

INCREASING MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS IN HOME BUILDING

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HBF is working to help employers understand mental health issues and how they can best support their employees.



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The home building industry is, of course, not immune to the challenges of mental ill health. On the contrary, the scale of mental health problems within the construction industry makes for sobering reading, with two construction workers taking their own lives every working day.

Mental health problems are understandably distressing for the individual concerned. However, in some cases, this already difficult experience can be compounded further through knock-on effects which detrimentally impact that person's relationship with their family, friends and employer.

As an industry, we need to work collectively to support our workforce. We have a responsibility to provide a culture in which people feel comfortable to admit that they're not 'ok', to ask for help and know where to turn for advice and support without fear of judgement.

This is why HBF launched its Mental Health Awareness Campaign with Lighthouse Club, the construction industry charity, in March 2019. Together with our members we are working to raise awareness of mental health problems, train people to spot the signs that a colleague may be struggling and better signpost the help available such as the Construction Industry Helpline.

Mental health is complex and the challenges facing our industry are not something that can be 'fixed' overnight. However, we can all take steps to help those in need, no matter how small. It's time to start talking.



Stewart Baseley,
Executive Chairman,
Home Builders Federation

A message from Lighthouse Club

HBF and its members have donated over **£120,000** this year to ensure that the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity continues to support our construction workforce in need.

Last year, 69% of the occupational groups seeking financial assistance from the Charity were directly related to home building including; bricklayers, ground workers, plasterers, dry liners, roofers, scaffolders, carpenters and plant operatives.

HBF are working with the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity to raise awareness of the support available and deliver positive change within the industry. This is being achieved not just through generous donations, but home builders of all sizes across the country are also pledging their commitment by signing a mental health charter and ensuring that they develop a positive mental health culture within their organisations. Many are also purchasing helpline posters that are displayed on site and helpline cards that are distributed to the workforce to ensure that workers know where to turn to if they need support.

Two construction workers take their own life every working day in the UK and 20% of all time off work is reported as being related to stress, anxiety or depression. This simply isn't acceptable. We are morally obligated to do

everything we can to change these horrendous statistics, not only to help our existing workforce but also to encourage new talent into the industry.

Without the support of HBF and its members, we simply wouldn't be able to provide the charitable services that are so desperately needed by our construction workforce and their families. Our mission is that no worker should feel alone in a crisis and we now have momentum behind a number of mental health initiatives to help us achieve that. But there is still a long way to go before we remove the stigma associated with talking about poor mental health and bringing about a significant cultural change in our industry.

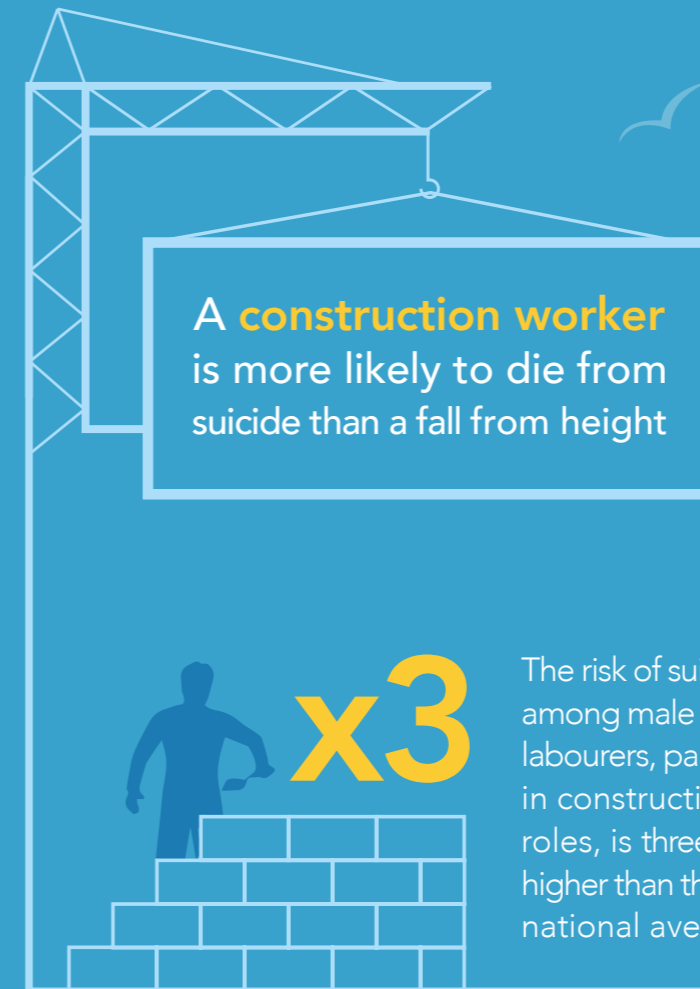
If you would like to find out more about the charity's work, visit www.lighthouseclub.org.



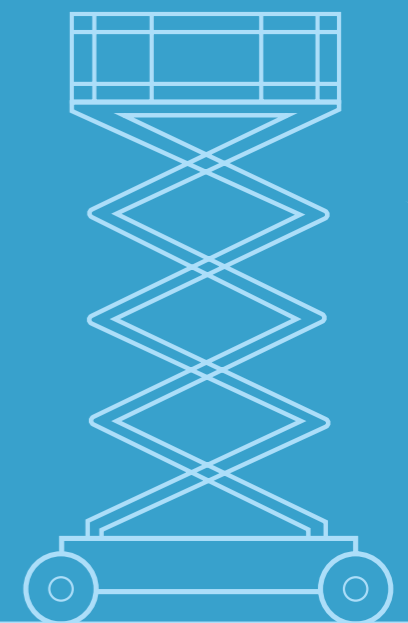
Bill Hill,
CEO, Lighthouse
Construction
Industry Charity



The UK is facing a mental health crisis and construction, including home building, is one of the industries most affected.



Every working day **two** construction workers take their own life



What are the wider consequences?

- 1) **Employers:** poor mental health is costing employers between **£33 billion and £42 billion a year.*** The greatest cost comes from reduced productivity among people who are at work but unwell, which costs businesses twice as much as sickness absence relating to poor mental health. Approximately 400,000 working days are lost annually to stress, anxiety and depression.
- 2) **The economy:** mental ill-health is costing the UK economy between **£74 billion and £99 billion per year.***

*The Stevenson/Farmer Review of mental health and employers, Thriving at Work, 2017

How is the home building industry tackling this?

While the industry has worked hard in recent years on health and safety initiatives to ensure workers are safe physically, an overwhelming **88% of people working in the sector believe more mental health support is needed.**

In March 2019, HBF launched its **Mental Health Awareness Campaign** supported by Lighthouse Club, the construction industry charity dedicated to delivering

financial and emotional support to the construction community and their families.

Since the launch HBF has driven collective action across the house building industry.

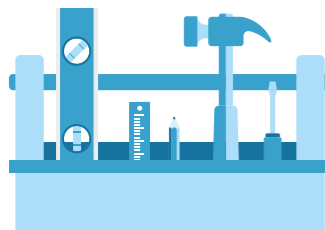
Over **50 developers have pledged their support** for the campaign and have collectively **donated £120,000** to Lighthouse Club and its services.

HBF and its members are also undertaking action in line with the Building Mental Health Framework to increase awareness of mental health across the industry. **Action includes:**



Signing the Building Mental Health Charter

This first step sets out a commitment to supporting the mental health of employees and tackling the stigma associated with mental illness. **Over 40 members** have already signed the Charter.



Delivering toolbox talks

Through these interactive sessions companies are raising awareness of mental health issues with their employees and educating them on the possible signs of stress, anxiety and depression. These talks have enabled employers and employees to start an important conversation about mental health at work and to break down the stigma.

Offering mental health awareness training

These training days allow managers, foremen, supervisors and others to receive in-depth training about understanding mental health and identifying the warning signs of deteriorating health in employees and allowing pre-emptive measures to be taken.



Developing Mental Health First Aiders

A number of our members have already committed to establishing and maintaining a healthy ratio of certified Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) to workers and contractors on site. MHFAs can play a vital role in helping to build a positive mental health culture and support network both at a site-level and within the company itself.

