

# chooselife

A national strategy and action plan  
to prevent suicide in Scotland

## Background to Local Action Plan

## East Renfrewshire

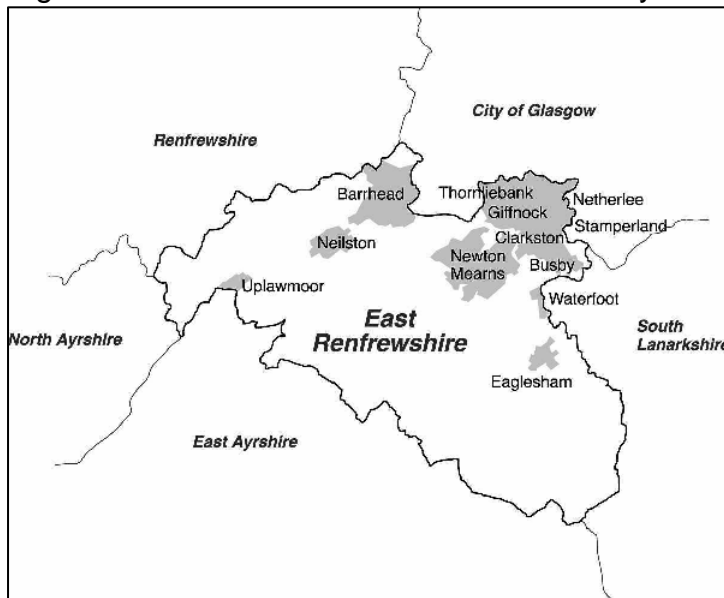
## August 2005

## Local Information

### Overview of East Renfrewshire

East Renfrewshire covers an area of 174 km<sup>2</sup> and had an estimated population of 89,700 in June 2003. The main settlements are Newton Mearns (22,637), Clarkston (19,136), Barrhead (17,244), and Giffnock (16,178). Figure 1 shows the boundary of East Renfrewshire Council. Approximately 70 per cent of residents fall into the Greater Glasgow NHS Board catchment area and 30 per cent of residents come under the NHS Argyll & Clyde catchment area.

Figure 1 East Renfrewshire Council boundary



Over the long-term the trend in population within East Renfrewshire is an upward one. Between 1981 and 1991 the population increased by over 7 per cent and rose by another 4 per cent between 1991 and 2001. This contrasts sharply with the downward trend in total population across Scotland. Population projections indicate continued growth in the population of East Renfrewshire to 2018. However, within this broad trend there is an ongoing shift in the composition of the population with an increasingly older population structure. Between 2002 and 2018, the population structure is expected to change significantly.

In general, East Renfrewshire has a higher level of economic activity and a correspondingly lower rate of unemployment than Scotland as a whole. For the year ending February 2003, East Renfrewshire had a rate of economic activity of just over 83 per cent compared to a national rate of just under 79 per cent. There has been a long-term decline in the unemployment rate for East Renfrewshire and this rate has consistently been below the national level of unemployment from a high of 4.4 per cent in 1996 to the 2004 rate of 1.7 per

cent as against a comparable change from 6.5 per cent to 3.0 per cent across Scotland.

However, certain communities experience substantially lower rates of economic activity and higher levels of unemployment. Economic activity is between 10 and 18 percentage points lower than the area average in Barrhead, Neilston, and Mearns electoral wards with unemployment levels two to three times those of the wider community in Thornliebank, Neilston, and Barrhead.

The East Renfrewshire community is considered to be relatively prosperous and unemployment is low, economic activity high, and educational achievement significantly above the national average. However, East Renfrewshire is not universally affluent and several communities such as Barrhead, Neilston, Thornliebank, and Mearns Village experience multiple deprivation. These areas have been identified as areas of deprivation in the East Renfrewshire Regeneration Plan 2005-2008.

## Local priorities

Local Choose Life funding has been focused primarily on the Lavern Valley area of East Renfrewshire in recognition of the higher levels of suicide and deliberate self-harm recorded. However, the action plan also includes activity that will be delivered across the whole of East Renfrewshire such as training and awareness-raising and the development of information resources.

