

Keeping Adults Safe Board Annual Report 24/25

An addendum to the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) Annual Report



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Introduction

This report is written as a follow up addendum to the KBSP Annual Report 24/25 which Keeping Adults Safe (KAS) is Bristol's Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) which is one of the three boards (the others being Keeping Children Safe and Keeping Communities Safe) that together make up the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership.

It was published in December 2025 and should be read in conjunction with that document as the Introduction, Safeguarding Partner Reflections and content relating to governance structure, KBSP Business Unit and funding of the KBSP activity applies here.

This report will satisfy the statutory obligation to publish an annual report by setting out:

- What activity has occurred to deliver to the strategic aim of KAS (i.e. effectively safeguarding adults.)
- A summary of the statutory reviews that were concluded in the period
- A summary of the reviews that are currently in progress
- What progress has been made to implement findings of completed reviews

It will then go on to provide a summary of plans for the coming year (25/26).

The report will be published for general consumption and presented to:

- the chief executive and leader of the local authority which established the SAB
- any local policing body that is required to sit on the SAB
- the local Healthwatch organisation
- the chair of the local health and wellbeing board

Keeping Adults Safe Board Activity 24/25

Bristol City Council | Adult Social Care | Safeguarding

Adult Social Care in Bristol is delivered through the Adults and Communities Directorate, where the focus remains on providing strengths-based advice, guidance and care and support to adults and carers across the city.

In 2024/2025, work has been shaped by Bristol City Council's commitment to inclusive, person-centred care, aligned with the principles of the Care Act and the Vision for Adult Social Care in Bristol.

This year the priorities have been informed by the council's strategic objectives, including reducing inequalities, promoting independence, and ensuring that safeguarding is embedded across all services. There has been a focus on working closely with partners to ensure the delivery of joined-up adult safeguarding services that reflect the diverse needs of Bristol's communities.

The Safeguarding Adult Board has been focussing on self-neglect and transitional safeguarding as priorities through work completed within these subgroups. This has involved updating guidance, restructuring pathways to make it easier for people to access support for self-neglect and sparked a new transitional safeguarding pathway which is due to be launched in 25/26. The Partnership have supported Avon Fire and Rescue to promote at home fire safety checks, especially relevant for individuals with self-neglect or hoarding concerns. There has been a significant increase

in referrals and completions of these preventative checks across Bristol, but work continues to engage workers in Adult Social Care to promote this opportunity to individuals who draw on care and support.

Following Working Together 2023 legislative changes, governance arrangements needed to be made across Children's which subsequently influenced changes to the Safeguarding Adults Board. The two main changes were an adjustment of chairing and decision making around Safeguarding Adult Reviews. The new Chair is Sally Rowe who is the Partnership's Independent Chair which has allowed for independent guidance to improve accountability and professional challenge. Regarding Safeguarding Adult Reviews, the decision to commission or not now sits with the Chair and the final governance review and sign off of the report sits with the Board. This allows for clarity in decision making and ensures partnership views are captured to improve the learning from the reviews.

Vision

The launch of the Vision for Adult Social Care represents a significant milestone in setting out the ways of working with people and communities in Bristol.

“Supporting people in vibrant and diverse communities to live in a place they call home, with the people they love, doing the things that matter to them”

Developed collaboratively with colleagues, system partners, and people who draw on services, this Vision serves as the ‘north star’ providing the foundation for all actions and setting clear guiding principles for working practices.

The aim is to foster a culture of collaboration and shared responsibility, which is reflected in the strong partnerships built with the NHS, Police, Fire Services, Housing and other key stakeholders, including local voluntary and community services. Guided by the core principles Adult Social Care are working hard with partners to align efforts, share insights, and deliver coordinated, impactful outcomes.

