide it asked a simple question, What if a conversation about suicide could save a life?

The campaign features four people, each of whom agreed to share their story having been bereaved by, attempted or actively considered suicide.



What if... a conversation
about **suicide** could **save a life?**

What if... campaign update (cont)



They do so by writing a letter to a loved one, or themselves, which feature in a powerful new film.

The idea behind the campaign is that we need to normalise talking about suicide and give people the confidence to have a conversation that might just save someone's life.

The four participants are Seonaid Stallan, Ross Cunningham, Clare Collin, and Laura Junor. They came together to share their letters and discuss their experiences, in a series of moving conversations.



This is important, because suicide is a topic that makes many of us nervous; it can feel like the hardest thing in the world.

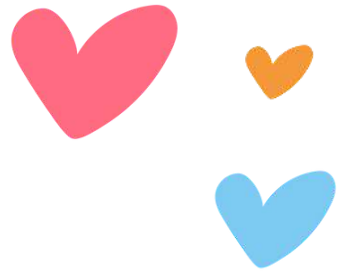
What if I say the wrong thing? Could I make the situation worse? Maybe I'm worrying over nothing and would look foolish to bring it up?

But here's something lots of people don't realise.

Talking about suicide is the best way to prevent it from happening.



What if... campaign update (cont)



The campaign coincided with the launch of the new suicideprevention.scot website, which has attracted 17,000 unique visitors so far. Interestingly, 60% of the traffic has come via performance media, according to Google Analytics. 11,000 unique users have visited the whatif campaign page.



A key part of the campaign was paid digital media advertising, featuring content on YouTube, across Meta (Facebook and Instagram), and a digital display platform called Mobsta.

Around 58% of people viewed the full YouTube ad, which is significantly above an industry expected target of 43%.

On Meta, the adverts appeared over two million times, resulting in 10,800 clicks to visit the Suicide Prevention Scotland website.

Meanwhile, the Mobsta display adverts performed brilliantly. A staggering click through rate of 2.18% (against a benchmark of 0.6%) from almost a million impressions generated over 20,000 clicks.

The campaign was supported by out of home (OOH) roadside advertising, railway station ads and bus rear ads across Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Inverness, and Aberdeen.



What if... campaign update (cont)



Content was weighted in favour of areas of higher deprivation, based on SIMD postcode data, both on digital and the location of out of home ads.

A post-campaign user test was also conducted with partners **Stickybeak**.

Of an audience of 400 participants, 54% had heard of the campaign.

And of that number, 64% had seen creative in different settings and 58% said they felt more confident about the issue of suicide than before.

This work is led by Suicide Prevention Scotland, the community of organisations working to deliver the Scottish Government and COSLA's joint suicide prevention strategy, Creating Hope Together.

There are four outcomes that shape the strategy with **SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health)** having responsibility for the key outcome that supports the campaign and website, improving understanding of suicide and tackling stigma.

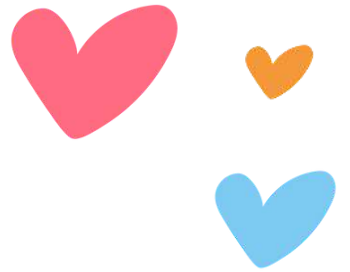
In addition to those with their own experiences of suicide, the campaign was developed with a group of people which also included those with professional experience and academic expertise. Suicide prevention specialists from local areas (Fife and Ayrshire) were also involved, as was SeeMe, Scotland's national programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

Our four participants also took part in managed media opportunities, resulting in national coverage across the BBC, Scottish Daily Mail, The Herald, and The Scottish Sun.

The campaign, was led by creative communications agency **Electrify**, who lead strategic communications & campaigns for Suicide Prevention Scotland.



What if... campaign update (cont)



Media buying for the campaign was managed by Republic of Media.

Two further campaign phases are planned for **2025-26**, with details to be announced in due course. Our thinking will continue to be bold, encouraging conversations.

Order free digital resources for your organisation at suicideprevention.scot/professionals.

You can also contact Lawrence & Lauren from our Suicide Prevention Scotland comms team via communications@suicideprevention.scot.

What else you need to know

YouGov data

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.

The total sample size was 1,002 adults. The 2024 survey was undertaken between 12th - 16th December where the total sample size was 1,007 adults. The surveys were carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Scottish adults (aged 18+).

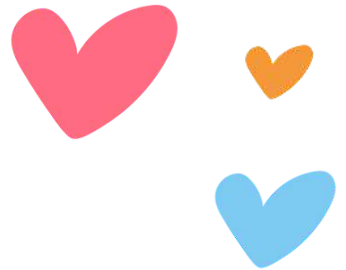
Stickybeak data

The sample size was 400. All participants were Scotland based adults (18+). Respondents were weighted towards people earning less than £30,000 per annum.

*Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Individual percentages are rounded to the nearest whole or tenth of a percent. The raw numbers are accurate, and the slight discrepancy in totals is due to rounding.



Creating Hope Podcast



As part of Mental Health Awareness week (12-18 May), we launched our new four-part limited edition podcast, powered by Public Health Scotland.



Each episode looks at a different theme, that will be relevant to colleagues working in suicide prevention across the country.

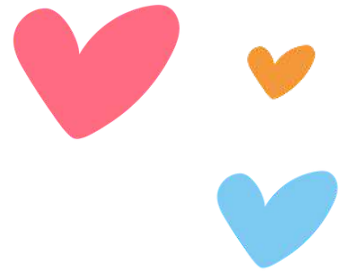
These include lived & living experience, data & intelligence, bereavement by suicide, supporting young people.

You'll be able to listen to these wherever you get your podcasts, and can read more in [this blog](#) from Susie, Jenny & Rob (Suicide Prevention Implementation Support Leads at Public Health Scotland)

▶ [Listen here](#)



New Suicide Prevention in Agriculture Research Project Launched



A major new research project focused on suicide prevention in agriculture has been announced by RSABI, the charity supporting people in Scottish agriculture.

RSABI is working with the University of Glasgow on the PhD research project aimed at understanding and preventing suicide within Scotland's farming and crofting communities.

The three-year project will be supervised by Professor Rory O'Connor, Director of the University's Suicidal Behaviour Research Lab, who is one of the world's leading experts in the field of suicide prevention.

RSABI and the University of Glasgow are inviting interest from prospective PhD researchers to undertake this vital work. The study will combine academic rigour with real-world impact, addressing the distinct challenges faced by people working in agriculture, a sector where stress, isolation, and poor access to healthcare contribute to significantly higher risks of mental ill-health and suicide.

Carol McLaren, Chief Executive of RSABI, said: "Tragically, suicide continues to be responsible for the loss of too many lives in the agricultural community. This research will play a vital role in deepening our understanding of the factors behind suicide in farming and help shape the most effective prevention strategies."

Professor Rory O'Connor, former President of the International Association for Suicide Prevention, said: "We are delighted to be partnering with RSABI on this important project. For far too long, suicide risk in agricultural communities has not received the attention that it so badly needs. Over the next 3 years, we hope to gain a better understanding of the specific factors associated with suicide risk, which will, in turn, inform suicide prevention efforts nationally and internationally."



New Suicide Prevention in Agriculture Research Project Launched (cont)



The findings of the study will directly inform RSABI's suicide prevention activities and wider mental health support work, helping to deliver more tailored services, targeted campaigns, and innovative tools to support those at risk and those affected by suicide.



Professor Rory O'Connor & Carol McLaren

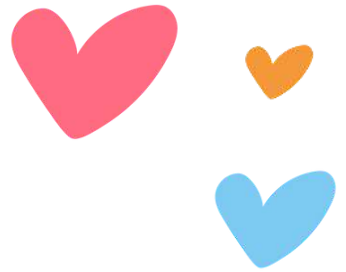
Click [here](#) for more information.

Applications are now being welcomed from individuals with a strong academic background in psychology, mental health, or related disciplines. Previous experience working in mental health-related research and/or practice as well as agricultural experience would be welcome. Those interested in applying or learning more about the project are encouraged to view details on:

<https://www.findaphd.com/phds/project/towards-an-enhanced-understanding-of-suicide-risk-among-those-from-agricultural-backgrounds/?p185354>



Booking opens for Peer Connects events!



Peer Connects is back for 2025/26 as Scottish Recovery Network continue to collaborate with you to support, champion and grow peer support in Scotland!



Peer support has a vital role to play in suicide prevention. This new programme features twelve free learning events and webinars, with guest contributors, networking opportunities, new tools, and a chance to share practice with other people passionate about peer support!

