



Suicide Prevention

Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee
26th January 2023

Suicide in Somerset



- Every single death by suicide is a tragedy, which has a devastating impact on families, friends, colleagues, communities and services.
- Between 2018 – 2020 the suicide rate in Somerset was **14.3 per 100,000** and the suicide rate nationally was **10.4 per 100,000**. The suicide rate in males was higher at 22.6 per 100,000, compared to females 6.5 per 100,000 (2018-2020) (ONS).

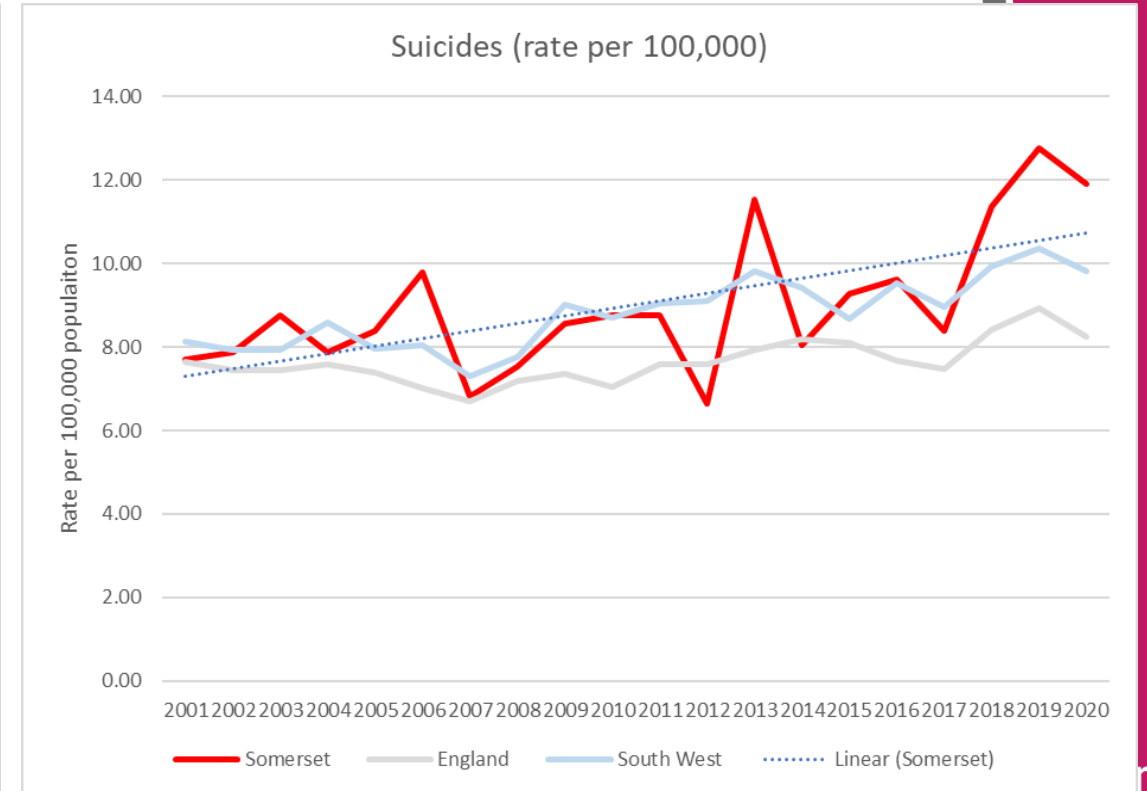
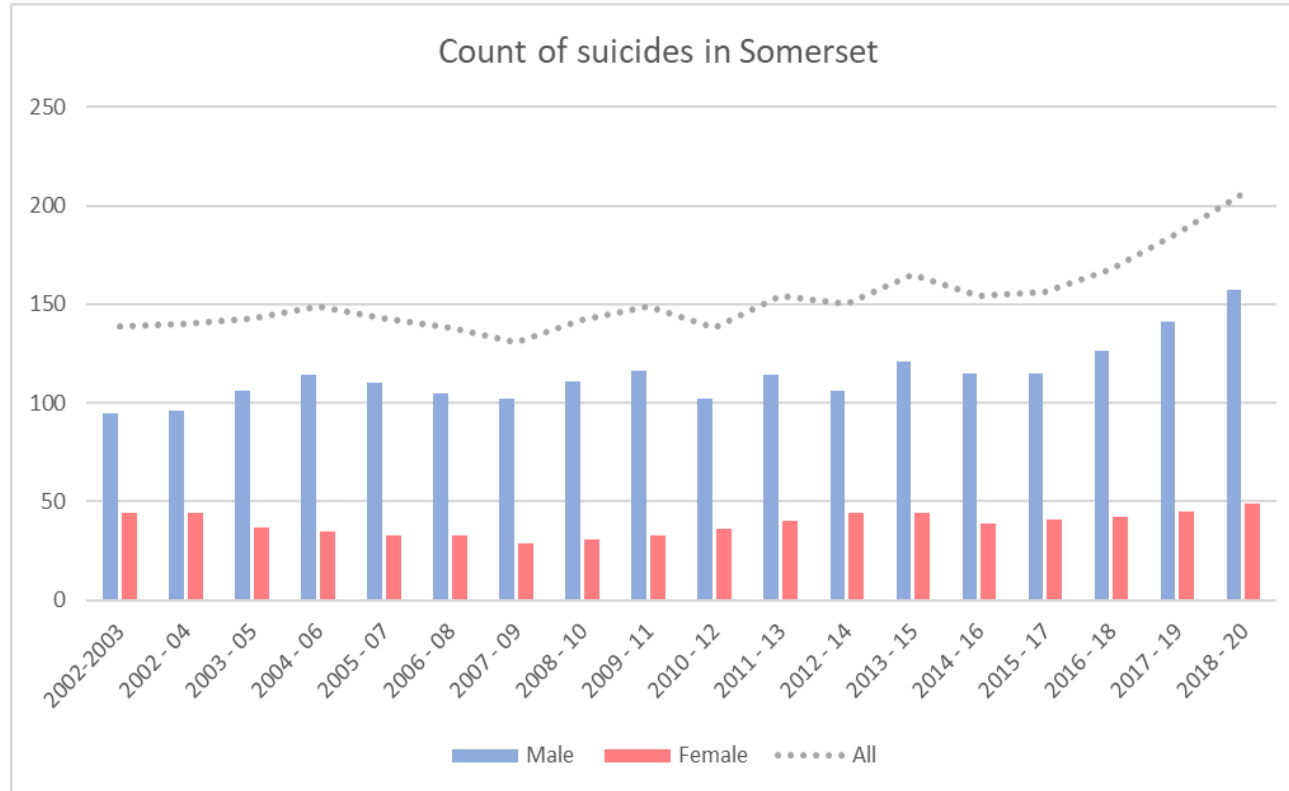


