

# Annual Report 2023 - 2024



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**Appendix 1 Partnership Safeguarding Information and Data 2023/24**

**Appendix 2 –SAB Structure and Membership**

**You can get all our publications in a format to suit you.**

If you would prefer this report in an alternative format or language, please contact us:

[ESSAB.Contact@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ESSAB.Contact@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Photographs courtesy of Aging Better Resource Space



## Foreword by the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board Independent Chair – Seona Douglas

It is a privilege to introduce the Annual Report for East Sussex Adults Board (SAB) for 2023/24. I am grateful to all partners for their contribution to the Board, and their ongoing support. It is important to lead the SAB in delivering its priorities as part of the continuous learning journey for all engaged in adult safeguarding, and the well-being of people in East Sussex.

As highlighted partners have been working hard to make a difference with, and for people. They have continued to provide care and support to people, and respond to the changing safeguarding needs and risks that occur in what can be described as challenging times for public services, and the effects post COVID19. It would be fair to say this continued to impact upon people as seen by all partners. The subgroups, and in particular the Chairs are owed much gratitude for their dedication and commitment to ensuring that the SABs priorities are delivered. There have been important areas of work undertaken in the year.

A data dashboard has been agreed so that SAB partners are able to understand through a “temperature check” what is this data is telling us about, and where we need to explore, and support front line practitioners across all organisations in their duties, and if issues occur with fluctuations, how we understand the reasons, and ensure all partners contribute to resolving any that may arise.

Self-Neglect remains an area of significant work as it is the responsibility of partners to be able to identify, and on occasions make decisions to ensure safety and protection as required. Audit work, Safeguarding Adults Reviews, and data, highlight this is an area of continuing development for all organisations within the SAB during 2024/25.

An area of work started by the SAB which will be important moving forward is to develop further “hearing the voice of people,” so that we can assess learning and change, as ongoing within all partner organisations. We are now asking ourselves about the “impact” of what we do, so that we keep people in East Sussex at the heart of what we do or what we produce, to ensure continued development and understanding of the adult safeguarding agenda.

I would like to thank the Board Manager and the Team for efficiently and effectively managing the business of the Board. I would also like to acknowledge the work of the staff and managers across all statutory, voluntary and community partners who are committed to working together to keep people safe in East Sussex.

## Our role and purpose

The East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is a multi-agency statutory partnership which provides leadership and strategic oversight of adult safeguarding work across East Sussex.



The work of the SAB is underpinned by the Care Act 2014, which sets out we must do:

Develop and publish a Strategic Plan setting out how we will meet our objectives and how our partner agencies will contribute to these objectives.

Publish an annual report detailing how effective our work has been over the past 12 months.

Arrange for Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) to be undertaken when the criteria under section 44 of the Care Act are considered to have been met.

The East Sussex SAB is led by our Independent Chair, and supported by a SAB Development Manager, a Board Support Coordinator and a part-time Administrator. The Board meets at least four times a year and is supported by a range of subgroups which are crucial in ensuring that the priorities set out in the Strategic Plan are delivered – these include: the Safeguarding Adult Review subgroup, the Operational Practice subgroup, Performance, Quality and Audit subgroup, Training and Workforce Development subgroup, Safeguarding Community Network and the Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Review Group. These subgroups ensure that the work of the Board really makes a difference to local safeguarding practice, and to the outcomes that adults, and their carers, wish to achieve.

## Our Vision

Our vision is for all agencies to work together and effectively build resilience and empower communities in responding to abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and to widely promote the message that safeguarding is everybody's business in that:

- **Abuse is not tolerated.**
- **People know what to do if abuse happens.**
- **People and organisations are proactive in working together to respond effectively to abuse.**

## Our Purpose

It is important to note that the SAB is not involved in operational practice. Our overarching purpose is to ensure that agencies work in partnership to deliver joined-up support that safeguard adults, with care and support needs, from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We do this by:

- Gaining assurance that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act and its statutory guidance.
- Working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect, where possible.
- Ensuring partner agencies are effective when abuse and neglect has occurred and give timely and proportionate responses.
- Gaining assurance that the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) are central to safeguarding, and practice is person-centred, and outcome focused.
- Striving for continuous improvement in safeguarding practice and supporting partner agencies to embed learning from local and national SARs, other learning reviews, and multi-agency audits.

## Partnership Working

The SAB has formal links with a number of other strategic partnerships in East Sussex, including the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP), Safer Communities Partnership (SCP), Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT) and the Health and Wellbeing Board. In addition, the Board maintains links with Sussex-wide and national networks and forums including:

- The National Network for Chairs of SABs.
- The National SAB Managers Network.
- The South-East Regional SAB Network.
- The Sussex Domestic Abuse Partnership Board
- The **Changing Futures Programme Sussex**

The Board works closely with the neighbouring Brighton & Hove and West Sussex SABs, and our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are adopted on a Sussex wide basis, as well as many protocols and guidance documents.



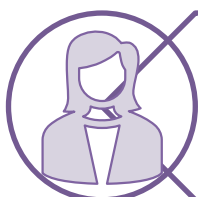
# Our Strategic Priorities 2021-2024



**Accountability and Leadership**



**Performance, Quality and Audit and Organisational Learning**



**Prevention, Engagement and Making Safeguarding Personal**



**Safeguarding Policies and Procedures**



**Integration, Training and Workforce Development**

The Strategic Plan has two main purposes:

- To specify the actions required by the SAB and its member agencies to implement the strategy.
- To inform the local community and all interested parties about the work programme of the SAB.

## SAB Budget

Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH), NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB), Sussex Police, East Sussex Healthcare Trust (ESHT) and East Sussex Fire and Rescue (ESFRS) contribute annually to the SAB budget. SAB Partners support with the running of the Board, for example by offering to chair meetings and co-delivering training. The budget contributions are reviewed annually to ensure that the SAB is delivering its statutory duties.

### Income 2023 – 2024

Partner Contributions	£128,914
Carry over from 22/23	£7,994
Total	£136,450

### Expenditure 2023 – 2024

SAB Staffing	£98,446
Independent Chair	£10,138
Safeguarding Adult Reviews	£18,001
Website ( SAB & Procedures) and training costs	£4,582
Total	£130,985

Carry over to 2024/25 £5,500.



# Key Achievements 2023 – 24

## Strategic Priority 1: Accountability and Leadership

Recommendations from the Thematic Safeguarding Adult Review<sup>1</sup> (SAR) and SAR Charlie<sup>2</sup> (published in 2022 and 2023 respectively) required assurances that transitional safeguarding processes are meeting the needs of people who have had adverse childhood experiences but may be struggling to engage with support, are met after they reach the age of 18 years old.

A transitions task and finish group was established in January 2023 by the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESSAB) and East Sussex Children's Safeguarding Partnership (ESSCP) and was chaired by the Head of Safeguarding for the Sussex NHS Integrated Care Board. A scoping activity was undertaken to identify current pathways for children who reach eighteen in East Sussex. The work of the task and finish group was concluded in January 2024 with the production of the **East Sussex Multi-Agency Transition to Adulthood Protocol**.

The protocol sets out a commitment, from the partner agencies of the ESSAB and the ESSCP, that a young person's transition experience is a positive, coordinated, and supportive one.

*East Sussex County Council will use the 6 principles, outlined in the protocol, for joint working in transition to adulthood as part of a review of the current transitions service, being undertaken jointly with Children's services, and align with the key aims of Preparing for Adulthood.*

*The protocol will help to ensure that everyone involved in the transition of young people into adulthood is clear (particularly parents/cares and, young people themselves) about the specific roles and responsibilities of all the key agencies so that we can work together in partnership with parents, carers, and personal advisors to support the young person at the centre of this process.*



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eastsussexsab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ESSAB-Thematic-Review.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eastsussexsab.org.uk/documents/executive-summary/>

## The Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) Protocol

The main purpose of the MARM group is to consider high risk, multiple and complex needs cases where other actions such as safeguarding interventions have been unable to reduce or mitigate risk.

A review of the **Multi-Agency Risk Management Protocol** (MARM) took place in 2023/24. The review also considered a recommendation from **SAR Donna** to review multi-agency risk assessment processes. The review resulted in a number of recommendations which were agreed by the SAB and have been implemented as follows:

- **Refreshed and targeted communications** have been circulated to referring agencies outlining the purpose of the MARM and benefits of a trauma informed approach.
- **MARM referral data will be fed into the SAB dashboard on a quarterly basis:** to aid future monitoring and evaluation. This will include discussions on where under-represented groups may be identified in the referral data.
- **The MARM review group have developed a standardised multi-agency risk assessment** which has been incorporated within the MARM referral form to improve consistency in referrals.

***‘MARM has ensured people’s voices are heard and the need for multiagency holistic responses to meet complex needs presentation which no other forum has had the ability to do.’ (Practitioner feedback)***

## Preparation for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment of Adult Social Care.

In preparation of a CQC assessment<sup>3</sup> a Local Government Association (LGA) Peer review of ASCH was undertaken in February 2024, including arrangements with the SAB. LGA peer reviews are assessments conducted by local government professionals to evaluate the performance of other councils. These reviews aim to provide constructive feedback and support improvements that will benefit local staff, residents, and businesses.

