

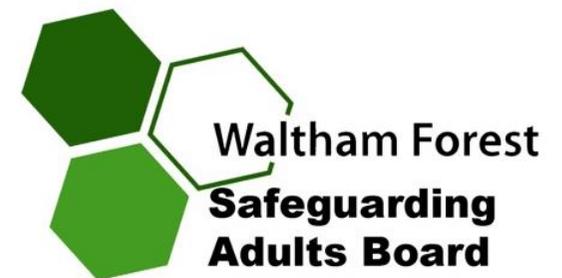
# Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Board

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020 – 2021



Strategic Partnership Boards

SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING



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## Message from SAB Independent Chair

Deborah Cohen

I am pleased to present the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for April 2020 to March 2021. I took up the role as independent chair barely three months before the start of the Pandemic and so my first full year has been dominated by the challenges presented by COVID.

These challenges include the vulnerabilities in the social care sector generally that long predate the pandemic. Locally, our Integrated Commissioners in Health and Social Care have led the way to support providers through the pandemic. However, an equal challenge has been keeping in contact and supporting those who need our services. I can say that the pandemic has highlighted how resilient and adaptable our staff and services are. The report below describes the work to keep people safe over this exceptionally difficult period.

Looking back, I want to highlight the following areas of work over the last year:

- The work to put in place comprehensive guidance on Mental Capacity has been a tour de force. This was originally planned to be produced at the same time as the Liberty Protection Safeguards were published by the Government. Although the latter has been delayed, we decided to continue to complete the Mental Capacity work.
- Team around the Person: this work started before the pandemic and is a key plank of our work to support individuals to stay safe, who might otherwise become subject to safeguarding concerns.
- The use of the learning from SAR George in influencing the Integrated Care Strategy, which brings together community health and social care services to work together in single teams. This SAR highlighted the fragmented nature of services and lack of communication between them. The findings have been used to assess the new arrangements being put in place.
- The work with volunteers to raise awareness of Safeguarding Adults.

Early on in this year a decision was taken by the Strategic Partnership Executive that three of the Boards – the Safeguarding Children Board, SafetyNet, and this Board, would hold meetings together. This has ensured a joined-up approach and streamlining of business for many partners who have seats on all three Boards during a very time-pressurised period. However, as we move out of the Pandemic, we will be reviewing this arrangement to ensure that we are not losing our focus on the safeguarding of adults.

I would like to thank all the partner agencies in the SAB and the wider group of staff who remain key in delivering the work that is described in this report. I would also like to thank the Strategic Partnership Team who support the work of the Board.

## Purpose of this report

The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21 is brought in accordance with the Care Act 2014 to provide an overview of how adults with care and support needs are kept safe, and how agencies within the Safeguarding Adults Board work together to promote their welfare.



## About the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Board

Waltham Forest's Safeguarding Adults Board is a partnership of statutory and voluntary sector partners. It has a range of roles scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice and works with partners to support the effective collaboration of all services being delivered to adults with care and support needs in Waltham Forest.

Under the Care Act, the SAB must lead adult safeguarding arrangements across its local area in order to oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its partner agencies. These functions are carried out through the full board and its priorities and activities as outlined throughout this report.

## Governance

The Safeguarding Adults Board is made up of representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary services across the partnership. The Safeguarding Adults Board reports to the Strategic Partnership Executive. This is a mature, decision-making forum that comprises senior leaders from the local authority, police, and health.



In Waltham Forest the approach to strategic partnerships is underpinned by the [Families at the Heart of Our Place](#) framework. The coordination of the Strategic Partnership Executive is delivered by the Strategic Partnerships Team who provide policy support and strategic planning to all the boards and identify opportunities to undertake cross-cutting work across boards to reduce duplication, increase efficiency and improve outcomes for residents.

Early on in the pandemic, it was decided to hold the first Safeguarding Adults Board of the year with the Safeguarding Children Board and SafetyNet (Waltham Forest's Community Safety Partnership). This recognised both the need to come together and focus on cross-cutting priority areas, and the time pressure on partner agencies arising from the pandemic. This proved fruitful and offered an innovative and effective way for moving forward through the pandemic.

Overall, the full Safeguarding Adults Board met once in 2020-21 and the Joint Board met twice. As in previous years, the focus of the work of the Boards and their agendas were planned by the Business Management Groups that met six weeks ahead of each board. The relevant and overarching subgroups continued to manage the relevant action plans and progress on these is reported accordingly in this report.



In 2020/21 the four Strategic Partnership Boards received a total funding of £258,887 from partners. Key statutory agencies contributed financially to the operating budget which ensured that the four Strategic Partnership Boards were able to meet their statutory requirements.

## About Waltham Forest

	Home to an estimated <b>277,000</b> residents and <b>102,500</b> households
	Median age of residents is <b>35.2 years</b> compared to the UK average of <b>40 years</b>
	One of the most diverse areas in the country. <b>53%</b> of residents are from a minority ethnic background;
	Top five countries of origin for residents born overseas are Romania ( <b>11,000</b> ), Hungary ( <b>6,000</b> ), Poland ( <b>6,000</b> ), Bulgaria ( <b>5,000</b> ) and Lithuania ( <b>5,000</b> )
	Top five languages spoken locally other than English are Urdu, Polish, Romanian, Turkish and Lithuanian
	<b>94.2%</b> of enterprises in Waltham Forest are micro businesses that employ fewer than 10 people
	As of March 2020, more than 156,000 working age residents in Waltham Forest <b>73.6%</b> were in employment.
	The median annual earnings for full-time working residents is <b>£35,000</b> . The average house price in the borough as of December 2019 was <b>£450,000</b> , an increase of 83% since 2013.
	Waltham Forest is currently ranked the <b>82nd most deprived</b> borough nationally (An improvement from 35th in 2015 and 15th in 2010)
	Life expectancy in Waltham Forest reflects the England average – <b>79.4</b> years for men and <b>83.8</b> years for women.