Here's the Peer Connects brochure for more information and to book:

<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/68a8f49628.html>

Creating Hope with Peer Support in Edinburgh: practical workshop

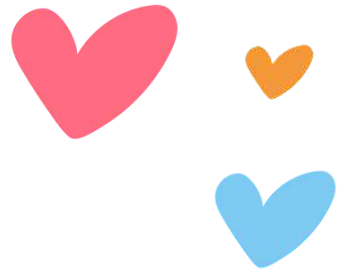
Want to build confidence & skills providing peer support to people affected by suicide? Make a real impact & create meaningful connections!

We'll start with an exploration of peer support and why it has a vital role to play in suicide prevention.

We'll then look at the Creating Hope with Peer Support Pathway. This Pathway outlines four key stages of the peer support relationship and journey: Connect, Explore, Hope and Support.



Creating Hope with Peer Support in Edinburgh: practical workshop (cont)



Who is this workshop for?

- Peer Supporters / Workers in groups or services who want to build their confidence supporting people affected by suicide
- People with lived experience interested in developing peer support skills



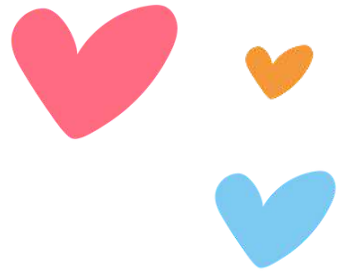
Group numbers for this workshop are deliberately low to provide a small group session where participants in similar roles can discuss challenges, shape solutions and exchange skills and ideas.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

<https://CreatingHopewithPeerSupportinEdinburghWorkshop.eventbrite.co.uk>



Inverclyde Breathing Space Bench Unveiling



A new Breathing Space bench has been unveiled at Greenock waterfront to give people the chance to pause, reflect, and get support if they need it.

The bench near the Beacon Arts Centre has been installed as part of a nationwide initiative.

More than 50 Breathing Space benches have been installed across Scotland and this is the first in Inverclyde.



Heather Still (Health Improvement Senior, Inverclyde HSCP) & Councillor Francesca Brennan, alongside partners from NHS 24, Samaritans & The Anchor

Vice-chair of Inverclyde Integrated Joint Board, Councillor Francesca Brennan, said: “The installation of this bench sits alongside ongoing work in the community to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and encourage open conversations.

“This bench is in a beautiful spot on the waterfront, making the most of the wonderful coastal views we’re blessed with in Inverclyde.

“I hope it is used by many people who want to take a moment in a calming location and for those who may need some extra support, they know where to go.”



Inverclyde Breathing Space Bench Unveiling (cont)



Funded by the Inverclyde HSCP Health Improvement Team and installed by Inverclyde Council, the bench has a plaque with information about NHS 24's Breathing Space service and The Samaritans, which provide free and confidential services for anyone in Scotland over the age of 16 who needs a listening ear.

Lisa-Jane Dock, a National Development Officer for NHS 24's Breathing Space service, said: "At Breathing Space, we welcome every opportunity to collaborate with partners across Scotland to raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

"Working with local communities, charities, and organisations like Inverclyde HSCP, we are highlighting together that services are available to provide compassionate advice to anyone needing support.

"We are delighted to see a new 'Take Some Breathing Space' bench installed in Inverclyde, offering a visible and welcoming space for people to pause, reflect, and connect.

"These benches are more than just a place to sit. They are a symbol promoting the importance of good mental wellbeing and encouraging open conversations about mental health."



Legend on a Bench - Dundee



A CHARITY which aims to prevent loss of a life to suicide has teamed up with an anonymous local donor to donate two suicide prevention benches in Dundee.



For the first time in Scotland, Legend on the Bench has provided benches containing a plaque with support contacts for people experiencing suicidal thoughts.

On Friday the 20th of June councillors, support workers and local people gathered to mark the occasion.



Legend on a Bench - Dundee (cont)



Cllr Ken Lynn, chair of the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board said: “The loss of life to suicide has a profound effect on so many people, and one person who takes their own life is one too many.

“Help and support is provided in the city by a range of local organisations and Dundee’s suicide prevention delivery plan, ‘Creating Hope Together in Dundee’, lays out firm foundations for work going forward.

