

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Pathfinder Impact Report

September 2015



Help us to create a suicide-safer Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Sign the STOP Suicide Pledge
www.stopsuicidepledge.org

@stopsuicidecam Today I told someone how I felt. They didn't run; weren't shocked. Relief 2 say the words & 2 b seen #STOPSuicide

The Headlines

Since the launch of STOP Suicide on World Suicide Prevention Day, 10 September 2014, we have had:

- More than **1000** face-to-face conversations on the subject of suicide
- **8,466** visits and **7,709** individual visitors to the STOP Suicide website
- More than **10,000** self-help resources distributed across our community
- **714** Personal STOP Suicide Pledges
- **40** Organisational STOP Suicide Pledges
- A presence at **30** Community Events and Meetings
- **960** followers on Twitter
- **1,600** retweets on Twitter, with a **2.33 Million** possible retweet reach
- **297** new 'fans' on Facebook
- Positive local and national press coverage

We have also:

- Trained **78** people as ASIST 'first aiders'
- Trained **111** people in basic Suicide Awareness (SuicideTALK)
- Recruited **12** active Campaign Makers
- Won a **national award** for our work.



Picture: Luke Aldington

Empathy

"I was with a neighbour, in the pub. He was drunk and disclosed to me that he wanted to end it all. We talked at length and were able to agree he would keep 'safe for now' and build on the strengths we identified together." **ASIST participant**

Our Campaign

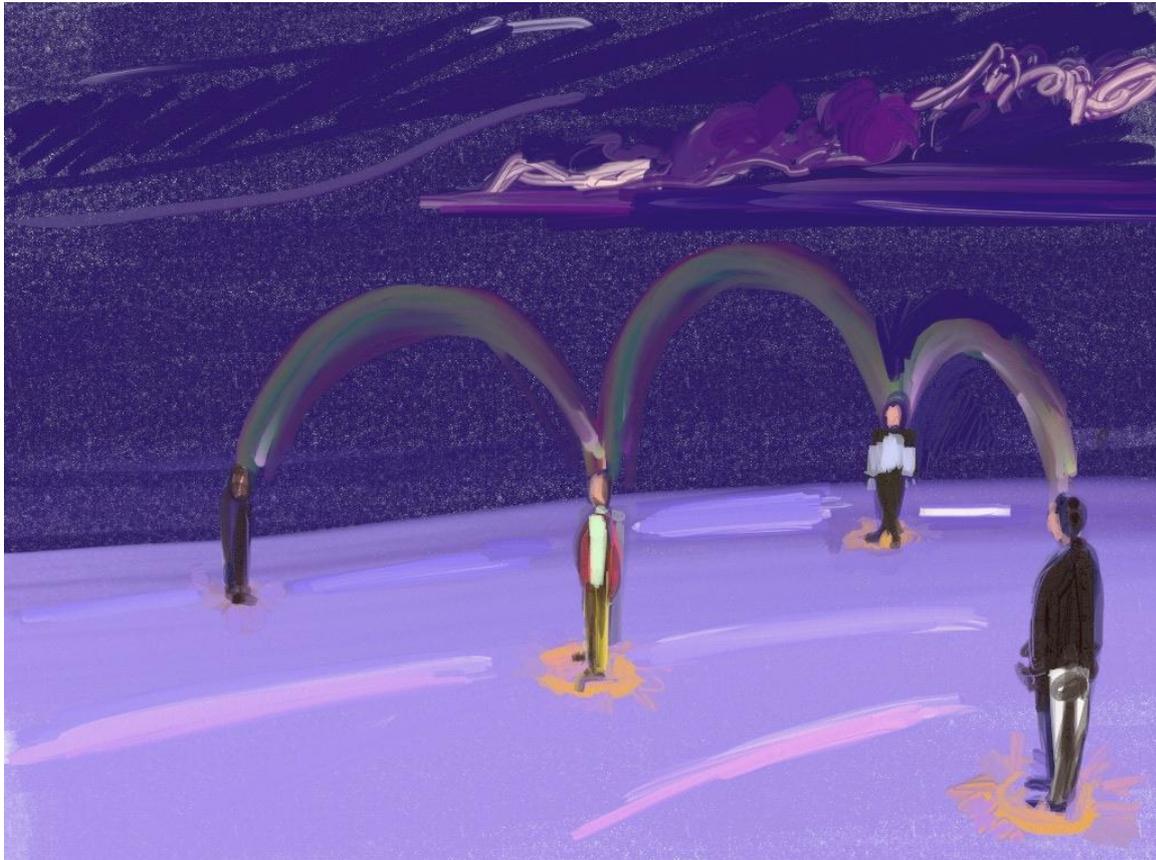
STOP Suicide is an award-winning suicide prevention campaign that is being delivered by the three mental health charities Mind in Cambridgeshire, Lifecraft and Peterborough & Fenland Mind, supported by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG and Cambridgeshire County Council public health teams. The campaign started life in September 2014 as one of four different NHS England-funded pilot campaigns across the East of England, and since April 2015 is continuing via other funding streams.

