

PUBLIC PROTECTION



SCOTTISH BORDERS

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



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FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the Annual report for the Scottish Borders Public Protection Committee (PPC) for the Scottish Borders for 2022/2023.

The PPC has a shared vision that all children and adults at risk in Scottish Borders are supported and protected from harm and are enabled to live their lives as safely and independently as possible. Our commitment is that everyone in the Scottish Borders has the right to live free from abuse, harm and neglect. In partnership we will focus our efforts on continuous improvement, strategic planning, public information and communication. The Committee draws together the work of key areas of public protection which cut across the work of many statutory, voluntary and independent sector agencies across the Borders. The Committee works to protect the public from harm and abuse, and ensures that people receive the help they need to recover, where harm has occurred.

The PPC was established at the start of 2020 and brought together the work of the former statutory Committees of Child Protection and Adult Protection. These now operate as Delivery Groups reporting into the Public Protection Committee along with a Training and Development Delivery Group, Communications Delivery Group, Violence Against Women Partnership and the Justice Delivery Group. A recent addition has been the Learning Review Delivery Group which has been formed to support the implementation of national guidance for Child and Adult Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews. A diagrammatic representation of the PPC structure can be found on page 7.

The PPC is an inter-agency group of senior staff, led by an Independent Chair, which has been my role since September 2022. It provides leadership to promote the safety of children and young people and adults at risk of harm and ensures that services provided are effectively supported and managed. It reports to the Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG) which is led by the Chief Executives of NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council and the Divisional Commander for Police Scotland.

The report looks back at our achievements over the last year and provides a summary of our planned improvements over the coming year and evidences the commitment of partners in the Scottish Borders to keeping children, young people and adults at risk of harm as safe as possible.



Alan Small

Alan Small, Independent Chair, Scottish Borders Public Protection Committee



ASSOCIATED REPORTS

The complex multi-agency nature of PPC means that much relevant activity is reported in other local reports, or statutory reporting directly to Scottish Government. Some areas of PPC activity are measured and reported against national standards, in line with national plans and strategies. This includes, for example the Child Protection National Minimum Dataset, the Equally Safe Quality Standards and the Adult Protection Annual Return. To avoid duplication of information, much of this has not been replicated here. The following table provides links to publicly available reports which contain relevant information that may be of interest.

Report name	Brief description of relevance	Hyperlink
MAPPA Edinburgh, the Lothian and Scottish Borders Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Annual Report	Responsible Authorities fulfil their statutory duties by jointly preparing and publishing MAPPA annual reports. The report provides a statistical overview of MAPPA activity, in addition to activity and partner contribution toward the Management of Risk.	<u>MAPPA Annual Report 2022/23 Scottish Borders Council (scotborders.gov.uk)</u>
Chief Social Work Officer Report April 2022 – March 2023	This report is an opportunity to reflect on the past year, highlight the progress made against social work and social care service priorities, to celebrate what has gone well, and to acknowledge the significant impact that the pandemic has continued to have on people, their families, staff, volunteers, and communities.	<u>Item No. 13 - Appendix A - CSWO Annual Report 2022 - 2023.pdf (moderngov.co.uk)</u>
Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Framework 2023-2026	Ensures that all major organisations in the Scottish Borders involved in promoting health, social care and wellbeing are working in a common direction, with a common vision focused on improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of our communities so that we ensure that all people in the Scottish Borders are able to live their lives to the full.	<u>ijb_strategic_framework_2023_2026.pdf (scot.nhs.uk)</u>
Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection, Scottish Borders Partnership October 2022	Joint Inspections provide timely national assurance about individual local partnership areas' effective operations of Adult Support and Protection key processes, and leadership for Adult Support and Protection. This report describes findings from the Joint Inspection June-October 2022.	<u>Joint inspection of adult support protection in the Scottish Borders partnership (careinspectorate.com)</u>
Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in Scottish Borders community planning partnership May 2023	These Joint Inspections consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections look at the differences community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm and their families. This report describes findings from the Joint Inspection November 2022-April 2023.	<u>Scottish Borders joint inspection children at risk of harm.pdf (careinspectorate.com)</u>



PPC GOVERNANCE

We have conducted a detailed review of our governance and reporting structures over the past year. By its nature, agenda setting for a Public Protection Committee is challenging. Finding space to cover all areas of public protection and allow time for meaningful discussion means that the meetings need to be carefully planned and structured. To streamline the process, we have concentrated on:

- Engaging with Delivery Group chairs well in advance of PPC meetings and agreeing priorities for discussion and what can be dealt with as 'For Noting'.
- Introducing a simple highlight reporting template removing the need for lengthy minutes to be read through and ensuring that when there is an ask of the PPC they have the required space to discuss it in full.
- Introducing an 'of interest'/discussion section on each agenda allowing complex and challenging issues to be discussed.
- Creating a confidential section of the agenda to allow more sensitive matters to be freely discussed.

In addition, the PPC has reviewed its Business Plan and agreed priority outcomes for delivery over the coming three years. The outcomes will be achieved through the Delivery Groups delivering to specific work plans agreed by the PPC and creating the necessary link between operational and practice change and delivering a safer environment for those we are tasked with protecting. The PPC Business Plan will be the vehicle we use to monitor our improvement journey. A direct link will be in place between the work of the Delivery Groups and the PPC desired outcomes with a scrutiny and assurance responsibility provided by the PPC and then CSOG.

