

# Two million Shout conversations

Saving lives at scale through  
the power of technology



MENTAL  
HEALTH  
INNOVATIONS

shout

85258

here for you 24/7



## KENSINGTON PALACE

In 2017, The Royal Foundation founded Mental Health Innovations. At the time, we were certain that harnessing the power of technology would help us to increase the support available for those struggling with their mental health, break the stigma around reaching out for help, and make it possible for more people to volunteer.

In May 2019, Shout was born - the UK's first free, 24/7 mental health text support service, ensuring that people around the country had access to crucial and often life-saving support in the palm of their hands. And in just four years, the team at Shout have held two million conversations with people in need of urgent help.

This has only been made possible by an extraordinary virtual community of dedicated volunteers, providing real-time advice and guidance from home with the support of an expert clinical supervision team.

The rapid increase in demand for the Shout service over the past four years - now reaching up to 2,000 conversations every day - demonstrates the value of a text service in helping people take the vital first step in reaching out.

However, two million conversations is also a sobering milestone, and the level of demand for the service highlights the scale of the challenge facing us. More than half of Shout texters are children and young people struggling with thoughts of suicide and self-harm. Over 50% of service users say that they have no one else to talk to, and a similar proportion have never spoken about their mental health before reaching out to Shout.

It is crucial that the insights gathered through Shout conversations, which are detailed further within this report, are used to learn how we can tackle this challenge head on. By using this data, we can help to ensure that we are equipping young people with the skills they need to better understand their emotions, develop effective coping strategies, and seek support before they reach crisis point.

Catherine and I are incredibly proud of Shout and the help it has provided to so many people since its inception. The potential for the service to continue to drive positive action and move the dial on how we approach our nation's mental health is so exciting. Whilst there is still much work to be done, I hope that this report provides a positive picture about what can be achieved with a little innovation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lilly'.

HRH Prince William  
The Prince of Wales

# Introduction

In this report we look back at the development of Mental Health Innovations and Shout over the past four years. In June 2023 we celebrated the amazing milestone of two million Shout conversations. Our extraordinary community of volunteers, in partnership with our expert clinical team, has enabled us to help more than 675,000 people who were struggling to cope.

Since the public launch of the service in May 2019, we have scaled rapidly and now support between 1,500 and 2,000 conversations every day. Leveraging the power of digital has enabled us to build a game-changing service able to respond to the enormous challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost of living crisis and a steep decline in the nation's mental health.

Alongside our purpose-built technology, we use groundbreaking data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence to analyse Shout's text-based conversations, understand our data and use it for social impact. This report looks at the range of issues faced by our texters. Suicidal thoughts is the most common reason that people contact Shout and we have grown to play a significant role in suicide prevention in the UK. We know that some groups are more likely to experience suicidal ideation and that a text service particularly resonates with vulnerable populations. These include children and young people, people living in poverty, autistic people, expectant and new mothers, the LGBTQ+ community and the prison population.

Shout's digital platform appeals to young people, with 62% of texters aged under 25. Three-quarters of our texters are female, reflecting the rapid decline in poor mental health in girls and young women. We can see that neurodiverse people are particularly drawn to a text-based service; our texters are many times more likely to self-identify as autistic than the UK population. Non-judgemental mental health support is critical for all of our texters and especially so for people from the LGBTQ+ community which represents more than a third of our service users. In 2023, we began offering our service to people in prison, in partnership with Serco. By the end of this year, we will be providing 24/7 support for people in three prisons and hope to be able to extend this service more widely in the future.

In addition to the Shout service, we have extended our support to a further three million people through the provision of resources on our [website](#) and provided high quality information and content through our social media channels. We have also developed digital and in-person mental health training, consultancy and tools to help employers to improve workforce wellbeing.

Finally, we have supported policy makers, third sector and public sector bodies, academic institutions and the corporate sector by sharing our knowledge and data insights to improve the understanding of mental health in the UK.

We could not have achieved any of this without our incredible volunteers, dedicated team and our funders and supporters, to whom I would like to express my immense gratitude. My final thanks is to our texters who have shown extraordinary courage and strength in contacting us. It is a privilege to be able to offer our support when it is needed most.



A handwritten signature in purple ink, consisting of a stylized 'V' followed by a long horizontal stroke that loops back.

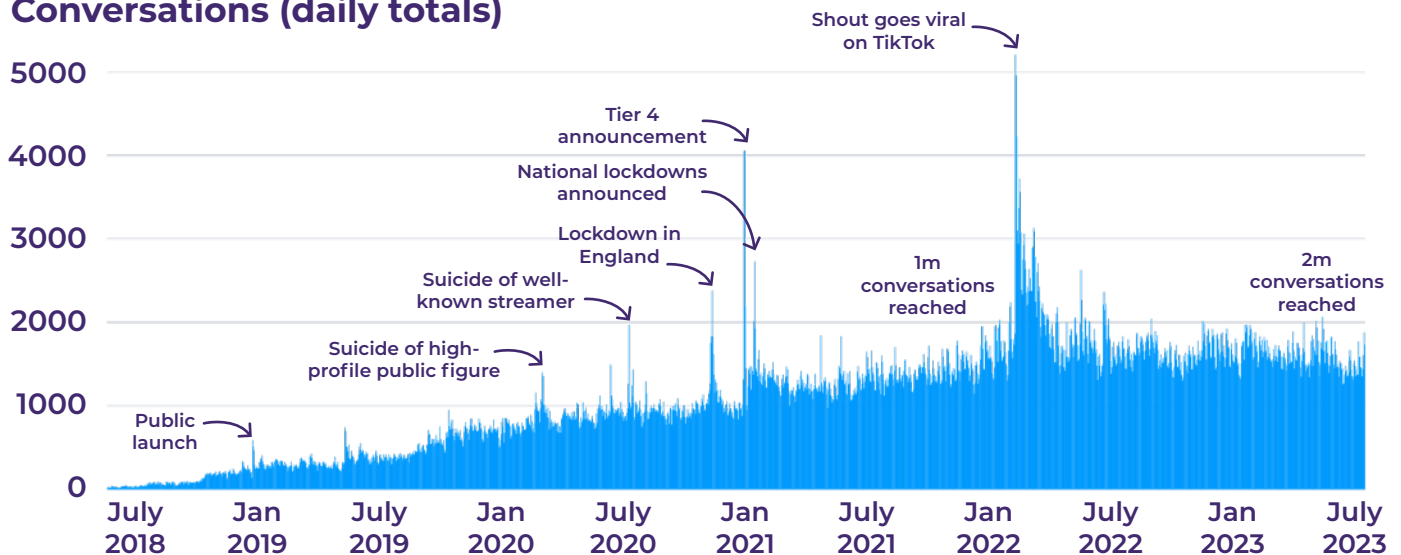
**Victoria Hornby OBE**  
CEO, Mental Health Innovations

