



West of Berkshire  
**Safeguarding Adults Board**

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Reading, West Berkshire & Wokingham

**Annual Report 2022-23**

If you would like this document in a different format, contact [Lynne.Mason@Reading.gov.uk](mailto:Lynne.Mason@Reading.gov.uk)

## Concerned about an adult?



If you are concerned about yourself or another adult who may be being abused or neglected, in an emergency call the Police on 999.

If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency, call the Police on 101 or contact Adult Social Care in the area in which the person lives:

- **Reading** - call 0118 9373747 or email at [CSAAdvice.Signposting@reading.gov.uk](mailto:CSAAdvice.Signposting@reading.gov.uk) or complete an online [form](#)
- **West Berkshire** - call 01635 519056 or email [safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk) or complete an online [form](#)
- **Wokingham** -call 0118 974 6371 or email [Adultsafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:Adultsafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk) or complete an online [form](#)

For help out of normal working hours contact the **Emergency Duty Team** on 01344 351 999 or email [edt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:edt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

For more information visit the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board website:  
<http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>

## Message from the Independent Chair



This is my second year as Chair of the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (2022/2023) and once again it has been my privilege to see the dedication and hard work of staff from across the health and social care sectors. These staff, including those from the formal, informal and voluntary sectors, are all committed to providing the very best health and social care possible.

Last year I commented on how staff were coping as we came out of the Covid pandemic and they were having to deal with a backlog of health and social care needs as a consequence of the pandemic. This past year has unfortunately been no easier and one of the great challenges facing the sector currently is recruitment and retention. Many parts of the health and social care sector continue to have very high and unsustainable vacancy rates which puts additional pressure on those staff within the system. This problem is outside of the Board's remit, but society as a whole does need to stand back and review how it values and appreciates staff working in this sector, particularly in the residential and domiciliary care sector for older people. They do amazing work under huge pressure, often on minimum wage or certainly low levels of pay. Society needs to review how we value these workers urgently if we are to have safe staffing levels, with experience and knowledge. Working in the care sector, though immensely rewarding, is hard work and requires great skill and ability.

However, despite all the pressures on the sector I am delighted to report that this Board has continued to function well during this past year to ensure that adults receive safe and appropriate health and social services in its area. The Board has undertaken and published a number of Safeguarding Adult Reviews in this year and also undertaken work to look at a Rapid Review process for SARs. This review has led to a tightening up of timelines to ensure that the process is completed as quickly as possible and we will be reviewing further the possibility of a more formal rapid review process in the coming year. One problem we are currently experiencing though is a lack of independent chairs to undertake the SARs. This is a national problem exacerbated by the fact that there are more reviews year on year. During the coming year we as a Board will be looking to strengthen our capacity to oversee SARs, and also to undertake even more quality and assurance work.

During the past year I am delighted to report on my involvement with organisations representing carers, people with lived experience and those working in the advocacy sector. This has been a growing and important development of our work.

Finally I want to offer my sincere thanks to the Board Staff and Board Members. Their commitment to safeguarding and high standards is really valued and appreciated. It is an area of work that continues to grow and is therefore of vital importance within our society in order to protect and support some of its most vulnerable members. It really is a privilege to work alongside these committed professionals and thus I want to say a sincere thank you for all you do.

**Prof Keith Brown**

**Independent Chair, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board**



## About us

<p><b>What is the Safeguarding Adults Board?</b></p>	<p>The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAB) covers the Local Authority areas of Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham. The SAB is made up of local organisations which work together to protect adults with care and support needs at risk of abuse or neglect. Mandatory partners on the SAB are the Local Authorities, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and Thames Valley Police. Other organisations are represented on the SAB such as health services, fire and rescue service, ambulance service, HealthWatch, probation and the voluntary sector. <i>A full list of partners is given in <u>Appendix A</u> and the SAB structure in <u>Appendix B</u>.</i></p> <p>We work together to ensure there are systems in place to keep adults at risk in the West of Berkshire safe. We hold partner agencies to account to ensure they are safeguarding adults at risk and promoting their well-being. We work to ensure local organisations focus on outcomes, performance, learning and engagement.</p>
<p><b>Who do we support?</b></p>	<p>Under the Care Act, safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and</li> <li>• As a result of their care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our vision</b></p>	<p>Adult safeguarding means protecting people in our community so they can live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Our vision in West Berkshire is that all agencies will work together to prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults at risk of abuse or neglect, whilst supporting individuals to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion</p>
<p><b>What is safeguarding adults?</b></p>	<p>Safeguarding adults means protecting others in our community who at risk of harm and unable to protect themselves because they have care and support needs, regardless of whether or not they are receiving support for these needs. There are many different forms of abuse, including but not exclusively: Disability hate crime, Discriminatory, Domestic, Female genital mutilation (FGM), Financial or material, Forced marriage, Hate crime, Honour based violence, Human trafficking, Mate crime, Modern slavery, Neglect and acts of omission, Organisational, Physical, Psychological, Restraint, Self-neglect, Sexual and Sexual Exploitation,</p>
<p><b>Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures</b></p>	<p>Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures are used in the West of Berkshire and their purpose is to support staff to respond appropriately to all concerns of abuse or neglect they may encounter: <a href="https://www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk/">https://www.berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk/</a></p>

