

Walsall Safeguarding  
Adults Board  
(part of Walsall  
Safeguarding Partnership)

**Annual Report**  
2020 - 2021



Right for Children, Families and Adults

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## Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read Walsall Safeguarding Partnership (WSP) Adults Annual Report which covers the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

The report is published by Walsall Council, West Midlands Police and Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (merged to Black Country and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group from 1st April 2021). Walsall has local arrangements to support the co-ordination, quality assurance and continuous improvement of activity to safeguard individuals across the life course and incorporate the statutory functions of the Safeguarding Adult Board.

This year we have drawn information from our subgroups, the work commenced around our engagement strategy and included, as statutory guidance requires, information about completed Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and other reviews.

2020-21 was a challenging year with the Pandemic however, the Care Act easements, created under the Coronavirus Act did not alter the adult safeguarding provisions and protections in Walsall. WSP continued to exercise oversight over adult safeguarding, whilst mindful of the pressure that health, police, social care and care providers have been and continue to be under. During the Pandemic, WSP held weekly partnership meetings to review how services have been responding to the challenges that the virus has created.

We have maintained close oversight on arrangements led by the Police, CCG and the Local Authority to Safeguarding Adults. We maintain a close focus on our safeguarding adult reviews and on learning from our assurance activity.

There is, of course, more to do and more that should be done to continue to improve safeguarding services and become an effective learning system.

The Partnership would like to thank agencies for the work they have done to keep our communities safe and to respond to the needs of adults at risk of abuse and neglect in Walsall.

We would like to express thanks to Liz Murphy as Independent Chair for her Leadership and the work that she has helped progress during this reporting period and welcome our new chair Sally Hodges to Walsall Safeguarding Partnership from 1st April 2021.

Kind Regards

**Sarah Barker / Lisa Burn**

**Business Manager / Assistant Business Manager**

**Walsall Safeguarding Partnership**

## Walsall 'At a glance'

There are 20 x wards within 4 Localities in the Walsall Borough, 63% of the Walsall population are aged over 18yrs, of these, 23% are aged 65yrs or over.

Adults aged over 65yrs live predominantly in the East locality, Streetly Ward has the highest population of over 65's closely followed by Aldridge and Pelsall, typically more affluent areas and least deprived areas of Walsall

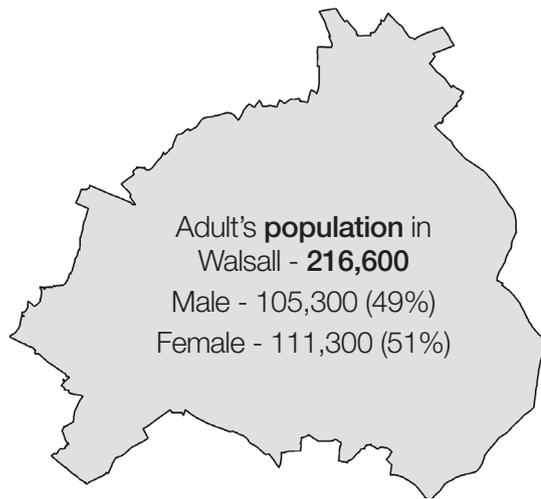
Life expectancy in Walsall is lower than regional & national comparators, Females 82 years old, Males 77 years old. However, females have a lower 'healthy' life expectancy of only 57.2yrs of 'good' health. Females in Walsall live 30% of their life in 'poor health' compared to males at 25%

56.8% adults are physically active in Walsall, this is significantly worse than the national average of 66.4% (2019-20)

Sources; Public Health England – LA Health Profile-fingertipstool

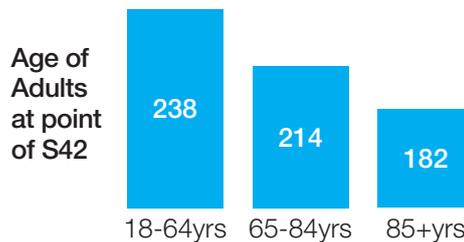
Walsall Insight – [www.walsallintellinge.org](http://www.walsallintellinge.org)

