



# SHIFT YOUR FOCUS.

Work with us to

## Support Men's Mental Fitness.

### Context.

Men's mental health is one of the most urgent issues facing York and North Yorkshire. **Men account for three out of four suicides, the leading cause of death for men under 50.** Although 1 in 5 men are diagnosed with depression or anxiety, the real number is likely higher as many do not seek help.

Poor male mental health locally leads to sickness absence, reduced workforce participation, and increased pressure on the NHS and social services. Many men do not engage with support, often because services do not meet their needs. Addressing this gap is essential for improving health, productivity, and community wellbeing.

Male-dominated sectors such as construction and agriculture are key to the regional economy but face high levels of stress and suicide risk.

Supporting men's mental health strengthens families, communities, and the local economy.

In response, David Skaith, Mayor of York and North Yorkshire, has formed a Men's Mental Health Taskforce and committed over £700,000 to a programme focused on tackling this issue. This work positions the region as a national leader and recognises that gender equity must also address the challenges faced by men and boys.

The Mayor and Taskforce aim to shift the narrative and take action before men reach crisis. Part of the funding supports this pilot behaviour change campaign, focused on specific sectors. The findings will guide a longer-term strategy to normalise proactive mental health maintenance and provide clear, practical support.

# About the campaign.

Most men know if they're struggling with their mental health but where do they start trying to improve it? What do they do next when they're just trying to get through the week? When things feel heavy, men crack on, push it down, or tell themselves it's just life.

**Shift Your Focus** starts from that reality, not by asking men to open up more, but by giving them practical, simple ways to change perspective. It's a starting point which feels achievable and proactive.

## Insight.

**The campaign is built on evidence and real life experiences, recognising that it must:**

- Focus on practical skills and actions, not just talking.
- Frame maintaining mental fitness as responsible action and highlight the potential personal gains.
- Utilise positive male role models to help shift harmful social norms.
- Activate and empower a man's informal network of friends, family, and colleagues to spot the signs and offer help in a supportive, non-judgmental way.

**By embedding these principles into the campaign, Shift your Focus guides men to make a conscious choice to redirect their mental habits or attention to something more helpful.**

## Get Involved.

We need stakeholders like you - the people closest to our communities, people our men trust - to help make this campaign as impactful as possible. **Here's how you can get involved:**

### Amplify.

Help us increase the visibility and reach of the campaign's message and support by sharing resources across your platforms and networks. This includes all available channels; social media, newsletters, internal communications, websites, to actively promote the campaign content. Campaign Activation packs will be shared with all those involved in supporting the campaign.

### Collaborate.

**Take part in 5 days to "Shift Your Focus" activity.**

Dedicate time to participate in a 5 day, on-the-ground campaign activation showing men's mental fitness tools in action. Led by your teams this could involve interventions and activities already in place or a chance to commit some time to new ideas inspired by the 'Shift Your Focus' Campaign. Whatever you decide to do we'd love to hear from you, to share your involvement and thoughts on how it's made a difference.