

Suicides across Scotland rise by 8%

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The number of suicides recorded across Scotland rose last year by eight per cent, new figures have shown.

There were 728 cases in 2016, up from 672 the previous year.

The ISD Scotland statistics revealed males were more than twice as likely as females to take their own lives.

In addition, Scotland's deprived areas had considerably higher suicide rates than wealthier parts.

According to the data, those between 45 and 54 accounted for the most deaths of any age group.

Scottish Conservative mental health spokeswoman Annie Wells said:

"These figures reflect hundreds of avoidable personal tragedies that have taken place in Scotland over the last year.

"The fact there has been such a notable increase should focus minds right across the board.

"There is broad agreement across all political parties that mental health now has to be a priority.

"There can't be many topics more important than suicide, and that is why everyone in the Scottish Parliament has to work together to make sure help is on hand for those who need it.

"We're never going to be in a situation in Scotland where we can prevent every suicide.

"But there are hundreds of lives here which could have been saved, and we have to ensure more is done to reduce these statistics in future years."