

MCA launches digital Wellbeing at Sea Tool to support seafarer health and wellbeing

Government takes action to support seafarers

- New report on seafarers' mental health launched to identify best ways to support those who work at sea
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency launches new digital tool aimed at seafarers dealing with mental health issues
- Part of Government's nine-point plan to improve seafarers' long-term working conditions.

Poor mental health at sea is still taboo, and better support for seafarers must be embedded into the maritime industry, according to a new report funded jointly by the Department for Transport and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

The report comes alongside the launch of MCA's new digital tool designed to support seafarers' health and wellbeing. Called the Wellbeing at Sea Tool, the new website provides practical advice for seafarers and helps organisations monitor wellbeing and support their employees.

Its launch is supported by the findings of the research which was carried out to gather the views of chaplains, charities, unions and the maritime industry as a whole.

Despite ongoing work, many of those questioned said they still felt mental health issues were poorly understood not just by employers but among seafarers themselves. Many of those questioned said that there needed to be better reporting to understand and act upon the level of suicide rates at sea, but added there were difficulties knowing for certain what the cause of death was in some cases.

Many also claimed that the subject of mental health and suicide was also off-limits for some people who are unwilling to discuss it because of cultural or religious reasons.

Maritime Minister Robert Courts said:

I want the maritime sector to be an inviting one, and for it to move with the times and recognise that, while offering incredibly rewarding careers, life at sea can be incredibly lonely and stressful.

This new report will help us to address this important issue, and with support from the MCA with its new online service, we will continue to challenge the sector to take action to ensure all

seafarers are properly supported on land and at sea.”

Katy Ware, Director of UK Maritime Services said:

There is – sadly – still a stigma around mental health. The fact seafarers still don't feel able to talk about it or access services says a lot about how far we still have to go in terms of reducing that taboo.

This is exactly why we have launched our Wellbeing at Sea Tool. By identifying stressors and issues at an early stage, we hope that the tool will help to reduce stress among seafarers which is a contributory factor to mental health problems.”

As part of the Government's nine-point plan to improve seafarers' long term working conditions, all measures have been considered to improve lives at sea – including the mental health of workers.

The MCA Human Element team developed the Wellbeing at Sea Tool with partners to form part of a range of guidance to improve seafarer wellbeing.

When a seafarer uses it, they are asked to take a digital survey. Once completed, the seafarer is given personalised advice on how to improve their wellbeing at sea. Data captured is anonymised and sent to managers within the company to help them better understand what the priorities are for improvement.

Website: <https://www.wellbeingseatool.com/>

New poll finds 7 in 10 adults want social media firms to do more to tackle harmful content

- 68 per cent want more action from social media firms on racism, homophobia and misogyny on their platforms
- Comes as the Online Safety Bill moves to Report Stage in the House of Commons this week

A clear majority of the public want social media companies to do more to protect their users from harmful content, according to new research published today.

Polling by Ipsos shows over four in five (84 per cent) adults in the UK are

concerned about seeing harmful content – such as racism, misogyny, homophobia and content that encourages self-harm – with two in five (38 per cent) reporting having seen it in the last month. This comes as the Online Safety Bill moves to Report Stage in Parliament this week.

The government commissioned study found strong public support for the measures contained in the Bill. For instance, seven in ten adults (68 per cent) believe social media companies should do more to protect people online.

Four in five adults (78 per cent) want social media companies to be clear about what sort of content is and isn't allowed on their platform. In a stark warning to social media companies, 45 per cent of respondents also said they will leave or reduce the amount of time they spend on their platforms if they see no action.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Online abuse has a devastating impact on people's lives, and these findings definitively show the public back our plans which will force social media companies to step up in keeping their users safe.

It is clear people across the UK are worried about this issue, and as our landmark Online Safety Bill reaches the next crucial stage in Parliament we're a big step closer to holding tech giants to account and making the internet safer for everyone in our country.

The survey also found that women have high levels of concern about legal but harmful content, with 45 per cent feeling unsafe when talking to people on dating or messaging apps.

Most women (65 per cent) agree there should be limits to the types of content people can post online. Nearly half (47 per cent) of those living in households with at least one child report having seen abusive content in the last month.

The safety of women and girls across the country is a top priority. The measures we're introducing through the Online Safety Bill will mean tech companies have to tackle illegal content and activity on their services, women will have more control over who can communicate with them and what kind of content they see on major platforms, and they will be better able to report abuse. In addition, we are continuing to implement our Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy to bring about real and lasting change offline as well as online.