“These two benches complement this ongoing effort and will provide part of the city’s suicide prevention activities by ensuring that anyone affected by suicide knows where they can get support.”

Legend on a Bench was born from a family bereavement to suicide, when former Spurs and Chelsea midfielder Micky Hazard’s nephew Jay took his own life in 2019.



The family set up the charity and since 2024 have been donating benches with QR codes pointing people contemplating suicide to sources of help and support in parks and open spaces across England, describing them as a “legacy of hope”.

Dundee’s benches are sited at Slessor Gardens, adjacent to the Ember bus stop on South Castle Street and at the park area on Tannadice Street, adjacent to Hindmarsh Avenue.



Community Comes Together for Suicide Prevention Training in Denny and Bonnybridge



CVS Falkirk & District, in partnership with Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership's Suicide Prevention Group, brought local people from Denny and Bonnybridge together for a powerful day of learning, connection and collaboration around strengthening our communities for suicide prevention.

Titled 'Creating Hope Together in Denny and Bonnybridge', the informal event welcomed residents, service providers, businesses, educators, community leaders, and volunteers to engage in meaningful discussions and training around suicide prevention. With 18 individuals working together, the training sessions focused on practical ways to recognise when someone may be at risk and how to respond appropriately with Time, Space and Compassion.



During the event, attendees came together to begin the development of a Creating Hope Charter – a community-driven document that outlines shared values and actions to support mentally healthy, suicide-safer communities. The Charter also details actions that individuals and groups will undertake themselves, and encourage others and local services to do, thereby amplifying their voices to inspire wider change.



Community Comes Together for Suicide Prevention Training in Denny and Bonnybridge (cont)



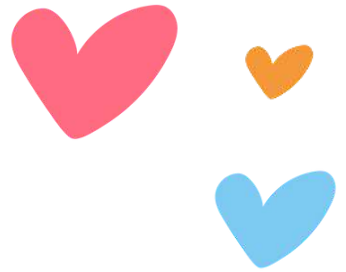
Utilising a template of ‘we value; we believe; we commit; we will’, attendees came together to set their own community priorities, creating ownership over the Charter and implementing those first steps towards stronger communities through the agreement of what was most needed. Starting at ‘we value’ and ending at ‘we will’ ensured this was more than a talking shop, it was a starting point on a longer journey with actionable targets such as:

“We will continue to support Denny and Bonnybridge communities and third sector groups to grow, thrive, and be aware of opportunities where they can have their voice heard across mental health and wellbeing planning. We will support our community to be more knowledgeable, open, aware and caring to those who are experiencing poor mental health. We will treat everyone as individuals, support them to be empowered in their decisions, and respect their views and rights to privacy. We will offer compassion and time to talk.”

The **[‘Creating Hope Together Community Charter’](#)** can be accessed online via the **[CVS Falkirk & District](#)** website but is also linked for your convenience.



Community Comes Together for Suicide Prevention Training in Denny and Bonnybridge (cont)



Ultimately, the day highlighted the importance of – and appetite for – community-led approaches which support the creation of safer, more compassionate environments:

“This event was about more than just raising awareness of suicide prevention –it was about providing local people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to respond appropriately to someone who is struggling with their mental health, and possible experiencing suicidal thoughts. “

“By taking part in this activity, we hope those who attended can go back to their community or organisation and encourage others to join the conversation about Creating Hope in Falkirk and suicide prevention work occurring across Falkirk. The Charter Activity allowed members of the Denny and Bonnybridge communities to unite under values and principles that they believe needs to remain at the heart of community and services, to deliver a high standard of support that makes people feel listened to, dignified and safe.”



Community Comes Together for Suicide Prevention Training in Denny and Bonnybridge (cont)



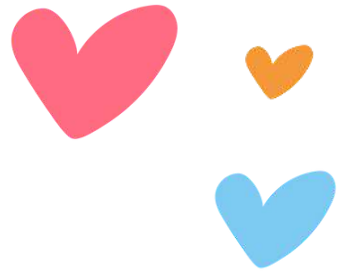
CVS Falkirk & District were heartened by this belief of a necessity for cross-sector partnership and joined-up approach to developing resources and initiatives such as this – with Partnership Manager, Eloise Wilson, sharing:

“Supporting our communities to become safe, compassionate, inclusive, and free from stigma is a key priority when it comes to health and wellbeing initiatives across the Falkirk District. Our Networks and Forums serve to support this through our quarterly meetings of third sector representatives, however, opportunities such as this to bring together anyone who shares the interest and desire to engage and learn about such important topics are vital in ensuring a District wide understanding and approach. We are grateful to those who attended this session, and contributed to the success of the event through mindful engagement and sensitive discussions.”