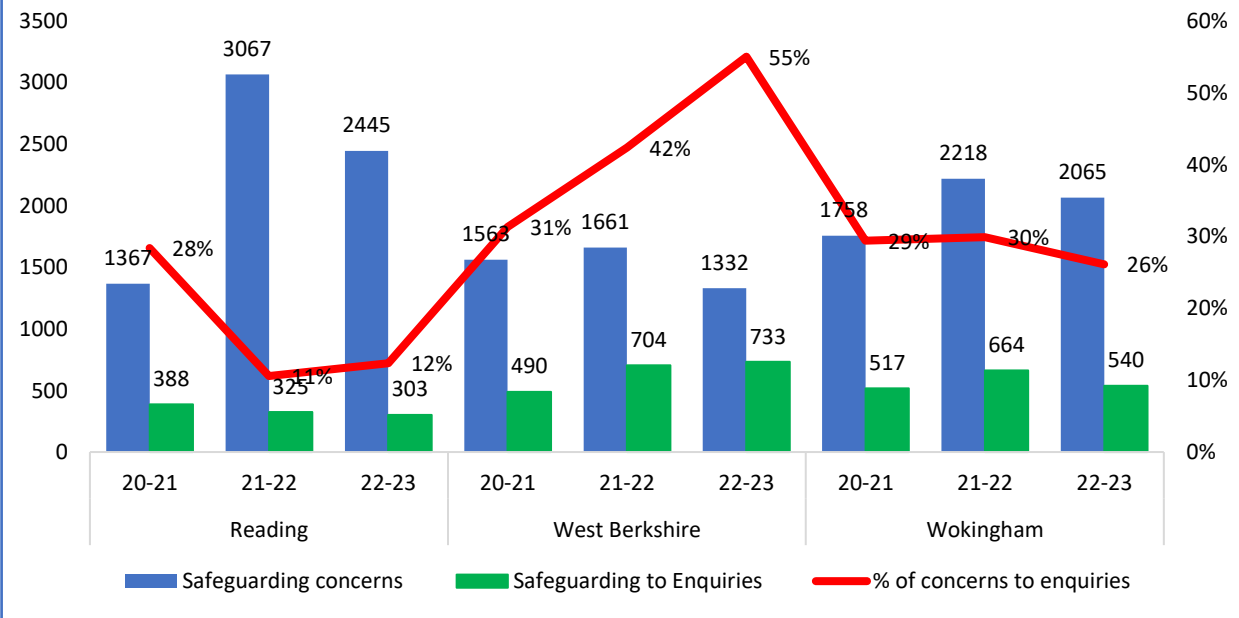
# Number of safeguarding adult concerns and enquiries 2022-23

We have spent a lot of time considering safeguarding adult concern numbers over the year, as the number of out of scope safeguarding concerns received by our Local Authorities, this resulted in Local Authorities having to adapt their pathways to ensure that their safeguarding pathway was not overwhelmed with concerns that were not safeguarding.

The chart below demonstrates, in 2022-23 the total number of safeguarding concerns for individuals started in period - per 100,000 population, has decreased by 22% in the West of Berkshire, when comparing with 2021-22. The SAB understands that this decrease is due to the amended pathways adopted by Local Authorities to address out of scope concerns and that there has not been an actual reduction in the number of in scope safeguarding concerns received.