Statutory Duties

The Care Act 2014 provides a clear legal framework for safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect. Under Section 42, local authorities have a duty to make enquiries, or ensure they are made, when they have reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in their area:

- has needs for care and support,
- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

Data snapshot

Bristol City Council – Adult Social Care data snapshot 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, Bristol City Council received 9,915 safeguarding concerns. This represents a 9% increase compared to the previous year. Safeguarding referrals have shown a consistent year-on-year increase of a similar percentage since the global pandemic.
- Section 42 (s42) conversion rate refers to the proportion of safeguarding concerns or referrals that progress into formal safeguarding enquiries under Section 42 of the Care Act. Last year, this rate was approximately 17.5%. Importantly, s42 conversion rates can vary between local authorities due to differences in interpretation, thresholds, and decision-making practices. Therefore, this figure should always be understood in the context of the wider safeguarding data and local circumstances.
- As a consistent trend, some agencies make more regular safeguarding referrals to social care. 21.15% of referrals were made by health (Primary Care), 17% by external agencies (e.g. VCSE or private sector), 9% from secondary health agencies and 8.9% of referrals came from the Police.
- Of the 10 recognised abuse types of self-neglect continues to be the most frequently referred for adult safeguard, a trend that has remained consistent since the global pandemic. Of the total referrals made, 2,775 were for self-neglect. However, other forms of abuse are also significantly represented: 1,805 referrals were for neglect, 1,748 for physical abuse, 1,595 for emotional abuse, and 1,435 for financial abuse. Notably, self-referrals account for only 0.8% of all referral cases.
- The referral trends reflect the changing nature of society where socio-economic pressures, the rise of multiple-disadvantage and increase in the popularity of extremist ideology reflect patterns of risk in the city.



This data is used to identify where greater awareness is needed in Bristol about the shared roles and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. This helps ensure that concerns are recognised and referred appropriately, so that people at risk receive the right support at the right time

The beginning of 2024/2025 saw the continuation of ongoing service improvement, continuing the transformation work which began during 2023/2024. This work has targeted significant improvements to the data reporting systems, and key to this success has been collaboration with the data and policy team to develop new Power BI Dashboards which have been shown to improve work with NHS partners. Adult Social Care have a responsibility to support the flow of patients through local hospitals and to avoid undue delays in their discharge. The data collected has helped to better understand the length of stay of people in discharge pathways, this allows analysis of where the workforce resources are best placed, ensuring that services are targeted and that services delivering the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

Data analysis has also been used when reviewing how many people are waiting for care and support, and for how long. This knowledge has played a significant role in helping manage waiting times, including efforts to ensure that people waiting are doing so safely. The success of data improvement work has been largely due to the extent to which data-rich insights have been used to inform continuous improvement



Care Quality Commission Local Authority Assurance

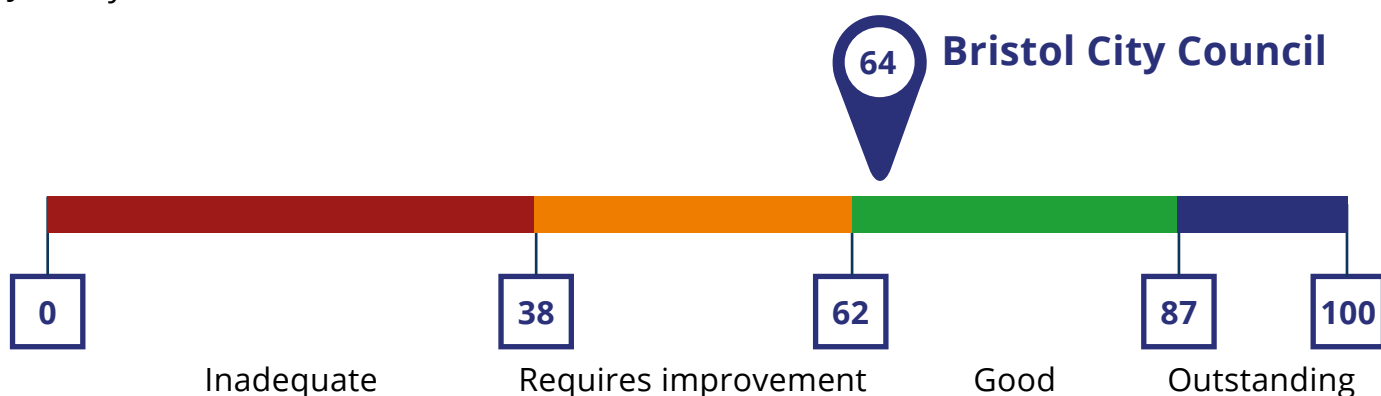
The CQC has a new duty under the Act to assess how local authorities work with their communities and partners to meet their responsibilities. This includes promoting the wellbeing and independence of working-age disabled adults, older people, and their unpaid carers to reduce their need for formal support where appropriate. Where support is needed it should provide people with choice and control of how their care needs are met.

