**Wells Cathedral opens its arms to suicide survivors reversing centuries of stigma in response to World Mental Health Day’s plea for organisations to ‘show they care’**

The second only Cathedral in the UK ever to do so, Wells is reaching out to survivors of suicide loss in a special All Souls Service *including all those affected by suicide and those who work for its prevention* on Saturday November 2nd reversing centuries of stigma around suicide.

In response to a staggering 11% rise in suicides , Wells has responded to World Mental Health Day appeal for all institutions *'to show they care'.*

*‘This is an important opportunity to recognise explicitly and lovingly all those who have died by suicide, and honour the dedicated people in our community who work to prevent it’,* says the Dean, the Very Revd.Dr.John Davies who will give the address. The service will complete 2 days of events dedicated to suicide survival and prevention at neighbouring church, St. Cuthbert’s as part of the Festival of Death and Dying being held in Wells, Glastonbury and Shepton Mallet over the weekend 1-3 November.

*‘Suicide is a difficult subject for people.  The point of a festival is to come together to explore creative ways to lighten the load, and open this vital conversation in a gentle and safe ways*.’ says Caroline Kenmore, whose daughter Cameron took her life at 15, and is the suicide lead on the Festival of Death and Dying team, a community-led initiative which aims to dissolve the death taboo.

Chukumeka Maxwell, founder of Action to Prevent Suicide, who is speaking at the event, said the impact of these offerings cannot be underestimated. ‘ *Famillies affected by suicide crossed the country to attend a similar service in Truro Cathedral recently. Loss by suicide is a double whammy, first you suffer the of loss a loved one in the worst possible way, then you have to suffer in silence because no-one wants to talk to you. Public acknowledgement of their grief means more than we can imagine.’*

For more information about the events contact Henrietta Lang, organiser of Festival of Death and Dying on 07976 336646 or henrietta.lang@gmail.com

[www.deathfest.co.uk](http://www.deathfest.co.uk) or www.facebook.com/deathfest2019/

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