Sandwell Suicide Prevention Strategy & Action Plan – 2022-2025

Recommendations and actions

Recommendations	Actions	Led by	Due
Recommendation 1:	1a: Raising awareness across whole organisations		by end
Necommendation 1	Tal Naising awareness across whole organisations		
Raise awareness of suicide	ACTION 1: Universal online training - encourage all staff across the Council to	Sandwell SP Partnership/	Q2 2022/23
prevention and bereavement support	complete brief online sessions from Zero Suicide Alliance as an entry point to developing awareness and understanding.	HR and Public Health, SMBC	2022/23
through training for all	developing awareness and understanding.		
frontline Council staff	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	Sandwell SP Partnership	Q2 2022/23
All staff across Sandwell Council who have direct	and/or refer or signpost them to appropriate services.		
contact with our residents will receive targeted training to	1b: Workforce development		
recognise signs that someone may be having suicidal thoughts, initiate supportive conversations, and direct people to the right help and	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.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ HR and Public Health, SMBC	Q2 2022/23
Delivering this alongside more basic training for all staff, and enhancing training in related	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.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Community Mental Health Taskforce	Q2 2022/23
areas through including suicide prevention elements, will help to create a culture of awareness and compassion	ACTION 5: Map current training available through the voluntary & community sector, and promote via networks and SCVO's Route2wellbeing portal.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Community Mental Health Taskforce	Q2 2022/23

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

Recommendation 2:	2a: Community-led, town-based approaches to Suicide Prevention		
Pilot town-based, community-led forums	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.	Samaritans/Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
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	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. 2b: Using community-led forums to inform and implement wider suicide prevention approaches	Highways Agency	Q4 2022/23 TBC
motorway bridges and rail stations. Pilots undertaken in Tipton suggest that town-based	Additional action specific to: Children & Young people: ACTION 16: Embed current good practice and continuous improvement across antibullying work via the SHAPE forum and partner agencies.	SHAPE Partnership Board/ Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
forums led by local communities are effective in embedding awareness and vigilance around suicide prevention.	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.	Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Service Providers commissioned via local authorities and the NHS, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and independent sector organisations.	Ongoing
	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.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	Q1 2023

Recommendation 3:	3a: Mapping suicide prevention & mental wellbeing activity		
Support community organisations with funding applications	ACTION 19: Work with PHDO in each town and SCVO to identify voluntary & community organisations already working towards suicide prevention and mental wellbeing promotion.	Public Health, SMBC/SCVO	Q3 2022/23
Lack of capacity and resources are cited as key barriers to accessing funding by voluntary and community organisations,	3b: Helping organisations to access funding 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.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ SCVO	Ongoing
with this activity detracting from core business. Public Health and other partners with	ACTION 21: Work with SCVO to support voluntary & community organisations to develop funding applications and bids.	Sandwell SP Partnership SCVO	Ongoing
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.	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.	Public Health/Community Partnerships, SMBC	Ongoing
access the means to grow.	3c: Supporting communities through grant funding 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).	Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
	ACTION 24: Work with Black Country SP leads and CDWs to identify and build capacity within the voluntary & community sector.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Black Country SP Partnership	Ongoing
4: Recommendation 4:	4a: Improving communications to increase accessibility and reduce stigma		
Work with Community Development Workers to identify gaps in accessibility	ACTION 25: Develop a Suicide Prevention Communication Plan for corporate communications and community marketing.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q1 2022 Refresh annually
		Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q2 2022

