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**DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE WELCOMES TASKFORCE ON MALE SUICIDE**

Today the Duke of Cambridge will join the Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) at the launch of a unique coalition of frontline services to help tackle the issue of male suicide, the single biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK.

With an estimated daily cost of £20 million, male suicide accounts for 76% of all suicides in the UK. It has a huge impact not only on individuals and families, but also on the workforce of many frontline services and other organisations.

Convened by CALM, the coalition includes Samaritans and frontline services from land, sea, and air: National Rail, Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), Highways England, British Transport Police and the National Police Chiefs’ Council, Chief Fire Officers Association and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives. These agencies are joined by Unilever’s male grooming brand Lynx, one of CALM’s key partners.

The Duke of Cambridge welcomes the coalition, to which he will bring his own experience as a Search and Rescue helicopter pilot. The aim is to pool all members' substantial expertise in dealing with suicide at first hand to develop a resource which helps men identify and support others, and themselves, when down, depressed or suicidal.

The Duke of Cambridge will attend the coalition's inaugural roundtable discussion and then visit the RNLI Tower Lifeboat Station to meet first responders who deal with male suicide on a daily basis.

Jane Powell, CEO of CALM, said: “*Suicide is frequently bracketed as the actions of the ‘mentally ill’. However, from our helpline we know that men who are suicidal are often tackling the kinds of life problems which can affect any of us, male or female, although it’s damned hard for men to admit to needing help or even find it. With the support of these male-dominated industries who know only too well the impact of suicide, we’re determined to normalise getting men help.”*

Jonny Benjamin, who was stopped from jumping from a bridge by a stranger, welcomes the coalition: *“It’s great to see this fantastic coalition of emergency and transport agencies come together with CALM and Samaritans around the issue of male suicide. There is a real need for a resource to help men feel able to offer help, whether that’s a stranger on a bridge or your best mate.”*

-Ends-

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

* **Photographs** from the inaugural meeting of the male suicide coalition and the Duke of Cambridge’s visit to the RNLI Tower Lifeboat Station will be available from 12:00 on Thursday 12 May via [this link](https://thecalmzone.net/media-room-male-suicide-prevention-coalition/)
* **Social media:** @theCALMzone / @kensingtonroyal / Instagram: KensingtonRoyal / @TowerRNLI / @Samaritans / @NetworkRail / @raildeliverygrp @Lynx #malesuicide
* **The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)** is an award-winning charity (reg. 1110621) dedicated to preventing male suicide, by providing frontline services for men, promoting cultural change and campaigning for better understanding of suicide and prevention.
* **Further information** about the male suicide prevention coalition can be downloaded [here](https://thecalmzone.net/media-room-male-suicide-prevention-coalition/)
* The male suicide prevention coalition is announced ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week (16 - 22 May) and the launch of [Heads Together](https://www.headstogether.org.uk/), a national campaign spearheaded by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry to promote mental wellbeing.

**CONTACT**

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* Please see the full briefing for all agencies' media contacts

**ABOUT SUICIDE AND ITS IMPACT**

Research consistently shows links between media depiction of suicide and imitative suicidal behaviour. This risk significantly increases if the suicide method is described. Please check with the [**Samaritans’ Media Guidelines for Reporting Suicide**](http://www.samaritans.org/media-centre/media-guidelines-reporting-suicide) when reporting this issue.

* Suicide is the biggest single killer of men aged under 45 in the UK. There were 6,109 suicides in the UK in 2014 of which 76%, or 4,623, were male (NISRA, GRO, ONS 2014).
* The daily cost of male suicide is estimated at £20 million per day on the basis that12 men on average take their life every day, and the cost of a single suicide in the UK is estimated at £1.67 million (Source: McDaid, D., Park, A., & Bonin, E. (2011). Population level suicide awareness training and intervention. In M. Knapp, D. McDaid & M. Parsonage (Eds.), *Mental Health Promotion and Prevention: The Economic Case* (26-28). London: Department of Health).
* Each year more than 2,500 rail personnel and support services staff deal with the aftermath of suicides on the railway whilst a further 1100 actively prevent them
* In 2015 there were 790 incidents reported to Highways England as suicides or attempted suicides on England’s motorways and major A roads.
* On the roads more than 1,500 suicide related incidents were recorded between April 2013 and December 2014 and the Fire and Rescue Service attend a further 1,500 incidents
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* Since April 2015, there have been 208 suicides or suspected suicides on the rail network. Frontline rail staff have performed more than 450 interventions during this time, preventing people from harming themselves on the network. The cost per year to the rail industry as a result of suicide is around £50m.
* Every six seconds somebody contacts Samaritans for help, with 5.4million contacts received last year.
* CALM receives a call or web chat from somebody who needs support every 2 minutes when lines are open.

**ADDITIONAL REMARKS FROM COALITION MEMBERS**

**Brian Robson, Community Safety Manager, RNLI:** *"The impact of suicide on society, communities, families and individuals cannot be underestimated. The RNLI is pleased to be a part of this hugely positive coalition focussing on preventing male suicide in particular. We are committed, through collaboration and partnership working, to help raise the profile of this issue, reduce suicide in, on and around the water and by doing so contribute to preventing suicide in the UK as a whole. We are looking forward to the work ahead."*

**David Norman, Thames Lifeboat Helm, RNLI:** *“Suicide attempts and self-harm are a big part of what we deal with at Tower. It’s just something you come to terms with dealing with and as we respond very quickly and have many successful outcomes, so I try not to dwell on things too much and we often don’t find out what the final outcome was.”*

**Ruth Sutherland, CEO, Samaritans**: *“Suicide is everybody’s business. It is the biggest killer of men under 45. We are all losing brothers, fathers, sons and friends tragically young and need to work together to stop this happening. Samaritans is pleased to be part of this important coalition which will save lives.”*

**Paul Plummer, Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group,** **representing train operators and Network Rail,** said: “*Our industry-wide partnership has allowed more than 11,500 railway staff to receive training in how best to deal with vulnerable people at railway stations. This training equips our people with the confidence and skills to intervene, approach the vulnerable person and lead them to safety. A continued collaboration between the rail industry and those specialising in mental health services will help to tackle this societal problem while keeping our transport network moving.”*

**Mark Smith, Head of Suicide Prevention and Mental Health, British Transport Police (BTP):** *“It is fantastic to be involved in such a high profile event, raising awareness around mental health and the issue of male suicide. At British Transport Police, this is sadly something our officers come across each day on our railways and so we are committed to working with our partners in this new coalition to address the issue. We already work with charities like the Samaritans to train our frontline officers and have mental health professionals working alongside BTP staff to offer support and advice to officers on the ground. This is an opportunity to share our learning from this and work together to find new ways of moving forward.”*

**Jane Powell, CEO, CALM:** “*In ten years, CALM has helped treble awareness of male suicide. But it is still the single biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK, and less than 30% of people know about it.”*

**Joanna Teasdale, Brand Building Director, Unilever (Lynx):** *“As a brand that’s been a daily part of the lives of British men since 1985, Lynx has a powerful voice and is proud to be lending its voice and its influence to this group and this critical issue.”*