

# Evaluation of Somerset Safeguarding Service:

6 User feedback process

Local health  
and care  
shaped by you

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# Background

In May 2018, Healthwatch Somerset was approached by Somerset Adult Safeguarding team to support them to increase service user engagement and obtain feedback about the service received. Currently, a survey is sent out to service users at the end of the process, however in 2017/18 only 6 responses were received back from the 1,830 adult safeguarding enquiries they completed.

The service was keen to try a different approach that would engage with service users and provide data that could better inform service changes going forward. This included qualitative data that would capture 'real stories' and could be shared with the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board and partner agencies.

The aim of the current project was to test and evaluate methods of service user engagement that could be embedded into the Adult Safeguarding Service's processes going forward.

## The Service

The Somerset Adult Safeguarding Service is run by Somerset County Council. Their work is set out in The Care Act 2014 that provides a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

Adult safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not we are meeting any of those needs), and;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and;
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.



**The role of the Adult Safeguarding Team within Somerset County Council is to:**

- Receive all the safeguarding concerns for adults who may be at risk across Somerset.
- Make the decision if the concern meets the criteria for statutory further enquiries.
- Work with the adult at risk, or their advocate, to agree what outcome they want to achieve.
- Determine the proportionate response and timescales for achieving these.
- Make sure the response is personal to the individual concerned.
- Lead the enquiry, or cause others to enquire, and make sure the most appropriate people assist with the enquiry to inform decision making.
- Link with other key people or agencies in the person at risks system.
- Make sure that there is a protection plan in place.
- Review the outcomes with the person at risk.
- Identify lessons learned and make changes to practice and process.

# What we did



We worked closely with the Adult Safeguarding Team to design a questionnaire that related to the six principles set out in The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance. These key principles must underpin all adult safeguarding work and are as follows:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

We considered an approach that would be effective but also deliverable by the Adult Safeguarding Team going forward. Online questionnaires were not working, and face to face interviews were impractical due to the sample size. We therefore agreed that telephone interviews would be used to listen to service user feedback.

Somerset County Council identified a group of service users and contacted them to ensure they were happy to for their details to be shared with Healthwatch Somerset. Healthwatch Somerset then contacted them to arrange a telephone interview. Adults at Risk, Family/Friends/Carers and IMCA (Independent Mental Capacity Advocate) were all asked to give feedback.

The project ran from 13 October 2018 to 7 February 2019.

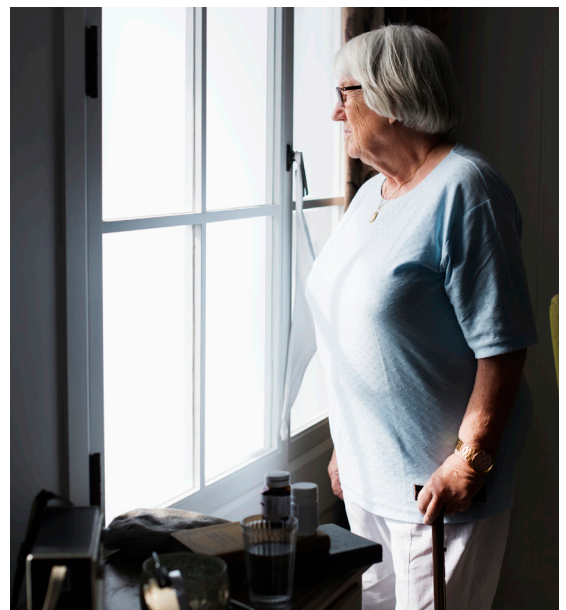
The questions asked, and responses gained, can be viewed in the Appendix (see page 9).

# Who we spoke to

We contacted 20 people who had experienced an adult safeguarding intervention in the last two months. Fourteen agreed to take part in the project.

- 6 were Adults at Risk
- 7 were Family/Friends/Carers
- 1 was an IMCA advocate

Friends, Family, Carers and Advocates were all contacted where the adult at risk lacked capacity to make decisions within the safeguarding process and had to have an advocate to present their views.



# Our volunteers

Healthwatch Somerset has a team of trained volunteers. Four of our volunteers were involved in contacting and interviewing those who took part. They contributed a total of 12 hours of their time to the project.



## Recommendations

Healthwatch Somerset tested the interview questions on 14 respondents. The sub-headings below list our recommendations based on feedback from our volunteers and by analysing the responses provided.

### **The responses from Q1 need to be used system wide**

The first question asked how safe the adult at risk feels or how safe their advocate feels they are.

This question has been set as a benchmarking question, designed to measure the overall effectiveness of Safeguarding in Somerset. This does not relate solely to Somerset County Council's Adult Safeguarding Service but includes wider preventative work across the county by partner agencies and the Safeguarding Adults Board.