# About Shout

Shout is a free text messaging support service, available 24/7 to anyone in the UK who is struggling to cope. Every single minute, someone reaches out to Shout for support and has a conversation that could save their life. Our trained volunteers and clinicians are there around the clock to support texters whenever they need us, listening without judgement, helping them to a calmer state so that they can discuss and develop a personal safety plan with signposting to further support where needed. Where a texter is deemed to be at imminent risk of suicide, Shout works with the emergency services to intervene.

In our first four years, Shout has scaled to take two million conversations with 675,000 children, young people and adults who have needed immediate mental health support. 85% of texters found their conversation helpful and 68% felt calmer afterwards.

## Conversations (daily totals)



We have teams in the UK and New Zealand working around the clock, offering support to the UK public when most other mental health services are not available. Anyone can text SHOUT to 85258 to receive support, at any time of day or night.

## At the cutting edge of digital innovation

Shout uses anonymised, aggregated data from our thousands of conversations, to generate unique insights into the mental health of the UK population. We use these insights to enhance our services and report on trends to inform the broader mental health sector.

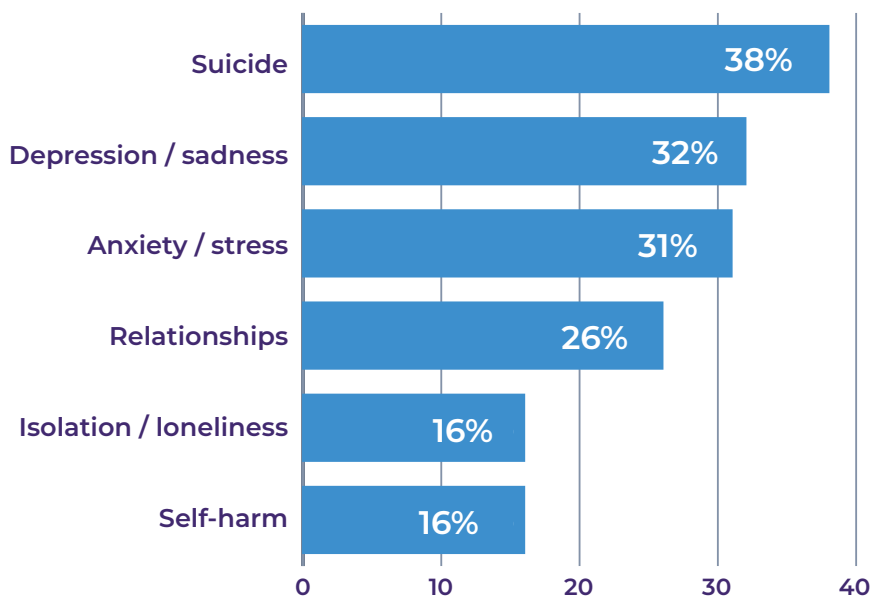
Shout's text-based conversations can be analysed using computational methods. We use groundbreaking data science, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI), to apply the most advanced techniques to understanding our data and using it for social impact.

In particular, we believe that Mental Health Innovations has a unique opportunity to be a leader in leveraging the powerful, fast-moving advancements in generative AI to enhance the Shout service. To do this we have developed a generative AI role-play simulator available for trainee volunteers. Almost all trainees that have used this simulator report that it has helped them practise the skills they learned in training, resulting in them feeling more confident.

## Shout and suicide prevention

The issue most frequently arising in Shout conversations is suicide and 38% of Shout users are experiencing suicidal ideation. The service is instrumental in preventing tragedies that might have otherwise occurred in moments of desperation. Many of our texters tell us that, without our support in their moment of crisis, they would have taken their own lives.

## Most common issues (% of all conversations)



"The volunteer I spoke to tonight was absolutely fantastic. Calmed me down, listened to what I was saying, ensured I had the relevant resources before I left. They quite literally saved my life tonight."

Shout texter feedback

## De-escalation of risk

Shout Volunteers are trained to assess risk and de-escalate texters experiencing suicidal thoughts or urges. They engage warmly with texters, validate their experience, de-escalate their situation and support them to make a safety plan. When de-escalation is not possible and a texter is deemed to be at imminent risk of suicide, Shout works with the emergency services to keep the texter safe. From two million conversations, Shout has actioned 27,775 emergency interventions.