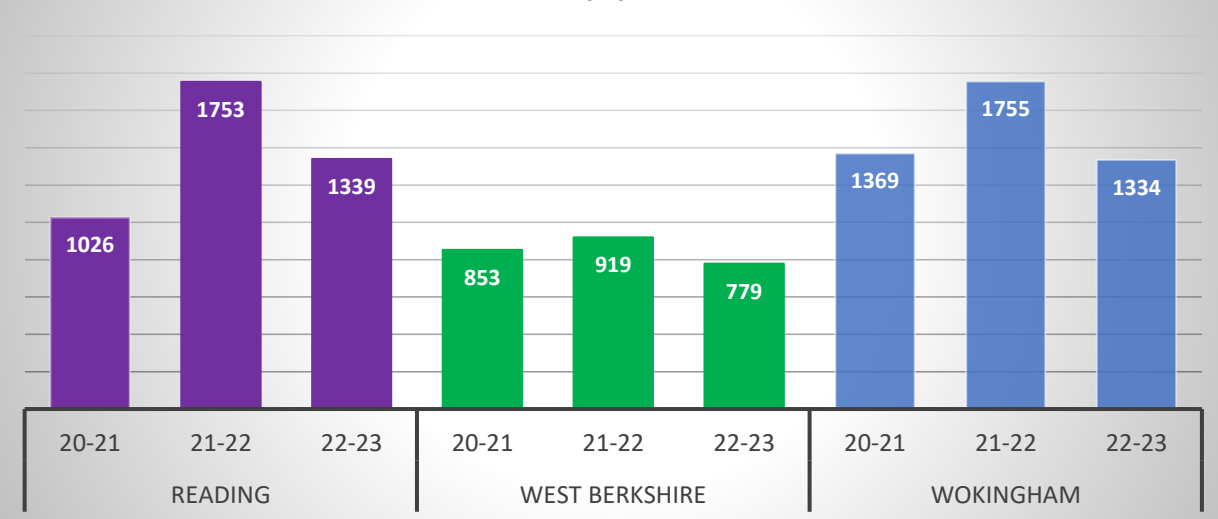
It is important to note that this indicator will only count an individual once during the reporting period and therefore does not account for any multiple safeguarding concerns raised for individuals over the year, therefore the number of safeguarding concerns received is much higher than this outturn.

The table below demonstrates the number of safeguarding concerns, safeguarding enquiries and conversion rate between safeguarding concern and enquiry over the last three years by local authority.



In 2022-23 there were a total of 1576 enquiries started 303 in Reading a decrease of 7% compared with 2021-22 733 in West Berkshire an increase of 4% compared with 2021-22 540 in Wokingham a decrease of 19% compared with 2021-22

Number of safeguarding concerns for individuals started in period - per 100,000 of the population



# Safeguarding Concern Trends across the area 2022/23

## Types of Abuse

As in previous years neglect and acts of omission was the most frequent abuse type, equating to 34% of enquiries. This was followed by physical, psychological or emotional abuse and financial abuse. But all have seen a decrease when compared with 2021/22.

There is a 17% decrease in Domestic abuse which in the previous year had seen a 20% increase.

Organisational abuse has seen the biggest increase of 159% when compared with 2021/22. There were 29 enquiries in 2021/22 and 75 in 2022/23.

Modern Slavery has seen an increase of 25%, with 5 enquiries in 22/23  
Self-Neglect has seen a 10% increase.

58% of enquires were in relation to women, this is consistent with previous years.

For the majority of enquiries (37%), the individual primary support reason was physical support, this however has decreased by 15% when comparing with previous years. This was followed by no support reason (30%), which saw a 5% increase when compared with last year.

85% of enquires were for individuals whose ethnicity is White, this consistent with last year. The ethnicity of the remaining 15% of individuals is as follows: Not Known 6%, Asian 3%, Black 3%, Other 3%, Mixed 1%.

The Performance and Quality Subgroup routinely consider the ethnicity data to ensure it is consistent with our demographics.

## Location of alleged abuse

60% of enquiries completed were where the alleged abuse took place in the persons own home, this is a slight drop from 20/21 where it was at 62% and is the third consecutive year where this has dropped.

There has been a 7% decrease in enquiries completed where the location of abuse was in hospital, equating to a total of 87 enquiries.

Care Homes also saw an increase of 4%, with a total of 418 enquires.

There was a 52% increase in Service within Community (Commissioned service in community setting) with 47 enquiries.

62% of enquiries relate to people over 65 years in age, this is consistent with 2021/22

# Risks and Mitigations

Challenges or areas of risk that have arisen during the year are recorded on our risk register, along with actions to mitigate the risks. These are some of the potential risks that we have addressed:

