



Issue: September 2023

# Newsletter

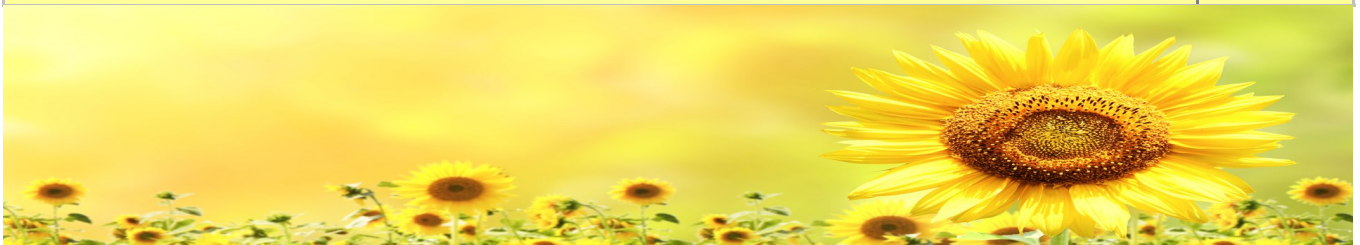
*Working in partnership to enable adults in Somerset to live a life free from fear, harm or abuse*

This is the 20th edition of the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) newsletter, and we hope those who have received copies since its launch continue to find it a useful resource and an interesting read.

To all our new subscribers who have recently signed up to receive copies of our newsletter, a very warm welcome and our thanks for your interest in being part of our local safeguarding community here in Somerset.

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## Latest news from the Board

**This has been an extremely busy and productive period for the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board.**

**We had a full Board meeting in June at which we looked at the proposed Annual Report and Strategic Plan; these are covered in this Newsletter.**

**We continue to promote the Safeguarding Adults Board across the region and are reaching out to Somerset's communities to engage them in our work.**

**The Safeguarding Adults Week is fast approaching; our members are preparing a webinar 'What's my Role in Safeguarding Adults?' please do join us, details are on page 5.**

**We are working across organisations to address themes that have been highlighted in our reviews: self-neglect, transitional safeguarding and exploitation.**



### Message from the Board's Independent Chair, Michael Preston-Shoot

*This certainly has been a busy period. I would like to thank all Board members for their inputs to produce the Annual Report, which demonstrates Somerset's commitment to Safeguarding Adults and the detailed performance reports, which has allowed us to prioritise our aims in our Strategic Plan.*

*We are working hard to address the issues identified in the Strategic Plan, particularly engaging with Somerset's communities to understand how we can work together and co-produce safer lives. We have our Safeguarding Adults Week in November with Somerset presenting a webinar on What's my Role in Safeguarding Adults on the first day (page 5) with events to promote understanding of Safeguarding Adults across Somerset and the region being planned, we will keep you updated.*



## Help us to keep adults in Somerset safe from abuse and neglect

Please spare a few minutes to complete a short survey and share your views, ideas and feedback:

[Somerset Safeguarding Adults Survey](#)



Survey closes on 30 September 2023

Safeguarding Adults is about protecting people living in Somerset who have needs for care and support and who are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect against which they are unable to protect themselves because of their needs.

We are keen to hear from people across Somerset, particularly those who have experience of people with care and support needs and people who are supported. We want to engage with you so we can support you in the best way possible.

### — Podcast: Social Work Sessions, Episode 4 —

Carolyn Smith (Principal Social Worker for Adult Social Care in Somerset Council) talks to our SSAB Chair, Professor Michael Preston-Shoot, about the legal, ethical and moral cases for making safeguarding personal, in the latest episode of the Social Work Session podcast now available on Spotify. There is no need to download Spotify, it will simply play within the browser window.

[Click here to listen now.](#)



### Social Work Sessions

Michael  
Preston-Shoot



# SSAB Annual Report 2022-2023

The SSAB Annual Report 2022/23 has now been published on our website, along with a One Page Summary version that allows you to see key information at a glance. The report sets out what we have done during the last year to help and protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect in Somerset, and is accompanied by our Strategic Plan which sets out our objectives going forwards and how members will contribute.