The three key developments funded by Choose Life are:

### **FIRST Crisis Support Worker**

The FIRST Crisis Intervention Service provides telephone support 7 days per week between 11am-11pm to any individual between the ages of 18 - 65 experiencing mental health problems, contemplating suicide or who are affected by the aftermath of suicide, completed or not. The service is managed by Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health (RAMH). The recruitment of an additional Support Worker allows the service to extend to the Lavern Valley area. The service provides intensive short-term crisis and follow-up support to people; liaison with families, carers and other agencies and signposts to appropriate specialist services. The Support Worker is also responsible for developing and raising the profile of the service in Lavern Valley.

### **Links to national/local strategy**

- East Renfrewshire Joint Health Improvement Plan
- National Programme for Mental Health & Well-being, Scottish Executive

### **Self-help Support - Primary Care Liaison Worker**

The Primary Care Liaison Worker provides a local community based self-help support service in the Lavern Valley area to people who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health problems who may be depressed, or experiencing an increase in symptoms of anxiety, including panic attacks. The service is managed and operated by Community Mental Health Team, NHS Argyll & Clyde. Referral to the service will be accepted from Primary Care and individual support provided to a maximum of 10 sessions. Referral onto specialist mental health services will be made where appropriate and sign-posting to community groups, services and organisations. The Worker has established self-help groups in collaboration with RAMH and Health Connect (healthy living centre) as there was a lack of supported and unsupported self-help in Lavern Valley.

### **Links to national/local strategy**

- Doing Well by People with Depression, Scottish Executive
- East Renfrewshire Joint Health Improvement Plan
- National Programme for Mental Health & Well-being, Scottish Executive

### **East Renfrewshire Youth Counselling Service (ERYCS)**

ERYCS offers a confidential counselling service to 11-18 year olds within secondary schools and the community. Established as a pilot in April 2003 with 2 Youth Counsellors, ERYCS has expanded and now employs 4 Youth Counsellors providing a service to all of the secondary schools in East Renfrewshire. Choose Life funding has allowed additional capacity, extension of service to all 7 secondary schools in East Renfrewshire and strengthened the training component. Referrals from young people expressing suicidal ideation are commonplace.

### **Links to national/local strategy**

- Integrated children's services, East Renfrewshire
- Changing Children Services Fund (CCSF)
- Social Justice Milestone 11, Scottish Executive
- Health Promoting Schools, Scottish Executive
- East Renfrewshire Joint Health Improvement Plan
- East Renfrewshire Regeneration Plan
- National Programme for Mental Health & Well-being, Scottish Executive

### **Training and awareness-raising**

- Applied Suicide Interventions Skills Training (ASIST)  
The National Implementation and Support Team has strongly recommended uptake of ASIST Training for Trainers and the development of a local ASIST training programme. Four ASIST workshops have been delivered in East Renfrewshire and four individuals have completed the ASIST Training for Trainers course all funded through the local Choose Life budget.
- Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA)  
The National Implementation and Support Team has strongly recommended uptake of SMHFA Training for Trainers and the development of a local SMHFA training programme. The local Choose Life budget will fund a place on the Training for Trainers course and local SMHFA sessions.
- Awareness-raising and training in schools in suicide and self-harm  
The Educational Psychology team carried out a survey of secondary schools. The results indicated that there was a need for awareness-raising and training for school-based staff concerning issues of suicide and self-harm. A seminar took place and a short-life working group has been set up to develop a policy and set of procedures for schools.

### **East Renfrewshire Choose Life Practitioner Forum**

The emphasis will be on strengthening partnership working and on providing a support network for those dealing with suicide and self-harm issues. The Forum will also have representation on the Implementation Group. The purpose of the Forum is to discuss practical issues facing frontline workers in dealing with self harm and suicide; to promote interagency working and joined up services; and to support the Implementation Group and to feed back into the Implementation Group, practical issues facing frontline workers.

### **Approach adopted in East Renfrewshire**

East Renfrewshire Council is responsible for leading health improvement planning under the auspices of the Community Care and Health Partnership, one of the themed policy groups within the local community planning structure. As such, the Choose Life local action plan has been developed and implemented via the joint health improvement planning mechanism. Multi-agency planning groups with remits for health improvement, mental health, substance misuse, children's services and older people were involved in the development of the local action plan. The East Renfrewshire Choose Life Implementation Group was established in June 2004 to oversee the implementation of the local action plan and to lead and support co-ordination of efforts. The Group is chaired by the local Choose Life Co-ordinator and support is provided by the Council's Health Improvement Development Officer. Information from the Choose Life National Team is disseminated to members of the Group by the Choose Life Co-ordinator.