Risk	Consequence/Impact	Mitigation
<p>The SAB does not know how individuals experience the Safeguarding Adults Process.</p> <p>Adults with care and support needs and their carers have no involvement or engagement with the Board.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Adults procedures and practices are not informed by people's experiences.</p> <p>Lack of community understanding to inform the work of the Board.</p>	<p>Voluntary Sector/Healthwatch Subgroup in place.</p> <p>Request made for the Advocacy people to deliver a presentation to the SAB in March 23, which was deferred to June 2023.</p>
<p>People who raise safeguarding concerns do not receive feedback</p>	<p>Impaired partnership working.</p>	<p>Key Performance Indicator (KPI) in place to monitor percentage of referrers that receive feedback.</p> <p>As reported in the 21/22 annual report Reading Borough Council are currently unable to supply this information. Repeated assurance has been provided to the Performance and Quality Subgroup that plans are in place to address this.</p>
<p>There is inconsistent use of advocacy services to support adults through their safeguarding experience.</p>	<p>The voice of the service user is not heard.</p>	<p>Improve oversight of advocacy offer in the West of Berkshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPI on SAB's dashboard,</li> <li>• Advocacy representation at SAB and subgroups,</li> <li>• request made for the Advocacy people to deliver a presentation to the SAB in March 23, which was deferred to June 2023.</li> </ul>
<p>Responsibilities under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 are not fully understood or applied in practice as a safeguard for people who may lack capacity (SAR finding)</p>	<p>Significant harm to adults as risk.</p>	<p>All work undertaken by the SAB partnership to ensure consideration of MCA so that it is embedded within practise.</p> <p>Good practice identified from the Pauline Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) published Jan 23, but did evidence that practitioners are not evidencing their decision making in regard to MCA.</p> <p>MCA a SAB priority for 23/24.</p>

## Risks and Mitigations continued.....

Challenges or areas of risk that have arisen during the year are recorded on our risk register, along with actions to mitigate the risks. These are some of the potential risks that we have addressed:

Risk	Consequence/Impact	Mitigation
There are capacity issues within the supervisory bodies to obtain timely DoLS assessments and provide appropriate authorisation.	Risks that vulnerable people do not have the opportunity to live within the least restrictive regime possible for their condition.	A KPI on the SAB dashboard, concerns around performance have been highlighted to the SAB for consideration.
Governance arrangements to support people who have Mental Health issues are not fully understood.	Significant harm to adults as risk.	Assurance obtained via Berks West Health Partners Strategic Safeguarding Committee.
Safeguarding People at risk of multiple exclusion, due to not meet safeguarding or care management pathways.	This is not a new issue but has been exacerbated as a result of lockdown, as people have been brought to the attention of services that wouldn't have previously been before.	Review and relaunch of Supporting Individuals to Manage Risk and Multi Agency Framework (MARM) took place in September 22.
Increase of out of Scope Safeguarding Referrals.	Capacity in Safeguarding Teams will be impacted on resulting in less time being available to spend on appropriate safeguarding concerns.	SAB sought assurance from partners that this issue was being addressed. In December 22 the SAB agreed that as LA's have updated their processes to limit the risk due to the increase in out of scope referrals, no further assurance is required for the SAB. The partnership can re-escalate to the SAB if the risk mitigation process is at risk of failure.
The impact the pandemic has had on domestic abuse.	People are more at risk of domestic abuse as a result of the measures put in place as a result of the pandemic, the partnership will need to consider how its approach will need to be adapted.	Safeguarding figures suggest that there had not been a significant increase in domestic abuse during the pandemic. However, agencies and the SAB continue to promote domestic abuse and ways in which to identify and support after the pandemic.  Domestic abuse will be considered as part of the SAB priority on serious violence for 2023/24.
The SAB is not complying with its Quality Assurance Framework.	That the SAB do not have assurance in regard to the quality of safeguarding in its area.	Is a SAB priority for 2023/24.



# Achievements through working together

## Our priorities for 2022/23 and outcomes to those priorities were:

### Priority 1: To expand on learning in regard to self-neglect; to offer the partnership with resources to support them to achieve effective outcomes for individuals that self-neglect.

- Created a [Self-Neglect and Hoarding Toolkit](#) for the partnership and launched via a webinar, where over 75 practitioners attended.
- [Safeguarding Adults Week 2022](#) in November 2023 had 1 day which focused on self-neglect, there was webinars, briefing notes and social media posts that all highlighted self-neglect.
- [Self-neglect](#) Page created on SAB Website.
- Webinar on [Mental Capacity Act and Self Neglect](#) took place in October 2022.
- Review and relaunch of [Supporting Individuals to Manage Risk and Multi Agency Framework \(MARM\)](#) took place in September 22. Videos detailing how the MARM works in West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council launched and a KPI to monitor MARM usage and outcomes will be go live in April 2023.
- Work on an awareness campaign to highlight fire risks in regards to hoarding, started and will be launched in 2023/24.
- Self-Neglect bitesize session for Voluntary Sector took place in February 2023 a [recording of this session](#) is on our website.
- Published SARS and practice learning notes, podcasts where self-neglect was a concern.
- Published and promoted via newsletter and email the [Mental Capacity Toolkit](#) and Prof Keith Brown publications on MCA.
- Updated the [MCA/DoLs Page](#) of SAB website.
- Review of the [Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure](#) on self-neglect completed.

### Priority 2: To seek assurance that quality of health and social care services delivered in the West of Berkshire or those commissioned out of area for West Berkshire residents is monitored effectively and there is a proportionate response to concerns.

- KPI to monitor quality of health and social care services in the West of Berkshire agreed and went live in April 2023.
- The following actions were not completed but have been carried over as SAB actions for 2023/24.
  - Assurance obtained from SAB Statutory partners on practice in regard quality monitoring of service provision.
  - Learning session to promote best practice when reviewing quality of care.
  - Create information source for volunteers on quality of service provision which includes details on pathways.
  - To consider any updates to the organisational safeguarding policy and procedure in light of SAB learning.

### Priority 3: The SAB to review its Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) process, in order to ensure that it is timely and good value for money

- Review of SAR process completed, SAB agreed that the SAR Panel should continue with its current SAR process.
- SARs continued to be delivered by the SAB as per its statutory requirements.
- Where suitable bitesize learning sessions on SARs have been delivered by the SAB.
- The following SAR action plans were signed off as completed: Michelle, P, Adam, John, Ken and Steven.

### Priority 4: The SAB will continue to carry out its business as usual tasks to comply with its statutory obligations

[Board Briefings](#), [Annual Report](#), [Website](#), Budget, Out of Scope Safeguarding Referrals, [Joint Investigation Protocol](#), [Safeguarding Adults Week](#), [Pressure Care Awareness](#), [Quality Assurance Framework](#).

# Achievements through working together continued....

## Safeguarding Adults Week 2022

In November 2022, the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board is supported the [Ann Craft Trust](#) Safeguarding Adults Week. Each day of the week our partners hosted a wide variety of free webinars to cover the themes on: Responding to Contemporary Safeguarding Challenges, these were open to all health and social care practitioners and volunteers within the West of Berkshire. The partnership provided learning resources to support awareness on these key themes. The week was a great success with a total of 393 delegates attended the webinars and 5 learning briefs were created covering:

- Exploitation and County Lines
- Self-Neglect
- Creating Safer Organisational Cultures
- Elder Abuse
- Domestic Abuse in a Tech Society

Social media posts also went out daily to promote public awareness on these subjects. The SAB website has a [page](#) where copies of the learning.

**Considered the impact the newly established Integrated Care Boards may have on the SAB and its arrangements with the East of Berkshire and our Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.**

## We said thankyou and goodbye to five Board members who are moving on from their organisations:

- Seona Douglas, Director of Adult Care and Health Services, Reading Borough Council
- Jo Lappin, Assistant Director for Safeguarding, Reading Borough Council
- Andy Sharp, Executive Director - People, West Berkshire District Council
- Simon Broad, Assistant Director - Adult Social Care at Wokingham Borough Council
- Abigail Mangaray, Designated Safeguarding Lead (Adults) in Berkshire West - Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board

**Agreed options will be explored to relaunch the safeguarding train the trainer programme.**

### **In response to learning identified in the Adam SAR the SAB:**

- Created a [best practice guide for out of area reviews](#)
- Definition of 'relevant history' agreed and added to Pan Berkshire Policies and Procedures.
- Created and launched 'supporting agencies in the management of complex multi-agency enquiries – joint safeguarding and criminal investigations protocol'

**Published a [case study](#), which shares learning from a safeguarding enquiry where the use of clinical terminology led to confusion for individual and people supporting them.**

**Created a webpage dedicated to: [fire risk awareness](#)**

**Researched and agreed options for commissioning of a new SAB website.**

**Reviewed and relaunched our Allegations Management (PiPOT) policy.**

**Considered and agreed assurance arrangements in response to South Central Ambulances CQC Inspection rating of [inadequate](#).**

## Celebratory Points

- Being able to address and be part of the SAB that **enables better understanding of advocacy**
- Being part of the **safeguarding week plans** and events that take place under the SAB banner.
- Knowing that SAB takes **issues that arise from SARs seriously** and acts on the recommendations that come from the reports
- **Commitment and agility of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector.** Despite the plethora of societal challenges facing communities, the determination to support those most in need continues. Within this, some charities have been able to build in additional offers of service delivery, for example grants to support the heating of the homes of local people.
- **More consortiums and partnerships.** Whilst charities are having to work hard to support their own sustainability, many are realising the advantages of working in partnership. In the last year, Wokingham Borough has developed its Dementia Alliance and Carers Alliance. In both cases, three or more charities are working together to realise a collective ambition, utilising and sharing resources to best achieve for local people.