The campaign seeks to **empower communities and individuals** across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to stop suicides from happening by recognising the warning signs, asking directly and non-judgementally about suicide and helping those who are feeling suicidal to stay safe. It's about getting across the message that suicide is "everybody's business" and that it's OK – and important – to talk about it. Ultimately we want to be a catalyst for **Social Change** around the issue of suicide.

Linking up with current activity around the Crisis Concordat, it also seeks to work with other voluntary and statutory organisations to help improve the care pathways for those at risk of suicide.



Jonny Benjamin, whose story and #Find Mike campaign has helped challenge the stigma around suicide, supported the launch of our campaign on World Suicide Prevention Day, 10 September 2014. Jonny is pictured here with members of the STOP Suicide campaign launch team.



Picture: Luke Aldington

Connecting

"I have recently worked with a client who expressed he had considered options for taking his own life. I spoke openly and directly about his thought processes, his reasoning for feeling this was perhaps his only option . . . He told me that he'd informed friends of his intentions and they had been fairly reticent in their responses and he felt they were not willing or able to support him . . .

" . . . But by being more open [with me] he had been able to realise for himself that his current situation was not insurmountable and we made a plan of action together for him to pursue ongoing support."

ASIST participant

Our Wildly Important Goal (WIG)

Inspired by Ed Coffey's Zero Suicide work in Detroit, USA, we have set ourselves a Wildly Important Goal (WIG). In order to make this Goal meaningful, we have identified it on the basis that this Project will continue over at least three years.

Our **Wildly Important Goal** is to reduce the suicide rates in Cambridge city, Peterborough and Fenland to a level that is at or below the average rate in England by September 2017

Achieving our Goal and measuring outputs

The STOP Suicide Project seeks to achieve this Goal via a range of community-based activity, which aims to do the following:

1. Tackle the stigma around suicide
2. Raise awareness of suicide warning signs
3. Encourage direct and open discussions around suicide
4. Skill up non mental health professionals in the Suicide Intervention Skills necessary to keep safe those identified as being at risk
5. Work with a range of providers and organisations to improve Crisis Care (linked with Crisis Concordat activity).

Our measurable outputs have been:

- STOP Suicide Personal Pledge no.s
- STOP Suicide Organisational Pledge no.s
- 'Conversation' Counts
- Resource distribution
- Interactions on social media
- Positive coverage in local/national media
- Training – participant no.s and evaluations
- Impact on Crisis Care Pathways

STOP suicide
Save a life. Choose to live.

Help us to create a suicide-safer
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

I pledge that I will:

- tell you if I'm struggling and need help;
- reach out and connect with you if I'm worried about you;
- listen to you, without judgement, if you need someone to talk to;
- ask you, directly, if I think you are trying to tell me about suicide;
- help you to get support if you are struggling and/or thinking about suicide.

Make the STOP Suicide Pledge at
www.stopsuicidepledge.org

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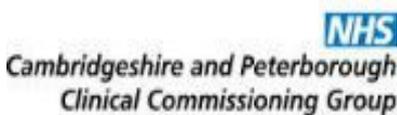
We pledge that we will:

- promote the STOP Suicide message throughout our organisation;
- encourage staff to sign up to the personal STOP Suicide Pledge;
- encourage staff to be open and honest when life gets difficult;
- encourage staff to reach out to others if they are worried about them.