2020/21 data should be regarded as provisional pending validation and publication by NHS Digital



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## Of the Individuals that progressed to S42



### Ethnicity of Adults at S42

White/ British	87.5%
Asian/ British	7.9%
Black/ British	2.4%
Mixed/Multiple	1.1%
Other/Unknown	1.2%

86% were asked & expressed their Desired Outcomes at S42

57% Desired Outcomes fully achieved and 34.6% were partially achieved

### Top 3 Types of Abuse at Section 42 Conclusion

379 Neglect      196 Psychological      181 Physical

Financial Abuse now ranks in 4<sup>th</sup> place compared to 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2019/20

73.6% "I feel as safe as I like"  
84.6% "My Care & Support services help me in feeling safe" (2019-20)

### Source of Risk at S42 Enquiry

Known to Individual	Provider	Unknown to Individual
58% (440)	38% (294)	4% (29)

82% Risk Removed or Reduced at point of concluded S42

- Concerns are reports into the local Adult Safeguarding process for consideration for a safeguarding enquiry
- An enquiry is any action that is taken (or instigated) by a local authority, under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, in response to indications of abuse or neglect in relation to an adult with care and support needs who is at risk and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs

# About Walsall Safeguarding Partnership

Walsall Safeguarding Partnership incorporates the statutory functions of the Safeguarding Adults Board. The job of the Partnership is to make sure that there are arrangements in Walsall that work well to help protect adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect.

The statutory functions of the Safeguarding Adults Board are:

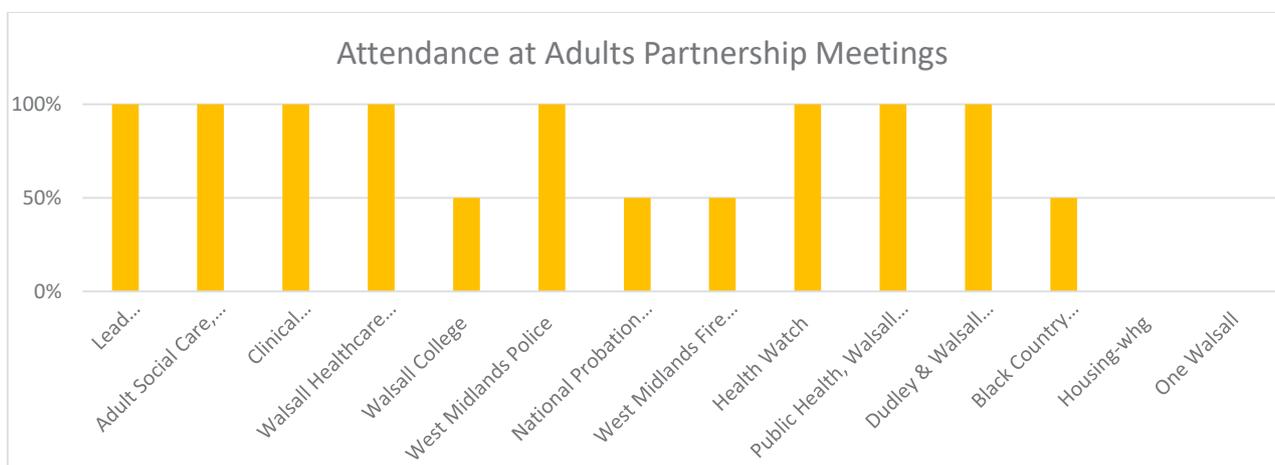
- To publish a Strategic Plan
- To publish an Annual Report detailing what the Board has done to achieve its objectives and implement its plans
- To conduct Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) in accordance with Section 44 of the Care Act This report seeks to outline how partners in Walsall have delivered these functions.

Statutory responsibility for WSP sits with Walsall Council. The Care Act also defines the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Police as statutory board partners for safeguarding adult arrangements. These agencies jointly fund the Business Unit and associated activities between them with additional contributions from Walsall Healthcare Trust and Probation Services.

In 2020-21 the partnership had £402,000 pooled into a partnership budget. This money was used to pay for Business Unit Staffing, the Independent Chair, Regional Procedures, Service User Involvement, Consultancy, Training, and to keep some saved in case of the need to carry out Safeguarding Adults Reviews.



During 2020-2021 the Partnership held two meetings virtually and covered a wide range of business including progress reports from subgroups on work plans and WSP priorities and assurance reporting.



## What the Partnership has focussed on over 2020/21

During this year, not only have we focused on our strategic priorities, we have focused on ensuring that partnership agencies have been able to continue to deliver safeguarding services to adults with care and support needs during the coronavirus pandemic.

Therefore, our practice development opportunities, audit processes and multi-agency meetings were quickly adapted to embrace using virtual platforms in response to the national lockdown to support ongoing multi-agency learning opportunities and gain assurance.

Our Priorities	What we said we would do:	What we did:
Assurance regarding transition arrangements for agreed vulnerable groups between children and adult services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more assurance that agencies are embedding a think family approach in practice through audit activity</li> <li>• Embed the Exploitation Transition Protocol</li> <li>• Establish a multi-agency, all-age, Exploitation Hub</li> <li>• Launch an Exploitation Screening Tool and Pathway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carried out a joint children's and adults audit to review the effectiveness of the Transition Exploitation Protocol</li> <li>✓ Launched the Exploitation Panel, Pathway and Assessment Tool</li> <li>✓ Launched the All-Age Exploitation Hub</li> <li>✓ Began to develop an All-Age Exploitation Strategy</li> <li>✓ Continued to develop an All-Age Exploitation Scorecard</li> </ul>
Tackle exploitation and supporting those children and adults who are victims of exploitation and/or go Missing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an Exploitation Panel (as part of the Pathway)</li> <li>• Further develop the data scorecard to include more data about adults that are being exploited</li> <li>• Embed the Herbert Protocol across the Partnership</li> <li>• Develop joint children's and adult courses in relation to Exploitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Launched the Herbert Protocol across the West Midlands</li> <li>✓ Family Safeguarding Model was launched</li> <li>✓ Held an All-Age Exploitation Webinar</li> <li>✓ Carried out a financial abuse/exploitation audit</li> </ul>
To support the local and professional community to respond to Self-Neglect in a person centred way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote the Self-Neglect Pathway and Panel</li> <li>• Further Embed the pathway in the Locality Panel arrangements</li> <li>• Hold Multi-agency training re Self-Neglect and Hoarding (including MSP vs risk enablement)</li> <li>• Increase public awareness of issues and support available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carried out an audit which considered adults who may be self-neglecting</li> <li>✓ 7 minute audit briefing shared to promote referrals to the panel</li> <li>✓ 13 cases were presented to the Self-Neglect Panel</li> <li>✓ Held a Self-Neglect Webinar</li> <li>✓ Developed and disseminated leaflets for the community</li> <li>✓ Commenced a Review of the Self-Neglect Panel Arrangements</li> </ul>
Improving the quality, practice and outcomes for Service Users in Care Homes and by Care Providers (incl. Learning Disability provisions and out of area hospital placements).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with the Quality in Care Board</li> <li>• Deliver key messages to practitioners regarding learning from reviews and audits</li> <li>• Raise awareness in the community regarding standards of care and their right to expectations of outstanding quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Undertook an audit to quality assure safeguarding practice in care</li> <li>✓ Disseminated a 7 minute briefing of the audit findings</li> <li>✓ CQC undertook a Walsall Provider Collaboration Review</li> <li>✓ Held information sharing meetings with care providers</li> <li>✓ Quality in Care Team closely supported Walsall providers through the pandemic</li> </ul>

# Communication and Engagement

The Partnership Joint Engagement Strategy (2020-2022) aims to help the partnership achieve the vision of having children, young people and adults as equal partners alongside the Local Authority, Health and Police. The strategy outlines 4 key steps to achieve engagement with adults: consultation, representation, decision-sharing and co-production.