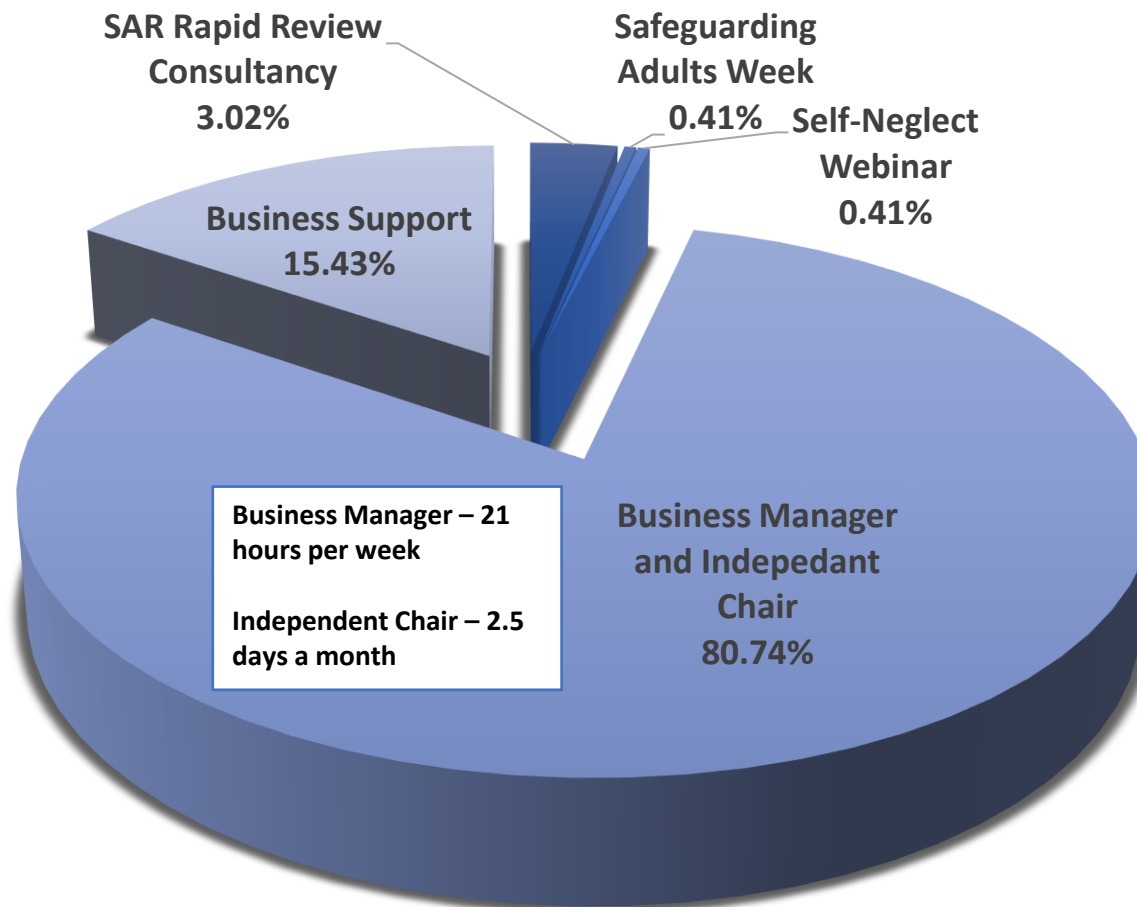
## Emerging Issues

- Lack of enough **advocacy funding** to provide enough early intervention i.e. community advocacy to act as a prevention of escalating problems.
- Learning from SARs evidences there is **a gap in advocacy referrals.**
- **Support for Asylum Seekers.** There are many asylum seekers who are successfully receiving their leave to remain in the UK. Upon receiving this notification, these individuals are given 28 days-notice and are then required to move on from their temporary accommodation. This notification is often delayed in arriving with the individual in question which is then not allowing sufficient time for professionals and volunteers to help secure income, find housing and begin to build the lives of those who are often highly vulnerable.
- **Cost of Living.** There are an ever increasing number of residents who are presenting to our foodbanks and who are working. Following increases to mortgages, rent, utilities and other outgoings, those who have previously lived well or sufficiently within their means are now in financial hardship. Approximately a quarter to a third of those coming to the attention of food services have never had to use these facilities before.
- **Statutory Funding Pressures and Impact on Local Charities.** As statutory organisations come under increasing funding pressures, funds historically allotted to the Voluntary and Community Sector are under increasing scrutiny. Whilst we have not seen any cuts to funding at this stage, the prognosis of this happening is ever more present. This, alongside the increasing competition for funds from national and local funding organisations will see income to charities and other community assets go down which in turn will see services reducing their provision, with a potential risk of insolvency.

# Annual Budget and Financial Contribution, 2022/23

The 2022/23 annual budget for the Board was £75,705 the annual budget is established through a financial contribution from statutory partners, The SAB also had £34,399 carry over from previous years. The name of the agency and their contribution; shown as a percentage of the overall cost in the table below and the pie chart demonstrates where the money was spent.

