



NEWSLETTER

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Foreword

We have a lot about domestic abuse in this newsletter. The laws are changing, with new powers to protect people against domestic abuse, new definitions of abuse, and the establishment of a national Domestic Abuse Commissioner. Locally we have been examining the services that are currently offered to people when they experience domestic abuse, and thinking about how else we should respond to perpetrators. Our Conference in March will give you all a chance to learn more and contribute to our thinking.

The big challenge, though, is to change the culture in which we all live, so that everybody feels that domestic abuse is unacceptable. Aggressive language or behaviour towards women is sometimes just laughed off; insults can be treated as jokes rather than challenged. To our shame, the north-east is the region with the highest rates of domestic abuse in England.

It does not have to be this way. Values can change. Twenty years ago I remember it was seen as normal to have a few drinks and then drive home – nowadays hardly anyone thinks that is OK, and most of us would immediately challenge a friend if we thought they planned to drive after drinking. We need the same changes in behaviour with domestic abuse – so that if a man seems to be coercing someone into behaviour they don't want, or if violence is simmering beneath the surface, then it should become normal for those around him to challenge it. Learning starts in young people; as a child, if you see your Mum facing violence or abuse, you believe it is OK, and as a growing young man you are more likely to behave that way to your own girlfriend. We need to help the next generation of young men to understand that it is cowardly, not manly, to use violence in any relationship. I am delighted that Northumbria Police are planning to deliver training in every school in Sunderland aimed at helping young people to understand what is acceptable behaviour in a relationship.

Sir Paul Ennals CBE
Independent Chair, SSAB

[Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board \(SSAB\)](#) is a multi-agency partnership providing strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across the City of Sunderland to promote the welfare of adults at risk of abuse and neglect and is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of what partner agencies do to support this. **Follow us on Twitter:** @SunderlandSAB

Focus on: Domestic Abuse

The Home Office defines domestic abuse as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviours, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

Domestic abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, financial, sexual, emotional, and includes controlling and/or coercive behaviour, ‘honour based’ violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Victims of domestic abuse are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Where a person makes a disclosure about domestic abuse, this may be the first and last time they do so, or has the opportunity. It is at this point that the opportunity to signpost to appropriate support services, gain consent to refer, establish what someone may want to happen and safety plan, should be taken.

If the Adult at Risk has mental capacity to make relevant decisions and does not consent to a safeguarding concern being raised, and there are no public or vital interest considerations they should be signposted to where to get help if they change their mind or if the abuse or neglect continues and subsequently want support to promote their safety. If the Adult has current injuries as a result of domestic abuse they should be supported to access appropriate medical treatment, and/or offered access to a medical examination so that the injuries can be examined and recorded. In all cases, a record must be made of the concern, any views of the Adult at Risk and of the decision not to raise a concern, with the reason stated. A record should also be made of information and advice provided and support they were given or offered.

Where the criteria for safeguarding has been met and the Adult at Risk has capacity and gives their consent, then a [Safeguarding Adult Concern \(SAC\) form](#) should be sent to the local authority clearly indicating the action that has been taken. Where the Adult at Risk does not give consent, the referrer must assure themselves that the decision to withhold consent has not been made under undue influence, coercion or intimidation. Any support or information provided must take account of the increased risk to people, and or individuals if the information and/or support provided is disclosed or made known to the perpetrator.

Sunderland has a [multi-agency domestic abuse referral pathway](#) and [staff guidance document](#). It is aimed at all staff working with children, families and vulnerable people who may be living with domestic abuse in Sunderland. This includes those working with Adults at Risk of abuse and neglect and those at risk of sexual exploitation. The guide aims to help staff enable a disclosure and make safe enquiries by safely and confidently asking about domestic abuse and how to respond.

Domestic Abuse Community Ambassador Training

Could you be a Community Ambassador? Sunderland Council is a proud supporter of Change That Lasts, a national campaign aiming to ensure that survivors of domestic abuse and their children can access help wherever they disclose abuse. Community Ambassadors are being created across Sunderland to raise awareness of domestic abuse and create safe environments so that survivors feels able to speak out. Ambassadors play a key role in signposting to services that specialise in domestic abuse and can be anyone who engages with people in their local area. For further information, please contact Jud Hindess (WWIN Health advocate and Training Officer): jud.hindess@wwin.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Bill

On 21st January 2019 the government published its draft domestic abuse bill, its response to domestic abuse consultation and research into the social and economic cost of domestic abuse. The bill is currently subject to pre-legislative scrutiny and statutory guidance will underpin this new law. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-consultation-response-and-draft-bill>

Update: Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is about engaging with people at the beginning of the safeguarding process about the outcomes they want to realise at the end of the process. At January's Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board meeting, Board members acknowledged the good progress, reflected in performance information, that has been made by partners with regard to Making Safeguarding Personal. The Board continue to encourage partners to keep momentum and maintain engagement with customers, providing a personalised approach that focuses on achieving meaningful improvement to people's circumstances.

Further information regarding MSP can be accessed via the [ADASS website](#).

Adult Social Care Survey 2017-18

The Personal Social Services Adult Social Care Survey for England is an annual survey that took place for the eighth time in 2017-18. Opinions were sought from a selection of people aged 18 and over in receipt of long-term services funded or managed by Adult Social Care during 2017-18. It seeks to learn more about how effectively services are helping people to live safely and independently in their own homes and in residential situations, and the impact on their quality of life.

Sunderland scored higher than all of the averages for its Peer Group, Region and England across the survey, which included areas such as quality of life, social contact and control over daily life. Respondents were also asked how safe they felt, with Sunderland retaining a high score and again scoring higher than the averages for its Peer Group, Region and England.

Safeguarding Adults Easy Read Guide



SSAB has recently produced a Safeguarding Adults Easy Read Guide to explain what abuse and neglect are and what safeguarding adults means. The leaflet can be downloaded from the [SSAB website](#) and is available in alternative languages upon request.

Annual Safeguarding Conference

Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board are pleased to be involved in the annual safeguarding conference, in partnership with South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group, Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board, Safer Sunderland Partnership, and South Tyneside Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards.

The conference will be held on 26th March 2019 at [Rainton Meadows Arena](#), with topics including domestic abuse, adverse childhood experiences, sexual exploitation, the experience of being in foster care and the impact, mental capacity, and self-neglect.

Places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis, and can be requested by logging onto the SSCB Learning Management System at <https://sunderlandscb.vctms.co.uk/> and nominating yourself for a place via your Requested Learning tab (instructions on how to use the system can be found at https://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com/assets/1/lms_guidelines_04.12.18.pdf).

Report a Concern

Everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse.

If you are worried about someone:

- In an emergency call 999
- If there is no immediate risk, call the police on 101

If you are a professional wishing to report a safeguarding concern regarding an adult, please read the [guidance](#) and complete the [Safeguarding Adults Concern \(SAC\) form](#).

Further information is available [here](#).

If your concern relates to a child, please call 0191 520 5560.

Future Articles

If you have an idea for an article for a future publication, please contact the Strategic Safeguarding Team: strategic.safeguarding@sunderland.gov.uk