

**It's OK**  
to ask for help



# North Central London Suicide Prevention Campaign 2025

**GRASSROOTS  
SUICIDE PREVENTION**



North Central London  
Health and Care  
Integrated Care System



# Campaign Context

The [North Central London Suicide Prevention Programme](#) is a partnership between North Central London Integrated Care Board, North London Foundation Trust and the London Boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington Public Health Teams.

***Programme Objective: Reduce the suicide rate across the NCL geography through population-based suicide prevention measures as well as programmes targeted to those at highest risk, through improved support to those who have self-harmed and improved support for people bereaved by suicide.***

A key element to this programme is **making suicide prevention everyone's business**. This is to ensure that NCL residents who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts, and those who may be worried about someone, have access to free, comprehensive and compassionate resources to keep themselves, or their loved ones, safe.

A **budget of £40,000** was allocated towards the delivery of a suicide prevention awareness raising campaign in 2025/26. Given the previous success of [Barnet's awareness raising efforts](#) and [the impact this had on local suicide rates](#), the decision was made to scale up the existing campaign to cover all NCL boroughs.

## Stay Alive App

'[Stay Alive](#)' is a UK-based self-help app developed by Grassroots Suicide Prevention for anyone who might be thinking about suicide or worried about someone else. The app has a range of features including a directory of local and national support services, advice about managing complex emotions, and tools to keep safe such as safety plans and breathing exercises.

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Since its launch in 2014, the app has been **downloaded over 900,000 times in 208 countries and territories**. An [independent evaluation of the app](#) in 2024 identified that

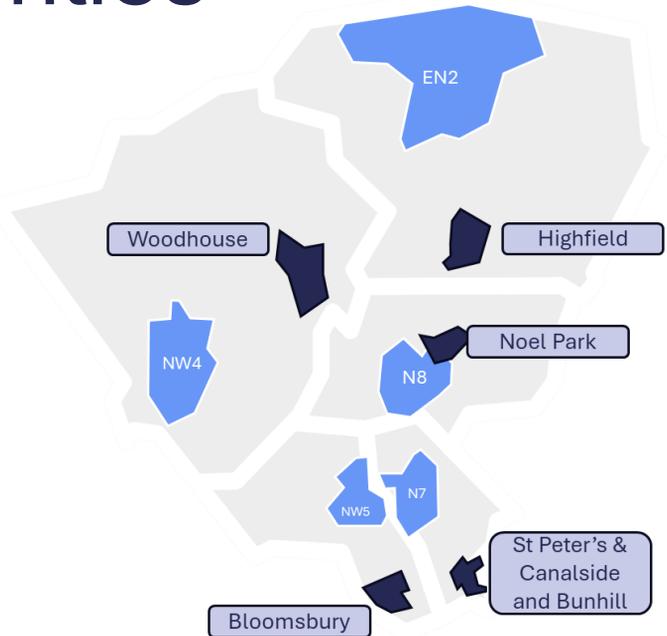
**76% of users were helped to stay safe, and 93% of users felt the app reduced stigma, with 89% finding the app's overall experience either 'good' or 'very good'**. Stay Alive won a [Patient Safety Award](#) in 2015 and has been named as a national inspiration by the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat.

Stay Alive was chosen as the central feature of the campaign to further expand the promotion activity in Barnet and ensure consistency of messaging across North Central London. To ensure the campaign best reflected the merits of Stay Alive, Grassroots Suicide Prevention were commissioned to oversee digital marketing and monitor downloads and app usage during the campaign period.



# Campaign Priorities

A review of local data was conducted to understand areas within each borough that would benefit from a targeted approach. This was combined with additional insight from local suicide prevention leads to determine potential areas for focusing communication activities. These areas were identified at both a ward and postcode district level. Wards typically covered a smaller geographic area and population, meaning targeted activity would be more likely to reach those in greatest need. Postcode districts cover a larger geography and population, which allowed for greater reach of messaging.



Taking into consideration feedback from previous campaigns, NCL professionals and experts by living experience, the campaign steering group decided to create two groups of images to include in the NCL-wide campaign (page 4). One group of images featured individuals standing alone staring into the camera to identify with people who may be feeling alone. The other group features people comforting each other to highlight how important asking for help is.

Given the size and diversity of population (as well as differences in presentations of suicide), the group designed **a wide suite of assets featuring people from a range of backgrounds showcasing a diversity of age, gender and ethnicity.**

Campaign graphics were designed by Good Impressions Ltd, building on their previous approach in developing materials for the Barnet Stay Alive campaign.

All images feature the same key tagline – **'It's OK to ask for help'** - as this was the most universally agreed to be supportive to people struggling with thoughts of suicide, without placing too much responsibility or negativity on the individual.

One of the campaign graphics was **translated into Arabic** to increase accessibility of messaging. Future efforts will be made to translate graphics into additional languages.





# Campaign Graphics

**It's OK to ask for help**

Thinking about suicide?  
Worried about someone?

download the **STAY ALIVE** app

www.stayalive.app

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# Campaign Delivery

The NCL Suicide Prevention campaign ran over a period of **6 weeks between 10 September and 22 October 2025**, with digital marketing in operation throughout this time and out of home marketing staggered throughout this period in two-weekly slots.