Our 2022 report '[Shout's role in UK suicide prevention](#)' brought together evidence from Frontier Economics and the Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College, to highlight the role Shout plays in suicide prevention and the benefits to the UK economy.

The report was launched at an event at the Royal Society of Chemistry with a keynote speech from Sajid Javid MP.

"Shout and their volunteers are at the forefront of digital innovation in suicide prevention and are making a huge difference. I saw the importance of their work as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and this report highlights once again the incredible impact they have."

Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP, former Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



## Case study - Google OneBox

40% of Shout's texters find us on Google and in June 2021, we partnered with them to signpost from the OneBox for search terms relating to suicide. Now, around 2% of our daily conversations are with people signposted to us after potentially harmful searches, showing the efficacy of these types of intervention to divert users from their course of action.



## Supporting government strategy

We are committed to using our clinical expertise and data insights to support others across the sector and beyond. This has included working with the government as a member of the Department of Health & Social Care's (DHSC) National Suicide Prevention Strategy Advisory Group (NSPSAG). We were encouraged by the 2023 National Suicide Prevention Strategy which recognises the vital role that data plays in suicide prevention, the importance of early intervention, the value of crisis text lines and the focus on some of the most vulnerable groups in society; who are strongly represented in the users of Shout.

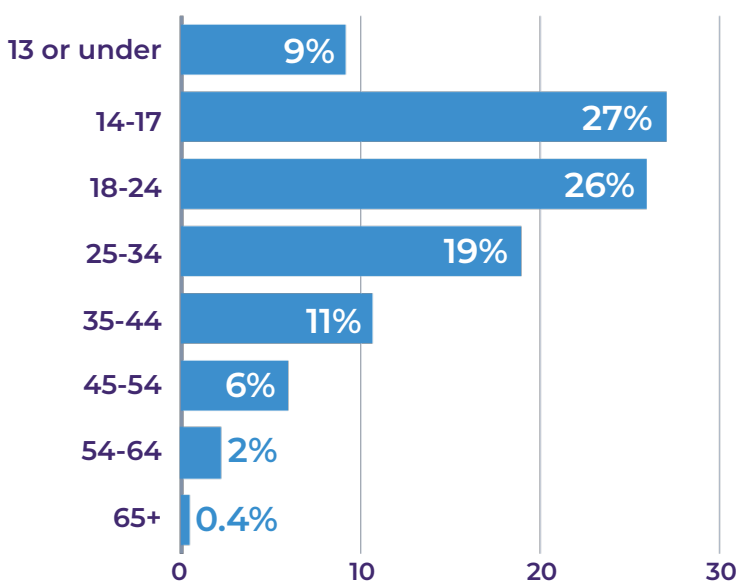
## Who uses Shout?

Shout reaches people who haven't found help anywhere else. 48% of our texters say they prefer to text rather than talk about private things and 34% are too embarrassed to talk on the phone. 48% of our texters want to talk to someone who they don't know and 55% don't have anyone else to talk to.

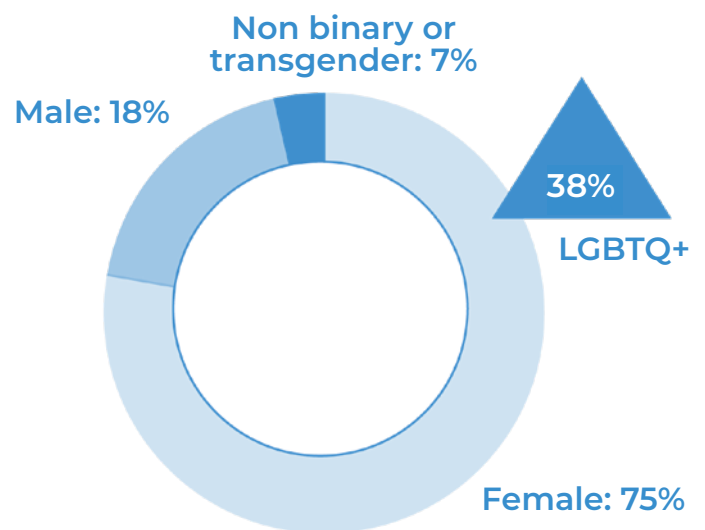
We reach a broad range of vulnerable audiences who value our service, including those in poverty, people who are autistic and the LGBTQ+ community.

The majority (62%) of Shout's texters are under 25-years-old and find it natural to seek support via digital means.

### Age (% of Texters)

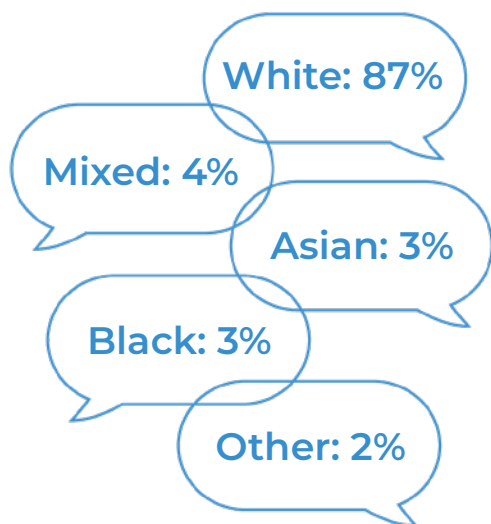


### Sexuality and gender



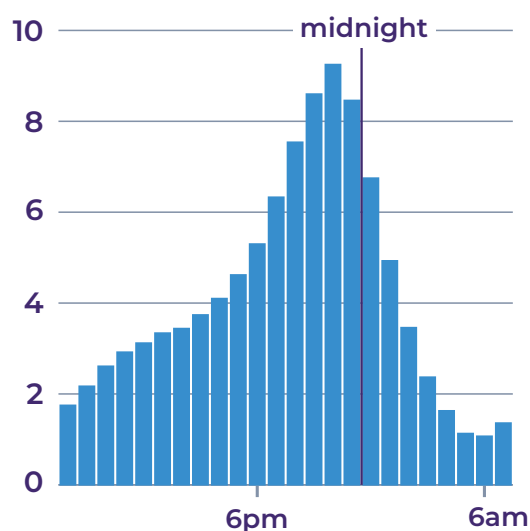
75% of Shout texters identify as female, which reflects patterns of need and help seeking that we see in society. More than a third (38%) of our texters identify as LGBTQ+.

