

Safeguarding Adults

My name is Sue Brain. I am the new Service Manager for Safeguarding Adults at West Berkshire Council. I've been in post since September 2020 and it seemed like a good time to introduce myself to colleagues in the voluntary sector and to refresh knowledge about what to do if you have concerns relating to potential abuse and neglect in the community.

Our focus is the person at the centre of the concern, working with them to identify their wishes and outcomes and supporting them to reduce or prevent neglect or abuse. We always remember we are working with adults, in most cases able to make capacitated decisions about their lives. We cannot impose safeguarding solutions on people where they are not wanted and at times this can be difficult to comprehend.

Safeguarding Adults is enshrined in the Care Act 2014. The Act and associated guidance defines what safeguarding is, what constitutes a concern and how we, as a Local Authority, are expected to respond.

However, for an easier read I would direct you to the website of the Safeguarding Adults Board in Berkshire West. The Board, of which West Berkshire Council is a member, sets the strategic direction for safeguarding adults across the area. The Board covers the Berkshire West area and includes West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham Councils. In practice, this means if you work across those three Council areas you should find the safeguarding adults practice will be very similar. The website is available at: <http://www.sabberkshirwest.co.uk/> There is a wealth of information on this site about safeguarding in the area which includes what constitutes abuse or neglect, how to raise a safeguarding concern you might have to any of the three Council areas and a link to the policies and procedures for safeguarding adults that covers the whole of Berkshire.

It's definitely worth dipping into the website to update your knowledge, search for answers to any queries you might have about adult safeguarding and look at Safeguarding Adults Review reports. Those reports analyse and review specific incidents where it is identified organisations may have worked differently to achieve a better outcome for someone. The purpose of those reports is to learn lessons for the future and support organisations involved, and those in the wider sector, to improve their practice going forward.

If however, wading through websites fills you with dread, we are always happy to have a conversation with you, especially if you are worried about something or someone you have seen. You can call us during office hours on 01635 519056. Out of office hours, you can leave a message and a contact number so one of us can return your call.

If you have a concern and wish to contact us directly, you can do so by following this link www.westberks.gov.uk/safeguardingalert