



**An Exploration of the Type, Prevalence, and
Management of Adult Exploitation in Worcestershire.**

FINAL REPORT

COMMISSIONED BY

WORCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

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A Housing Provider, Housing and Communities, West Mercia Police, An Advocacy Organisation, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust, Worcestershire Adult Social Care, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Herefordshire & Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Integrated Adult & Children's Safeguarding Team, University of Worcester Service user and carer group -'IMPACT' and Sandwell Borough Council.

Unfortunately, not all invitations to participate were taken up. The research team would have benefitted from hearing the perspectives of domiciliary care providers and had hoped for more than one housing provider response.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents findings of an evaluation commissioned by Worcester Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) and undertaken by the University of Worcester (UW), to explore the type, prevalence, and management of adult exploitation in Worcestershire. WSAB commissioned this research with the brief that they needed to know more about what was happening in the field of adult exploitation, locally and nationally, driven by a desire to establish effective contemporary services across the county. There was consensus that clear operational pathways were needed, both within and across key organisations, if suspected cases of adult exploitation were to be identified and effectively managed. Governance issues were accordingly explored along with ways in which awareness about adult exploitation might be raised with professionals and communities. The research team reported regularly on progress to the Adult Exploitation Group during October 2020 - March 2021 and is aware that not all aspects of adult safeguarding that are known to exist in Worcestershire (e.g., issues concerning migrant workers, forced labour, 'mate crime' and radicalisation) are reflected in the report, as such areas were not highlighted in either surveys or interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were arranged with professionals from frontline organisations and a survey was sent to both strategic and operational staff within those organisations. A questionnaire was also sent to UW's IMPACT members for a 'citizen's view' on adult exploitation and pathways for reporting suspected cases.

Several key themes emerged from the data – the lack of comprehensive information on levels of adult exploitation in Worcestershire; inconsistency in the pathways used by the different agencies

regarding reporting/actioning such incidents, and obstacles and barriers to protecting exploited adults or those vulnerable to exploitation, including the interface with adult safeguarding. The lack of a watertight 'young person to adulthood' transition process was highlighted – the current arrangements being perceived as failing many young adults. The need to increase awareness of adult exploitation for frontline staff and the public was identified, as was a lack of systemic training opportunities. Despite high levels of knowledge, and close respectful working relationships at senior level and numerous strategic groups, this complexity of knowledge had not consistently been passed down to frontline staff. The full contribution of the voluntary sector did not appear to be realised in the area of adult exploitation, and there may be untapped potential here. Greater involvement of the voluntary sector could also be a way of helping 'mainstream' understanding of the nature and prevalence of adult exploitation in the public eye.

It is unsurprising that the research found there was a lack of clear understanding across the county regarding what constitutes adult exploitation and the role of respective organisations in addressing this phenomenon. Many of the examples provided to the researchers concerned complex situations that did not meet the section 42 criteria and were not viewed as adult exploitation.

WSAB has recognised the need for guidance and a clear pathway for complex situations that do not meet the section 42 criteria.

Recommendations are that:

1. Worcestershire develops its own definition of 'adult abuse' as contrasted with 'adult exploitation'.
2. Clear governance arrangements, reflecting the complementary roles of WSAB and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) are developed, contemporary with the ever-changing nature of exploitation and abuse.

3. Clear operational pathways are developed across all relevant agencies, reflecting Worcestershire's future agreed definitions of what constitutes 'abuse' and what constitutes 'exploitation'.
4. The agreed Exploitation Development Officer post needs further discussion regarding its priorities, which it is suggested should be more operational than strategic e.g., a co-ordinator of a system of interdisciplinary training and best practice guides/ an expert point of reference regarding practice and resources across adult exploitation / a forger of key local and national relationships.
5. Voluntary organisations could be worked with in partnership regarding adult exploitation. For example, organisations such as 'Friends Against Scams' <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/> offer a range of advice and support for organisations and for all victims of scams, regardless of care and support needs. Voluntary organisations could also be an important part of public awareness raising strategies and campaigns across Worcestershire, and thus encourage preventive approaches.
6. The established process of 'detection – action – management – support – prevention', might usefully include 'follow-up', to counter the 'refer and forget' syndrome. Training and induction initiatives could help change this culture.
7. The practice and systems knowledge of senior staff need to be cascaded down to all staff in the partner organisations from induction onwards, thus encouraging all staff to see adult exploitation as 'core business', and not 'somebody else's business'.
8. The WSAB website needs to reflect adult exploitation as 'core business', in line with the advice of this report regarding content and accessibility.
9. National training packages should be investigated in greater detail, especially the free / accredited courses.

10. Data needs to be collected more extensively across agencies if WSAB is to gain a fuller understanding of type, patterns, and prevalence in the county.
11. The conflictual views about referrals to transition services for young people need to be more fully examined on a factual basis between partner organisations.
12. That the gaps in this report regarding areas of adult exploitation known to exist within Worcestershire (e.g., exploitation of migrant workers/forced labour/ mate crime/radicalisation) be subject to further targeted research, as information about their nature and prevalence did not emerge in the study.

In essence, senior managers seem to have been committed to Worcestershire for some years and have amassed the knowledge and the strategic vision about future direction, but what is needed is for that knowledge and vision to be translated into clear online and practice pathways in ways that ensure all staff working in the areas, and all citizens of Worcestershire, can play a full part in raising the profile of the ever more complex forms of adult exploitation in their midst. The aspiration should perhaps be to raise awareness of adult exploitation in the public and professional consciousness to the level that that now pertains regarding Child Criminal /Sexual Exploitation.

There are clearly resource implications here, particularly given the impact of austerity on key partner organisations, but there is a wealth of free educative material available (details within report below, p. 44 onwards), and the existing depth of senior management knowledge across partner organisations needs to be passed on to frontline staff from induction onwards. It is most encouraging that, during the course of this evaluation, Public Health funding became available for a two-year Exploitation Development Officer (See Appendix 4 - Job Description). This post will be pivotal to bringing about the changes outlined above.

INTRODUCTION

There is a lack of literature on adult exploitation, most online searches regarding 'exploitation' resulting in articles and reports relating to child exploitation. This scarcity of information reflects a wider concern that community awareness is significantly lagging behind the ever more complex, and growing, problem of adult exploitation.

For example, in 2019, over 10,000 potential victims of modern slavery were identified in the UK (HM Government, 2020), while a report by the Centre of Social Justice (2020) suggested that there could be at least 100,000 victims in the UK. The same report makes a challenging statement, which is worthy of reflection in regard to the current Worcestershire culture regarding adult exploitation:

'Our understanding of slavery and how to fight it must improve on the frontline if we are to tackle it. A 'local lottery' exists when it comes to prioritising the anti-slavery fight across public authorities, and the response often remains reliant on personal leadership rather than it being core business.'

(Gren-Jardan, 2020: *It Still Happens Here: Fighting UK Slavery In the 2020s*, p.6)

Austerity and cutbacks over recent years have reduced social and community resources, which makes all approaches to what should be the 'core business' of adult exploitation so much more challenging. The importance of making best use of county and national resources, therefore, should not be underestimated and space should be identified for forming partnerships with businesses, voluntary organisations and involving the public with awareness campaigns, including schools and higher education institutions.

This present research report highlights both the strategic and operational issues identified by members of the WSAB and partner agencies / organisations, that either help or hinder the processes of detecting and managing adult exploitation concerns. The following sections cover the methodology, findings and recommendations which have arisen from the research. In the interests of encouraging respondents to speak openly, we have not identified individuals in this report. although we have on occasion identified the agency concerned, where this was considered necessary to contextualise the matter being presented.

WHAT IS ADULT EXPLOITATION?

It is important to distinguish between the terms 'adult abuse' and 'adult exploitation'. While the two behaviours overlap, the terms are not interchangeable. The overarching purpose of any adult safeguarding board is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs, which it does by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and its associated statutory guidance. There is overlap with the wider responsibilities of community safety partnerships, whose statutory role is to provide strategic oversight for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour across communities.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance (2021; 14.17) states that local authorities should not limit their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. This guidance goes on to note that exploitation, in particular, is a common theme associated with, physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, psychological abuse, financial abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect, and self-neglect. However, further expansion of the 'exploitation' definition is absent. Different authorities use different definitions – Buckinghamshire, for example use:

'The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work. (ii) The fact of making use of a situation to gain unfair advantage for oneself'

(<http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.gov.uk/media/5003033/Adult-Exploitation-Strategy-2017-20-published-Nov-2017.pdf>).

Luton Safeguarding Adults Board use:

'Adult exploitation is when a person, 18 years and over, is being made to do something that makes them feel bad or that they do not want to do so that another person can benefit from it.'

(<http://lutonsab.org.uk/adult-exploitation/>).

The Northern Ireland definition is:

'Abuse is 'any action taken by another person that causes harm or distress', while exploitation means the 'utilization of another person or group for selfish purposes', but both fit the description: 'maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person' (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/recognising-adult-abuse-exploitation-and-neglect>).

In our web searches for 'exploitation', the results invariably led to information on child exploitation, with information/material relating to various forms of adult maltreatment typically appearing under the heading 'adult abuse'. There is also a lack of academic literature that specifically concerns adult exploitation, the limited amount available mainly focusing on elder abuse and financial exploitation.

Adult exploitation can take many forms:

Modern slavery and human trafficking: the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men using force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for

the purpose of exploitation. It is a crime under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and includes holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after...' (Modern Slavery and Public Health, 2017, Public Health England).

Financial Exploitation: illegal or improper use of property, income, resources, or trust funds of a vulnerable adult by any person for any person's profit or advantage other than for the vulnerable adult's profit or advantage.

Sexual Exploitation: abuse or exploitation of another person's sexuality without consent, for the perpetrators own advantage or benefit, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited.

Mate Crime: person harmed or taken advantage of by someone they thought was their friend.

Scamming: deceit by uninvited contact (by letter, email, phone call) in order to obtain money.

County Lines: illegal drugs transported across police and local authority boundaries by children or vulnerable people, coerced into it by gangs.

Blackmail: the act of getting money from people or forcing them to do something by threatening to tell a secret of theirs or to harm them.

Fraud: the crime of getting money, goods, services or property by deceiving people.

Radicalisation: people often coerced by an individual or group actively seeking to persuade others to adopt their views. This can lead to committing acts of extremism and terrorism.

For more information, please see the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) website at

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse> and

Preventing Exploitation Toolkit at <https://www.preventingexploitationtoolkit.org.uk/home/what-is-exploitation/>

METHODOLOGY

This six-month project was commissioned by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) and conducted by researchers at the University of Worcester (UW). Approval was gained from the University of Worcester Health and Sciences Research Ethics Committee, after which a Reference Group of seven citizens was established, including UW's IMPACT members (service users and carers group), with experience of issues relevant to the research. This group met every month to discuss issues related to adult exploitation and safeguarding, discuss case studies and emergent findings.

A mixed methods approach was adopted for this study - Interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams and were recorded and transcribed. Interviewees were provided with a Participant information Sheet and Consent Form prior to attending the interviews. An online survey using JISC Online Surveys, was constructed for frontline workers within the partner agencies, and was made available via an online link. For the online survey, the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form were embedded in the opening section. A short questionnaire was sent to IMPACT members via email, again incorporating information and consent.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Information on incidents other than financial exploitation or scamming in Worcestershire appears sparse. However, the latest statistics reported by The Salvation Army (July 2019 to June 2020) suggest that incidents of modern slavery referrals in the West Midlands (247 referrals) were the second highest after London (1284 referrals).

The local statistics made available to the research team were as follows:

Worcestershire Council Safeguarding Team from December 2019 to November 2020:

1 financial exploitation; 14 financial scams; 3 criminal exploitation; 2 sexual exploitation; 1 human trafficking; 1 labour exploitation; 1 online scam.

Housing Provider

The records kept by housing relate mainly to domestic abuse.

West Mercia Police

County Lines Groups:

South Worcestershire: As of September 2020, there were 11 county lines groups.

North Worcestershire: As of September 2020, there were 20 county lines groups.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking:

During 2019, West Mercia Police submitted 118 returns via the National Referral Mechanism, equating to a 93% increase on 2018.

Trading Standards (Regulatory Services)

Doorstep Crime and unsolicited incidents: During the two-year period from 1st November 2018 to 31st October 2020:

1,074 incidents were recorded by the Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS) relating to the purchase (or attempted sale) of goods or services via the doorstep or unsolicited means such as email, post, or telephone. An average of 134 incidents were recorded each quarter: approximately 80% of incidents related to doorstep purchases.

Scams: In total, Worcestershire Trading Standards completed 223 intelligence reports in relation to scams; with 59% relating to bogus services such as airport parking, charities, computer services, education services, employment services and government agencies. Other types of scams included internet scams (11%), inheritance and money scams (11%) and business scams (9%). Many of the people (often older people) who fell victim to such scams were not eligible for care and support, but the impact of scamming should not be underestimated in terms of financial loss and emotional distress caused to victims and their families, especially where repeat scamming is an ever-present threat. Victims who do not appear to have care and support needs were reported as not always being signposted to any voluntary sector partner organisation for appropriate support. Staff in Regulatory and other services were aware of voluntary sector initiatives such as 'Friends Against Scams' <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/become-a-friend>, but the capacity to engage with such organisations has not been identified within current resources in Worcestershire. Friends Against Scams work with all victims of scamming, regardless of care and support needs, and provide awareness sessions, support organisations running campaigns and recruit victims as 'scam marshals', who use their own experiences to fight back against the scammers. Scams are the most prevalent form of adult exploitation in Worcestershire and should not be just accepted as 'part of modern life'.

Overall, all participants reported problems with the accuracy of data available, and there is a clear need to improve data collection and sharing on adult exploitation across the county, if its profile is to be raised among the public, professionals, and politicians. Current data may only represent the 'tip of the iceberg'.

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with senior professionals from key community services including local councils, NHS, Police, Trading Standards, Housing, and an Advocacy service. These were semi-structured interviews guided by questions that probed the type and prevalence of adult exploitation in Worcestershire, the current pathways for dealing with cases, and obstacles to understanding the issues surrounding adult exploitation/ taking appropriate action in properly detecting and managing suspected cases. The questions were as follows:

1. What types of adult exploitation do you regularly encounter and on what scale?
2. What are the existing pathways for investigating suspected adult exploitation cases?
3. Are there any immediately noticeable obstacles within the existing pathways that impede prompt action in dealing with reported cases of exploitation?
4. What additional resources and communication strategies could make the 'reporting to investigation to action' process more effective?

Main Themes arising from Interviews:

Pathways, Processes and Obstacles

The statutory agencies all reported problems brought about by cutbacks which had served to hinder development. By contrast, a housing provider said they had capacity to play a bigger part in adult exploitation, if only they were asked.