Partner	Agreed % Contribution
Reading Borough Council	16.07%
West Berkshire Council	16.07%
Wokingham Borough Council	16.07%
Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, West of Berkshire ICB	16.07%
Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	9.52%
Royal Berkshire Hospital	9.52%
Thames Valley Police	16.66%



The 2022/23 expenditure was £71,745 and the SAB have carried over £43,859 into 2023/24. Which will be used to support the SAB to achieve its priorities.

The SAB has a legal duty to carry out a SAR when there is reasonable cause for concern about how agencies worked together to safeguard an adult who has died, and abuse or neglect is suspected to be a factor in their death; or when an adult has not died but suffered serious abuse or neglect. The aim is for all agencies to learn lessons about the way they safeguard adults at risk and prevent such tragedies happening in the future. The SAB has a SAR Panel that oversees this work.

During the reporting year, the SAR Panel have worked on six SARs of which 3 have been endorsed and published and the remaining 3 SARs are due to go to SAB for endorsement and publication in 2023/24.

For each SAR that is completed a practice learning note is produced to help promote the learning across the partnership and webinars/podcasts are standard practice to further promote the learning.

The SAR Panel continues to promote reflective practice and feedback from learning events has been very positive.

The SAR Panel awaits the publication of the Safeguarding Adult Reviews in Rapid Time guidance that is being produced by the Social Care Institute for Excellence. Once available the panel will consider if this approach can be adopted by the SAB.

## **Adam [Full Report](#) and [Practice Learning Note](#)**

Key learning identified from this review:

- Out of Area Placements – Understanding and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns Out of area placements make it more challenging to identify emerging safeguarding concerns and to provide an effective response. In order to improve this a person centred approach is required, in addition to a greater level of multi-agency working.
- Information Sharing The lack of information sharing affected the quality of safeguarding and reduced the ability of agencies to protect Adam from further abuse. A greater understanding of the need to share information is required for the effective management of future complex cases.
- Management of Complex Enquiries A new partnership protocol for the management of complex enquiries would greatly improve the efficacy of multi-agency safeguarding investigations. This should be supported with a training and development programme for professionals involved in such multi-agency enquiries.
- Family Engagement Professionals did not understand the underlying reasons for Adam’s mother’s concerns and why she had developed a different opinion to others about what was in Adam’s best interests. This prevented a consensus being developed, affecting the services provided to Adam.

**Published May 2022**

## **Louise [Practice Learning Note](#)**

Louise died in hospital when she was in her 40’s. Louise had been living at home supported by two carers/personal assistants, one of whom lived in with her, this was managed by direct payments. Concerns had been raised over the years about the quality of care provided to Louise by the live-in personal assistant. Louise wanted to have weight loss surgery so that she could look after her son, who lived at his grandparents. Despite making changes in her life in preparation for surgery, Louise was told that it could not go ahead. Following this, Louise refused to allow district nurses to treat her pressure ulcers. Key Learning Points from this review were:

- There were unresolved concerns about the extent to which Louise’s care and support needs were being met.
- Safeguarding processes did not identify patterns, themes or connections that might have alerted practitioners to the need to reconsider how well Louise’s care and support needs were met or the extent to which Louise was feigning compliance and self-neglecting.
- No connection was made between the refusal of surgery and Louise’s subsequent refusal of district nursing care. The impact of this was not recognised and no support was provided for Louise to cope with this disappointment.
- There was insufficient recognition that Louise was self-neglecting.
- Louise’s mental capacity to make decisions about her care was assumed rather than assessed. This was despite a consistent pattern of “unwise decisions”
- There was insufficient consideration given to balancing Louise’s wellbeing (Section 1 of the Care Act) and the obligation to protect her life (Article 2 of the Human Rights Act) with her right to make decisions (Article 8)

**Published June 2022**

## Pauline Full Report and Practice Learning Note

Pauline lived alone in her own home. She was a local well-liked character; friendly, chatty and cooperative, but fiercely independent and someone who, despite increasing frailty associated with aging, remained very active and physically able. Pauline died at home in late 2021, having fallen resulting in fatal injuries. Pauline had several known conditions (including dementia) that impacted on her ability to manage daily living activities.

Concerns had been raised by Pauline's neighbours and a number of professionals over recent years that, as she had grown increasingly frail with age, and her choices which may have been present throughout her life.

The SAR clarified Pauline did not die because of abuse or neglect and partners had complied with their duties to assess and offer support in a manner that complied with her human rights. There was evidence of good practice from professionals throughout.