## Ethnicity



Shout texters are predominately white, but there is growing representation of other ethnicities in our texter base.

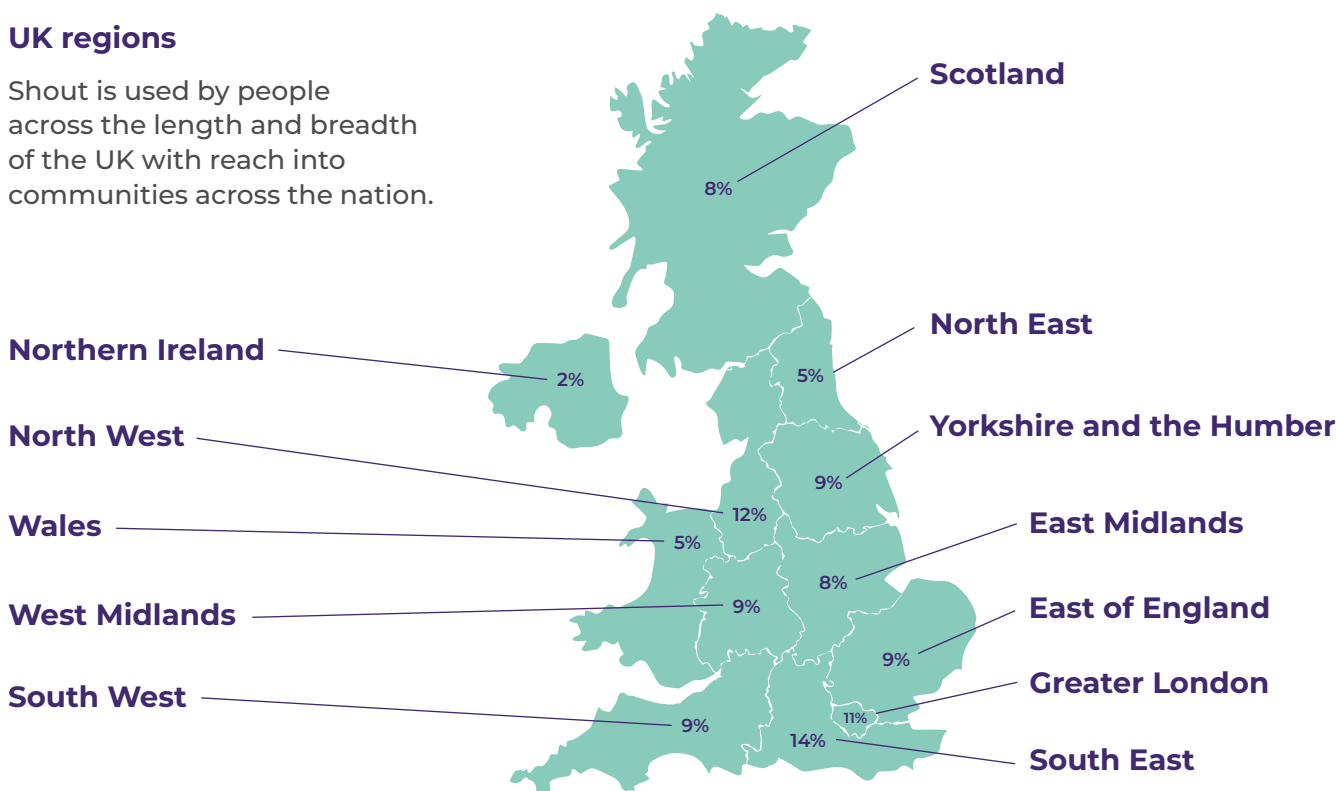
## Conversations (average % hourly)



Our busiest hours are 10pm to midnight, when other services are closed.

## UK regions

Shout is used by people across the length and breadth of the UK with reach into communities across the nation.



## Children and young people

Shout’s digital platform particularly appeals to young people, with 62% of texters aged under 25, making it an accessible lifeline for those who are digitally connected from an early age.

Shout users have become ever younger since we first launched. We have seen an 86% growth in the number of our youngest texters aged 13 or under since 2020, with the percentage of all texters in this age group growing from 7% to 13% since launch. The growth was driven following a surge of viral TikTok posts in January 2022 featuring Shout. We took 5,200 conversations in a single day as a huge number of children and young adults sought mental health support all through the night.

"Many of the young texters that make contact do not feel able to have a physical conversation about how they are feeling. Having this text service provides them with a safe space to be heard, however major or minor their issue."

Shout Volunteer

## Case study - Caitlyn

Caitlyn started struggling with her mental health in her early teens and texted Shout while she was at school. She found it hard to talk about how she was feeling, so the idea of text messaging was appealing. Caitlyn created a safety plan with her Shout Volunteer and managed to get through her crisis safely.



"I just want people to know that it's 100% okay to ask for help. Shout is a very helpful service, full of very kind people. You are never alone."

