

By **Tony Bonnici**

TWO more youngsters from the town dubbed Britain's suicide capital hanged themselves within hours of each other.

The deaths of cousins Nathaniel Pritchard and Kelly Stephenson bring the suicide toll involving the Welsh town of Bridgend to 16 in just over a year.

Schoolboy Nathaniel, 15, was still alive when he was found on Thursday but died yesterday when his life-support machine was turned off.

Kelly, 20, who lived a few doors away from him, was on holiday in Folkestone, Kent, when she heard the news. Shortly afterwards she was found hanged from a bathroom shower rail.

They are the latest in a string of apparently linked suicides of young people all aged between 15 and 27.

A spokeswoman for Kent Police said: "We can confirm that a 20-year-old woman was found dead at an address in Folkestone."

"Officers are making inquiries but there are not believed to be any suspicious circumstances. An inquest will be opened next week."

Police in Wales confirmed they are investigating Nathaniel's death after he was found hanging from an attic room at his home in Cefn Glas, Bridgend.

Poignantly

Both youngsters were members of the internet social networking sites Bebo and Facebook and Kelly was friendly with two of the other victims, Gareth Morgan, 27, and Liam Clarke, 20, who hanged themselves last year.

Police have previously investigated a link between the deaths and social networking websites but have since played down this line of inquiry.

Kelly, a keen footballer, had pictures of Nathaniel on her site using his nickname "Ginge".

On her Bebo site she says poignantly that her biggest fear is: "Losing the people I love".

And, in her own style, she adds: "I just love to live life to the full... always up 4 a laugh and don't like to takin things to serious!"

One of her friends on her Bebo site has photographs and tributes to three of the victims Liam Clarke, Natasha Randall, 17, and Zachary Barnes, 17.

A relative of the youngsters said: "We just don't understand what is going on in Bridgend."

"Kelly and Nathaniel were both brilliant kids with good futures ahead of them."

"We would never have thought in a million years that they were capable of anything like this."

"None of this makes sense and both families are devastated at what has happened."

A task force has been set up in the town to investigate the string of tragedies.

One of Kelly's friends, Rosie, who appears on Kelly's Bebo site, said: "It's going crazy down in Bridgend and it's not going to stop. I know

Two more hangings rock death-cult town



MYSTERY: Kelly, left, was found hanged after she was told of the death of her younger cousin Nathaniel, above

seven of the people who have killed themselves.

"People are saying it's got something to do with the internet but I don't believe that. But then I can't explain it either."

"I saw Kelly a month ago and she was fine - smiling and laughing."

A spokesman for South Wales Police yesterday said: "There is no evidence to suggest this incident is linked to any other incidents or sud-

den deaths in the area." Tributes were yesterday being posted to Nathaniel's Bebo site where he used the nickname Pritch.

One said: "What happened m8? Going to miss you. Cannot believe what has happened. There is no better place for you than down here. But I will no now that u r safer up there m8. Sleep tight."

The Bebo website has now given free advertising to the Samaritans.

The charity's public affairs manager Anthony Langan said: "Bebo are aware of the national and international interest that Bridgend is generating and that this was something they could do for us."

"We are hoping we can develop something so that we can start having a one-to-one forum to help people straight away." Darren Matthews, director of Samaritans in Bridgend, said: "As soon there was

one suicide it was like a door was open and others could follow."

"It became acceptable for them to do it and now we have to change attitudes and work with youngsters to let them know we are here to listen to them."

"We are going out to schools and youth clubs and talking to young people. And we are going to be putting up posters after we were donated some sites."



SENSITIVE: Ten-year-old Cameron

Suicide of boy who read of tragedies

A BOY aged 10 hanged himself after reading about the spate of teenage suicides in Bridgend.

Cameron McWilliams spent days finding out about the deaths before he took his own life.

The sensitive youngster had told his mother, Kelly McWilliams, that he wanted to become a girl and was interested in cross-dressing.

Cameron was found in his bedroom by his mother in the early hours of Monday with a belt around his neck.

Emergency services were called to the home in Doncaster, South Yorks, but it was too late. Hours

By **Paul Jeeves**

earlier Cameron had talked about the Bridgend suicides with his parents but they were not aware of the deaths there and did not take the conversation further.

An inquest into his death was opened and adjourned in Doncaster on Wednesday.

The hearing was told Cameron had been teased by other pupils after he was found wearing his half-sister's knickers.

His mother told the inquest she had bought him female underwear but refused to let him wear make-

up. She added: "Cameron wasn't a typical 10-year-old boy. He acted older than a 10-year-old."

"He didn't go out and play football or play with other youngsters."

But she said: "He was a very loving and very caring boy. We can't think of a reason why he should have wanted to do this."

Cameron wrote his mother notes if he wanted to talk about anything serious.

She said: "He was not himself but he made no mention whatsoever that he would harm himself - on that day he was happy as Larry."

When I got in the room he was not asleep, he was standing by the window with a dressing gown on."

"His head was down and I realised something really serious had happened and I screamed."

Coroner Stanley Hooper made a reference in court to Victoria Beckham's claim that husband David once wore her knickers.

He said: "If there is anything I can say to avoid similar fatalities in the future, I observe it is well-known that there is a very rich and successful footballer married to a pop singer who is known to have worn his wife's underwear."