



# Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report

**April 2023 - March 2024**



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# Introduction from the Chair

# Hello

This year has seen a change to the Independent Chair, in that the SAB has said farewell to Andrew Mason after many years of dedication and I have taken over the reins of this important role as detailed in The Care Act 2014 which makes a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) a statutory requirement. The purpose of Safeguarding Adults Boards is to help safeguard people who have care and support needs from abuse and prevent harm happening to them.



Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership (TWSP) is determined to ensure that people, rather than policies or processes, remain at the centre of what we do. By law, the SAB must have three core members which are: Telford and Wrekin Council, West Mercia Police and the Integrated Care System, however we firmly believe there is a fourth member – the people of Telford and Wrekin.

Together we hold each other to account and build learning through identifying best practice and areas which need improvement to improve the quality of life for the people of Telford and Wrekin and to ensure they remain free and safe from harm. In addition to our local partners, TWSP is in regular contact with our counter parts up and down the country to proactively share learning identified in other areas which may also be useful to Telford and Wrekin.

The SAB has three core duties:

- develop and publish a strategic plan setting out our objectives, how we will meet them and how the board members and our partner agencies will contribute;
- to make sure that Safeguarding Adult Reviews take place for any cases which meet the criteria;
- publish an annual report showing we have fulfilled our statutory obligations and have done what we said we would do in our Strategy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the huge number of professionals who continue to work tirelessly in Telford and Wrekin to make it a safer place for those adults who need our support and extra protection.

**Sue Howard**

**Independent Chair of Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership**

# Who makes up the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Adults Board and what does it do?

Telford & Wrekin Council, West Mercia Police and Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care Board ICB have a statutory duty to put in place multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults. This responsibility is driven by the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Adults Board which is funded, equally, by the three statutory partners.

Membership of the board is drawn from:

- Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust
- Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital Trust
- Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Shropshire Partners in Care (who have now changed their name to Partners in Care).
- Making it Real Board
- Healthwatch
- Chief Officers Group

The board has agreed its core focus as:

- put the person who has been harmed or at risk at the centre of everything that we do and listen to their views about what we can do to improve the safety of people;
- hold members to account – are we/they doing enough to keep people safe;
- collect and share information about how well we are keeping people safe and what more we could do;
- make sure our workers and volunteers get the training they need to provide safe services and share concerns if they think a person is being hurt or abused;
- review our policies and guidance to make sure we are constantly improving; and
- raise awareness of safeguarding issues and what to do.

