

Welcome to our latest edition of Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board newsletter.

This edition is packed with evidence, findings and resources based on case and safeguarding reviews, practice audits and the work of our subgroups.

Dear Partners

As we leave the summer and head into autumn, no doubt we all reflect on the disturbing race riots and hate crimes that unfolded over the past few months. It was encouraging to see in Hertfordshire how the Police and other key partners worked together to monitor the local picture and their readiness to intervene if required.

It is the time of year for Annual Reports! The HSCP and HSAB have published their Annual Reports for 2023/24, which can be found on our [website](#) and [Hertfordshire County Council website](#). This is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the work across the partnership in safeguarding adults and children.

In June 2024 the HSCP/HSAB held their Annual Conference on the theme of Exploitation, with keynote speakers and workshops on scamming, online abuse, Prevent, child sexual abuse and Mental Capacity Act. The Conference was very well attended, and feedback was positive with participants speaking about the impact on their practice. To further strengthen our training offer on the Mental Capacity Act, the HSCP/HSAB are developing a training offer that will be available later this year.

Over the summer the HSAB have been working on raising awareness of cuckooing along with our partners and Crimestoppers.

The HCSP and HSAB have a new Service Manager– Laurence Doe. He comes with experience in partnership working and with a background in safeguarding. Welcome to the team Laurence!

This autumn the HSCP and HSAB are in the process of reviewing our priorities for the next financial year and welcome any thoughts and ideas.

Natalie Hammond

Chair, Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Liz Hanlon

Chair, Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board



HSCP Annual Report 2023/24

The HSCP have published their Annual Report for 2023/24. This outlines the achievements of the Partnership during 2023/24 and includes our responses to our priority areas: *Promote equity and culture competence, recovering from the Pandemic, Workforce, Vulnerable Adolescents and Continuous Learning*. We continue to carry out quality assurance work including audits, learning from practice reviews and through the work undertaken by our Independent Scrutineer.

It also highlights our commitment to Learning & Development via our multi-agency training offer. This was evaluated by the University of Hertfordshire and they recognised that the training had a positive impact on safeguarding practice. We continue to develop a multi-agency training programme, informed by findings from case reviews, audits, national research and local priorities.

You can find the Annual Report on our [website](#).



Working Together 2023

The HSCP is working to ensure that we are fully compliant with Working Together 2023 (WT23) by December 2024. We have completed a self-assessment and are implementing an action plan. Working Together 2023 can be found on the [Government Website](#) You can follow our progress by viewing the WT23 Action Plan on our [website](#).

We continue to have strong leadership arrangements including working to ensure that Lead Safeguarding Partners (a title introduced by WT23) are fulfilling their revised statutory duties. We are also reviewing our arrangements to ensure that the voice of the education sector is strong and effective within the safeguarding arrangements.