The CQC assessment will look at how local authorities meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act (2014) and how the local authority ensures safety within the system which includes safeguarding.

Feedback indicated the SAB is showing strong evidence of its plan, and ongoing engagement from multi-agency partners. A feature for the future will be greater engagement of people and carers who have been involved in safeguarding.

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<sup>3</sup> [Local authority assessments - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk)

### Bi-Annual SAB Self-Assessment 2023

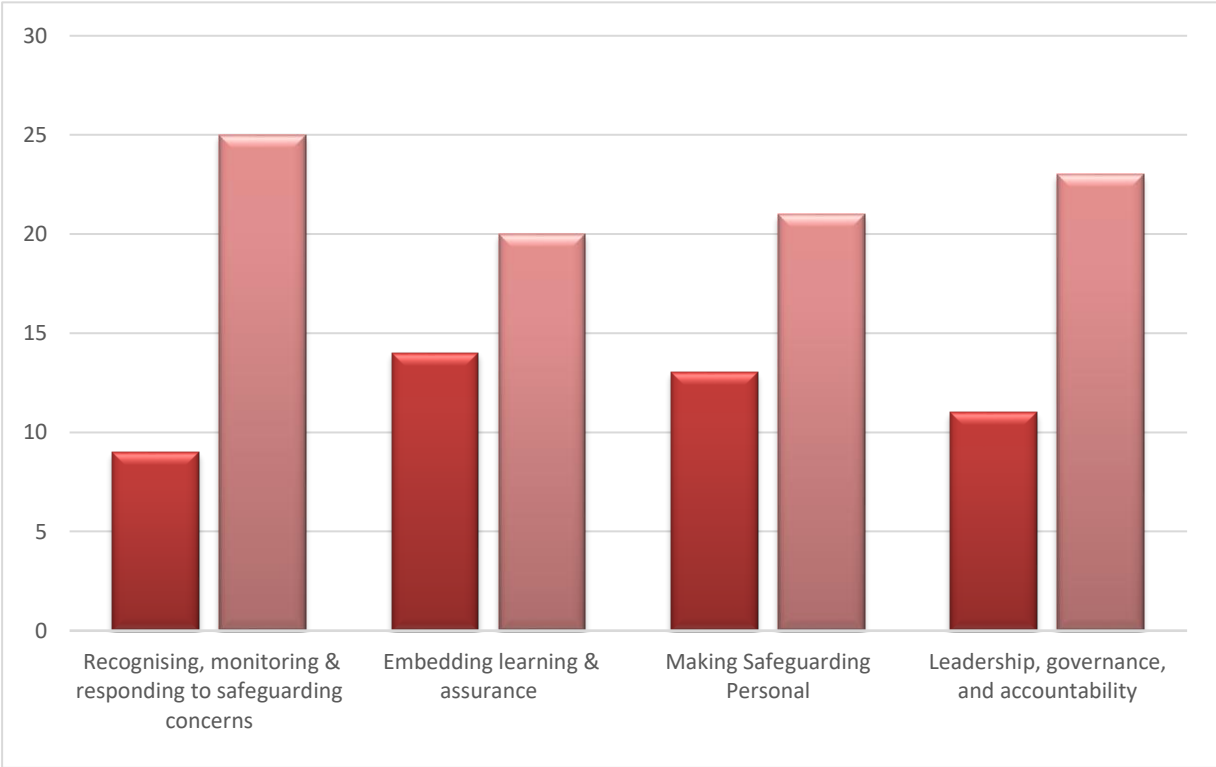
The purpose of the bi-annual Safeguarding Adults Board Self-Assessment process is to provide the SAB with assurance in relation to safeguarding activity taking place across the partnership. A pan-Sussex approach was taken with a self-assessment tool jointly developed by all three Sussex SABs to reduce unnecessary duplication for pan-Sussex organisations, and to enable consistency in identifying areas of focus.

There were 12 questions in total covering four safeguarding areas as follows:

1. **Recognising, monitoring & responding to safeguarding concerns**
2. **Embedding learning & assurance**
3. **Making Safeguarding Personal**
4. **Leadership, governance, and accountability**

Each agency provided a rating based on their own assessment on the evidence and examples they provide on whether they had achieved the following ratings:

- **Fully achieved** with robust evidence for this and continual development.
- **Partially achieved** with some actions in progress but with more to do/areas to improve.