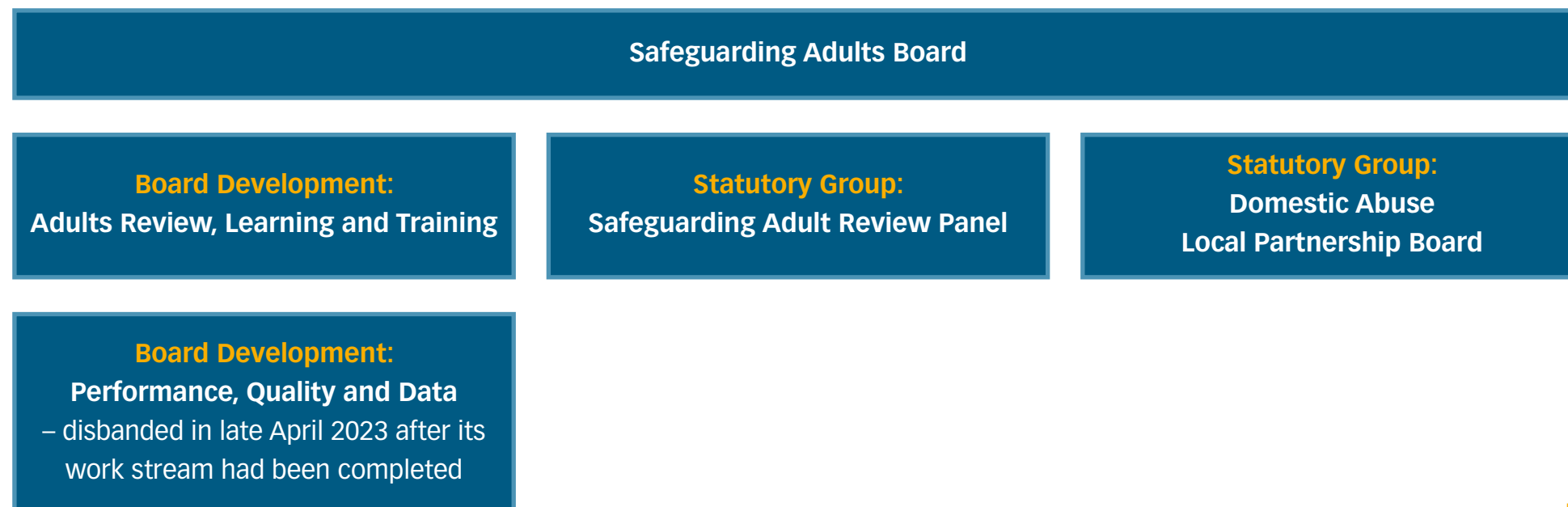


**How the board does things is as important as what it does. To shape how it delivers its role, the board has adopted the following principles and values:**

- **Empowerment** – presumption of person led decisions and informed consent;
- **Prevention** – it's better to take action before harm occurs;
- **Proportionality** – proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented;
- **Protection** – support and representation for those in greatest need;
- **Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect; and
- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

The Board is chaired by an Independent Chair appointed by the three statutory partners with the objective of providing independent challenge and scrutiny. As part of our arrangements for external challenge, the Chair presents the Board's annual report to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

To drive delivery of its objectives, the board has a series of sub-groups and boards as set out below:



## Telford and Wrekin – the place

The borough which the board serves is a place of contrasts. Central to the borough is the New Town of Telford which was commissioned in 1968 and grew rapidly around existing communities including Wellington, Oakengates, Dawley and Madeley. Along the banks of the River Severn is Ironbridge, the birthplace of the industrial revolution and now a World Heritage site. Surrounding Telford is a rural hinterland – accounting for more than two thirds of the borough’s area.

The 2021 Census estimated the population of the borough to be 185,842 people. A quarter (45,504 people) are aged 0 to 19. From the 2011 to 2021 Census, the borough’s overall population increased by 19,000 people – an increase of 11% - making it the fastest growing area in the West Midlands. As the population grows it is becoming more diverse and ageing, between 2011 and 2021, the number of people aged 65+ grew by 36% which is twice the regional rate of 18%.



Many people who have come to live in the borough have been attracted by the value for money housing offer, our schools, outstanding natural environment, growing economy and our connectivity via road and rail into the West Midlands conurbation and beyond.

Whilst at face value the borough is prosperous and thriving, the Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that there are 18 neighbour areas in the Borough which are ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in England. This impacts on the life experience of these residents in terms of poorer outcomes with regards to health, education employment and housing, such challenges have undoubtedly increased because of the current cost of living crisis. This impact can be seen on the demand for support from adults social care across the borough:

- The number of concerns raised in 2023/2024 showed a slight increase for a second year running with 477 logged this year. This is 7% higher than two years ago.
- During 2023/2024 – 54% of 542 enquiries were to protect females with males being at risk in 46% of cases.
- 2023/2024 – saw a 59/41 split between females and males at the centre of concerns respectively.

## What have we achieved in the last 12 months?

An essential objective of this report is to demonstrate the impact of the Board and the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements that it has put in place. The following part of the report takes a month by month look at the activity of the Board and the safeguarding impact that this has had.



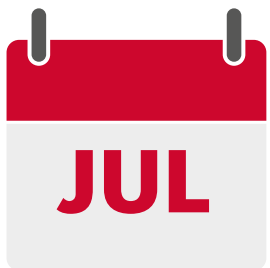
Domestic Abuse has a far reaching impact across all ages and it is for this reason that any **Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)** which is carried out feed into both the Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards. DHRs are a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person they were related to, in a relationship with or was a member of the same household. April saw the commencement of a DHR with the purpose of identifying learning regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims.