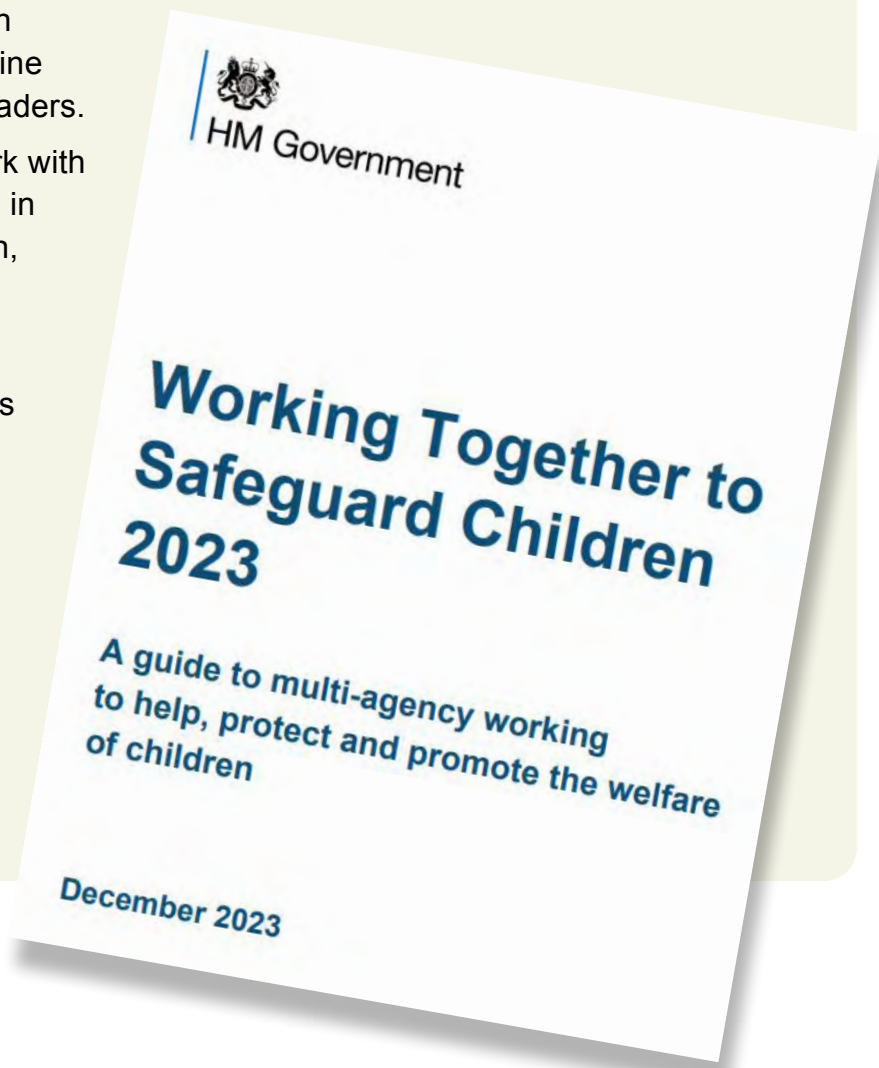
Information sharing

In May 2024, the DfE released [Information Sharing; advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#). This advice is for:

- individuals who are directly involved in safeguarding children, including frontline practitioners, managers and senior leaders.
- individuals and organisations that work with children, parents, carers and families, in sectors such as social care, education, health, justice and voluntary.

It is also a useful aid for practitioners working with vulnerable adults and adults who could pose a risk to children.

The advice outlines the importance of sharing information about children, young people and their families in order to safeguard children. It should be read alongside the statutory guidance [Working together to safeguard children 2023](#).



UK Safer Internet Centre

Online safety tool

In collaboration with the Childnet Youth Advisory Board, the UK Safer Internet Centre has created an [interactive resource](#) about [online safety](#) called “Reliability Online.”

This tool is designed to educate children to recognise trustworthy online content and addresses various risks, including Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated imagery, scams, and body image concerns. While primarily targeted at 13 to 16-year-olds, the resource can also be customised for use with both older and younger learners.



Sextortion

The UK Safer Internet Centre has released [new guidance](#) on financially motivated sexual extortion, commonly known as ‘sextortion’. The guidance offers support, tools, and resources to assist professionals, parents, caregivers, and young people. It also includes details on reporting and escalating incidents.

The Guardian has released a [podcast](#) and [article](#) about sextortion that discusses the issue in relation to the death of a 16-year-old boy who was blackmailed by a criminal gang after he [shared a sexual image](#), believing he was talking to a girl.



Neglect Strategy 2024-27

An updated Neglect Strategy for Hertfordshire has been published which outlines how all partners will contribute to identifying and addressing neglect with the families they work with. The Strategy is overseen by the HSCP and the Families First Partnership Board. The Strategy has been updated to reflect the new national definition of neglect in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and to include more defined milestones to demonstrate progress and how the objectives have made a difference. Supporting Families will also be focusing on individual aspects of neglect in direct work with families with a different theme every 12 weeks including dental health and health eating.

The HSCP offer the following courses in relation to neglect – please visit their [website](#) for bookings

- Graded Care Profile Lite Bite – a tool to be used when ongoing Neglect is of concern
- Understanding and Identifying Neglect, with a focus on Early Help

You can also visit the [HSCP Neglect Hub](#), for further information and resources.

The Partnership offer training on the [Graded Care Profile](#) and there is the [Multi-agency Checklist Tool](#) which can be used as a precursor to the Graded Care Profile.



NSPCC Podcast: The Voice of the Child in social work practice

How considering the child's voice can enhance safeguarding responses

It is important for social workers and all practitioners working with children and young people to consider the voice of the child — their experiences, their worries and their wants — when undertaking their work, particularly when conducting assessments. This improves professionals' abilities to act in the child's best interest.

In this podcast, three consultant social workers from the NSPCC's Quality and Practice team look at how we can hear and understand the young person's voice.

They discussed:

- what we mean by 'the voice of the child'
- why the voice of the child is important in social work practice
- how to effectively capture the voice of the child and what barriers might get in the way of this
- the language we use to describe the three types of children's voice: pre-speaking, speaking, non-speaking
- how to make use of the voice of the child in practical work, including in meetings, assessments, interventions and record keeping.

You can listen to the podcast here: [The voice of the child in social work practice | NSPCC Learning \(youtube.com\)](#)



HSAB Annual Report 2023-24

Our new annual report is now available on our [Website](#) and contains details of the Board's activity over the last year including highlighting our work on Cuckooing, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and raising awareness of domestic abuse and older people.

The Board continues to work to engage with all partners including the District Councils and voluntary organisations to achieve our goals to safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect.