## Issues facing our young texters

Suicide rates among 15- to 19-year-olds in England have reached their highest point in 30 years<sup>2</sup> and **suicide** is the most common reason those under 18 text Shout, accounting for 38% of their conversations.

Our younger texters are far more likely to discuss **self-harm** than all texters. Self-harm is an issue in 16% of all Shout conversations and this rises to 24% of conversations with texters aged 14-17 and 30% of conversations with texters aged 13 or under.

"I took a conversation with a 13-year-old with urges to self-harm and family issues at home. We talked about what was making them feel that self-harm was the only way to find relief, as well as some alternatives that wouldn't cause them any harm."

Shout Volunteer

**Bullying** was an issue in 5% of conversations with children under the age of 18; more than double the rate seen in all conversations (2%). In the majority of these conversations, texters were being bullied by schoolmates, and they were predominantly concerned with in-person bullying.

"I am so grateful to get the support I did, as I now have the confidence to stop the bullying I experience. Thanks."

Shout texter feedback

## Students

More than one million of our conversations have been with school, college and university students. 15% of Shout texters are in higher education, navigating significant change in their lives and coping with the pressures of studying and exams, managing personal finances and making new friends can all be difficult.



"I sometimes feel I don't have anybody to talk to about my emotions because I don't want to worry friends and family... So to speak to somebody I don't know helps."

Shout student texter feedback

The Covid-19 pandemic added to the difficulties faced by students and Shout was ideally placed to support large numbers of students at a time when they were unable to access face-to-face services. We were able to significantly scale-up our offer to students by collaborating with key organisations such as Student Minds, to provide a range of holistic support to students in a moment of acute need.



"What you do is amazing and I cannot thank you enough for what you did. You saved my life today."

Shout student texter feedback

## Case study - Emily

Emily had recently been diagnosed with bipolar disorder and was feeling isolated when she contacted Shout for help. Living in busy student halls where she could be overheard having a conversation, the silent and discreet nature of Shout appealed. As a 24/7 service, Shout was there for Emily when her care teams were unavailable.



"The volunteer listened to all my worries about my illness and how much I was struggling with my diagnosis. They didn't tell me what to do or how to feel, instead empowering me to make my own decisions about my care and what I needed at that time."

Thanks to the support she received, Emily has gone on to become a Shout Volunteer, having been inspired by the volunteer who helped her when she needed it the most.



## Those in poverty

While 3% of our conversations are with texters specifically contacting us about financial difficulties, we are contacted every day by hundreds by people who are much more likely to be in poverty and impacted by the cost of living crisis.

Among children who contact the service, 25% of texters under the age of 18 are from a disadvantaged background and in receipt of free school meals.

More than a fifth (21%) of adult texters are unemployed. Additionally, we see demand for Shout across the UK correlating with national indices of deprivation. This means that people from more deprived areas in the UK are more likely to contact Shout than those living in the least deprived areas.

## Autistic texters

Of autistic adults, 90% are thought to have a co-occurring mental health disorder<sup>3</sup> so it is no surprise that our texter population is considerably more likely to report being autistic (14%) than the UK population (around 1%). Studies have shown that verbal or in-person social interactions can be perceived as stressful by people who have autism and 58% of autistic texters say they are more comfortable texting than talking about private things.

*"Many autistic texters appreciate the time and space to talk by text, the technology suits them, there is no pressure to respond straight away."*

Shout Volunteer

*"I am autistic and often find it easier to type how I'm feeling and you really supported me and listened to me through a very difficult distressing moment to make me feel more in control and like someone listened to me. Thank you so much."*

Shout texter feedback



## Middle-aged men

Men are three times more likely to die by suicide than women, with men aged 40-59 being the highest risk group for suicide based on age and gender demographics<sup>4</sup>. Despite this, many men are unlikely to seek support or speak to others about their experiences or emotions.

Men are four times less likely to text Shout for support with their mental health than women (18% vs 75%) and 42% of Shout's male texters have never asked for help elsewhere.

*"You've helped me more in the last hour than anyone else has in 32 years. I'm genuinely in tears, there's an option other than death. Thank you."*

Male Shout texter

Shout works in partnership with a diverse range of organisations who work with male audiences to extend the reach of Shout and to help men start a conversation about their mental health. Partners since launch include Harry's, The Burnt Chef Project, Newcastle United Foundation, Lighthouse Club and Tough Enough to Care.

## Girls and women

Of our first two million conversations, 1.5 million have been with 528,000 female texters. Key issues faced by women are suicide (38%), anxiety/stress (34%) and depression (32%). While male texters mention self-harm in 9% of conversations, females mention it in 20%. They are also twice as likely to mention eating disorders and body image compared to males.

<sup>3</sup> Camm-Crosbie et al., (2018) - 'People like me don't get support': autistic adults' experiences of support and treatment for mental health difficulties, self-injury and suicidality

<sup>4</sup> ONS Suicides in England and Wales: 2020 registrations

"I had a conversation with a middle-aged woman struggling with suicidal thoughts who couldn't see a way forward and believed their children would be better off without them. We explored ways together to try and make things a bit more manageable and to take small, manageable steps and self-care to boost their self-worth."

Shout Volunteer

## Case study - Dove

In 2023, we supported Dove's **self-esteem campaign**, with the film signposting viewers affected by the issues it raised to Shout. The campaign raised awareness of harmful beauty content on social media and encouraged platforms to implement new design standards to make social media safer for young people.



## Perinatal texters

Perinatal mental illness in England can affect up to 27% of pregnant and new mothers and 20% of women who suffer with perinatal mental health conditions will experience suicidal thoughts or engage in self-harm<sup>5</sup>.