Key Learning Points from this review were:

- Balancing risks and rights: those working with Pauline demonstrated persistent, compassionate concern. The risks to Pauline remaining within her own home were well understood, but consideration was also given to the harm that compelling her to receive care against her will would cause.
- Caring Communities have a valuable role: People with dementia wishing to remain at home for as long as possible, have the easiest course when they have family, friends or neighbours supporting this choice.
- Good record keeping is essential to good risk enabling care: Whilst there was an agreed multiagency understanding of Pauline's capacity. Formal capacity assessment reports were not completed in line with policy. There are opportunities to improve recording and monitoring systems to ensure improved compliance with the Mental Capacity Act.
- Lessons learnt from Covid should not be forgotten: The pandemic was undoubtedly a very difficult time to have additional vulnerabilities, but there was also remarkable effort from volunteers and key workers to reduce harm to adults with care and support needs.

**Published January 2023**

## How is learning from SARS embedded within in practice?

The SAB captures all recommendations from SARs on a Learning from SARS/Audit Implementation Plan where all recommendations from SARs and other SAB learning is added and tracked.

The SAB create and manage a SAR action plan and/or each partner agency involved in the SAR is required to submit a Learning from SAR Quality Check to the Business Manager within of 3 months of the SAR endorsement to demonstrate how learning from the SAR has been embedded within their organisations.

Learning events take place to share learning from reviews.

The SAB continually monitors themes in learning from SARs both locally and nationally and uses this to inform the SAB priorities.

The SAB are committed to ensuring that our priorities are current and have and will change priorities in order to support learning from its SARs.#

There is a dedicated page on the SAB's website for case reviews:

<http://www.sabberkshirwest.co.uk/board-members/safeguarding-adults-reviews/>

## SAR Notifications

In 2022/23 the SAR Panel considered eight SAR Notifications of which three were identified as meeting the SAR criteria.

Under the Care Act each member of the SAB must co-operate in and contribute to the carrying out of a review. The Board has set out a process for Board members, managers and practitioners, in order to clarify the different roles and responsibilities of individual agencies, the Safeguarding Adults Board and its Subgroups. This includes a notification report template to be completed by anyone wishing to present a case for consideration by the SAR Panel. Further information can be found here: [Safeguarding Adults Reviews | West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(sabberkshirwest.co.uk\)](#)

# Reflection

The SAB have reflected on its activity over the past 12 months and have identified 3 areas of success and 3 areas where we want to improve:

## Success

### Partnership

The SAB works in an atmosphere and culture of cooperation, mutual assurance, accountability and ownership of responsibility

### Leadership

The SAB demonstrates effective leadership and coordinates the delivery of adult safeguarding policy and practice across all agencies, with representatives who are sufficiently senior to get things done.

### Reporting Mechanisms

Reporting mechanisms (to the SAB and from the SAB to the LA's and the boards of partner organisations) are clear and effective.

## Improvement

### Links

Improve our links with Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and Children's Safeguarding Board.

### Engagement

Improve mechanisms to ensure that the views of people who are in situations that place them at risk of abuse and carers inform the work of the SAB.

### Integration

Establish clear protocols that integrate different agency procedures.

## Key Priorities for 2023/24

The SAB acknowledges that there are reoccurring themes from local and national learning from SARs that must be addressed. As in previous years we will continue to consider what the obstacles are in implementing recommendations and sustaining improvement and there will be a focus on good practice to promote learning, alongside an emphasis on good quality care principles and the role of effective support and supervision of the workforce to embed learning and inform future practice.

It is possible that changes to priorities will be made throughout the duration of this year in light of national and local learning in order to ensure that there is capacity within the partnership to deliver on the most pressing priorities for the West of Berkshire. Any change in priorities will be approved by the SAB.

Through its reflective learning practice, the SAB have identified the following priorities:

### Priority 1

To seek assurance that quality of health and social care services delivered in the West of Berkshire or those commissioned out of area for West Berkshire residents is monitored effectively and there is a proportionate response to concerns.

### Priority 2

Embedding a good understanding of Mental Capacity Act within the practice of our statutory partners.

### Priority 3

Serious Violence and Exploitation, understanding the gaps from an adult safeguarding perspective.

### Priority 4

Review and relaunch of the SAB Quality Assurance Framework



## Appendices

Reference	Description	Link
Appendix A	SAB Member Organisations	<a href="#">Click here</a>
Appendix B	SAB Structure	<a href="#">Click here</a>
Appendix C	Achievements by partner agencies	<a href="#">Click here</a>
Appendix D	2022/23 SAB Business Plan	<a href="#">Click here</a>
Appendix E	2023/24 SAB Business Plan	<a href="#">Click here</a>
Appendix F	Partners' Safeguarding Performance Annual Reports:	
	Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	<a href="#">Click here</a>
	West Berkshire Council	<a href="#">Click here</a>
	Wokingham Borough Council	<a href="#">Click here</a>
	Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust	<a href="#">Click here</a>
	Reading Borough Council	Not ready for publication
	South Central Ambulance	<a href="#">Click here</a>