Data from [London Borough of Waltham Forest statistics about the borough](#) is from a range of sources

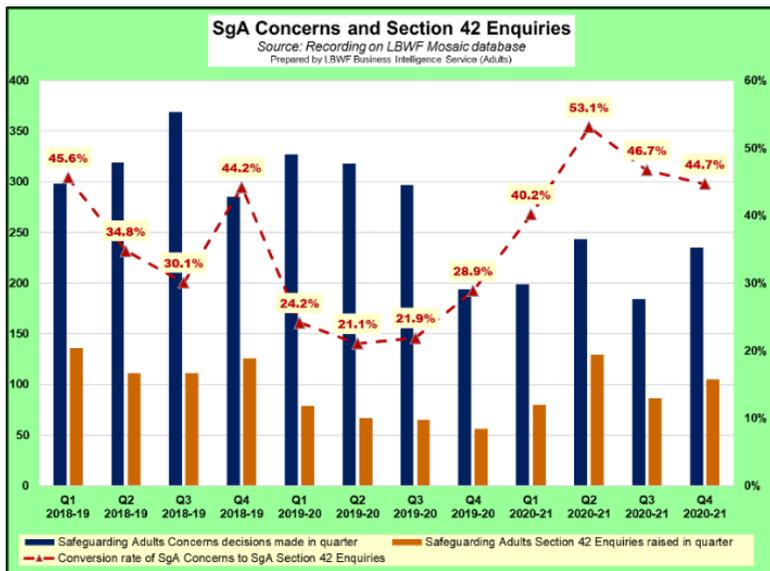
## The picture of safeguarding in Waltham Forest

The pandemic and accompanying lockdowns had an unprecedented and extraordinary impact on safeguarding.

An **Insight Project** was developed by **Association of Directors of Adult Social Services** and the **Local Government Association** to create a national picture regarding councils' safeguarding adults' activity during the COVID-19 pandemic which the Waltham Forest Council fed into.

### SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND SECTION 42 SAFEGUARDING ENQUIRIES:

Safeguarding concerns during 2020 - 2021 remained lower than in previous years. However, a significantly higher number of concerns progressed on to Section 42 enquiries.

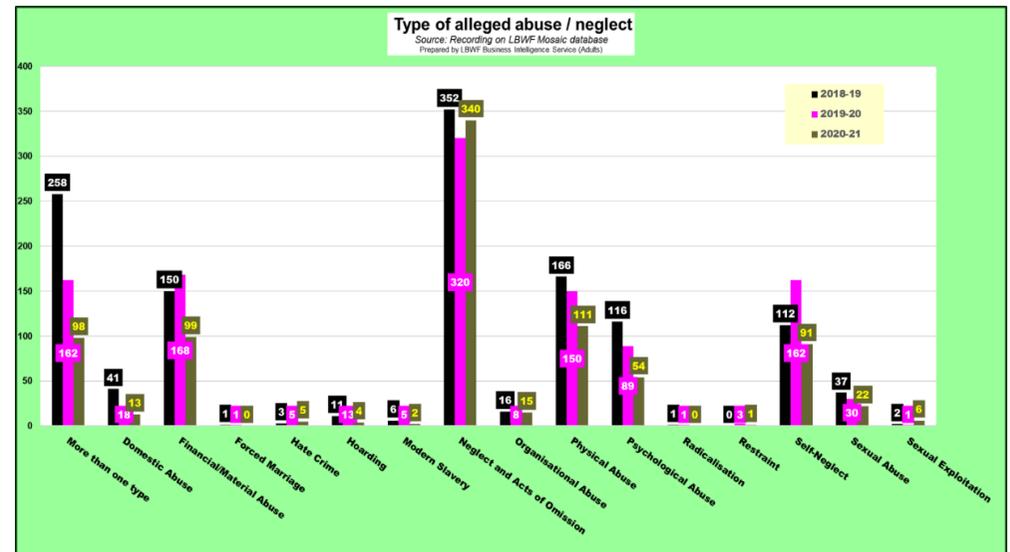


This was similar to national trends, the difference being that nationally, concerns returned to and exceeded usual levels in June 2020, after the initial weeks of lockdown.

### TYPES OF ABUSE:

Concerns around neglect and acts of omission remain the highest type of recorded alleged abuse with a small rise from 320 in 2019/20 to 340 in 2021/21.

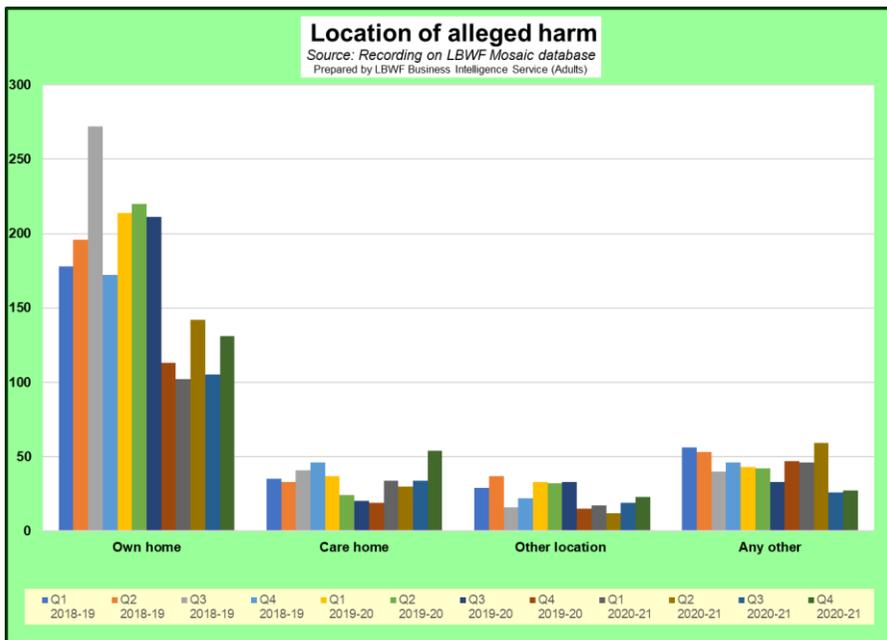
There was a drop in recorded concerns across almost all other types of alleged abuse and neglect, with a significant fall in reports of financial abuse and psychological abuse. This drop is thought to be due to the lockdown restrictions. In light of a downturn in pressure care and self-neglect referrals a range of resources were shared to raise awareness with the external provider markets. In contrast, nationally there was some evidence that some forms of abuse, particularly domestic abuse increased slightly overall and significantly within some areas, as well as psychological abuse and self-neglect.