This question has been set to provide quantitative data to measure the whole system approach to adult safeguarding in Somerset. Therefore a mechanism for sharing and using this data across all agencies involved in the safeguarding of the adult at risk needs to be identified.

### **Key questions should be asked throughout the process**

Several respondents said that they did not always know what was happening throughout the enquiry and that they were not being asked their opinion on what they wanted to happen.

We recommend that the Adult Safeguarding Team introduce key questions that can be asked and recorded throughout the enquiry and consider how these conversations are recorded in relevant documentation. This would help to check respondents understanding of what was happening and their feelings about their level of involvement in the enquiry. This would support the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' approach.

### **Review the information given about staying safe in the future**

Half of respondents said that they either didn't get any information or would have liked more information about staying safe in the future.

We recommend that key agencies review the information made available to adults at risk and their advocates about how to stay safe.

We also recommend that an additional question is added to Question 2 such as: What additional information would help you stay safe in the future?

This will help agencies to understand what additional information could be made available and the best format for this.

## Change the position of Question 9

Question 9 is the very last question and asks if the respondent is happy with the result of the safeguarding process.

This question was added half way through the project to capture the respondent's overall satisfaction.

We recommend moving this question forward so that the last three questions are as follows:

Q7) Are you happy with result of the safeguarding work?

Q8) What difference did the support received make?

Q9) Is there anything you would have liked to have been done differently?

## Consider other useful data to capture

As responses should remain anonymous, the team should also capture the demographic data to understand whether there are different needs for different demographic groups.

## Data analysis

Thought needs to be given to how data from the telephone interviews can be recorded and analysed. An online survey tool would be the most effective method for doing this.

## Pilot and review the questions and responses

We would recommend a review of the questions and response data in Summer 2019. This should be a multi-agency review to ensure that the service user feedback provided is both useful and being used system wide.

# Next steps

Following the recommendations made in this report, the system of service user feedback will be implemented by Somerset County Council Adult Safeguarding Team.

# Thank you

Healthwatch Somerset would like to thank service users who took the time to contribute their views and experience through the interviews.



# Responses

## Somerset County Council Adult Safeguarding Team

As a service we thank Healthwatch Somerset for their support and enthusiasm in their undertaking of this pilot, the findings have far exceeded our original expectations. Whilst the sample size was small, we have been able to determine the appropriateness of the questionnaire and the detail of how this can be implemented into our business as usual processes. We are confident that the lead practitioners within the safeguarding service will be able to take forward the learning and implement this successfully within practice. Our findings, per quarter, will be shared with the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board and partner agencies to promote system wide learning.



Actions we will take in response to the Healthwatch project:

- We will actively work towards enhancing service user engagement into the safeguarding process to ensure their voice is heard.
- We will share our findings across partner agencies to promote wider learning.
- We will include our partners in the collection of data.
- Findings reflect that people were not always sure what was happening and that some people have not been asked what outcome they want to achieve. We will introduce key questions to be asked, and recorded, throughout the enquiry to ensure that MSP remains central to the enquiry.
- We will work with our partner agencies to review and produce information about how to stay safe.
- We will consult with members of the public to ensure that the information produced is fit for purpose.
- We will continually review the questionnaire to ensure that the questions remain effective.
- The service will devise a reporting mechanism so that data can be analysed.

The service intends to gain feedback from 5% of all enquiries undertaken within the first quarter of 2019 reporting period (April - June). This will provide us with enough data to review the question suitability and the responses received. This data will be analysed and shared with our partners in a SSAB forum. Our aim is to increase to 10% for the second quarter to test if this is achievable and sustainable for the service. We will then review and set a key performance indicator for quarter three and four.

As a service we will use the qualitative data to inform our service development. Ultimately, we aim to improve the quality in the service that is delivered, and that is received by people, by asking about their experience and acting upon the areas they identify as being important for us to get right. We will use both the quantitative and qualitative data to temperature check how safe people feel and what impact we have made across Somerset. We will share our findings with our partner organisations as shared learning across the system will enhance all safeguarding responses.

# Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board

Thank you for sending the draft report for the *Evaluation of Somerset Safeguarding Service: User Feedback Process*, and for your presentation to the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board on 25/03/2019.