In preparation for CQC Assurance the Local Government Association (LGA) completed an Adult Social Care 'Peer Review'. Completed in December 2023, the Peer Review provided Bristol with an opportunity to understand current achievements, areas for development and capacity to change. The Peer Challenge Report set out strengths and the areas to improve, and this enabled better preparation for CQC Assurance and inspection.

The first part of the CQC Assurance process was completing an Information Return and Self-assessment. The second part included an on-site inspection visit. This visit occurred seven months after the first notification, and inspection team started a four-day on-site visit started on 20 January 2025.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has rated Bristol City Council as good, demonstrating that the council is meeting core responsibilities to ensure people have access to adult social care and support under the Care Act (2014).

CQC looked at nine areas spread across four themes to assess how well the authority is meeting responsibilities to create their good rating. CQC has given each of these nine areas a score out of four with one being the evidence shows significant shortfalls, and four showing an exceptional standard.



Highlights from the CQC report include:

Areas of strength

- Actions have been taken to enhance safeguarding arrangements including decision support tools to improve practice around intersectionality in safeguarding decision making.
- The introduction of a virtual Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in November 2024 to review complex cases.
- The average waiting time for enquiry decisions reduced from 9 to 6 days.
- The Safeguarding Advice Line has expanded its role to support more safeguarding enquiries.
- There was effective triaging of referrals combining a positive strength-based approach taken by staff.
- Lessons have been learned when people have experienced serious abuse or neglect with action taken to reduce future risks and drive best practice.

- Staff involved in safeguarding are suitably skilled and supported to carry out their duties effectively.
- Partners were positive about safeguarding in terms of the local authority response to risks and issues.

Areas for improvement

- Whilst there were some evident improvements in safeguarding waiting times for people, there is further work to be done to continue this trajectory and maintain these improvements.
- Systems and processes to protect people from abuse and neglect are in place but still needed improvement.
- There is more work to do to ensure that the Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) approach is embedded through systems and processes.
- Feedback from care providers suggests that communication could be better in relation to safeguarding outcomes.



Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

A significant achievement for 2024/2025 has been the progress made with safeguarding partners in launching the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This collaborative initiative was constructed by Adult Social Care and the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) and has strengthened the ability to respond effectively to safeguarding concerns, ensuring timely and coordinated interventions.

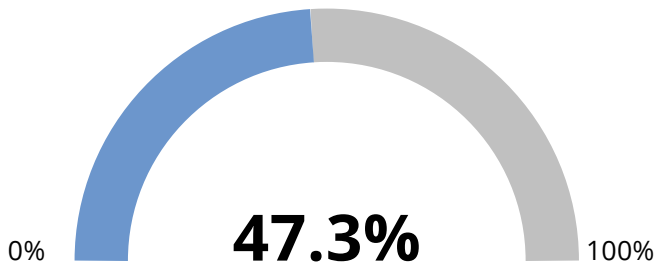
The need for a MASH model came following learning from several Safeguarding Adult Reviews where a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach could have affected the information sharing, risk planning and subsequent care provided to individuals. The learning was collated to give initial structure to the MASH pilot which was implemented in October 2024. Since then, the MASH has been critical to managing waiting times and improving the approach to multi-disciplinary safeguarding.