No clear and consistent pathways were identified across the agencies. However, each organisation appeared to have their own process depending on the concern. Some processes and partner agency relationships seem to work well as described in the following narrative:

We've got a number of processes...it could be a Section 42 enquiry if it met the threshold for that. There's also a MASH [Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub] process. So, the Local Authority

lead on that – so if there’s an emergency situation...nobody knows much about the patient – it might...come under a MASH...and then people pool their information – so police, social care, health...and then an action plan is derived from that – so that works really well.

...so, our relationship with the Harm Assessment Unit in the police is really good and our adult social care team...in my experience you can usually speak to somebody...get a meeting together if necessary and resolve or move something on...so I think it works well.

From the following narrative, regarding concerns around radicalisation, the reporting pathways and information sharing processes seemed clear:

...we have good connections with the counterterrorism team...we are obligated to work with the counterterrorism team and share information to make referrals.

...we have to report on all our activity around radicalisation...there’s a very rigorous process of reporting and sharing information...

Knowing who is leading on an adult exploitation case was stated as a significant issue. The roles and responsibilities of individuals and organisations are not always clear, often resulting in a lack of appropriate action and delay. This is reflected in the narrative below:

...one of the problems is finding who’s leading on it [a case]. When agencies are working together, you’ve often got an unspoken reluctance to say who’s leading – who’s coordinating... You have to agree who will coordinate at the outset. Otherwise, nothing is done properly or on time...there ought to be more responsibility placed on the partners to contribute to the process...

It was also mentioned that the processing/handling of some cases is perhaps not as comprehensive and rigorous as it should be:

...one of the things that we were worrying about is, when people are being picked up by the police...whether exploitation is being fully explored with them, and...it seems like things are going into a...criminal justice route quickly. So, there was an example – and the police...said they explored it, but people were picked up around...a cannabis farm, and then they were in court the next day, and...everything was in a sort of real rush – and it just sort of seems that...have people looked at immigration and all of those sorts of things...seems that people are very quickly under criminal justice. And then, they got lost...there'd been some...issue around the spelling of their names – that we never managed to track them again.

... the police were...giving assurance that they'd looked into things...but it just didn't sound that convincing....and you know, one of them [person picked up by police] ...said that they were...14...when they looked about 37 – so he was the one we were able to track. But you know, they didn't have ...proper interpreting sorted out – what about advocacy? Those sorts of things.

...it was [just] through talk that that came to our attention. But if that person...hadn't had said he was 14 when he wasn't...Worcestershire Children First had to follow up...we would never have been involved otherwise, because the police had decided it wasn't exploitation. So, it just went straight to court...so it just seemed like...maybe we could have had a discussion about it, or rather...cos we were then trying to chase after the event – 'well are you sure they haven't got care and support needs, do they need an advocate?' but we'd lost them by that stage.

Communication between agencies/partners/organisations could be much improved.

The sharing of information and involving relevant people in making decisions about processes and actions is paramount:

...there are occasions sometimes when the local authority doesn't include us in their decision-making...we are addressing that, because it is a multi-disciplinary decision really...but...I don't know why sometimes decisions are made and we're not...necessarily included.

Recording methods - It is difficult to categorise cases in a consistent manner. At present there appears to be a lack of and inconsistency of category definitions in adult exploitation case recording, which needs to be resolved:

...the problem we have is our recording methods...and again it comes down to definitions. If you talk adult social care, exploitation doesn't fit the definition in the care and support needs necessarily...we deal with vulnerable adults but that is not that care and support definition – it's much...wider, so we have got a series of exploitation markers that are coming which will help us to differentiate different areas and elements of that – but they're not in force yet – so it means our data interpretation ...is very difficult...we have a raft of different exploitation...scenarios that we see...but again very few of those are going to be the definition that adult social care would include within those with care and support needs.

The issue of consent can be an obstacle to providing support where it is needed. Disagreements amongst agencies about capacity to consent is a significant issue:

...if [people] are coming to our attention because of need, then there's an element around self-neglect...So a statutory responsibility of social care – but because they haven't got the

resources or if people don't consent to be involved – and...consent is another major issue here where we have problems...then they don't get engaged, but we don't have a mechanism to know who your GP is...So our only recourse is to go through social care who have got access to medical records...and the whole consent issue. Where...they're not a Section 42 and they haven't...consented. And of course, when we deal with them – they might not be in a fit state to consent in the first instance – then social care won't take the referral because they don't believe it is lawful to.

An effective working relationship with the police did not appear consistent. For example, disagreement whether a particular concern is dealt with under criminal law or civil law:

... depends locally on the volumes of policing; about the willingness and ability of the local policing teams...to pursue things; and also, a willingness to liaise with housing. We understand the rewards in housing of a good working relationship with the police, but I would not say...that it is consistent...The rules are there...where someone phones up or...someone says 'there's loads of drug dealing going on in this property'...you need to tell the police if it's criminal and then the police would actually say 'well no it's happening in the landlord's property – the landlord's got to deal with it'. My personal view is we both need to deal with it because there will be aspects of both criminality and also civil issues. – So, if we work together to do that then [it addresses the problem].

Eligibility Criteria/Care Act - Section 42

The care and support needs criteria can make reporting cases difficult. There are no clear pathways for dealing with vulnerable people who fall outside Adult Social Care's eligibility criteria:

'Adult Social Care will say we over refer [they] want to hear about the stuff that meets the care and support needs...threshold...but actually there is a whole host of people that need a whole load of other support mechanisms. Whether it be through self-neglect or otherwise – we are at a loss really within the partnership, where to go...

...as the police we've got no one clear pathway or even a small number of pathways that are identical across the board. '

The current referral systems can leave people that need support, with no support:

We would say that individual is vulnerable, but actually another agency would say that they've got means to support them – because...they've been duped, but £20,000 could be their life savings and therefore...we know full well the data will tell us...if it's an elderly person – that could shorten their life.

Section 42 eligibility can stand in the way of accessing appropriate support for vulnerable people.

The complexity of the problems mentioned below shows the reality of the situation:

...not a lot of people that I work with at the moment have Care Act eligibility in terms of the local authority stepping in – and I think that can be a barrier... that sometimes leaves them in No-man's land and I think it's left then to the 3rd sector, as we are known, to provide that support – and sometimes we're doing that in an ill-informed way because we don't have access to all the information about that person – and we don't have the statutory powers to investigate or find out or ask questions of people. So, we may be supporting people inappropriately. We may be supporting them to perpetuate the exploitation, but... we're the only people left to get on with it...cos nobody else is going to pick up that challis. And that's

usually because it's stuff that isn't 'high ranking'. It's having a massive impact on the individual...but it doesn't warrant an allocation of a social worker, or perhaps even a police investigation.

Cohesive partner-agency involvement and follow-up of referred cases is crucial but not consistent, resulting in people becoming lost or forgotten within (or beyond) the safeguarding system:

...there can be a culture in certain areas...of 'refer and forget'... and this is where some of the threshold stuff can come in regarding the team in the council, for example, where they...and GPs can be a bit like that as well – where the referral's gone in – they would probably say [to] social services even though they made a safeguarding referral and... somebody might...say 'well when was the last time you saw Mr's X...? - 'Oh, I saw her when I was worried about her three months ago when I sent that referral off... And do you know what's happened to her? – oh...her prescriptions are getting picked up...we haven't seen her...', and they it will sort of turn out where nobody's seen her...so this is reflected in our Safeguarding adult reviews (SARs) fairly regularly...but that's not to say there isn't a lot of multi-agency work because that does happen...

Transition years, young adults and the 'Get Safe' programme

The issue of 'transition' years from children's services to adult services is a particularly difficult one nationally, issues of consent being the core dilemma, but eligibility being another real challenge. 'Get Safe' is the Worcestershire name for the multi-agency way of working with children and young people at risk of Criminal Exploitation (https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20700/get_safe_-_keeping_children_and_young_people_safe_from_criminal_exploitation/2035/what_is_get_safe).