In terms of the recommendations made in the draft report have spoken with colleagues within Somerset County Council and we have jointly agreed the following response:



1. The responses from Question 1 (Empowerment) need to be used system wide.

**Response:** We accept and agree with this recommendation

2. Key questions should be asked throughout the process.

**Response:** We accept and agree with this recommendation

3. Review the information given about staying safe in the future.

**Response:** We accept and agree with this recommendation, including the addition of detail to Question 2 that will support the ongoing development of information to enable people to stay safe. As part of SSAB's new strategic plan objective for 2019-22 to enable people to keep themselves safe, we will also shortly be looking at the content on our website. This will include adding new content to it for the public which will be promoted for all organisations to use.

4. Change the position of Question 9.

**Response:** We accept and agree with this recommendation

5. Capture the demographic data to understand whether there are different needs for different demographic groups.

**Response:** We accept and agree with this recommendation

Thank you again for the work that Healthwatch did to produce this report, your presentation to the Board and your on-going support to the Board.

Stephen Miles  
Service Manager



# Appendix

## Detailed information about people's views and experiences

It was agreed that a benchmarking question was needed to compare quantitative data year on year and report this back to the Somerset Adult Safeguarding Board. The questions chosen were:

- Which of the following statements best describes how safe you feel?  
Or
- Which of the following statements best describes how safe you feel [the adult at risk] is?

### Findings:

	I feel as safe as I want/ As safe as I feel they would like to be	Generally, I feel safe, but not as safe as I would like/ Generally I feel they are safe, but not as safe as I would like	I don't feel safe/ I don't feel they are at all safe	Did not answer
Adult at Risk	4	1	1	
Family/ Friends/ Carers	3	4		
IMCA				1
Total	7	5	1	1

### What people said:

“Now being moved.”

“Felt some staff were untrained. Watching my husband have a bed bath and the look of terror on his face was very upsetting.”

“Still afraid to go out alone, feels safe at home and when support workers accompany me shopping etc.”

“Don't know. Referral came in around her finances. At the initial visit concerns were raised about her weight (sudden loss). Advocate chased for another meeting, but it seems case may have been closed (would of liked feedback).”

## Question 1 - Empowerment

- Were you asked about what you wanted to happen to help you feel safe?
- Were you asked about what you wanted to happen to help [adult at risk] feel safe?

	Asked at more than one point	Asked at the beginning	Not asked
Adult at Risk	3	2	1
Family/ Friends/ Carers	3	1	3
IMCA		1	
Total	6	4	4

- Did you feel listened to?

	Yes	No
Adult at Risk	5	1
Family/ Friends/ Carers	6	1
IMCA	1	
Total	12	2

- Did people try to help in the way you wanted?

	Yes	No
Adult at Risk	6	
Family/ Friends/ Carers	6	1
IMCA	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>

- Did you feel included in any decisions made?

	Yes	No
Adult at Risk	5	1
Family/ Friends/ Carers	5	2
IMCA		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>

- Is there anything that could have been done better?

“Yes, could have asked for my opinion more.”

“Social Services could have acted sooner. Safeguarding team were wonderful. Lack of communication. Not at first by Social Services but yes by Safeguarding Team.”

“I could have seen Martin more, only had one visit.”

“I did not meet anyone from the Safeguarding team. I met the Police, housing, OT and support workers, and felt they all listened and assisted me to a good outcome.”

### Other comments

“Service very good. They did everything to help. He is very happy.”

“Not sure if message got to the people who need to know.”

“Did not feel well informed just seemed to happen.”

“Annabel, Social Worker, was very supportive, knowledgeable, and kind.”

“He was asked what he wanted. He was seen several times and also asked at each visit.”

“No options given.”

“When Becky Davis took over she was wonderful.”

“I was aware safeguarding was involved and was happy with their involvement, although I did not actually meet anyone.”

“Not sure. Not heard anything since first meeting. Would have liked to have been informed. Would have liked to have known that they were okay.”

### Question 2 (Prevention)

- Do you know what to do if you don't feel safe in the future?

	Yes, I would know what to do	I know a bit, but would like to know more	No, I wouldn't know what to do	Didn't answer
Adult at Risk	5	1		
Family/ Friends/ Carers	3	1	2	1
IMCA	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

- Do you know what to do if you don't feel the adult at risk is safe in the future?
- Did you get any information about how to stay safe in future?

	I got all the information I needed about staying safe and how to get help	I got some information but would have liked more	I did not get any information about this	Didn't answer
Adult at Risk	3	2	1	
Family/ Friends/ Carers	2	2	2	1
IMCA	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

- Did you get any information about how the adult at risk can stay safe in future?

### Comments

“If there was any problem I would go to the Home and question them.”

“Just not sure what to do.”

“Felt that I received information that enabled me to assist the service user solve the incidents that lead to safeguarding involvement.”

“Still in progress. Waiting for a door viewing system.”

“More visits would help and action should be taken. My electrics are dangerous.”