Lack of accessibility to services	ACTION 26. Drint materials (nectors leaflets business cards) an suiside presention in	Sandwell SP Partnership/	Refresh
supporting suicide prevention	ACTION 26: Print materials (posters, leaflets, business cards) on suicide prevention in languages other than English, particularly those that are most widely spoken among	Public Health, SMBC	as
has been highlighted as a key	Sandwell residents.	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	required
issue in Sandwell. Here we	Sund Well residents.		Q2 2022
focus on working together to	ACTION 27: Develop targeted resources for people who are non-literate or whose	Sandwell SP Partnership/	Refresh as
identify barriers to access, in	first language is not English, including radio and audio information and adding	Public Health, SMBC	required
terms of both practical	pictorial information to key messages.		
elements (i.e. language, format, digital literacy) and	protestial and the protesting of the protesting		
inclusion (i.e. cultural	ACTION 28: Produce resources in accessible formats for people who are deaf or	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
appropriateness and	hearing impaired, or blind or visually impaired.	- Canada Circi Cir	
representation).			
	4b: Increasing representation within Suicide Prevention communications		
	ACTION 20 H	Sandwell SP Partnership	
	ACTION 29: Use imagery and wording that is relatable to different communities and	- Canada Cara Cara Cara Cara Cara Cara Cara C	Ongoing
	groups, including those in higher-risk groups.		
	ACTION 30: Work with minority and/or marginalised communities and groups within		Ongoing
	Sandwell to understand how their unique lived experience affects their lives and	Sandwell SP Partnership	
	mental health (e.g. experiences of discrimination).		
	mental nearly (e.g. orponenter of allocation)		
	ACTION 31: Share learning across professional and community networks to increase	Sandwell SP Partnership	
	understanding of the experiences minority and/or marginalised communities and		Ongoing
	groups, and ensure that these experiences are reflected in their communications.		
	4c: Disseminating information		
	ACTION 32: Work proactively to promote messages around suicide prevention and	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	available support to local communities via a range of media, including approaching	Sanawen Si Tarthership	
	local networks and radio stations.		
			Ongoine
	ACTION 33: Work closely with community groups and the faith sector to build on	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	existing infrastructure and embed support around suicide prevention.		

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

		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	6a: Developing the suicide bereavement support offer for Sandwell residents		
awareness and access of bereavement support to all First Responder and bereavement-related	ACTION 43: Community engagement with people bereaved by suicide to identify gaps in support and provision and identify/inform policy and funding.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
partners Knowledge of bereavement services by First Responders and wider professionals in	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.	Kaleidoscope+ Group/Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
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	6b: Information and training for First Responders ACTION 45: Develop and deliver targeted training sessions on suicide prevention, postvention & bereavement support for first responders	Sandwell SP Partnership	Q1 2023
it. This includes not just emotional and psychological support, but also practical	ACTION 46: Create Z cards for all first responders containing details of local bereavement support services.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q1 2022
support in the period following a death.	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	

Recommendation 7:
Identify and prioritise high-
risk populations through
working groups

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.

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 coordinated approach.

7a: Reviewing local, regional and national evidence

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.

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.

ACTION 51: Update the Suicide Prevention Needs Assessment in 2024 to inform update of subsequent SP Strategy & Action Plan.

7b: Links to mental health and other services

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.

ACTION 53: Analyse data on hospital admissions for self-harm to identify associated risk factors.

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.

7c: Links with community-led forums

ACTION 55: Regular engagement with community-led forums in each of the six towns in Sandwell to identify new and emerging concerns.

Sandwell SP Partnership/
Public Health, SMBC

Sandwell SP Partnership

Ongoing

Ongoing

Sandwell SP Partnership/
Public Health, SMBC

Q2 2024

Black Country & West Birmingham CCG

Q2 2022

Public Health, SMBC

Q1 2023

Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC

Ongoing

Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC Ongoing

Addition	nal actions specific to: Children & Young People:		
that wh any rela be ident excludir	I 56: Issue revised guidance to schools on the use of exclusion, recognising ten a child or young person is permanently excluded from school or college, ationships with universal services are at risk of becoming fractured and should tified as a potential risk factor for suicide. If a school or college is considering and someone there should be multi-agency engagement to discuss other al solutions.	Public Health/ Education, SMBC / School & College Leadership Teams & Governors	Q3 2023
and menthat who process needs o	157: Improve awareness of the impact of domestic abuse, parental physical ntal health needs and conflict at home. In addition, agencies should ensure here a parent or carer is open to adult mental health services, existing hes include systematic risk assessment (including thoughts of suicide) of the of the child or young person by all partner agencies to ensure they receive riate support	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	Q3 2023
schools) risk of s under w	158: Ensure all schools and colleges (including independent and faith-based) have clear anti-bullying policies that include guidance on how to assess the suicide for children and young people experiencing bullying and when and what circumstances multi-agency meetings will be called to discuss individual n/young people.	Public Health/ Education, SMBC / School & College Leadership Teams & Governors Health, Social Care, Education, Local Authorities, Schools Colleges, Criminal Justice System,	
	59: Review existing local policies and guidance to ensure they emphasise the findicators identified to improve awareness of the possibility of child suicide.	Acute Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Childrens Services, Local Authorities, Primary Care, Education departments, Schools, Colleges, Youth Offending Teams, Liaison and Diversion Services, Commissioned services	

