

WORCESTERSHIRE  
ADULT EXPLOITATION  
STRATEGY  
DRAFT MAY 2023

**A strategy to coordinate action and  
minimise impact of abuse**

Consultation Document V1

## Worcestershire Adult Exploitation

### A strategy to coordinate action and minimise the impact of abuse

#### Introduction

In Worcestershire over the last two years there work has been undertaken to understand the nature and extent of the exploitation of adults in Worcestershire.

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Commissioned an evaluation by the University of Worcester to explore the type, prevalence, and management of adult exploitation in Worcestershire.

[link to University of Worcestershire Study](#)

The findings of this report resulted in a series of recommendations to WSAB. As a result of actions taken against those recommendations, it was agreed that an overarching strategy was required.

Two years on it is now time to draw together a multi-agency strategy based on the information to date, so that agencies can set priorities and goals in an agreed accountability framework to ensure that those being exploited or are at risk of exploitation receive a collective robust response to safeguard their well-being.

#### What is Adult Exploitation?

Exploitation is a form of abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child, young person, or adult (including those with care and support needs) into any activity that results in financial or other advantage for the perpetrator(s) or facilitator(s). Activity includes arranging or facilitating the involvement or travel (trafficking) of a child, young person, or adult (including those with care and support needs)

Specific types of exploitation include:

- Modern Slavery (including human trafficking)
- Sexual Exploitation
- Criminal Exploitation
- Financial Exploitation, including:
  - Scams
  - Doorstep Crime
  - Rogue Traders: via Physical, Digital, or Postal contact
- Radicalisation to commit acts of terrorism.
- Any other Exploitation that enables services or benefits of any kind, including:
  - Removal of organs
  - Forced marriage.
  - Illegal adoption

The victim may still be exploited even if the activities that they are engaging in appear consensual.

Multiple types of exploitation can occur alongside or as part of other forms of abuse.

## **The National and local picture**

The study carried out for the University of Worcester identified the national and local context of Adult Exploitation.

Whilst National data provides some information on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, data regarding wider forms of exploitation are limited.

The latest data as of the end of 2022 published in March 2023<sup>1</sup>

- there were 16,938 potential victims of modern slavery referred to the Home Office in 2022, representing a 33% increase compared to the preceding year (12,706) and the highest annual number since the NRM began in 2009.
- the large increase in referrals from government agency first responders has driven this increase which could be linked to the increase in detections at the border and, particularly, the large increase in small boats arrivals
- Albanian nationals overtook UK nationals as the most commonly referred nationality in 2022, with Eritrean nationals being the third most referred.

There is very likely to be huge underreporting regarding those who are exploited due to the very nature of the control that criminal hold over victims.

## **Gaps and challenges Identified.**

Through the work to develop the strategy the following gaps and challenges have been identified:

- Identifying pathways for those adults with no care and support needs
- Identifying pathways for those with mental capacity and able to act on decisions.
- Identifying a pathway through from children's safeguarding to adult safeguarding when a young person is being exploited.
- Professionals skilled in recognising exploitation in adults when other types of abuse are also present.
- Victim blaming and language.
- Movement to and from other processes (bouncing in and out of process)
- Governance and accountability

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/modern-slavery-national-referral-mechanism-and-duty-to-notify-statistics-uk-end-of-year-summary-2022/modern-slavery-national-referral-mechanism-and-duty-to-notify-statistics-uk-end-of-year-summary-2022>

This strategy, through its framework, will lead to a protocol and pathway that has clear accountability and governance included.



## Strategy Vision

**Across Worcestershire there will be a commitment to provide a multi-agency coordinated response to tackling all forms of adult exploitation.**

## Strategy Mission

### Victims

Victims will be recognised and protected by robust and effective multi agency working, remaining at the centre of all work towards safer outcomes. Victims who are children will receive a smooth transition into adult services for ongoing protection. Victims who appear to be perpetrators of crime will be understood and supported. Victims will be supported through their pathway to recovery.

### Offenders

Offenders will not be able to escape the law and will be dealt with accordingly where there is evidence of criminal exploitation. Their abuse will be disrupted, and further offending will be prevented.

### Environment

Conditions of employment and accommodation that foster exploitation settings will be tackled and disrupted

## Strategy Objectives

### Four Ps.

The Worcestershire Strategy will utilise the framework that has been used nationally to tackle organised crime and terrorism and has been adopted for use with Modern Slavery both nationally and across many local authority areas as a framework to tackle Adult Exploitation. This same framework is also in use in Worcestershire as part of the 'Get Safe' programme, the Worcestershire response to child exploitation.

The four elements of the strategy



**PREVENT** people from engaging in adult exploitation.

**PROTECT** strengthening safeguards against adult exploitation by protecting victims, increasing awareness and resilience against the crime.

**PURSUE** Prosecuting and disrupting individuals and groups responsible for adult exploitation.

**PREPARE** reducing the harm caused by modern slavery through improved victim identification and enhanced support and protection.

## Strategy Aims

By using the four Ps as a framework the partners across Worcestershire will manage each objective in the following ways.

In understanding what is needed to be undertaken in each element, careful consideration has been given to, wherever possible, align with the Worcestershire Children's Get Safe Strategy. This will enable easier transitions of young people as well as ensuring that data gathering, and problem profiling is happening in the same way and that tasks required to support the strategy lined up when gathering data.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PREPARE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All agencies will understand the forms of Adult Exploitation across the county and the challenges faced by adults who are vulnerable and that the outputs from this work can be measured, and reviewed.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PREVENT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Increase awareness and understanding of adults at risk, professionals and public of community risks and threats, thereby increasing prevention and resilience.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PROTECT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All agencies are steadfast in their protection of those adults who are at risk of or victims of all types of exploitation.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Partner agencies will work together to ensure that exploited adults are heard, protected and that offenders will be held to account.</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PURSUE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All agencies will work together to prosecute the crimes of exploitation and disrupt individuals and groups responsible for perpetrating exploitation of adults.</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear governance and accountability.</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of the profile of victims and offenders in the County.</li> <li>• Develop and strengthen data gathering.</li> <li>• Use intelligence and information sharing to keep up with how exploitation is changing over time in order that processes remain relevant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer training and other awareness raising options across all agencies that increases the early identification of those at risk.</li> <li>• Support a communication strategy that covers a range of audiences and includes campaign materials and resources.</li> <li>• Provide tools and guidance that support identifications, types of exploitation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All agencies will commit to ensuring that relevant guidance, procedures, and pathways are in place and complied with.</li> <li>• All agencies will identify a key lead for Adult Exploitation where appropriate.</li> <li>• Safety planning will be effective and creative.</li> <li>• Agencies will intervene to protect victims and those at risk at an early stage to limit the impact of abuse and exploitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies will collaborate effectively across enforcement services to utilise all forms of legal enforcement routes to minimise the ability to exploit adults and bring to prosecution where necessary.</li> <li>• Ensure effective intelligence sharing across organisations related to places where exploitation occurs and those who perpetrate exploitation.</li> <li>• Develop and share offender profiles to enable and understanding of the processes that perpetrators take to enable</li> </ul>

## Proposed Approach: The Worcestershire Way

### The Adult Exploitation Strategic Partnership Group

Worcestershire's response to tackling Adult Exploitation will be led by a new subgroup. It is currently proposed that this reports to the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board, who have sponsored the development of this Strategy, however, there also needs to be clarity on how this links into the Police and Safer Community Partnerships. Its primary purpose is to develop and co-ordinate the strategic and tactical action plan to support and protect adults who may be vulnerable to and experiencing harm from exploitation.

This group provides assurance that there is a robust and effective multi-agency response to adults at risk, including young people who transition from children's services to services for adults. It also provides formal governance for the operational group. The group is directly accountable to the WSAB comprising the three statutory Safeguarding Partners (Adult Social Care, NHS Health Services, and the Police). The main aim of the group is to reduce the exploitation of adults in Worcestershire.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance Chapter 14 states that to achieve the aims of adult safeguarding the following must take place.

- ensure that everyone, both individuals and organisations, are clear about their roles and responsibilities
- create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and responses to abuse or neglect

Worcestershire's Adult Exploitation strategy will also adhere to the six key principles underpin all adult safeguarding work:

- **Empowerment**  
People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention**  
It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality**  
The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection**  
Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership**  
Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability**  
Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

### **The core functions of the group are:**

To develop, share and promote good practice across Worcestershire for those working with/encountering adults at risk of exploitation.

To identify patterns of activity that might reflect the organised exploitation of Adults in Worcestershire.

To provide assurance to the WSAB that different forms of exploitation are being actively addressed.

To seek assurance that practitioners have access to appropriate policies and procedures and training to enable them to respond robustly to risks of exploitation.

To work with local partner agencies with the aim of reducing duplication and improving local coordination.

To inform commissioning intentions and provide local challenge in respect of services provided to adults.

To co-ordinate delivery of the Adult Exploitation Action Plan, holding partner agencies to account where necessary, and to keep the WSAB informed of progress.

To provide support and oversight for the Adult Exploitation Operational Group to enable delivery of the key components of the Action Plan.

To take account of any national or regional guidance to ensure that the local response is consistent with current learning.

To utilise data to identify emerging patterns and trends, and to monitor performance and identify any areas for improvement.

The Adult Exploitation Partnership Group also works closely with the other subgroups to ensure that best practice and new learning is shared with practitioners across the partnership.

### **The Adult Exploitation Operational Group**

The Adult Exploitation Operational Group will hold monthly meetings to identify actions by the partnerships to support frontline practitioners working with adults, where they are identified as being Criminally Exploited. The Operational Group will cover all exploitation risks. The group will collate problem profiling which links into both the Adult Exploitation Strategic Group and the Serious and Organised Criminal Joint Action Group (SOCJAG).

The wider functions of the Operational Group are to:

- Develop multi-agency prevention, protection and disruption responses to issues identified.
- Identify current trends of exploitation and abuse across Worcestershire to identify profiles for both victims and perpetrators.
- Identify geographic hotspots and the most prolific models of offending.



- Ensure multi-agency meetings and forums are “fit for purpose” and promoting the safeguarding adults.
- Consider communication strategies and the raising of awareness around Adult Exploitation to the public, parents, children and co-workers within all partner agencies.
- Ensure the collation and analysis of data to ensure resources are effectively and efficiently deployed.
- Provide assurance of the effectiveness of operations to the Strategic Group
- Ensure all agencies understand what the pathways are for referral and registering concern.
- Interact with the CARM Framework Process on cases of Adult Exploitation.

The Operational Group membership reflects the wider partnership of agencies who have a statutory or active role in the identification of, and/or response to Adult Exploitation in Worcestershire. Membership is flexible within the group to enable a dynamic response to the problem profile that is identified through the functions as described above. The Operational Group reports to the Worcestershire Adult Exploitation Strategic Group, which oversees the effectiveness of its work and provides a route for escalation of any issues which the Operational Group has been unable to resolve.

**Action Plan**

**PREPARE**

All agencies will understand the forms of Adult Exploitation across the county and the challenges faced by adults who are vulnerable and that the outputs from

Success will mean.....XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

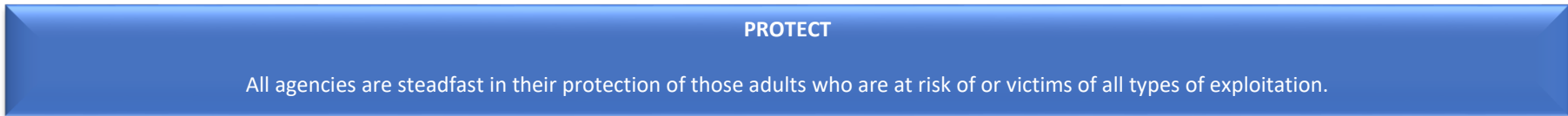
Outcome	Actions	Lead	COMMENTS

**PREVENT**

Increase awareness and understanding of adults at risk, professionals and public of community risks and threats, thereby increasing prevention and resilience.

Success will mean.....XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Outcome	Actions	Lead	COMMENTS



Success will mean.....XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Outcome	Actions	Lead	COMMENTS
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**PURSUE**

All agencies will work together to prosecute the crimes of exploitation and disrupt individuals and groups responsible for perpetrating exploitation of adults.

Success will mean.....XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Outcome	Actions	Lead	COMMENTS
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