

# Mums march in bid to

## Bereaved mothers demand justice by calling

### NEW GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

A NEW Suicide Prevention Strategy launched by the Government on Monday will focus on ways bereaved families can be supported and suicide among at-risk groups can be prevented.

The strategy, launched by Care Services Minister Norman Lamb, will plough £1.5 million into research.

Six key prevention areas have been identified for formulating a strategy which Patti Boyle and Joanna Lane say do not go far enough. Included are:

- Working with the internet industry through members of the UK Council for

Child Internet Safety to help parents ensure children are not accessing harmful suicide-related websites

- Better support for high-risk groups – such as those with mental health problems and people who self-harm – making sure mental health aspects are managed more effectively

- Reducing opportunities for suicide, by making sure prisons and mental health facilities keep people safer – for example by redesigning buildings to stop people being able to hang themselves – and promoting safer-drug-prescribing

By David Churchill

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TWO mothers whose sons took their own lives are joining forces to pile pressure on the Government to ban websites selling 'death in a bag' suicide kits.

Patti Boyle, 54, of Purley, and Joanna Lane, 64, of Coulsdon, will march on Westminster on Wednesday armed with a petition to demand ministers shut down websites "earning money from the death of our children".

The mothers' demands come days after the Government announced a

new suicide-reducing strategy, ring-fencing £1.5 million to research possible preventable measures, but which stops short of exploring the advantages of an outright ban on suicide websites.

Mrs Boyle, whose son Kevin – a high-profile chef trained by Jamie Oliver who took his own life after ordering a suicide kit online aged 26 – said: "I want to see suicide websites banned. I want them stopped at point of entry to the UK.

"These websites are defended under the auspices of freedom of speech which unfortunately means these people take this to mean they can do what they want. But they can't.

"These people are earning money from the death of our children.

#### Justice

"I want the people selling these web kits brought to justice because in this country assisted suicide is against the law.

"It's about time the Government stands up and does the job we pay it to do and introduces a ban."

Mrs Boyle, who revealed the website Kevin used was traced to Honduras, Central America, is calling for a blanket internet service provider filter which effectively bans access anywhere in the UK.

The 54-year-old lecturer, of Old



Lodge Lane, is currently on an awareness-raising March For Life – a hike from Northern Ireland, where Kevin is buried, to Parliament – where she



# shut suicide websites

## on ministers to crack down on sites selling 'death in a bag' kits



**SETTING OFF:** Kevin's father and mother, Tom and Patti Boyle in Northern Ireland

**CAMPAIGNER:** Joanna Lane, right, holding a picture of her son Christopher who took his own life in 2008 CRDC20120912A

want to kill themselves will do anyway, but it makes it so quick and easy.

"People can feel suicidal on a Monday and be dead on the Tuesday without having any cooling off period or any time to reconsider what they are doing.

"I think changing legislation will save lives. It will certainly give families more time to step in and understand what is happening."

The Government's strategy review, announced on Monday, will consider increasing the "availability and take-up of effective parental controls to reduce access to harmful websites", but stops short of considering an outright ban.

Around 4,200 people commit suicide every year, with the rate highest amongst men aged 35 to 49.

will present the petition to ministers on Wednesday.

Mrs Lane, of Southwood Avenue, whose son Christopher took his own life in 2008 aged 31, after ordering a book on the internet, will also use the Government's announcement to push for stricter laws.

She said: "Christopher was able

to do it very easily. Me and Patti were both parents at Reedham Park School and we feel very strongly about this.

"Although Christopher didn't buy a 'death in a bag' kit, I feel sure he would have now, and I feel very strongly these sites should be banned.

"People argue that people who



## Ordered within minutes

FINDING and ordering a suicide kit online can be done within minutes, the Advertiser has learnt.

As the Government launches research for its suicide prevention strategy amid calls for tougher measures on web providers, we decided to find out how quickly and easily people considering suicide can order kits.

Within minutes we found a kit being sold for \$60 (£37).

We were told it would be dispatched "within hours" and arrive within "a day or two" - depending on what time of day it is ordered.

No doctor's note diagnosing terminal illness was required - only payment and delivery details.