For those who were unable to attend but are interested in future training, please visit the [NHS Forth Valley – Training](#) dedicated website. For further information about community initiatives around suicide prevention, please contact the CVS Falkirk & District team by email: info@cvsfalkirk.org.uk or phone: 01324 692000.



World Suicide Prevention Day 2025



World Suicide Prevention day is on the 10th of September 2025.

The continuing theme is:

“Changing the narrative on suicide”

We plan to have the next edition of the newsletter as a special World Suicide Prevention Day edition and we would love you to send in what you are planning to do to mark the day.

Please send any information to:

p hs.suicidepreventionteam@p hs.scot



Resources

Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework

Public Health Scotland has recently published the Mentally Flourishing Workplaces (MFW) Framework.



Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework



MFW is a free framework for any organisations regardless of size or sector, designed to help organisations in Scotland adopt best practices that support employee mental health and wellbeing - to help you create a mentally flourishing workplace for all employees.

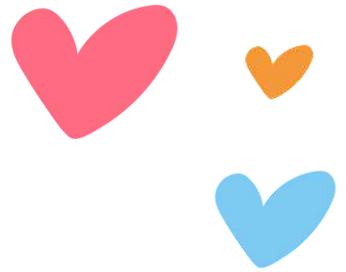
Developed by Public Health Scotland, with support from businesses across Scotland, MFW helps you assess what you're already doing for staff mental health, identify gaps, and explore new approaches.

MFW consists of a series of Dimensions that promote best practice for mental health and wellbeing, all outlined in a framework for ANY organisation to adopt. It serves as a starting point for organisations looking to build a mentally flourishing workplace and is supported by an Implementation Guide to assist with practical application.

To access the Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework, scan the QR code (above) or copy the link below. You can also contact the team that developed MFW at PHS.MentallyFlourishingWork@phs.scot

<https://shorturl.at/ZBJIT>

Resources



Creating Safe Spaces: New peer support practice guide

The first in a series of four short practice guides, developed as part of the Creating Hope with Peer Support suicide prevention project, but valuable to anyone working in mental health peer support.

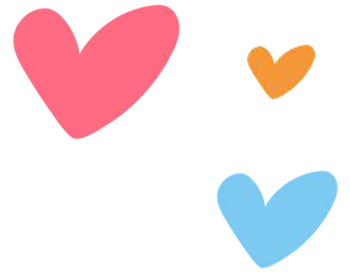


Full of practical advice and tips based on the experiences of peer supporters, groups and services across Scotland.

Download for free here <https://bit.ly/CSSPG1PDF>



Reading Corner



Creating Hope Together National Conference

The Creating Hope Together Conference took place on the 15th of May 2025 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Glasgow.

You can read more about the conference and view presentations from the day [here](#).

NCISH 11th Conference

The NCISH 11th Conference took place on the 8th of May.

The slides and recordings from the conference can now be viewed on the [website](#) and can be shared within your organisation.

We have also attached a list of Report and publication links from the NCISH 2025 conference which we hope you will find useful.

'Life Under Pressure: The Social Roots of Youth Suicide and What to Do About Them' Seminar

The recent 'Life Under Pressure' seminar recording is now available on the Suicide Cultures [blog](#),



Key documents and information

Key documents around suicide prevention

Local Area Suicide Prevention Action Plan Guidance



Document 1: Introduction



Document 2: Governance and Collaboration



Document 3: Data, Evidence and Intelligence



Document 4: Monitoring and Evaluation



Document 5: Participation Practice

Induction Pack for Suicide Prevention Leads

Knowledge and Skills Framework for Mental Health Improvement and Suicide Prevention

Locations of Concern guidance

Cluster guidance

Public Memorial guidance

Time Space Compassion - supporting people experiencing suicidal crisis: introductory guide

Creating Hope Together - strategy

Creating Hope Together - action plan

Creating Hope Together - EQIA

Creating Hope Together - strategy (easy read)

Creating Hope Together - action plan (easy read)

Outcomes Framework

