

Make It Visible Taskforce launches FREE Workforce Welfare and Wellbeing Portal

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A new hub has been launched to help the drive to reduce suicide and improve welfare and wellbeing in the construction industry in the UK and Ireland.

The Make It Visible Portal at www.makeitvisible.info provides access to information, advice and guidance and is a pathway to free support.

Its content –based on research and development carried out by the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity – features sections on emotional, physical and financial wellbeing.

Within each there are learning tools, self-help tools and ways for people to assess whether they need to seek further help from professionals, e.g. for depression.

A map of ‘Lighthouse Beacons’ –drop-in self-help groups is included for those working away from home to be able to find other people to speak to in a non-judgemental environment is another element available to use.

Also featured are videos of construction workers talking about their experiences with issues such as stress, anger and anxiety.

The website is curated and managed by the Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity, and forms part of the Make It Visible initiative that brings contractors, clients and professional bodies together to try to tackle the industry's poor record on worker welfare and wellbeing with an emphasis on mental health.

ONS data shows that people working in construction are three times more likely to take their own lives than those in other industries.

Every working day two construction workers are lost to suicide in the UK and Ireland. The site, which has been developed with funding from the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), also includes emergency numbers for those in need to contact for 24/7 help.

Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity CEO Bill Hill said: "This portal is for everyone in our industry to use, especially those in the trades and agency workers who often have nowhere to turn for help in a crisis.

"It's been created by the industry, funded by the industry for all the workforce and their families working in our industry."

The portal has been developed as a website rather than an app to ensure anyone with a smartphone or computer can have full access to it, regardless of which device or browser they use.

Bill added: "Every physical safety measure is taken to protect our workers, but whilst we've been shouting safety, we've been whispering health.

"If you're not on top of your game and you're struggling emotionally, physically or financially, makeitvisible.info will give you instant access to information, advice and guidance and a pathway to free support."

The launch event was hosted by the Supply Chain Sustainability School. Over 550 registered for the event and more than 280 people from companies across the sector attended the online launch of the portal last week.

Speakers from organisations including the Supply Chain Sustainability School, Lendlease, Canary Wharf Contractors, the Considerate Constructors Scheme, L Lynch and Speedy Services, as well as the CITB and Lighthouse, took part.

Ian Heptonstall, director of the Supply Chain Sustainability School said: "We are very pleased to be supporting this initiative and will actively promoting to our members helping them to provide this really important support."

Bill encouraged everyone in the industry to visit the portal and share it, in order to maximise its reach and help put Welfare and Wellbeing Support in sight .. on every site and added: "If you like what you see, please mark it as one of your favourites and also get it out on your social media channels because you

never know who might be struggling at the moment –it could get them the support they need.”

Visit the portal at www.MakeItVisible.info

Photo credit: Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity