

Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2023-2024



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Purpose of this Report

The Care Act 2014 says that we must publish a report every year to say what we have done to achieve our main goals and how our members have supported us to do this. This report sets out who we are and what we have achieved between April 2023 and March 2024. There is also an easy-to-read version of this report available on the SAB website.

About the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board

The Care Act 2014 makes a Safeguarding Adults Board a statutory requirement. The job of Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is to make sure that there are arrangements in Solihull that work well to help protect adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect. Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board must ensure that safeguarding practice continues to improve the quality of life of adults in Solihull.

The Board is led by an Independent Chair appointed by the Local Authority. There are three members who must be part of the Board by law, which are:

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
West Midlands Police
Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board.

Solihull SAB also has the following partners represented on its board representing our inclusive approach and long history of partners wanting to work together:

Age UK Solihull
Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust
Care Quality Commission
Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
Healthwatch Solihull
Private Care Sector
Probation Service
Solihull Action through Advocacy
Solihull Carers Trust
Solihull Community Housing
University Hospitals Birmingham
West Midlands Fire Service



Message from the Independent Chair

I am very pleased to present the Annual Report of the Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board for 2023/2024. This has been another very busy and successful year for the Board which has focussed on the achievement of the three ambitious objectives for the year as well as planning the strategic objectives for 2024/25, through discussions at Board, work undertaken in the Board's development sessions through the year and the work of the sub-committees. The work on priorities for 23/24 and the objectives for 24/25 are both described in detail in the report below.



The agencies represented at the Board have all again shown their demonstrable commitment to adult safeguarding throughout the year and despite the pressures and demands on all public sector organisations at the current time, the contributions of agency partners to the Board are very considerable and for which, as Independent Chair of the Board, I am very grateful. We know that the enduring effects of the Covid pandemic, the cost-of-living crises and the societal and individual pressures stemming from national and international tensions and unrest, are all contributing to pressures on the way our citizens in Solihull are living. Our collective commitment to adult safeguarding requires that we are continually sensitive to these pressures and always focus our efforts on what the people we aim to support through our work, tell us about how they experience safeguarding and review and refine our responses to safeguarding, as a result. This commitment to engagement and co-production has and will continue to underpin the Board's work in the coming year.

Dr Sue Ross
Independent Chair Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board

May 2024

The population is 216,240

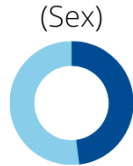
Projections suggest there are nearly

4,000

adults aged 18+, with a learning disability in Solihull



51%
Female



49%
Male



21%

of Solihull residents are 65 & over

Higher than West Midlands & England averages



95%

(Gender Identity)

* 4.8% of people did not answer the question

Same Sex at Birth

0.1% Different Sex at Birth (Unspecified)

0.06% Trans Woman

0.06% Trans Man

0.02% Non-Binary

0.02% Other



The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population increased by **72%** (+16,000) between 2011-21

It now accounts for **18%** of the Solihull population (38,600)

71%

of Solihull adults receiving long-term social care support are supported in the community

76%

of the working age population in Solihull are employed, in-line with the England average

SOLIHULL AT A GLANCE



Solihull has an area of **69** square miles and contains **17** electoral wards

34%



The ONS projects a 34% increase in the number of people in Solihull aged 85+, in the next 10 years

Projections suggest that

23,500 working age adults in Solihull have a common mental health problem



There is an estimated

7,100



physically disabled people living in Solihull



Solihull residents have the highest average wages in the West Midlands and **12%** above the UK average

Projections suggest more than **3,400** people in Solihull, aged 65+, are living with dementia



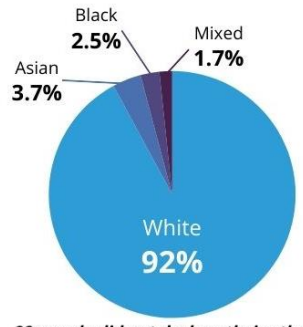
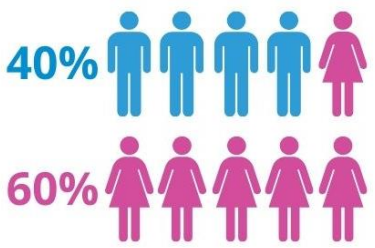
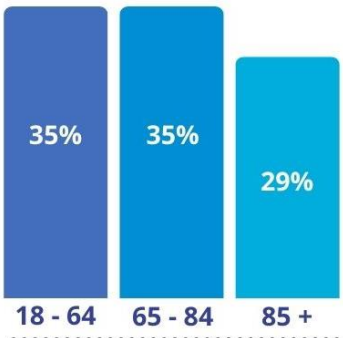
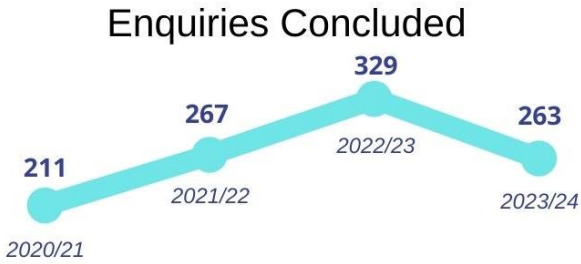
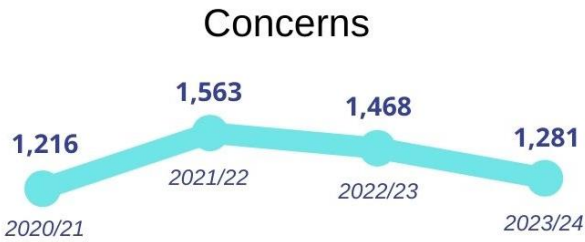
In 2021 there were nearly

20,000

unpaid carers aged 5+ in Solihull, representing **10%** of the population

*Data taken from [2021 Census](#)

The Picture of Safeguarding in Solihull



22 people did not declare their ethnicity

Top 3 Types of Abuse



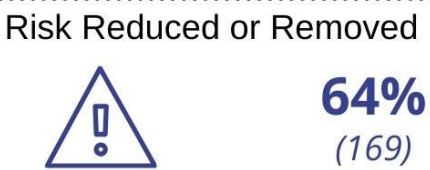
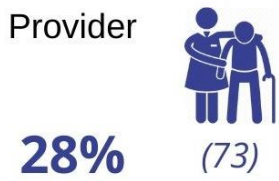
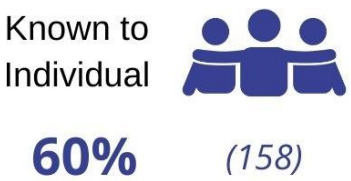
Neglect
25%
(113)



Financial
17%
(78)



Psychological
16%
(75)



* All data is regarding enquiries concluded in 2023/24 unless otherwise stated

What is the data telling us?

Safeguarding Concern numbers and Safeguarding Enquiry numbers have decreased when compared to the previous year 2022/23. There are several contributing factors to this, including the robust response provide at the Adult Duty meaning fewer cases require further work to be undertaken during a Safeguarding Enquiry. The Adult Duty Team are working to ensure the right balance is struck between providing an immediate response to safeguarding concerns and recognising when to hand over to community social work teams to begin longer term safety planning. There has also been an increase in the number of domestic abuse concerns received where the adult does not have care and support needs, meaning a safeguarding enquiry is not the appropriate response, these individuals will be signposted to appropriate community services such as Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid.

The 2021 Census data tells us that the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population is now 18% and has increased by 72% since the last census in 2011. This information supported us with our 2023/24 priority of understanding who Solihull's communities are and we identified that that the Asian population aged over 65years is underrepresented in safeguarding data. We have plans to undertake engagement work in 2024/25 to make sure communities receive information about how to keep themselves safe, and what to do if they need support.

Approximately one third of safeguarding enquiries involve concerns regarding a care provider, this will also include situations that occur within a care setting, for example where one resident causes another resident harm either intentionally or unintentionally. We receive updates from Commissioning colleagues in Health and Social Care at each Board meeting to understand the work they do to support providers, and to encourage continued reporting of concerns as part of an open and honest working relationship. Commissioning colleagues will also address quality and safeguarding concerns with care providers as necessary.

Data measuring whether people are supported and encouraged to have their say about what they want from a safeguarding enquiry and whether it has made a difference to how safe they feel is largely positive. Most people are asked the outcomes they would like to see, and where they are not asked, the board receives assurance that the reasons for this are appropriate, for example where a friend, family member or advocate has been approached because the person is unable to contribute. 67% of people asked if they feel safer after safeguarding responded that they do, this is a slight improvement on the previous year. Most of the rest of those asked report that they did not feel a difference, and the Board receives assurances regularly that the reasons given for this are appropriate for example, the person did not feel particularly unsafe to begin with.



The complexity of adult safeguarding

Safeguarding adults is complex because peoples' lives are often complicated, and everyone's situation is different. Also, there are lots of different ways in which people can be abused or neglected. That's why our responses need to be personalised and partnership working is essential. Safeguarding is everybody's business and everyone's responsibility, and organisations must work effectively with the person and with each other to achieve the best outcomes. There can be a wide variety of partners engaging with an individual, therefore effective communication and appropriate information sharing is important.

The SAB has a key role in ensuring safeguarding is happening effectively by:

- assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance
- ensuring safeguarding practice is not only guided by the Care Act (2014) but also wider statutory considerations including but not limited to the Mental Capacity Act (2005), Mental Health Act (1983), and Human Rights Act (1998)
- assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused
- working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- ensuring agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
- assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area
- seeking feedback and views from local people on safeguarding arrangements and acting on these

Board Priorities and how they have made a difference

For 2023-24 we had 3 priorities we wanted to focus on:

Priority 1: To improve our understanding of who Solihull's communities are and use this to improve the accessibility and quality of safeguarding information as well as service development.

What we said we would do:

- Review of the Performance Dashboard so that it captures protected characteristics and reflects how these fit with Solihull's known communities
- Develop links with community groups and ensure there is understanding of how to raise concerns in Solihull (this may include cross border links as some groups/ individuals may travel to other localities for support and resources)

- Explore whether cultural competency training would be beneficial to support understanding of different communities and their needs
- Identify whether any research or work from other areas has been undertaken to support understanding of how different safeguarding issues affect different groups
- As communities are always changing and evolving, determine whether there are opportunities to receive up-to-date information in-year, and to build in touch points to understand any new communities.
- Make use of existing links to receive feedback from communities e.g., care providers who will speak to adults with care and support needs, families and carers
- Link with Community Safety Partnership to share their hate crime data to develop understanding of safety risks to different communities

What we did:

- Amendments have been made to the Performance Dashboard so that key demographics of age, gender and ethnicity are clearly recorded. 15.6% of section 42 enquiries did not have an ethnicity recorded in the year 2022/23, which impacts on analysis. SMBC Adult Social Care have implemented improvements to data quality which will help with identifying themes and trends.
- The 2021 Census identified that 11% Solihull residents identified their ethnic group within the Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh category. Whilst this population is younger than the white population, the Asian population is underrepresented in safeguarding data for over 65 years. This led to an agreed action at the board's Development Session in October 23, to focus on engagement work with the Asian population in Solihull to ensure preventive messages, and information on how to seek help are available. We will take this work forwards in to 2024-25.
- Performance and Development Lead has made links with the Faith Forum to be able to share key messages with the group and feed back to the SAB from the forum. This ensures key messages are reaching faith groups via the forum and that the board is informed on the views of the faith forum and can respond as needed.
- Performance and Development Lead has contacted care quality teams in Birmingham and Coventry to ensure community groups have key information for raising safeguarding concerns for Solihull residents who attend community groups out of borough. This is to ensure that even where Solihull residents are seeking support outside of the borough, safeguarding concerns will still be raised appropriately as needed. Posters were developed with key information which have been shared with commissioning contacts.
- Following discussion of a safeguarding case at Engagement and Prevention Subcommittee, Solihull Action through Advocacy and Police reps agreed to work together to establish a "link" officer for Solihull Action through Advocacy's community groups, to encourage trust with those who attend so they feel more comfortable to share concerns with an officer they know. This should ensure that individuals are raising concerns with the officer in a timely manner and can receive an effective response, because they know and trust the officer.
- Cultural Competency awareness training was commissioned from Bexley SAB who had previously delivered the session locally in Bexley following a

Safeguarding Adult Review involving an individual with no recourse to public funds. The session was adapted to include local content for Solihull and was very popular with 34 attending on the day and was reviewed very positively by those who attended, with lots of discussion and ideas about what attendees could do within their organisations to apply the learning, and one attendee sharing that the SAR and learning will help them with someone they are working with currently.

- Performance and Development Lead reviewed crime data provided by Community Safety Partnership to understand Hate Crime levels in Solihull which has helped to support understanding of individuals' experiences of living in Solihull. There was an increase of 26% in reported hate crimes in the year ending Mar 22, 70% were racially motivated, but the biggest increase was for transgender hate crime. SSAB Performance and Development Lead has linked with CSP and has since raised awareness of Hate Crime through the Engagement and Prevention subcommittee for partners to encourage victims to report their concerns.
- Support for adults with learning disabilities to report hate crime was discussed at the new quarterly Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB), run by Adult Social Care Engagement Lead and chaired by a member of the community with learning disabilities. SSAB Performance and Development Lead has agreed with Adult Social Care Engagement Lead that where appropriate, opportunities will be taken to share safeguarding messages via this forum.

Impact for the people we support:

- Visibility of diverse groups in safeguarding dashboard data which reflect Solihull's communities
- The board has reached out to community groups rather than expecting individuals to come to them to express their views, so engagement is happening in a safe space with support from group facilitators
- The board's work focuses on the needs of the communities it serves
- Improved data quality relating to protected characteristics meaning the board understands how different safeguarding issues affect different groups and can identify whether the board is doing enough to address any unwarranted differences, and if needed, co-ordinate further improvement
- People in Solihull have access to safeguarding information which has been shaped by community feedback in order to be as useful as possible

Priority 2: To understand from Solihull's communities and those with lived experience of safeguarding, what they need from an effective safeguarding response and act on this.

What we said we would do:

- Link with partners, other local boards and organisations in neighbouring localities (who may be supporting Solihull individuals/groups) so that we hear the views of Solihull's communities on what they see as an effective safeguarding response, making changes to our practice and arrangements that take account of this feedback.
- The board will build on the current arrangements to seek feedback by trying some alternative methods too e.g., an online form on the website, seeking

support of partners to engage and obtain feedback, or members of the SSAB support team visiting key community groups to hear feedback directly.

- To increase the reach of the Board to local communities, Voluntary Sector organisations will support by sharing with the Board the views of the communities they support and will share key safeguarding messages from the Board with those groups, including messages focused on prevention.

What we did:

- Performance and Development Lead developed a set of questions to share with community groups, as well as sharing with Age UK Solihull, Solihull Action through Advocacy and Carers Trust to establish what people who attend the groups know about safeguarding and how they would seek help and support. Performance and Development Lead has also visited extra care accommodation and pensioner clubs to talk to people about safeguarding and their awareness, views etc. Responses received suggest that people would speak to a trusted person either in their family or in their community including their faith leader, as well as voluntary organisations if they were already involved. The Board has used this feedback to ensure awareness raising messages on how to seek help following abuse, as well as prevention messages, are being shared with the public via community groups, places of worship and GP practices.
- As part of the board's routine engagement with adults with lived experience, the Performance and Development has spoken with adults who consented to being contacted following the end of their safeguarding enquiry, where they had an opportunity to provide feedback on the support they received. Feedback has been very positive with those spoken to sharing that they felt listened to, understood what was happening, and were happy with the outcome.
- Single agency audit completed via Performance Quality and Audit Subcommittee to look at evidence of Making Safeguarding Personal. The results have been largely positive, providing assurance that there is evidence of Making Safeguarding Personal within multiagency safeguarding practice. Where there were single agency actions, the subcommittee is receiving updates on progress. Actions were primarily around evidencing voice of those using the service, having accessible information available, and improving training uptake.
- A Making Safeguarding Personal deep dive audit of cases involving dementia took place in November 2023. This has provided assurance that even where individuals struggle to provide their views and outcomes, making safeguarding personal is still evident in safeguarding practice. A further audit looking at cases involving adults with a learning disability will take place during 2024-25.
- An all-age exploitation case file audit completed jointly by SSAB and Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) between January and March 2024 looked at the effectiveness of safeguarding responses and also sought the views of individuals who have been supported. The feedback from those who had been supported and their families has provided assurance on the quality of exploitation safeguarding practice, and the improvements made since the last audit.

Impact for the people we support:

- There is evidence that when someone requires safeguarding support, this is person centred and tailored to their needs, including when they may struggle to make their views and wishes known due to a cognitive impairment.
- Safeguarding interventions are meeting the needs of diverse groups within the community and communities are informed and supported to avoid abusive situations, and to know how to report a concern.
- The board is hearing the voices of communities that it hasn't previously heard from and is further strengthening working relationships with community groups and care settings in Solihull, to continue to work with them.
- Anonymised feedback from those with lived experience has been shared with the board and with frontline practitioners to provide positive feedback and celebrate good practice which is important for a positive learning environment.

Priority 3: A robust response to financial abuse

What we said we would do:

- Use our data to understand the types of financial abuse happening in Solihull which will inform plans to reduce financial abuse locally
- Review and refresh our financial abuse guidance and ensure it is in line with current best practice, sharing this widely and publishing it on our website so it is available for all
- Key messages shared with the public on the prevention of financial abuse as well as how to seek help if financial abuse is suspected
- Use national, regional, and local reports to understand whether the cost-of-living crisis has impacted on the levels of financial abuse reported
- Audits of financial abuse cases to seek assurance on the quality of practice and to learn from good practice as well as where practice needs to improve

What we did:

- A review of SSAB Financial Abuse guidance has been completed and the refreshed guidance promoted widely ensuring professionals have up to date information on how to respond to financial abuse concerns. Some partners have included the key information from the guidance in their training packages for staff.
- Financial abuse information leaflet for the public, and an easy read version has been developed and shared with partners with a request to promote and share. SMBC Communications Officer also supported the promotion of these resource via Council Twitter and SMBC Adult Social Care Engagement Officer shared via their networks. This ensures the public receive key messages regarding financial abuse, spotting the signs and how to seek help.
- Performance and Development Lead attended the GPs Forum with attendance from hundreds of GPs across Solihull and Birmingham to share information about financial abuse and promote resources for both GPs and their patients.
- Three training sessions ran during 2023-24, one developed jointly with Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership, addressing financial abuse in the form of scams and loan sharks. Focus on these topics ensured that the

training opportunities were informed by and will respond to the common financial abuse issues identified in national research.

- A financial abuse case file audit in 2023-24 identified evidence of good practice in terms of effective partnership working and clearly defined safeguarding actions. An area for learning was ensuring professionals understand the history of a person's presenting situation, to help to inform understanding of the risks. A learning briefing identifying both good practice and areas for learning was developed to share key messages with front line staff.

Impact for the people we support:

- Improved public understanding of what financial abuse is and how they can protect themselves, as well as knowing how to seek help if they have been abused financially.
- Professionals working with adults with care and support needs understand financial abuse and provide an effective response when concerns are raised.
- Professionals have access to up-to-date information and training on financial abuse, which supports their response to people who need help and advice.
- Use of audits has created a culture of continuous improvement amongst partner organisations ensuring the public receives an effective safeguarding response.

Multi Agency Board Coordination

During 2023-24 the Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and ICB Place Committee have been working to improve cross-board arrangements and coordination. The intended outcome is that each board's work is effective and has impact and that capacity is organised to deliver our priorities.

We have continued our progress on key practical activities which improve the way we do business together including:

- Maintaining our 'plan on a page' which sets out the key multi-agency boards in Solihull, the purpose for each one, and the priorities for each one. This gives an 'at a glance' view of how it all fits together and we initiated plans to refresh this for 24-25.
- Consolidating our risk management approach, so that we have consistency of understanding and application of how we consider risks within and across our boards.
- Having a strong focus on impact by ensuring all our strategic plans can be directly connected to the impact and difference they will make for Solihull children, young people, and adults.
- Strengthening the focus each board must have on delivering against our Living Well in Solihull Prevention Strategy and Tackling health inequalities ambitions, to facilitate further improvements to wellbeing and outcomes, and to reduce inequalities.
- Making sure everyone has the key information needed to be a productive member of the board(s) they are involved in. We will maintain our Multi-Board Induction and Information Pack to achieve this.

Our face-to-face event in February 24 was an opportunity to share progress to date with members of Solihull multi agency boards and partnerships on developing coordination,

and to reach agreement on further action required to improve multi agency board and partnership coordination and impact. This work is overseen by 6 monthly meetings of the board chairs and support officers, with a further multi board event proposed for 2024-25.

Subcommittee Progress

Supporting the Board, we have five sub-committees which completed the following work so that people can live their lives free from abuse or neglect.

Policies & Procedures Subcommittee

This subcommittee has developed and launched the safeguarding adults risk screening tool which provides clear information for professionals as to when to make a safeguarding referral as well as how to assess risk. The subcommittee also refreshed the multi-agency risk management guidance, which sets out how partners should work together to safeguard and promote an individual’s wellbeing, when there are concerns about complex needs and unmanaged risk.

To support the financial abuse priority the subcommittee researched and developed a guide for professionals on financial abuse, this included input from police colleagues. The guide supports professionals in understanding what financial abuse is, how to spot the signs, the impact it can have on individuals and how to broach the subject of financial abuse with individuals who may be reluctant to talk about it or unaware they are being abused. Options for legal redress and strategies for protecting adults at risk of financial abuse are also covered. This guidance has been promoted widely across SSAB networks and will continue to be promoted routinely.

A financial abuse information leaflet for public, and an easy read version was also developed, after feedback from communities identified that often people will talk to family and friends about their concerns before consulting professionals. It was important communities had clear and up to date information regarding financial abuse, spotting the signs and how to seek help. These resources have been shared with partners with an expectation that they are promoted and shared. SMBC Communications Officer also supported the promotion of these resources via the Council’s Twitter and SMBC Adult Social Care Engagement Officer shared them via their networks.

Following recognition that recent Safeguarding Adult Review referrals had in common the theme of a lack of escalation of issues to achieve timely resolution, the subcommittee refreshed and promoted the dispute resolution and escalation procedure which provides clear guidance on how to resolve professional disagreements, always retaining a focus on the wellbeing of the adult.

The subcommittee’s work on best practice guidance has been informed by national research, input from local expertise, and effective tools already in place that have been shared at regional and national safeguarding board meetings and adopted locally.

Engagement & Prevention Subcommittee

The Performance and Development Lead revived links with community groups during 2022-23 and has built on this during 2023-24 by meeting with extra care resident groups and

pensioner clubs to share key safeguarding messages and to hear their views. This means community groups are aware of the Board and its work and the Board is receiving feedback from communities.

The group has developed and shared a set of key questions about safeguarding with community groups, to understand what people know about safeguarding and how they would seek support if they had concerns about abuse. This feedback has been valuable in understanding where to target awareness raising information about safeguarding and how to seek help.

Work is ongoing, with Safeguarding Adult Boards across the West Midlands and West Yorkshire to develop a safeguarding toolkit tailored for the faith communities. Once complete this will incorporate safeguarding legislation and practice, disclosure and referrals, safer recruitment and health and safety and will be tailored to faith communities. This should complete by July 2024.

Work is also ongoing with Solihull BID to start new Safe Space scheme aimed at anyone in the town centre who feels worried, vulnerable, or overwhelmed. This will involve designated BID wardens, Touchwood Security Officers, and the Police who will be trained to support the individual and take them to a Safe Place to calm and reassure them or ring a friend or family member to come and assist.

Performance, Quality & Audit Subcommittee

Amendments have been made to the Performance Dashboard so that key demographics of age, gender and ethnicity are clearly recorded and comparisons with the 2021 Census data have been made to determine any groups over or underrepresented, with actions agreed to target safeguarding awareness raising at underrepresented groups.

A deep dive audit of evidence of Making Safeguarding Personal in cases involving adults with dementia took place in November 2023. This has provided assurance that even where individuals struggle to provide their views and outcomes, making safeguarding personal is still evident in safeguarding practice. A further audit looking at cases involving adults with a learning disability will take place before the end of March 2023.

Analysis of Solihull's safeguarding concerns data for financial abuse over the past 12 months identified that 66% concerns are for those aged 65+, and 63% concerns listed family, partner, or neighbour/friend as the source of risk, and the person's own home as the location of abuse. Information related to spotting the signs of abuse and where to get help and support was included in the information leaflet for the public developed by the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee.

The subcommittee undertook a financial abuse case file audit in November 23 to identify evidence of good practice, effective partnership working, as well as areas for improvement. Key findings were that these were complex cases, with most common types of abuse being from a friend or a scam. Safeguarding actions were clearly recorded. Improvement actions will be overseen by the subcommittee and a learning briefing was developed and shared across partner organisations to ensure frontline practitioners were aware of the learning from both good practice and improvement areas.

A multi board audit and assurance schedule was developed and used to support coordination of audit and assurance work across the boards, utilising opportunities for joint work and

reducing the impact on partners. Activities included a joint domestic abuse self-assessment in April 2023, a joint all-age exploitation case file audit in February 2024 and a joint Section 11 and Care Act Compliance Audit across SSAB and SSCP.

Learning & Improvement Subcommittee

The group set the training offer for the year ensuring it reflected the board priority of financial abuse, as well as areas identified for improvement in practice including self-neglect and mental capacity, outcome based safeguarding and positive risk taking and professional curiosity. Financial abuse sessions were delivered during safeguarding adults' week in November 2023 and included input from trading standards, and a joint session was also delivered across children and adult partner organisations.

Practical tools and good practice information guides have been shared via this subcommittee including the Economic Abuse tool and the Money Lenders research guide to support front line practitioners in their practice.

Partners shared best practice from their organisations in embedding mental capacity assessment knowledge and skills. They have responded to this improvement area in a number of ways including developing a variety of training approaches and introducing mandatory mental capacity competencies for staff.

Following a questionnaire for the multi-agency partnership to determine training needs around cultural competence, a training session was commissioned from colleagues at Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board who had previously delivered the session locally following a SAR involving an individual with no recourse to public funds. This session was very well attended and was reviewed very positively, with attendees welcoming the opportunity for discussion and reflection and identifying how they can apply the learning in practice.

Safeguarding Adult Review Subcommittee

The SAR subcommittee has received 2 SAR referrals this year, neither case met the criteria for a SAR, but learning identified from discussions of the cases was used to make improvements in exploitation reduction processes and will guide some of the work during 2024-25 on ensuring a robust response to self-neglect.

The subcommittee developed a learning briefing from a SAR referral received towards the end of 2022-23 which did not meet the criteria for review but highlighted both good practice and areas for improvement, this was shared with frontline practitioners across the partnership to support learning and development.

The subcommittee looked at Safeguarding Adult Reviews from the West Midlands region and those shared nationally to identify learning for Solihull, examples include the learning from a fire death in Sandwell which was shared via a video resource across the partnership, a thematic analysis of sexual exploitation SARs which identified areas for focus that Solihull is actively working on already, and a thematic review of SARs involving mental capacity issues, which set out a checklist of best practice in undertaking mental capacity assessments. The checklist was used to determine whether any additions were needed to local mental capacity training.

The subcommittee also received two completed Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (one from Solihull and one from Birmingham) which highlighted the importance of trauma informed practice as part of a safeguarding approach. The subcommittee will work with colleagues in SSCP during 2024-25 to introduce trauma informed practice across the partnership and support it being embedded in practice.

Partner Contributions

Safeguarding Adults Board members have worked hard to implement the SSAB 2023-24 Strategy, here are just a few highlights of our partners' contributions:

Statutory Partners:

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council have continued to participate fully in the SSAB. As the lead partner for safeguarding adults, we have structures and processes in place to ensure that adults at risk are safeguarded effectively. This includes a dedicated Safeguarding Team Manager who is closely linked into SSAB activity. Solihull's Adult Social Care Directorate is committed to Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP), supporting and empowering adults to make choices and have control. This means a commitment to promoting equality and recognising and embracing diversity, ensuring everyone is treated fairly with access to information, advice, and support in an accessible format.

Key safeguarding activities undertaken to support SSAB priorities during 2023/24 included:

- Refresh of the Adult Social Care 5 Year Plan, that outlines our plans to enhance our safeguarding offer over the next 5 years.
- Production of the Adult Social Care Self-Assessment in preparation for inspection of how local authorities meet their Care Act duties, including a section on safeguarding that was coproduced with members of the SSAB.
- Continuing to closely monitor safeguarding performance through a weekly report to the Adult Social Care Transformation Board, and by providing performance information and commentary for the quarterly SSAB dashboard.
- Chairing three of the SSAB subcommittees.
- Worked closely with the SSAB Business Team to offer a programme of training during national Safeguarding Week, which was open to partners including SSAB members and providers. The training sessions were very well attended, and feedback was excellent.
- Safeguarding forms and practice guidance were refreshed to take into account feedback from people who have experienced being part of a safeguarding enquiry, and from SSAB members. These now focus more on Making Safeguarding Personal and adopting a strengths-based approach.
- We refreshed our safeguarding threshold guidance to support partners and providers to determine when to refer a safeguarding concern. This work included additional support to care providers relating to falls prevention and explored links between falls and safeguarding. We also ensured that guidance for partners includes considerations around domestic abuse.

- Continued development of our exploitation reduction offer, including leading a refresh of the All-Age Exploitation Reduction Strategy and the Exploitation Reduction Delivery Group.
- We have also continued with routine practices to monitor quality of practice, including planned and ad hoc case audits. These identified consistently high standards of practice throughout the year. We also amended the safeguarding case file audit tool to include collation of the person's own views on their experience of safeguarding processes and produced a one-page overview of governance and reporting channels.
- We have refreshed our programme of training for Adult Social Care staff, to ensure that the offer is evidence-based and responsive- this has included the provision of specialist domestic abuse training.
- Adult Social Care commissioners have continued to work closely with care providers to promote high standards of care. Solihull has a high level of regulated services rated Good by CQC, but this does not allow for complacency. Two care homes for older people closed during 2023 following repeated concerns about the welfare of residents, including safeguarding enquiries. Providers are encouraged to report safeguarding incidents and the learning is then applied more widely through commissioners' quality improvement activity to achieve better standards for all. Commissioners aim to work in a way that is supportive of providers' efforts to deliver consistently high standards of care, drawing on the expertise offered through NHS partners to help provide safe care for people with the most complex needs.

Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board have continued to participate fully in the SSAB and its sub groups too. The Director of Nursing for Safeguarding also chairs the Performance, Quality & Audit group.

Key Safeguarding activities, achievements to improve adult safeguarding include:

- Reviewed the L3 training package and developed one for the Pharmacy, Ophthalmology and Dentistry (POD) services that came under the ICB in April 2023.
- We have remained committed to improving staff knowledge and understanding of Domestic Abuse and the dedicated Interpersonal Violence Team are regular members of both Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) panels.
- The Director of Nursing for Safeguarding presented learning from SAR's to students at the Birmingham University, this was an opportunity to raise awareness of the local, regional and national cases and the key recommendations
- We continue to share the learning and development resources via our GP Safeguarding Network (GPSN) meetings, other forums and our newsletters. We have also maintained our advice and support duty line which offers support to our Primary Care Staff and other Health colleagues and through this we do promote principles of MSP and other guides such as financial abuse.
- We also have a robust audit schedule in place with focus on the adult with care and support needs – Reviewing staff knowledge & understanding of adult safeguarding, financial abuse, MSP and Mental Capacity Act particularly the principles and how applied in practice.
- We continued to work collaboratively with our partners to continuously improve the safeguarding systems for adults to help achieve the best possible outcomes as quickly as possible.

- The Designate nurse for safeguarding chairs the MCA/LPS/DOLS system wide implementation group

West Midlands Police officers attend calls for service where people are in need and ensure that they are appropriately safeguarded by attending officers. A dedicated officer ensures daily that appropriate referrals are sent to the right agency for onward support and advice and officers are regularly seeking new pathways to help support this area of business to ensure that the right support is put in place.

Structures around vulnerability and safeguarding are as such that incidents /events are reviewed daily, and any identified risk is dealt with promptly. Where long term intervention is required, meeting structures allow the progression of safeguarding with an escalation process, including the wider partnership in the Borough, where information is shared to assist with difficult cases.

On 3rd April 2023 West Midlands Police (WMP) moved to a new operating model with the creation of 7 Local Policing Areas (LPAs) to deliver an effective and efficient service to the public which enshrines the principle of local neighbourhood policing. The Solihull LPA is led by a Chief Superintendent (Richard Harris) with authority and control of resources to meet local needs more effectively. This means that investigations, response, offender management and neighbourhood policing come together under one local command enabling WMP to meet the needs of the public better through improved engagement, enhanced understanding of local priorities and flexing our resources accordingly.

In addition to the new operating model, the Solihull LPA is supported by a Force Public Protection Unit (PPU) which strives for investigative excellence, ensuring justice for our vulnerable community members. The PPU consists of local Adult Investigation Teams, Rape & Serious Sexual Offences Investigation Teams, Child Abuse Investigation Teams, Safeguarding Teams, and Sex Offender Managers.

Wider Partners:

Age UK Solihull is committed to the idea of it being better to take action before harm occurs and therefore actively promotes mandatory safeguarding training for all of its 55+ employees and 300+ volunteers. We know that our staff and volunteers are the eyes and ears of the Charity in the community and are well placed to recognise when individuals may be at risk of harm. As a trusted brand, we are in a good position to engage with people in conversations about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in order to improve their quality of life, their well-being and their safety.

We are regular attendees at the Solihull Adult Safeguarding Board and recognise the role that we have in being both active participants and critical friends. We believe that safeguarding works well in Solihull because partners work together so well and involve our local communities in raising awareness and finding solutions.

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust The safeguarding team at BSMHFT have undergone review and reorganisation with the appointment of a new Head of Safeguarding. There is now a dedicated safeguarding adults workstream within the safeguarding team. This includes a lead nurse, two safeguarding facilitators and a named doctor for safeguarding adults.

- We have increased our visibility from a safeguarding adult's perspective within clinical areas and deliver safeguarding supervision and standalone teaching to more teams than previously. As part of this, we are focusing on a 'back to basics' approach.
- We have recognised that getting out to teams, working with them to develop their skills in relation to the practical application of safeguarding adults is a priority for the safeguarding team at the Trust.
- The Safeguarding team re-launched "Think Family" as an approach in November 2023 to support practitioners' practical approach to good safeguarding practice when working with our service users. Encouraging staff to "Think Family" and consider the needs of not only the service user but the wider family, both adults and children. The Think Family approach means working to ensure better outcomes for adults, children, and families by co-ordinating the support and delivery of services available. It should encourage professional curiosity and more joined up working as Think Family aims to promote the importance of a whole family approach.
- The Safeguarding team have developed a quality assurance framework (QAF) and part of this is the development of safeguarding quality assurance visits to wards across the Trust to ensure sound safeguarding adults practice is embedded within clinical practice.
- The Safeguarding team have strengthened the communications with the Trust comm's team and regular safeguarding content is now regularly shared Trust wide. This includes a suite of 7-minute briefings which have been developed in response to statutory reviews, incidents and requests from teams and includes topics such as self-neglect and exploitation.
- The Trust safeguarding team continue to be responsive to concerns about vulnerable adults and adults with care and support needs and offer advice, support and specialist safeguarding supervision on complex cases providing oversight and escalation as required.

Carers Trust Solihull Over the past year, Carers Trust Solihull have diligently addressed ten safeguarding cases involving adult carers (over 25 years), demonstrating our unwavering commitment to their well-being and safety.

- 6 cases showed an increase in complexity relating to mental health or complicated family situations
- 3 cases of financial concerns and
- One case refers to observations during an activity.

We have observed a growing trend among self-funding carers who are hesitant to utilise their savings for care, equipment, and basic necessities like food. We understand the financial uncertainty they face and are committed to finding solutions. We have worked with SMBC to target hardship funds to alleviate pressures in Carer households.

We work closely with multi agency services and escalate concerns to the local authority as and when we have cause for concern. Often the individual and occasionally the situation is already known to the local authority and other organisations, and we are already working cooperatively.

Often, services work well together once arrangements are in place. It is important to push for access to services to avoid drift and delay. We have used our input into the safeguarding processes and attendance at the Safeguarding Adults Board to highlight the needs and challenges of carers of all ages, and we particularly value the joint board session, information, policy updates and training opportunities arising in the Safeguarding Board.

Our organisation's primary focus is to support the carer, not the cared-for person. But we recognise that this often occurs within a family context. We have redoubled our efforts to ensure our staff's safeguarding approach is complimentary: that an adult carer support worker can pick up on young carer safeguarding concerns if they emerge in the same household and refer to the appropriate colleague and vice versa.

We proactively seek to limit all carers from providing inappropriate levels of care. Adult carers with capacity can make their own informed decisions, in the case of young carers at risk of providing inappropriate care, we take immediate steps to prevent the risk of emotional and physical harm. This well-being and protection approach is at the heart of our initial assessments and statutory assessment processes. During the year, online training refreshes for existing and new staff were completed and going forward our DMS will increasingly deliver safeguarding internally in a timelier manner.

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) continue to be an active partner in Solihull Adults Board. Our services are Brooklands Hospital, providing inpatient care for those with learning disability and Autism who have Mental health illness, this includes some provision for young people and 4 forensic wards for those referred through a criminal justice process. We also offer Learning disability and Autism Community services for Solihull and Primary Care mental health support through Talking Therapies for the Solihull community.

This has been a busy year for CWPT, with the developments below:-

- Working in partnership with the board, with attendance and engagement in subgroups and development days,
- A new secure 7 bed unit has been built at Brooklands Hospital and is operational. It is an environment designed for young men with autism and is intended to meet a gap in provision nationally.
- Responding to reviews across the region and imbedding lessons learned from reviews in our everyday practice.
- Monthly meetings with the Local Authority safeguarding team to review and respond to any safeguarding issues.
- Review of all safeguarding policies
- Developing and delivering level 3 safeguarding training
- Refresher training for all the safeguarding staff team in safeguarding supervision in order to enhance our offer to staff.
- Our active Champions group spread the safeguarding message throughout our services.

Healthwatch Solihull is proud to be a member of the Board and subcommittees. Our role of listening to the public's experiences of health and social care give us a unique perspective for the Board. Our ability to hear quality and safety issues for adults with care and support needs across local services is an important role. Throughout the year we have raised the voice of local Solihull people, influencing improvement in health and social care making sure those in need get the help and support they need. We look forward to working with the Board in the year ahead in its priority to hear the experiences of individuals and support the Board in using this insight to drive improvement for Solihull residents.