## Action Plan Team Profile

**Full Name:** East Renfrewshire Choose Life Implementation Group

**Remit:** To ensure implementation of the local action plan; to lead and support co-ordination of efforts; to develop and support local training programmes.

**Chair** Kerry McKenzie (July 2005)  
Health Improvement Development Officer  
East Renfrewshire Council

Julie Murray (until July 2005)  
Head of Strategy & Development, Social Work Department  
East Renfrewshire Council

<b>Dates of meetings held 2004-2005</b>	18th June 2004 27th August 2004 9th November 2004	24th July 2005 8th March 2005 17th May 2005 12th July 2005
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### Members

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Kerry McKenzie	Health Improvement Development Officer	East Renfrewshire Council
Louie Larkin	Manager, Counselling & Education Services	Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health (RAMH)
David Hart	Project Manager	FIRST Crisis Service, RAMH
Marie Hedges	Project Co-ordinator	Health Connect
Carole Whitelaw	Public Health Practitioner	Eastwood & Levern Valley Joint LHCC
Mary Wilson	Senior Substance Misuse Officer	East Renfrewshire Council
Eleanor Boyd	Senior Social Worker, Community Care	East Renfrewshire Council
Donna Dunlop joined 01/05/05	Primary Care Liaison Service	NHS Argyll & Clyde
Tom McAuley joined 01/08/05	Project Worker	FIRST Crisis, RAMH
Sgt Austin Gaughan Joined 01/11/04	Local Authority Liaison Officer	Strathclyde Police
Angela Moran	Community Mental Health	Greater Renfrewshire Division, NHS Argyll & Clyde
Eileen Carroll	Community Mental Health	Greater Glasgow Community Health Division
Alison Ryan	Commissioning & Planning Officer, Social Work	East Renfrewshire Council

**Former members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Sgt David Wood Left 01/10/04	Local Authority Liaison Officer	Strathclyde Police
Fergal Doherty Left 01/08/04	Senior Educational Psychologist	East Renfrewshire Council
Angie Docherty Left 01/08/04	Public Health Practitioner	Levern Valley LHCC
June Doogan left 01/11/04	Manager	Causeway, RAMH
John Phillips Left 01/06/05	Commissioning & Planning Manager, Social Work	East Renfrewshire Council
Roslyn Redpath Left 01/04/05	Senior Educational Psychologist	East Renfrewshire Council
Elaine Corcoran Left 01/02/05	Clinical Nurse Manager, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service(CAMHS)	NHS Argyll & Clyde

## **Key local developments and links to national policy**

The following local developments have a major bearing on the development and implementation of the Choose Life Local Action Plan. The increasing focus of agencies working together under community planning will assist with improved co-ordination of effort and how agencies respond to local need in the areas of suicide and deliberate self-harm. The increasing prominence of health improvement and reducing health inequalities at national and local levels provide an additional impetus for action.

### **East Renfrewshire Community Health and Care Partnership**

Community Health Partnerships are being introduced in Scotland from 1st April 2005 and will replace the existing Local Health Care Co-operatives (LHCCs). In East Renfrewshire, Levern Valley LHCC and Eastwood LHCC will be replaced by one single Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP) covering the whole of the local authority area. Negotiations are underway concerning services to be delivered by the CHCP. There are equity issues to be addressed since Greater Glasgow NHS Board and NHS Argyll & Clyde resource and deliver services in different ways.

One of the key functions of the CHCP will be to deliver health improvement across East Renfrewshire with a particular focus on tackling health inequalities. To deliver health improvement effectively and efficiently, it is proposed that staff within local agencies that have a specific health improvement remit be organised as a health improvement team within the CHCP. The team will greatly assist integrated working and improve the strategic focus for health improvement planning and activity. The East Renfrewshire Joint Health Improvement Plan (JHIP) will determine programmes of activity for the team to be undertaken with partners agencies. The team will be linked directly to the community planning structure via the Community Care and Health Partnership.

### **East Renfrewshire Regeneration Plan 2005-08**

New arrangements for local regeneration have been introduced by Communities Scotland. From 1st April 2005, it is stipulated that local regeneration should take place within the wider strategic context of community planning and that mainstream services should work together effectively for disadvantaged communities. The 3-year Regeneration Plan will provide the strategic and operational framework for the East Renfrewshire Partnership to bring improvements to areas of deprivation and help individuals and families in greatest need. Barrhead, Neilston, Thornliebank and Mearns have been identified that require targeting of focused action. The 'Improving health' theme of the plan focuses on the links between deprivation and poor health targeting specific investment to address health inequalities and improve the health of the most disadvantaged. The key outcomes are:

- Improve attainment at primary and secondary school.
- Increase the number of people in employment, education and training.
- Maximise the income of poorest households
- Improve access to a range of local health services
- Improve health circumstances of vulnerable groups
- Improve mental health and tackle substance misuse.
- Increase positive behaviour, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Increase satisfaction with local neighbourhoods and environment.
- Improve availability of quality affordable housing
- Improve transport links to key facilities and employment opportunities.

### **Dissolution of NHS Argyll & Clyde and boundary re-organisation**

On the 19th May 2005, the Scottish Executive announced its decision to dissolve NHS Argyll & Clyde and its intention to:

- place an order before Parliament to change the administrative boundaries of NHS Greater Glasgow and NHS Highland to allow them to take over responsibility for managing the delivery of health services in relevant areas of Argyll and Clyde;
- clear the accumulated financial deficit of NHS Argyll and Clyde; and
- consult on what the new administrative boundaries for NHS Greater Glasgow and NHS Highland should be. The consultation process is due to end on the 4th November 2005.

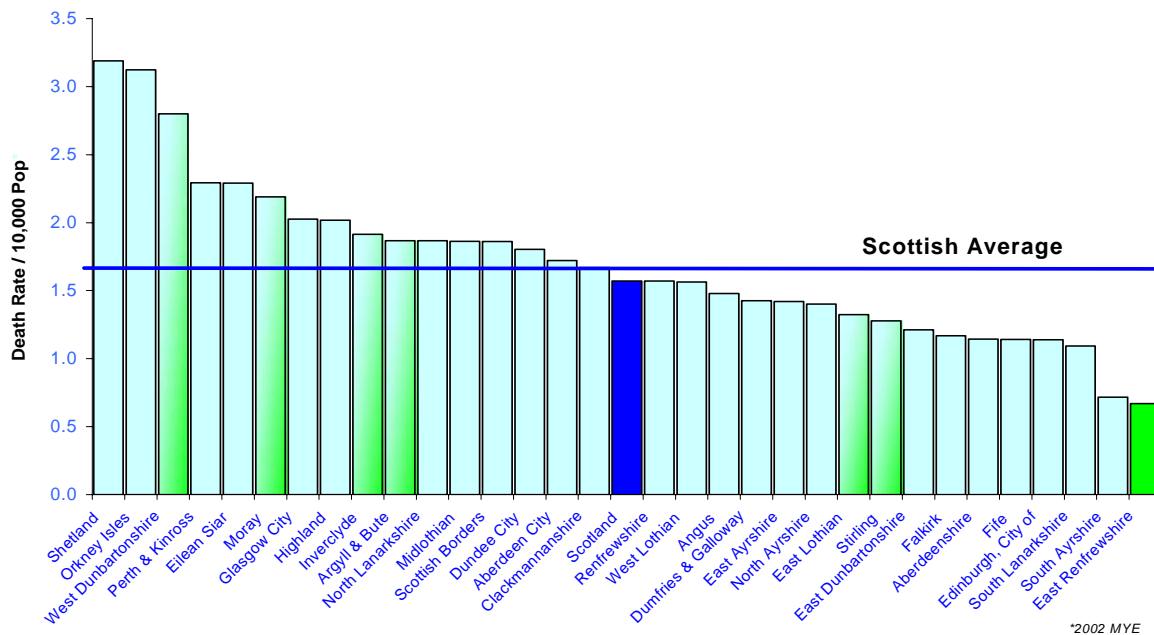
# Appendix 1

## Local statistics for suicide and deliberate self-harm

### Comparing East Renfrewshire with the Rest of Scotland

East Renfrewshire had the lowest rate of suicide/undetermined death in 2003 compared with the rest of Scotland. Figure 2 shows that the rate for East Renfrewshire is less than half of the Scottish average (1.6) at 0.7 per 100,000 population.