It brings together local partner agencies, including the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (BNSSG ICB), Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP), the Police, the Probation Service, and Bristol City Council as the lead agency. This collaborative initiative has strengthened the ability to respond effectively to safeguarding concerns, ensuring timely and coordinated interventions. This will help ensure that safeguarding practices remain person-centred and empowering for individuals.

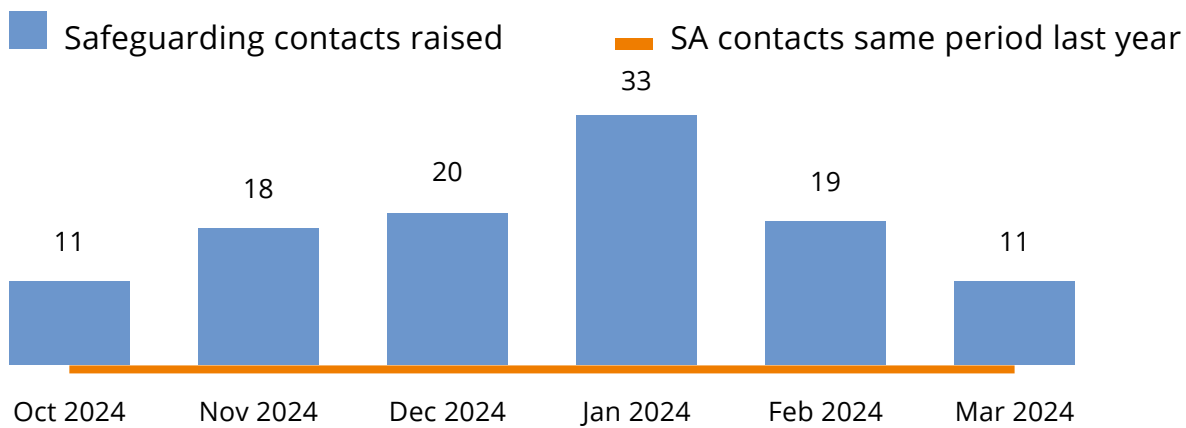
A successful trial of the MASH has validated the partnership's concept, paving the way for expansion in the coming year. The success of this trial even created a MASH nurse position in the ICB to help support the project's longevity but ensuring there is always a health perspective within the multi-agency discussions.

The following snapshot shows the MASH work completed from when it began in October 24 – March 25. Despite its infancy, the MASH has already been used to escalate 47.3% of the cases presented there into Section 42 processes. This shows the robust nature of the set up and subsequent pathways following the MASH discussion. Self-neglect is the most common abuse type which is presented at MASH with emotional abuse a close second. This could indicate the need for more pathway of support for this cohort as the need for advice, guidance and a multi-agency approach is most requested for this cohort. In 25/26 the frequency of meetings will be reviewed to see if an increase is required as it is twice weekly.

% of referrals progressed to episode



Safeguarding referrals over time (with same period last year)



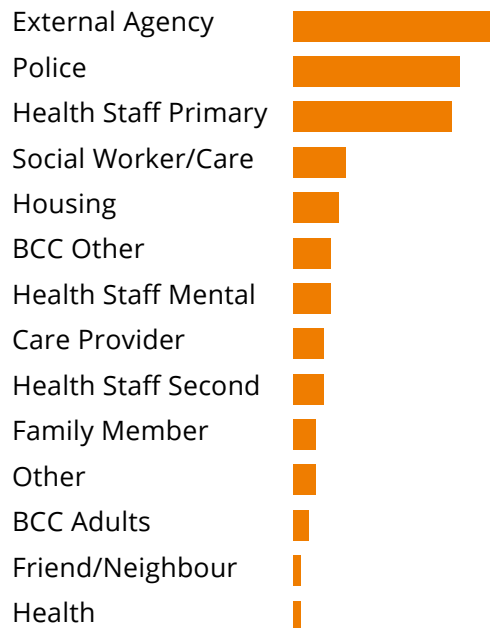
Referrals raised by abuse type (recorded on contact form)