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STOP Suicide Pledges

In the first year, we have achieved **714** Personal Pledges and **40** Organisational Pledges, including:



"The STOP Suicide Campaign has enabled me to start some really powerful conversations around the subject of suicide within the training environment. One that stands out for me was when I was training a group of senior managers who all worked for a big local employer. Most of the participants were men, which is unusual for this kind of training, and I asked them to consider how they would deal with a situation where a colleague was in a very low and distressed state and talking in a very hopeless, helpless way about having 'nothing to live for'.

Many of the participants were visibly shocked when I suggested they might ask directly about suicide. but once we started discussing the subject we had a really open, honest discussion. I felt a very real shift in attitudes within the room." **Mental health awareness trainer**

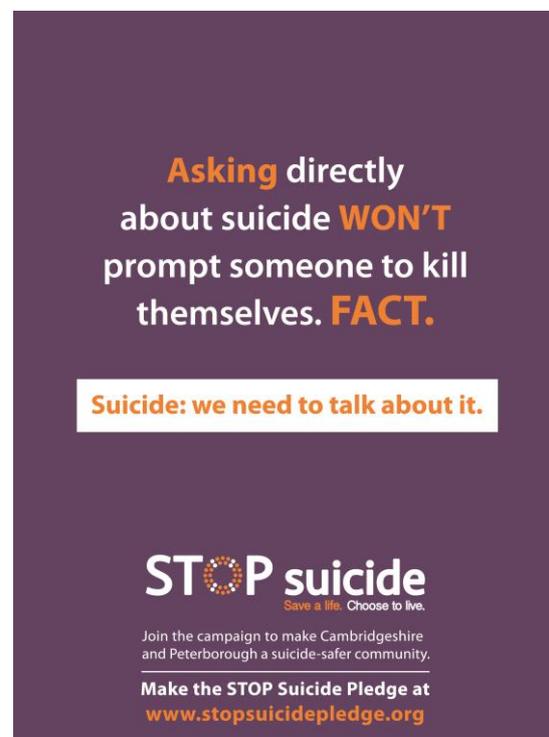
Making conversations happen

Community engagement has played a key part in the STOP Suicide activity over the past 10 months, during which we have attended a wide range of community events and embedded the STOP Suicide message in all our training and public-facing activities.

In total we have had more than **1000 face-to-face conversations** with members of the public. Events we have covered include a Music Festival, University/further education college events, theatre productions, employee wellbeing events, a Cambridge University conference and a local faith groups 'breakfast' get together.

Distributing resources

We have distributed nearly 10,000 self-help resources and campaign message posters across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.



Our website

Since the campaign launched in September 2014 our website - www.stopsuicidepledge.org - has received **8466** visits from **7709** individual visitors. The most popular pages have been the Homepage, the Resources and the Pledge page.

Press coverage

The campaign has featured prominently in national & local newspapers/magazines and on local radio:



Campaign Makers - catalysts for change?

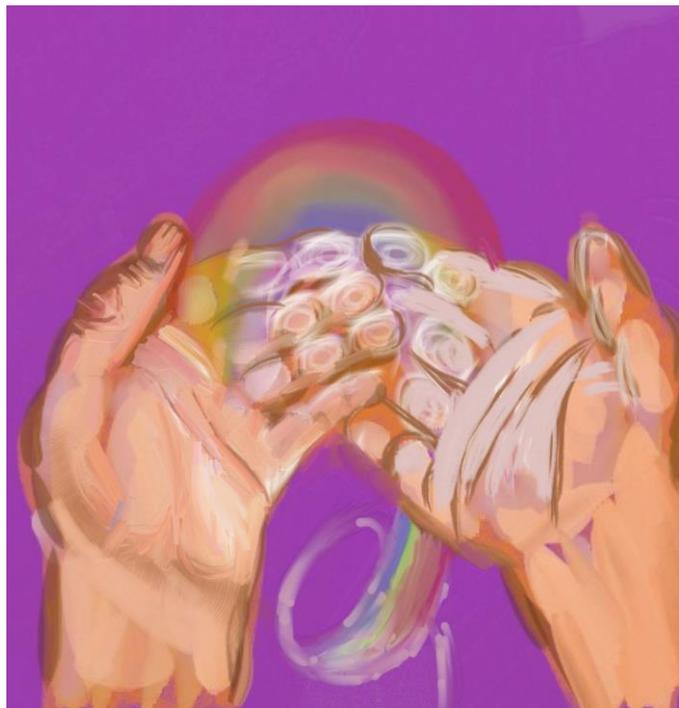
Our ultimate goal, relating to tackling stigma, is to be a catalyst for social change around the way we approach the subject of suicide. Our core message is that suicide is “everybody’s business”.