Signposting support

Members are taking steps to ensure employees know how to access help, including their company's Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) and the confidential 24/7 construction industry helpline, run by Lighthouse Club. Posters and cards promoting the helpline and App are provided in social spaces in offices and across construction sites.



Home Builders Take Action - Case Studies

Galliard Homes

'Take a minute' campaign supports employees mental health

Galliard Homes used Mental Health Awareness week to launch their 'Take a minute' campaign across all its sites and offices. Activities included financial well-being sessions, health check-ups, mindfulness workshops and high impact work outs.

Galliard has now trained 28 Mental Health First Aiders with a further 25 scheduled to receive training. As signatory members of the Building Mental Health Charter, the Lighthouse Club and

Mates In Mind, Galliard are working hard to challenge the stigma associated with mental illness and intend to create an open and safe environment where all employees feel able to gain support and advice on any number of issues.

Group-wide awareness briefings have been set up and Mental Health First Aiders meet quarterly to ensure mental health and wellbeing remains at the forefront of the employee agenda.

Barratt Developments

Fundraising for Mind

This year Barratt Developments launched the Big Barratt Hike, a hiking event for employees from across the business to get active and fundraise for good causes. All money raised will be split between The British Heart Foundation and Mind, the mental health charity which provides support and advice to anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

eLearning Modules

Barratt launched 14 new eLearning modules which encourages employees to look at how to address some of the triggers of mental health, including stress management, sleep deprivation and leading an active lifestyle.

Health and Wellbeing Calendar

A Health and Wellbeing desk calendar was launched in 2018 and again in 2019 to assist in implementing a health and wellbeing culture and to encourage employees to think about their overall health. The calendar is based around 12 key themes and linked to national health and wellbeing days, and provides hints and tips as well as practical information.

Redrow

- The Mind Your Head mental health awareness campaign was launched at Redrow's Building Responsibly Conferences in March 2019.
- All managers will be attending a one day mental health awareness session, starting in October. This will be followed by a bespoke one day session for directors in November.
- A 'Toolbox Talk' has been developed for use on site. This will be rolled out in October with drop in sessions being offered on site from November.
- Over 200 people signed up to become a Mental Health First Aider – over 100 have been trained so far, with dates to train remaining employees by year end.

"The main skill I've learnt from the Mental Health First Aid training has been knowing how to ask people if they are ok, and letting them know that help is always available and confidential."

Awareness of mental health issues is increasing, and there are loads of great resources out there. Sometimes it helps to talk to someone and it doesn't have to be friends or family, but somebody who can professionally talk things through with you."



Gary Cheek,
Eastern Construction
Director and Mental
Health First Aider, Redrow

Telford Homes

Telford Homes has run two highly successful mental health weeks to help raise awareness amongst its employees, provide support for workers in the industry, and to eradicate the stigma of mental illness. Activities included wellbeing sessions such as mindfulness and yoga and workshops in head office with speakers from organisations such as the Samaritans, MIND, BUPA and the Lighthouse Club. They also set up manned stalls on all of their sites promoting the Construction Industry Helpline, helped operatives on site to download the Construction Industry Helpline app and mandated that all operation construction staff attended a mental health briefing session delivered by a trained Mental Health First Aider. To communicate

the importance of the campaign, the weeks were launched by their CEO who encouraged every member of staff to attend the sessions. The Group Managing Director closed the weeks and subsequently has presented its importance at HBF's Policy Conference.

To help maintain a focus on mental health longer-term, Telford Homes have identified and trained 19 Mental Health First Aiders and are training 10 dedicated mental health champions who can listen and provide advice on where to find the best professional support. They are also working with Mind and developing their mental health strategy and corresponding processes and procedures.

Next steps

HBF and its members are continuing to promote good mental health in home building, including on awareness days such as World Mental Health Day.

We also aim to reach more subcontractors through the campaign, to ensure that all employees across the industry are aware of where to turn for help should they need it.

Get involved now and be part of the solution by visiting www.hbf.co.uk/mentalhealth or get in touch with us directly on the details across.

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Construction
Industry Helpline 
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Lighthouse
CLUB


HOME BUILDERS FEDERATION