Referrals raised by contact outcome



Referrals raised by source



Governance

Audit Highlights

- Internal audits show that 80% of Care Act Assessments are 'good' and reflect strengths-based decision making.
- Audits have been undertaken to assess how well the council applied intersectionality, assessment of risk, and robust protection planning as part of the renewed quality assurance framework.
- Adult Social Care continues to develop safeguarding 'listening audits', designed to use feedback from citizens to demonstrate the commitment to listening and understanding the difference the involvement is making. This is key to informing the improvement of services.

This quality and assurance work is monitored by the Quality & Improvement Performance Board (QUIP) and locality forums. The board and forums have helped to foster a reflective and transparent culture across the services and teams, ensuring that understanding of what works and that there is accountability for continuous improvement.

The KBSP conducted a multi-agency audit around the use of Mental Capacity Act with cases open to Adult Social Care with current concerns around their capacity. There were multiple examples of person centred and trauma informed practice across the sampled cases. There were also cases which agencies were working hard to support but there was a lack of joint working which led to repetition, mixed message or contradicting direction of support. We identified actions to enhance

training provisions, agreed timelines for information sharing and raise awareness of voluntary support agencies all to improve outcomes for Bristol residents.

Financial Protection

The introduction of a Safeguarding Financial Protection Legal Officer in 2024/2025 has significantly enhanced capacity to detect and address financial abuse at an early stage. This role has proven instrumental in fostering stronger collaboration between the operational and commissioning teams. Demonstrable outcomes in risk management have reinforced the value of this integrated approach.

Stop Adult Abuse Week

Stop Adult Abuse week ran 11th – 15th November 2024 and the five local authority neighbours each produced a Lunch and Learn session open to partners across the area (Bristol, BaNES, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Somerset).

Bristol covered 'Professional Curiosity' and hosted their event covering what professional curiosity is, professional barriers, a series of activities and videos to change how we view professional curiosity, interviews with a senior practitioner and new ways of asking familiar questions to people you may be working with. The events from the week had an attendance of over 500 professionals and the recordings are hosted on the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership YouTube with a collective viewing number of over 55,000.

Participation

Adult Social Care fosters a strong culture of continuous learning for quality, improvement, and accountability, underpinned by a well-established model of assurance.

The assurance processes are designed not only to monitor performance but to actively inform professional development and service design. This creates a dynamic feedback loop that drives continuous improvement across teams and services.

To support this, they use a range of assurance methods, including:

- Thematic and listening audits
- Team-focused peer audits

During 2024/2025 they have strengthened their commitment to listening to people with lived experience, ensuring their voices directly influence the service they receive.

These approaches shape the Practice Improvement Plans, which are monitored through the Quality and Improvement Performance Board. This board provides a collaborative space where managers and teams co-produce and review improvement plans, ensuring they are grounded in real-world insights and frontline experience.

Together, these practices have helped build a reflective and transparent culture—one that values learning, understands what works, and holds itself accountable for delivering high-quality care and support.

Formed by people with lived expertise of care and support and lead officers from the ASC commissioning team, the Co-production Policy Working Group has challenged the ways of working and

emphasised the importance of co-production in promoting democratic involvement and inclusion when planning services alongside people and communities. The new Adult Social Care Co-Production Policy aims to clarify the distinction between various forms of participation and co-production, ensuring community acknowledgment and awareness of genuine co-production efforts.

The working group that successfully coproduced and launched the policy has now transitioned to the 'Co-Production Policy Advisory Group,' a highly valued group that colleagues and managers can consult for advice on how to implement the policy. The group provide critical oversight on council practice and review and monitor the policy's effectiveness and usage.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Forum

The Forum is a group of women who strategically inform Bristol's services that support or interact with victims/survivors of domestic abuse & sexual violence. The group was originally established in 2021 after changes in the Domestic Abuse Act requiring experts by experience to inform how services needs are identified and commissioned.