### LOCATION OF ABUSE:

In Waltham Forest there was a significant rise in reports from care homes and hospital settings compared to previous years. Sources of harm reported as own home and other location fell considerably from last year with a total of 758 concerns reported in own home for 19/20 compared to 480 for 20/21.

The chart below shows that the number of concerns raised against people in their own home did increase in Q2 and Q4, suggesting that as lockdown restrictions lifted, more reporting took place.

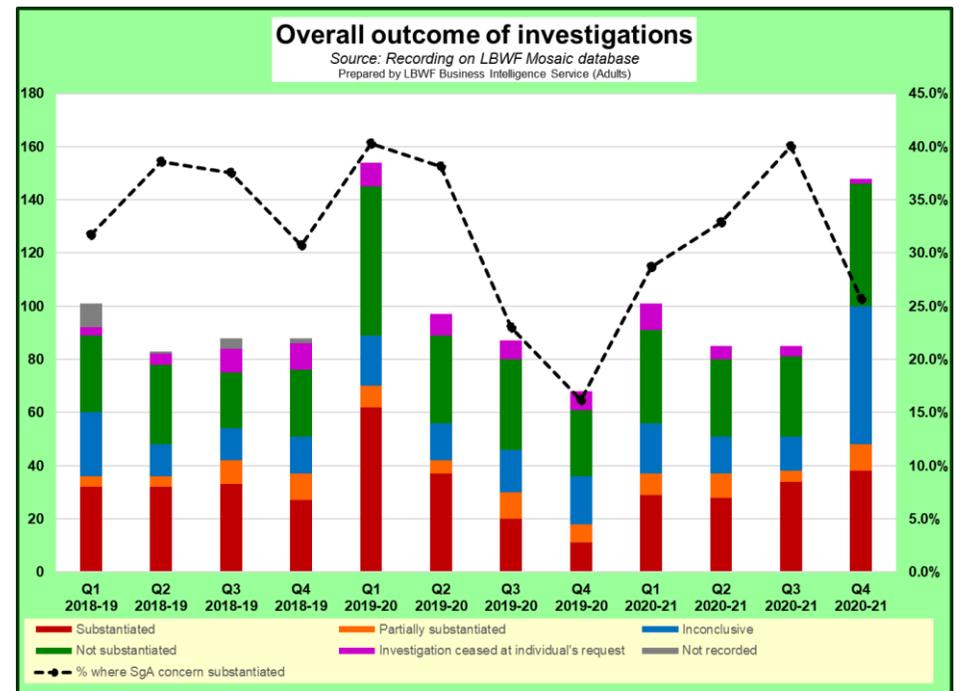


Conversely, it seems this is somewhat different nationally where the risk in individuals' own homes has increased markedly since the start of the COVID-19 lockdown period and enquiries with risk located in care homes has decreased as a percentage in the same period.

### OUTCOME OF ENQUIRY:

Overall investigation outcomes remain similar to 2020/21, with a slight increase in inconclusive cases. This seems to be in line with the national picture.

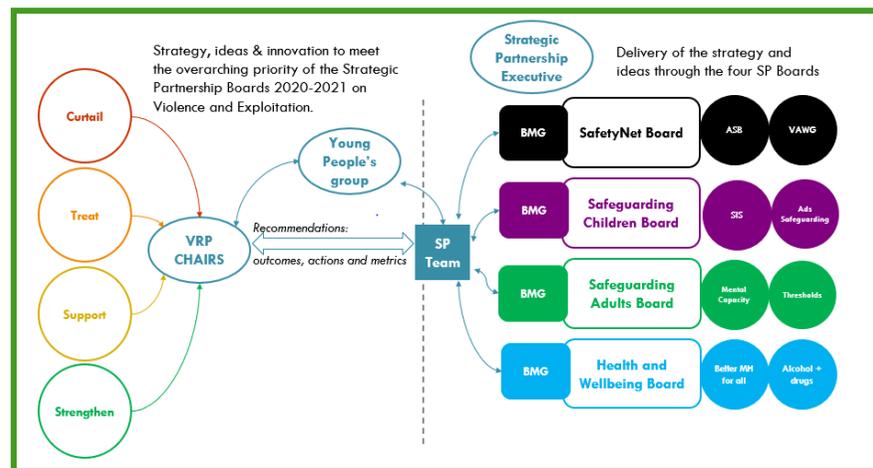
Unsurprisingly safeguarding workloads increased in 20/21 and this is consistent with the higher numbers of cases progressing from concerns stage to Section 42 enquiry.



## Board priorities

In Waltham Forest, priorities are formally reviewed every two years. This was last done in 2019 when a needs assessment was carried out. This year's report is the second of the two-year cycle.

In addition, partners have opportunities throughout the year to identify and raise issues as they arise. This means that emerging themes and trends can be addressed accordingly, as evidenced by the Partnership's move to make Mental Capacity a priority area in 2020.



George Floyd's murder in May 2020 triggered a worldwide outcry and facilitated further discourse within the Strategic Partnership around structural racism. All work in progress at that time across the strategic boards underwent a review through the lens of race disparity to identify the areas that required different or additional actions to narrow the gap between the outcomes for different groups of residents. This shaped the focus of the renewed priorities for 2021 - 2023 that were agreed towards the end of the year as detailed later in the report and will steer the partnership to taking action to enact meaningful change.

## Overarching priority: Violence & Exploitation

In 2020 - 21 Violence and Exploitation continued to be an overarching priority for all four boards (each area of which is led by a particular board as detailed) and forms part of the work currently delivered via our Violence Reduction Partnership which takes a public health approach to tackling violence.

The image across illustrates the Safeguarding Adults Board's connection with Violence Reduction Partnership which develops ideas actioned by the Strategic Partnership boards.

