



**Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board**  
**Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024**  
**2023 Refresh**

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## Introduction

This is the second Strategic Plan for the statutory Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) post implementation of the Care Act (2014) on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. This plan has been reviewed and updated in June 2023. This is with the recognition that the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented challenges placed upon our services and is expected to have a long-lasting detrimental impact upon our communities from a socio-economic and health perspective.

The Gateshead SAB remains committed to making Safeguarding in Gateshead person-led and outcome focussed whilst ensuring that there is an underpinning ethos of prevention. The Board have worked hard to ensure that they are Care Act compliant and have demonstrated via internal and independent scrutiny that we deliver quality services.

The Gateshead SAB continues to provide strategic leadership for our approach to responding to statutory duties detailed within the Mental Capacity Act. As such we are preparing for changes to legislation introduced via the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 which includes the abolition of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and the subsequent introduction of Liberty Protection Safeguards.

The challenges faced by the Board are evolving. Since the commencement of our last Strategic Plan in 2016 we have seen challenges in relation to the stability of the care market, a growth in mechanisms for responding to complex cases and extensive learning from national, regional and local Safeguarding Adult Reviews. This is combined with uncertainties caused by continued austerity and Brexit.

As part of the consultation process for this Strategic Plan an anonymous responder said:

***'In this very challenging economic climate keep up the good work as a lot of what you do goes unnoticed, but it is vital to the individuals that are being safeguarded'***

The national and local policy landscape is constantly changing, and we will review the Strategic Plan on an annual basis to ensure that the Strategic priorities remain right for Gateshead. We have a strong commitment from its members to implement the Strategic Priorities identified within this plan. This

five-year Strategic Plan is supported by annual Business Plans to enable the Board to prioritise and focus activity.

## Policy Context

The Care Act 2014 has enshrined in law the principles of Safeguarding Adults, which will ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are afforded appropriate support and protection, and help them to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible. Chapter 14 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act replaces the No Secrets document as the statutory basis for all safeguarding activity. The Care Act sets out the Safeguarding Adult responsibilities for Local Authorities and their partners and places a duty upon Local Authorities to establish SABs.

A corner stone of the Care Act is the general responsibility placed on all local authorities to promote wellbeing. The Care Act emphasises the assumption that individuals are best placed to judge their own wellbeing, and that protection from abuse and neglect is fundamental.

The Care Act identifies six key principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work, and which apply equally to all sectors and settings:

**Empowerment** – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent

**Prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs

**Proportionality** – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

**Protection** – support and representation to those in greatest need

**Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities

**Accountability** – accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice

Schedule 2 of the Care Act (2014) stipulates that SABs must publish a Strategic Plan each financial year, identifying how the Boards and their members will protect adults in their respective areas from abuse and neglect.

# Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board

## Our Vision

Our vision for Adult Safeguarding in Gateshead is:

***'Everybody in Gateshead has the right to lead a fulfilling life and should be able to live safely, free from abuse and neglect – and to contribute to their own and other people's health and wellbeing'***

In Gateshead we believe that Safeguarding is everyone's business. This means - whoever you are, wherever you are and whatever position you hold – you have a responsibility to take action to help protect our residents when you hear about allegations of abuse or neglect.

We know you share our vision, and it is practiced by all our partner organisations. Safeguarding cannot be fully delivered by agencies acting in isolation – and can only be achieved by working together in partnership to help protect and support adults at risk of, or experiencing, abuse or neglect.

## Governance Arrangements

The Gateshead SAB became a statutory body in April 2015, assuming the strategic lead and overseeing the work of Adult Safeguarding arrangements in Gateshead. We have an Independent Chair to enhance scrutiny and challenge. The Board has a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding, which provides the framework for identifying roles and responsibilities and demonstrating accountability. We have developed strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Board.