	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	
Recommendation 8:	8a: Monitoring and evaluation		
Improve data collation and intelligence-gathering	ACTION 61: Improve monitoring of protected characteristics for mental health and wellbeing programmes, project and services delivered or commissioned by SMBC	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
There are multiple sources for statistical data that can be	and partner organisations.		
shared on a regular basis to identify developing trends. Equally, there should be	ACTION 62: Develop a set of key outcome indicators to inform evaluation frameworks for suicide prevention interventions and projects.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q2 2022
encouragement for recorded and anecdotal evidence from	8b: Effective information sharing		
across the borough to be shared among partners so that we can continue to understand what is happening at every	ACTION 63: Work with Sandwell Council Information Management Unit to establish Information Sharing Agreements between the Council and partner organisations.	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health/IMU, SMBC	Q4 2022
level. This also feeds into the requirement to link to the Police's real-time surveillance activities.	8c: Sharing learning between partner organisations ACTION 64: Continue to share information and intelligence via the Sandwell Suicide Prevention Partnership to inform local policy and practice.	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	Additional action specific to: Children & Young People: 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.	Acute Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Childrens Services, Local Authorities, Primary Care, Education departments, Schools, Colleges, Youth Offending Teams, Liaison and Diversion Services, Commissioned services	Ongoing
	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:	9a: Promoting responsible reporting of suicides	a macinganas, amac	
Engage with media	ACTION 68: Provide opportunities for media organisations and staff to participate in	SMBC Press	Q1 2024
organisations to work co-	multi-agency training to advocate towards responsible reporting.	Office/Samaritans	Δ= === :
operatively on the	mater agency training to advocate towards responsible reporting.		
reporting of suicides Media organisations have a	ACTION 69: Actively engage with local media organisations to encourage and support them to adopt the Samaritans' media guidelines for reporting suicide.	Samaritans Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
responsibility to report	9b: Developing key messages for the public		
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	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.	Samaritans Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q3 2022
	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	Q1 2023
and friends.	ACTION 72: Work with Black Country Suicide Prevention leads to develop and	Sandwell SP Partnership/	Ongoing
	promote consistent messages.	Black Country SP Partnership	
Recommendation 10:	10a: Increasing resources and capacity		
	ACTION 73: Identify potential funding sources to support local suicide prevention	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
Conduct further	activity.		
assessments to consider			
specific populations	ACTION 74: Align with related strategies (including Sandwell Better Mental Health Strategy; Autism Strategy; Carers Strategy and End of Life Strategy).	Public Health, SMBC	Ongoing
We have already begun to			
identify key groups including rough sleepers, migrants, those with who misuse drugs and alcohol and people who are	ACTION 75: Ensure that suicide prevention considerations are included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Sandwell.	Public Health, SMBC	TBC

unemployed. We will continue to work as a multi-stakeholder group to review and update these groups.	10b: Focus on specific groups 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	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
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	alcohol, people who are unemployed and those who are LGBT+, working as a multi- stakeholder group to review and update these groups. 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	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	highlighting suicide prevention /interventions/effectiveness. ACTION 78: Carry out more detailed work on self-harm, following on from	Sandwell SP Partnership/ Public Health, SMBC	Q4 2023
suicide prevention/interventions/ effectiveness.	preliminary analysis of hospital admissions data (Action 49) to understand more about potential risk factors. ACTION 79: Continue to work together to identify emerging risk factors and key	Sandwell SP Partnership	Ongoing
	ACTION 80: Identify potential funding sources to support suicide prevention activity across the Black Country footprint.	Black Country SP Partnership	Ongoing