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**September 2024**

**Media Release**

**Key Essex buildings and landmarks to be lit up in September to encourage people to talk about preventing suicide.**

From the 9th to the 13th September, organisations, people and communities across Essex and Hertfordshire are lighting up buildings and landmarks green, as part of the **‘Creating hope through light’** event for World Suicide Prevention Day.

The ‘Creating hope through light’ week-long event, hopes to raise awareness of suicide prevention and challenge Essex residents to take the FREE suicide prevention training, which can be accessed on [www.letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk](http://www.letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk).

It’s a joint initiative from Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System and Thurrock and Brentwood Mind as part of their #LetsTalkAboutSuicide campaign. It’s aimed at reducing the stigma around talking about suicide and encourages people to take the free online suicide prevention training, as well as highlight the other mental health resources available in Essex.

The suicide prevention training focuses on three key elements See, Say, Signpost.  See the problem, Say the words, Signpost to support and it gives people the knowledge and the confidence to talk to someone who might be at risk of or thinking about suicide.

***Alfred Bandakpara-Taylor, Deputy Director of Mental Health at NHS mid and south Essex ICB, said:***

*Seeking support when we are feeling low and/or anxious can be difficult, but the earlier individuals reach out for support the better. We want people from across mid and south Essex to encourage their friends, family, work colleagues, their communities, and the organisations they work for to become a part of our ‘Creating hope through light’ event this September to help prevent and reduce suicides. Whether it is lighting a building green, talking to other people about preventing suicide or taking the training - you may help save someone’s life.’*

So far, the following places will be turning green:

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| * Thurrock and Brentwood Mind * South East Essex and Central Mind * Mid and North East Essex Mind * Basildon Hospital * Southend Hospital * Broomfield Hospital * Bennett Funeral Home - Brentwood |
| * Bennett Funeral Home - Billericay |
| * County Hall Chelmsford |
| * Harlow Civic Centre |
| * Southend City Beach |
| * Porters Mayors House, Southend |
| * Civic Centre, Southend |
| * Top level (7th floor) of Thameside complex Orsett Rd Grays Essex RM17 5DX |
| * 2-4 Derwent Parade , South Ockendon RM15 5EE |
| * New Hall The Sorrells, Stanford Le Hope SS17 7ES |
| * Aveley Hall 108 High Street Aveley RM15 4AX |
| * 34 Derry Avenue South Ockendon RM15 5DL |
| * Marisco Hall Brentwood Rd Chadwell St Mary RM16 4JP |
| * Take 4 51 Lodge Lane Grays Essex RM17 5RZ |
| * North East Essex Mind, Mersea Road, Colchester |
| * Riverside Leisure Centre, Chelmsford |
| * Health watch Thurrock |
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The list is continuing to grow and the most up to date roadmap can be found here:

<https://letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk/world-suicide-prevention-day/>

Other organisations supporting the campaign but not lighting up green:

* Daily Bread, Brentwood
* Lakeside Shopping Centre
* Thurrock Family Hub
* Southend Family Centres
* Brentwood Cost Cutters
* Visit Essex
* Home start, Essex

**Lynne Morgan, CEO, Thurrock & Brentwood Mind said**

*‘We are so grateful for the support from organisations that have embraced the ‘Creating Hope through Light’ campaign and encouraged their staff and communities to undergo the training and promote the website as a resource. As we embark on another year of this campaign, we aspire to engage even more individuals and organisations in our mission to maximise participation in the suicide prevention training now more than ever we think this kind of training is vital for everyone to help spot someone who may be struggling.’*

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People can also take part by joining the social media campaign with #CreatingHopeThroughLight, as well as upload personal messages and videos using the campaign resources available on [www.letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk](http://www.letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk) You can also follow the campaigns on Instagram @tbmindcharity, [@talksuicideessex](https://www.instagram.com/talksuicideessex/), and Facebook

@ThurrockandBrentwoodMindCharity, [@letstalkaboutsuicideessex](https://www.facebook.com/letstalkaboutsuicideessex).

In 2022 5,642 people lost their lives to suicide in the UK, with 131 people taking their life in Essex alone. Suicide is in fact the leading cause of death in the United Kingdom in men under 50. Thousands of people experience suicidal thoughts and feelings every single day and coupled with COVID-19, the cost-of-living crisis and events across the World, we are now amidst a mental health crisis.

Suicide is a preventable and avoidable death, and we believe everyone should know how to talk and support someone who is having suicidal thoughts.

Could you spot the signs of someone who is struggling with their mental health? Would you know how to have the conversations with someone? Would you feel comfortable saying the word suicide to a loved one or colleague?

If you would like to find out more about how to get involved visit <https://letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk> for more information.

For press enquiries please contact:

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Our communications toolkit and digital assets for the campaign can be found:

<https://letstalkaboutsuicide.co.uk/world-suicide-prevention-day/>