## Our Violence Reduction Partnership has a single ambition:

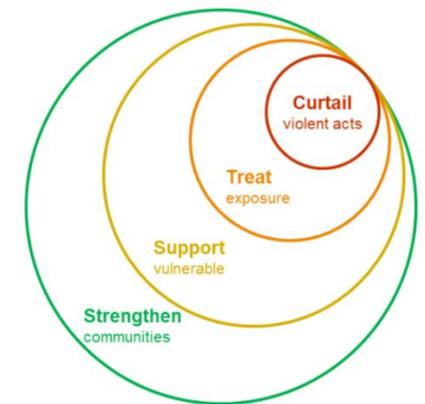
**To reduce violence in Waltham Forest so that our residents feel safer**

To deliver this we aim to:

- Tackle violence
- End racial disparity
- Improve public perceptions of violence
- Visibly demonstrate our leadership

There are four strands to our VRP approach:

- **CURTAIN** violent acts at source, pursuing perpetrators and enforcing action
- **TREAT** those who have been exposed to violence to control the spread
- **SUPPORT** those susceptible to violence due to their exposure to risk factor
- **STRENGTHEN** community resilience through a universal approach



## Violence Against Women and Girls

Led by SafetyNet

We have found that COVID and lockdown restrictions have exacerbated circumstance for those experiencing abuse. With a reduction in face-to-face support across agencies and using evidence from other countries with earlier experience of the pandemic, a number of new initiatives were swiftly put in place in Waltham Forest to mitigate the heightened risks for women and girls.

**What difference did the violence against women and girls priority make to Waltham Forest residents?**

### SURVIVORS WERE SUPPORTED AND KEPT SAFE



- New Domestic Abuse Drop In Service provided a safe, non-judgemental space five days per week for survivors to access face-to-face advice, signposting, and safety-planning. Over one hundred survivors have been supported since the service was set up.
- The Community Safety Team worked closely with Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub colleagues to implement an additional layer of support for survivors who were coming to the attention of services through police call outs to homes where children lived. Where there was no further action by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, each survivor was safely contacted to check if any further domestic abuse support was required.

### Snapshot of support and services in numbers

Approx. <b>1055</b> survivors supported by Solace Women's Aid	Approx. <b>100</b> survivors supported by Domestic Abuse Drop In Service
<b>38</b> women living in specialist domestic abuse accommodation	<b>235</b> survivors (assessed as lower risk) reached out to for safety planning and signposting
<b>32</b> children	
<b>279</b> domestic abuse case consultations	<b>4348</b> domestic abuse incidences recorded by police
<b>250</b> VAWG services posters distributed in the community	

- A key aspect of ensuring survivors could access support was to get the word out. Flyers were put together and translated into the most common languages in the borough. These were distributed widely, put up in person, circulated via social media and also included in food hampers that went out to individuals and families in need.

#### Training: Domestic abuse and dementia

During the pandemic there was a focus on Dementia which included outreach to those living with dementia and their families. Recognising the complexity of both dementia and domestic abuse, a dedicated training session was delivered that allowed practitioners to explore the dynamics of these two areas and the added challenges faced by survivors. The majority of participants reported that it had improved both their understanding and knowledge. We also agreed our multi-agency partnership dementia strategy at Cabinet, which sets out our priorities across the partnership. We continued our dementia friends training, moving this online, and secured a high degree of satisfaction with the training and increased participation.

- Targeting of VAWG and street “harassment” hotspots by uniformed officers for high visibility patrols, led by Safer Neighbourhoods and supported by Response under the “Adopt a Ward” project.
- Started the process with multi-agency partners for domestic abuse accreditation for Housing services in Waltham Forest

### **Domestic abuse housing alliance accreditation (DAHA)**

This involves an in-depth review of case management processes, policies, and procedures to ensure responses to domestic abuse represents best practice. Online training sessions have been delivered to all staff across Housing Services, as well as to repairs and maintenance contractors. Gaining DAHA accreditation is one of the top priorities for Housing in the coming year. As a social landlord we are uniquely placed to identify cases and intervene to ensure the safety and wellbeing of survivors.

### **What’s next for VAWG in 2021/22?**

We know that as COVID infection rates start to flatten VAWG will continue and we will see an increase in demand for VAWG services. Specifically, we anticipate increased severity of economic abuse and the need for recovery support to enable women to enter the world of work and provide for their families as they recover from both the pandemic and violence.

- ❖ Refresh of VAWG Strategy
- ❖ DAHA Accreditation
- ❖ Gather data to fully understand and address racial disparity: For Black and minoritised women, racialised discrimination and the disproportionate impact of structural inequalities will also be exacerbated.
- ❖ Further develop projects that focus on perpetrators, challenging the attitudes and behaviours that underpin VAWG and building community capacity to respond and support survivors to thrive in community
- ❖ More emphasis on recovery, wellbeing and independence for survivors and their families

## **Adolescents Safeguarding and Resilience**

*Led by Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board*

Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience forms part of the overarching priority for Violence & Exploitation (detailed above). This is important and relevant to Safeguarding Adults Board in terms of transition and our young people becoming adults who may have care and support needs.

In Waltham Forest, the Strategic Partnership has been working together on this challenging agenda for over six years and while progress has been made, we know there is more to do. We recognise both the complexity of safeguarding adolescents and the need to have a dynamic strategic and operational response that is live to the changing landscape and can reflect, review, and change as required.

The tragic murder of one of our children in 2019 led to significant learning for the partnership, which was instrumental to our subsequent innovation and drive to change. Although this was a Children’s review there were specific lessons and recommendations which read across into Adults. The following recommendations have been actioned over the last year:

- Greater involvement of Housing in case discussions where applicable
- Establishment of the new all age Exploitation and Risk Panel
- Development of a new pathway from Whipps Cross Hospital into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to provide direct support to people presenting at Emergency Department affected by violence. This will be all age (including adults) in relation to those who fit the s42 criteria.

- Incorporating into learning and development on self-neglect by capacitous individuals "who say no" to the notion of "reachable moments": a window of opportunity when a person may be more likely to take an offer of support because of their circumstances at the time.
- Safeguarding in settings: about identifying and responding to risks and vulnerabilities in a range of social environments beyond individual risk factors and vulnerabilities - extending the work of the Safeguarding Children's Board into the world of Adult Safeguarding through the sharing of the [interactive resource pack on Safeguarding Adolescents](#). The pack was demonstrated to all four boards and encouraged to be used in team meetings. Feedback indicated that practitioners found the tool useful.
- Debt bondage – not something that only happens to young people – to be taken forward through the work on Modern Slavery – see future priorities below.

The following films outline some of the achievements of the Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience work and more detail can be found in the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board annual report 2020/21.



### What's next for Adolescents Safeguarding in 2021/22?

- ❖ The VRP is preparing for effective management of potential increases in violence as lockdown restrictions ease, particularly as the summer holidays approach.
- ❖ ERP is now well-established, and a peer review is being planned
- ❖ Use data and young people's feedback to further measure the take up of support offered through the Urgent Response Protocol and varying types of reachable moments
- ❖ Gather data to understand and address racial disparity
- ❖ Focus on transition
- ❖ Further develop outward facing work including Pan-London London collaborations

## Overarching priority: Better Mental Health for All

Led by Health & Wellbeing Board

COVID has undeniably had an impact on mental wellbeing, the full extent of which is yet to be seen. While Mental Wellbeing has been a priority since 2017 this has become even more important as the impact of COVID on the population unfolds and the work under this heading has been a key plank of our preventative approach to building resilience in our local communities.

**What difference did the Better Mental Health for All priority make to Waltham Forest residents?**

### REDUCED FEELINGS OF LONELINESS

- Volunteers were recruited to conduct check-in calls for those residents that were shielding or self-isolating

### ENABLED FRONTLINE STAFF TO RECOGNISE AND INTERVENE IN MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPERIENCES OF THE PANDEMIC

- Utilised Public Health England's Psychological First Aid Training

### BROADER ACCESS TO SUPPORT TO PREVENT DETERIORATION OF MENTAL HEALTH

- Our 5 Ways to Wellbeing campaign was promoted widely and adapted to encourage residents to look after their wellbeing during the pandemic, particularly during lockdowns. Additional settings were identified to extend the campaign into, primarily care homes across the borough

- Mental Health support services and groups such as Kooth and Talking Therapies promoted through volunteers as well as hampers going out to vulnerable residents
- Existing support group adapted to virtual set-up in order to maintain provision



### What's next for Better Mental Health for All in 2021/22?

- ❖ Refresh of Mental Wellbeing Strategy
- ❖ Specific projects for individuals and families who are minoritised
- ❖ Re-focus campaigning for mental wellbeing

## Mental Capacity

*Safeguarding Adults Board-specific priority*

Mental Capacity has been a continuing feature of working with clients who self-neglect. Learning from reviews, the Partnership identified that the awareness and confidence of practitioners around all aspects of Mental Capacity required strengthening. The Self-Neglect Group transitioned to a Mental Capacity Group, led by NELFT and Adults Social Care, with members drawn from all services including Children's Services, carer organisations and the voluntary sector.

***What difference has the priority Mental Capacity made to Waltham Forest residents?***

**RESIDENTS ARE EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTED by frontline practitioners who have a good understanding of assessing mental capacity and making best interest decisions in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.**



- ❖ Development of clear and concise [Guidance to assessing mental capacity and making best interest decisions document](#) following consultation sessions with practitioners. The guidance was officially launched in June 2020 and the impact of this work will be reported in next year's report.



- ❖ The Mental Capacity Guidance was timed to support the work of the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards as recognition of and quality of mental capacity assessments will be key to ensuring that Liberty Protection Safeguards are successfully implemented into business as usual.

### **Wellbeing & Independence good practice example: Mental capacity**

Mr D, a 53-year-old man had a brain haemorrhage while at the wheel of his car, resulting in a collision that led to him sustaining an acquired brain injury. After being rehabilitated in hospital he was able to mobilise unaided, but was disoriented in time and place, and was at risk of wandering from home and losing his way outdoors. He was discharged from hospital to an interim placement in a residential care home where he received additional 1:1 support during the daytime, to mitigate risks to his safety.

The social worker involved recognised the importance of assessing and then reviewing his mental capacity to make informed decisions about residence, to ensure that every effort was made to help him express his own choices about how he would like to be supported in future.

These meetings involved Mr D, his care provider, a family member, and an Urdu-speaking interpreter. Also, his brother-in-law participated in a best interest meeting regarding next steps. Plans were soon underway for Mr D's 1:1 support to be tapered down in stages in the coming weeks, to ensure that the least restrictive care arrangements were in place for him.

## **Thresholds guidance and ways of working with adults**

*Safeguarding Adults Board-specific priority*

***What difference has the priority Thresholds Guidance and ways of working with adults made to Waltham Forest residents?***

### **RESIDENTS RECEIVE SUPPORT THAT MAKES SAFEGUARDING PERSONAL**

Work continued to embed the guidance and develop the Team around the Person approach with health and voluntary sector partners. This included partnership dissemination of a **7 minute briefing** on Team around the Person.

In recognition of the importance of this work, two events were organised in Safeguarding Adults Week in November 2020 to promote this: one session for professionals and one for volunteers.

The awareness raising sessions brought agencies and individuals together to share ideas about how to frame conversations with residents who need support. Colleagues from Adults Social Care, Waltham Forest Housing Association, and Community Safety provided information on Adult Thresholds Guidance, the Team Around the Person Approach, and domestic abuse. The events were well attended with over 100 participants at the practitioner event and 70 participants at the volunteer event. Feedback overall was positive, and the majority of survey respondents said they would recommend the session to others.

Building on the success of these events, further sessions were delivered in January 2021.

Participant feedback included:

- ❖ “Very useful, especially 'team around a person' approach”
- ❖ “It is always good to refresh on this area - would definitely like to attend more”

## Learning from George: Integrated Care Strategy

Waltham Forest has been undergoing a reset of the Integrated Care Strategy, in the light of COVID. The work of this strategy, that will see the delivery of joined-up services across health and social care, has been very heavily influenced by the learning from the [Safeguarding Adult Review for George](#) about the fragmented nature of services and poor communication between services. The findings provide a platform from which to measure progress in service improvement and better experiences for service users and their carers.



### What's next for the ICS and Safeguarding Adults in 2021/22?

A final Integrated Care Strategy with 2 year roadmap will be marked against key criteria from the SAR George for further discussion at the SAB to look at the impact of the ICS on strengthening Safeguarding Adults

## The impact of the pandemic on agencies within the Safeguarding Adults Board

The work of the Boards' priorities, including Waltham Forest's Safeguarding Adults Board, is reliant on effectively working together as a partnership and in Waltham Forest, this is one of our greatest strengths.