In law, the statutory members of a SAB are defined as the local authority, the local police force and the relevant clinical commissioning group. However, in Gateshead, we recognise the importance the contribution made by all of our partner agencies, and this is reflected by the wider Board membership (correct as of June 2022):

- Gateshead Council
- Northumbria Police

- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (on behalf of NHS England, North East Ambulance Service and incorporating GP lead for Adult Safeguarding)
- Lay Members
- Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Gateshead College
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
- Probation Service
- Oasis Community Housing
- Connected Voice Advocacy
- Healthwatch Gateshead
- Department for Work and Pensions

The SAB is supported by three Sub-Groups:

**Quality, Learning and Practice Group (QLP)** (Chaired by a senior manager from Gateshead Council)

The Quality, Learning and Practice Group was established in March 2021 following a restructure of the SAB Sub-Groups. The group is responsible for monitoring and reviewing performance data and driving forward quality via the quality assurance framework, case file audits and monitoring inspection recommendations. The QLP collate and review recommendations from statutory Safeguarding Adult Reviews and discretionary reviews and has oversight of multi-agency safeguarding training. The QLP aims to ensure that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures and supporting practice guidance continue to be fit for purpose. The Group has responsibility for keeping up to date with national policy changes that may impact upon the work of the SAB. The Group also has responsibility for the development and implementation of the Communication and Engagement strategy.

**Safeguarding Adult Review and Complex Case Group (SARCC)** (Chaired by a senior manager from North East and North Cumbria ICB)

The Safeguarding Adults Review Group (SARCC) will consider Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) referrals, commission reviews and subsequently monitor their progress. The SARCC may also oversee discretionary reviews into cases

that do not meet the criteria for a SAR, where the group feel there are multi-agency lessons to be learned. It will collate and review recommendations from SARs and other reviews, ensuring that achievable action plans are developed and that actions are delivered. The SARCC also provides a forum to discuss complex Safeguarding Adult cases that require additional scrutiny and support.

**Strategic Exploitation Group** (Chaired by a senior officer from Northumbria Police)

The Strategic Exploitation Group is a sub-group of both the SAB and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The group is responsible for overseeing all work with respect to all aspects of exploitation including modern slavery, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, trafficking, missing and female genital mutilation in Gateshead.

## Developing the Strategic Plan

The Gateshead SAB Strategic Plan 2019-24 has been developed in consultation with a variety of stakeholders. It is underpinned by performance information, learning from reviews and feedback from members of the general public and safeguarding adult service users. Targeted consultation includes:

- Board member consultation
- Online survey which was circulated to all Sub Group members, key stakeholders, commissioned providers and members of NCVS who support voluntary organisations within Gateshead
- Face to face consultation with:
  - Shared Lives carers
  - Young women in supported housing provision
  - Gateshead Council tenants



## Strategic Priorities and Key Actions

The consultation process identified that the five SAB Strategic Priorities that had been in place since 2016 remained fit for purpose for 2019-24, those are:

- Quality Assurance
- Prevention
- Communication and Engagement
- Operational Practice
- Mental Capacity

### 1. Quality Assurance

The SAB will continue to prioritise Quality Assurance in its widest sense. This will enable the Board to demonstrate quality and effectiveness at both strategic and operational levels. It aims to support a better understanding of how safe adults are locally and how well local services are carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with the Care Act and the Gateshead Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures. In particular, the Board will ensure that quality is driven by learning.

#### **Key Actions 2019 - 24 include:**

- Develop training for front line practitioners that is guided by learning from reviews and inquiries
- Develop and implement annual Quality Assurance challenge event
- Enhance our multi-agency approach of sharing learning with front line practitioners
- Revise the Safeguarding Adults Review Policy and Practice Guidance to include a strengthened approach to practical application of learning
- Prepare our SAB for the new CQC regulatory model and assessment framework which is expected to commence in April 2023.

### 2. Prevention

Prevention is one of the six Principles of Safeguarding. Within Gateshead we have prioritised preventative work and have produced a range of practice guidance notes and bespoke training courses to support our front-line practitioners. The Board would like to see Prevention at the forefront of all Policies, Procedures and Practice Guidance and woven into practice.