Our Campaign Makers are key to this. They are members of the public who want to take the STOP Suicide message into their communities and have conversations that challenge the myths and stigma around suicide, within their own lives, and on social media.

We currently have **12 active Campaign Makers** and believe that these passionate individuals – and others like them – could be key to shifting attitudes in much the same way as Dementia Friends has shifted attitudes around dementia.



Pictured are two of our 12 active Campaign Makers – Costin Bucuci (back, right) and Zoe Rice-Jones (front, right) with members of the campaign team, following MHPF award ceremony. Our Campaign Makers are proving key to getting the STOP Suicide message out to the wider community.



Picture: Luke Aldington

Hope

"The person in question got into the car and I started talking to her. After roughly 10 minutes she said that she had to go. I asked the direct question as to whether, if she drove away, it was her intention to kill herself. She said yes.

"From then it was the talk down. I was with the person for approximately 20 minutes until the NHS crisis team turned up and they then took over." **Police Officer**

Social media

Social media has played a key role in our engagement with individuals and organisations. Twitter has been particularly useful in spreading the STOP Suicide message. Within the first year, we have achieved more than **900** followers and **1,600** retweets with a **2.33m** retweet reach.

The average number of suicides in the UK has now increased to 17 every day. We need to talk about this urgently #stopsuicide @stopsuicidecam

@stopsuicidecam would like to raise awareness at my sixth form over next year. You guys have any posters/informative packs?

Our lovely Campaign Makers are in the foyer @HuntsCollege – come find out more :) #STOPSuicide #MHAW15

'Suicide dropped from sociology lessons' as it's 'too sensitive' @guardian bit.ly/1QZznTm NOT good enough, we need to talk about it!

@stopsuicidecam it [the pledge] has helped me feel accountable. I made a pledge, a promise. Promises matter, even when I feel I don't #hope

Lots of lovely compassionate people @strawberry-fair signing the STOP Suicide pledge. Come and see us at the 'village green'.

#STOPSUICIDE Make your pledge today
@stopsuicidecam



Training participant feedback . . .

"Extremely good training that as many people as possible should complete. Thought I would leave feeling down but actually feel uplifted in the knowledge that I can have a positive contribution to someone in a vulnerable place."

"Enlightening and hopeful"

"I feel much more confident in not only addressing someone at risk but also knowing what to do subsequently."

"Honest, open and thought provoking"

"I would like to say how grateful I am to you for getting me on this course. . . I feel positive that I can help veterans who feel in a bad way."

"A brilliant course, very well delivered. The model is very accessible and once grasped it is easily applied giving focus and structure to, often, challenging situations."

"Clear, direct and engaging"

"Brilliant course makes you very aware of how to talk, deal with and not to be shocked at the word suicide."