## During the year we:

Created and distributed a <b>leaflet to support adults that needed to isolate</b> at the start of the first lockdown	Created an <b>online tool kit</b> for professionals and volunteers who may be seeing vulnerable adults during the pandemic to raise awareness of safeguarding	Distributed regular <b>Key Messages</b> to professionals in partner agencies in relation to Covid-19 and partnership work	Employed an <b>Engagement Officer</b> in the Business Unit to progress the work of involving our 4 <sup>th</sup> Partner in our work	Developed a <b>database of engagement contacts</b> and reached out to those groups to raise the profile of the Safeguarding Partnership
Held 4 Walsall webinars that related to adult safeguarding or think family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Domestic Abuse</b> (113 attended)</li> <li>• <b>Self-Neglect</b> (68 attended)</li> <li>• <b>Exploitation</b> (201 attended)</li> <li>• <b>Domestic Homicide Reviews</b> (17 attended)</li> </ul>	These Webinars have been uploaded to our <b>website and accessed 785</b> times.	Supported <b>#16days action against domestic abuse</b> campaign on twitter (181 clicks on the content and 11,747 views)	Held two regional webinars during <b>National Safeguarding Adults Week</b> on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Understanding Legal Literacy</b> (256 attended as a live event)</li> <li>• <b>Closed Cultures</b> (179 attended as a live event)</li> </ul>	Ran a Twitter campaign during <b>National Safeguarding Adults Week</b> (250 clicks on the content and had 8,752 views)
Supported <b>Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week</b> on twitter (17 clicks on the content and 755 views)	Delivered an <b>engagement and training forum</b> with Healthwatch Walsall to 38 residents of Walsall	Held an engagement and training forum with a Walsall community network group to deliver key safeguarding messages	Supported <b>#WorldElderAbuse day</b> (37 clicks on the content and 1,842 views)	Developed and distributed <b>7 Minute Briefings</b> on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency audit findings</li> <li>• Adults Position of Trust</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse</li> </ul>
Published a <b>Domestic Abuse Awareness poster</b> in the Health and Community Guide which reaches over 40,000 residents of Walsall	Healthwatch completed <b>engage and share virtual meetings</b> with 4 Learning Disability Homes (14 adults	<b>Shared learning</b> from all our Walsall Reviews to all partner agencies	<b>Supported service users</b> to hold interviews for the new Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership	<b>Developed the future engagement project</b> and delivery of strategy for 2021-22

# What has our Partnership work meant for adults in Walsall?

## Making Safeguarding Personal Case Study - 1

A 71 year old resident at a care home since January 2019 with a mental health diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. Concerns have been raised previously about self-neglect and financial abuse in the community and on this occasion a concern was raised by the care home manager about a physical assault by a fellow resident.

Staff reacted quickly to the concern, the police were informed, attended and interviewed the resident at his request, he wanted his complaint acknowledged.

The gentleman was supported by the provider during lockdown restrictions, enabling him to achieve his desired outcomes through police engagement.

The Quality in Care Team noted that the care home paperwork was very comprehensive and well organised. There was also evidence of a mental capacity assessment in relation to refusal of wound care in 2019 which demonstrated good understanding of the Mental Capacity Act.

Future risk was mitigated through resolution between the adults involved.

## Making Safeguarding Personal Case Study - 2

The 83 year old lady lives in a multi storey tower block in the centre of Walsall. The lady is in good physical health but admitted to becoming increasingly concerned about their safety due to frailty and emerging issues with their mobility. They report that their mental health has recently deteriorated and they are feeling in low mood, anxious and worried about their health and wellbeing. They have no regular contact with family or friends. Family members do not live locally and friends are now passing away leading to further isolation. The person is reported to be fiercely independent and recognises that they don't like asking for or receiving help. The Covid pandemic contributed to feelings of low mood, poor appetite, neglecting personal hygiene and no longer feeling able to go for daily exercise.

Whg worked closely with this lady using a person centred, strengths based approach in working with her. She was introduced to, and developed skills in using a range technology which increased independence, connectivity and improved her feelings of safety in her home.