For many women, having someone to talk to anonymously and in confidence can help during a time in their lives when they might find it hard to let friends and family know they are struggling. Over the last four years, Shout has taken 53,000 conversations about pregnancy or baby-related topics.

"I spoke with a texter that was finding it hard to manage the feeling of isolation that came after having her baby. She felt alone and incapable of being a good mum. We worked together to find some positives to what had been going on in her life and I was able to encourage her to seek support from her GP."

Shout Volunteer

In 2023 we convened a roundtable of experts in perinatal mental health including representatives from The Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) and the NHS, to discuss how digital services such as Shout can play a key role in delivering positive outcomes alongside traditional pathways across the UK.

We have also partnered with PANDAS Foundation, Best Beginnings and MumsAid to provide support to their audiences.

## LGBTQ+ community

LGBTQ+ people are two to three times more likely than heterosexual people to report having a mental health problem in England<sup>6</sup>, yet they find it hard to access mental health support, often finding services to be discriminatory<sup>7</sup>. The LGBTQ+ community is over-represented among users of the Shout service; whereas just 3% of the UK population identify as LGB<sup>8</sup>, 38% of Shout texters identify as LGBTQ+. We have had around 880,000 conversations with around 255,000 members of the LGBTQ+ community.

LGBTQ+ texters might contact Shout to talk about their problems because they don't feel they can talk openly to anyone else, or access non-judgmental support as they should be able to, from UK services or family and friends.

5 <https://www.who.int/news/item/19-09-2022-launch-of-the-who-guide-for-integration-of-perinatal-mental-health>

6 Sexual Minorities in England Have Poorer Health and Worse Health Care Experiences: A National Survey (2015)

7 <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/statistics/lgbtiq-people-statistics>

"Thank you so much for all your help. I just thought about coming out, and I'm going to build up the courage to tell my mum about how I'm struggling with sexuality and how I find it difficult."

Shout texter

## The prison population

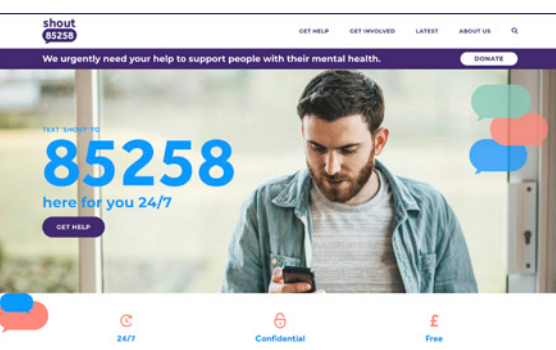
Poor mental health is exceptionally common in prison, with 45% of adults experiencing anxiety or depression and nine out of ten prisoners having at least one mental health or substance misuse problem.



In 2023 Shout launched a groundbreaking pilot with Serco, which runs six male prisons across the UK, to offer 24/7 crisis support via a messaging service to people in prison via their in-cell technology. The service has seen a significant take up with more than 650 conversations with prisoners reaching out for support with their mental health. The service, which was trialled in London's HMP Thameside, will be extended to an additional two prisons in 2023.

"Thank you - you was a great help for me today and now I know I have somewhere to go when im feeling low and suicidal, you are a kind person with a big heart."

Feedback from a texter in prison



## Shout website and social media reach

We extend our reach by providing support to people via our website and social media accounts. Over the course of two million Shout conversations, **our website** has been visited by three million people who have generated seven million page views as they browsed relatable case studies and downloaded helpful resources.

Through our website we reach and support a broader audience than through the service alone. 37% of our website visitors who are aged over 18 are male.

We have built up a combined social media following of 166,000 people. Through our social and web channels we provide educational material via infographics, blogs and videos to help support and improve supporters' mental health, as well as inspirational content such as testimonials from our texters, case study stories, illustrations and peer-to-peer tips.

## Our brilliant partners

At Shout, partnerships are central to our mission to improve access to transformative digital mental health support. We work in partnership with government, third sector and public sector bodies, academic institutions and the corporate sector to inform the conversation, increase reach and to improve mental health across the UK.

### Commissioned partners

We work collaboratively with more than 75 public, private and third sector organisations including the NHS, Premier League, EDF Energy and Network Rail, to provide a bespoke service for their audiences, who can access Shout via a custom keyword. Partners can also receive advice and consultation on marketing their keyword service and engaging new groups, along with anonymised data insights and tailored clinical analysis to help them gain a valuable understanding of the mental health needs of their audience.

## Case study - NHS Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes ICB



Through local consultation the ICB had found that their young people wanted mental health support that was flexible, responsive and available 24/7. As well as face-to-face services in the area, they sought digital provision that could support them outside of traditional office hours. We formed a partnership offering the community a bespoke Shout keyword 'REFLECT'. In its first six months, over 250 conversations were taken with young people struggling to cope.

James Dove, from Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes public health service, said:

*"Through our bespoke keyword, we are able to glean aggregated and anonymised data insights into the issues [young people] in our community are facing... we've seen that the biggest presenting issue is anxiety and the most popular time to request support is 9pm. Over 94% have found the service helpful."*

## Case study - Tough Enough to Care



The organisation promotes positive conversations about mental health in male-dominated spaces. They partnered with Shout to ensure that anyone in their audience struggling with their mental health can text 'TOUGH' to 85258 and find support. Tough Enough to Care are in year two of their three year contract, seeing an increase in usage of the service every quarter.