## Examples of partnership activity from each of the four areas:

### Recognising, monitoring & responding to safeguarding concerns

**Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) The Safeguarding Adults Thresholds: Guidance for Professionals**, developed by the three Sussex Safeguarding Adults Boards, has been shared across the Trust and is used by community operational team and wards. This guidance contains information on signs and indicators of abuse and neglect and what should be reported as a safeguarding concern.

The SPFT adult safeguarding team promote this guidance at every quality review which the team attends. A quality review is a type of audit of a team or ward's practice. During quality reviews staff are asked if they are referring to the Safeguarding Adults Thresholds.

### Embedding learning & assurance

**Sussex Police** - There is consistent involvement in Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) by a Detective Sergeant who actively engages in reviews, working with partners to draft recommendations. Recommendations are then adopted and tracked through established police meeting structures. The team are responsible for creating learning bulletins and working with internal programmes to ensure the delivery of training.

The police intranet frontpage includes 'Changes to Safeguarding Adults Reviews' and a searchable library maintained by the team entitled Safeguarding Adults Reviews providing a summary of published SARs outlining the key themes and learning and providing links to associated learning materials.

### Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

**Probation Service** - Training is provided to staff on trauma informed practice. Risk assessments are holistic and include consideration of people's childhood experiences and any Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), key adult relationships, and any other experience of trauma. Interventions for people on probation are based on models of behavioural understanding that are trauma informed. Training for delivery of interventions includes trauma-informed practice and responsivity.

## **Leadership, governance, and accountability**

**East Sussex Healthcare Trust (ESHT)** - The Head of Safeguarding attends governance meetings and multi-professional trust wide meetings such as the Professional Advisory Group, the Patient Safety and Quality group and the Quality and Safety Committee, where Safeguarding is a standing item. The trust holds quarterly Safeguarding Operational Meetings to which the Named Lead for Adult Safeguarding reports as well as a Safeguarding Strategic group chaired by the Chief Nurse.

A Mental Capacity Lead is now in post who facilitates Mental Capacity Act (MCA) workshops and attends Matrons' meetings. This has raised the profile within the organisation and as a result the numbers of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards have improved.

**Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)** - The Head of Training in ASC Chairs the SAB Training and Workforce Development subgroup and learning from SARs and audits is taken forward in training plans. A recent example is the discussion of the need for greater understanding between Children's Services and ASC on respective roles and responsibilities, as identified in SAR Hannah, and plans are being taken forward to address this. Changes were made to the Coercion and Control training, which now includes more emphasis on abuse in older adults as a result of **SAR Anna**.

A monthly Operational Safeguarding and Risk Group (OSRG) is convened monthly by the Hospitals, Continuing Healthcare and Financial Services to support senior management oversight of cases for safeguarding, high risk or of a complex nature. The OSRG is a forum where frontline practitioners and their managers can present details of case where there are risks that cannot be mitigated, despite interventions and strategies that have been activated.

**The Sussex Safeguarding Adults Escalation and Resolution Protocol** is promoted within ASC, and comments from East Sussex ASC have recently been fed back for a review of this protocol via Heads of Service.

## Strategic Priority 2: Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

To raise awareness of safeguarding policies and procedures relating to specific local themes the SAB developed learning briefings and resources, and reviewed a number of guidance documents this year.

- These included developing 10-minute Learning Briefings<sup>4</sup> for practitioners on recently published SARs.

All staff and managers are encouraged to discuss and share the briefing, to ensure that the learning outcomes are used to consolidate existing best practice and develop practice where required.

- The Brighton & Hove and East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Boards worked with a range of partner agencies to develop an updated and expanded **Multi-Agency Responding to Hoarding Behaviour Framework** that replaces the previous multi-agency Hoarding Framework.
- A **Digital Safeguarding Leaflet** for staff and carers was developed and raises awareness and highlights online harms for vulnerable adults who use social media and the internet.



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<sup>4</sup> [Safeguarding Adults Reviews - East Sussex SAB](#)

The following documents were reviewed in 2023/24 to ensure they reflected new legislation, national guidance, and local learning from SARs:

- [Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Guidance](#)
- [Multi-Agency Financial Abuse Guidance](#)
- [The Safeguarding Adults Review \(SAR\) Protocol](#)
- [The Sussex Safeguarding Adults Escalation and Resolution Policy](#)
- [Multi-Agency Modern Slavery Guidance](#)
- New guidance developed and published: [Responding to Incidents of Harm between Adults at Risk in a Provider Setting.](#)

## The Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Review Group

This group has responsibility for the [Sussex Safeguarding Adult Policy and Procedures](#) (which are held by the three local authorities as the statutory leads for adult safeguarding) and the development and implementation of changes to these.

In 2023 the three SABs and local authorities agreed the development of a new Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures website. The new website which was launched in 2024 is easy to navigate and digest, is accessible, has cost saving benefits and promotes a unified approach to safeguarding adults across Sussex.

A number of the sections in the Policy and Procedures have been refreshed and updated including the development of new sections on multi-agency working, trauma informed practice, care and approaches in adult safeguarding and multiple compound needs.



### About these procedures

Read about the revised policy and procedures, edition 4. Please note that these policy and procedures are in the process of being reviewed.



### Access the policy and procedures

Visit the 'Contents' page and access each section of the policy and procedures.



### Report suspected abuse or neglect

Find out how to raise a concern about an adult with care and support needs in your area.

# Strategic Priority 3: Performance, Quality and Audit, and Organisational Learning

One of the objectives of the Performance, Quality and Audit (PQA) subgroup is to establish systems for monitoring, reporting, and evaluating performance across organisations with regards to adult safeguarding, linking annual reporting to improvement planning and a measurable work programme.

A new **SAB Multi-Agency Data Dashboard** has been developed to routinely collect safeguarding data across agencies and display this data in an effective and accessible dashboard to help steer the work of the group and support safeguarding assurance to the SAB.



It evidences the progress being made against specific safeguarding indicators, identifies emerging trends, and extracts actionable insights to assess the performance of our safeguarding approaches. Indicators will continue to be developed further with partners in 2024/25.

## Audits

Two audits were undertaken in 2023/24 in relation to two recommendations in SAR Charlie as follows:

The East Sussex Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (ESSCP) should consider how best to undertake a **multi-agency audit of selected young people aged between 16 and 18 subject to child protection plans in the last two years to assure themselves that effective safeguarding arrangements were in place.**



In February 2024, a ‘deep dive’ was undertaken, involving front line professionals working with the child and family, of two recent cases where a 16–18-year-old had a child protection plan. In both cases, the ESSCP felt that the child protection plan was appropriate, robust, and supported the family to reduce risk. The audit identified strong social work, and multi-agency, practice in both of these cases.

The audit also explored the challenges to safeguarding vulnerable young adults and identified areas for multi-agency learning.



ESSAB and Brighton and Hove SAB (BHSAB) should assure themselves through shared **multi-agency audit that adults moving between borders in Sussex and local authorities are supported and safeguarded with clarity of case responsibility and accountability.**



The multi-agency audit group consisted of 8 agencies all of whom had identified an adult in receipt of support to meet their assessed need who had experienced or had been at risk of abuse or neglect and moved from Brighton & Hove or East Sussex to another Local Authority (LA) area.

The audit explored local guidance and identified a step-by-step guide would be beneficial for practitioners which sets out the differing aspects of need and circumstances when someone is transferring or moving from one area to another. There was an improved understanding that Local Authorities have very limited, available social housing stock and this stock is even more limited when agencies are looking to provide accommodation for adults with additional needs.



# Strategic Priority 4: Prevention, Engagement and Making Safeguarding Personal



The SAB continue to develop approaches to safeguarding which recognise the value of prevention and early intervention.

NHS Sussex delivered a fortnight of multi-agency learning events in November 2023 covering a wide range of topics including learning from statutory reviews, exploitation, domestic abuse, and trauma informed care.

Feedback from attendees reporting that they were taking forward the related learning to embed into practice.



**Attendees**

**1,165**



**Organisations**

**120**



**Number of sessions**

**12**

## Working with self-neglect - focus on responding to Hoarding Behaviour.

This session delivered jointly, by the East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Adults Boards and supported by Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, was the best attended session of the fortnight.

Of those who attended and provided feedback 100% reported that the session was relevant and useful to their work.

The session is available on YouTube here: [Safeguarding Fortnight 2023: Working with self-neglect - focus on responding to Hoarding Behaviour](#)

Through the SAB Safeguarding Community Network, focussed discussions take place regularly on safeguarding themes which community groups have requested in order to be more aware of and which would improve their confidence in recognising and responding to concerns.

Topics covered this year have included:

- **Safeguarding Adults Thresholds Guidance**

This session provided an overview of the Care Act section 42 safeguarding duty, an overview of the SAB Thresholds Guidance<sup>5</sup> and how to raise a safeguarding concern.

## Reporting procedure

You will always need a reporting procedure that clearly explains how people can make their concerns known and how you will handle any problems. The reporting procedure needs to set out:

- who to speak to
- how issues should be reported
- where information will be stored and shared internally
- how you'll share this with police, social services or regulators if necessary.



- **Safeguarding arrangements for community and voluntary organisations**

This session outlined the key safeguarding requirements for organisations which support adults.

- **Change Grow Live (CGL) East Sussex Domestic Abuse Service**

CGL provided information on their local domestic abuse service, how to make a referral, training, and local resources.

- **STAR- East Sussex Drug & Alcohol Recovery Service**

The STAR Team provided information on their local support, pathways to treatment including the alcohol pathway, opiate pathway, non-opiate pathway, and recovery support.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eastsussexsab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Sussex-Safeguarding-Adults-Thresholds-Guidance-Print-Version.pdf>

- **What is a Safeguarding Adults Board and what does it do?**

This session covered the purpose and core duties for a SAB. What Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) are and their purpose and an overview of the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

- **Safeguarding at Victoria Medical Practice (Eastbourne).**

Safeguarding staff from the practice delivered an overview of their role/work at the practice. The team is made up of four safeguarding professionals (Children and Adults) and provided an example of safeguarding practice within a GP surgery.



### **Easy Read Safeguarding Leaflet**

In collaboration with the ASC Learning Disability Commissioning Team and the Involvement Matters Team (IMT)<sup>6</sup> an easy read guide was developed for the Sussex Adult Safeguarding leaflet.

The leaflet aims to help people, particularly those with learning disabilities, to understand safeguarding information more easily.

### **[Safeguarding Easy Read Leaflet.](#)**



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<sup>6</sup> [Involvement Matters Team \(IMT\) | East Sussex County Council](#)

## Making Safeguarding Personal

Donna was 42 years old and alcohol dependent.

**STAR** the local drug and alcohol service were heavily involved in supporting Donna. Their “non-judgemental” and “friendly” service were important requirements in seeking and securing Donna’s engagement. They gave Donna advice about detoxing safely, secured a bed in a detox centre and provided additional funding to support with her mobility needs during her stay at the centre.

When Donna, due to her poor eyesight, was unable to log onto an online call to access group support around alcohol, they supported her on a one-to-one basis over the telephone with the “workbooks” that the group were using. Consideration was given to supporting Donna to log on herself and suggestions were also made to listening to online recovery podcasts.

Alongside STAR practitioners a STAR volunteer ( with personal experience of the issues STAR services help people with) had regular contact with Donna offering positive support.

STAR made a referral to **ADFAM** (a support agency for families affected by someone else’s substance misuse) for Donna’s daughter.

**Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) ‘Donna’<sup>7</sup> published December 2023**



The SAB published **Guidance on Making Safeguarding Personal** in 2019 following a recommendation from the Adult B SAR .

This guidance also includes information about appropriate resolution mechanisms to respond to situations in which an individual cannot be seen alone and there is a concern that a third party may be preventing this, or the adult may be experiencing undue influence or coercion.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.eastsussexsab.org.uk/publications/sars/>

## Strategic Priority 5: Integration, Training and Workforce Development

The SAB Training and Workforce Development (TWD) subgroup supports the strategic objective of ensuring the workforce is equipped to support adults effectively where abuse and neglect takes place.

The current East Sussex SAB training programme includes the following courses:

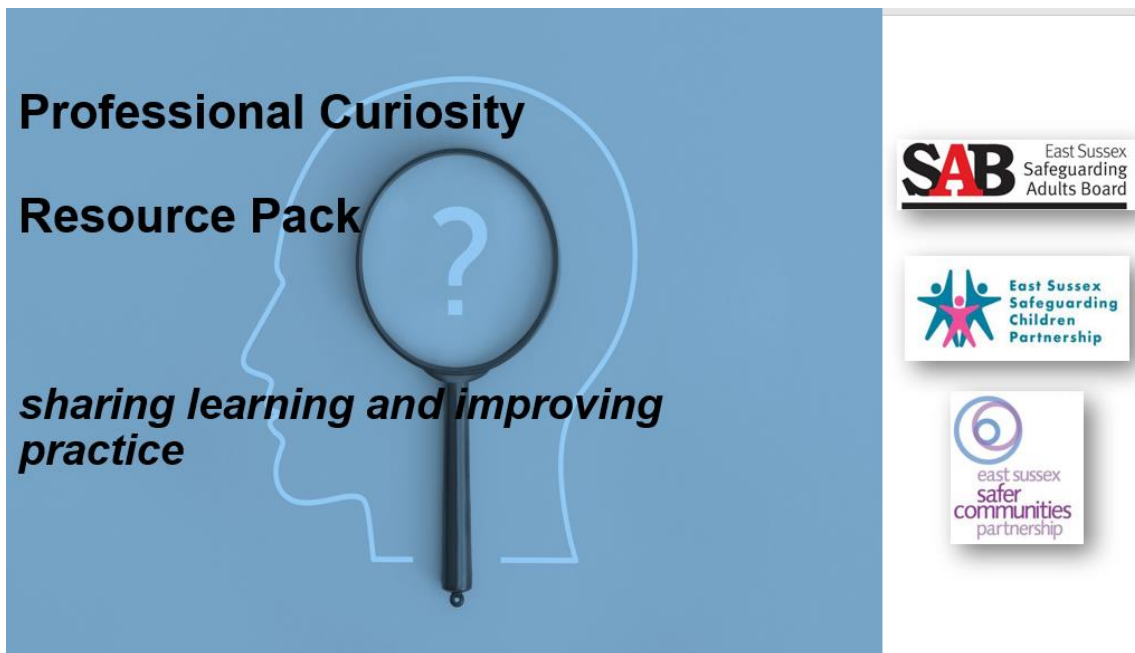
- Self-neglect
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Mental Capacity Act 2005: A Multi-agency Approach to Complex Cases
- Adopting a Whole Family Approach to Domestic Abuse
- Coercion and Control



In partnership with the Safer Communities Substance Misuse Team, the SAB hosted two virtual workshops facilitated by Alcohol Change.

These workshops were commissioned as a result of two Safeguarding Adult Reviews (Hannah and Donna) published in 2023. Both reviews identified the need to promote an understanding amongst practitioners of the relationship and interplay between alcohol misuse and self-neglect and when and how safeguarding referrals and enquiries related to alcohol use and self-neglect should be instigated and that staff who work with chronic, highly vulnerable, dependent drinkers have relevant training on the use of legal frameworks.

Practitioners who attended the sessions reported a 100% satisfaction rate with the workshops.



In partnership with the Safer Communities Team and the East Sussex Safeguarding Children’s Partnership a **Professional Curiosity Resource Pack** has been developed and published.

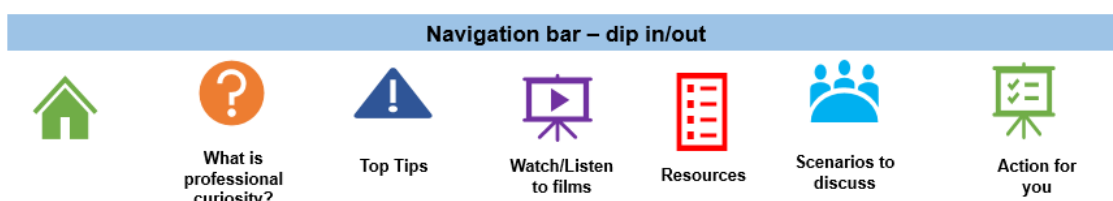
One of the objectives of the Partnerships Review group is to share learning from safeguarding reviews and building on strengths using our collective resources to address areas of concern or which require further development as outlined in the **Partnership Protocol**.

Professional curiosity was an area identified as a common theme across East Sussex reviews. The resource pack is based on the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership resource pack.

This resource aims to raise awareness of professional curiosity and how being professionally curious is necessary to fully understand a situation and the risks an adult may face, which are not always immediately obvious.

The expectation is that practitioners will share the resource pack and use it:

- in team meetings
- as part of group/individual supervision or for their own development



## Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

The SAR Subgroup acts with delegated responsibility from the East Sussex SAB. Its' main purpose is to monitor the delivery of its statutory duties with regards to SARs and other reviews of cases where there are lessons to be learnt.

**The purpose of a SAR is to look at the ways professionals and agencies work together to determine what might have been done differently which could have prevented harm or death. It is not an enquiry into how a person died, nor is it to apportion blame; but to learn from such situations, and to ensure that any learning is applied to future cases to reduce the likelihood of similar harm occurring again.**

SABs have a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to undertake Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs). This is when:

- An adult dies as a result of abuse or neglect (including death by suicide), whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult.
- An adult is still alive but has experienced serious abuse or neglect, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult.