Grassroots Suicide Prevention were commissioned to deliver the digital element of the NCL Stay Alive campaign. This consisted of promotion of the locally designed graphics to key target areas within North Central London through both Google and Meta advertising. Ad performance was regularly reviewed to make refinements when required.

**Enfield and Haringey Council were able to offer promotion at 24 and 16 sites across their respective boroughs.** Enfield utilised a mix of both printed posters and digital screens, whilst Haringey used digital screens only.

DOOH Media Ltd were commissioned to deliver other out-of-home marketing, utilising digital screens across NCL, as well as buses travelling out of the Holloway depot. Digital screens were selected for their location within a target area and/or their location in busy thoroughfares maximising the potential number of impacts.

To aid in the promotion of messaging, a **communications toolkit was developed and shared with 200+ members of the NCL Suicide Prevention Community.** This toolkit consisted of background to the campaign and the Stay Alive app, copy for newsletters and links to download graphics

Printed **posters were distributed to over 400 public and third sector organisations** across North Central London. Key audiences included organisations that people visit in their daily lives, such as pharmacies and libraries.





# Campaign Impact

Over the six weeks of the campaign, the Stay Alive app saw a total of **6749 new users across London. 1894 downloads came directly from digital marketing, with a 10.34% conversion rate**, above the typical 2-10% benchmark for app downloads.

Of the remaining 4855 new users, these are likely a combination of people who have engaged with out-of-home advertising, professionals downloading the app to use in their practice, or service users encouraged to download the app because of said change in practice. It is important to note that it is likely a proportion of these new users will be based outside of North Central London, though it is not possible to separate these.

Most downloads came from Google advertising. Facebook advertising had a great reach in terms of impressions but led to relatively fewer downloads. **A combination of approaches is valuable to drive both general awareness and engagement** with the Stay Alive app.

Out of home advertising is a low-cost approach to reaching a high number of people. Cumulatively, we can estimate that these adverts would have been **seen over 2.5 million times during** the campaign period.

Platform	Impressions	Clicks	Downloads
Google	301250	12887	1869
Facebook	94935	330	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>396185</b>	<b>13,217</b>	<b>1894</b>

The **postcode districts with the greatest level of engagement were NW1 in Camden and N1 in Islington**. NW5 had very little engagement, in terms of both impressions and clicks throughout the duration of the campaign. The three postcode districts in **Haringey offered a consistent and balanced performance**. In **Barnet, there was strong engagement, but high costs per download** were observed. **Enfield had the smallest reach of the five boroughs but had a relatively high conversion rate** within N21 of 14.4%, meaning although fewer people interacted with the ads, they were more likely to download.

Interest across all five boroughs suggests that the **approach pioneered by Barnet can be easily scaled up** with great success. In parallel, Barnet was not underserved by this campaign as residents engaged with the adverts to a similar degree as in other areas. Any potential risk of oversaturation of messaging in Barnet following previous campaign work earlier in the year does not seem to have occurred.

Advertising Type	Estimated Impacts	Estimated Impacts in Target Areas
Local authority promotion (Enfield)	935,940	354,891
Local authority promotion (Haringey)	311,666	193,747
Digital screens	578,140	462,512
Bus rears	337,270	202,362
Bus interiors	~ 406,000	~243,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,569,016</b>	<b>1,457,112</b>



# Stay Alive App Usage

Stay Alive app usage was reviewed by Grassroots Suicide Prevention to understand trends between 5 September and 22 October, with data analysed using Google Analytics. Comparisons are made to the previous period: 19th July to 4th September. Data was reviewed London-wide due to limitations in borough-level targeting, this was compared to all other locations (London excluded).

**Engagement increased across London on all measures.** An increase in usage of the app was observed immediately following the launch of the campaign on 5th September following distribution of the communications toolkit to all partners. This activity spiked considerably on **World Suicide Prevention Day**, which is likely due to a combination of campaign activity and other communications marking the day across London. **Engagement remained at an increased level across the entire campaign period.**

Of those that viewed an onboarding screen (new users), 77% did so for support for themselves, with 23% doing so for support for someone else. Once people had

onboarded, there was also an observed increase across all areas of the app, with the greatest number of views being to the 'Find Help Now' section, indicating that people are keen to learn about local and national services available to them or someone they are worried about.

London outperformed all other areas, showing much stronger growth across sessions, users, and new users, particularly a **109% increase in new users compared with 32% elsewhere.** Engagement quality also improved in London, with a higher engagement rate and more events per session, despite overall engagement time outside of London declining by 16%.

Users to all help seeking pages increased. Views show moderate increases or are down, but unique users are up because more new people are visiting these pages, while returning users are viewing them less often. This means the app reached a wider audience, but with fewer repeat views per person. This warrants further discussion.