Stu Bratt, CEO and Founder of Tough Enough to Care said:

*"The ease of access, complete confidentiality and the immediate access to trained volunteers was evident from the first meeting we had with Mental Health Innovations."*

## Case study - Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight NHS ICB



Our partnership helps residents access local mental health services for ongoing support. We ask texters using the keyword 'HANTS' who are not at imminent risk if they would like information about further support in their area. We then signpost texters directly to the NHS 111 mental health service, and a member of the local mental health triage team follows up with them.

Sonya Mclean, Senior Programme Manager, Mental Health Crisis Care at the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, explained:

*"This innovation aligns with the urgent and emergency mental health care support offer across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, supporting people to get access to mental health response 24/7 including those who may need urgent community response. This has increased our digital interface with our citizens to ensure we break down the barriers to health inequalities and equal access to all."*

## Corporate partners

Our partnerships play a vital role in supporting us to reach more people, raise awareness, amplify our messages and create a positive impact on the mental wellbeing of people across the UK. Our team is here to work with you to engage employees, generate shared value partnerships and demonstrate results and impact.

### Case study - Premier League

We collaborated with the Premier League as part of its Inside Matters campaign to promote mental health and wellbeing among the football community. We published the **Inside Matters Handbook**, a digital guide offering tips and advice for managing the mental and physical symptoms of anxiety which included comment from Premier League players and club staff as well as advice from Shout clinicians.

As part of the collaboration, Premier League fans were given access to 24/7 mental health support by texting 'TEAMTALK' to 85258.

In addition, Shout released a new report '**Anxiety in the UK**' that gives insight into anxiety and coping skills from 300,000 anonymised conversations.



### Case study - Selfridges

Selfridges has been supporting Shout since 2021 through an impactful and all-encompassing partnership with fantastic levels of colleague engagement and participation in fundraising and volunteering activities which has grown year on year.



Selfridges' generosity as lead supporter on The Big Give Christmas campaign enabled us to unlock matched funding, and we are proud to have supported Selfridges colleagues through talks and resources during key moments such as Mental Health Awareness Week.

## Our training offer

Mental Health Innovations provides a range of unique digital and in-person mental health training, consultancy and tools to help employers and organisations improve workforce wellbeing and facilitate positive conversations at work.

### Case study - Cadent Train the Trainer

Cadent commissioned Mental Health Innovations to design a new mental health 'train the trainer' programme. The programme served to both build participants' capacity for workplace mental health and wellbeing, resilience and supporting each other, and equip attendees to effectively facilitate this personal and professional development in others.



**Sam Graham, Technical Manager, Social Programmes, Cadent** said:

"We are delighted with the high level of training Mental Health Innovations have provided to our initial cohort of employees. We plan to use the internal trainers to deliver this message far and wide within our organisation and maximise the benefits this partnership brings to our internal team and our customers."

## Supporters

We are incredibly grateful to our **existing supporters** which include The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales, whose generous founding grant launched the charity, philanthropic foundations and a growing number of corporate partners for helping us help others when they are in need of immediate support.



We would also like to thank the following networks for providing the Shout text service free to the service user and 'off bill': EE, O2, Three, Vodafone, BT Mobile, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Mobile, iD Mobile, Sky, Telecom Plus, Lebara, GiffGaff and Smarty..

## Our patron, Will Young

In 2023 we were delighted to announce musician, actor and mental health campaigner Will Young as our first ever patron.

"I'm so thrilled and excited to work with and represent Shout. The work Shout does in helping young people throughout the UK is astounding using a text message service. I have seen them in real time save lives and it is my honour to be a part of this incredible charity."

Will Young, Shout Patron



## Support for the charity sector

We partner with a wide range of charities to enable them to offer the Shout service to their audiences, extending our reach into vulnerable communities. We have partnered with 41 charities, including Place2Be, Best Beginnings, The Mix and Winston's Wish, to give their audiences free 24/7 mental health support by offering them a bespoke support service at no cost, at a benefit of £2.3m to the sector.

### Case study - Place2Be

We have partnered with children's mental health charity Place2Be since 2019, providing our Shout service free of charge through the keyword 'CONNECT'. This means Place2Be can offer support outside of school hours at times when children and young people are most likely to need urgent support with their mental health.



"...you made me feel so much better... you just helped save a life"

Feedback from Place2Be texter aged 13 or under

To talk about working together and signposting to Shout from your charity, please send an email to [info@giveusashout.org](mailto:info@giveusashout.org).

# Celebrating Shout Volunteers

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, giving up their time to respond to people going through their darkest moments and making an immeasurable difference to lives in crisis. It's a demanding but highly rewarding role which delivers a real sense of pride, satisfaction and purpose from taking conversations that help people get through difficult times and that save lives.

## Case study - Clare, Shout Volunteer

Clare became a Shout Volunteer in 2019 after seeing the service launch on the news. Like many of our volunteers, becoming a Shout Volunteer gave Clare a sense of purpose and she loves the flexibility that volunteering for a digital organisation offers. Not only has she made new friends through being part of the volunteer community, Clare says it has made her a better version of herself too.



*"I often volunteer in the early hours of the morning when many texters feel at their loneliest. Being a Shout Volunteer is a huge honour and privilege - so often texters share with us things they have never shared with anyone before."*

Shout Volunteers learn and develop a wide range of skills and experience that help them in both their professional and their personal lives. 85% of volunteers feel they have gained mental health knowledge and skills that they can use in their lives beyond Shout and 84% say their role gives them a sense of accomplishment.

## Case study - Avi, Shout Volunteer

Having used Shout and found it helpful, Avi went on to become a Shout Volunteer himself. The training gave him an appreciation for the importance of compassion, reflection and active listening - skills he now applies within his own relationships.



*"The most rewarding part of being a Shout Volunteer is knowing that I have helped somebody after each shift. It might not always be something that has a huge impact, it could just be helping someone feel less lonely when they are low, or helping a texter to find safer alternatives to self-harming."*

Shout has a warm and supportive community as well as a highly accessible and inclusive volunteering offer. Volunteers work flexibly from the comfort of their own homes, doing two to four hour shifts per week and choosing the times that best suit them. We have volunteers from every region in the UK and a team of volunteers on the other side of the world in New Zealand who help us maintain our 24/7 service.



## Case study - Ben, Shout Volunteer

Ben tragically lost his younger brother to suicide in 2018 and reached out to Shout while he was struggling with his thoughts and feelings at university. Ben has gone on to become a mental health campaigner and advocate, has worked with Shout on a number of awareness campaigns and also volunteers for Shout.



"I'd do anything to go back and change things, but I can't. What I can do is help someone else choose to stay, and in turn change another family's story. That's why I trained, that's why I volunteer, because I know what it's like to lose someone, and I know that I don't want anyone to ever feel like they're alone."

To find out more about our volunteering offer, [click here](#).

## Fabulous fundraisers

Over the last four years, hundreds of amazing supporters have raised significant amounts of money to help keep Shout running 24/7 for anyone who needs us. Here we celebrate just some of the individuals and businesses who have made such a difference.



**14-year-old Scout Leo** has raised an amazing £10,000 for Shout! In 2021 he challenged himself to sleep outside in his hammock through gales and snow for a whole year. In 2023 Leo, his mum and nan cycled 500 miles from his home in Kent to Edinburgh, battling tricky terrain, aching limbs and a snapped bike chain along the way.

"After finding the transition from primary school to secondary during Covid difficult, I wanted to fundraise for a mental health charity to support others who needed help too. I chose Shout because they communicate using text messages and thought people my age would find this easier."



**Shout Volunteer and Corporate Implementation Manager Nikki** felt that Shout was the perfect charity for Agilio Software to support through their annual charity activity. 21 walkers undertook the UK 3 Peaks Challenge, for Shout, raising an incredible £25,000!

"We chose to take on the UK 3 Peaks for Shout because we wanted to do something truly challenging and meaningful and provide an opportunity for our team to spend time together."



**Lu and Chris** took on the UK 3 Peaks for Shout after Shout supported Lu when she felt suicidal. Feeling she had exhausted all other avenues, she sent a text. A Shout Volunteer calmed Lu from her moment of crisis and helped her to get a plan in place to move forward. Lu and Chris shared the highs and lows of their fundraising challenge online and raised a brilliant £2,000.

"What better way to feel like you're on the way to conquering your own mental health than climbing the UK's three highest mountains?"



# Campaign highlights

## Our Frontline

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the mental health of frontline staff was pushed to its limits. Millions of key workers across the UK went to work on the frontline against Covid-19, while many others were putting their physical health at risk and their mental health under pressure to protect us all.

In response, we united with Samaritans, Mind, Hospice UK and The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales to launch Our Frontline, a campaign that provided mental health and bereavement support to all key workers via text and phone along with tailored online resources. Shout took more than 24,000 conversations with key workers at this time, with 89% saying the service was helpful to them.



## The Princess of Wales marks Shout's one million conversations milestone

As we hit a significant milestone of one million conversations with people in crisis, The Princess of Wales helped us thank some of our incredible Shout Volunteers, fundraisers, staff and trustees for their invaluable efforts in supporting people across the UK with their mental health.

Her Royal Highness spoke to three Shout Volunteers who shared their experiences of helping people who are anxious, stressed, depressed, suicidal or overwhelmed and who need immediate support, and how volunteering for Shout had positively impacted their lives.



## Harry Kane x Shout

We have been working with the Harry Kane Foundation since its launch in 2022 and are thrilled to have Harry to champion the Shout service. The England captain first supported us through in the 2022/23 football season, which saw the Shout logo feature on the front of Leyton Orient's shirts.

We kicked off World Mental Health Day 2023 by featuring Harry on billboards across the country in a campaign that raised awareness of Shout. As part of Mental Health Awareness week 2023, our #DoGoodFeelGood volunteering campaign shone the spotlight on the benefits of volunteering for your own wellbeing and saw Harry back on the billboards to encourage people to become a Shout Volunteer.



## For One Night Only

We launched a series of innovative fundraising events in 2022, led by our Patron Will Young with new initiative For One Night Only (FONO), offering a prize draw to the general public to win tickets by donating to Shout, to attend a unique experience.

The first events saw global music icon Ed Sheeran perform an intimate gig at London's Union Chapel and comedian Eddie Izzard invite people to a preview of her solo performance of Charles' Dickens Great Expectations at the Charles Dickens Museum, with proceeds going to support the Shout text service.

A huge thank you to the brand partners Marks & Spencer, ASOS and Chase UK for their generous support too.

## Let It Out

As part of our work to reach diverse audiences, we conducted award-winning research with agency The Outsiders to inform a campaign aimed at supporting young black men with their mental health. With the research findings we worked with community interest company Create Not Hate to co-create a campaign with young men and boys from the audience we were most trying to reach.

The campaign ran across digital platforms used by the target audience, as well as nationwide outdoor ads and media placements. Funded by our partner Harry's, the Let It Out campaign message was a simple one; you don't need to hide behind a smile.



"Thank you so much for reading through my issues and helping me think rationally. Please keep doing what you are doing because if there are others like me out there, they need someone like you to stop them from giving up."

Feedback from a young black male texter



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