May saw the launch of a new **enhanced data dashboard** which addressed the gaps identified through the Adult Data, Performance and Quality working group. The new dashboard now captures more qualitative information relating to a person's journey through social care services. This new type of information tells us how people 'felt' during their time with services. Did they feel their wishes and feelings were taken into account when decisions were being made about their care and support, they get the outcome they wanted? This data capture provides a real insight and focus to ensure we are [making safeguarding personal](#) to the person and their situation.



The new **Domestic Abuse Service** was launched in June. The service is being delivered by Cranstoun in partnership with Women's Aid and offers a single point of contact. As part of the service launch, **Cranstoun** joined forces with representatives from West Mercia Police and the Integrated Care System (bringing all health services together) to deliver an [online awareness session](#) across all partners which focussed on the domestic abuse support available, warning flags, and preventative measures which can be put in place. This online 'lunch and learn' session was our most attended online session of the year proving that practitioners across Telford and Wrekin are fully committed to answering calls for help.



The Safeguarding Adults Review Panel is a multi-agency group who review instances where a person with care and support needs has died or come to significant harm, to determine what agencies and individuals involved could have done differently that may have prevented harm or death from happening. July saw the start of a **Safeguarding Adult Review**, with an independent author being commissioned to review agency involvement and identify learning. All reviews are undertaken with the greatest level of care and sensitivity with final reports being fully anonymised to protect the privacy of family and friends whilst still allowing learning and changes to be made to services.



As part of the SAB's continuous **auditing process**, we, along with other Safeguarding Boards in the West Midlands used a new online auditing system to assess how well partners were meeting the duties detailed in the Care Act 2014. Following the audit 37 points were identified as area which would further improve and build upon the safeguarding. 25 of these actions have already been completed with the remaining actions on track to be completed well in advance of the next audit cycle which starts in spring 2025.



Analysis of our safeguarding data highlighted that there was a disproportionately low number of safeguarding referrals from black and ethnic minority groups in Telford and Wrekin. As such a community engagement event was held in September, specifically aimed towards these groups to understand the reasons for this and to raise awareness within the communities. Attendance at the event was good, with feedback confirming that it had been a really useful exercise. Ongoing work will be taking place to continue to build relationships and trust among the community group leaders so that they can act as an advocate in safeguarding situations.



October was a busy month preparing for **Safeguarding Adults Week** taking place in November. A diverse range of seminars and events took place which were open to both professionals and members of the public. This included our stall at the Town Centre where you could drop in for advice and support on a whole range of concerns.

To support the **White Ribbon** campaign the SAB launched a new animation which highlighted highlights the [unique challenges that older adults face when domestic abuse occurs](#). The aim of the animation is to be a tool to help support practitioners and families start a conversation with an older adult.





Following the move to identify learning which crosses both Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards we commissioned a charity to deliver a half-day session focussing on **Trauma Informed Practice**. We recognise that our communities are complex and in some cases distrusting of agencies and this face to face conference had attendees from across 19 different specialisms to focus on educating professionals and promoting the message of how one person can make a huge impact on an individual's life by taking the time to understand previous trauma and how this still impacts on them and the decision they make.



The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is only effective when all partners work together to achieve a shared standard for the people of Telford and Wrekin and as such our programme of **Peer Reviews** are crucial. This process means that partners are paired up at random to review a partner agency to understand how well they are meeting their safeguarding responsibilities and embedding learning within their culture. December saw the final reviews taking place within the partnership. This process allows for areas of best practice to be shared among agencies, alongside identification of areas which require further work ad focus.



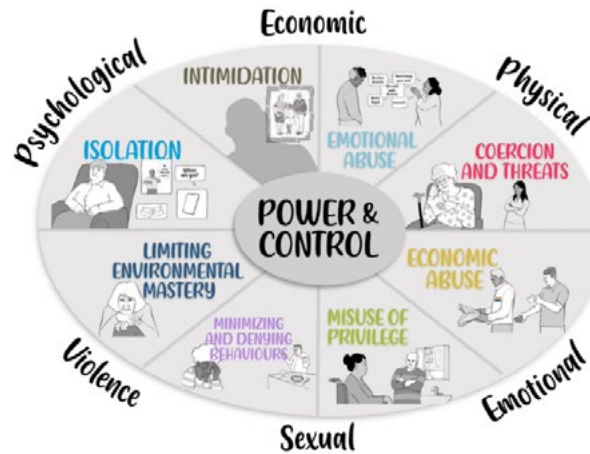
After a robust recruitment process, Sue Howard was appointed as the **new Independent Chair** and joined the Safeguarding Adults Board. Sue has worked in adult social care for most of her career before moving into regulation and becoming Deputy Chief Inspector in the Care Quality Commission. Sue is passionate about person-centred, safe care for everyone, and is perfectly placed to positively challenge our partners to achieve desired outcomes and promote equal opportunities. One of her first changes has been to introduce the fourth partner in the TWSP, the people of Telford and Wrekin and she is keen to explore how TWSP can further improve its engagement, and gain the views of people from every background.