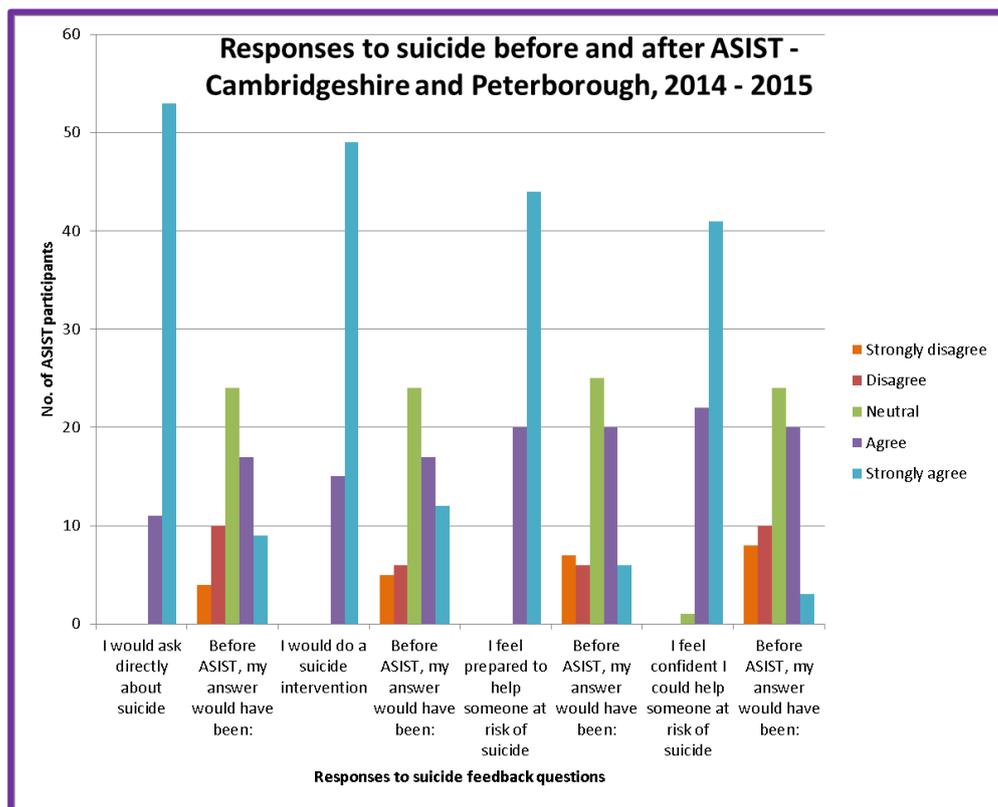
"One of the best training courses I have ever attended"

"Both trainers were excellent and ensured a difficult topic was delivered well and that it was treated with respect and dignity."

Training

Since the launch, the STOP Suicide Project team has trained up three team members as trainers in the internationally recognised two-day 'first aid' Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). We have delivered six courses and now have

78 trained ASIST first aiders across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, including police officers, paramedics, charity workers, support workers, counsellors and members of the public. *Please see graph below for the post course evaluation from the first five courses.*



Training cont'd

In Peterborough we have also been delivering the two-hour ASIST SuicideTALK across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, training **111** people in Suicide Awareness. This training has attracted participants from across the community and has received consistently positive feedback



We have also developed our own ½ day STOP Suicide Workshop, the aims of which are:

To enable participants to:

- Identify persons at risk of suicide
- Talk openly about suicide
- Help a person at risk to stay safe

The

STOP suicide
Save a life. Choose to live.

Workshop

This was piloted for the first time in June 2015 and is undergoing further testing and evaluation over the coming months. It will then be developed as a Train the Trainer package which will be made widely available across the county. We believe this T4T model is key to both maximising capacity and ensuring sustainability.

Using the skills – saving lives

Below and elsewhere in this report are examples of how individuals whom we have trained within the first year have already put their skills into action . . .

*"I was with a fellow veteran [who was in distress]. I asked him directly about suicide. We talked and found some turning points and agreed for him to keep safe whilst we worked on his identified strengths." **War Veteran***

"The day after I completed the ASIST course, I was on duty and called out to a male with suicidal thoughts. This man has become a frequent caller to the emergency services over the past few months and, each time, either police are called or he is taken to hospital and discharged home later only to call us back again. On this occasion, I used the PAL Pathway and was able to refer to an Out of Hours GP to keep him 'safe for now'. I found I was more confident in dealing with this case following the ASIST course."

*"Yesterday was a day like no other; I saved a man's life using the skills you taught us on the ASIST course. I cannot find words to properly express the gratitude I have for that. I know I played a part in yesterday, but without the training I would have been in bits. It was a very calm, almost serene affair. It was a very public place, packed with people – but, to onlookers, we [must have] just looked like two blokes sitting on a bench talking." **ASIST Participant***

*"A friend of mine's daughter tried to commit suicide and the course assisted me in guiding her through the process to a point where her daughter has recovered and realises how important she is." **ASIST Participant***

*"The course has also made me think for myself about my own strengths, positives etc. – and the importance of practicing what I preach – I am more aware of my feelings and moods and how they swing, and they are not permanent. I am keen to not make a permanent decision about taking my own life when I could be dealing with a short term problem/feeling." **ASIST Participant***

*" ASIST talks about suicide warning signs as being 'invitations' that we can all receive and respond to, if we know how. Since completing this course I have received and responded to several of those invitations with confidence and without panicking, which has been empowering both for me and those at risk." **Charity Worker***

Crisis care pathways

The launch of the STOP Suicide campaign coincided with and has contributed to intense activity around the Crisis Concordat work across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

Representatives from the STOP Suicide delivery partners have played key roles within the Crisis Care Concordat team, which is being driven by Cambridgeshire's Police Commissioner, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, public health, NHS and voluntary sector groups.