During 2020 -21, with COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions in force, services and agencies adapted to ensure a continued focus on Waltham Forest's Strategic Partnership Priorities, so that adults, children, and families in Waltham Forest continue to be kept safe and well as follows:

### Adults Social Care *(Waltham Forest Council)*

Social work services continued throughout the pandemic. Adjustments were put in place to enable staff to work from home where possible and for some activities to be carried out remotely. However a risk management approach was taken so that where needed there was a physical presence to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our vulnerable residents.

The Wellbeing & Independence service revised how assessments were undertaken during the pandemic. The nature of the assessment / contact was risk assessed to determine the most appropriate method of obtaining the required information: desk top information via CERNER/RIO (health recording systems), conference call, video link, face-to-face contact or a combination.

The hospital social work team were not able to see patients on the ward for whom they were planning discharge so all information was gathered from the recording systems and/or the Complex Discharge Team who were the interface with the patient and ward/medical staff, plus contact with family members. Staff adapted to managing safeguarding activity and Mental Capacity Act and best interest decisions with patients and families virtually.

Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of residents of our care homes through restricting physical access to the homes, whilst maintaining contact with families and conducting outdoor visits when possible, as well as contact through online methods was a top priority. We also ensured our staff were supported to maintain high standards of Health and Safety and provided with personal protective equipment.

Day opportunities / building-based activities were suspended for significant periods however outreach, zoom activities and regular telephone contact was maintained with service users.

In addition, we have begun developing a strong, focussed framework around provider concerns and how we as a partnership manage these concerns and ensure the safety and wellbeing of our residents in need of commissioned care. We have refined the process for High Risk Panel and ensuring that this aligns with safeguarding processes, including joint agency visits where relevant. Progress against a provider improvement plan is closely monitored and where lack of improvement compromises the safety of residents, actions are taken to remove the risk.

#### **Children's Social Care** *(Waltham Forest Council - includes Youth & Family Resilience Service, comprising Behaviour and Children Missing Education and Youth Offending Services)*

Children's Services maintained a high level of delivery throughout the pandemic and lots of critical activity that would usually be delivered face to face, switched seamlessly to a virtual approach.

#### **Clinical Commissioning Group**

*(NHS North East London Tower Hamlets / Newham / Waltham Forest) – TNW)*

The impact of COVID resulted in services transforming to offer predominantly telephone and video consultations across services although face to face appointments were still available where required, to provide patients with the choice of a blended offer.

In addition to the change in service provision there was a noticeable increase in the acuity of presentation which placed increased pressure on the service to meet the needs of the patients, resulting in services offering a more trauma informed approach and building this into the service delivery as part of the recovery planning for commissioned services.

The safeguarding team strengthened their communication with safeguarding partners and collaborated with Police and Social care to distribute domestic abuse awareness raising posters to health settings such as community pharmacies and primary care. The intended outcome of this campaign was to alert domestic abuse survivors to the safe, confidential spaces in health settings. The aim is to facilitate disclosure and enable signposting to local support services for survivors and their families.

#### **Early Help** *(Waltham Forest Council)*

The Early Help teams have continued to be at the forefront of the work to tackle violence and exploitation, contributing significant thought leadership and practical energy. Despite COVID and lockdown restrictions we have mobilised new projects and we have led on implementing new processes for keeping individuals and families safe. We have also harnessed the urgent need to tackle racial disparity with work underway internally to become an anti-racist division.

### Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

The privatisation of the probation service in 2014 saw the creation of two new organisations the 'Community Rehabilitation Companies' managed by MTC Novo, designed to work with low-medium risk people on probation and the National Probation Service managing the high risk offenders.

Throughout the duration of 2020-21 (pandemic period), both London Community Rehabilitation Companies and National Probation Service developed 'Exceptional Delivery Models (EDMs)' which was set out to effectively manage the safety and risk of the people on probation whilst maintaining the safety and wellbeing of the staff. Staffing numbers were limited in most offices with some offices being closed. Rota systems were introduced to manage staff in the office and who were seeing people on probation needing to be seen face to face in accordance with risk and base on needs and levels of complexity.

Young adults were priorities and we implemented an exceptional delivery model for the transition to adult services, which placed a paused on the transfer of cases, unless the individual was assessed as high risk of harm to the public and there was at least six months remaining on their order. This enabled us to ensure consistency and continuity of care for the individual and support a safe transfer to adult services, that remained in the best interest of the young person and an acknowledgement of which organisation could best cater for their needs.

Integrated Offender Management is a good model to demonstrate how partnership arrangements tightened up in relation to support for people on probation during 2020-21. Both Probation and Partnership agencies intensified support and intervention within the caseload particularly around substance misuse and in order to disrupt risks around domestic abuse.

Phones were purchased where required to issue to people on probation needing to be contacted for phone appointments during 2020-21 and especially, to help support the resettlement of those people on probation who had been released from custody.

### Housing *(Waltham Forest Council)*

In the past year, Housing have increased their engagement and involvement with multi-agency meetings and panels, for example, One Panel and Exploitation Risk Panel. During the pandemic, Housing Services made several adaptations to ensure our residents and service users continued to remain safe and well. Although the pandemic has meant greater use of digital and remote methods of contact, this has freed up time to focus on support to our most vulnerable tenants.

For example, reports of ASB increased throughout the pandemic because of the restrictions and stay at home guidance. During this period, we continued to receive telephone referrals and provided weekly support on high-risk cases, investigating with the council's ASB team and the Police. Online partnership meetings and case reviews were held, whilst regular patrols continued to take place.

At the height of lockdown our teams also assisted in delivering essential items, such as food packages and prescriptions, to vulnerable residents. This was based on our pre-existing knowledge and data, as well as working with colleagues across the Partnership. Vulnerable and elderly residents also received welfare calls proactively to check on their safety.

### Integrated Commissioning *(Waltham Forest Council / Clinical Commissioning Group)*

Our team led the response to support the care markets during the pandemic. We worked closely with stakeholders from across the system to ensure that our most vulnerable residents were supported safely. We provided guidance to the markets in a number of formats including forums, briefings and bespoke advice as required. We particularly focused upon the markets where there was a lack of national guidance such as supported living and day opportunities.

We specifically worked with Public Health and infection control colleagues to ensure that the market were able to put the right infection control procedures in place to reduce COVID transmission. We set up PPE distribution, supported scheme risk assessments and disseminated guidance. Our unique integrated roles allowed us to work as part of both health and care systems to protect the most vulnerable residents.

### London Fire Brigade

The London Fire Brigade introduced a variation on the “normal service” of providing Home Fire Safety Visits. Although visits continued, we introduced an additional layer of assessment to balance against the COVID risk.

A new Safeguarding referral proforma has been developed which reflects the increasing prevalence of concerns being identified by London Fire Brigade staff. This now allows the London Fire Brigade to suggest or recommend interventions.

The London Fire Brigade have utilised some operational staff to support the borough’s COVID “Hub” to provide delivery of personal protective equipment and other essentials to workers and residents in the borough.

During the later stages of the year a pilot Community Engagement programme was launched. Waltham Forest was selected following a competitive bidding process, to take part. Partners across the borough were invited, along with residents, to attend two online community engagement meetings. The outcome of these and further engagement activities will directly shape the service that is provided by the LFB to residents.

To assist the identification of risk from fire, the London Fire Brigade are now working with partners to roll out training for NELFT and care providers. This is very important when vulnerable residents are not being seen by friends and family.

### North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)

The mantra that “safeguarding is everyone’s business” has continued in the way that North East London Foundation Trust has responded to the pandemic. The Named Professionals and Associate Director for Safeguarding /Looked After Children have continued to work closely with operational and management colleagues within North East London Foundation Trust and continued to respond to safeguarding concerns and risks.

North East London Foundation Trust have continued to prioritise safeguarding partnership working, attendance and participation at partnership meetings at both a strategic and operational level. This includes representation at the Waltham Forest’s Safeguarding Adults Board, subgroup meetings and statutory safeguarding meetings.

#### **North East London Foundation Trust good practice example: partnership working**

During 2020-21 there has been positive joint-working relationships and collaboration between partner agencies. An example of this is appropriate escalation, discussion, and collaborative working between North East London Foundation Trust, Clinical Commissioning Group and Waltham Forest Council in relation to complex case management for a Continuing Health Care patient and concerns that relate to care and engagement from the parent. Each agency had utilised and promoted the current guidance available: adult threshold document, escalation process (high level risk reporting)/raising a safeguarding concern and provided expertise around mental capacity and the best interest process in line with the current Mental Capacity Act: Code of Practice.

### Public Health (Waltham Forest Council)

Public Health's prime focus in 2020/21 was to respond to the immediate problems relating to COVID, working closely with the Clinical Commissioning Group. Despite this, the break with traditional ways of working and strengthened bonds across the system provided opportunities for introducing new and innovative service transformations during the pandemic. This included implementing new remote and digital services, a number of which have resulted in improved outcomes and efficiencies. Examples include substance misuse services – virtual one to one appointments, delivery/collection of medicines, postal test kits for blood born viruses, and Zoom group sessions were introduced to complement face to face support when needed.



### Whipps Cross University Hospital (Barts Health NHS Trust)

Across Whipps Cross Hospital and Barts Health the safeguarding team has maintained an onsite safeguarding presence for adults and children services throughout the year and responded accordingly. Despite the COVID 19 pressures, no hospital safeguarding professionals were redeployed who remained available to support staff. The co-location of adult and children safeguarding teams with an interim head of service across both teams has strengthened the Families at the Heart of Our Place approach. Social Care referrals continued to be monitored along with attendance to the emergency department and Datix throughout the year to identify and effectively respond to safeguarding need.



Despite the overwhelming COVID-related pressures experienced by the hospital, services continued to be delivered throughout the year such as the Alcohol Liaison Nurse and psychiatric liaison roles which maintained a physical presence. This was also the case for the Ruby Team (vulnerable women's team in maternity) who continued to provide face to face appointments to pregnant women under their care.

## Learning & improving practice in Waltham Forest

The Learning and Improving Practice Forum along with the One Panel work across Adults and Children's.

The remit of the One Panel includes domestic homicide reviews, safeguarding adult reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews. This arrangement has been in existence for many years and has worked well in bringing a wide range of expertise to look at specific cases.

The Learning & Improving Practice Forum drives forward the effective dissemination and sharing of learning across the partnership in a variety of ways as outlined below. All learning activities are "in-house" led, coordinated by the Strategic Partnership Unit and delivered with support from practitioners and managers from across the partnership.

A decision was made in 2020 to pause on multi-agency audits and focus on the embedding of learning. As a partnership, it was agreed that the most common themes arising from reviews were lack of professional curiosity, multi-agency working, escalation, and Think Family and a plan was put in place to deliver a programme of awareness raising that could be monitored for impact. Whilst some of the awareness raising work took place for professional curiosity, it became necessary because of the demands of the pandemic to minimise the amount of communication being circulated across services and this affected the planned programme of work. This will be revisited in the coming year with a view to reviewing how we can most effectively measure the impact of learning and improving practice work.

## Training

Training is just one part of our creative approach to sharing learning and improving practice in Waltham Forest. It is delivered by multi-agency partners and is focussed on themes that arise from reviews and audits. We understand that practitioners have limited capacity to both attend and deliver full days of training, so we try to provide as much of a varied offer as possible and this includes our bitesize video guides and spotlights. In 2020/21 we distributed spotlights on: awareness / resources for Safeguarding Adults Week, ending Violence Against Women & Girls, Modern Slavery, Making Every Contact Count and supporting people with drug and alcohol abuse.

Additionally, recognising the incredible commitment of our community who came together to support each other we created a bitesize video guide on safeguarding awareness for volunteers. This was shared widely, both locally and across safeguarding board networks nationally.



## Cross-cutting resources

With Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience one of our overarching priorities, an [interactive resource pack on Safeguarding Adolescents](#) was created and shared amongst all agencies. The pack was demonstrated to all four boards and encouraged to be used in team meetings. Feedback indicated that practitioners found the tool useful.

## The One Panel: statutory and local reviews

Referrals for statutory reviews are considered by the One Panel. This consists of senior officers from different agencies including health, children social care, adult social care, community safety and police. It receives referrals on cases that may meet the criteria for a statutory review.