Professionals from across key agencies are situated together and model a joint way of managing exploitation. Views about Get Safe were rather mixed among respondents, some expressing concerns that there is no system in place to protect young adults who do not have clearly identified care and support needs:

...one of the things I've always struggled with is this clear demarcation between children's and adult's, and actually there doesn't seem to be...that support...transition.

It is not...children's services until this age and then they go into adult...it's a very linear process.

... We start to engage with the young adults' team for any transfers across when the young person is approx. 17 and a half, to discuss if there are ongoing concerns. These tend to be sexual exploitation or county lines. We then ask children's services to get involved so that we can then work with our young adults' team if the young person is transferring across. Quite often...people don't transfer because at the age of 18 services end for them. Or engagement can be difficult.

...the child has been known from an early age around CSE and sexual exploitation and now she's reached 18 – it's continued...the perpetrator was almost waiting for her to turn 18...before they started again.

However, the evidence that claims people are falling through the gap is not clear – 'Contentious' referrals are not being received by Adult Social Care; hence it is difficult to assess and act on the concerns that partner agencies appear to be having:

I hear very differing reports about 'GET SAFE' – [some will say that there are] 300 children that are involved with GET SAFE at the moment. But then I also hear from different partners that - yes – they're involved but they're not doing anything to make any difference to them ...? Or is there [something] around that there's no point making the referral because they won't meet criteria...

... and it's like everybody goes into the...GET SAFE meetings and they've got their 'children's' heads on, and it might even be the same staff, but they're just not thinking with the adult perspective... so I don't know whether that's the right model. I mean this is what we need to work out. If we knew that we'd have just implemented it.

While it is acknowledged that all agencies have to follow their own statutory guidelines and protocols, the transition issue does focus the question about the moral responsibility of WSAB to all of Worcestershire's citizens, including those with 'low-level' needs.

Training

Several respondents recalled ad hoc adult exploitation training having taken place in recent years, but no interagency training strategy exists. Most interviewees reported a lack of specific training in the field of adult exploitation. The challenge is for all agencies to have a training strategy from induction onwards, ideally delivered on an interdisciplinary basis to break down barriers and form the types of working relationships regarding joint commitment to adult exploitation that is modelled at senior level. Examples of available training packages, some free of charge, is given from page 41 onwards in this report.

FINDINGS FROM IMPACT MEMBERS' SURVEY

A short questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was sent to 30 IMPACT members (Service User and Carer Involvement group at the University of Worcester) to gauge their awareness of the types of adult exploitation and where they might report suspected cases. Sixteen responses were received.

Q1. Awareness of adult exploitation concerns in the community

Five respondents were not aware of any adult exploitation issues in their respective communities.

Eleven respondents were aware of cases of financial exploitation, one of which knew a victim of emotional abuse and financial exploitation. One respondent has known many visually impaired people that have been exploited.

There was a concern about nail-bars, and possible associated labour exploitation increasing in number.

One respondent was aware from a carer's perspective, of mate crime, cuckooing, financial exploitation, and also of abuse of power by a private day centre for people with a learning disability. Such day centres are unregulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Five respondents were aware of cases of modern slavery; four were aware of sexual exploitation cases; two were aware of cases of criminal exploitation.

Q2. Reporting a suspicion that a local premise was being used for county lines drug dealing

Eleven respondents would report the suspicion to the police. Only one respondent would report such a concern to the local housing organisation. Two respondents might report to the safeguarding board, and one would inform the owner or warden of the premises, if appropriate.

Q3. Reporting a suspected case of modern slavery

Eight respondents would report such concerns to the police.

One respondent mentioned reporting the suspicion to the Modern Slavery helpline. Another respondent would try both the police and social service, but also mentioned that neither of these options had worked in the past:

...in my experience neither the police or social services have wanted to get involved.

One respondent, mentioned that, dependent on the situation, they might report to the regulatory body for gang masters. Another respondent would, in the absence of hard evidence, contact the Safeguarding Board for advice.

Q4. Report a case of suspected financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

Most respondents mentioned the police as first port of call in their replies. Additionally, two respondents would report to the safeguarding board / local social services and/or adult social services. Three would report to social services, the council and the police. One respondent would report to police first, who should then help with contacting safeguarding.

Another respondent would contact the social worker in the first instance (if there is a social worker involved). The same respondent mentioned that they had reported a safeguarding concern via the Adult Contact Team to the Local Authority's Safeguarding Team. From there it was escalated, and the matter taken to court.

One case of mate crime from a carer's perspective was reported to the Adult Access Centre and acted upon appropriately.

A comment from one of the respondents does not reflect a good reporting experience:

*...reporting, whether to safeguarding teams or the police; I have found that **instead of safeguarding/protection from exploitation being everyone's business, it is often regarded as being someone else's business...***

In one case, it was mentioned that the local bank had posters displayed relating to this issue. Two respondents mentioned successfully reporting financial exploitation to the bank.

A further respondent commented that if the issue involved a paid carer, apart from calling the police, they would also report the concern to Social Services, as the care package may have been commissioned by the council.

A case of financial exploitation of a disabled student was mentioned by one respondent who reported their concern to the educational establishment where the incident took place.

FINDINGS FROM ONLINE SURVEY – MULTI AGENCY

With regard to the online survey (see Appendix 2 for questions), a total of 37 responses were received from staff across all the agencies - Seventeen from Regulatory Services; nine from Adult Social Care; seven from a Housing provider; two from West Mercia Police and two from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health Care Trust.

The online survey was designed to capture the perspectives of staff on the frontline of services, and although these responses are not necessarily generalisable, they do provide some useful pointers about the lack of frequency regarding dealing with cases of adult exploitation, and a sense of not being 'in partnership' with fellow agencies in ways which share understanding. This state of affairs contrasts with what appears to be the authentic nature of partnership working at senior level, and therefore merits attention. Themed answers to the survey questions are presented below:

Q1. Awareness of adult exploitation categories (modern slavery; Criminal exploitation; financial exploitation; sexual exploitation; county lines)

REGULATORY SERVICES: Majority of respondents reported being aware of all categories.

HOUSING PROVIDER: Majority of respondents reported being aware of all categories.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, WEST MERCIA, WHCT: All respondents aware of all categories.

Q2. Categories/Scale of Adult Exploitation Encountered

REGULATORY SERVICES: main incidents encountered include rogue trading; unsolicited texts/emails/phone calls re: prize draws, bogus investments, scams, financial exploitation of elderly, worker exploitation, occasional modern slavery.

Scale: five respondents reported that incidents are infrequent.

The following were also reported:

- Modern Slavery – Medium; Criminal Exploitation – Medium; Financial Exploitation – High; Sexual Exploitation – Low; County Lines - Low
- Regular complaints are received, and it is believed that a lot of cases are underreported.
- The majority of reports received are related to financial exploitation, but reports are occasionally received suggesting modern slavery, criminal and sexual exploitation.
- Scams and rogue trader issues constitute regular Trading Standards work. Suspected Modern Slavery issues are reported less frequently.
- Rogue traders, preying on the elderly and vulnerable are widespread nationally, with doorstep crime and scams - repeated across borders and within the county.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE: All respondents had encountered incidents, with financial, sexual, neglect/omission on a regular basis.

Scale:

Regarding financial exploitation, one respondent commented that rather than incidents involving a one-time large-scale theft, it was the spending of small amounts of the victim's money on various things that was more of an issue. Financial exploitation was reported as common occurrence

One respondent reported that level of exploitation cases was 'very high'.

