

Newsletter

Redefining Masculinity on Site



Construction is one of UK's most male-dominated industries with over 85% of the workforce being male. For many, this comes with an unspoken rule: "Be tough. Keep quiet. Push through." It's a culture that tells men to hide struggles, bottle up emotions and never show vulnerability. But the cost is real: stress, isolation, burnout and tragically, suicide rates in construction are **three times higher** than the national average.

Meet Tom (name changed). He's been on sites for over a decade. Long hours, pressure to meet deadlines and the constant expectation to "man up" left him exhausted. Talking about stress wasn't an option. Drinking helped him cope until one day he realised it wasn't just affecting him, it was affecting his focus on site and his relationships at home.

Tom isn't alone. Across the industry:

- 94% of workers report feeling stressed
- 60% have experienced depression
- 27% have had suicidal thoughts

This isn't just numbers. These are lives.

A New Definition of Man Up!

It no longer means pretending everything's okay. Real strength comes from:

- Speaking up when you're struggling
- Asking for help without shame
- Supporting your mates openly
- Being honest about how you feel

This shift isn't just about mental health it improves safety, focus and teamwork. A site where men feel they can talk is a site where people look out for each other.

How to Start Changing Culture on Site

1. Check in daily: simple "How's it going?" conversations matter.
2. Peer support: buddy systems give workers someone they can confide in.
3. Lead by example: managers sharing struggles removes stigma.
4. Open discussions: include mental health moments in toolbox talks.
5. Replace judgment with curiosity: listen first, respond with care.

Small actions build trust. Trust builds resilience.

Resilience saves lives.

Question:

If "being a man" on site doesn't mean suffering in silence, what could change if every worker felt safe enough to speak honestly about how they're really doing?



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Masculinity with
Author George Bell

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