Following delivery of the first **Advocacy Awareness** session by [POHWER](#), a charity which helps people who, because of disability, illness, social exclusion and other challenges, find it difficult to express their views or get the support they need, work continued to arrange a further set of online learning dates for both professionals and members of the public. The [initial session](#) was aimed at professionals and covered the basics of what is advocacy, why is it needed, who can benefit and how to access it. Additional sessions will take place in June and November 2024.



Work started on our next Strategic Plan and creation of the fourth partner – the people of Telford and Wrekin. Each partner is currently reviewing the data and evidence they hold, which must include the voice of Telford and Wrekin’s people and members of the board will come together, in April and May, to share what they have and decide how to prioritise their work. We expect the new Strategy to include work which supports specific groups of people alongside projects designed to support the people of Telford and Wrekin as a whole. We want to make sure that our Strategy is accessible to all and resonates with the people of Telford and Wrekin.



Today(23 Nov), as part of #SafeguardingAdultsWeek, we are hosting a drop-in event at Telford Centre. You can come anytime until 5pm to speak to safeguarding experts from our council & local organisations about safeguarding issues, such as domestic abuse, hoarding, self-neglect.



<p><b>Empowerment</b> People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent</p>	<p><b>Prevention</b> It is better to take action before harm occurs</p>	<p><b>Proportionality</b> The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented</p>
<p><b>Protection</b> Support and representation for those in greatest need</p>	<p><b>Partnership</b> Working with communities who have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect</p>	<p><b>Accountability</b> Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice</p>



# Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's)

The purpose of the SAR Panel is to meet the statutory requirements of the Care Act 2014, the Local Safeguarding Adult Board<sup>1</sup> has a responsibility to conduct **Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)**. This Sub-group has delegated authority to undertake this activity to promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations by using learning from case reviews to drive improvements in practice.

Since April 2023 the panel has received five referrals, two of which have met the criteria for a full SAR review to be undertaken. All referrals received undergo a thorough scoping process across all partner agencies to assess the information and involvement with the particular case before a decision is made following strict frameworks and adhering to the criteria as detailed in [section 44 of the Care Act 2014](#).

Work has also continued on the SAR commissioned in the last financial year. An independent reviewer has been commissioned and has been tasked to review the case to identify learning for partners involved. The findings from this review will be published on the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership website once it has reached completion.

The **Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Decision Panel** seeks to ensure that the processes in Telford and Wrekin to determine when a case meets the DHR criteria and the ensuing actions necessary to complete the review meet the standards within the Home Office Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews 2016 (referred to as the statutory guidance)<sup>2</sup>. The Domestic Homicide Review Decision Panel is responsible for making a recommendation to the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership about whether a DHR should be commissioned or not.

The statutory guidance makes it clear that “where a victim took their own life (suicide) and the circumstances give rise to concern, for example it emerges that there was coercive controlling behaviour in the relationship, a review should be undertaken, even if a suspect is not charged with an offence or they are tried and acquitted.”

As stated whilst the governance of the Domestic Homicide Review process rests with the Community Safety Partnership we think that this important work needs to be referenced in our annual report given the obvious degree of cross over between the two groups and the mutual way the Safeguarding Adult Board works with the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.

<sup>1</sup> This is now known locally as Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575273/DHR-Statutory-Guidance-161206.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575273/DHR-Statutory-Guidance-161206.pdf)

We have also focused on ensuring there is a better understanding of the circumstances in which people go on to complete suicide after experiencing domestic abuse. Work has taken place to share insights from important research in this area and this will remain an area of endeavour in 2024-25<sup>3</sup>.

