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# Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-2026

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**Report being considered by:** Health and Wellbeing Board  
**On:** 30 September 2021  
**Report Author:** Rachel Johnson and Matt Pearce  
**Item for:** Decision

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## 1. Purpose of the Report

The Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2017-2020 is now out of date. This report presents an update on the refreshed Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy that will cover the next five years, 2021-26. This is annexed as Appendix A.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

For the Health and Wellbeing Board to approve this strategy.

## 3. How the Health and Wellbeing Board can help

The Health and Wellbeing Board approves the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy (2021-26) as set out in Appendix A.

|  |                               |   |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Executive for final determination?</b> | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|-------------------------------|---|

## 4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 Following publication of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy in 2021, Preventing Suicide in England, a cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives (HM Government, 2021), councils were given the responsibility of developing local suicide prevention strategies and action plans through their work with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Boards, Clinical Commissioning Groups and wider partners. It is also reinforced by the Mental Health Taskforce's report to NHS England, The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health (NHS England, 2016).
- 4.2 The national strategy stresses the importance of engaging with a wide network of stakeholders to develop and deliver these strategies and plans to reduce suicide. Locally this takes the form of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group, with one overarching Suicide Prevention Strategy for the whole of Berkshire.
- 4.3 This strategy has been developed through the work of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group that has a range of representation of partners across the system, and is founded upon local data, intelligence and knowledge.

## 5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 This strategy builds on the previous Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy (2017-2020), and serves as refresh of that strategy, where we take forward the key underlying principles addressed in the former strategy and have updated it with new priorities.
- 5.2 The vision for this strategy is: “To reduced deaths by suicide in Berkshire across the life course and ensure better knowledge and action around self-harm”.
- 5.3 The strategy has been developed by the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group, who have worked together to identify key priority areas, derived from local data intelligence, trends and action. A small sub-group of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group was responsible for further defining the content for each of the priorities and providing regular updates to and receiving feedback from the main steering group.
- 5.4 The priorities of the national suicide prevention strategy (2012), and subsequent progress reports are the guiding principles to how we work to prevent suicide across Berkshire.
- 5.5 The 7 guiding principles for this strategy are:
1. Reduce the risk of suicide in key, high-risk groups
  2. Tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups
  3. Reduce access to the means of suicide
  4. Provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide
  5. Support the media in delivering sensitive approaches to suicide and suicidal behaviour
  6. Support research, data collection and monitoring
  7. Reduce rates of self-harm as a key indicator of suicide risk
- 5.6 The five core priority areas principally address the national priority to tailor approaches to improve mental health in specific groups, but the commitment remains to all of the national principles and reducing suicide rates across all population groups. Our local intelligence has demonstrated a need to focus on the following key areas:
1. Children and Young People
  2. Self-harm
  3. Females
  4. Economic stresses
  5. People bereaved by suicide
- 5.7 Whilst these are the agreed strategic priorities across Berkshire, there will remain a need to monitor trends and risk factors, particularly from the impacts of Covid-19 and to respond to the latest changes.
- 5.8 The strategy will directly contribute to priority 4 and 5 in the new Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- Priority 4 – Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
- Priority 5 – Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

5.9 The strategy directly meets this aim through the vision: “To reduce deaths by suicide in Berkshire across the life course and ensure better knowledge and action around self-harm”.

## 6. Options for Consideration

None.

## 7. Proposal(s)

To adopt the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy as developed by the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group.

## 8. Conclusion(s)

This paper has outlined our commitment to a continued focus on preventing suicides across Berkshire. By working together, we have put forward a range of recommendations that demonstrate how we will focus on key risk groups and how we will use local data and intelligence to take action and target our efforts effectively. The scope of our strategy also extends to include self-harm, which is an important risk factor for suicide.

## 9. Consultation and Engagement

9.1 Whilst there has been no formal public consultation, as was done previously, this strategy has a local focus and contains the perspectives from professionals working in the statutory, private and third sector organisations. Colleagues who support people who have been directly affected by suicide have also been involved, who we have worked with sensitively to engage this group with this strategy. The strategy reflects the commitments of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group who worked together on identifying the key priorities, which have been derived from reviewing local data, intelligence, and information.

9.2 A small sub-group of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group was responsible for further defining the content for each of the priorities and providing regular updates to and receiving feedback, from the main steering group.

## 10. Appendices

Appendix A – Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy (2021-2026)

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### Background Papers:

The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health (NHS England, 2016).

National strategy for England, Preventing Suicide in England, a cross-governmental outcomes strategy to save lives (HM Government, 2012)

**Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2018/19 Supported:**

- Support mental health and wellbeing for adults
- Improve access to employment for vulnerable people

**Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims Supported:**

The proposals will help achieve the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim(s):

- Give every child the best start in life
- Support mental health and wellbeing throughout life
- Reduce premature mortality by helping people lead healthier lives
- Build a thriving and sustainable environment in which communities can flourish
- Help older people maintain a healthy, independent life for as long as possible

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim by 2026.

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## Appendix A

### Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via [dp@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:dp@westberks.gov.uk)

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Directorate:             | Communities and Wellbeing                          |
| Service:                 | Public Health and Wellbeing                        |
| Team:                    | N/A  |
| Lead Officer:            | Public Health Consultant – Suicide Prevention Lead |
| Title of Project/System: | Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy              |
| Date of Assessment:      | September 2021                                     |

### Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

|  | Yes                                   | No                                  |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</b></p> <p>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “<i>data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation</i>”</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <p><b>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</b></p> <p>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</b></p> <p>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>Will any decisions be automated?</b></p> <p>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</b></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</b></p>   | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</b></p> <p>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</p>  | <input type="checkbox"/>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.