The Probation Service have statutory responsibility for overseeing and undertaking sentences for circa 350 Solihull residents who have been sentenced to Community

orders, Suspended Sentence Orders, or custodial sentences. The aim of the Probation Service is to protect the public, reduce reoffending and support desistance. Our focus is on strengthening the probation practitioner's relationship with people on probation, using the right key skills, activities, and behaviours to achieve the most effective outcomes and enable offenders to make positive changes to their lives. Some of the people on our caseload may present a risk of serious harm to vulnerable adults and adults at risk. Our practitioners have specialist training to identify and manage the risk within the probation service policies and legislative framework during supervision. Some of the people on our caseload are vulnerable adults themselves and a very small percentage meet the criteria of being an adult at risk. Our practitioners undergo regular mandatory training to recognise the signs and understand where to access support or help. The probation service is dedicated in working jointly with the local authority and partners to ensure services can be accessed, the appropriate referrals are undertaken, and information is shared.

Solihull Action Through Advocacy (SAAtA) supports some of the most vulnerable people in our society, including those with learning disabilities and autism. SAAtA is passionate about safeguarding the people we work with in a way that encourages their voice, feelings and wishes to be heard through the safeguarding journey.

SAAtA recognises the importance of positive partnership working which is demonstrated at the SSAB amongst the statutory and independent community sector. It enables an open and collaborative approach that provides the opportunity for the sharing of learning and good practice. This helps to improve the quality of life of Solihull adults and includes those supported by SAAtA.

SAAtA has recently taken over the Chair of the Engagement and Prevention Sub Committee. This Sub Committee also encourages the sharing of information and good practice amongst partners including the voluntary sector. This facilitates being kept informed on key issues and having a consistency in approach and coordination amongst partners in Solihull.

Solihull Community Housing Safeguarding delivery in SCH is overseen by SEDA Group (Safeguarding, Exploitation and Domestic Abuse) who have safeguarding oversight and assurance responsibilities. They provide regular reporting to the Executive Leadership Team and the SCH Board on the work of the group.

During 2023/24, SCH recruited a new Community Safety Manager who has strategic responsibility for SCH safeguarding and anti-social behaviour.

SCH have also completed a review of its intranet safeguarding pages; this has been simplified to ensure all staff are able to easily make a safeguarding referral for both Adults and Children.

SCH are registered members of DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) hoping to achieve accreditation by March 2025.

Key messages and learning identified through the Solihull Children and Adults partnerships serious case reviews and audits are disseminated to improve multi agency practice.

SCH delivered joint exploitation training to five new police response teams in collaboration with Adult Social Care.

University Hospitals Birmingham remains committed to the delivery of a robust and responsive safeguarding service across all inpatient and outpatient areas of the Trust.

The Director of and Lead Nurses within Safeguarding and Vulnerabilities continue to be proactive members of several of the SSAB's subcommittees and contribute to the discussions within the meetings.

Key activities undertaken during 2023-2024:

- Ensured key messages and learning identified by the Solihull Children and Adults partnerships from serious case reviews and audits to improve multi agency practice have been disseminated throughout the Trust.
- Training needs analysis (TNA) has been reviewed and updated, along with our education and training packages with a focus on think family.
- The safeguarding team have provided an in-reach model of safeguarding, to support all clinical areas and all staff groups.
- Daily support to Emergency departments across all our hospital sites to provide education, training, supervision, and operational support.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures have been updated.

West Midlands Fire Service In relation to Adult Safeguarding, the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal have been introduced, explored, and discussed within our level 1 safeguarding training – a mandatory course for all WMFS staff. This training is 2 yearly.

A recent WMFS audit of Complex Needs officer cases highlighted a need for Mental Capacity awareness to be increased across specialist roles. Following a review of the Prevention department at WMFS, 'Specialist Roles' within this department will receive this training as part of their development.

WMFS respond to all national and regional reforms, development, and policy in relation to safeguarding. This is assured through regional and national safeguarding meetings (NFCC) where support is sought and given on a range of safeguarding related themes. This is then assured through the WMFS Safeguarding Oversight and Assurance Group that meet monthly.

WMFS have employed a permanent safeguarding manager that attends regional Safeguarding meetings where critical emerging adult safeguarding issues and practises are discussed. This coupled with the national safeguarding (NFCC) meetings ensure any emerging issues and practises are better understood and then shared with WMFS through the WMFS Safeguarding Oversight and Assurance Group that meet monthly.

Our Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews

What are Safeguarding Adult Reviews?

The Care Act 2014 introduced statutory Safeguarding Adults Reviews. A Safeguarding Adult Review takes place when agencies who worked with an adult who suffered abuse or neglect, come together to find out how they could have done things differently to prevent harm or a death. A SAR does not seek to blame anyone; it tries to find out what can be changed so that harm is less likely to happen in the future.

The law says SSAB must arrange a SAR when:

- There is reasonable cause for concern about how SSAB, its partners or others worked together to safeguard the adult; AND
- The adult died and SSAB suspects the death resulted from abuse or neglect, OR
- The adult is alive and SSAB suspects the adult has experienced significant abuse or neglect.

SARs are overseen by the SSAB, but as of March 2022, the Safeguarding Adult Review Subcommittee considers SAR referrals and would oversee progress on live reviews. The Subcommittee provides regular updates to the Board and Independent Chair, who retains overall responsibility for decision making around SAR criteria being met for a review, and the sign off of Safeguarding Adult Review reports and recommendations.

During 2023-24

SSAB have received 2 referrals for a Safeguarding Adults Review which were reviewed by a panel of representatives from organisations who are members of the Board and did not meet the criteria for a review. Both cases were considered in detail and through panel and subcommittee discussion we agreed areas of learning that we could take from each of the cases. We have used the panel's findings to improve local policy and procedure in relation to exploitation reduction, and to inform our 2024-25 objective responding to self-neglect.

We have not completed any SARs during 2023-24 but via the Safeguarding Adult Review Subcommittee of the board, we continue to horizon scan and examine Safeguarding Adult Reviews completed regionally within the West Midlands and nationally to identify learning we can apply to our practice in Solihull. For example, the subcommittee considered 2 SARs from other areas of the country which received national attention, Eileen who was a white British older woman who was killed by a younger resident at the care home they both lived in, and Joshua who was a Black-Caribbean man who died following police restraint during a period of poor mental health. Learning and resources from the cases have been shared with practitioners as well as commissioning colleagues both in SMBC and ICB. As part of new provider checks with any prospective providers, SMBC commissioning will consider a provider's ability to meet the differing needs of younger people with dementia and older people with dementia who may be living together, following the learning from the Eileen SAR.

What is feedback from adults with lived experience of safeguarding telling us about our progress?