Over the last year the Forum have been involved in multiple projects.

These have included:

- Engagement on a draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy which the recommendations the Forum provided informed parts of the ongoing Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation work.

- The Forum met with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) as part of their focus on mental health and the barriers that victims/survivors face when accessing support. This led to a second conversation with the talking therapists who have since updated aspects of their assessment following the feedback from the forum.
- The Forum met with the Domestic Abuse Lead in Avon & Somerset Police to discuss the community conferences she was looking to set up. The Forum influenced the location of these conferences following their feedback that a football stadium wouldn't be an appropriate venue. The Police have now decided to host these at a college and a university in the Avon & Somerset area.
- The Forum constructed a way to ensure that their feedback to agencies is followed up, and visitors are required to book in a review session 3 or 6 months after their initial meeting to feedback what difference has been made because of the consultation. This has stopped participation from the group feeling 'tokenistic' and this form has been adopted by other lived experience groups across Bristol Council.
- The Forum provided recommendations on the KBSP Domestic Abuse training course and following this the training and development officer will be adding a slide on post separation abuse into the training and including the videos the forum produced to include input from lived experience in this.

Publication of work the group has contributed to:

The Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Strategy 2024-27 which the Forum contributed towards was published to mark the final day of the 16 days of activism.

The Guide to Family Court Proceedings was also published in December 2024. This project started following the initial conversations in the forum about their experiences with the Family Court.

Future Planning

Continuous Improvement

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has recognised the progress in embedding learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). It also acknowledged that staff are demonstrating the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) in their day-to-day practice. However, the CQC highlighted that further work is needed to fully embed these principles across all areas of safeguarding.

In response, there has been the appointment of a dedicated Safeguarding Senior Practitioner to work closely with the Workforce Development Team. This role is central to driving forward learning from SARs and DHRs and reinforcing commitment to MSP. The collaboration of this post with the KBSP training group will ensure key up to date information is used throughout training offers and enhanced by contributions from a wide range of agencies. This group and the KBSP newsletter will allow for widespread promotion of upcoming training courses

across the workforce as the circulation list is currently around 1000 professionals.

The Safeguarding Senior Practitioner will lead efforts to ensure that safeguarding is consistently person-centred, and outcomes focused. They will provide expert guidance, support staff training and development, and help embed a culture of continuous improvement across the safeguarding systems.

Target Operating Model

Over the past year, Adult Social Care have laid the foundations for a major modernisation programme. A key milestone in this journey has been the development of a new Target Operating Model (TOM) which includes a new operating structure, is a key strategic blueprint that outlines how they will plan and deliver services in the future to meet long-term goals.

The TOM is designed to help better manage both current capacity and future demand by strengthening systems and workforce. It provides a framework for more efficient, person-centred care that is responsive to the evolving needs of Bristol's communities. This includes maintaining strong Social Work capacity while expanding the roles of Occupational Therapists and non-regulated practitioners to enhance the overall service offer.

This new operating structure will launch in 2025/2026, with a clear aim - to ensure that people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time. This is especially important in the context of safeguarding. It means ensuring that safeguarding is not only responsive and effective, but also person-centred, empowering individuals to be involved in decisions about their own safety and wellbeing. The new structure will support a more integrated, proactive, and preventative approach, ensuring that safeguarding is embedded across all aspects of care and support.



Adult Social Care Safeguarding Priorities for 2025/2026

As we look ahead to the 2025/26 period, Adult Social Care has set out a clear programme of safeguarding priorities designed to strengthen multi-agency practice, improve responsiveness, and ensure that our work continues to reflect the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). These priorities build on the foundations established in 2024/25, particularly the successful implementation of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and our system-wide approach to reducing waiting times.

1. Strengthening and Reviewing the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Following its implementation in October 2024, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be a central focus for development throughout 2025/26. The MASH brings together Bristol City Council (as lead agency), BNSSG ICB, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP), the Police, and the Probation Service to support earlier, faster and more coordinated responses to safeguarding concerns.

Priority for 2025/26:

- Carry out a comprehensive review of the MASH to ensure the model continues to deliver effective multi-disciplinary decision-making.
- Strengthen partnership pathways and workflow design to support a consistently high-quality safeguarding response.

- Ensure the ongoing integration of the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal so that individuals remain at the centre of decision-making.

This programme of work will allow the MASH to continue improving the way agencies collaborate, share intelligence and address risk.

2. Reducing Waiting Times and Embedding a System-Wide 'Waiting Well' Approach

Managing and reducing waiting times for safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) remains a major priority. During 2024/25, essential groundwork was undertaken to stabilise waiting times, develop a targeted improvement plan and embed a system-wide approach to "waiting well".

Priority for 2025/26:

- Deliver the safeguarding waiting-time improvement strategy developed in 2024/25.
- Strengthen cross-agency coordination and risk prioritisation systems.
- Ensure that those who are waiting receive meaningful contact, clear communication and appropriate interim support.

The aim is to deliver measurable improvements in waiting times across both safeguarding and DoLS during 2025/26.

3. Enhancing Protection Against Financial Abuse

The introduction of the Safeguarding Financial Protection Legal Officer in 2024/25 has significantly strengthened early identification and response to financial abuse. This role has already proven to be a valuable bridge between operational teams and commissioning colleagues, enabling more targeted interventions and improved oversight of risk.

Priority for 2025/26:

- Further embed this specialist legal function into safeguarding pathways.
- Expand partnership working to improve intelligence-sharing and early detection of financial exploitation.
- Consolidate learning into practice guidance and training for staff.

This work will continue to improve our ability to respond swiftly and effectively to financial abuse.

4. Embedding Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and Strengthening Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

Embedding MSP into day-to-day practice and strengthening learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews will remain central to our quality improvement approach.

Priority for 2025/26:

- Use SAR learning to shape targeted training, reflective practice and service improvement activity.
 - Enhance case recording and decision-making frameworks to ensure MSP remains the golden thread throughout safeguarding work.
 - Continue to align practice with the expectations of the Care Quality Commission (CQC), building on positive recognition already given to teams.
- This focus will ensure that safeguarding interventions remain person-centred, empowering and informed by evidence.

5. Continuing to Strengthen Corporate Risk Management

Our Safeguarding Adults Team's nomination for the National Risk Awards in early 2025 reflects the progress made in strengthening corporate governance, risk oversight and assurance processes.

Priority for 2025/26:

- Build on this recognition by continuing to embed robust risk management approaches across the service.
 - Strengthen internal controls, monitoring mechanisms and strategic reporting.
 - Ensure that safeguarding risks are clearly understood, owned and responded to at every level of the organisation.
- This work remains essential to maintaining high standards of safety, accountability and public confidence.

6. Developing a Transitional Safeguarding Pathway

Ensuring continuity of safeguarding support as young people move into adulthood has been identified as a critical priority for 2025/26. The transition between the Children and Families Act and the Care Act can create gaps in support, leaving young people at risk during a vulnerable period of change.

Priority for 2025/26:

- Strengthen the work that began in 2024/25 with the Young Adults Transition Service.
- Develop and launch a new Transitional Safeguarding Pathway, co-produced with young people.
- Create clear, responsive, and trauma-informed pathways that safeguard young adults while respecting their growing autonomy.

This new pathway aims to ensure that no young person falls through the gap as they move into adulthood and that the safeguarding system is equipped to respond to the complex needs of adolescents and young adults.



Statutory Reviews

In 2024/2025, we strengthened our internal governance arrangements for Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).

Once a SAR or DHR has been commissioned, our new governance processes ensure timely escalation, the setting and tracking of actions, in addition to confirming the governance structure and when information about SAR and DHR outcomes should be shared.

These improvements have established a clearer and more robust framework for ensuring that information is shared effectively with the council and with relevant agencies.

By enhancing coordination and accountability, we are better positioned to identify learning, drive continuous improvement, and ultimately improve outcomes for individuals at risk.

Within 2024/25, the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) undertook several Statutory Reviews.

Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs):

Number of Safeguarding Adult Reviews

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Initiated	3	0	0	0
Ongoing	6 (including 2x joint DHRs)	9 (including 2x joint DHRs)	7 (including 2x joint DHRs)	6 (including 2x joint DHRs)
Published	2	0	2	1

In 2024/25, the KBSP commissioned three new SARs. These reviews were commissioned to explore several safeguarding themes including self-neglect, mental health/capacity, deteriorating health conditions, alcohol and illicit drug dependency, non-engagement with services and making safeguarding personal.

In addition, the KBSP published five SARs which can be found on the KBSP website. This is a positive rise from 2023/24 when only three SARs were published.

Regarding learning from our SARs, self-neglect continues to be a consistent theme which follows the pattern of self-neglect referrals regionally into Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) and nationally into Adult Social Care.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has now been established in Bristol following several recommendations from local SARs and more information can be found around this in the adult's section of the report.

Domestic Homicide Reviews / Domestic Abuse-Related Death Reviews (DHRs):

Number of Domestic Homicide Reviews

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Initiated	0	0	1	0
Ongoing	6 (including 1x joint SAR)	5 (including 1x joint SAR)	5 (including 1x joint SAR)	6 (including 2x joint SAR)
At the Home Office	7 (including 1x joint SAR)	5 (including 1x joint SAR)	5 (including 1x joint SAR)	4 (including 1x joint SAR)
Published	2	3	0	1

During 2024/25, the KBSP commissioned one new DHR to explore the theme of bi-directional intimate partner violence which is an emerging theme in several of Bristol's most recent DHRs.

Overall, in 2024/25, the KBSP published six DHRs which can be found on the KBSP website. This is a positive increase from the previous year (2023/24) where only three DHRs were published.

In regard to learning from DHRs, the KBSP created a new resource on Older People and Domestic Abuse following a learning from a review. This resource stipulates that anyone can be a victim of abuse regardless of age, race, income, religion, belief, sex, disability, culture or sexual orientation.

This resource is to aid professionals understanding that older people may have different experiences of domestic abuse and sexual violence and are less likely to access specialist services. This resource has been requested by several other local authorities in the local area to inform their own practice and share with front line practitioners.

Furthermore, recommendations from local DHRs around access to mental health support services, suicide surveillance and awareness for all domestic abuse victims has been implemented as part of the KBSP commitment in Bristol's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2024 – 2026.

Conclusion:

Throughout 2024/2025, the Keeping Adults Safe Board has continued to strengthen Bristol's safeguarding system through focused improvement activity, enhanced multi-agency collaboration, and a clear commitment to learning. The launch of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, improvements in data quality and governance, and the strengthened approach to statutory reviews all demonstrate meaningful progress in ensuring adults at risk receive timely, person-centred and proportionate safeguarding responses. At the same time, the CQC's positive assessment confirms that Bristol is building a strong foundation of good practice while remaining transparent about the areas where further work is needed.

The priorities set for 2025/2026 reflect this commitment to continuous improvement. A renewed focus on reducing waiting times, strengthening risk management, embedding Making Safeguarding Personal, developing the Transitional Safeguarding Pathway, and enhancing protection against financial abuse will help ensure that safeguarding practice remains responsive to local need and aligned with national expectations. These priorities also reinforce the importance of lived experience, co-production, and cross-agency accountability in shaping better outcomes for people across the city.

As Bristol continues its modernisation journey and prepares for the implementation of the new Target Operating Model, the Board remains firmly committed to its overarching purpose: ensuring that adults in Bristol are safe, supported and empowered, and that safeguarding practice is preventative, collaborative and grounded in dignity and respect. The Board will continue to work closely with partners, practitioners and communities to deliver on this purpose and to provide transparent assurance to the public in the year ahead.