Four respondents commented that exploitation cases were of 'very low level'.

Once case of cuckooing was severe as victim moved to a care home, because of being targeted in his community.

HOUSING PROVIDER: Encounter on regular basis: financial, phone and doorstep scams.

Scale:

It was reported that suspicions of exploitation are a frequent occurrence: monthly. Where it is proven, this happens perhaps two to three times a year.

Two respondents commented that there are a few occurrences / low levels.

One respondent did not know the scale and another respondent had not encountered exploitation in their housing scheme.

It was reported by one respondent that in eight years there had been numerous cases of financial exploitation but that sometimes they were hard to prove. There was one case of sexual exploitation mentioned, involving a victim with dementia.

WEST MERCIA POLICE: Encounter on regular basis: Financial exploitation and County Lines (criminal exploitation is usually linked to county lines); Financial, sexual, neglect, physical, lack of capacity offences, provider offences.

Scale:

Adult exploitation was reported as a 'significant issue'.

WHCT: Encounter on regular basis financial, sexual and county lines, doorstep scams, county lines especially where it started in childhood.

Scale:

One respondent reported 2 cases a week approximately

The other respondent commented that the level of cases was 'Very low level identified'.

Q3. Behaviour that might indicate possible exploitation

Apart from the obvious and evident physical signs that people were being treated badly, and reports from observations from members of the public, all participants had a good idea of what type of behaviours might be signs that a form of adult exploitation was happening. The markers included visible anxiety, depression, defensive behaviour, reluctance to engage, unkempt appearance (physical and clothing), fatigued/underfed. Other signifiers were unusual work hours, lack of money to pay bills or buy food, never being alone and not having access to own identity documents.

Q4. Existing pathways for investigating suspected adult exploitation cases

REGULATORY SERVICES:

When reporting a safeguarding concern to the Police it is expected that intelligence will be logged in relation to incident, statement obtained and investigated. Reporting to adult safeguarding was commonplace. Referrals had also been made to the Serious Organised Crime Group (SOCJAG) and to the Multi Agency Targeted Enforcement Strategy (MATES). It was made clear that Trading

Standards investigate their own cases of financial exploitation in relation to scams and rogue trading (also collecting evidence to take legal action and support the wronged individual). For all other cases of exploitation, they would refer to adult safeguarding, modern slavery team, police and social services depending on the type of exploitation. They would expect the matter to be looked into and to be updated as to the outcome.

One respondent indicated that incident reporting happens through various channels, for example: Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS) notifications and referrals, intelligence reports from within Trading Standards and from external agencies. Incidents are also reported to the local authority. Several respondents commented that they would report to police or social services or County Council safeguarding team. One respondent mentioned that they would report to the Financial Conduct Authority where a scam is involved. Two respondents mentioned that they would not expect to hear back from these agencies about action taken.

Other comments were as follows:

- Social Services, sometimes police, have direct power to intervene in workplaces. Once a referral made, we are more than likely to hear nothing about action taken
- I would notify manager, local police, Regional Modern Slavery contact at GAIN (Government Agency Intelligence Network)
- Social Care Safeguarding referral. Police if criminal activity
- Would ask for advice if found examples of adult exploitation
- We can investigate the activities we identify. That is our role. Our officers would engage with the multi-agency safeguarding hub or our contacts in Adult Social Care in relation to any wider themes of exploitation.
- [would report to] The West Mercia Police Safeguarding lead and also the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- Depends on concern. We have connections to Adult Social Care and the police and will report any concerns to them.
- Through Police or Social Services.
- Would refer to Adult Services at Worcestershire County Council, or to the Police for them to investigate.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE:

- Safeguarding referral - would expect to be told to make enquiries as the social worker.
- Safeguarding team should investigate and advise. Police also involved.
- As community social work team, check if person wants safeguarding. Would refer to Safeguarding Team and work together to support person. Other agencies e.g., police, also contacted if necessary.
- Would report any concerns to safeguarding team. Would gain consent where possible from individual but if they refused and I still felt concerned I would seek advice from safeguarding team. Our safeguarding team have networks with health/ Police and would be able to gain further information to explore any concerns of harm or exploitation.
- Report to Police if a crime was suspected, to a social work safeguarding team if they appeared unable to act to protect themselves, as well as support services. I would expect enquiry or investigation of some form, links between agencies and multi-faceted response.
- Adult Safeguarding, MAPPA and the Police. I have also referred to Prevent.
- Discuss with Adult Safeguarding for guidance – which services can help if meets threshold for safeguarding enquiry.

- Referral made to local authority safeguarding team and police (notification to CQC if in a registered service). Would expect Section 42 enquiry and findings and recommendations reported. For criminal activity police often investigate and take action if there is evidence.
- WCC and Unseen (Safeguarding Resource Hub - <https://www.unseenuk.org/>)

HOUSING PROVIDER:

- If support needs - refer to adult services via safeguarding referral which is recorded on our systems also. Otherwise report to Police.
- Local Authority safeguarding team
- Safeguarding, Police. Line Manager.
- Inform line manager and would expect safeguarding form to be completed before being passed on to Pathways
- Report to Line Manager who would make a safeguarding referral.
- Line manager and adult safeguarding
- Safeguarding referral or police. This would be done through management, then to local police or social services

WEST MERCIA POLICE:

- We lead on the investigation but involve a range of statutory partners in the response and can access investigative support regionally and nationally where required.
- We have adult referral system both for adult safeguarding involving 'adults at risk - as per the Care Act 2014' and we have the NRM through NCA. We also have Force SPOC's [Single point of contact] and a central lead.

WHCT:

- Refer to Adult Safeguarding.
- Refer to Police and Adult Social Care

CITIZEN REFERENCE GROUP MEETINGS

A reference group of five IMPACT members, facilitated by the researchers, was set up to bring a 'lived experience' dimension to the research. The group met on a monthly basis over five months and contributed ideas, links to relevant websites and personal case studies. Discussions focused on issues of known adult exploitation cases, support needs of those affected and improvements within agencies and organisations (e.g., banking – esp. the limited option to have non-contactless credit/debit cards) that could deter people from exploiting others. See Appendix 3 for case studies which may be useful for group discussion.

SANDWELL COUNCIL STAFF

Sandwell Council contributed some interesting information, insights, and recommendations, especially with regard to modern slavery:

- Meetings for meetings sake:
...they were bringing...the kind of cases that nobody knew what to do with...so they brought them all into this meeting...called Sandwell Housing Operational Partnership – so nobody fully knew what it was...nobody knew what this group did. But it was the place where all the modern slavery cases were brought.

- Action needs to be immediate for many cases of modern slavery: timing is crucial:
...where you've got say a potential brothel that has appeared, I guarantee that within a couple of months that would have moved on and gone somewhere else...you need to act really, really quickly. So, the timing was a real barrier for those cases.
- Initially there was no clear pathway to dealing with cases:
...[no] clear, seamless...pathway for any of the cases...you would have around 40 or 50 different locations of concern listed, because they never closed any of the cases, or followed them through to make sure that there was any action.
- Single Point of Contact:
So, the one thing that we put in place that worked...was having a single point of contact... they'd had 47 cases in a year...But the more that we have embedded...this approach properly [it] was up to almost 200 cases we had last year – so trying to...do that properly – it really made a difference, so...having a single point of contact to...keep those cases on track...link in with the different agencies...who needs to do what.
...the process that we set up for any case around modern slavery was...really simple...they don't need to be complicated at all. So, what we agreed is that any concern for modern slavery that comes in from any door...they all work their way to me [single point of contact]. What we then do...with those cases...we send those out for a virtual scoping with all our key partners. So, within 24 hours, we normally have responses back – so that will go out to places like DWP, HMRC, immigration and the police, all of the local authority...partners and some of the third sector agencies that we work with.