**Hertfordshire
Safeguarding
Adults Board**

**Annual Report
2023-2024**

Hertfordshire
Safeguarding Adults Board

Raising Awareness of Cuckooing

During May 2024 the HSAB with the help of Crimestoppers ran an ad campaign around the districts to help raise awareness of cuckooing and the related crimes.

What is Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoos who take over the nests of other birds.

There are different types of cuckooing:

- Using the property to deal, store or take drugs.
- Using the property for sexual exploitation.
- Taking over the property as a place to live.
- Taking over the property to financially abuse the tenant.

The most common form of cuckooing is where drug dealers take over a person's home and use it to store or distribute drugs. Criminal gangs target people to use their homes to deal drugs from. Money and weapons may also be stored at the property.

Cuckooing often forms part of a wider County Lines activity and is a form of criminal exploitation. The person being cuckooed will likely be reluctant to raise concerns for fear of repercussions or violence.

Cuckooing can also sometimes be a family member who takes over say a grandparents home for financial gain or criminal activity.

You can find out more about cuckooing on our web page where there are also links to report any concerns. [What is Cuckooing?](#)

These are some of our colleagues who braved the weather to support our campaign.



SAR Alex

The HSAB have published our recent Safeguarding Adults Review - Alex.

About Alex

Alex was 51 years old when he died in an accidental fire in March 2022. The fire was caused by the “careless use of smoking materials”. Alex had a long history of involvement with services. He had many health problems, associated with sustained alcohol use including falls when intoxicated. He also experienced malnutrition, eating difficulties and depression. He had self-harmed and made suicide attempts. Alex lived alone in two storey accommodation, but mobility difficulties meant that he slept on a bed downstairs.

Safeguarding concerns had been raised about Alex to Adult Community Mental Health Services in January and May 2021. The causes of these concerns were: the condition of his home, his inability to care for himself and concerns that his home was being cuckooed.

A plan had been put in place, but a lengthy hospital admission had complicated its implementation. Latterly, Alex declined a deep clean of his home and any support from alcohol services and adult safeguarding, but he was agreeable to moving to alternative accommodation.

There was no active follow-up from mental health services during the two weeks directly following Alex’s discharge from hospital in November 2021. There was no contact by services with Alex for eight weeks between December and February 2022.

Key Learning Points

- Smoking and alcohol use significantly increases the risk of fatal fires. Make sure that home fire safety assessments are made and use the whole range of fire safety measures that are available, including alcohol and smoking reduction interventions.
- Use and share the Clutter-Image Rating Scale to communicate about the level of hoarding in someone’s home.
- Use the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Multidisciplinary Guidance for Complex Cases and multi-agency forums like the Community Safety Action Group to help you coordinate interventions.

To read more about this SAR please follow these links to the [Report](#) and [Board Response](#).

If you would like to discuss this case with your team then you might find our [7 Minute Briefing](#) useful.

HSAB / HSCP Conference – June 2024

Safeguarding Against Exploitation

The HSAB and HSCP held a joint conference in June which was well received

We had keynote speeches from

- Anna Glinski, Deputy Director at the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse who spoke about Child Sexual Abuse - Being Part of the Solution;
- Dr Amy Loughery, a Research Fellow at the University of Leeds who spoke about the victimisation of those who have been cuckooed
- Making Every Adult Matter Team from HCC who talked about the work the team has been doing.

Five workshops were available for delegates to attend during the day along with a number of stalls providing information on various services across the county. This included our fire and rescue colleagues who can offer safe and well checks for vulnerable residents. [Fire safety home visits.](#) [school visits and open days](#)

The conference was concluded by a powerful performance of Skin Deep by the Solomon Theatre Company.



Making Safeguarding Personal Survey

Our Making Safeguarding Personal Survey took place between September 23 and February 24. We interviewed 75 people who had recently been the subject of an adult safeguarding enquiry to find out how they felt about the process.

51% of people felt that they had been listened to or mostly listened to, 72% said they could understand or mostly understand the information they were given, 56% were happy or quite happy with the outcome, 51% said that they were happy or quite happy with how the concern was dealt with, 45% felt that they were a lot or quite a bit safer following the enquiry. 56% of people did not feel they had received enough or any information about the process.

The HSAB have looked at these findings and also the many comments received from those taking part in the survey and have set up an action plan from the recommendations which include; to repeat the survey annually but to use an on line platform; to look at how we can make the survey cohort more representative of the ethnic and gender make up of the safeguarding cohort; to provide a leaflet about the safeguarding process and what to expect and to provide a written response at the end of the process so people have something to refer to.

“ 56% were happy
or quite happy
with the outcome ”

If you have any queries on any items in this newsletter please contact a member of the Business Unit Staff

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