During April 2023 and March 2024 the DHR Decision making Panel received two referrals for consideration with both progressing to full reviews being led by an independent reviewer who will review the cases to identify learning for all partners involved.

<sup>3</sup> Domestic Homicides and Suspected Victim Suicides 2022-2023 Report [www.vkpp.org.uk/vkpp-work/domestic-homicide-project/#:~:text=Key%20findings%20from%20the%20report,31%20adult%20family%20homicides%20\(AFH\)](https://www.vkpp.org.uk/vkpp-work/domestic-homicide-project/#:~:text=Key%20findings%20from%20the%20report,31%20adult%20family%20homicides%20(AFH))

## Training and development

**We have continued to identify learning which crosses both Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards and consequently held a largest multi-agency event to date. The Trauma Informed Practice Session was attended by 280 professionals across all agencies in Telford and Wrekin!**

All partners have mandatory safeguarding training in place where compliance is monitored and considered as part of the Care Act audit and ongoing assurance work within the Adults, Review, Learning and Training sub group. In addition to these mandatory courses the SAB offers a constant E-Learning training offer which is extended to all partners through the Telford and Wrekin Council online learning environment and can be accessed at a time to suit them. This site includes multitude of training packages including Exploitation and Vulnerability, Adult Safeguarding, The Care Act 2014, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), Domestic Abuse Awareness and Hoarding to name but a few.

The following bespoke **'lunch and learn' sessions** have taken place between April 2023 and March 2024 in collaboration with our partners and has allowed over 270 professionals access to courses, seminars and learning material to develop their practice and expertise even further, to help protect the residents of Telford and Wrekin:

- **Domestic Abuse Awareness**
- **Co-production**
- **Safeguarding is Everybody's Business**
- **Scams: red flags!**
- **Who Cares for the Carers**
- **Cyber & Fraud Protect "There's A Cyber Criminal Out There for Everyone"**
- **Dental Neglect in older people and the Care to Smile Programme**
- **Advocacy Awareness**
- **Thematic analysis of Safeguarding Adults Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews**
- **Human Rights and Adult Safeguarding**

*"Excellent Presentation. Very moving and informative. Thank you."*

*"Please pass on my thanks. What a fantastic session. Really made me think more from a safeguarding point and how to share the information in supervision sessions. Thanks to all involved."*

*"I found it really beneficial and enlightening."*

The following 7 minute briefings have been developed and circulated among partners:

- **Information Sharing**
- **Professional Boundaries**
- **Hoarding**
- **MARAC**
- **Professional Curiosity**
- **Self Neglect**
- **Clare's Law**
- **Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's)**
- **Domestic Abuse**
- **Predatory Marriage**

*"I cannot say enough about how they were excellent in sharing their lived experiences...I will take away from this that always to ask the questions, to stop missed opportunities and to look at people having more of a positive experience... Thank you to them all for sharing their stories. "*

*"I wanted to say a big thank you for running this training session. I found it invaluable I really look forward to future sessions. "*

# Quality and performance

The purpose of the Adult Review, Learning and Training sub group is to promote a culture of continuous multi-agency learning and improvement throughout the partnership. The ARLT sub group meets quarterly and between April 2023 and March 2024 the sub group has undertaken the following activities:

- Undertaken a Peer Review exercise across all partner agencies to challenge each other regarding Safeguarding Standards .
- Completed the West Midlands Care Act Audit across all partner agencies with work continuing to address the points identified within the action plan for improvement.
- Developed a 7 minute briefing on Professional Boundaries.
- Enhanced the data dashboard to allow us to better understand the needs, demands and challenges faced by the communities in Telford and Wrekin.
- Contributed to multiple online and in person events to mark Safeguarding Adults Week, including a town centre drop in for members of the public and professionals to seek advice.

## A heartfelt thank you to...

All the individuals and families who have taken the brave step to share their experiences and worked with us in pushing for change. The 100's of professionals up and down the borough who have continued to support the partnership, their colleagues and the residents of Telford and Wrekin.

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To find out more about the Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership and access resources please visit [www.telfordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk)