



Kent and Medway Annual Report 2024/5 Appendix 2. How our strategic partners delivered the KMSAB Safeguarding Priorities in 2024/2025

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Priority 1. Promoting person centred safeguarding - this means putting adults at the centre of our work.



KCC have a co-produced vision for Adult Social Care, "**Making a positive difference every day, supporting our residents to live as full and safe a life as possible and make informed choices.**" A mid-point review was undertaken this year, which re-confirmed that our "vision" still represents what matters to the people of Kent.



The Directorate has seen some significant structural transformation over the last few years, with an embedded and established leadership team this gives us a strong foundation to deliver the aims and objectives set out in our



Making a Difference Every Day Strategy. Creating a culture of continuous development and learning with our workforce, and establishing stronger relationships with our Partners. Kent County Council's journey from current challenges to a future where every adult in Kent lives a "**glorious ordinary life**" is one of transformation, collaboration, and resilience. We are on a journey of practice improvement in line with ensuring that our strategic objectives are embedded into everyday practice.

As of April 2024, safeguarding teams in Kent were restructured into **dedicated Safeguarding Hubs**, aligned to four localities: **Ashford and Canterbury, Thanet South Kent Coast, North Kent, and West Kent**



These hubs are part of the **Adult Social Care Connect** service and are responsible for managing all Safeguarding Concerns—whether the person is new to or already known by Adult Social Care.

In addition, the **Safeguarding Managed Service**, was introduced in November 2024, with the aim of providing support to KCC Adult Social Care in relation to Safeguarding activities over a six-month period. The focus of the additional capacity was to ensure that we could respond to safeguarding concerns in a timely manner ensuring people experienced equity in terms of access, experience, and outcomes. The Service provided a positive impact on the work undertaken by frontline Adult Social Care colleagues and for the people we support.

KCC Website – [Kent.gov.uk](https://www.kent.gov.uk) - data gathered by our Digital Services team shows that the **Adult Safeguarding "Report abuse"** page was viewed **25,912** times between April 2024 to March 2025 with people accessing it fairly consistent throughout the year. The link for the online Safeguarding Concern form, to enable people to report abuse about someone they are concerned for, was used a total of **7,917** times in the last year, which is just over 2,150 more than the previous year, showing a 37% increase in Safeguarding Concerns raised online.

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) remains central to practice, when supporting a person involved in the Adult Safeguarding process in Adult Social Care, ensuring their wishes are discussed and clearly recorded. The KCC Adult Social Care dedicated **Making Safeguarding Personal** online page, launched in September 2023, which incorporates a feedback form, to ensure we continue to capture the voice of the person and enable them to share their views on their Safeguarding experience. The feedback form has proved to be the most effective way so far of receiving feedback, with over 85% of feedback highlighting that the person felt central to the Safeguarding Enquiry and the decisions that were made. The feedback form can also be printed and completed manually to ensure everyone has the opportunity to share their experience.



Ongoing practice improvements to ensure the person's voice is always paramount within the Safeguarding process, remains a priority going into the coming year.

KCC would like to share with you some examples from the people supported by KCC Adult Social Care over the last year;

Example 1 – Self-Neglect - One of our Social Worker's worked with a person in a complex situation involving self-

neglect. The situation appeared to have gone unnoticed by many other professionals until a referral was received to adult social care. The person appeared to have no identified care and support needs but was living in a severe state of self-neglect. At the beginning of the person's journey, the Social Worker had to find ways to engage with the person. She did this by spending time to build trust and understand the person's situations and needs through multiple visits. With hard work and determination, the Social Worker has now enabled the person to access other community and private services to regain control of their life and live independently and safely, within their home. This demonstrates a great example of strengths-based relational work, putting the person at the centre of what we do.

The feedback below shows the difference we can make;



"Where do I start, as you are aware I have been involved with your service for a little while now, and I would like to write to you and show my gratitude. More importantly my appreciation towards the Social Worker that has worked hard and tirelessly to support me, which hasn't been easy for her due to my reluctance."

"My lights went out, my life was very lonely. I got in complete despair, and I was in a horrible mess, my house was in ruin, and I was not living I was merely existing. Thank God for my Social Worker, she had the patience to crack my hard exterior and encourage me to get my life back. I will forever be grateful to her. There should be more people that work for services like her, she is kind, caring, compassionate and forward thinking and her efficiency is something to be desired. I could not have got to where I am today without her and that I'm sure of. I now have a new lease of life and I feel so positive going forward, and my Social Worker always said to me this will be exciting when we started together and I thought she was mad, but she was right this has been exciting, the progress we made, the changes has all been great and has lit a fire in me. I have started knitting and cooking again, and watching how my Social Worker managed to get the services in to help with the cleaning, plumbing, electrics, and clearance, and been there every step of the way involving me and treating me like a human being, she is marvellous".

Example 2 – Co-Occurring Conditions

XX is a gentleman who has been known to services for a number of years. There have been concerns raised about his vulnerability and his self-neglecting during this time. He has a history of drug and alcohol misuse and health conditions, and disengaging with all support. A Safeguarding Concern was raised late 2023 when Kent Fire and Rescue Service attended his home. They were extremely concerned about him as his home had a clutter rating of 9.

Multiple Professionals Meetings were held as part of the Safeguarding process, and Risk Panels for Co-Occurring Conditions, involving KCC Adult Social Care, housing, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, GP, Police, Community Wardens and Mental Health colleagues. These led to the development of a multi-agency plan to engage XX using creative approaches and looking at any appropriate legal interventions including Mental Capacity assessments. XX has the support of an advocate and is clear he wants to be left in his flat alone and would like others near him to be moved away. He does not consider that he has any needs. Plans are in place for detox, medical interventions and rehabilitation, alongside improvements to XX's property and prevention of eviction.

KCC Adult Social Care have worked collaboratively with multi-agency colleagues, taking into consideration the significant challenges that comes with identifying and getting the support needed to help someone who Self-Neglects, and support is ongoing for XX into 2025/26.

Creating a Multi-Agency Team Approach to Co-occurring Conditions in Thanet

In response to the issues affecting a growing number of people in Kent. Social based in Thanet Community Teams, have been working with a team of KCC Co-occurring Conditions (Substance misuse and Mental Health) Champions, and partner agencies, to create a focussed Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting. Throughout 2024 work was undertaken to ensure the most appropriate agencies were involved, the necessary information gathering

mechanisms were created, and the first meeting was held in February 2025. Partner agencies include, KCC, Forward Trust, Community Mental Health Team, Housing, Community Nurses, GP and more. This pro-active and innovative work, focusing on the issues around substance misuse and mental health, has created an environment to find solutions for people that really need them, ensuring that professionals are working together in the most collaborative way. This work will continue to be monitored in the coming year.

This complements the ongoing work led by KCC Public Health around [Co-occurring Conditions](#), focusing on building the network of Co-occurring Conditions Champions with all partner agencies, providing training, holding conferences, collaborating with partners, in particular around Alcohol Related Brain Injuries, which reached over 300 delegates, and convening regular panel meetings to discuss those most at risk through substance misuse and mental health concerns.

**Adult Suicide Prevention
Training For People in Kent**

Learn more about this free training.



KCC remains a committed partner organisation for the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Programme, working with many agencies who provided support to people in need of services during 2024/25. These agencies include, Release the pressure who offer free support for anyone, 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. In 2024/25 they provided over 35,000

wellbeing conversations via either text or phone.

Suicide Prevention training, delivered by Mid Kent Mind, is available to anyone in Kent (for free). During 2024/25 over 2000 people were trained in suicide prevention awareness and techniques. <https://midkentmind.org.uk/training/adult-suicide-prevention/>.



Amparo offer free suicide bereavement support and worked with 87 bereaved families and individuals in the previous year; 74% of the beneficiaries indicated a positive change to their wellbeing, and feedback received such as “With the emotional support, I am learning to live alongside and around my grief day to day” shows how important this service is to the people who need it during the most hardest times in their lives.



KCC Adult Strategic Safeguarding also created a Suicide Prevention aide memoire to support frontline colleagues when responding to conversations of this nature. This was produced in response to learning identified by Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board when reviewing the Self-Assessment Framework, and learning on the impact of Domestic Abuse. The aide memoire was contributed to by Adult Social Care colleagues, Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention colleagues, and MIND.

In addition, Strategic Safeguarding worked alongside Public Health colleagues to create a briefing for colleagues highlighting the links between Autism and Suicide. The Suicide Prevention Strategy for England, 2023-2028, autistic people have been named as a new priority group using data, evidence and engagement with experts. Taking learning from the KMSAB Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) for [SAR Stephen](#), a young man with Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and Neurodiversity who sadly took his own life, whilst in supported living with a range of agencies involved. You can read the SAR learning briefing [here](#).

Throughout 2024, the **KCC Involvement and Information team** facilitated a series of in-person staff engagement events at various locations across the county via a staff roadshow. The aim was to promote greater awareness of the Making a difference every day strategy, strategic priorities and the delivery plan. There was also an opportunity to share related information, advice and guidance with staff. The events were designed to improve links between departments, promote joined-up communication and best-practice sharing amongst colleagues as well as encouraging a greater understanding of the directorate’s vision.

The Involvement and Information team hosted ongoing **Social Care Involvement Groups** across the county to ensure that our communities and people that may have unmet social care and wellbeing needs have a chance to be

aware of what support is available in Kent. Groups are advertised locally via community venues, newsletters, websites and partner communications. A full list of groups is updated regularly on [Get Involved : Involvement groups | Connect to Support | Kent.gov.uk](#). The team also facilitated the Learning Disability Partnership Board for Kent and Medway multiple times in 2024, and the members including people with lived experience have a varied agenda with a focus on safeguarding awareness and issues affecting people with learning disabilities, autistic people, neurodivergent people and parent carers.

KCC Community Safety provide the Kent Community Warden Service who have a proactive and visible presence in Kent communities to improve residents' quality of life and promote stronger and safer communities. They deliver a trusted community-based service that identifies and addresses local concerns by implementing preventative and early intervention measures. This includes contributing to KCC's duties under the Care Act 2014 including [Section 1 Promoting individual well-being](#) and [Section 2 Preventing needs for care and support](#). The work undertaken by the [Community Wardens](#) covers a wide range of situations and circumstances including many examples of [social isolation](#), self-neglect and hoarding, substance dependency, dementia cafés, [scams](#), and anti-social behaviour. Adult Social Care colleagues work closely with the Community Warden Service, along with a number of multi-agency partners.

D/deaf Pub case study - In November 2024 a Community Warden based in Swale, received a heartfelt request from members of the D/deaf community on the Isle of Sheppey to facilitate a 'Deaf Pub,' providing a welcoming space for mingling with others interested in learning British Sign Language (BSL). Embracing this opportunity, the warden, who was advancing her own BSL skills at Level 3, reached out to Sheerness East Working Men's Club. The club manager, eager to support inclusivity, eagerly offered the venue, having previously achieved Level 1 in BSL herself.

Determined to make a difference, Community Warden spread the word among the D/deaf community and to those keen on BSL. The Deaf Pub opened its doors on the on 25th November and is held on the last Monday of each month. Ages in attendance ranged from 9 to over 70. Conversations were held in sign language and signing games were played. This vibrant club has become a *“beacon of friendship, learning, and inclusivity”*. It's a place where new skills are honed, and friendships are forged, embodying the spirit of community. With a commitment to support the D/deaf community in Swale and beyond. One of the attendees who is Deaf said that he *“had really enjoyed himself and that for the first time in ages he had really relaxed and had a good time”*.



The Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling Community Warden Team have won **two National Safeguarding Adults Board Excellence Awards**, recognising the excellent and valuable work of the team. The first award was for **‘Innovation Champion’** and went to a Community Warden for her innovative work on the **Men's Moving Minds group** which she established in Shepway, Maidstone, an area of high deprivation. This group runs every Wednesday from 1-3pm, offering the opportunity for men of all ages to get together, make new friends, learn new skills and receive support from the Community Warden Service. The routine, activities and connections made are allowing improvements in confidence, mental health, and social isolation. The Warden has further plans to help empower the group through arranging support for those looking to return to work, and work with some of the members to take ownership of the group.

The second award was for **‘Partnership Champion’** and was awarded to the whole area team for the partnership work they all carry out within their local communities. The team ensures residents receive the right support at the right time for issues around living conditions, self-neglect and mental health. When working with residents with

such issues it is important to have a joined-up approach in place as there are many strands which need to be addressed. The team refer onto appropriate agencies such as Adult Social Care, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Mental Health Services and Housing services. They also, very importantly, provide facilitation and support to the resident in engaging with the various other services, which could otherwise be overwhelming and lead to disengagement. These two national awards are very well deserved recognition for the highly regarded.

The Chair of the [Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board](#), Andy Rabey, visited the Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling Community Safety Wardens Team on 19 March 2025 to personally present them with their awards. He has previously spoken very highly of the valuable work wardens carry out in supporting the collective effort of safeguarding vulnerable residents in Kent. The team were able to share additional stories and cases with Andy during his visit, highlighting and demonstrating even further the role the Wardens play in safeguarding the elderly and vulnerable in our communities. Andy said about the visit:



“It was such a pleasure to meet, talk and present the award to the Warden team. I was able to share their stories at the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Board this morning and I was pleased to say that a number of the attendees knew about the hard work and dedication to supporting the people in their communities that is carried out by the wardens. I look forward to catching up with them again in the near future.”

Priority 2. Strengthening system assurance - How organisations are working together to support adults

The Adult Strategic Safeguarding Unit visited [Southfields](#) a short-breaks centre in Ashford, in February 2025 to provide a Team Talk, which incorporated an overview of the work the Safeguarding unit and raise awareness in relation to Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs), sharing learning from previous Reviews. Below is some of the feedback received:



“I know I have knowledge of how to follow the procedures of raising a Safeguarding concern, which form to fill out, the responses and period of time it takes, and not all concerns raised qualify as safeguarding concerns”.

“Thank you for the clarification and explaining how accessible and useable the safeguarding information is”

“More confident in what a SAR is and completing a Safeguarding Concern, looks easy. Good presentation, thank you”.



As part of the [Safeguarding Adult Awareness Week Programme](#) in November 2024, KCC Strategic Safeguarding Unit and Community Wardens held joint information stalls in the Invicta House Atrium, Maidstone, Kent. We spoke with a wide range of KCC colleagues on what safeguarding means to them, including the theme of

exploitation, raising awareness of Domestic Abuse, Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board, and the work undertaken by our Community Wardens.

To help improve communication with our multi-agency colleagues, KCC Strategic Safeguarding has produced **guidance briefings for when corresponding with Primary Care or Kent Police**. The guidance highlights the essential information required between agencies, to ensure the person at the centre of the concern is supported in the most timely and appropriate way.

Our **Adult Social Care Safeguarding practitioners regularly work with our Care Sector Workforce** to consider the support required for the care sector. Regular articles are provided within our Kent Registered Managers Newsletter and Adult Social Care always have a stand at the Kent Registered Managers (KRM) Conference. In September 2024, a presentation was delivered at the KRM on our Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) service, which was attended by 150 Registered Care Managers. In addition, KCC Strategic Safeguarding attended the Canterbury Registered Managers Network meeting in October 2024, and the North Kent Registered Manager's Network meeting in November 2024. Continued engagement with our Care Sector has enabled us to raise awareness of Safeguarding and related areas of concern such as Self Neglect, discussed changes made to the Online Safeguarding Concern form and re-shared contact information in relation to Safeguarding areas teams.

The Adult Social Care People's Panel is a key co-production group which is held six times a year and is made up of people with direct lived experience of accessing care and support and carers. The group has a varied agenda focusing on the issues and opportunities that are important to local areas in Kent. Safeguarding information has been shared with the group and a number of key projects and campaigns throughout the year have had involvement from its members. They play a key role in steering the agenda of the meetings, and are well-linked to their own communities, proactively raising awareness about adult social care services and support.

Carers voice co-production groups have discussed safeguarding topics that are relevant to carers who care for adult family members or friends to ensure that their voices are heard throughout the development of the future carer support offer.

Our **"Your Voice" Network newsletter** is circulated monthly to members of the public who have registered an interest in social care topics, voluntary sector organisations, local councils including parish councils, community and faith-based organisations and charities. This has incorporated content about key areas of work where people can have a say on plans, influence the design of communication materials or be involved in co-production of services and campaigns etc, including those focused on safeguarding awareness, such as the White Ribbon campaign, loneliness, suicide prevention and wellbeing. KCC also produce an annual "[Your Guide to Adult Social Care in Kent](#)" (available in paper format and online) for the public and people that draw on care and support and which includes information on safeguarding. It is a practical guide to getting support and signposting to support organisations.



KCC colleagues continued worked alongside Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB) partner agencies on many policy, practice and guidance initiatives over the course of the year, which include;

❖ **Multi-Agency Risk Management (MARM) Framework – which is due to go live on 1 April 2025**

A local MARM Framework for Kent and Medway was jointly developed, learning from other areas of the country, where this Framework has been adopted. The purpose of the MARM Framework is for relevant agencies and professionals, with the person, to discuss perceived risks, and how best they can support the person to reduce future serious risk. These MARM meetings may take place only where other statutory processes and multi-agency forums do not apply (e.g. Section 42 Enquiries), or when other multi-agency meetings or ways to support the person to reduce serious risk may not have worked.

- ❖ The complete review of the '[Multi-agency protocol to safeguard adults with care and support needs who are impacted by domestic abuse](#)' which was re-launched in December 2024. The focus was to ensure that the protocol comprehensively covered the effect of domestic abuse on people with care and support needs, taking into consideration areas such as communication needs, impact on Carers, additional risk factors and importance of appropriate information sharing with partner agencies.
- ❖ **KMSAB Multi-agency Audit**, with a focus on Homelessness. This is an ongoing piece of work, and the first of its kind undertaken by the Board multi-agency partners in Kent and Medway. The planning stages began in 2024, with a view of undertaking the audit in Spring 2025. This is to provide assurance to the Board, that statutory agencies are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to the [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#).



The Domestic Abuse Community Champions scheme was launched in February 2025 – to provide colleagues in the scheme with additional Domestic Abuse knowledge, so they can be an empathetic point of contact, getting people to the right support quickly. A monthly cohort will be trained and have access to ongoing support. Most people experiencing domestic abuse tell someone they know first. **We want victims of domestic abuse to get a good response from whoever they choose to tell.**

Priority 3. Embedding improvement and shaping future practice – organisations keep getting better



In April 2024 CQC launched a new single assessment framework for providers, local authorities and integrated care systems. For local authorities the assessment framework uses a subset of the quality statements from the overall assessment framework. This is because local authorities are being assessed against a different set of statutory duties (Care Act 2014) to registered providers.

[The assessment framework for local authorities](#) comprises of 9 quality statements mapped across 4 overall themes. Each theme is also aligned to;

- I statements – what people expect and based on [Think Local Act Personal's 'Making it Real' Framework](#)
- We statements – commitments that local authorities must commit to, to deliver high-quality, person-centred care.

Kent County Council's assessment commenced on the 18 March 2024 with a notification of local authority assessment. KCC provided over 250 pieces of evidence, alongside our April 2024 self-assessment as part of the initial information required by CQC, which forms a key part of part of the assessment to demonstrate how the local authority is carrying out its functions as part of the Care Act (2014). The second notification for assessment was received on 29 July 2024 confirming our on-site visit for the week 30 September 2024. As part of this notification KCC were required to return an anonymised list of 50 people who have drawn on care and support, 10 were selected by CQC to engage with people, and or their family and carers, where consent was given.

The formal assessment interviews began on the 26 September virtually with a number of partners, with the CQC assessment team arriving in Kent on 1 October 2024 until 3 October 2024, with a number of virtual interviews continuing until the 8 October 2024. Following the on-site visit CQC requested some additional information from the local authority on the 15 October and 13 December 2024 to support their assessment. The outcome of the Assessment is due in the Summer 2025.

Focusing on the importance of ongoing development for KCC colleagues, the **Competency Framework for Statutory Responsibilities** was launched in November 2024, which brings together the principles of The Care Act (2014), The Mental Health Act and the Mental Capacity Act, to ensure that staff at all levels are aware of their statutory duties and responsibilities and how this is evidenced within their role. The framework programme is broken down into 4 levels for Adult Social Care with a separate level for Occupational Therapy (OT). Our suite of training includes Safeguarding Section 42 Enquiries, Domestic Abuse provided by one of KCC's commissioned providers Oasis, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and Court of Protection, Positive Risk Management, Mental Capacity Act and Mental Health Act, and Trauma Informed Positive Behaviour among many others.

To assist people with accessing the most current and useful [Adult Safeguarding information on Kent.gov.uk](https://www.kent.gov.uk/adult-safeguarding), KCC Strategic Safeguarding reviewed the information available, working collaboratively with the members of the Safeguarding Co-Production group and Digital Services. The revised Safeguarding pages were launched in January 2025 and included additional information on the Care Act (2014) in relation to Safeguarding, advocacy, various categories of abuse, Children's Services - Signs and symptoms of child abuse and a link to the new Kent and Medway Threshold Tool.

[Kent and Medway Threshold Tool](#) - the tool, launched in January 2025, was created collaboratively with KCC Strategic Safeguarding and Medway Adult Social Care, to provide a best practice guide in relation to Safeguarding. The tool was approved by the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB) and is hosted on the KMSAB Website, signposted on Kent.gov.uk, and on Tri-X (online resource platform) for all staff to access. The feedback from KCC staff and multi-agency partners has been very positive, highlighting that it regularly used as part of their decision making in relation to raising a Safeguarding Concern.

In 2024/2025, all of the **KCC Safeguarding Forms** both public facing, and internal forms used for Care Act (2014) Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries, were revised and enhanced. The KCC [Online Safeguarding Concern Referral Form](#) was updated to improve accessibility and streamlined to assist the person raising a Concern; whilst ensuring the most pertinent information required was made mandatory to complete by the referrer, to help frontline practitioners accurately risk assess the Concerns raised for the person(s). The internal Safeguarding forms held on the Mosaic electronic database, were also revised to improve the recording of essential information about the person and to provide vital prompts/guidance for staff, such as raising concerns for Children's services where appropriate, Self Neglect and Hoarding [Clutter rating scale](#), and enhanced information captured in relation to Making Safeguarding Personal. These changes went live in March 2025, and included a specific section of the form adapted for South East Coastal Ambulance Service (SECAMB) colleagues, to support them to raise Safeguarding Concerns in the most accessible way.

Alongside the above changes, a Self-Neglect pathway has also been developed to be introduced into frontline practice in April 2025, which help to provide a clearer picture of people who are experiencing Self Neglect, known to Adult Social Care and to provide those with the appropriate support and guidance. The "pathway" is a new process within the electronic Mosaic system. Joint training will be provided to frontline colleagues by the Practice Development Officers and Systems Team to support the use of the new pathway over the coming year.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) continues to deliver support to adult survivors of domestic abuse across Kent, both in refuges and in their own home. KIDAS providers deliver a wide range of training including how to complete the DASH (Domestic Abuse Stalking, Honour-based abuse) risk assessment that helps to identify what level of support may be required, training to professionals to support their response and practice to domestic abuse. This includes delivery to safeguarding teams, housing teams and hospital staff.

KIDAS works alongside new safe accommodation support services, that commenced in 2023, to ensure the council meets its statutory duty under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This includes;

A Male Refuge Pilot which is a 3 bed refuge for male survivors and their accompanying children, opened in

December 2023. In the first year of delivery this service received 49 enquiries for a bedspace which highlights the level of demand and lack of specialist refuge spaces across the Country. This service has provided refuge space and support to 5 males who were fleeing domestic abuse.



The **Sanctuary Access For Eligible Residents (SAFER) Scheme**. SAFER comprises of a Single Point of Access, Property Security (including property assessment and installation of items such as security advice, door locks, window locks etc) and the offer of specialist domestic abuse support for occupants of the home. In the previous year, the SAFER Scheme’s single point of access received 594 referrals, each referral constituting as one single household, with over 700 adults residing in those households and almost 1000 children and young people.

The **Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS)** provides child-centred, outcome-focused support to children and young people (0-19 years, up to 25 years with additional needs) who are victims and survivors of domestic abuse and residing in all types of Safe Accommodation including refuge and in a property with SAFER applied.

KIDAS also has a “**Pets in Refuge**” initiative which supports the associated costs of allowing pets into refuge. This helps to remove the barriers survivors may face in accessing safety and support and recognises the significant role pets can play in deciding whether to leave. **This is available in self-contained refuges** which have been made available across the county of Kent including in Tonbridge, Ashford, Sittingbourne, Folkestone and Canterbury and dispersed accommodation options in Thanet.

The **Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership** brings organisations together to facilitate delivery against our joint [Domestic Abuse Strategy](#). This year the governance structure that supports delivery and scrutiny has been renewed, with membership of all groups updated. A **new quarterly Domestic Abuse Support in Kent and Medway Newsletter** was launched to promote consistent messaging and share guidance tools and news including the newly published [referral pathway](#) and [British Sign Language Access Video](#). To increase the knowledge around domestic abuse there were [18 webinars](#) run throughout the **16 Days of Action**, with over 1400 people signed-up to attend them.

The [Know, See, Speak Out](#) multi-agency campaign raises awareness of domestic abuse and who this affects, engaging hundreds of individuals, businesses and organisations, helping them to:

- **Know** more about domestic abuse by undertaking training
- **See** what action they can take such as sharing our [campaign resources](#).

- **Speak Out** by signposting people to services.



The campaign puts **Survivor Voice Ambassadors** at its heart, sharing their stories to educate and inspire more people to seek help. KCC are also proud to continue to be a [White Ribbon accredited organisation](#). White Ribbon encourages people, especially men and boys, to take action and change behaviour individually or collectively to end male violence against women and girls. White Ribbon day was held on 25th November 2024.

MARAC Hub Change Programme – a review of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) (a safeguarding forum to discuss how to help people experiencing domestic abuse who are at high risk of murder or serious harm) continued throughout 2024. The review included recommendations and learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and a Kent Analytics assessment which identified a number of weaknesses in the system. Multi-Agency partners agreed on a new MARAC Hub with increased staffing, a new case management system to facilitate information sharing and action planning, with fewer meetings. The new Hub Model is collaboratively funded by Kent County Council, Kent Police, Medway Council, the ICB, Kent Fire and Rescue Service

and Probation and is due to go live in April 2025.

Kent Police

Priority 1. Promoting person centred safeguarding - this means putting adults at the centre of our work.

To promote person centred safeguarding - Kent Police have developed our response to safeguarding adults in a number of ways.

Recognising the need to put vulnerable adults at the centre of our work is a fundamental message that comes through in all of our engagement with KMSAB, but especially in the tactical groups we are part off and also through the SAR learning.

Below we have documented internal changes and activities which have taken place across the force. Furthermore, we have utilised courses provided by KMSAB and SAR learning to wider inform all force members through training courses and internal advertising of events and learning.

Investigative Habits

In line with the [Kent Police Pledge](#), Kent Police's investigative priorities are to **catch criminals, support and protect victims** and **solve crime**. To do this Investigators need to adopt an investigative mindset, develop good practices, and take the **right action** at the **right time** and to the **right standard**.

To support Officers and staff in doing this Kent Police has developed a set of investigative habits, that if understood and used in the right way will ensure every investigator approaches every investigation consistently, effectively and with a mindset that is:

- **Suspect focused**
- **Victim centred**
- **Context led**

The investigative habits should be used to develop investigation plans, to shape supervisory reviews, and be used as a framework for how we investigate crime and develop our investigators. These habits are to be used for all investigations including where Adults at Risk are victims, by officers applying the habits it will lead to better outcomes for victims of crime and ensure that the risk of harm from suspects towards vulnerable people in Kent and Medway is effectively managed.

Divisional Policing Review - Investigations

As part of the Divisional Policing Review, announced in 2023, the force has now successfully implemented changes to the investigation and management of cases involving the abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and adults at risk. The new Public Protection Command combines the Strategic and Operational teams under one Detective Chief Superintendent and Detective Superintendent. Operationally, the Child Protection & Adult Protection Teams are based divisionally and collaborate closely with local partners to provide an effective safeguarding response. These teams are responsible for investigating crimes where adults at risk of harm or abuse are targeted because of their vulnerabilities. The new command also incorporates the Central Referral Unit, who manage safeguarding

referrals on behalf of the force, and the Public Protection Development Team, who support operation delivery by ensuring policy, training and multiagency working is effective.

To support this revised structure a new crime allocation policy was introduced to ensure that safeguarding investigations are allocated to appropriately trained staff in a timely manner.

A similar restructure has also occurred within the investigation of Rape and High-Risk Domestic Abuse, the new Crime Command similarly combines the Strategic and Operational teams under one Detective Chief Superintendent.

This review has improved the management of investigations, empowering decision-making, and leadership at a local level. This directly supports the [Kent Police Pledge](#) and the commitment towards providing a high-quality policing service and a focus on solving crimes and the relentless pursuit of criminals

The Quality Assurance Framework audit has shown that since the introduction of the new command there has been an increase in both the identification of vulnerability in victims of crime and the use of suitable safeguarding responses.

Neighbourhood Policing Model

Following on from the introduction last year of the new Neighbourhood Policing Model, the latest available figures for antisocial behaviour show a positive impact, with 1,214 fewer incidents reported (a 4% drop) during the year to April 2025 compared to the previous 12 months.

The Neighbourhood Policing Teams continue to collaborate with partners to ensure that those most vulnerable in Kent and Medway are protected from harm. One such example was the successful use of a closure order in Kent in relation to cuckooing ¹concerns. Police had responded to reports that drink and drug users were frequenting the address at all hours of the day and night, causing nuisance behaviour, and taking advantage of a vulnerable person living there. The use of the closure order and effective partnership working ensured that both the vulnerable resident of the flat and other vulnerable residents in the locality were protected from further harm.

Kent Police work closely with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner who has secured an additional £1.5 million budget for more visible police patrols in areas where there has historically been more antisocial behaviour and criminality. The OPCC also launched a survey seeking feedback from the residents of Kent and Medway who live in antisocial behaviour hotspots.

MARAC² Hub

A new case management system has been introduced into the MARAC Hub, this ensures that cases are effectively managed, actions are tracked and business information can be captured and shared to better understand risk and respond to need.

National Intelligence Model

Kent Police have reinvigorated use of the National Intelligence Model. This model is recognised across the world as an effective & efficient policing model, one which was pioneered within Kent Police. The process relies on the analysis of Intelligence received and generated by police to produce effective briefings and taskings of officers and staff. The briefing & tasking process rolled out now focuses on the threat, risk and harm and provides a valuable snapshot of priorities. The National Intelligence Model ensures Kent Police delivers a better and more proactive service to our communities, while helping officers and staff to be more efficient and effective. The use of these

¹ [Cuckooing | Kent Police](#)

² [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference \(MARAC\) referral | Kent Police](#)

proactive patrols on hotspots has led to a measurable reduction in crime in targeted areas and the effective disruption of criminals who target those most vulnerable in Kent and Medway.

Herbert Protocol

In March 2025, Kent Police formally adopted the [Herbert Protocol](#) to help locate vulnerable adults with dementia who are reported missing. The protocol enables carers to pre-emptively record important details of such vulnerable people, including their interests, the places they like to visit and how dementia affects them, using an online form which is uploaded to [Safe and Found Online](#).

These details can be accessed quickly by the police if a person with dementia is later reported missing, helping officers to find them sooner, bring them to a place of safety and reduce any risk of harm.

This is providing a vulnerable adult centric approach.

Forcer Protocol

Kent Police launched the Forcer Protocol in November 2024 enabling swift access to bespoke personal safety information once the force is informed an armed forces veteran, reservist or serving member is lost, missing or in need of support - helping to find them more quickly.

Those leaving from the armed services can often find it difficult to reintegrate into civilian life and if they are missing while vulnerable, swift access to safety information specific to them can be critical towards finding them safely before they come to harm. Force Incident Managers and Adult Missing Liaison Officers will have access to details previously submitted by veterans via an online form which is held on the [Safe and Found website database](#). Details include the habits and interests of veterans and locations they are likely to visit.

Community Engagement and Community Events

My Community Voice

My Community Voice (MCV) is a two-way engagement tool set up by Kent Police for residents, businesses and community groups in Kent and Medway. Members of the public can choose what information they receive from Kent Police and how they receive it – whether that is by email, text, or voice mail.

In May 2024, a MCV group dedicated to Safeguarding Adults was set up by the Public Protection Command and has over 790 subscribers. During 2024/2025, 23 messages highlighting issues directly related to Adult Safeguarding were sent, including highlighting KMSAB campaigns and weeks of Action. The Kent Fraud Alert System also uses My Community Voice to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Kent Police Open Days

Kent Police hosted three open days in summer 2024 attended by over 15000 people. These days offered a unique chance to engage with a wide range of individuals to help promote an understanding of policing and offer advice on crime reduction. There were stands dedicated to KMSAB, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Crime Prevention, Protecting Vulnerable People, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Kent County Council Trading Standards – all promoting safety and signposting to services to support those in need. Feedback from the public on the events has been excellent, and the force received hundreds of positive comments across our social media channels as well as in person on the day.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Kent Police have continued to engage with communities across Kent and Medway to offer guidance and reassurance around Violence Against Women and Girls. Kent Police have hosted a number of events including “Walk & Talks,” community meetings and online engagement events where members of the public and wider stakeholders were able to engage directly with force VAWG leads, and their local policing teams. These were hybrid events attended either in person at each district or virtually.

In addition, there have been safe havens and safe spaces initiatives launched across Kent and Medway, these are advertised so that vulnerable individuals can go to a venue and get additional support, whether that is enabling them to make a call, charge a phone or seek assistance.

Neighbourhood profiles have been introduced, these highlight vulnerable individuals and locations for our Neighbourhood officers to be aware of and pay attention to during their patrols. Where specific problems are identified 'Problem Management Plans' are introduced which ensure a multi-agency response is in place to reduce threat, risk, and harm.

Priority 2. Strengthening system assurance - How organisations are working together to support adults

Policing

In 2024/25 Kent Police recorded over 10,000 incidents involving adults with care and support needs across Kent and Medway, over 3000 of which were crimes. Furthermore, Kent Police notified the Local Authority of over 3200 safeguarding concerns involving Adults at Risk. This was an increase on previous years and reflects the effectiveness of the AWARE Adult Risk Assessment, which encourages frontline staff to consider the contextual risk when assessing an individual's care and support needs. The AWARE elements consist of Appearance, Words, Activity, Relationships and Dynamics, and Environment.

Right Care Right Person

In April 2024 Kent Police Formally adopted the Right Care Right Person (RCRP) approach. RCRP is an initiative between police forces nationally and the Department of Health and Social Care. Its core aim is to ensure that members of the public receive the right care by the right service, especially in regard to mental health incidents. This new approach means that people will receive the right support, at the right time by the right agency. Kent Police attendance at mental health, medical or social care related incidents will be considered using the following criteria:

- To protect people whose life is at risk.
- To protect another where there is a clear, immediate risk that serious harm will be caused.
- To investigate crime that has or is occurring.

Kent Police worked closely with the NHS and Social Care in the build up to the introduction of RCRP, adopting a partnership approach to ensure smooth implementation and effective learning was in place

Kent & Medway Fraud Panel

Kent Police has continued to chair the Kent and Medway Fraud Panel. The Fraud Panel has been formed to work collaboratively in investigating allegations of fraud, prosecution of offenders, recovery of criminal assets and the safeguarding of residents and victims. This co-ordinated approach has resulted in 310 Fraud alerts being circulated via the Kent Fraud Alert System reaching 250,000 subscribers and over 2.3 million people via social media.

In 2024/25 the Kent Police Prevent & Protect Team attended 145 events to offer advice on scams and Fraud to residents of Kent and Medway. This reached an audience of over 12,000 people many of whom were vulnerable and thus at risk of being targeted by criminals. The team also contacted over 1800 victims of fraud to offer crime prevention advice. This resulted in the installation of 33 call blocker devices to help the most vulnerable victims stay safe.

Kent Police continue to work closely with financial institutions through the Banking Protocol which involves helping train bank staff to recognise when vulnerable victims are being targeted by criminals and to report this to police. In 2024, there were 469 calls into the Police from financial institutions in Kent with savings of £4.4M. This represents an increase of 70% in calls and in increase of 144% in savings thus denying criminals the profits to

perpetrate further crime against the most vulnerable victims.

As an extension of the Banking Protocol, Kent Police has been visiting retailers as part of the Gift Card Road Show. Requests for Gift cards by fraudsters targeting vulnerable people has increased dramatically. The Road show involves presenting to staff on the problem, spotting signs of a possible victim and use of the Protocol.

Kent Police have also focused on the problems of Courier Fraud and Rogue Traders. Work with partner agencies and use of trigger plans has resulted in the issuing of quick time alerts to areas where offences are being reported. Not only does this help with reducing the number of victims but also the losses and is helping to build the intelligence picture.

Kent Patrol App

The Kent Patrol App was introduced to assist frontline staff and officers when out on patrol. It collates sources of information in an easy to access format which can be used on mobile devices. This App allows access to Safeguarding information including how to make a safeguarding referral and what information to include.

Guidance Pages

To support investigation teams the Kent Police Public Protection Command have redesigned the internal Guidance pages for staff and officers. There is now a dedicated guidance page for Adults at Risk which closely links to the KMSAB Multiagency Policies & Guidance. The topics on these pages are shaped by learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and internal audits. These pages have been designed with frontline staff and officers in mind to be easily accessible and to offer straightforward guidance on how to manage safeguarding concerns. These pages are also linked via the Kent Patrol App so that officers responding to emergencies have such guidance at their fingertips.

Priority 3. Embedding improvement and shaping future practice – organisations keep getting better

Training

Kent Police Learning and Development and Public Protection Command have reviewed and redesigned the Adults At Risk Investigator training course to incorporate learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and new Policies and procedures from the KMSAB. The newly designed course now incorporates staff from Adult Social Care to allow for joint training of both Police and Adults Social Care. It includes a specific immersive roleplay exercise which primarily focuses on the SAR of 'Patsy' (anonymised in full) and an additional case study to reinforce learning for both agencies across the entire course.

National Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week – Multiagency Training Event

Kent Police hosted a multiagency event with several guest speakers from different agencies and additional inputs by the Public Protection Command which focused on issues identified during Safeguarding Adult Reviews. The following were topics covered:

- Legal Literacy – Kent Police
- Investigative habits and professional curiosity – Kent Police
- Partnership working with Adult Social Care – Medway Adult Social Care
- Role of the Integrated Care Board – Kent & Medway ICB
- Role of the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board – KMSAB

The event was run as a hybrid event taking place simultaneously in the Kent Police College lecture theatre and online via MS Teams. In total 91 people attended from a wide range of agencies including Police, Local Authorities, and the NHS. Feedback from attendees was positive with respondents on average rating the day as 9/10 both in terms of relevance to their safeguarding roles and overall quality of the inputs

Police and Crime Plan Survey 2024

As part of his commitment to actively engage with the diverse communities of Kent and Medway, the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Matthew Scott, launched the Annual Policing Survey in July 2024. 6,767 survey responses were received overall. Whilst not specifically targeted at Adults at risk of abuse and neglect, the survey did cover several key issues such as how safe people feel and how effective the Police were at dealing with issues such as antisocial behaviour which was seen by the public as the 7th biggest crime related issue. Results also showed that on average, residents of Kent and Medway do trust the police and think the Force performs well. There was strong support for the policing priorities. These results will be used to help formulate the Police and Crime Plan for 2025 – 2029.

Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board

Kent Police have continued to fully engage with the work of the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board over the last year. As a statutory agency, Kent Police attend all the working groups and have chaired several Task and Finish Groups looking at policy and practice reviews on behalf of the Practice, Policy, and Procedures Working Group. Kent Police also played an extensive role in the writing and review of the Agency Self-Assessment Framework on behalf of the Quality Assurance Working Group.

Reviews and Audits

There are a number of multi-agency scrutiny panels set up to review cases where a positive outcome i.e. charge has not been achieved. Cases are reviewed collectively with the investigators; this means that any opportunities to improve practice are identified and acted upon immediately. Thematic issues are identified and addressed by organisational events and professional development sessions. These issues are then reviewed during audits to ensure the learning is embedded in practice.

Priority 1. Promoting person centred safeguarding - this means putting adults at the centre of our work.

The points below detail how NHS Kent and Medway has worked across the system to promote person centred safeguarding

- NHS Kent and Medway are an active member in all the KMSAB subgroups and executive meetings, including chairing the QAWG (from 2025) Our input to these groups and meetings ensures that health have a key voice to collaborate with system partners to drive innovation, transformation and improvement into strategic safeguarding planning for the population of Kent and Medway.
- Our activity with the KMSAB is reported on monthly basis via our NHS Kent and Medway formal assurance meeting which is attended by NHS England (NHSE) and in turn reported via the NHS Kent and Medway Improving Outcome and Experience Committee (IOEC) which is a subcommittee of our ICB Board. This governance structure ensures compliance with our adult safeguarding statutory duties is understood and threaded throughout the organisation.
- The NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team share work undertaken in the Kent and Medway system with regional and national colleagues to support, inform and influence wider safeguarding practice. An example of this is the sharing of work undertaken in the Kent and Medway system on Domestic abuse and Suicide Prevention. NHS Kent and Medway's designate team supported the facilitation of an interactive learning event in November 2024 to ensure safeguarding systems across the Southeast region were prepared to comply with the revision of the Domestic Abuse Related Death Review guidance. Presentations at the event were provided by Kent and Medway suicide prevention team and the Kent and Medway Community Safety Partnership (CSP) celebrating the work Kent and Medway multi agency partners had achieved together. The day enabled shared discussion to support regional systems to share best practice and explore how suicide prevention awareness and planning could continue to be developed locally.
- In April 2024, the team re-established the Primary Care Safeguarding Leads forums to support Primary care practice safeguarding leads. These forums cover topics relevant to statutory reviews or safeguarding matters arising from contact with primary care colleagues. Learning is linked to policies and procedures from the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board for example the sharing of SAR Linda in relation to the [KMSAB's Escalation policy](#) and [SAR Glen](#) in relation to the [KMSAB self-neglect and hoarding policy](#)
- Across 2024/ 2025 NHS Kent and Medway have contributed to the completion of
 - ◆ Multi agency protocol to safeguard Adults with care and support needs to are impacted by Domestic Abuse
 - ◆ Protocols for Kent and Medway to safeguard adults who are at risk of modern slavery and human trafficking
 - ◆ Supporting persons who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness
 - ◆ Managing concerns around People in Positions of Trust (PiPOT)
 - ◆ Working with statutory partners to develop a multi-agency risk management framework (MARM) to support front line practitioners when working with individuals where there is no applicable legislative framework to guide and agree ways to work with the risk posed by the circumstances or behaviour of the individual.
- NHS Kent and Medway have promoted these protocols with health commissioned providers and across the 183 GP practices covering Kent and Medway via GP bulletins and safeguarding lead forums. These protocols provide guidance to practitioners about how to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns, and enable them to protect and prevent adults with care and support needs from risk of abuse or neglect and support and promote their wellbeing,
- NHS Kent and Medway have used the agreed messaging developed by the KMSAB Communications and

Engagement Working Group (CEWG) to promote key safeguarding information to the public and to health commissioned providers. Our sharing of social media content plans for safeguarding adults' week in November 2024 saw a total of 1755 impressions (the total number of times the post was displayed on peoples' feed) and a reach of 691 (the total number of unique users who see content). This was a significant increase in activity on the previous year with impressions increasing by a total of 1040% and reach increasing by 117%.



"We will work together to make health and wellbeing better than any partner can do alone"
Kent and Medway Integrated Care System

Our Purpose

NHS KM exists to improve health and healthcare for the people of Kent and Medway.

We do this using influence and partnership to lead the NHS to find ambitious, collaborative solutions to long standing issues and inequalities, driving innovation and transformation. We represent the NHS in Kent and Medway in the national NHS.

Priority 2. Strengthening system assurance - How organisations are working together to support adults

The NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team have worked hard to strengthen the oversight of both internal and external safeguarding compliance and assurance, through a focused approach set out by the Safeguarding Assurance Roadmap. The roadmap was created with clear, concise milestones for NHS Kent and Medway (NHS KM) to become fully compliant with all statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities which has been divided into three domains.

- Domain 1: Internal NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Governance
- Domain 2: Provider Assurance (health commissioned services)
- Domain 3: Statutory Partnership Working

NHS Kent and Medway contributed to the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Boards (KMSAB) priority of strengthening system assurance during 2024-2025 in line with the safeguarding assurance roadmap as follows:

Domain 1 - Internal NHS KM Safeguarding Governance

- Full review of all relevant internal ICB policies that relate to safeguarding to align with organisational requirements set out in the NHSE Safeguarding Assessment and Assurance Framework (SAAF) and safeguarding legislation.

Policies Revised and Launched 2024/25

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Supervision Policy

Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy

Mental Capacity Act Policy

- Supported colleagues within NHS Kent and Medway to embed the NHS Sexual Safety Charter, which NHS Kent and Medway became a signatory to in 2024.
- Published an NHS Kent and Medway [Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement](#) in accordance with Section 54, Part 6 of the Modern Slavery Act.
- Reviewed and refreshed safeguarding training for all colleagues in NHS Kent and Medway.
- Implemented the NHSE Safeguarding Case Review Tracker which holds the information on all statutory reviews where health is involved. This has been highlighted by the regional NHSE Safeguarding team as an example of best practice.
- Monitored action progress via monthly formal assurance meetings which are attended by an NHSE regional safeguarding representative providing a robust safeguarding governance structure.

Domain 2 - Provider Assurance

- NHS Kent and Medway retains responsibility for seeking assurance and monitoring the quality of safeguarding practice in NHS commissioned services across Kent and Medway. This role extends to eight large providers: four acute trusts, two mental health trusts, and two community providers.
- Designated Nurses and Professionals meet regularly with Named Nurses/Heads of Safeguarding of each provider to ensure that they are discharging their statutory safeguarding responsibilities by attending internal safeguarding assurance committees and having regular one to ones.
- During 2024/25 the NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team have worked to ensure there is now a consistent and robust way of monitoring, assuring, and supporting health commissioned services across Kent and Medway with their safeguarding processes, assurance, and governance by utilising Schedule 4 of the NHS Contract. This has also involved ensuring the newly delegated protocols from NHSE influence and feed into assurance processes.
- NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team have developed a Self-Assessment mapping tool in line with the NHSE SAAF, which serves as a key enabler for large providers to self-assess and set supported improvement goals. These goals help them meet both their organisational contractual safeguarding obligations and constituent legislative safeguarding responsibilities.
- Assurance is also gained through attendance at health provider safeguarding meetings, assurance reports, safeguarding metrics, performance and quality monitoring meetings, safeguarding supervision processes and identification of learning through incident and review processes. Provider Support is targeted, dependent on the needs of the organisation and wider multiagency system to ensure the health population is safeguarded where this need is identified.

Celebrations across the health system

HCRG Health Group - HCRG made key safeguarding improvements in 2024/25, including the successful implementation of joint care plans with partner agencies, improving multi-agency communication and coordination. The organisation maintained 100% compliance in safeguarding supervision across all eligible staff, reinforcing its commitment to staff support and safeguarding best practices.

Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust (DGT) - DGT made significant progress in safeguarding during 2024/25, including the implementation of the Right Care, Right Person strategy and a revised policy with supporting flowcharts. Training compliance improved across the Trust, with targeted sessions for Radiology, Cancer Services, and Midwifery, and Family Focused Domestic Abuse training delivered Trust-wide. The Domestic Abuse Policy for staff and patients was finalised, and trauma-informed support was embedded for mothers at risk of child removal. The HIDVA service supported 179 patients and 8 staff members, and charity funding provided mobile phones for vulnerable individuals. The Trust also enhanced safeguarding supervision monitoring through the "Engage" platform and established a High-Intensity Users Group, working with external partners to reduce unnecessary hospital visits.