## Published Safeguarding Adult Reviews 2023/24

- SARs Charlie, Donna, Finley, Hannah and Gwen and Ian were published on the [SAB website](#) in 2023/24.
- A total of 35 recommendations and associated actions in relation to Charlie, Donna, Finley, Hannah, the Thematic Review and SAR Gwen and Ian were incorporated into the SAR Action Plan in 2023/24 with the recommendations developed in partnership with SAB partner agencies.



## Completed recommendations included:

**Recommendation: Sussex Police should consider how information and intelligence can inform the response to someone who is suspected of being a cuckooing victim (vulnerable to exploitation) but where they are denying they are being cuckooed.**

A new Operation Cuckoo Single Point Of Contact Working Group (police) has been developed. The aim of this group is to bring a joined up and standardised approach to Sussex Police's response to Cuckooing. Intelligence and Operational information is fed into this group. Where victims are denying they are being cuckooed consideration will be given on whether they require safeguarding.

**Recommendation: Assurance of the progress of the implementation of the East Sussex Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2021-2026. The Lead Strategic Commissioning Manager for Substance Misuse updated the SAB in January and provided assurances of the progress of the strategy.**

There is now a multi-disciplinary alcohol care team based in Hastings Conquest hospital which will aim to reduce bed days, readmissions and ensure that people who are intoxicated, drinking at risky levels or are dependent are identified early and given the support they need by qualified advisors.

Development of an Alcohol Harm Reduction Alliance in East Sussex will bring together expertise and resources to combat challenges posed by excessive alcohol consumption and will be needed to fully achieve the five ambitions by 2026.

The new treatment service contract is due to start in April 2026 and the way in which agencies share information and work collaboratively will be part of this consultation process.

**Recommendation: Sussex Partnership Foundation NHS Trust should review the current arrangements for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) support across Sussex and ensure that inconsistency of practice in local teams is addressed including the lead practitioner role for hospital discharge.**

Significant changes have been made to CAMHS duty teams, including:

Reducing the use of answerphones.

Minimum clinical standards have been developed which require a Lead Practitioner at hospital discharge of a young person.

CAMHS clinical risk training has been updated to include more about ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences).

## SAB Priorities 2024 – 27

Our new **Strategic Plan** sets out the following three strategic priorities, themes and objectives that the SAB want to achieve for the next three years.

**Self-Neglect** - Improve and develop effective multi-agency working and practice with adults who self-neglect. Develop a shared understanding, and early recognition of the issues involved in working with adults who self-neglect with a focus on substance misuse, mental capacity, exploitation, and multiple compound needs.

**Safeguarding and Homelessness** - Promote positive practice with professionals working at the interface of homelessness and adult safeguarding. Ensure professionals use trauma informed approaches and consider local multi-agency risk management pathways and legal frameworks to identify what action is needed to reduce or remove potential risk.

**Prevention and Early Intervention** - Ensure unpaid carers who take on adult caring responsibilities have an understanding and awareness of adult safeguarding and what support they can access for the person they are caring for as well as for themselves. Promote and raise awareness of the important role unpaid carers have in preventing neglect, abuse, or harm and ensuring carers know how to raise and report safeguarding concerns.

### How will the effectiveness of this strategic plan be measured?

**Annual Report** - The board has a statutory duty to produce an annual report at the end of each year which details the work of the board and its effectiveness.

**Bi-Annual Safeguarding Self-Assessment** – We ask partners to complete a self-assessment to evidence the effectiveness of their local safeguarding procedures and practice and provide assurance to the SAB.

**Development Event** - The board holds a bi-annual development event following the self-assessment activity which is another way the board can measure its effectiveness and make improvements for the following year.

# Glossary

## Trauma Informed Practice

Trauma-informed practice is an approach to health and care interventions which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological and social development. A working definition of trauma-informed practice is detailed on the [Gov.uk website](#).

## Changing Futures

The [Changing Futures programme](#) is a £77 million joint initiative by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest community funder in the UK.

Sussex was awarded a Changing Futures grant of £4.45M in July 2021 to improve the way that local systems support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Multiple disadvantage or multiple complex/compound needs (MCN) is defined by the national Changing Futures programme as people who experience three or more of: homelessness, current or historical offending, substance misuse, domestic abuse, and mental ill health.

## Transition

Transition is the term used within the [2014 Care Act](#) (and also the Children and Families Act 2014) to describe the range of processes that local authorities should use to support a child with care needs or young carer (and their informal networks of support) to move successfully from childhood into adulthood.

The 3 groups of people that transition applies to are:

- Young people with Care and Support needs who are approaching adulthood;
- Adult carers of young people with Care and Support needs who are approaching adulthood; and
- Young carers who are themselves approaching adulthood