Figure 1: Count of suicides over time in Somerset (ONS/OHID fingertips)

Figure 2: Comparison of the local, regional and national suicide rate by 100,000 over time (ONS)



Somerset's Multi-Agency Suicide Prevention Approach

The profile of Suicide Prevention has grown significantly, which has led to it becoming higher on the system's priority list.

Changes in personnel and the move to an Integrated Care System way of working, led the group to complete a workshop to review the purpose and effectiveness of the Suicide Prevention Partnership Board.

The group renamed itself the Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum and agreed a new workstream structure and governance process.

Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum Structure and Governance



Population Health Board (ICB)

Somerset Suicide Prevention Partnership
Forum

Programme
Management

- Suicide Audit
- Deaths in public Places
- Real time Surveillance
- Bereavement Support

High Risk Groups

- Using local and national data to identify high risk groups

Communications and
Media Management

- Pro-active positive messaging
- Reactive challenge & education to negative media coverage

Training and
Community
Engagement

- General awareness raising
- Skills development
- Confidence to signpost

Programme Management



Purpose To provide the Suicide Case Audit Oversight Group with ongoing relevant and timely information of suspected suicide death events in Somerset attended by Avon & Somerset police officers

IMPORTANT

- *Deaths are suspected suicides in the attending A&S police officer's opinion only
- *Police officers do not attend every death that may be ruled by the coroner as death by suicide
- *As pre-coroner inquest cases, there is no pre-judgement that a suicide death will be determined
- *Due to the small numbers involved, any year-on-year comparisons have no statistical significance
- *Data gathered prior to April 2022 is not directly comparable with data since April 2022

near Real Time Surveillance (nRTS)