Adults are listened to with 86% asked about their desired outcomes and 57% of these were fully achieved



Adults who may be self neglecting are recognised and supported as 87.5% more cases are being discussed at the Self-Neglect Panel than the previous year



Adults Practitioner Feedback from Exploitation Training



Adults Practioner Feedback from Closed Cultures Webinar



CQC Quality Assured Walsall Providers and provided feedback



Volunteers were given tools to recognise and report abuse of those that may have been shielding due to the pandemic

## Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)

Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) must arrange a SAR when an adult dies either as a result of abuse or neglect, known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult". (Care & Support Statutory Guidance, Amended 21/4/21)

The overall purpose of a SAR is to promote learning and improve practice, not to reinvestigate or apportion blame.

### Key activity within the period of this annual report is as follows:

<p>One referral was received in September 2020, however it was agreed to await the outcome of the Coroner Report prior to progressing discussions, this was later considered in March 2021 and did not progress to a SAR</p>	<p>One case referred in the previous reporting period but reviewed during 2020/21, led to a proposal to develop learning disability partnership board</p>	<p>A 7 minute briefing was developed and disseminated to staff in all agencies to remind them to make SAR referrals if required.</p>
<p>Two further referrals were received in February and March 2021 (meetings are planned for April 2021 and findings will be reported in the next financial year)</p>	<p>Key themes related to: Mental Capacity Act, Learning Disabilities, Advocacy, Mental Health Self-Neglect</p>	<p>Specific learning newsletters were created to share learning from all previous reviews with all agencies</p>
<p>Due to the recurrent learning for adults in relation to the Mental Capacity Act (MCA), a practitioner event in the operational implementation of the MCA is in development.</p>	<p>A workshop was held to refine the action monitoring process, requiring single agency action to be monitored through respective governance processes enabling the partnership to focus on the multi-agency actions</p>	<p>Measuring the impact of recommendations will be a key focus for 2021-22</p>

## Learning from Multi-Agency Audits

During the year there were 4 multi-agency audits carried out which linked to the safeguarding priorities, key learning from the audits included:

### Q1 Safeguarding Practice in Care

There were a number of findings around application of the Making Safeguarding Personal approach and application of the Mental Capacity Act. Further clarity concerning information sharing and processes arose from this audit which will support improvement in safeguarding practice across the partnership. This further ensures that we improve our service to adults in Walsall with care and support needs who are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect. Older adults who are resident in care homes, many of whom are experiencing some form of mental impairment, must be strongly advocated for by the safeguarding partnership.

### Q2 Transition Exploitation Protocol

The audit demonstrated the complexity of working with young people for whom there are concerns in relation to exploitation which becomes exacerbated as they approach adulthood. It was evident that understanding the emotional needs of these children was evidently challenging; indeed possibly even understanding exactly how they were being exploited. There was little evidence of a collective, real understanding of the impact of the traumatic experiences these children had survived or were still experiencing. The audit highlighted a need to review the current Transition Exploitation Protocol.

### Q3 Self- Neglect

It was acknowledged that practitioners in the community, from housing officers to social workers, police and health professionals can find working with people who self-neglect extremely challenging. There was a clear recognition and celebration of what good practice looks like. There was clear demonstration of how this is evidenced through partnership working, case recording and outcomes for individuals. There were excellent examples of single agencies working closely with individuals and using creativity to establish effective relationships and outcomes particularly in challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic. However the audit highlighted a need for multi-disciplinary team working.

### Q4 Financial Abuse / Exploitation

This audit identified good and outstanding practice and working with individuals to determine their wishes and outcomes. There were good examples of risk assessment and risk management in complex situations. There was, however, a number of cases where the ongoing risk was unclear and the need for a plan should have been further explored. It is likely that this was due to inconsistent sharing of information in respect of single agency actions taken and a lack of understanding around the ongoing management and disruption of perpetrators of financial exploitation.

There were less cases graded at outstanding and good compared with last year, however there was an improvement in cases graded inadequate.

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
2019-2020	11%	47%	32%	11%
2020-2021	5%	42%	47%	5%

7 minute briefings were disseminated for each audit which included learning for all partners in an accessible format. Recommendations were followed up during the year and areas of impact will be a significant area of focus for 2021-22.