Crisis Care
Concordat
Mental Health

Achievements to date include:

- **Cambridgeshire have appointed a Crisis Concordat Delivery Manager hosted by Mind in Cambridgeshire through shared investment.**
- **A full assessment was undertaken of the Constabulary's Street Triage Needs.**
- **Acquired all essential signatories to the Concordat Action Plan.**
- **The group has raised the profile of various initiatives such as STOP Suicide, Blue Light and NHS CCG Transformation.**
- **Prioritised service user engagement.**

The STOP Suicide team have been key influencers in the development of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Suicide Prevention strategy, which was adopted in October 2014 and continue to work closely with Cambridgeshire County Council and other providers and stakeholders as part of the Suicide Prevention Strategy Implementation Group.

We finish this report with words of lived experience: an extract from *Life in a Bind* - a blog written by "a wife and working mum" who was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder and Generalised Anxiety Disorder two years ago and blogs regularly about her experiences. Please see further posts on www.lifeinabind.com

Why taking a pledge to talk about suicide can be so powerful

Last Sunday I broke down in front of two people at church, and told them that I was desperate to die and that I had been on the verge of walking out and going to the spot where, when I had been feeling suicidal before, I had planned to take my own life. They weren't horrified, or at a loss for words. They took me seriously, but they didn't panic. They held me, and talked to me, and though the pain was still intense the sobbing died down, and some sort of connection had been made.

Less than a month ago, I signed the [STOP Suicide pledge](#). The pledge is part of a wider suicide-prevention campaign working towards reducing the stigma of talking openly about suicide. When a friend of mine first drew my attention to the STOP Suicide pledge, I wasn't prepared to sign it. I thought the campaign was incredibly important and I had no problem with points two to five of the pledge – reaching out to those who are struggling, listening without judgement, and helping them to get support. But I couldn't hand-on-heart commit to point one – "tell you if I'm struggling and need help". I was worried that talking about suicide would be too much of a burden for others; that they wouldn't know what to say or would feel uncomfortable. That it was unfair of me to put them in a position where they would worry about me and might feel responsible for 'saving me'. It didn't occur to me that it might be unfair not to give them the opportunity to try.

I'm not sure exactly how or why I changed my mind about signing the pledge. I think it was part of the very gradual process, encouraged by therapy, of opening up a little about my mental health difficulties. But even just a few weeks ago, I could never have imagined talking in that way to anyone about wanting to kill myself. I am sure that even unconsciously, the pledge was a key part of that change, and I've been thinking during the last week about why pledging can be so powerful.

Taking the pledge somehow helped me to feel accountable – to the campaign, to those other individuals who have also taken the pledge, and to the people in my own life. Not in a way that felt burdensome or restrictive, but in a gentle way that reminded me that I'm connected, and although I may feel like an island, my actions have ripples and repercussions.

Continued overleaf



www.Lifeinabind.com

@lifeinabind

From previous page.

Taking the pledge was a bit like taking on board an anchor that you can throw overboard when you find yourself in a storm. Talking to others did not mean I was yet in safe harbour – it still felt as though I was being buffeted by desperation – but I felt a little safer. The suicidal thoughts were still scary, but I felt a bit more in control; less likely to be swept away by them. Like being in a relationship, I had something to cling to, something to help tie me to firmer ground.

Suicide prevention and reducing stigma should be a national campaign – the various projects around the UK are doing fantastic work but this message needs to be taken up more widely. The more people who become involved, and the more that the impact of these campaigns can be demonstrated, the more likely it is not only that they will continue to be funded, but that other similar projects will also get off the ground.

Taking the [STOP Suicide pledge](#) means making a promise, a promise to yourself and to others; and we tend to like keeping our promises. For me, promises matter – even when I feel *I* don't. Wherever you are, may I encourage you to think about taking the pledge. It may be the most important promise you ever keep.

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Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.**

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