- Police-led data reporting process since April 2022 (previously coroner-led)
- Provides a 'helicopter view' of the latest events
- Opportunity for introduction into the Somerset Suicide Bereavement Support Service (SSBSS)

Bereavement Support Service

- Contact made with offer of support within 72 hours of the event, subject to receipt of consent
- Available to next of kin or other affected parties

Suspected Suicide Case Audit

- Suspected Suicide Case Audit Oversight Group
- Summary reports Q1, Q2 & Q3
- Annual report Q4
- Informs the Suicide Prevention Partnership Forum

Deaths in Public Places

- Quarterly meetings
- Locations of interest, not solely suicide locations
- Wider interest group

High Risk Groups



Purpose and Current Work

Using local and national information the Somerset system has been working for over 10 years to identify and put in place work to reduce risk of suicide for key groups through commissioning projects such as:

- Stepladder
- Unbreakable Men
- Farmerados
- Training for staff who work with high-risk groups

The **individual circumstances** that lead to suicide are **complex**, but we know that **rurality, lower socio-economic mobility, and age demographic** influence the risk of suicide in Somerset.

Looking Ahead

Creating task groups to look at how we can influence strategy and delivery for key groups including:

- Older single men with long term health conditions
- Children and Young People; where specific knowledge can be seen to make changes- for example working with education colleagues
- Improving understanding and expertise around gambling and debt
- Working with key at risk group agencies e.g. Farming Community Network, Probation Services, and Autism & Learning Disability colleagues, and others

Training and Engagement



Purpose and Current Work

Build skills and confidence for people to have conversations about mental health and suicide and know where to get support

Promotion and awareness raising of the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention **training programme**:

- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) – Adults and Children
- Connect 5
- Self-Harm Awareness (online)
- Suicide Awareness – 1 hour (online)
- Suicide Alertness – 3.5 hour (online)

Engagement with schools raise awareness of support and training for staff

Launch of the **Orange Button Scheme**

Looking Ahead

Add **Safety Planning** to online training offer

Develop **Postvention Guidance**

Deliver **in-house training to key partner organisations** including, Police, Fire, Housing services

Deliver **Orange Button presentations to organisations/businesses** across Somerset embed the scheme into the wider community

Create a countywide **‘Towards Zero’ suicide prevention pledge** for organisations and individuals to sign which will encompass a commitment the Orange Button Scheme and Postvention Guidance

Communications and Media



Purpose and Current Work

Raise awareness of support available and promote positive messaging around mental health and suicide to reduce stigma and tackle the taboo of talking about suicide

Partnerships with Somerset County Cricket Club and Yeovil Football Club

Orange Button **Social Media Campaign**

Walk for a Life event for World Suicide Prevention Day

Regular comms around starting a conversation about mental health, knowing signs you or somebody you know is struggling, signposting to support

Looking Ahead

Use **insight** from **High Risk Groups** workstream to create **targeted campaigns**

Develop **Orange Button Case Study videos** to continue to raise awareness of the scheme

Develop a **communications network** across the county to enable easy sharing of **campaign materials**, promote **positive messaging** and regular sharing of **media reporting guidelines**

Plans in place for the **2023 Walk for a Life** event – including more partner organisations

'Towards Zero' Suicide Prevention Conference



Improving our
Real Time
Surveillance
processes

The impact of
the rising cost
of living

Challenges

Ensuring that
suicide
prevention is
a priority for
everyone

Ongoing
funding of
projects

What we have achieved this year



Over **60** people joined the **Walk for a Life** event which was supported by **12** different partners from the Somerset system and is set to become an **annual event**



610 people so far have completed training and signed up to become **Orange Button holders**



We have partnered with **Somerset County Cricket Club** and **Yeovil Football Club**, installing ad boards for Mindline in both grounds



In 2022:

- **716** people completed online suicide alertness and suicide awareness courses
- **229** people completed 2 day ASIST training
- **126** people completed 2 day MHFA training

The **Orange Button Social Media Campaign** reached **over 61,000** people resulting in:
2816 link clicks to the website
310 shares
64 comments



If you have found any of the discussions today
distressing, please contact Mindline



Somerset
Mindline



0800 138 1692 Freephone

01823 276 892 Local

Here when you need us 24/7
For anyone of any age in Somerset experiencing
mental distress or wanting emotional support.