## Key Actions 2019 - 24 include:

- Develop and implement a Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) framework as a mechanism for supporting vulnerable residents who do not meet the statutory criteria for Safeguarding Adults.
- Support closer integration of public services across the wider Gateshead System, including the work of Public Sector Reform and the Gateshead Care Partnership. Understand and respond to potential safeguarding implications of the Health and Social Care Integration White Paper.
- Become Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) / Adult Attachment / trauma informed.
- Revise the Self-Neglect Practice Guidance note and deliver updated multi-agency practitioner training.
- Revise the Financial Abuse Practice Guidance note, taking into account the issues arising from implementation of Universal Credit.
- Strengthen multi-agency arrangements for Modern Slavery in Gateshead; to include awareness raising, responding to pre-planned and unplanned incidents and quality assurance.
- Raise awareness about Gateshead pathways and provision for all aspects of exploitation, and work in partnership with the new regional Victim Hub.
- Build community resilience so that our residents are better equipped to keep themselves safe from harm.
- Develop a more flexible training programme, to include more e-learning and virtual learning opportunities.
- Develop and implement organisational abuse policy and procedure.
- Improve partnership working to safeguard people who experience homelessness.
- Understand the impact of Mental Health Act reform upon the wider safeguarding agenda. Support the Gateshead community mental health transformation programme.

## 3. Communication and Engagement

The Safeguarding Adults Board has made significant improvements in Making Safeguarding Personal to ensure that those adults involved within the safeguarding process have their wellbeing promoted and, where appropriate, that regard is given to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs when deciding any action. Consultation has demonstrated that there continues to be a lack of understanding about Safeguarding within the wider

community, which can impact upon the effectiveness of Safeguarding Adults as a whole.

#### **Key Actions 2019 - 24 include:**

- Effectively communicate and champion our good practice.
- Enhance communication and engagement with partners and providers who are not routinely engaged with the Board and Sub-Groups.
- Promote Safeguarding Adult key messages within our communities.
- Widely promote our Safeguarding website and social media presence.
- Implement our Safeguarding Adult Champion Scheme and develop Safe Reporting Centres.
- Develop a safeguarding adult resource library which includes communication and engagement tools, including visual media aids.
- Develop mechanisms to ensure that the views of adults at risk and carers inform the work of the SAB.

#### **4. Operational Practice**

Whilst this is a Strategic Plan, the SAB must ensure that operational practice is fit for purpose. Whilst significant improvements have been introduced by the SAB and our key partners, we know from our quality assurance processes and the sharing of best practice nationally and regionally that further improvements can always be made.

#### **Key Actions 2019 - 24 include:**

- Work with the Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Board to improve how our partner organisations identify and respond to complex cases.
- Refresh the SAB Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures by enhancing accessibility and simplifying the procedures.
- Enhance our approach to managing risk, to include:
  - Understanding perpetrator motivations
  - Person centred approach v managing risk
  - Identifying and responding to coercive and controlling behaviour
- Improve communication flow with referrers, providers and Adult at risk after a concern has been submitted.
- Strengthen multi-agency safeguarding transition arrangements, including procedures for responding to child to parent violence.

- Develop a shared approach to missing adults, including consideration of the use of 'vulnerability markers'.
- Further embed Making Safeguarding Personal throughout Safeguarding Adults practice.
- Work in partnership to manage levels of demand. This will include the development of an Adult Concern decision making tool.
- Develop a Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board People in a Position of Trust (PIPOT) Policy

## 5. Mental Capacity

Understanding and applying the Mental Capacity Act is central to the Safeguarding Adults process. It remains one of our most common areas for improvement in Gateshead, and beyond. Legislative changes are again on the horizon with the proposed Mental Capacity (Amendment) Bill which will reform the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and replace them with Liberty Protection Safeguards. The agenda will continue to evolve as new ways of working and case law is embedded into practice. Practitioners need tools and guidance to support them with the practical application of the Mental Capacity Act within everyday safeguarding, assessment, and care provision.

### **Key Actions 2019 - 24 include:**

- Understand, and effectively respond, to changes within the Mental Capacity Act (Amendment) Act.
- Monitor the development of the revised Code of Practice for the Mental Capacity Act and develop a mechanism for assuring that the changes within the Code of Practice are effectively implemented within Gateshead.
- Develop and implement a programme of awareness raising for front line practitioners, providers, partners and the wider public about the application of the Mental Capacity Act.
- Explore how a health diagnosis supports the practical application of the Mental Capacity act.
- Continue to ensure that referrals for advocacy are made in accordance with the Care Act 2014