“When I move to a new property if the situation arises again I will know who to contact.”

“The incident had made her more aware of how vulnerable she might be to others who express kindness towards her. She now knows how to manage the situation and also where to go if she is in the same situation.”

### Question 3 - Proportionality

- Did you feel that the support you/ the Adult at Risk received was?

	Too much	The right amount	Too little
Adult at Risk		5	1
Family/ Friends/ Carers		5	2
IMCA			1
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>

### Comments

“Safer - I have no questions. He is happy. There is no need to change anything.”

“Everything fine.”

“It was the right amount of intervention.”

“Given right advice appropriate for role as Social Worker, spoke to Police and Care Staff.”

“All done that is possible.”

“Overwhelmed at first, but glad of this, I needed it.”

“A lot of agencies were involved, and the outcome has been good as I am now “gold” on the housing list.”

“Very good support. I miss the visits by the team.”

“Didn’t check on her half of the time.”

“Felt general care was too little at times due to shortage of staff/untrained staff.”

“More visits.”

## Question 4 - Protection

- Following the support do you feel safer?
- Following the support, do you feel the adult at risk is safer?

	Yes	No
Adult at Risk	5	1
Family/ Friends/ Carers	5	2
IMCA		1
Total	10	4

### If not, why?

“I feel safer in some ways, but am still experiencing some harassment.”

“No real change in safety.”

“As wasn’t informed of the outcome so I don’t know if they are safer.”

## Question 5 - Partnership

- Did you feel people worked together to help you/ the Adult at Risk be safe?

	Yes	No
Adult at Risk	6	
Family/ Friends/ Carers	5	2
IMCA	1	
Total	12	2

### Yes responses

“Once safeguarding team took over they worked with everyone follow-up was incredible. I’m very vulnerable, but feel looked after now.”

“Group discussion, it was good.”

“All the services were working together.”

“I felt that everyone involved worked together to support me through my difficulties.”

“Good support all around.”

“No concerns.”

“Put in place a plan of action should incidents arise.”

“The team were supportive and made every effort to ensure the service users safety at home.”

“Social Worker kept an eye on him and queried any new bruises.”

“At the initial visit yes there was working together partnerships.”

### No responses

“Not very much - could have visited more often.”

“It depended on which team were on duty. New staff didn’t seem to understand my husband’s physical and mental needs.”

## Question 6 - Accountability

- Did you feel the person supporting you/Adult at Risk had the right skills and knowledge?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Adult at Risk	5		1
Family/ Friends/ Carers	5		2
IMCA	1		
Total	11		3

### Responses

- + “Everyone involved was helpful and knowledgeable.”
- + “Jayne, Anne, and Social Worker were very supportive and informative.”
- + “Seemed to know the job.”
- + “The team were conscientious, caring and most of all kind. I was very impressed with the safeguarding process and would like to thank them.”
- “Did not introduce themselves or say what their capabilities are.”
- “Don’t know them or capabilities.”

## Question 7

- What difference did the support received make?

### Comments

“Gave you confidence.”

“Transformed the quality of our lives.”

“It made me feel safer.”

“Before involvement of services I was in a “dark tunnel” and had suicidal thoughts. Following involvement of services I no longer feel hopeless.”

“I feel very positive about my involvement with safeguarding. I feel complementary about the service and feel that I have been well supported and the outcome has been necessary and positive.”

“Lots of difference.”

“Everything is great. He would have great difficulty without SCC’s support. He feels safe.”

“It gives the family more time, 24 hour care too much for family.”

“Not massive but some. Not seen copy of plan - wishy washy - seemed to be done our bit - move on.”

“The service user was supported, and as a result the situation changed ensuring the service user’s safety needs and welfare needs were met.”

“Gave her more confidence.”

“It was nice someone believed him and listened to him. Social Worker did a great job.”

“Initial visit - there was a way forward and a solution was found. Ref - someone to handle finances, but I don’t know what happened after.”

## Question 8

Is there anything you would have liked to have been done differently?

### Comments

“Only that it would have been seen to sooner, but that wasn’t the fault of the safeguarding team.”

“More visits.”

“I know everybody was involved and were working together which was good, but I felt that the Housing Department were not keeping me informed and were slow to let me know that I was going to be offered new accommodation.”

“Check on her a bit more.”

“Would have liked to have cared for him at home. Due to lack of help at the beginning this wasn’t possible at the end. Pressure sores/ulcers were really bad.”

## Question 9

- Are you happy with the end result of the safeguarding work?

	Yes	Partly	No	Did not answer
Adult at Risk	2			4
Family/ Friends/ Carers	1	1		5
IMCA	Not asked this question			
Total	3	1		9

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