The Online Safety Bill was introduced to Parliament in March and is a major milestone in the government's mission to make the UK the safest place in the world to be online. The new laws will protect children, tackle illegal content and protect free speech, as well as requiring social media platforms to uphold their stated terms and conditions.

If they don't, the regulator Ofcom will work with platforms to ensure they comply and will have the power to fine companies up to ten per cent of their annual global turnover – which could reach billions of pounds – to force them to fulfil their responsibilities or even block non-compliant sites.

When the Bill comes into force, firms will be required to identify and implement solutions to protect their users. Firms hosting content that is harmful to children such as pornography, will have to prevent them from accessing it, for example by using age verification.

Social media platforms will also be required to safeguard people's free speech, and their access to journalism and content that is democratically important. The poll follows the announcement of a series of amendments to the Bill last week to strengthen protections for freedom of speech, including tougher protections to guard against the arbitrary removal of articles from recognised news outlets shared on social media.

Last week the government [published](#) the list of legal but harmful content social media companies will need to address under the Online Safety Bill.

The categories consist of types of online abuse and harassment which can fall below the threshold of a criminal offence, but which still cause significant harm to adults online such as misogyny, homophobia and content that encourages self-harm. This threshold is important to ensure that the online safety framework focuses on content and activity which poses the most significant risk of harm to UK users online. Free speech within the law can involve the expression of views that some may find offensive, but a line is crossed when disagreement mutates into abuse or harassment, which refuses to tolerate other opinions and seeks to deprive others from exercising their free speech and freedom of association.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Ipsos interviewed a representative sample of 1,140 adults aged 18+ across the United Kingdom. Interviews were conducted online from 20th to 22nd June 2022. Quotas were set and data weighted using demographic variables to match the profile of the population.

[Government THINK! campaign launched to improve road safety for those most at risk](#)

- government launches “Travel Like You Know Them” campaign encouraging

- positive behaviour on roads and protecting those more at risk
- campaign promotes Highway Code changes, highlighting that vehicles don't make journeys, people do
 - follows first phase of THINK! Campaign in February to boost safety, mutual respect and responsibility on our roads

People driving, walking and cycling are being encouraged to give space and be considerate to other road users in the Government's latest THINK! road safety campaign launched today (12 July 2022).

[Travel Like You Know Them](#)

The 'Travel Like You Know Them' campaign will promote the recent changes to the Highway Code, which help improve road safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding.

The campaign offers a snapshot into the lives of people who use the roads, aiming to help people see beyond the mode of transport and improve understanding of how others see and use the road.

'Travel Like You Know Them' speaks to everyone who uses the road, with an emphasis on motorists and those who have a greater responsibility to reduce the risk they may pose to others, as per Highway Code's new hierarchy of road users.

The campaign follows the first phase of the THINK! campaign launched in February to highlight the changes to the Highway Code, with 87% of people surveyed being aware of the changes.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

People tend to see cycles, lorries and cars on the roads rather than thinking of the person using them – but it could be your family member, your friend or your colleague.

We have some of the safest roads in the world but I am determined to make them even safer, particularly as more people choose to walk, cycle and ride for their journeys.

This campaign encourages everyone to see the person behind the wheel or handlebars, to build more understanding of others on the road, and help keep everyone safe.

'Travel Like You Know Them' aims to foster mutual respect to embed the new Highway Code rules in the day-to-day behaviour of people driving, walking and cycling alike.

The changes include clarifying cycle positioning, emphasising the priority at junctions for pedestrians and cyclists, guidance on safe passing distances and speeds when overtaking, and on opening car doors, the 'Dutch reach'.

Mary Williams OBE, chief executive of Brake said:

On behalf of road victims and everyone who uses roads, Brake is a passionate supporter of the government's THINK! campaign, and its focus on driver behaviour and protection of those most at risk, particularly people on bicycles and walking.

The Highway Code's new hierarchy of road users is a vital step forwards that everyone can help promote, particularly to drivers, to prevent tragedies on roads.

As the country works towards a net zero future, safer roads will encourage more and more people to travel by foot, bike or public transport, helping reduce congestion and emissions.

The campaign builds on our [£20 million investment in Bikeability](#), the government's national cycle training programme, to ensure everyone can access the fantastic mobility opportunities of cycling and sustainable active travel.

Improvements to road safety measures will also lead to fewer road traffic collisions, not only saving lives but also the billions of pounds spent every year on dealing with such collisions and ensuing road repairs.

[Travel Like You Know Them, 15 second clip](#)

[Schools across the country to receive state of the art refurbishments](#)

Sixty-one schools across the country are set to receive state of the art rebuilds or refurbishments that will transform education for their pupils.