Engagement of London users	Count	% change from previous period
Total users	9,826	+71%
New users	6,749	+109%
Overall page views	90,507	+115%
Event count	152,753	+90%
Views to Find Help Now	4,376	+143%
Active Users for North London resource page	28	+33%
Active Users for Central London resource page	16	+128%
Views to the LifeBox	1,672	+47%
Views to Safety Plan	1,746	+83%
Views to onboarding screen ("for myself")	3,945	+302%
Views to onboarding screen ("for someone else")	1,207	+231%
Views to Advice	1,827	+52%



# Stay Alive Directory

A key element of this campaign involved ensuring that the app contained a comprehensive directory of services available to NCL residents.

**16 new services were added to the North and Central London directories on the Stay Alive app.** All other entries for services supporting NCL residents were reviewed and updated to ensure accuracy of content.

NHS 111	Amparo	Andy's Man Club	Asian Women's Resource Centre	Barnet Bereavement Service	Barnet Friends	Barnet Wellbeing Service	Body and Soul – YANA
BOOST	Camden Crisis Sanctuary	Drayton Park Women's Crisis House	Enfield Saheli	Facing the Future	Freedom from Torture	Grief Encounter	Hillside Clubhouse
Islington Mind	Islington Recovery Café	James' Place	Jami	Kooth	London Nightline	Maytree Sanctuary	Mind in Enfield and Barnet
Nafsiyat	New Citizens' Gateway	New Horizon Youth Centre	One in Four	Op COURAGE	Outcome	Qwell	Reach Out Camden
Samaritans	Sanctuary in Barnet	Sanctuary in Enfield	Solace Women's Aid	Sport in Mind	Stonewall Housing	Support When it Matters	Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide
		The Havens	The Listening Place	Waiting Room	Women and Girls Network		

■ = services added as part of this campaign

## Stay Alive Booklets

Alongside delivery of the digital advertising campaign, Grassroots Suicide Prevention were also commissioned to develop and distribute 10,000 copies of an NCL-specific Stay Alive booklet. This is a physical copy of the content of the Stay Alive app, tailored to the local area through the addition of key local services promoted within the booklet. This can be an invaluable tool for those with less digital access, for example older adults or those without a reliable internet connection. To ensure this booklet reached the right audiences, local public sector and VCSE organisations were invited to order booklets at no cost to then distribute to service users in need.

As of February 2026, **over 5000 copies have been distributed to local organisations**, with remaining booklets planned for distribution by June 2026.





# Good Practice

- › A **combination of digital and out of home advertising** increases awareness of suicide prevention messaging and engagement with the Stay Alive app.
- › **Strong partnership working** ensured that the approach was reflective of need within each borough, utilising a range of local assets, existing partnerships and marketing expertise.
- › Simultaneously promoting the Stay Alive app across North Central London whilst also **ensuring that the app was more relevant to the area** is likely to encourage uptake of local services by those in need.
- › Choosing to build on Barnet's existing campaign work ensured that the **campaign could be developed rapidly with a strong evidence base for success**.
- › Offering people a **clear call to action** to download a potentially life-saving resource is a strong element of the campaign.
- › Each borough has access to different assets, so parity of approach was a challenge. This was achieved through **utilising different advertising assets for each borough**.

# Areas for Improvement

- › A longer **'build up' period** would have meant greater availability of assets and resources could be shared with partners in advance of the campaign.
- › Building in a **learning and testing period** at the start of the campaign would allow us to troubleshoot early and test alternative targeting options.
- › **Out of home marketing was a challenge to quantify impact**, relying heavily on estimation. This was particularly the case for the digital screens and bus advertising which used generic figures of reach as opposed to estimates tailored to the specific assets used.
- › During the campaign period, there were at least **three other (known) suicide prevention campaigns operating within London** that may have had an impact on the outcome of the work.
- › Future efforts should involve **engagement with communications colleagues** in partner organisations who can share campaign materials more widely.
- › This campaign has provided a solid foundation for the delivery of digital campaign delivery across North Central London, but there are **opportunities to refine the approach, such as gathering of additional demographic insights**.
- › To ensure even spend, **separate campaigns could be set up on advertising platforms for each borough** and assigned an even portion of the spend. This will prevent advertising algorithms drawing too much of the budget towards areas with higher traffic.
- › There would be value in **conducting an academic evaluation** of this campaign to understand the potential impact on a wider geographic and demographic scale.



This report is a summary of a more comprehensive evaluation compiled in January 2026 by Joe Davies, North Central London Suicide Prevention Programme Manager, including information from the following sources:

- Grassroots Suicide Prevention
- DOOH Media Ltd
- Barnet Council
- Enfield Council
- Haringey Council

This work has been supported by the NCL Suicide Prevention Campaign Steering Group, consisting of suicide prevention leads and communications officers within Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington Councils, alongside colleagues from North London NHS Foundation Trust, and Grassroots Suicide Prevention. This campaign, alongside the wider NCL Suicide Prevention Programme has been funded by North Central London Integrated Care Board.

To learn more about the NCL Suicide Prevention campaign, or read the evaluation in full, please contact [ncl.suicideprevention@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:ncl.suicideprevention@barnet.gov.uk)

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