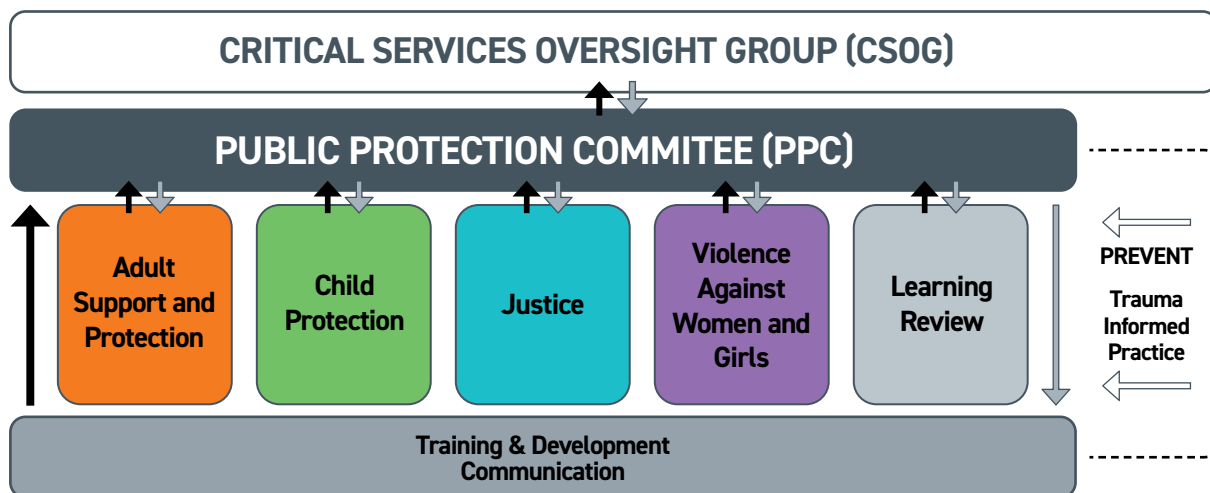


Diagram 1: PPC Governance Structure

Our Business Plan is focused on the delivery of a range of set objectives through the work of the Delivery Groups who support the PPC, each contributing to our agreed goals.



PPC BUSINESS PLAN 2023-26

Introduction

Scottish Borders Public Protection Committee (PPC) have a shared vision that all children and adults at risk in Scottish Borders are supported and protected from harm, and are enabled to live their lives as safely and independently as possible. Our commitment is that everyone in the Scottish Borders has the right to live free from abuse, harm and neglect. In partnership we will focus our efforts on continuous improvement; strategic planning; public information and communication. The work of PPC will wherever possible take cognisance of local practice and meet local needs. The following describes in more detail how we will align our core business functions to deliver improving outcomes for adults, children and young people at risk of harm.

The Business Plan is SMARTER: **S**pecific; **M**eaningful; **A**chievable; **R**elevant; **T**imebound; and we will **E**valuate and **R**e-adjust as necessary.

Our Key Principles

Our six key principles link with our statutory and non- statutory duties and our focus on continuous improvement. All partners will strive to ensure that these principles are embedded into their organisations practice and procedure.

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

What we want to achieve

To achieve our vision, this plan sets out three priority areas for development, each with a specific aim. Each priority will be taken forward by the PPC through the PPC Delivery Groups who are tasked with developing and delivering distinct work plans to achieve the aims set out for each priority. Our delivery groups (see diagram 1 page 5) lead the delivery of set priorities into each of the three PPC Business Plan outcomes as appropriate.



Our Priorities

Priority Outcome 1 – Listening to and acting on the views of those with lived experience.

We will proactively and meaningfully engage with those we seek to protect to ensure they are appropriately involved in decisions about their lives and influence service planning, delivery and improvement, so that our service delivery impacts positively on their safety and wellbeing.

Priority Outcome 2 - Further develop the culture of learning from Public Protection practice both within and beyond the Scottish Borders.

We will continue to understand the experiences of children, families and adults at risk of harm and the staff who support them within the Scottish Borders and elsewhere promoting the embodying of a positive learning culture enabling our continuous improvement journey.

Priority Outcome 3 – Responding to the pressures placed on children, young people and adults at risk of harm improving safety and wellbeing.

We will improve our systems and practice to respond to the growing pressure on those we aim to protect through poverty and the ongoing impact of the pandemic. Maximising our response to child abuse and neglect, adult self-neglect and hoarding, transition planning and adults and children affected by mental health issues.



PPC REPORTING PERIOD

An important area of ongoing work for PPC is to improve and align our data collection and reporting across all areas of activity. As noted on page 5, there are several different national reporting requirements, many of which align to the fiscal year. Differing reporting timescales are a barrier to effective and meaningful data analysis, and PPC is therefore considering changing our child protection data reporting year from the academic year to the fiscal year, in line with all other areas of public protection reporting. As a consequence, the reporting period for future PPC Annual Reports would be based on the fiscal year. This change would leave an extended timescale before the end of the next full PPC Annual Report period, March 2025. PPC will make the decision whether to make this change by the end of 2023, including how to report on the period August 2023 to March 2024. It is noted that the Scottish Borders Adult Support and Protection Biennial Report will be submitted to Scottish Government in October 2024 to reflect activity in this area over the two years to March 2024.





JOINT INSPECTIONS

Over the course of the past two years, Scottish Borders has received Joint Inspections of both Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection.

Joint Inspections require considerable time and attention from staff. PPC would like to thank the front line staff across all agencies who assisted in gathering and collating relevant information, with case file audits, and providing their views to Inspectors; and the Business Support staff whose expertise enabled the process to go smoothly.

PPC particularly appreciates the efforts of service users: the large number of adults, children and parent carers who took time to comment on their experiences of Adult Support and Protection or Child Protection services through completing surveys or meeting with Inspectors.

Adult Support and Protection

The Adult Support and Protection Inspection took place in July 2022, with the Report published October 2022. Strengths highlighted in the report include:

- Improved outcomes for adults at risk of harm through the provision of effective adult support and protection practice by knowledgeable, competent, and confident staff
- High quality and effective risk assessment and management of risks
- Collaborative, cohesive and decisive strategic leadership for adult support and protection
- Impressive and effective multi-agency working.

The Adult Support and Protection Delivery Group is now progressing an Improvement Plan based on areas identified both through the Inspection and through the robust self-evaluation process undertaken through 2021-22. The main areas of improvement activity are: better recording of the three-point criteria at the initial inquiry stage; improved involvement of adults at risk of harm at their ASP Case Conferences; and improved involvement of adults at risk of harm and their unpaid carers at the strategic level.

Children at Risk of Harm

The Children at Risk of Harm Inspection took place during December 2022- April 2023, with the Inspection Report published in May 2023. Inspectors highlighted similar strengths and areas for improvement as those identified through the Adult Support and Protection Inspection.

Strengths identified included:

- Well-established and effective multi-agency working which led to timely and appropriate responses where risk was identified
- Children and families benefitted from supportive and trusting relationships with staff across all services, and were supported to meaningfully contribute to decisions about their lives

The key areas for improvement, which will inform the work of the Child Protection Delivery Group through 2023-24 include: children and families' involvement in service planning and improvement; consistency in quality of chronologies and children's plans, and establishing a shared and systematic approach to quality assurance and self-evaluation.

Specific aspects relating to both Inspections are referenced throughout the remainder of this Report.



KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

185 referrals were made where an adult was believed to be at risk of harm. Of these, **139** progressed to an **Adult Support and Protection Investigation.**

100% of Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection Referrals were accompanied by a **Chronology of Significant Events.**

28 children accessed the **CEDAR** (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) groups.



100% of our **Child Protection Initial Case Conferences** occurred within target timescales, and 82% of these had **parent carers** attending.

There were **691 attendances** at **38 multi-agency** child and adult support and protection **training courses**, and **2407** attendances at single agency training for Education, Early Years and Community Learning and Development.

392 referrals to **Domestic Abuse Advice Service**, with **96.4%** of first referrals contacted within agreed timescales.



87% of children at risk of harm said that they have an **adult they can trust** to talk about things that are important to them, or when they are not happy about something.


67% of the **133** situations of high risk of harm from Domestic Abuse discussed at a **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference** included children.

90% of delegates completing an evaluation rated our child protection and adult support and protection training **4 or 5 out of 5.**



Further information on our Performance Indicators can be found at Appendix 4.





PRIORITY OUTCOME 1: LISTENING TO, AND ACTING ON, THE VIEWS OF THOSE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

As part of our pre-existing improvement plan for Adult Social Work, Scottish Borders Council had identified the need for a Service User (SU) engagement role. This had also been identified as a need across ASP and included in the ASP improvement plan. This was fully endorsed in principle by the Public Protection multi agency partners. As no shared resource was available across the partnership at the time, a decision was made to progress with the Adult Social Work SU engagement role which would also encompass focused work in the area of ASP, engaging with individuals and SU representation groups. Recruitment to this post will commence at the start of reporting year 2023-24, informed by targeted work undertaken by a staff member one day per week using a test of change approach, and which has proved very successful to date. It is anticipated there will be ongoing benefits to staff, SU's and families once this post is fully operational.

As part of the Children at Risk of Harm inspection, the Care Inspectorate gathered the views and experiences of almost 200 children and young people and over 100 parents and carers. The final Inspection Report notes that this high level of engagement reflects the partnership's work to develop and maintain strong relationships with children and their families. The views and experiences that children, parents and carers shared provide a rich source of information to guide future improvements to our service provision.

During last year's reporting period a consultation across Police, Social Work, NHS and 3rd sector led to the creation of our first multi-agency Adult Support and Protection Procedures. This was followed by a review of our recording workflows in 2022-23 and a revision of our performance indicators and data collection ensuring that the service user and carers are central to the process. This was implemented in the summer of 2022 and has strengthened the positive outcomes for individuals and has also provided opportunity for greater analysis and insight into service delivery and improvement. Adult service users tell us how both practical and emotional support provided through Adult Support and Protection helps them to be safer.

"...person who was harassing me has now stopped. I am now not scared of the person and I can walk past them in the street and they keep their head down. They have now (allegedly) started harassing a friend of mine and I am now trying to help [my friend] by offering practical advice. I am now not scared to answer my door as the doorbell gives me extra security along with my new door and window."
Service user

We have worked hard to improve feedback from service users, unpaid carers and families at different stages of ASP intervention and have much better mechanisms in place for collating this information. We continue to work towards better engagement at a strategic level for people with lived and/or living experience of ASP interventions.

Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre survivor participation group – Kaleidoscope – calls on the expertise of survivors who have accessed our services to improve and develop our service for survivors accessing in the future. Group members have been instrumental in supporting areas of development within SBRCC and participating in local and national activities and consultations, further contributing to ensuring trauma-informed responses locally and nationally. Group members told us:

*“Being part of the group is empowering, energising.
I love being involved, feel like I am giving something back, doing something for you as you have done something for me.”*

The Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) approach to joint forensic interviews of children, continues to be embedded in Scottish Borders Practice. Scottish Borders has a bespoke interview suite at Eildon View, Galashiels; adjacent to the co-located Public Protection Unit. A dataset has been developed to capture outcomes in respect of the project, and we undertake an evaluation process with line management and external partners to ensure evidential quality. 56 Joint Investigative Interviews (JIIs) using the SCIM model took place over the course of the reporting year.

Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) affords the opportunity to provide a collaborative approach and helps children and young people to have a better understanding of the process throughout interview and thereafter. Forensic Interviewing of children requires a lot of knowledge and specialist skill. The child’s wellbeing and the integrity of the entire judicial process may well depend on the quality of the interview. Interview plans are bespoke and informed by the individual needs of each child. SCIM protocol provides questioning techniques which, if utilised appropriately, are aimed to elicit more informative, richer responses.

“SCIM JII is often a child’s first point of contact with the legal/social service systems. The effect of a positive SCIM JII experience, where children feel they have been treated as respected, competent sources of important information, may have profound consequences, affecting their attitudes toward the system and themselves. Research suggests that supportive interviewers will provide higher quality evidence to decision makers than neutral or non-supportive interviewers.”
<from DC Siobhan Norrie, Police Scotland>

We have made changes in response to feedback from service users and front line staff.

You said...	We did...
<p>Small, independent social care providers asked for more flexible access to appropriate child protection and adult support and protection training.</p>	<p>Two trainers from Borders Care Learning Network have been supported to deliver the multi-agency course for the General Workforce, PP2: Introduction to Public Protection. This course is now a part of their regular training calendar, providing additional opportunity for these practitioners to receive relevant training.</p>
<p>A small group of social workers in adult services advocated passionately for the need for strategic planning to meet the needs of young adults. This focus was echoed by a third sector parent carer organisation.</p>	<p>Set up a young adults workstream to look at service provision for this age group – wider transition, and the interface between child protection and adult support and protection</p>
<p>Midwifery staff asked for support and guidance about identifying thresholds of risk.</p>	<p>Updated the Keeping Children Safe and Well Tool to include a Pre-Birth section.</p>
<p>Adult service users highlighted the impact that their housing situation has on their feeling safe and protected in their own home.</p>	<p>Ensured that service users have independent advocacy to help them address this with housing providers.</p>



PRIORITY OUTCOME 2: DEVELOPING THE CULTURE OF LEARNING FROM PUBLIC PROTECTION PRACTICE, BOTH WITHIN AND BEYOND THE SCOTTISH BORDERS

Much of the focus of PPC throughout the year has been on the establishment of a new Delivery Group specific to learning and learning reviews in response to the new National Guidance for Learning Reviews for Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection.

A Learning Review is a process that enables multi-agencies to reflect, discuss and look at service users' experiences as a way to learn and improve the services that are delivered. Learning Reviews form part of Scottish Borders quality assurance framework, and provide staff with an opportunity to consider practice and promote service developments. Systems have been put in place to ensure that any learning is shared with individual staff and managers involved prior to any wider learning being shared. No Learning Reviews were undertaken during this reporting period. (See also Policy and Procedures, pg 23)

Throughout 2022-23, work has continued to embed our Learning and Development Strategy and Framework, to ensure that all practitioners have the knowledge and understanding they require to effectively carry out their role. There were 691 attendances at our Core multi-agency Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection courses, which equip staff with the knowledge and understanding to Recognise, Respond, Record and Report concerns about children or adults at risk of harm, and (where appropriate) to contribute effectively to the Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection process.

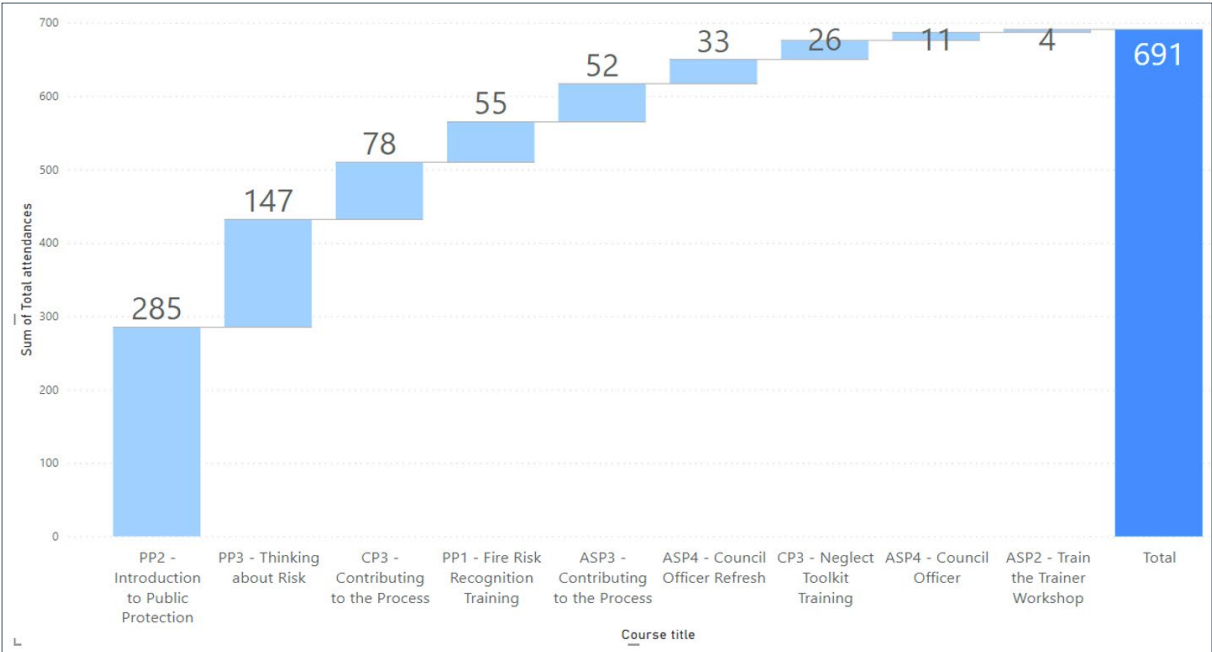


Diagram 2: Attendances at Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection multi-agency training courses

Overall, course evaluations indicate that staff rate multi-agency training courses highly, with the majority indicating some increase in their knowledge and understanding. A significant proportion of responses identify refreshed knowledge and understanding – this appears to be due to experienced staff repeating training courses either because they have transferred to Scottish Borders from another area, or their agency requires regular refresher training.

Course title	Overall, how would you rate this training? (1-5, where 5 is best)
CP2: Child Protection Induction	4.7
PP2: Introduction to Public Protection	4.4
PP3: Thinking About Risk	4.3
CP3: Contributing to the Process	4.2
ASP3: Contributing to the Process	4.7
CP3: Neglect Toolkit	4.5
ASP4: Council Officer Training	4.9
ASP4: Council Officer Refresh	4.8
Overall rating	4.4

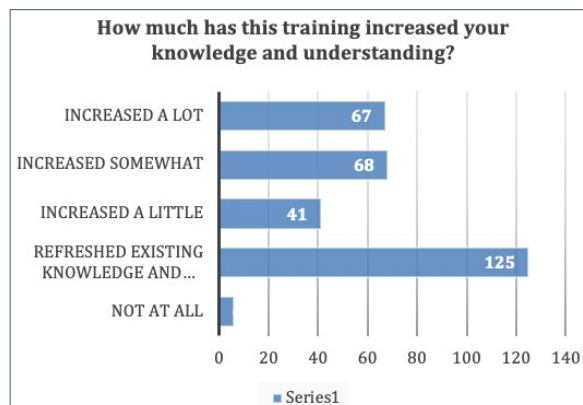


Diagram 3: Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection multi-agency training evaluation rating charts

In evaluation comments, staff particularly highlight the value of our joint Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection training at Tier 2 and 3, and the multi-agency environment. Many staff were able to point to specific ways in which they intended to apply the learning to their practice on a day to day basis.

“we don't get a lot of training about adults but they are the parents of the child we work with so this was really useful” PP2 participant

“Everyone's perception of risk is different. It is good to have a mix of professionals attending which helps to generate discussion” ASP3 participant

“I feel I'll be able to contribute more effectively to discussions around issues of neglect where this has already been identified and I will be confident about suggesting the use of the kit moving forwards” CP3: Neglect Toolkit participant

It is notable that Council Officer courses, which are delivered face to face to small groups, are consistently rated slightly higher than courses delivered online. The Training and Development Delivery Group continues to monitor capacity and staff feedback to determine how training courses are delivered to best meet the needs of our diverse workforces.

In addition to Council Officer training under the Adult Support & Protection Act, we have set up a full accreditation and reaccreditation process supported by a clear policy, and which requires Council Officers and Managers to take responsibility for completing and approving a robust learning and development plan which is evidence based.

“Good to go over the ASP Act and updated procedures and processes. I appreciated the space to think about how they underpin the day to day ASP work for all of us. I personally valued the refresher on the distinction between the ASP Act, AWI and MHCT Act. I welcome the annual refresher, it is good to keep it fresh in my mind”. Council Officer

As part of our aspirations for continuous learning we developed and recruited a specific Adult Protection Officer role focusing on supporting staff with their learning and also quality assuring the skill set of staff working in ASP. This officer set up monthly small group based reflective practice sessions, offering Council Officers protected time for peer discussion on topics such as complex case work, legal and ethical dilemmas and balancing of rights.

“I got a lot out of the reflective practice. It is like peer to peer supervision, with oversight - so it doesn't head off on a tangent in one particular direction, and remains informative and relevant to all our work”
Council Officer

Over the course of the year we have increased our capacity to deliver training for the General Workforce across independent or 3rd sector service providers in children and adult services by supporting two trainers from Borders Care Learning Network to deliver our core course PP2: Introduction to Public Protection.

We have also developed a leaflet, poster and short animation in order to promote the PPC Vision that “Public Protection is everybody's business” to hospitality, tourism and other small businesses across the Borders. A copy of the poster is included at Appendix 4. The Communications Delivery Group will explore improving our dissemination and evaluation strategy for information for these audiences through 2023-24.

The Communications Delivery Group has formalised a quarterly Newsletter, disseminated to all staff and volunteers across all agencies. The Newsletter provides an opportunity to promote the work of the PPC, keep staff up to date with key legislative, policy or practice developments, and highlight resources for improving practice.

The Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP) has no dedicated resource to deliver training, awareness raising or more targeted workforce development activity in Scottish Borders: all partners are committed to ensuring the workforce is offered the opportunity to ensure an effective response to all forms of gender based violence. Specialist agencies provide single agency training on domestic abuse awareness, risk assessment, rape and sexual assault, and trauma informed approaches.

In partnership with national agencies, the workforce have been offered the opportunity to be better informed on the Disclosure Scheme Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS), Revenge Porn Helpline, Human Trafficking and the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process.

The forthcoming refresh of Equally Safe will allow the VAW Partnership to take a more targeted approach to workforce development and plans are in progress to link more closely with the local Supporting the Workforce working group, Equally Safe in Schools programme and with the existing Public Protection/ Trauma training frameworks.

Learning and Development opportunities for staff and volunteers were provided by the Alcohol and Drug Partnership. These included collaborations Scottish Drugs Forum, CREW and Scottish Families Affected by Drugs and Alcohol to offer multi-agency alcohol and drug related training.

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) recognises that support and supervision for practitioners involved in child protection work, regardless of professional role, is critical to ensure:

- support for those who are directly involved in child protection work, which may be distressing
- critical reflection and two-way accountability, which enables a focus on outcomes
- the development of good practice for individual practitioners, and improvement in the quality of the service provided by the agency

To ensure that key staff continue to be provided with Child Protection supervision, within NHS Borders, Child Protection Supervisor training was commissioned and delivered by an external trainer to 16 staff across Health Visiting/School Nursing and Midwifery Service. This has supported us to increase our number of skilled supervisors and enables us to continue to develop a consistent approach and understanding of what constitutes effective child protection supervision and its relationship to safe practice and positive outcomes for children and adults.

Staff surveys carried out by the Care Inspectorate provided reassurance in the confidence staff have in our training provision and the knowledge and skills they have. The Adult Support & Protection Care Inspectorate Inspection staff survey found that:

- Almost all staff understood their role and what to do if they had concerns about an adult at risk of harm.
- Almost all agreed they were confident escalating concerns about adults at risk of harm to their supervisor and knew where to get advice.
- Almost all agreed training gave them the required knowledge, skills and confidence to undertake the required role.

A graph illustrating the results of the Children at Risk of Harm staff survey is below.



Diagram 4: Results of the Children at Risk of Harm Care Inspectorate staff survey

Further information about attendances at our training provision can be found at Appendix 3.

A range of new initiatives support shared understanding and consistent practice across agencies.

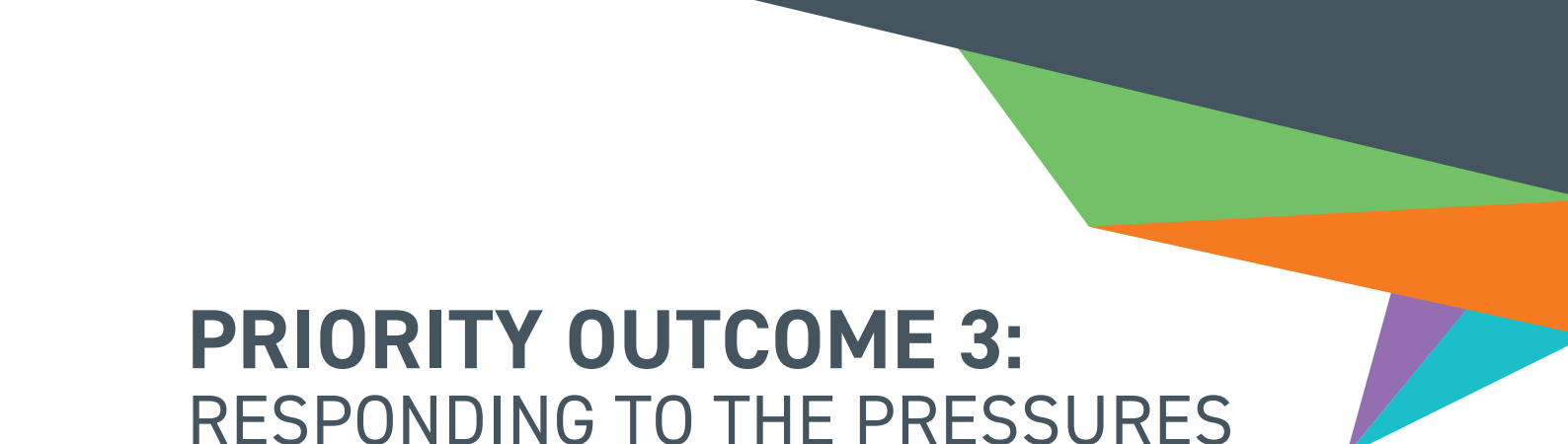
The Borders Housing Network (Berwickshire, Eildon, Scottish Borders, Waverley) have worked together on a **unified staff policy on domestic abuse**. The policy has been created to ensure colleagues across the four organisations are aware of the support available to them and to provide guidance to line managers and Domestic Abuse Workplace Support (DAWS) volunteers on supporting colleagues impacted by domestic abuse. The policy aims to **raise awareness** of the whole agenda and provide a safe space for colleagues to **share experiences and receive support** which will be tailored to their needs.

The learning from a Significant Case Review in another area of Scotland in respect to an infant who died from traumatic brain injury led NHS Borders to review and develop their **procedure for monitoring Occipital Frontal Circumference**. A **reflective learning session** with health visitors, midwives, paediatric nursing teams, and doctors was also undertaken; feedback from staff was that the session made them consider their own practice and assessments with regard to management of a crying baby and how fathers are included in home visits and assessments.

A Significant Case Review was undertaken in another local authority area following the death of an adult where **self-neglect** was a significant issue. One of the recommendations from the Significant case review report was that a clear pathway for accessing an assessment of capacity should be developed. Within Scottish Borders a **multi-agency Capacity Assessment short life working group** has taken these findings into consideration when developing the pathway for assessing capacity within Scottish Borders. This group includes representation from NHS, Mental Health, Learning Disability, Public Protection and Social Work services. This work ensures that all **practitioners share common language, understanding and practice** relating to the assessment of an adult's capacity to make decisions.

A recent **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to MARAC transfer** "out of area" and cross border resulted in a significant service generated risk to the family through a lack of understanding of the nature of the risk and the supports in place by the receiving MARAC. A professionals meeting with the agencies involved was held by the Scottish Borders MARAC Steering Group Chair and the remedial action was immediately taken to protect the family and staff member concerned. The learning from this case resulted in **new MARAC to MARAC Transfer Guidance** being developed for Scottish Borders and a **new procedure implemented** for any MARAC cases being transferred cross border or out of area. The client whose case was transferred re-engaged with supports in Scottish Borders, when informed of the changes to procedures etc said *"I am so glad that things have changed and will be better, so nobody else has to go through what I did, thank you"*





PRIORITY OUTCOME 3: RESPONDING TO THE PRESSURES PLACED ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM, IMPROVING SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Neglect

At the start of 2023, a new post of Child Protection Education Officer was established at the Public Protection Unit (PPU) based in Langlee, further strengthening the multi-agency nature of the PPU. The establishment of this post has enabled the annual Child Protection Update training for all Education, Early Years and Community Learning and Development to be created and directed by a service specialist. This has allowed for a tighter focus on the particular experiences of children and staff within these settings.

The Child Protection Annual Update for Education, Early Years and Community Learning and Development concentrated on neglect this session as there were more concerns about neglect during Covid 19 and staff were becoming more and more aware due the current economic situation. The Annual Update was delivered in schools by CP Coordinators, utilising a Train the Trainers model. This was well received, and staff fed back that the update provided them with an opportunity to consider the different types of neglect, how that manifests in a school setting and generated discussion around how young people can be supported.

The Child Protection Delivery Group previously highlighted the importance of staff receiving training in understanding the impact of childhood neglect, and supporting children and families where this is an area of concern. The CP3: Neglect Toolkit training course was re-established in 2021-22, and is now included in the regular training schedule. The course equips relevant practitioners from Health, Social Work and Education to use this important tool to support parents to understand the strengths and areas for improvement in their care of their children. Over the course of 2022-23, 26 practitioners attended this training.

Mental health

Staff from the Public Protection Unit have joined a short life working group from across adult services to devise a specific tool to support staff who work with Adults where the person appears to have difficulties in making decisions or acting in their own interests due to a mental illness or a severe communication difficulty caused by a physical condition has been developed. Although the ASP Code of Practice strongly emphasises that the three point criteria makes no reference to capacity it gives much more guidance in relation to executorial and decisional capacity and undue pressure and coercive control. As such Public Protection Unit staff have been part of the Capacity Assessment group to make sure that the tool created covers the needs of adults at risk.

Fifty eight staff from the Health and Social Care Partnership, including staff from public protection services, attended a workshop in May to discuss the development of a Capacity Pathway. This followed work undertaken to review and update the partnership's existing Capacity Assessment Tool (CAT). The aim of the workshop was to develop a Capacity Pathway across NHS and SBC and to jointly agree a flowchart and improved system of progressing Capacity-related situations in hospital, at home and in situations which require intervention under formal Adult Support & Protection. In parallel, NHS Borders is progressing a piece of work to develop a pathway of referral once it has been assessed that a Medical Assessment of Capacity is indicated.

Transitions

Scottish Borders Council continues a programme of work with Achieving Real Change (ARC) Scotland on developing Principles into Practice for young people. This work was commenced in the last reporting year and continues to focus more specifically on young people who do not have a learning disability but who need support or early intervention, particularly around supporting needs and risks. The focus of work is currently around mapping and a robust process mapping exercise has taken place and will soon conclude. This is being co-produced across several services and organisations including education, children's social work, adult social work, NHS Borders, ARC Scotland and Branching Out youth project - Borders Additional Needs Group (BANG).

In addition, a new work stream has been set up around the wider needs of young persons and young adults with a view to co-ordinating across various work streams and developing a strategic and commissioning plan for young persons and adults in the ages between 14 to 30 approximately. This will also include a review of the Vulnerable Young Persons protocols, consideration of the introduction of the Care & Assessment Risk Management approach, and particularly focusing on the needs of the 16 to 17 age group who fall under a range of policy and legislation. A wide range of statutory and third sector agencies have shown a commitment to become involved, and representatives from Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection Delivery Groups ensure consistency of approach is developed across support and protection services.



POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Learning Review local procedures

In 2021-22 the Scottish Government published new Guidance for undertaking Learning Reviews for Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection. The Learning Review approach stemmed from Scotland's commitment to strengthen its learning culture, and replaces the previous Initial and Significant Case Review process. A Learning Review is a process that enables multi-agencies to reflect, discuss and look at service users' experiences as a way to learn and improve the services that are delivered. The National guidance for both Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection supports a consistent approach to conducting Learning Reviews and improve the dissemination and application of learning both locally and nationally.

Much of the focus of PPC throughout the year has been on the establishment of a new Delivery Group specific to learning and learning reviews in response to the new National Guidance for Learning Reviews for Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection. The Learning Review Delivery Group is a multi-agency group and covers both Children and Adults, which continues to promote the Public Protection Committee's underpinning principle of 'Think Family'. The Scottish Borders Learning Review Delivery Group (LRDG) has a multi-agency Terms of Reference and Scottish Borders Learning Review Guidance that covers both Children and Adults. Local protocols and templates for sharing, analysing and disseminating information have been agreed across partner agencies.

Scottish Borders Child Protection Procedures

In September 2021, the Scottish Government published revised National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. This revised guidance introduced changes to underlying values and process, and all Local Authority areas are required to update their local Child Protection Procedures to reflect these changes. Scottish Borders embarked on a joint project with Edinburgh, Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian to develop shared Child Protection Procedures across the five areas.

Over the course of 2022-23, it became clear that differences in service structure, roles and remits meant that it was not possible to create one set of Procedures to be followed in each of the areas. The Child Protection Delivery Group and PPC considered that the areas of divergence were significant and that there was no benefit to children, parent carers or staff to adopting the practice of the other areas. It was therefore agreed in June 2023, that Scottish Borders would withdraw from this joint venture.

A multi-agency Working Group comprising members of Child Protection Delivery Group and key practitioners from the Public Protection Unit are progressing with the revision of our local Child Protection Procedures, together with implementation and communications plans. At the end of this reporting year, staff were updated on the current situation through a focused edition of the PPC Newsletter, and additional communications and staff briefing sessions will take place at intervals as the work progresses.

Through involvement in various national forums, it is apparent that progress with revising and implementing changes to local Child Protection Procedures in Scottish Borders is broadly in line with the pace of change across Scotland.

ASP Code of Practice

The Adult Support & Protection Act 2007 requires that a Code of Practice be published containing guidance about the functions under the Act by councils, their Council Officers and health professionals. The newly revised Code of Practice, which was published in July 2022 now reflects that there is a growing appreciation that Adult Support and Protection can have direct relevance to a broader range of people than originally anticipated including some people who have addiction problems or who are homeless. It can also potentially apply to people who may be being placed at risk and having their human rights infringed through inappropriate arrangements for their care. The Code of Practice provides information and detail to support practical application of the 2007 Act.