The data from SMBC Adult Social Care tells us that for the most part (86% of the time), individuals are being asked what outcomes they would like to achieve as part of the safeguarding intervention. This is a slight increase from 2022/23 and indicates that practice in this area is well embedded. Where individuals have not been asked, the Board has been assured that this is because the person was not well enough, had passed away during the enquiry or did not identify any specific outcomes. Where the individual is asked, their outcomes are met or partly met 88% of the time. Again, this is a slight increase on 2022/23 figures and the Board has been assured that where outcomes are not met, this is usually because they fell outside the remit of the safeguarding intervention. In 67% of cases, individuals felt safer following safeguarding intervention, this is also a slight increase to 2022/23. Where individuals felt there was no difference in terms of how safe they felt, this was usually because they did not feel unsafe to begin with. This data provides evidence of the level of involvement individuals have in their safeguarding enquiries and demonstrates how making safeguarding personal is working in practice.

As part of the board's performance dashboard, the Performance and Development Lead for the board's business team contacts individuals who have been supported with a safeguarding issue, to talk about how they found the support and any feedback they would like to provide. This year 12 individuals have been contacted and their feedback has been very positive, with all individuals feeling they were fully involved and understood what was happening, that they were always or almost always listened to and that they were happy or quite happy with the result. As part of our focus during 2023/24 we wanted to increase the number of individuals we received feedback from, and we are pleased to have spoken to 4 more individuals this year than in 2022/23 and that the feedback is very positive. We aim to continue to increase the number of people we speak to in 2024/25 being mindful that this is an individual decision and there will be very valid reasons for people choosing not to talk to talk about their personal experience.

Healthwatch receive a lot of feedback from their community and speaks to residents, families, and staff when they visit residential and nursing homes and supported living houses. Healthwatch have seen and heard about lots of positive examples of people receiving care and support in a way that suits them. Where Healthwatch hears about practice that doesn't meet the standards expected, they will raise this with the appropriate organisation or Board member to address.

Our social media and website

X (formerly Twitter) - [@SolihullSAB](#)

We use Twitter to keep our 1,091 followers up to date with what SSAB are doing, to share safeguarding messages and to promote best practice guidance and support organisations who are safeguarding adults. We support several awareness days across the year by promoting key messages around awareness raising and seeking support.

We also link up with the partner organisations' communications plans for the sharing of key messages, for example the Violence Reduction Partnership, and local and national voluntary organisations as we recognise that the reach and therefore impact is much

greater from these accounts. We also join up with Solihull Council's twitter account for some elements of communication and promotion which has a large following of almost 24,000 followers. This year Solihull Council's Communications Team supported us in promoting our Hidden Harms video, designed to help recognise the signs of domestic abuse against older people, and to start a conversation with older adults to help keep them safe.

Some topics we tweeted about in 2023-24 included:

- Exploitation and key resources to support exploitation reduction
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- National Safeguarding Week
- Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Carers Week
- 16 days of activism against domestic violence
- Suicide prevention
- LGBT+ History Month

Website - safeguardingsolihull.org.uk/ssab

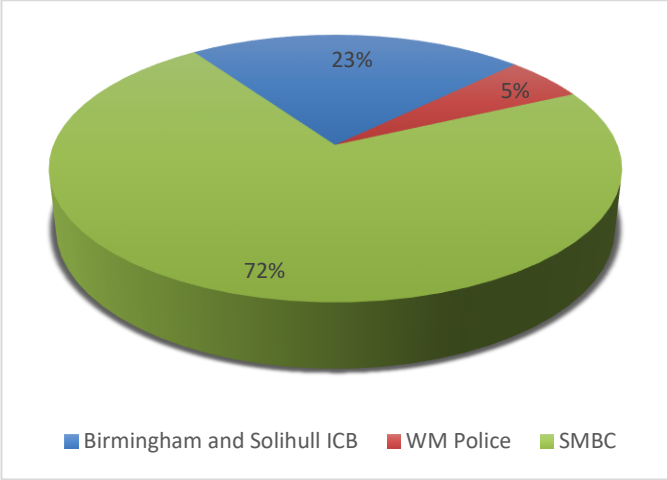
Our joint website with Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership is where we hold information about the board, our training offer for the multiagency partnership, and resources for professionals to support their practice. It also includes joint learning resources developed with Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, and joint communications to support exploitation reduction, which were developed with Solihull Safeguarding Children Partnership and SMBC Adult Social Care's Exploitation Reduction Lead. We keep the website under regular review to ensure it continues to be easy to navigate and that it contains up to date information and resources.



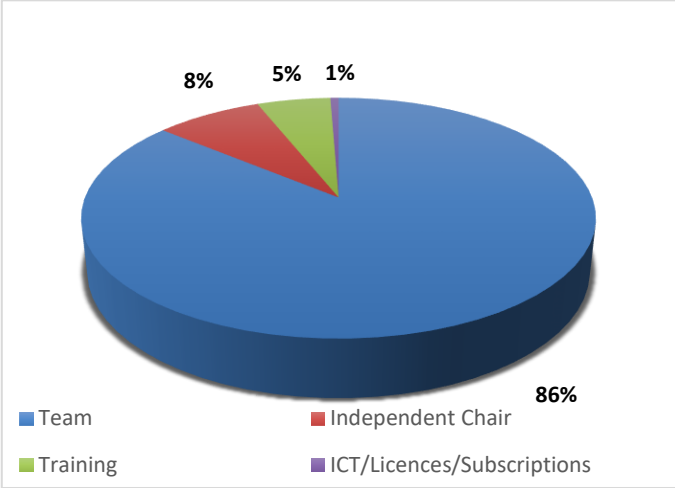
Financial Summary 2023-24

In 2023-24 we had a gross budget of £265,920. This budget comprises contributions from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Adult Social Care, West Midlands Police, and Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board.

In addition to the financial funding, Board partners also support the board by chairing sub committees and have delivered exploitation reduction training to the partnership.



The budget covers the costs associated with the running of the Board, including its Independent Chair and Business Team. It also covers a discreet training offer and supports the Boards Engagement approach and publicity. It also includes ICT related costs including licences and subscriptions. This year we have not had any SARs requiring funding.



Expenditure in 2023-24 totalled £257,358 which gave an underspend against budget of £8,522.

What's next for 2024-25?

Towards the end of 2023-24 the Board came together to agree the priorities for 2024-25. The priorities for Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board will be:

Priority 1: To understand from Solihull's communities and those with lived experience of safeguarding, what they need from an effective safeguarding response and act on this.

Priority 2: Improve effectiveness of interventions and reduce the impact of neglect on adults in Solihull.

Priority 3: A constructive and compassionate response to self-neglect.

The strategic plan 2024-25 will set out further detail on how the Board intends to deliver on these priorities.





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