For the period of this report, no safeguarding adult reviews were carried out nor published. As outlined in this report, significant progress has been made in relation to Mental Capacity which was a feature in previous SAR George which is yet to be published due to the continued impending criminal trial.



The SAR for George has meant that partner organisations have needed to revisit the way adult health and social care is delivered through the Integrated Care System to ensure residents are protected from abuse, harm, and neglect. The findings and recommendations from the review provided a 'litmus test' for the integrated care model the system is developing. The service reorganisation to create an aligned Home First Service with NELFT (due to be implemented in August 2021), and the associated process and practice change programme across Adults Social Care aims to:

- ❖ Identify and provide clear ownership of adult social care cases 'right care, right time, right team'
- ❖ Reduce the number of handoffs between teams and workers in adult social care, where possible
- ❖ Ensure that if a case moves between adult social care teams, it is well managed, that there is a robust transfer and risks are identified to the receiving team using a transfer work step on Mosaic (the social care database)
- ❖ Ensure adult social care resources are deployed in the most effective areas of social care and the integrated care environment
- ❖ Build on multi-disciplinary teams working with health colleagues and a 'Team Around the Person' approach that draws in community and third sector providers
- ❖ Provide joined-up and coordinated health and adult social care responses to deliver seamless care
- ❖ Break down the barriers to collaboration and collaborative working
- ❖ Deliver statutory obligations in the most effective way
- ❖ Amplify the resident and carer's voice and involve them in the co-production of services
- ❖ Provide high-quality professional services and support, in line with regulatory and clinical frameworks
- ❖ Deliver the Council and partners' ambitions and priorities
- ❖ Provide care which is affordable and sustainable

The impact of these changes on safeguarding will be closely monitored by the SAB and reported in next year's annual report.

## What's next for 2021/22?

The pandemic has had a significant impact on many of our residents as well as our workforce. COVID 19 has highlighted and exposed the challenges that many individuals are facing, including ill-health, poor quality housing, poverty, and inequality.

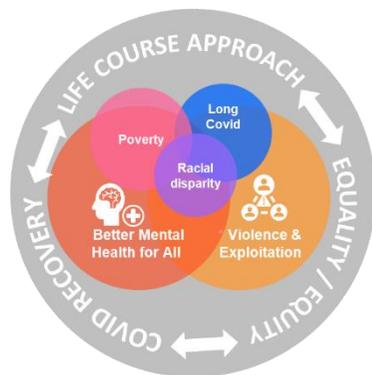
The adaptability of our workforce and our residents was an outstanding factor in our response to the pandemic and morale remains high. The longer-term impact continues to unfold and demand for services continues to rise. Across the partnership, reset plans are underway to absorb the even greater demand that is likely to take place as a result of increasing population growth combined with the economic and health implications of the pandemic.

Towards the end of 2020/21 the partnership came together to review the priorities via a high-level synthesis that supported cross-agency discussions for the agreed set of strategic priorities for 2021 – 2023.

As we began moving out of lockdown it was agreed that Better Mental Health for All and Violence & Exploitation would continue as overarching priorities. Modern Slavery is reinstated as a priority under Violence & Exploitation.

In acknowledgement of the past year, priorities will be underpinned by three core themes:

- **Equality / Equity**
- **Life Course Approach**
- **COVID Recovery**



## For Safeguarding Adults Board priority work this means:

- ❖ Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) will become a priority. This is dependent on the impending new legislation being implemented although strategic preparations for this are already underway. In the meantime, the Mental Capacity subgroup are paving the way for this. Once the timescale for implementation of LPS is known, the Mental Capacity subgroup will transition to a LPS focused group
- ❖ Modern Slavery is a new priority. This formed a significant part of partnership discussion on priorities which concluded that there was a need for refreshing the partnership approach to Modern Slavery, building on the considerable work that took place in previous years. Communication has already commenced with the Human Trafficking Foundation to establish and reaffirm what good partnership working would look like, as well as a train the training offer
- ❖ Self-Neglect and Team Around the Person along with hoarding appear to be themes in new One Panel referrals for SARs and will feed into the Learning & Improving Practice Forum
- ❖ There is consensus from partners that some Post-COVID reflection on pressure care is required to reinvigorate that area of practice. A short task and finish group is to be re-established to pick this up
- ❖ Another area of consideration and reflection was directed to carers, given the strain the pandemic may have placed on them and this will be monitored as the full impact of the pandemic unfolds

## Appendix 1: Attendance at SAB

During 2020/21, one full SAB meeting and two joint board meetings took place. Despite the pandemic, attendance was even better than the previous year. This is likely due to meetings taking place virtually and reflects the excellence and strength of the partnership. Partners welcomed the move to joint meetings.

Member attended
  Deputy attended
  Did not attend
  Member resigned or role ended

Partner agency/member	July 20 – Joint	Oct 20 – SAB	Feb 21 – Joint	%
Barts				100
Carers First				100
CQC				0
Health Watch				100
HM Prison and Probation Service				66
Lay Member				0
LBWF Council, Adults Social Care				100
LBWF Council, Commissioning				100
LBWF Council, Housing Services				66
LBWF Council, Public Health				100
Lead Member for Adults				66
London Fire Brigade				33
Metropolitan Police Service				100
NELFT - Integrated Care Director				100
TNW CCG - Director of Quality and Safety				100
TNW CCG – Safeguarding Adults Lead				100

## Appendix 2: Resource & Funding

SPU Income		£258,887
<b>Clinical Commissioning Group</b> <i>(includes £5175 towards statutory review)</i>	£40,175	
<b>North East London Foundation Trust</b>	£10,000	
<b>Barts Health NHS Trust</b> <i>(includes £5175 towards statutory review)</i>	£32,175	
<b>Police</b> <i>(£10,000 nationally agreed + includes £5175 towards statutory review)</i>	£15,175	
<b>London Fire Brigade</b>	£1000	
<b>HM Prisons &amp; Probation Service</b> <i>(nationally agreed)</i>	£1,000	
<b>London Borough of Waltham Forest</b>	159,362	

SPU Expenditure		£258,887
<b>Strategic Partnership Unit Salaries</b>	£209,254	
<b>Salaries for Chairs 20/21</b>	£28,588	
<b>Running costs, bitesize, etc.</b>	£3,670	
<b>Statutory reviews</b>	£17,375	