[SSAB Annual Report 2022-2023](#)

[SSAB Annual Report 2022-2023 Appendix 1](#)

[SSAB Annual Report One Page Summary](#)

[SSAB Strategic Plan 2023-2026](#)



## Foreword

Professor Michael Preston-Shoot, Independent Chair

As the new Independent Chair of the Somerset Safeguarding Adult Board, I am pleased to introduce our Annual Report. The aim is to give an insight to our activity over a 12-month period, and the collective response of our partners to the issue of neglect and abuse of adults with care and support needs in Somerset.

Like many areas across the Country, we have seen first-hand how health and social care systems have had to cope with unprecedented demand, increasing complexity and, at the same time, manage the repercussions of the COVID pandemic, and the workforce recruitment and retention pressures.

The SAB itself maintained its focus on a virtual basis and continued to deliver the objectives of its 3-year strategic plan and improving the effectiveness of the Board (listening and learning, enabling people to keep themselves safe, working together to safeguard people who can't keep themselves safe, and enhancing how together to safeguard people who can't keep themselves safe, and enhancing how the Board works). I am pleased to report that we have recently launched a refreshed 3-year strategic plan for 2023-2026, and would like to thank everyone involved for their contribution in setting our clear priorities for the immediate future.

Safeguarding adults is a legal and ethical responsibility. We need to remind ourselves and raise awareness widely that abuse and neglect are real.

We have a website, which is being enhanced further, and active social media engagement to support adult safeguarding awareness and practice. Your feedback would be very helpful in improving the Board's work.

In the meantime, my sincere thanks to everyone involved in safeguarding adults in Somerset.



# Stop Adult Abuse Week 20-24 November 2023

## Safeguarding Yourself and Others

As part of this week long campaign, there will be series of jointly held online workshops that will be free to access for any practitioner working with adults across Somerset, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Bristol and Bath & North East Somerset.

**Monday 12:00-13:00** - What's My Role in Safeguarding Adults?

**Tuesday 12:00-13:00** - Let's Start Talking – Taking the Lead on Safeguarding in Your Organisation

**Wednesday 12:00-13:00** - Who Cares for The Carers? Secondary and Vicarious Trauma

**Thursday 12:00-13:00** - Adopting a Trauma Informed approach to Safeguarding Adults

**Friday 12:00-13:00** - Listen, Learn, Lead – Hearing the Voice of Adults

**Booking is now open, please follow the link to book onto these workshops:**



## How to use legal powers to safeguard highly vulnerable dependent drinkers in England and Wales

[A guide written by Professor Michael Preston-Shoot and Mike Ward](#)

This guide aims to help practitioners to improve the well-being and safety of adults who are highly vulnerable, chronic, dependent drinkers.

Amongst the broader population of dependent drinkers is a smaller group of drinkers whose alcohol dependency is particularly entrenched and chronic. An even smaller sub-group is particularly vulnerable and faces significant safeguarding risks, to themselves and others.

Without action, these people and those around them can experience serious dangers, including neglect, abuse and untimely deaths. This group of people often requires more robust support, by using legal powers.

This guide provides an accessible introduction to three pieces of legislation that can be applied to chronic, highly vulnerable, dependent drinkers so as to improve outcomes for them, their families and their communities.

The guide also outlines the limits of these legal frameworks and when they should not be used.

In particular, it encourages practitioners to challenge the assumption that these people 'choose' or 'like' an abusive or self-neglecting lifestyle; and outlines alternative ways of thinking about these people and the reasons for the challenges they face.

**By combining the power of positive interventions (assertive relationship building, harm reduction and motivational interventions) with the effective and careful use of legal powers, practitioners can help vulnerable, chronic, dependent drinkers to be safer, healthier, and stand a better chance of achieving positive longer-term outcomes.**

## How Can Care Providers Learn From Safeguarding Adult Reviews?



How would a care provider be expected to know about and learn from the findings of SARs from other parts of the country?

The Institute of Public Care has written a paper to prompt discussion as to whether (and how) there should be a national mechanism to identify and share with care providers the most relevant learnings from SARs.

[Click here to read more.](#)

# More elderly and disabled people to be supported to live in their own homes in Somerset

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Grace Rasch, from Wellington, recently turned 105. She celebrated this milestone birthday with family and friends, in her own home, sitting up in a chair.

Earlier this year she had spent weeks in bed when a decline in her health meant her live-in carers could no longer get her up safely.

“I was in bed for a long time,” said Mrs Rasch.

Somerset Council community occupational therapist Amy Greening assessed Mrs Rasch and procured a hoist and reclining chair, training the carers in safe moving and handling.

“The chair meant Grace could be upright, be at eye-level with her family and not be a ‘person in bed’ which she had been for so long,” said Ms Greening.

Mrs Rasch’s nephew, Martyn Field, lives 180 miles away and visited for her recent birthday party.

“I can’t express what a change it made,” he said.

Mrs Rasch’s case is textbook “reablement”, Director of Adult Services, Mel Lock said.

“It is about us working with our NHS primary care teams and GPs to understand why people start to wobble a little bit in their communities, or are staying in bed a bit longer, how together we can work out what we need to do, ask the individual, and make sure their needs are met,” she added.

Ms Lock said the council had been heading in this direction for a while but it is now trying to “accelerate that change” to help people stay as independent as possible in their own homes.

“That’s what people tell us they want,” said Ms Lock, “So what we’re trying to do is make sure we have the right people and the right skills to help people stay there.”



# TAKE FIVE TO STOP FRAUD

Always remember to Take Five when faced with requests for personal or financial information.



Fraud remains the most common crime committed in the UK. The impact of fraud and related offences such as market abuse and counterfeiting can be devastating, ranging from unaffordable personal losses suffered by vulnerable individuals to impacting the ability of organisations to stay in business.

[Take Five](#) is a national campaign offering straight-forward, impartial advice that helps prevent email, phone-based and online fraud—particularly where criminals impersonate trusted organisations.

Many people may already know the dos and don'ts of financial fraud and scams - that no-one should ever contact them out of the blue to ask for their full PIN or full password, or ever make them feel pressured into moving money to another account. The trouble is, in the heat of the moment, it's easy to forget this.

After all, trusting people on their word is something everyone tends to do instinctively. If someone says they're from your bank or a trusted organisation, why wouldn't you believe them? Take Five urges you to stop and consider whether the situation is genuine - to stop and think if what you're being told really makes sense.

Led by UK Finance, the campaign is delivered with and through a range of partners in the UK payments industry, financial services firms, law enforcement agencies, telecommunication providers, commercial, public and third sector organisations.

## Take Five useful resources:

- [General Advice | Take Five \(takefive-stopfraud.org.uk\)](https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk)
- [Business Advice | Take Five \(takefive-stopfraud.org.uk\)](https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk)
- [@TakeFive](https://twitter.com/TakeFive)

## Other useful links:

- [What is fraud and cyber crime? | Action Fraud](#)
- [Fraud, tricks and scams: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Fraud - Victim Support](#)

## STOP

If you receive a request to make an urgent payment, change supplier bank details or provide financial information, take a moment to stop and think.

## CHALLENGE

Could it be fake? Verify all payments and supplier details directly with the company on a known phone number or in person first.

## PROTECT

Contact your business's bank immediately if you think you've been scammed and report it to Action Fraud.



# PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PHISHING SCAMS

## STOP.THINK.TELL.

In today's digital age, identifying phishing emails and messages has become a complex challenge. These scams have evolved to a point where they can even deceive experts. However, equipping ourselves with knowledge can help us stay one step ahead. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

### Spotting Phishing Signs

1. **AUTHORITY:** Be cautious if a message claims to be from an official entity like your bank, doctor, solicitor, or a government department. Criminals often impersonate these figures to manipulate you into compliance.
2. **URGENCY:** Watch out for messages pressuring you with tight deadlines (e.g., 'within 24 hours' or 'immediately'). Scammers often employ threats of fines or negative consequences to spur immediate action.
3. **EMOTION:** Be mindful of messages that evoke panic, fear, hope, or curiosity. Threatening language, false promises, or curiosity-driven content are tactics scammers use to entice victims.
4. **SCARCITY:** If a message offers something in short supply, such as concert tickets, money, or a miraculous medical solution, exercise caution. Fear of missing out can lead to hasty responses.
5. **CURRENT EVENTS:** Stay alert if a message capitalises on ongoing news, significant events, or specific times of the year (e.g., tax season). Scammers use these to lend credibility to their scams.

### Take Action: Protect Yourself

If you find yourself doubting the authenticity of a message, take these steps:

- Avoid clicking links or using contact details provided in the message.
- Use trusted contact information: visit the official website, dial their publicly advertised number, or log in directly to your account.
- Familiarise yourself with an organisation's list of actions they'd never request from you and cross-check if the request matches.

### Report Suspicious Messages

Help protect others from becoming a victim:

If you're suspicious of an email, forward it to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

**Avon and Somerset Police**  
**SERVE.PROTECT.RESPECT.**

[www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk) | Follow us on   



# ACORN Recovery Programme for Male Survivors of Domestic Abuse

[ManKind Initiative](#)'s team of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers have created a [Recovery Programme for Male Survivors of Domestic Abuse called ACORN](#). It is designed to help them:

- Break their cycle of isolation and loneliness they experience
- To recognise the impact that domestic abuse has on their children
- Help them move forward with their lives, and
- Form healthy, respectful and loving relationships in the future

This is an online programme delivered by Zoom, over nine weeks and up to 10 delegates can be accommodated.

This programme has been academically peer reviewed by the UK's leading experts as well as male survivors. It has been developed by the ManKind Initiative as part of its specialist [Domestic Abuse Support Service \(MIDASS\)](#).

## Who is it for?

Male survivors of domestic abuse who have left their abusive relationship and want help to move forward with their lives and form healthy, respectful and loving relationships in the future.

## Referral Routes / Access

Access to this programme is available in Avon & Somerset and Dorset through a referral by a statutory agency (local council, NHS, Police, Armed Forces) or a domestic abuse organisation. Self-referrals can also be made if you reside in the Avon & Somerset or Dorset PCC areas where this course is funded and is available at no cost for those assessed as suitable to attend.

The course includes a pre-course suitability assessment and a one to one follow up session for each delegate.

## For more information, please contact:

training@mankind.org.uk  
01823 334229

If you are experiencing domestic abuse you can contact us on our national helpline 01823 334244 or in an emergency call 999





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carers  
part of CCS

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Contact Us  
[Click here](#)

## Free support & information for Carers

If you regularly look after someone in a caring capacity, the Somerset Carers Service can support you with advice and guidance. Caring for another person is very rewarding, but can be overwhelming and lonely at times. The Somerset Carers Service can help you to find groups and events in your area, to get facts and information that will help the person you are caring for with their particular needs.

You can receive support from Somerset Carers for free if you are over 18 and you look after someone in an 'unpaid' caring capacity (not employed or self employed as a Carer).

The person you look after could be a loved one, friend, partner, parent or child (it doesn't matter if they are under or over 18) on a regular or irregular basis.

Somerset Carers will do their utmost to ensure you receive the right support you need in your day-to-day life, by working with healthcare providers, and other local services to create a tailored, integrated package of care that works for you.

- [Free support & information for Carers just like you. - Somerset Carers](#)
- [Carers Groups - In Person & Online! - Somerset Carers](#)
- [Carers Downloadable Resources - Somerset Carers](#)

## Healthwatch Somerset Annual Report 2022/23

In its latest Annual Report, Healthwatch Somerset highlights how it has listened to Somerset residents and shared their feedback to help NHS and social care decision makers prioritise the issues that matter most to local people.

[Read the full Annual Report here](#)

healthwatch  
Somerset

# ANTI-SLAVERY DAY

October 18th 2023



Modern slavery exists in many forms in the UK, including trafficking into criminal activities like cannabis farming, sexual exploitation, domestic slavery or forced labour on farms, in construction, shops, bars, nail bars, car washes or manufacturing.

While it's impossible to know the full extent of modern slavery in the UK, the Home Office [release data](#) to demonstrate the numbers of people referred to authorities. At the end of 2022 there were:

- 16,938 potential victims of modern slavery - the highest number of referrals since the records began in 2009 and a 33% increase compared to the preceding year.
- 52% claimed exploitation as adults, while 41% claimed exploitation as children.
- 25% of people referred were British nationals.

Overall, forced labour was the most common form of slavery in the UK, followed by criminal exploitation. However, child potential victims were most often referred for criminal exploitation (43%).

Many people are trafficked into slavery in the UK from overseas, but vulnerable British people are also targeted, especially children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

For many people who find themselves forced to work in illegal enterprises like drugs manufacturing, there's the ever-present fear of being criminalised by the UK authorities for the activities that they have been trafficked into. This is a serious injustice, and prevents many victims from feeling able to trust the police, social workers and other authority figures.

## Raising Awareness

Anti-slavery Day takes place every year on 18th October. It provides an opportunity to raise awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, and encourage others to do what they can to address the problem.

Anti-Slavery Day was created by the [Anti-Slavery Day Act](#) and each year an increasing number of charities, individuals, local authorities and police forces take action to mark the Day.

## Useful Links

- [Anti-Slavery International | Fighting for Freedom from Slavery \(antislavery.org\)](https://antislavery.org)
- [Modern slavery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Modern Slavery – Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board \(safeguardingsomerset.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)
- [Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales \(under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015\) and Non-Statutory Guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)



# SPOT THE SIGNS OF SLAVERY

You probably see people who are in slavery on a regular basis. They don't have shackles, they might appear ordinary, but look closer and you might spot more worrying traits.

## What are the signs of slavery?

### Someone in slavery might:

- appear to be under the control of someone else and reluctant to interact with others
- not have personal identification on them
- have few personal belongings, wear the same clothes every day or wear unsuitable clothes for work
- not be able to move around freely
- be reluctant to talk to strangers or the authorities
- appear frightened, withdrawn, or show signs of physical or psychological abuse
- dropped off and collected for work always in the same way, especially at unusual times, i.e. very early or late at night.

## What to do if you spot the signs?

If you suspect that someone is in slavery, **DO NOT** confront them or cause a scene as this will likely lead to increased harm for them. Instead, inform relevant authorities or organisations working in the field.

### If you are in the UK and suspect someone might be in slavery, you have several options:

- Call the [Modern Slavery Helpline](#) on **08000 121 700** or fill out an online form
- Contact the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority to report concerns about the mistreatment of workers on **0800 432 0804**, or by email [intelligence@gla.gov.uk](mailto:intelligence@gla.gov.uk)
- Contact Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**
- Contact the Police
- Contact [Anti-Slavery International](#) or other [specialist anti-slavery organisations](#).

If you are outside of the UK, search online for the relevant helpline in your country. If you are abroad and think you are being exploited or have been trafficked, the best option is always to contact your embassy or consulate for support.

## Training and Development

It is the responsibility of all organisations to ensure they have a skilled and competent workforce who are able to take on the roles and responsibilities required to protect adults at risk and ensure an appropriate response when adult abuse or neglect does occur. The SSAB does not provide any single or multi-agency training but has published a [Somerset Adult Safeguarding Learning Framework](#).

### Somerset Survivors: e-Learning (free)

- [Professional e-Learning modules on domestic abuse](#)
- [Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery e-Learning modules for the public](#)

Social Care Institute for Excellence: e-learning (please note that SCIE are now charging for this content)

- [e-learning: Adult Safeguarding Resource](#)
- [e-learning: Mental Capacity Act](#)

### Other resources

- [FutureLearn Safeguarding Adults Level 3 Training](#)
- [Friends Against Scams Practitioner E-Learning](#)
- [Health Education England e-Learning Mental Capacity Act e-Learning](#)
- [Home Office Prevent e-learning](#)

## Useful Safeguarding Adults links

- [Secure professionals e-referral form](#)
- [Joint Safeguarding Adults Policy](#)
- [Somerset Adult Safeguarding Guidance](#)
- [Practice guidance and resources](#)
- [Get the SSAB Website on your phone or tablet](#)

## Your Adult Safeguarding Experience Feedback

Somerset Council's Adult Safeguarding service would like hear feedback not just from people who have been supported by adult safeguarding services, and their carers, but also from those who advocate or support them on a professional basis. The forms below have been developed in partnership with Healthwatch Somerset.

- [Adult Safeguarding Service Questionnaire for adults who have been supported by safeguarding services](#)
- [Adult Safeguarding Service Questionnaire for carers, relatives or friends](#)
- [Adult Safeguarding Service Questionnaire for Advocates, IMCAs and Providers](#)

### Get in touch

If you have any suggestions for future topics or comments about this newsletter, please contact us via:

[ssab@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:ssab@somerset.gov.uk)

**If you are worried about a vulnerable adult, don't stay silent**

Phone: 0300 123 2224

Email: [adults@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:adults@somerset.gov.uk)

Or complete a secure

[Professionals e-referral form](#)

In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999.