Sandwell have three main response types:

First response: a low-level concern, allocated to a single agency response, e.g., social worker, housing officer, voluntary agency, police – depending on best suitability and prepped with all relevant information.

Second response: more concerning, a multi-agency visit and briefing at the police station - so all the agencies know what the plan. Important to have a multi-agency approach because of the three main areas: pursuing perpetrators, supporting the victims, disrupting the location.

Third response: a significant concern or high numbers of people. Pre-planning to visit premises with partners and assess who else needs to be involved, whether the case needs closing, monitoring etc.

It is important to note that this service was based in housing. Also, the majority of people who came into contact with the service did not require responses under adult safeguarding services as there were more appropriate pathways.

The Importance of Training and Development is considered crucial by Sandwell Council, as part of the overall strategy for dealing with adult exploitation. A training package was provided by Black Country Women's Aid and The Salvation Army was subcontracted for modern slavery training. The training apparently highlighted the mismatch between what a third sector agency would deliver and fit with local authority pathways:

so, they were saying these pathways are not going to work and there were lots of disjointed – so we made sure that was a joined-up approach to...have the knowledge of modern slavery....to bring that alongside the way that the local authority works.....and...the training – the more you embedded that – our referrals just went up and up and up.

WSAB will have to consider its logistical response if similar upward surges in referrals result as a consequence of adopting new approaches to adult exploitation. Sandwell's messages about simplification of procedures are an important consideration for future developments.

The Importance of a Partnership Approach

Sandwell viewed the building of relationships with all the different agencies and making them aware of the person who is the single point of contact, as critical to success. Crucial also was close working with the police transformation unit: <https://www.aspartnership.org.uk/modern-slavery-police-transformation-unit>:

...you've got something called GAIN (Government Agency Intelligence Network) ...what would happen – say your concern went to the police now and the police need you to get information from Department of Work and Pensions or HMRC or Immigration. Then they do something called a GAIN referral and then all those agencies would look at that and send back that information. But that takes a couple of months for them to process that because they go through the national...protocols – but just having that main person on the ground, it makes that really seamless – because I know I've got my inside links with HMRC, and we can have that dialogue really, really quickly and get that information exchanged – and the same with Department of Work and Pensions. As soon as that information-sharing protocol was set up – they can just share that information. So those relationships became really...important.

LEVELS OF KNOWLEDGE ACROSS PARTNERSHIPS

The depth and extent of knowledge across key organisations at senior level in Worcestershire appears extensive and sophisticated, reflecting the local prevalence and types of exploitation. The

sheer number of agencies and meeting appeared confusing to the research team and must appear so in the eyes of others not steeped in adult exploitation on an everyday basis. The role of the CSP is an overarching strategic one, where networks might be able to play a bigger role in fighting adult exploitation -

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20078/community_safety/862/community_safety_partnership_arrangements

The voluntary sector did not appear to be an intrinsic partner in adult exploitation across the county. Issues that are reported across Worcestershire, mainly concerning financial exploitation, including online and doorstep scams, seem well understood across the partner organisations and to largely be appropriately managed within a limited resource base. Knowledge and understanding of other forms of adult exploitation are less evident, largely due to perceived low prevalence of such concerns. Whether prevalence (for example, of modern slavery) is indeed low, or whether greater awareness is needed in order to properly identify such concerns is not clear. Appropriate training, specifically on adult exploitation, delivered to all partner agency staff should help uncover the reality of the Worcestershire situation.

It appears that a large number of strategic meetings with partner organisations are held regularly across the county. Such meetings should result in 'operational pathways', but it is not clear that they do. The research findings suggest that communication between agencies is inconsistent, and that levels of knowledge at senior level are not always cascaded down the line. There are mixed beliefs across agencies and staff about whether current processes are working well and consistently, and whether referral pathways and accountabilities are clear.

The rules about data protection/GDPR, seem ambiguous across agencies, with some partners not knowing how far they can go with sharing information. This lack of clarity, and possible worry of

breaching any rules, seems to hinder progress in the taking of joint actions. Clear governance would go some way to providing clarity around this.

The WSAB website should be a core point of quality information both for professionals and the public. The website has some information about adult safeguarding and the Safeguarding Adults Board itself. However, the website is not particularly user-friendly, difficult to navigate, information is lacking and seems randomly organised and seems more for the benefit of professionals rather than general public. Each section could be further developed with links to film clips and websites that address relevant issues. Enhanced graphics would be beneficial.

For example when accessing the '*Who Needs Safeguarding?*' link on the Safeguarding Adults Board portal, the only information is about '*Financial abuse and Doorstep Crime*', referring the reader to a short film ('Following this [link](#) will take you to a short film made by colleagues in Kent to help raise awareness of the impact of what we often call doorstep crime'), which does not work. The film can be found on YouTube under the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYvsuynSJQs>.

It is recommended that this section is further developed, containing easily accessible and clear information about adult exploitation and safeguarding.

Lack of information specific to adults: Searches for 'exploitation' on the Worcestershire Safeguarding website lead mostly to specific links for children – none concerning adults. It is important to include a section on adult exploitation with explanation of categories of exploitation, additional information such as film clips and case studies, and who to contact for advice and/or reporting cases.

We suggest looking at The Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership website, which is a good example of how relevant information should be presented

(<https://www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/>). It is easy to navigate and has all

relevant information clearly categorised and well explained. Links to other useful organisations are given, including a Preventing Exploitation Toolkit.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this report contains suggestions for ways forward in the management of WSAB's responsibilities for overseeing adult exploitation in Worcestershire. We have addressed the evaluation brief in respect of exploring types and prevalence of adult exploitation, governance, and ways to raise awareness and improve partnership working. We are aware that not all forms of adult exploitation known to exist within Worcestershire, such as the exploitation of migrant labour, forced labour, 'mate' crime and radicalisation, formed part of our interview or survey findings.

Strategic and operational decisions about best ways forward need to be made by the respective partners under the direction of WSAB and the Safer Communities Board. The forthcoming Exploitation Development Officer post should be oriented towards the operationalisation of some of the recommendations below and will be pivotal in changing culture and practice, which is essential if referrals are to rise, as will inevitably be the case. We do not underestimate the effects of austerity policies and cutbacks in statutory services but do believe that the local voluntary sector, and the many freely available resources which we highlight from page 44 below, can go a long way toward improving services, without incurring unsupportable cost. We were impressed by the knowledge held at senior level in this extremely complex moral, legal and practice area of multi-disciplinary work and do hope this can be cascaded across frontline staff by initiatives such as systemic interdisciplinary training. There is a long way to go before adult exploitation is embedded in all professionals' lifeblood in the same way that child exploitation has become embedded. The same goes for the public, our 'Citizen's Panel' having illustrated a lack of knowledge about

pathways and the responsibilities of key agencies. Information, particularly on the WSAB website, needs to significantly profile adult exploitation as 'core business'. It is fully understood that respective agencies have their own statutory and logistical parameters, particularly given austerity measures, but WSAB and the CSP have moral responsibilities to all Worcestershire's citizens regarding adult exploitation. It maybe that exploring closer working with voluntary agencies and utilising the freely available national information and training packages listed at the end of this report, can offer credible ways forward as referrals rise and perpetrators use new tactics to exploit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Worcestershire develops its own definition of 'adult abuse 'as contrasted with 'adult exploitation'.
2. That clear governance arrangements, reflecting the complementary roles of WSAB and the CSP are developed, reflecting the ever-changing nature of exploitation and abuse.
3. That clear operational pathways are developed across all relevant agencies, reflecting Worcestershire's future agreed definitions of what constitutes 'abuse' and what constitutes 'exploitation'.
4. That the agreed Exploitation Development Officer post needs further discussion regarding its priorities, which it is suggested should be more operational than strategic e.g., a co-ordinator of a system of interdisciplinary training and best practice guides/ an expert point of reference regarding practice and resources across adult exploitation / a forger of key local and national relationships.
5. It is suggested that voluntary organisations could be called upon for supporting citizens who fall outside of statutory criteria for help e.g. Recruitment of 'Scam Marshalls'
<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/scammarshals> - people with lived experience who

help people recognise and report scams to the National Trading Standards Scams Team. . Voluntary organisations could also be an important part of an awareness -raising strategies / campaign strategies across Worcestershire, and thus encourage preventive approaches.

6. The established process of 'detection – action – management – support – prevention', might usefully include 'follow-up', to counter the 'refer and forget' syndrome. Training and induction initiatives could help change this culture.
7. The practice and systems knowledge of senior staff need to be cascaded down to all staff in the partner organisations from induction onwards, thus encouraging all staff to see adult exploitation as 'core business', and not 'somebody else's business'.
8. The WSAB website needs to reflect adult exploitation as 'core business', in line with the advice of this report regarding content and accessibility.
9. National training packages should be investigated in greater detail, especially the free / accredited courses.
10. Data needs to be collected more extensively across agencies if WSAB is to gain a fuller understanding of type, patterns, and prevalence in the county.
11. The conflictual views about referrals to transition services for young people need to be more fully examined on a factual basis between partner organisations.
12. That the gaps in this report regarding areas of adult exploitation known to exist within Worcestershire (e.g., exploitation of migrant workers/ forced labour/mate crime / radicalisation) be subject to further targeted research, as information about their nature and prevalence did not emerge in the study.

OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY WEBSITES

The following website links were returned when searching using the phrase 'adult exploitation UK' and offer much useful information that could be applied to Worcestershire's existing provision:

Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board: has case studies, guidance and resources:

<https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/?s=exploitation>

Hampshire Multi-agency Practice Guidance below is specifically for adult sexual exploitation:

[https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ASE-operational-guidance-final-draft-](https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ASE-operational-guidance-final-draft-March-2018.pdf)

[March-2018.pdf](https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/ASE-operational-guidance-final-draft-March-2018.pdf) but they have practice guidance and resources for other concerns related to exploitation.

Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board: website has detailed information about criminal exploitation of adults (<https://www.lradultsafeguarding.co.uk/criminal-exploitation-of-adults/>), covering modern slavery, human trafficking and other crimes.

Luton Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB): has a direct link to their adult exploitation portal with information about the different types of exploitation and links to further help and guidance.

<http://lutonsab.org.uk/adult-exploitation/>

North Tyneside Safeguarding Adults Board: information specific to adult sexual exploitation – guidance booklet:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related->

[files/Sexual%20Exploitation%20Guidance%20Adults.pdf](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/Sexual%20Exploitation%20Guidance%20Adults.pdf)

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership: a direct link to Adult sexual exploitation (ASE) guidance <https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/Guidance/Adult-Sexual-Exploitation-guidance.aspx> but other categories are found under the heading 'What is abuse?'

Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership: website has detailed information about many forms of adult exploitation <https://www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/exploitation/>

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Bournemouth University

Scams: the power of persuasive language <https://ncpqsw.com/financial-scamming/>

Buckinghamshire Adult Exploitation Strategy 2017-2020

<http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.gov.uk/media/5003033/Adult-Exploitation-Strategy-2017-20-published-Nov-2017.pdf>

Community Care

'Exploitation does not stop at 18': chief social workers highlight gap in support for young adult victims

<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2020/03/24/exploitation-stop-18-chief-social-workers-highlight-gap-support-young-adult-victims/>

Hidden in plain sight

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery/latest-campaigns/hidden-plain-sight>

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery/latest-campaigns>

Hope for Justice

<https://hopeforjustice.org/aboutus/>

Police Transformation Unit

<https://www.aspartnership.org.uk/modern-slavery-police-transformation-unit>

Preventing Exploitation Toolkit

<https://www.preventingexploitationtoolkit.org.uk/home/what-is-exploitation/>

Sandwell Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Adult Victim Pathways and Guidance

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/28968/sandwell-modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking-adult-victim-pathways-and-guidance>

Sandwell Modern Slavery Annual Report

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/30092/sandwell-modern-slavery-annual-report>

Slavery Footprint is a non-profit organization that works to engage individuals, groups, and businesses to build awareness against modern-day slavery.

<http://slaveryfootprint.org/mobile2.html>

Think Jessica is a registered charity supported by many agencies (e.g., National Trading Standards – Friends Against Scams initiative), organisations and police nationwide, which joined forces to make people aware of the danger, and financial implications, of scams which target people in their own homes.

<https://www.thinkjessica.com/>

Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership information on adult exploitation:

<https://www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/>

UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery October (October 2020). HM Government

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927111/FINAL-2020_Modern_Slavery_Report_14-10-20.pdf

Training Courses

Black Country Women's Aid (BCWA)

<https://blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk/training/>

e-Learning for Healthcare (Open access session on Modern Slavery)

<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/modern-slavery/>

Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership

<https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/safeguarding/learning-zone/free-online-training-courses/>

Friends Against Scams (Free Online Learning Course)

<https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership – Training and Resources (Open access training materials and links to other resources)

<https://www.stopexploitationherts.org.uk/training-and-resources/training-and-resources.aspx>

me learning (Course on Adult Sexual Exploitation (£20 +VAT with volume discounts)

<https://shop.melearning.co.uk/courses/browse-our-courses/safeguarding-adults/adult-sexual-exploitation/>

NWG Exploitation Response Unit Training

Transition years training (email: training@nwgnetwork.org to book)

<https://www.nwgnetwork.org/training/>

<https://www.nwgnetwork.org/training/transitions-16-18-and-beyond/>

SCIE social care institute for excellence

Safeguarding Adults

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/e-learning/safeguarding-adults>

Unseen

Working towards a world without slavery.

<https://unseen.learnworlds.com/>

<https://www.unseenuk.org/modern-slavery-training/training-professionals>

<https://www.unseenuk.org/modern-slavery>

Virtual College – Online Courses

Adult Sexual Exploitation

<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses/safeguarding/adult-sexual-exploitation>

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

<https://www.virtual-college.co.uk/courses/safeguarding/modern-slavery-and-trafficking>

Appendices

Appendix 1: Impact Members' Questionnaire

IMPACT Members' Questionnaire

Dear IMPACT Members,

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board have commissioned the University of Worcester to explore ways in which adult exploitation is currently detected, responded to and managed. The key objectives are to:

- evaluate current responses to dealing with adult exploitation;
- establish a governance structure for adult safeguarding;
- outline an operational pathway for different elements of adult exploitation and safeguarding;
- define details of activities that support prevention of adult exploitation.

Your contribution will be a valuable addition to our research.

To help us in this task, we would be grateful if you would share your perspectives on the issues surrounding adult exploitation and safeguarding, by answering the following questions as fully as you can:

1. What forms of adult exploitation are you aware of in your community / social circle?	
2. Where would you report a suspicion that a local premise was being used for county lines* ¹ drug dealing?	
3. Where would you report a suspected case of modern slavery* ² ?	
4. Where would you report a case of suspected financial exploitation* ³ of a vulnerable adult?	

Key to Terms

*¹ **County Lines:** where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries, usually by children or vulnerable people, coerced into it by gangs.

*² **Modern Slavery:** severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain.

*³ **Financial exploitation:** when a person misuses or takes the assets of a vulnerable adult for his/her own personal benefit.

We hope you can participate (Consent Form attached for your signature) and look forward to receiving your comments.

Appendix 2: Online Survey Questions

Online Survey Questions

1. Please state your role and provide a brief description for your line of work (e.g., Emergency Services, NHS, Social Work):
2. What categories of adult exploitation are you aware of?
3. What types of adult exploitation do you regularly encounter?
Is this Worcestershire only or do issues cross boundaries?
4. On what scale do you encounter each type of adult exploitation?
Is this Worcestershire only?
5. What are the existing pathways for investigating suspected adult exploitation cases?
How do these pathways help to effect prompt action in cases of adult exploitation?
6. What additional resources and communication strategies could make the 'reporting through investigation to action' processes more effective?
7. Who makes initial decisions about whether a reported concern constitutes 'exploitation'?
8. Do you have access to relevant training relating to adult exploitation work? If yes, please specify:
9. Consent and Information Sharing: GDPR and the Data Protection legislation – how do these impact your operations/procedures relating to adult exploitation and safeguarding?
10. How could your role be improved? Resources / training / documentation / partnerships etc.

Appendix 3: Case Studies

Case Study 1

John is in his 20s. He suffers from epilepsy and is susceptible to severe seizures and mood swings. As an adult, he was sectioned for suspected psychosis, but never received any effective after care, despite subsequent assessments deeming him not to have mental capacity.

John suffered both financial (several thousand pounds of saving went missing) and labour exploitation (he worked long hours for one employer but only ever received 'pocket money').

John was arrested for an assault on a family member and given a community service sentence. He could not fulfill this because of his mental health issues. He was subsequently imprisoned and targeted on release by his 'employer'. He could not live at home due to his behaviour so stayed at various B & Bs (often short-term due to John's behaviour issues). During this time, there was no support provided by social work/mental health teams, although they knew of the situation.

John was referred several times to mental health services – but no support was put in place, and his family kept 'hitting a brick wall'. John's family applied for deputyship (property and affairs and personal welfare management), but two years on, this has still not been arranged.

What can be done to help John and his family?

Case Study 2

Joan is 75 years old, a retired professional and a victim of financial exploitation. She is self-sufficient in personal care, house upkeep and drives in the local area. She owns her own house and has some £15k in savings.

Over the last year, Joan has struggled emotionally due to mental health problems and is very lonely. She refuses to 'waste the GP's time' with her worries. She has, however, recently felt overwhelmed, and found it difficult to handle her financial affairs. Joan's brother, Alan, offered to help, but he lives abroad and has found it difficult to keep track of his sister's expenditure, especially since his sister has learnt how to use the internet.

Alan's initial concern about financial exploitation was when his sister rang him excitedly to say she had won a holiday in a prize draw. Details were hazy and it appeared that Joan had to send a hefty deposit, after which the rest of the trip would be free. Alan advised caution, but the deposit of £200 was paid, and the holiday was subsequently cancelled by 'circumstances beyond the company's control'. Never previously one to enter prize draws, Joan began getting floods of mail and e mail,

and won three toasters and a kettle in a short period. When Alan asked whether she was spending much money on these 'competitions' she was evasive saying 'I enjoy the competitions and they are nice people who ring me up. I am very lonely you know, and it breaks the day up'. Alan is becoming very concerned- Joan hardly ever rings him, unless she has had a 'win', and his response from Joan's GP was that his sister's health is a confidential matter. Alan does not know where to turn next.

Joan is not eligible for care and support needs intervention criteria – but she is in need of care and support.

What can be done? And who should do it?

Case Study 3

Mike, 52 years, is a local man with low levels of literacy and social confidence. He lost his warehouse job and then his rented flat. Mike then slept rough. Two men approached him and offered him work and somewhere to live. He was forced to share a cold, dirty house with eleven other men.

Every morning they were picked up by a van, made to deliver packages in return for cash and then collected in the evening. All the collected cash was taken from them. If they were not back in time to be picked up, they would get beaten. Everyone was afraid. Some often got beaten up, being punched in the head or kicked. They worked six days a week unpaid. One man tried to escape but was severely beaten with a hammer. All the men looked ill and thin.

One late evening, the police raided the crowded house....

What should happen next? What other services might be involved? Who takes responsibility for Mike once any arrests have been made?



West Mercia POLICE

Exploitation Development Officer

Number of vacancies
1

Location
Worcestershire

Grade
E

Salary
£26,865 - £31,725

Working pattern
Weekdays

Type of Contract
Fixed Term

Document Attachment
[2020.11.10 Job_Profile_-_adult_exploitation.pdf – 196KB](#)

Job Advert
Exploitation Development Officer

Worcestershire

Fixed Term Contract (2 years)

Full Time (Monday – Friday)

The closing date for this post is 12 noon on Monday 28th May 2021

(previous applicants need not apply)

Secondments may be considered - Please obtain approval from your Line Manager before applying for this as a secondment (please note secondments is for internal candidates only)

Interviews dates TBC

The main purpose of the role is to support Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) to gather a better understanding of current responses to dealing with exploitation.

Develop a clear governance and operational pathway for agencies to respond to concerns around adults being exploited.

To work with partners to raise awareness with professionals and communities.

Aim- To safeguard adults who are being exploited or who are at risk of exploitation in Worcestershire.

Develop and embed a lead professional approach to dealing with complex cases where there are multiple agencies and services involved ensuring that all support is considered and multi-agency action plans are implemented

Main Responsibilities:

Work in partnership to align agency processes in how they identify and report exploitation for adults.

Develop a clear governance and accountability structure incorporating child focussed Get Safe sub group and links from Stay Safe- Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership arrangements to WSAB.

Scan and respond to national policy, review and national best practice and adopt recommendations as to form local policy and procedures

Create and coordinate operational pathways that identify and manage reports of exploitation for adults.

Raise awareness of early intervention support, identify activities that support prevention and victim care.

Work with WSAB board members to produce an outcomes framework for exploitation.

Coordinate training across organisations for exploitation, utilising existing training opportunities.

Develop working relationships with a wide range of partners to identify 'exploitation champions' across agencies and share key messages and approaches to the workforce.

Raise awareness, identify training needs and support for professionals and provide advice and support for communities around exploitation

To undertake other duties commensurate with the nature, level of responsibility and grading of this post, as required.

Experience/Skills:

In depth understanding of exploitation and the risks associated with it.

In depth understanding of partnership working and adult safeguarding.

Understanding of exploitation

Evidence of working with a wide range of partners

Setting priorities

Provide inputs to professionals and uniformed officers

Working towards tight deadlines

Setting key performance indicators

Experience of developing and implementing an outcomes framework

Presentation skills

Report writing

Proficient in ICT

Ability to influence cultural change

Negotiation, tact and diplomacy

Problem solving

Interpersonal and communication skills

Special Conditions: See attached Checklist on Job profile

To read more about the added benefits and rewards of working for West Mercia Police, please go to [our website](#).

We want our organisation to be as diverse as the community it serves. We welcome applicants from all sections of the community.

You will be required as part of West Mercia Police recruitment process to successfully complete vetting and credit checks.

Those currently eligible on the redeployment register will be given prior consideration

We support the “Happy to talk flexible working” campaign, which aims to encourage uptake of flexible working for individuals, the flexible working options that may be considered for this role include;

Annualised Hours, Compressed Hours, Job Share, Part Time Working, Remote Working,