In his first announcement as Education Secretary, James Cleverly confirmed the investment to provide thousands of children access to new, modern classrooms as part of the Prime Minister's flagship School Rebuilding Programme.

The projects will be backed by over £1bn of funding.

Work to deliver the projects will start immediately. It will include updating and modernising buildings, and creating state of the art facilities such as new sports halls, music rooms, science labs and dining areas.

The new school buildings will be net-zero carbon in operation, helping meet the Government's net-zero target.

The schools in this round include primary, secondary and special schools, with 11 in the North West, ten in the North East and six in Yorkshire and the Humber, helping level up education for children of all ages and right across the country.

Since 2010, around 500 schools have been refurbished or rebuilt under government programmes.

Education Secretary James Cleverly said:

Our School Rebuilding Programme is already making a difference to the lives of pupils and their teachers. It is creating greener school sites that are fit for the future and that local communities can be proud of.

We know how important it is to have high-quality school facilities. That is why we continue to invest billions in our rebuilding programme.

Headteacher of Framwellgate School Durham, Andy Byers said:

I'm absolutely delighted that Framwellgate School Durham has been chosen to be part of the School Rebuilding Programme.

Our school was designed and built in the 1960s and is old and tired and very poorly designed. With a new building we will be able to give our students facilities and a learning environment which will inspire them, and our staff, in the working environment they deserve.

Schools selected in round one of the programme, such as West Coventry Academy and St John Fisher Catholic High School in Wigan, are benefitting from a full replacement of all their buildings. The work will transform the environment children learn in, including brand new sports facilities enabling more children to take part in physical activity.

The commitment to rebuild and refurbish the schools most in need is part of Government's wider Schools White Paper commitments, to ensure that by 2030 every child will be taught a broad and ambitious curriculum, with access to high-quality extra-curricular provision, in a school with high expectations and strong standards of behaviour.

To achieve this, staff and pupils need access to top facilities.

Alongside the new rebuilding programme, the Government has committed £1.8 billion in financial year 2022-23 for maintaining and improving the school estate, as part of £13.1 billion allocated since 2015.

The full list of schools can be found [here](#).

ENDS

Working together to forge a more prosperous and sustainable future for Small Island Developing States

Good afternoon, everyone.

Thank you very much to the panel for the very interesting interventions.

Today we strive to build a more secure and sustainable future for some of the world's most vulnerable people.

There is no doubting the challenges we face.

Russia's illegal war in Ukraine is damaging the global economy and compounding food insecurity.

The impacts of COVID-19 remain with us.

And the climate crisis continues to threaten lives and livelihoods.

Small Island Developing States have, of course, been disproportionately affected.

Yet you also have very powerful voices.

You have played a vital role in pushing for climate action. Thanks to the promises made in Glasgow, the 1.5 degree warming limit remains within reach.

You are also vital partners in the achievement of SDG 14, as you steward nearly a third of our global ocean.

The United Kingdom is committed to supporting SIDS to become more resilient to climate and economic shocks.

We stand with you in your determination to achieve your development and economic goals.

Our new International Development Strategy sets out this vision.

We know that reforms are needed. It is crucial to place issues of vulnerability and resilience at the heart of planning and decisions about finance.

We launched a Call to Action on Access to Finance last year with Belize, Fiji

and the Alliance of Small Island States, and we are now working to deliver its recommendations.

We are determined to address challenges around debt, eligibility criteria and bureaucracy.

This includes the potential use of Multi-dimensional Vulnerability Indices, and we are really looking forward to considering the conclusions of the High-Level Panel.

We urge financial institutions to consider how they can best factor vulnerability into their systems.

We know that too many SIDS face a cliff edge when they are no longer eligible for Official Development Assistance.

The Glasgow Climate Pact challenged us all to take this seriously.

The ODA criteria must reflect our discussions in Glasgow and take into account the unique challenges of vulnerable small states.

We must also improve the quality of finance and ensure that aid has the greatest possible impact.

This is why the UK, Canada, and the Alliance of Small Island States will launch a set of joint principles this year.

We will ask donors to tailor their approaches, and ensure they are backed by time, expertise and resources.

Meanwhile, the UK will continue to support SIDS through our £40 million programme, launched at COP26, to support your development goals.

And through our £36 million Sustainable Blue Economies programme launched by our Prime Minister at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

In these times of challenge, let us take the opportunity to turn ambition into action, supporting economies, protecting nature and boosting climate resilience.

Together we can forge a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Thank you.