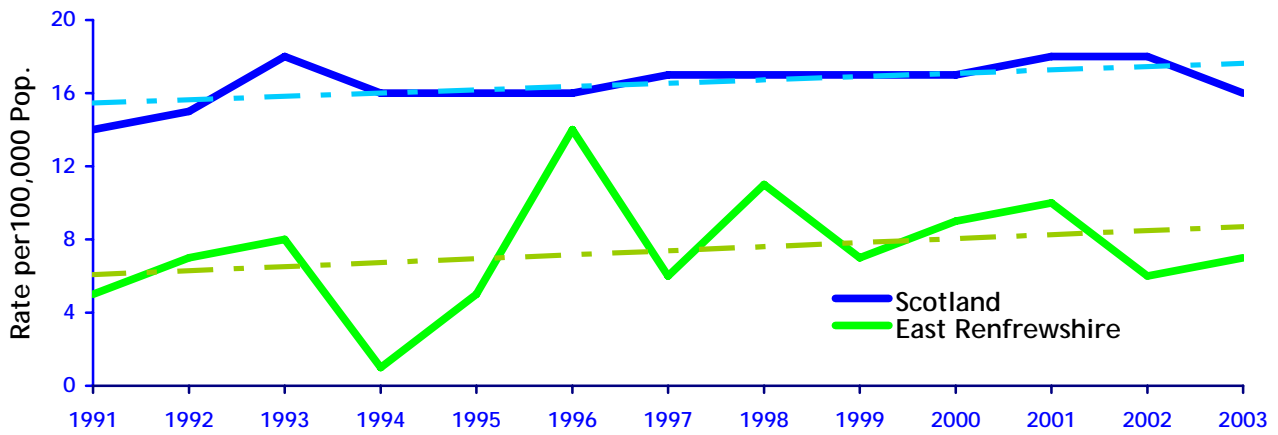
Figure 2: Scottish Local Authority Suicide Rates 2003



\*2002 MYE

Between 1991 and 2003, the East Renfrewshire rate has remained significantly higher than the Scottish rate as illustrated in Figure 11. However, rates for both Scotland and East Renfrewshire indicate a rising trend across the period.

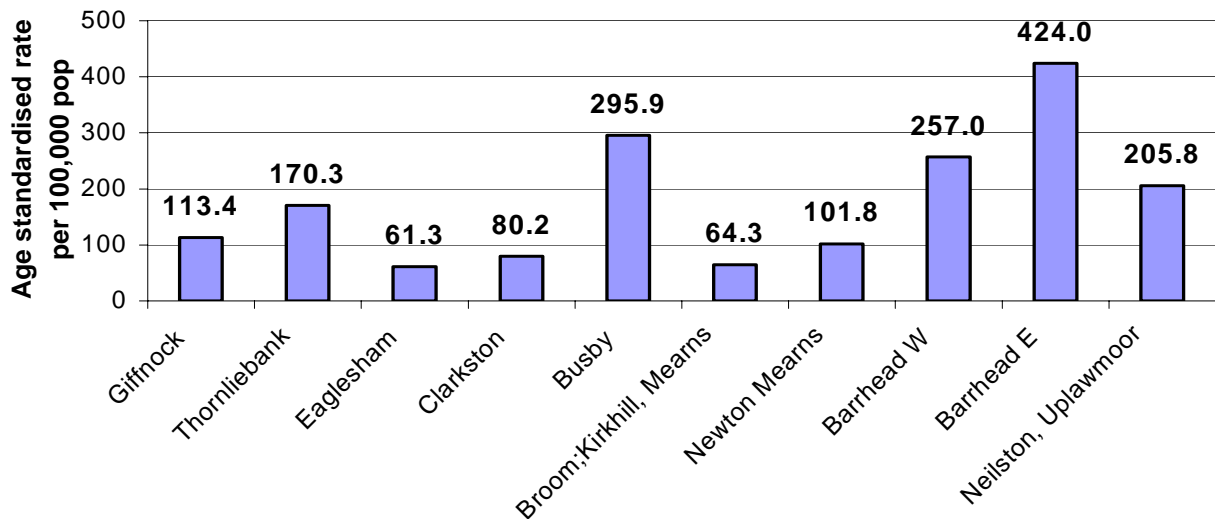
Figure 3 : Suicide Rates Scotland & East Renfrewshire 1991 - 2003



### Comparing Areas Within East Renfrewshire

The community health and well-being profiles of Eastwood and Lavern Valley (NHS Health Scotland 2004) provide information on a range of indicators at postcode level. Hospital admissions for suicide and deliberate self-harm (DSH) are one such indicator as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: East Renfrewshire (postcode sectors) Hospital Admissions – Suicide/DSH



Source: Adapted from Community Health & Well-being Profiles Eastwood, Lavern Valley (NHS Health Scotland 2004); ISD SMR1

### Gender and Age

There is a gender divide in terms of both rates of suicide/undetermined death and trend directions over time (Figure 5). During the period 1979-2003, male rates have shown an increasing trend while female rates indicate a decreasing trend.

Figure 5: East Renfrewshire Suicide / Undetermined Deaths by Gender 1979 - 2003

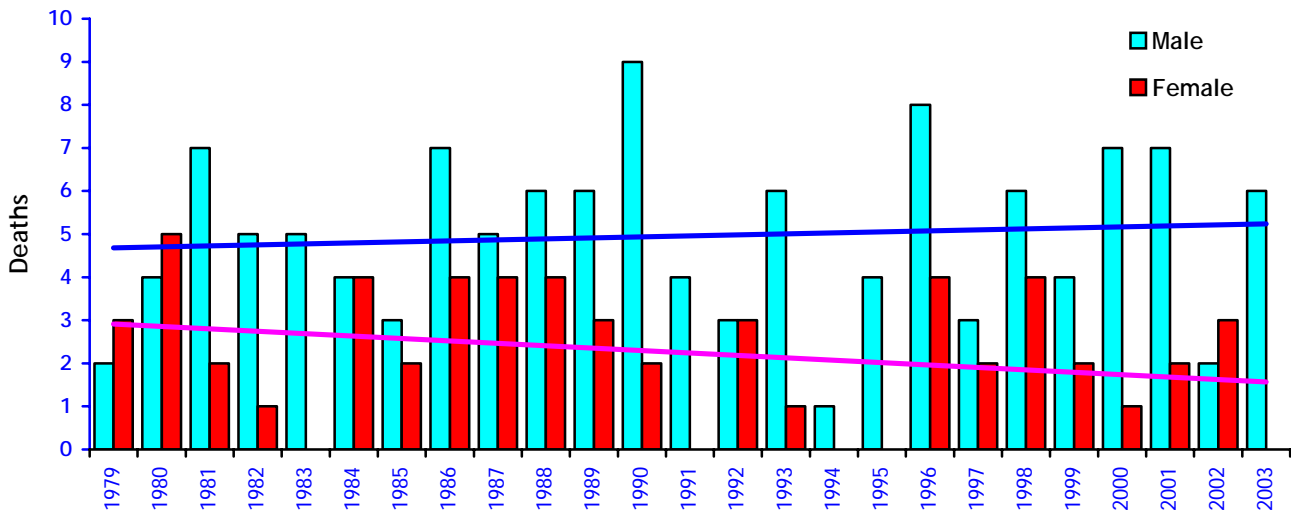


Figure 6 describes the period 1999-2001 where there were more females attempting suicide than males in the 0-19 age group but no completed suicides recorded for either males or females. The largest number of suicide attempts occurred in the 20-39 age group with more attempted and completed suicides amongst males. In the 40-59 age group, there were more female suicide attempts but more deaths. This age group accounted for the most completed suicides. The over 60s group had proportionately more deaths than any other age group.

Figure 6: East Renfrewshire Suicide (Completed/Attempted) Age Structure 1999-2001

