

West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Briefing no. 6 – October 2017



The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board meets four times a year to plan and scrutinise how agencies work together to keep adults at risk of abuse or neglect safe in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham.

Among the topics discussed at the September Board meeting were: support provided to homeless and vulnerable people by the Salvation Army; mental health and safeguarding; joint working between adults and children services to support victims of child sexual exploitation at the transition to adulthood; what staff should do if they receive a disclosure of non-recent abuse; a framework for agencies on how to manage allegations against people in positions of trust.

Making Safeguarding Personal

Members of *Listen To Us* have created a short film to help us understand what we can do to help make safeguarding personal.

Making Safeguarding Personal puts people more in control of their lives and makes sure they are involved in decisions and choices that help keep them safe. In the film, *Listen To Us* members explain what Making Safeguarding Personal means and the practical things we should do to make it happen, including:

- Understanding and being sympathetic to their feelings.
- Giving them the opportunity to talk things through face to face - preferably with someone they know and trust.
- Explaining things in a way they can understand.
- Listening to and respecting their opinions and choices.
- Explaining their options and asking who they want to involve in the situation.
- Helping them understand why it is a safeguarding concern and ensuring that what happens next includes what they think.
- Telling them when their case is closed.
- And making sure they have the right support to move on.

You can see the film at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUKMMMEU4m4>

Listen to us is CLASP's training group which started in 2011. It was set up by people with learning disabilities to raise awareness of what it is like to have a learning disability. CLASP is a service user group and self-advocacy charity to help people speak up and lead independent lives. <http://www.wokinghamclasp.org.uk/cm/>



The new website for the Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures was presented to the Board. It will be launched at the end of October.

Bite size learning sessions

The first bite size session held on 11 September on [Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews](#) was very well attended and informative. The next two bite size sessions will be on Advocacy and Safer Recruitment.

Mental Capacity Act Week 16-20 October

includes a series of free workshops to support practitioners to develop skills and knowledge in understanding and applying the Mental Capacity Act 2005. [Book your place now.](#)

For more information on these events see the [Learning and Development](#) page of the website.

Salvation Army - Support for homeless and vulnerable people

Jan Howlin and Chris Pape from the Salvation Army in Wokingham joined the Board meeting to raise awareness of the support provided to homeless and vulnerable people. As well as a lot of practical support, the Salvation Army helps people get back to work through use of a laptop and training to help gain employment or voluntary work. Staff and volunteers signpost to other agencies and work together to support an individual; they accompany people to appointments and help them with paperwork.



Jan and Chris brought to the attention of Board members some of the issues their clients face, so that we can improve the way we work:

- They support many people who have attempted suicide. For some people suicide is perceived as the only way out; for others who are desperate it is a plea for help. People appear to get fast tracked to receive services if they have attempted suicide and it is necessary to break this cycle by intervening early to prevent a problem reaching crisis point.
- There are recognised difficulties in accessing mental health services: telephone contact is difficult for many people, as is group work which many find intimidating.
- Written correspondence is also an issue: lengthy and complex documents are overwhelming and envelopes often don't get opened. A simple covering note to summarise key points and the immediate actions required would be helpful.

Find out more about the Salvation Army in [Reading, West Berkshire](#) and [Wokingham](#).

Find out more about the support provided for homeless people in [Reading, West Berkshire](#) and [Wokingham](#).

Other useful links:

- [Streetlink](#)
- [Shelter](#)



Rose Centre – support for women who have experienced FGM

The Rose Centre is a place where women who have experienced FGM can go for support. Women can speak in confidence with a specialist doctor and get support from other women.

The service is a once a month drop-in at Oxford Road Community Centre. The Centre covers the whole of the West of Berkshire. No woman will be turned away.

See [flyer](#) on the Board's website for more information.

Safeguarding Adults Toolkit

The [Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm](#) toolkit provides information, templates, and handy guides. The toolkit promotes good practice and use of relevant legislation when providing care for adults at risk of harm, or those lacking the capacity to make decisions for themselves.

Although aimed at GPs and other primary care staff, the toolkit contains useful advice for all, such as top tips for deciding whether a safeguarding referral is needed and types and indicators of abuse.

The Board's website is <http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>

To be added to the distribution list for these Briefings, please email the Board's business manager natalie.madden@reading.gov.uk

Non-recent allegations

The definition of non-recent abuse in the context of child abuse is that the abuse ended at least 12 months before it was reported to the Police. 'Non-recent abuse' is the preferred term although 'historic abuse' has previously been used. Thames Valley Police have clear operational guidance and procedures to manage investigations into non-recent abuse.

If staff receive a disclosure of non-recent abuse, it is a matter for their professional judgment and / or consent of the victim as to whether they report it to Police. There is no current mandatory reporting requirement. The Police encourage staff to report, but acknowledge that doing so may impact on the professional relationship with the victim and the ability to provide ongoing support to them.

If there is a current safeguarding concern, particularly with regard to other potential victims, then organisations have to seriously consider their duty to report to ensure effective safeguarding measures can be put in place.

Advice to Partner Agencies if someone reports non-recent abuse:

- Let the victim know you believe them (this is often their biggest fear).
- Listen to what they have to say and make a note of disclosures.
- Don't question them about the disclosure (this will affect the validity of the Police interview).
- Reassure them that their allegations will be treated seriously.
- Consider the risks and take action to mitigate them without alerting the perpetrator. Although they may be reporting non-recent abuse, the perpetrator may still pose a risk to the victim or others.
- Seek the victim's views on what they would like to happen and their consent to report.
- If a decision is made to report without the victim's consent, then let them know.

Reports can be made to the Police in the following ways:

Call 999 if immediate emergency response is required.

Call 101 if there are no immediate concerns.

Online via TVP's website.

In October, Thames Valley Police will be launching Operation Verse to enable anonymous reporting of rape or serious sexual assault by a victim or a third party.

Information Sharing

Staff are reminded of the findings from [Bichard Inquiry](#) following the Soham murders into the vetting and information sharing procedures which allowed Ian Huntley to be employed as a school caretaker. See also the [Berkshire Information Sharing Protocol](#) and the [Seven Golden Rules of Information Sharing](#).

Contacts

An updated version of the [Board's Directory](#) is on the website. This gives names and contact details of board members and other key safeguarding staff in the local area.

Local Partners - Twitter



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