## How effective have our arrangements been?

Although this year has been challenging due to a pandemic, there continues to be evidence of awareness of the safeguarding adults agenda as the number of safeguarding concerns that are being raised has increased from 2019-2020.

Adults continue to be consulted with and their desired outcome of the safeguarding concern captured, there are only a consistent low number of adults not asked their outcomes alongside a reduced number of outcomes not achieved. This can be due to outcomes not being realistic and unable to be achieved e.g. a police prosecution.

The numbers of individuals where a risk was identified, was reduced or removed was 82% (compared with 89.8% during 2019-2020) of cases showing positive outcomes for adults in Walsall.

The continuation of the Quality in Care Team has proved invaluable during the pandemic, ensuring homes have adequate personal protective equipment and access to regular advice and information from the team. This has ensured that care standards are monitored and improving. This was further evidenced through the Provider Collaboration Review carried out by change to; the Care Quality Commission during July 2020.

The Partnership held weekly Safeguarding Meetings in response to the pandemic to ensure a collective ownership and accountability of safeguarding practice, between Police, Health and Local Authority (adults and children) and regular key messages were developed and distributed to keep the wider workforce informed.

A variety of high quality learning opportunities were offered throughout the pandemic. The rapid lockdown meant that all planned learning had to move from face to face to virtual and this was managed very effectively. Given the additional pressures on partners as a result of the pandemic the engagement has been encouraging and we now have a wealth of recorded webinars on the website. A number of comments in the evaluations highlighted that those who attended would be cascading their learning to others so the learning is reaching further than the Partnership set out to.

Additionally, partners continued to contribute to multi-agency audits over the year which assisted in ensuring greater consistency of practice. Some engagement from partners was impacted by the pandemic including the vaccination roll out but enough multi-agency contributors made the audits worthwhile and provided quality assurance in key areas of the partnership work.

Progress was also made on reviewing forms and guidance, this included:

- A Review of the Adult Safeguarding Concern Form
- Development and roll out of the Safeguarding Medication Guidance
- Review of the Decision Making Support Tool
- Assurance exercises in relation to caused enquires and Position of Trust to begin to quality assure how partners are embedding these processes

Towards the end of the year WSP commissioned an Independent Review of its Arrangements, ensuring there was an equal voice for all partners. The purpose was to review the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Arrangements and the robustness of quality assurance arrangements. The findings from the review will be implemented in the following year.

However, there is still some work to do to ensure we are an effective learning system, this includes:

- Finalising and implementing an All-Age Exploitation Strategy
- Completion and implementation of the multi-agency revised Self Neglect Pathway, Guidance & Governance structure
- Implementing the findings from the WSP Review of its arrangements
- Capturing the views adults with care and support needs who have experienced safeguarding to shape strategy, planning and service delivery needs
- Increasing the conversion rate of safeguarding enquiries through raising awareness and understanding of the legal framework within the partnership
- Contribute to embedding the Domestic Abuse Strategy for the Partnership
- Measuring the impact of reviews and audits has had on adult safeguarding practice
- Embedding the new Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Embedding Impact Evaluations across the Partnership as part of management oversight and supervisions
- Revisiting the Practice Improvement Strategy and Competency Framework, to explore any gaps in the learning and development offer
- Continue the quality assurance work on Caused Enquiries and Position of Trust

## Looking forward to next year

We have agreed a smaller set of priorities for the forthcoming year, these are focused on Adult Neglect, Child Neglect and All-Age Exploitation.

We will continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 and the increased service demand this may bring and look to reset the way we conduct our business by learning from good practice from this year and we will also focus on embedding our revised arrangements.

We will be further engaging with the voluntary and community sector to capture the views of adults with care and support needs. We will use this feedback to shape strategy, planning and service delivery.

We will also be closely tracking the impact that learning from our reviews and audits have had by carrying out a range of assurance activities and engaging with practitioners.





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**For more information or to report  
an Adult Safeguarding Concern  
please visit our website:  
[www.WalsallSP.co.uk](http://www.WalsallSP.co.uk)**