Medway Foundation Trust (MFT) - The Safeguarding Team continued to support MFT, which is part of the NHS Recovery Support Programme, in developing a self-assessment framework aligned with SAAF. This was monitored through the MFT Safeguarding Assurance Group as part of its improvement journey. The team also supported an increase in safeguarding mandatory training compliance from 61.3% to 86% and helped develop a more robust managing allegations policy. Additionally, they worked with MFT to strengthen safer recruitment processes and implement three-yearly enhanced DBS checks following a successful business case, demonstrating leadership in safeguarding improvements.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) - MTW addressed key safeguarding priorities in 2024/25, including an action plan to clear a backlog of overdue DBS checks following recommendations from the 'Fuller' report. Level 3 adult safeguarding training remains below compliance targets due to increased staff numbers from service acquisitions, but the Trust has implemented additional training opportunities to address this. MCA training compliance has improved overall, though targeted efforts are needed in the medical and dental division. In response to statutory reviews, an MCA guidance document was developed for ED staff to support the lawful detention of patients needing urgent care. The HIDVA service was introduced but faced sustainability issues due to staffing challenges, with Safeguarding Teams now providing interim domestic abuse support.

East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) - In 2024/25, the Safeguarding Team provided tailored support to EKHUFT, which was in NHS Oversight Framework 4 (NoF). A key achievement was enabling EKHUFT to develop a safeguarding self-assessment framework based on the SAAF, monitored through the jointly chaired Safeguarding Strategic Oversight Group (SSOG) with NHSE. This work contributed to EKHUFT moving from NoF4 to NoF3 for safeguarding. The success of this approach led to its adoption across NHS KM Providers to standardise safeguarding assurance.

Southeast Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SECAMB) - SECAMB introduced a standalone MCA e-learning module in 2024/25 to enhance staff understanding, contributing to a 10% rise in safeguarding referrals across Kent and Medway. The Trust identified high numbers of referrals related to self-neglect, domestic abuse, and child neglect, with 80% concerning adults. SECAMB strengthened partnerships with Kent County Council and Medway Council, improving the triage of safeguarding concerns in response to a Safeguarding Adults Review recommendation. A notable case saw SECAMB, and social care services facilitate a best-interest hospital admission for a homeless individual facing systemic neglect, demonstrating the impact of joint safeguarding interventions.

- Additionally, in 2024/25, the NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team developed an accessible safeguarding assessment framework for auditing and assuring a significant number of small and medium contracts for health commissioned services.
- NHS Kent and Medway retain responsibility for supporting and monitoring the quality of safeguarding practice for Primary Care services across Kent and Medway.
- In July 2024, the NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Team worked alongside the Kent and Medway Primary Care Training Hub to deliver Level 3 safeguarding training using Microsoft Teams to Primary care services across Kent and Medway. In total, 1,444 people attended the July 2024 Protected Learning Time (PLT) sessions and gave feedback. Overall, the feedback showed that 63% of participants found the sessions very useful, and a further 25% marked them as useful. There are subsequent plans for data analysis of the qualitative and quantitative feedback, with a view to learning and improvement for future PLT sessions, utilising a Plan-Do-Study-Act model for quality improvement.

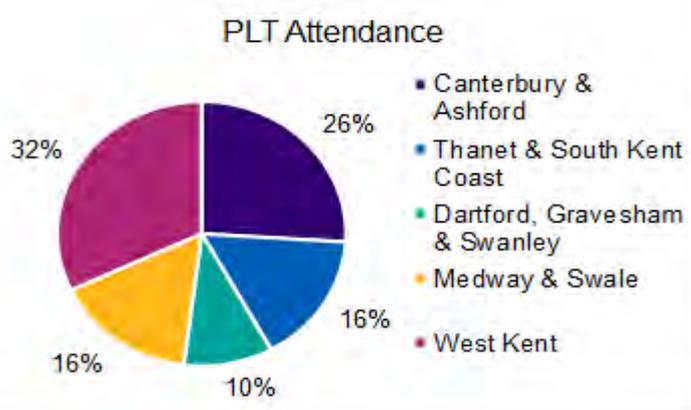


Figure 2

- NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team have supported the delivery of educational webinars arranged by the NHS Kent and Medway Quality Team and supported by Named GP colleagues. Webinar topics included Safer Chaperoning and Domestic Abuse Awareness. These topics were covered as a direct response to training needs identified from statutory reviews or complaints involving primary care staff. These webinars were very well attended and received by primary care staff. Individual primary care staff reached out to the NHS Kent and Medway Named GPs to express their gratitude for the teaching and training.
- In October 2024, the ICB Safeguarding Team developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for writing of Summaries of Involvement (Soi) for statutory reviews, with a robust implementation plan. The responsibility was given directly to practices to author their own summaries, with support from the

Designate Professionals and Named GPs. This change in process has given practices accountability, and through experience and exposure, with support from the NHS Kent and Medway ICB safeguarding team, will enable practices to improve the quality of reports they produce across Kent and Medway. Furthermore, through closer involvement with the SOI process, practices will develop a deeper understanding of safeguarding and safe care provision for our vulnerable patients. This piece of work was communicated with and supported by the Local Medical Committee (LMC), and communications were sent to GP practices via the GP update bulletin. Training resources, including a webinar, slide deck, and support guide, were developed by the Named GPs and delivered to primary care. The Safeguarding Team has supported GP practices to become the author for these reports: There have been several excellent examples of reflective and analytical practice with some additional support from Named GPs when required. The anecdotal feedback received from primary care colleagues is that the support given by the Named GPs “has improved the provision of care provided to patients” and supported GP practices in “reflecting upon their internal safeguarding systems and processes.”

Domain 3 - Statutory Partnership Working

- NHS Kent and Medway actively contribute to the KMSAB Quality Assurance Working Group which co-ordinates quality assurance activity and evaluates the effectiveness of the work of all KMSAB's partner agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk of abuse or neglect. This has included being an active member on the Self-Assessment Framework (SAF) review panels and a member of the case audit planning task and finish group.
- NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team have continued to update to the SAF panels on their progress with the KMSAB Self-Assessment Framework (SAF). The SAF process supports agencies to review progress against key standards and learning across the course of the year. The initial peer review at the start of 2024 provided NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team with some key points to support progress through over 18 months. Only 1 standard remains in progress.

NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding have raised awareness of the roles and responsibilities of both health and partner organisations through sharing of information relating to:

1. Right care right person – legal framework training analysis
2. Raising concerns – promotion of KCC safeguarding concern forms changes
3. Communication of the introductions of the Multi Agency Referral Assessment Conference (MARAC) hub model.
4. Worked closely with Kent Violence Reduction Unit to improve the use of health data in identifying place-based violence
5. Communication and promotion of legislative changes to MAPPA eligible offences

Multi-agency risk management framework (MARM) – brought together partner agencies to share and agree risk to support positive risk management and improving outcomes.

Priority 3. Embedding improvement and shaping future practice – organisations keep getting better

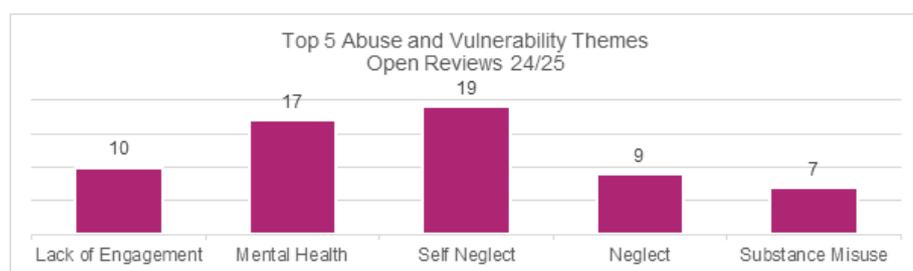
Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) have a lead role for health within all Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews. NHS Kent and Medway contribute to all reviews via the Designated Nurses/Professionals and Named GPs in the Safeguarding Team. Learning from these reviews is used to inform system level development and improve outcomes for our population.

It is important that identified thematic areas of learning influence our Kent and Medway system, regional and national priority areas of work. As part of NHS Kent and Medway’s effort to deliver the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Boards (KMSAB) priority of embedding improvement and shaping future practice during 2024-2025 we have started to look at how data in relation to adult safeguarding can inform future planning. Over the past year, the NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Team has fully embedded the Safeguarding Case Review Tracker (S-CRT). Developed by NHSE, the S-CRT enables ICBs to track and monitor statutory safeguarding reviews more effectively and improves accountability, governance, and learning across the health system. Previously, the absence of a central tracker led to inefficiencies and incomplete data captured across the health system. By working with regional teams, adapting best-practice models, and implementing a structured filing system, NHS Kent and Medway have successfully consolidated all statutory reviews into a centralised data source. Monthly review meetings and ongoing support have ensured sustained engagement, leading to the closure of outstanding actions and the development of Standard Operating Procedures for key safeguarding reviews. In February 2025, the project was presented to the regional NHSE steering group, demonstrating its impact in strengthening safeguarding processes and celebrated by the steering group as best practice.

The data held in the newly established NHS SCRT highlights that for health:

- Self-neglect remained the most common theme featured in SARs, appearing in 75% of the SARs. This is a significant increase (28%) on last year's data.
- Mental ill health is a growing theme, featuring 58% of SARs. Ill health in these cases includes severe dementia, substance-induced psychosis, and individuals who stop taking their antipsychotic medications.
- Substance misuse remains a common theme in 53% of SARs, which has increased in prevalence since the previous year by 26%.
- Domestic abuse was prevalent in 33% of SARs.

The NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Team are working to ensure that the improved data capture can be used to influence and inform pathways and commissioning decisions and ultimately improve health outcomes for the population of Kent and Medway.



Data taken from the S-CRT

Across 2024- 2025 the NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Team have undertaken actions to improve practice in relation to learning from SARs / reviews by:

- Working to promote the KMSAB Self-neglect and Hoarding policy and procedures to ensure health commissioned services have a shared understanding, common language, and baseline assessment to use when working together with other agencies relating to concerns of self-neglect and hoarding, resulting in improved standards of care and practice for those individuals who receive support from the variety of

health commissioned services.

- The NHS Kent and Medway Safeguarding Team have also worked closely with NHS Kent and Medway mental health commissioners in the development and implementation of Right Care, Right Person to better manage adults in crisis within the community, support discharge planning, and sustain individuals within their local networks. Critical to this has been the team's involvement in the commissioning of a specialist training provider to support all the agencies involved in working with and supporting adults living with either, or both, enduring mental illness and long-term health conditions.
- The NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team continue to support the culture of learning and have continued to ensure that there is a clear process in place to share learning from reviews to Primary care services across Kent and Medway. This is undertaken by ensuring that learning from reviews is shared via:
 - 1) Regular GP bulletins
 - 2) Reflective synopsis of case learning at monthly safeguarding lead forums
 - 3) Reflective presentations for involved practices.
 - 4) Annual Protected Learning Time safeguarding training
- Internally, the NHS Kent and Medway safeguarding team continue to work to enable the organisation attain compliance with the required statutory and mandatory safeguarding and Mental Capacity Act training. In collaboration with the NHS Kent and Medway Organisational, People, and Culture team a comprehensive mapping and re-evaluation of all roles has ensured alignment of all staff to the required level of safeguarding training as outlined in the NHSE [Safeguarding Accountability Assurance Framework](#) that was updated in June 2024 and the NHS Safeguarding Roles and Competencies Standard Guidance (2024).
- An internal Safeguarding Training Task and Finish (STTF) Group was established in quarter3 of 2024 and, following the mapping and re-evaluation, worked to improve safeguarding training compliance, develop accurate and realistic training trajectories, and ensure the future delivery of accessible, high-quality safeguarding training.
- Since the STTF's implementation and starting from a reset of zero, safeguarding training compliance across all levels within the organisation has shown significant improvement. The revised and enhanced content and delivery of Level 3 training has been successfully embedded, using a hybrid approach that includes both online and face-to-face training.



Safeguarding training compliance rates broken down by level and quarter, taken from TAPS.

Priority 1. Promoting person centred safeguarding - this means putting adults at the centre of our work.

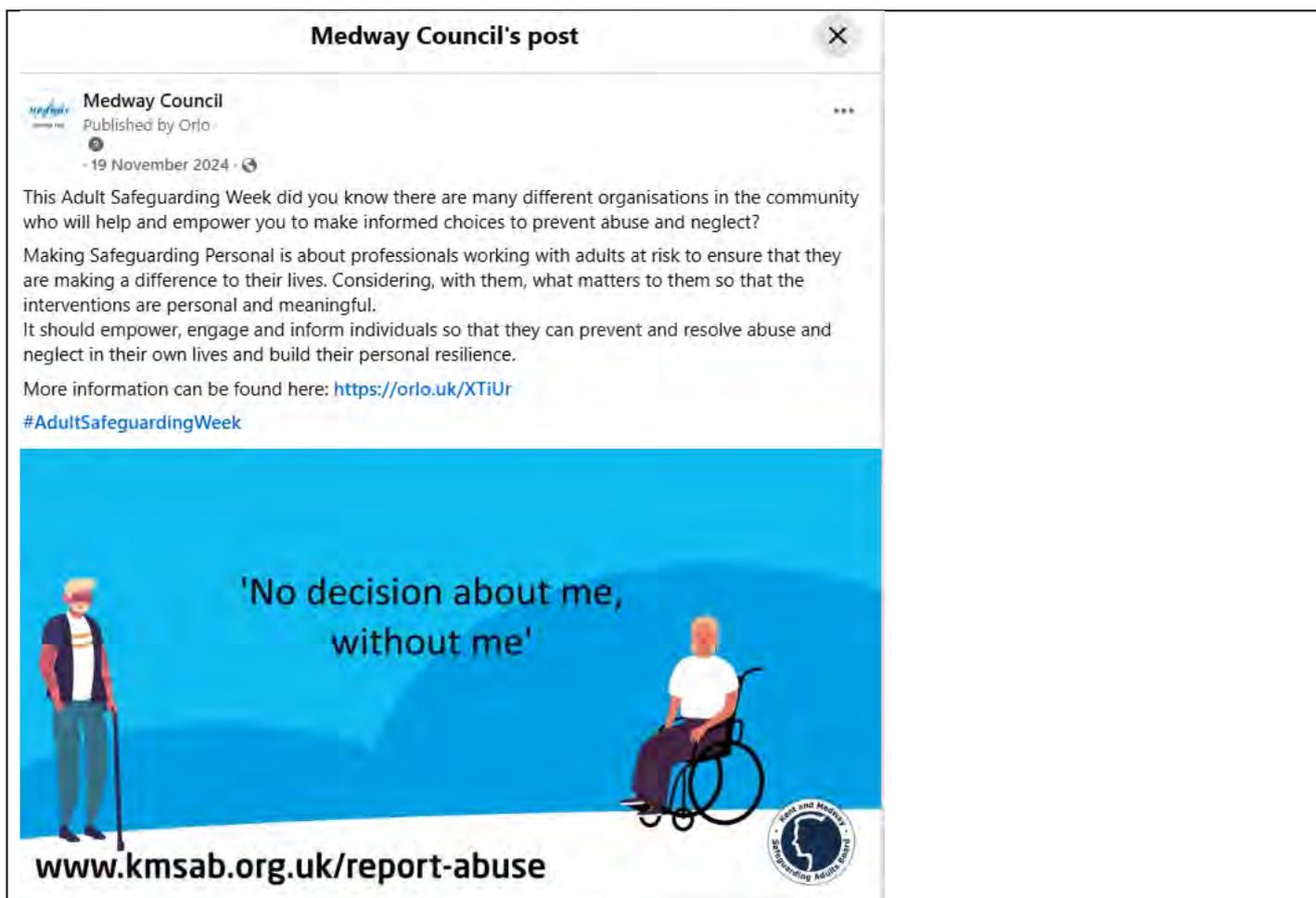
Objective one – Raise awareness of adult safeguarding to ensure that people understand what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and how to seek help.

During Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week in November 2024, Medway Adult Safeguarding Team hosted stands at Medway Council’s offices at Gun Wharf, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre and the Pentagon Shopping Centre where they were joined by Cllr Teresa Murray. The Safeguarding Team and Cllr Murray engaged with Medway residents, raising awareness of adult safeguarding by sharing key information and directing them to resources and services.



Above: Medway Safeguarding Team members and Cllr Teresa Murray during Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week, November 2024.

In addition to meeting members of the public, Medway Adult Social Care shared the KMSAB posts via the council’s corporate Facebook account with a reach of 4783 people.



Above: An example of Medway Council sharing information via Facebook during Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week.

The Principal Social Worker's November 2024 newsletter focussed on Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week and promoted the KMSAB's open sessions, including a session about adult safeguarding and professional curiosity. The newsletter raised awareness of the KMSAB media resource pack which included email signatures and Microsoft Teams backgrounds for team members to use, supporting a wider reach in raising awareness about safeguarding adults and what to do if a person is concerned for an adult.



Above: KMSAB media pack resources that were used by members of Adult Social Care in their email signatures.

The Council's website provides information to help residents understand adult safeguarding, including details on what constitutes adult abuse, types of abuse, and how to report abuse. In 2024-25, the safeguarding pages received 12,784 visits broken down as follows:

- Report adult abuse – 7,603 page views

- Safeguarding adults – 2,680 page views
- Adult Safeguarding Board- 1,785 page views
- What is adult abuse – 716 page views

To improve partners' understanding of adult safeguarding, Adult Social Care, have delivered a number of training and briefing sessions. Examples of these include being part of Kent Police's continuous professional development day in relation to safeguarding adults at risk during November 2024. The event target audience were Kent Police, and the event focussed on improving investigative quality and the quality of safeguarding for adults. Members of the council's Safeguarding Team delivered a training session as part of the event called *Partnership Working with Adult Social Care*. This session focused on the responsibilities and safeguarding duties of local authorities, the six principles of safeguarding adults, making safeguarding personal and the stages and processes of safeguarding adults' work.

In October 2024, members of the Medway Adult Safeguarding Team and Principal Social Worker Team, attended the Medway Registered Manager Network, which is a forum available for all managers in social care in Medway. The team members delivered a session about what makes a good safeguarding referral and hosted a question and answer session in relation to safeguarding adults, local process and policy.

In December 2024, a member of the Adult Safeguarding Team delivered a presentation about self-neglect and hoarding at the Neglect Champions Network meeting to raise awareness about the relevant legislation, what constitutes self-neglect, possible causes of self-neglect and hoarding and some of the challenges faced when working with individuals who self-neglect or hoard.

During January and February 2025, the Principal Social Worker Team delivered presentations at Canterbury Christ Church University as part of the Paramedics Science Course. The topics of the presentations delivered were:

- Mental Capacity Act
- Safeguarding Adults
- Working with Older People
- Working with People with a Physical Disability
- Mental Health and Hoarding
- Learning Disability and Autism

The purpose of delivering these presentations was to provide the students with an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Adult Social Care. The presentations aimed to raise awareness of adult care and support needs, how these needs are identified and assessed under the Care Act 2014 and had a focus on engagement of adults and the application of person-centred practice.

The Safeguarding presentation incorporated links to KMSAB website, policies and protocols and advice on [Safeguarding vs safeguarding](#).

There are plans to deliver similar presentations for future paramedics' courses at the university.

Adult Social Care and Housing Services held a joint workshop in late 2024 to improve understanding of each other's roles and remits, and the legal parameters each service area operates within. A task and finish group will be formed to develop a working protocol between Adult Social Care and Housing Services in 2025-26 to enhance overall service responsiveness and synergies of working together.

Objective three – Ensure the voice of the person (or their representative) who has been involved in our safeguarding system is heard in respect of their safeguarding experience.

Adult Social Care have policies in place that set out the process for involving individuals and their representatives in the safeguarding process, including that they are consulted about what they would like to happen and what outcome they are seeking. There is a mechanism for seeking feedback from individuals and their representatives at the end of the safeguarding process about their experience of adult safeguarding and quarterly internal audits are undertaken to measure performance in these areas.

For the 2024-25 full year, 853 safeguarding enquiries were closed. Of these enquiries, 661 were asked what their making safeguarding personal outcome was. 477 individuals expressed an outcome and of the 477, 457 individuals had their desired outcome achieved or partially achieved. (96%) National benchmarking is taken from a voluntary collection, and the latest national data (2023-24) shows 94.9% of individuals saw the desired outcome met or partially met, demonstrating that Medway Adult Social Care is performing slightly above the latest national benchmarking data in regard to this area of safeguarding adult's work.

Objective four – Seek assurance that each partner agency's workforce demonstrates 'professional curiosity' and has processes in place to allow them to reflect on their practice and receive appropriate supervision.

The Principal Social Worker has introduced critical reflection meetings, with the purpose of enabling practitioners to reflect upon a specific case or piece of work, that may have identified learning opportunities, and to discuss this in detail and identify what support the practitioner requires to learn and develop their future practice. The terms of reference set out key points for reflection which include:

- Quality of case notes
- Supervision notes
- Frequency of contact with client
- Professional contacts
- Family contact
- Home visits
- Quality of written documentation
- Use of risk assessments and/or safety plans
- Professional curiosity
- Presenting risk factors

This is a positive approach to supporting practitioners be professionally curious and presents the opportunity for in depth critical peer and self-reflection of their work with the aim of further developing and improving practice.

There is an embedded supervision policy in place that details that one of the functions of supervision is that it encourages supervisees to reflect on their practice, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and develop self-awareness. The policy includes different types of supervision models such as peer and group supervision and details theories to support supervision be as effective as possible.

To support a culture of professional curiosity, non-engagement practice guidance was developed. The guidance outlines the practice expectations for staff who undertake statutory care and support planning duties in circumstances where an adult declines an assessment and where Section 11 of the Care Act 2014 applies. The guidance also addresses circumstances where there are safeguarding concerns, and the person is not engaging with the safeguarding enquiry process outlined in Section 42 of the Care Act. The guidance states that practitioners must demonstrate that all possibilities have been tried in order to meet the assessment duty and be able to evidence the extent to which these have not been effective. The guidance further states that where the risk of harm is significant and ongoing it may be necessary to develop a plan that monitors the risk and

reviews opportunities for engagement. The embedding of this guidance means that safeguarding work continues, preventing the closure of cases due to non-engagement.

Priority 2. Strengthening system assurance - How organisations are working together to support adults

Objective five – Establish a mechanism to identify system issues and risks to provide assurance to Kent and Medway residents that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

The mechanisms highlighted in Medway Council's Annual Agency Report, for 2023 and 2024 remain in place. The Head of Specialist Services and Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Team's Operations Manager meet regularly with partner agency safeguarding leads to discuss what is working well between agencies and to review and implement change when it is identified that communication or systems are not working effectively.

Quarterly internal safeguarding audits take place and Adult Social Care participate in multi-agency audits organised by the KMSAB. These audits provide the opportunity to identify themes for Adult Social Care as an individual agency but also identify any system wide themes.

Performance data has been strengthened to enable Adult Social Care to better understand themes and trends and more quickly identify and respond to system issues or risks. Medway Adult Social Care are working with the KMSAB to support the production of a KMSAB performance dashboard, that will include data from partner agencies and help to identify and resolve system issues.

Objective seven – Improving interagency understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other partner organisations.

An example of interagency working where the roles and responsibilities of each agency were clear was when supporting an individual who had mental health and substance misuse challenges, was self-neglecting and posing risk of harm to others. The individual did not engage with professionals or friends and family support. In response to the concerns, multi-agency safeguarding meetings were held involving, the community mental health team, adult social care, housing, police, and the individual's family. These meetings led to a coordinated response and action plan, that ultimately supported the individual to engage with their professional and personal networks and resulted in the individual achieving, appropriate accommodation, regular contact with the community mental health team, improved mental health and support from a personal assistant to help achieve daily living tasks.

Objective eight – Discharging their respective responsibilities to safeguard people.

During the year 2024-25, the Care Quality Commission, (CQC) assessed Medway Council's Adult Social Care and awarded Medway a 59% score which is an overall rating of "Requires Improvement." Medway Adult Social Care scored "2" for Safeguarding which also equates to "Requires Improvement." To support the journey of improvement, an action plan has been developed to address findings from the assessment. To enable the actions to be deliverable, dedicated resource is being recruited to. A CQC Assurance Programme Lead is joining Medway Adult Social Care in June 2025 on a 2-year fixed term contract. This post is tasked with overseeing the action plan and ensuring that projects and improvements are made within agreed timescales. In addition, there are 5 Assistant Project Managers and 2 Programme Leads being recruited to. The Safeguarding Improvement Project has a

Programme Lead and Assistant Project Manager post assigned to it to provide focus and resource to further improving safeguarding delivery.

The number of safeguarding referrals received by Adult Social Care continue to rise, with an overall increase of 100.6 % in the past five years. To ensure that Medway Council can discharge their responsibilities to safeguarding people a number of strategies have been implemented detailed below.

A restructure of Adult Social Care took place on 1st March 2025. Prior to the restructure, there were 3 safeguarding hubs that worked in a locality-based model. The restructuring has established a single safeguarding team, responsible for the entire demographic area of Medway. By transitioning to a team that serves all of Medway, it eliminates postcode-based response disparities and enhances equity for residents.

In addition to the restructure, to enable the Safeguarding Team to meet demand effectively, the permanent staffing establishment has been increased by just over 100%, increasing the number of senior social workers, social workers, social care officers and the introduction of a new outreach worker post and two dedicated business support posts.

The Safeguarding Team are working with the Head of Transformation and Adult Social Care Improvement to explore and utilise artificial intelligence such as Magic Notes, to more efficiently record case notes and minutes of meetings, meaning that frontline practitioners will have more time to spend meeting with and talking to the residents of Medway who are going through the safeguarding process.

Adult Social Care reviewed and redesigned all pathways and processes during 2024-25. As part of this project the safeguarding forms were redesigned to include a more comprehensive risk assessment matrix and mandatory management oversight with rationale for each stage of the safeguarding process.

Close work between Housing Services and Adult Social Care takes place regularly and includes discussions, professionals' meetings about individuals, and joint visits. An example includes multiple visits from Adult Social Care and Rough Sleeping Initiative workers to an individual who was sleeping rough, declining support and was exposed to the risk of cold weather. Following the establishment of the presentation of the individual and the risks of harm that were present, joint working with mental health colleagues resulted in the individual receiving treatment for their mental health. The individual is now living in the community and receiving and accepting of support to enable them to keep well and safe.

Priority 3. Embedding improvement and shaping future practice – organisations keep getting better

Objective twelve – Learn from experience and have a workforce that is knowledgeable and confident in the application of their safeguarding adults' roles and responsibilities

To support the workforce to learn from experience and be knowledgeable and confident in delivering safeguarding interventions, a number of training and learning opportunities have been commissioned or publicised with staff in direct relation to the KMSAB Safeguarding Adults Review themes and adult safeguarding work.

Examples of training that Medway Adult Social Care commissioned relating to safeguarding adults includes:

- Multiple Exclusion Homelessness and Capacity
- Executive Capacity in Practice
- Situational Capacity in Practice

- The Role of the Inquiry Officer
- The Role of the Designated Senior Officer
- Self-Neglect, Capacity and Safeguarding.

The Principal Social Worker Team devised and ran a bite sized SAR learning event for SAR Terry. The event was delivered across 3 mornings during May 2024. The event was attended service wide by 135 staff members. An evaluation was sent out following the SAR learning event with 46 staff completing. Feedback was positive and included that the event:

- Reinforced the importance of professional curiosity
- Increased awareness of interagency working
- Provided the opportunity to reflect
- Encouraged relationship building with individuals with lived experience
- Gave participants valuable knowledge and insight.

To support the embedding of the learning from the event, the key messages have been reinforced via Practice Postcards, bulletins and through reflection in team meetings. Future SAR learning events will be recorded so that they can be accessed as part of staff inductions and so that they are available for staff who are unable to attend the live events.

Adult Social Care recently established the Medway Intensive Support Team. (MIST) The purpose of the Medway Intensive Support Team, is to play a key part in transforming lives and promoting positive outcomes for individuals facing multi-faceted complexities, by providing proactive, assertive strengths-based outreach and support. Individuals supported by the team will be facing challenges associated with learning disabilities and/or autism, mental health decline, drug and alcohol dependency, homelessness, self-neglect, hoarding, cuckooing and home invasion concerns. The team will consist of 1 x Senior Social Worker, 3 x Social Workers and 3 x Social Care Officers and recruitment to this team is almost complete. Two of the Social Care Officer posts are funded by Public Health, as part of the Medway Multi Disadvantaged Network.