Since publication, all Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection training delivered by the ASP & CP Training and Quality Assurance Team has been updated to reflect the new Code of Practice. All Scottish Borders Council Staff who have Council Officer (as stipulated under the Adult Support & Protection Act 2007) or Line Management responsibility for Adult Support & Protection have had to complete a Microsoft Form to confirm they have read and understood the revised Code of Practice, providing PPC with assurance that key staff are aware of this development. A series of targeted briefing sessions to highlight changes to language and practice to key staff groups have been scheduled: the first session for Council Officers took place in June 2023, with further sessions scheduled for Council Officers and for all practitioners involved in ASP work.

MARAC Guidance

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) shares information to manage the risk of further harm to high risk victims of domestic abuse. During the reporting year, a number of documents to support an effective MARAC were produced or reviewed. These included guidance relating to: MARAC and Honour Based Abuse; MARAC and Older People; and MARAC and LGBTQ. The MARAC Information Sharing Protocol and Operating Guidance was reviewed and updated.

APPENDIX 1:

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADP	Alcohol and Drugs Partnership	MOMO	Mind of My Own
APDG	Adult Protection Delivery Group	MS TEAMS	Microsoft Teams
AP	Adult Protection	NHS	National Health Service
ASP	Adult Support & Protection	NRM	National Referral Mechanism
CEDAR	Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery	PPC	Public Protection Committee
CLD	Community Learning And Development	PPI	Public Protection Indicators
CP	Child Protection	PPU	Public Protection Unit
CPCC	Child Protection Case Conference	SB	Scottish Borders
CPDG	Child Protection Delivery Group	SBC	Scottish Borders Council
CP/LAC	Child Protection / Looked After Child	SBRCC	Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre
CPRO	Child Protection Reviewing Officer	SCIM	Scottish Child Interview Model
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation	SCR	Significant Case Review
CSOG	Critical Services Oversight Group	SOPU	Sex Offender Prevention Unit
DA	Domestic Abuse	SW	Social Work
DAAS	Domestic Abuse Advisory Service	T&DDG	Training and Development Delivery Group
DG	Delivery Group	VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
DTTO	Drug Treatment and Testing Order	VAWP	Violence Against Women Partnership
IRD	Initial Referral Discussion	VYP	Vulnerable Young Person
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment		
MAPPA	Multiagency Public Protection Arrangements		

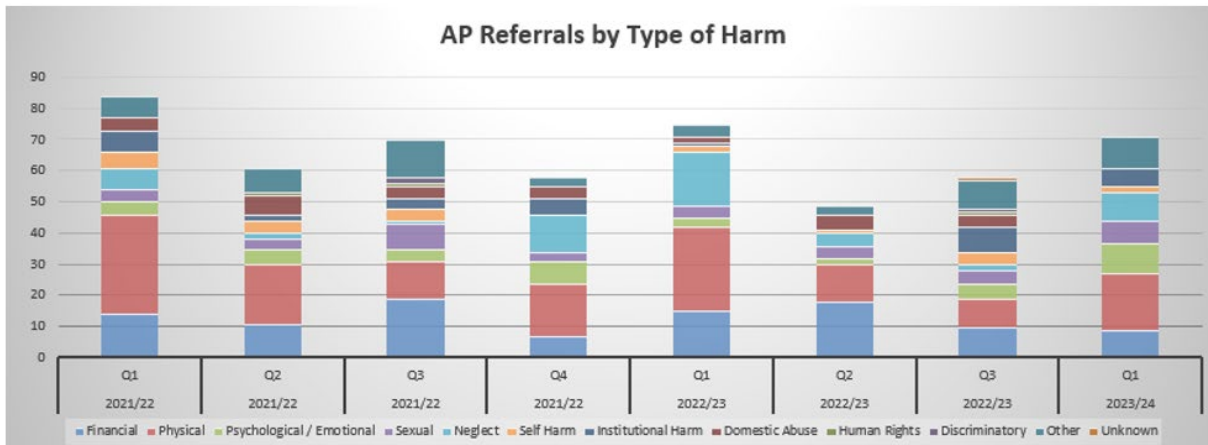


APPENDIX 2: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

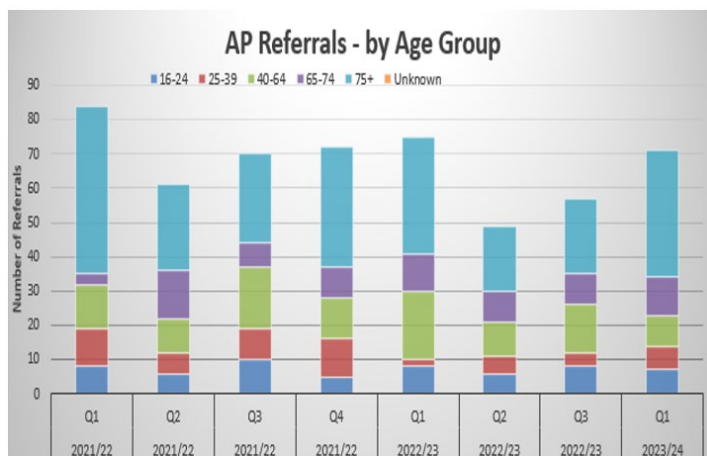
The PPC considers information gathered across a range of agreed Performance Indicators (PPIs), reviewed quarterly by Delivery Groups and the PPC and reported to the Critical Services Oversight Group. PPIs provide insight into how our processes help the people we work with, and inform improvement work. This appendix contains some representative information.

Adult Support and Protection

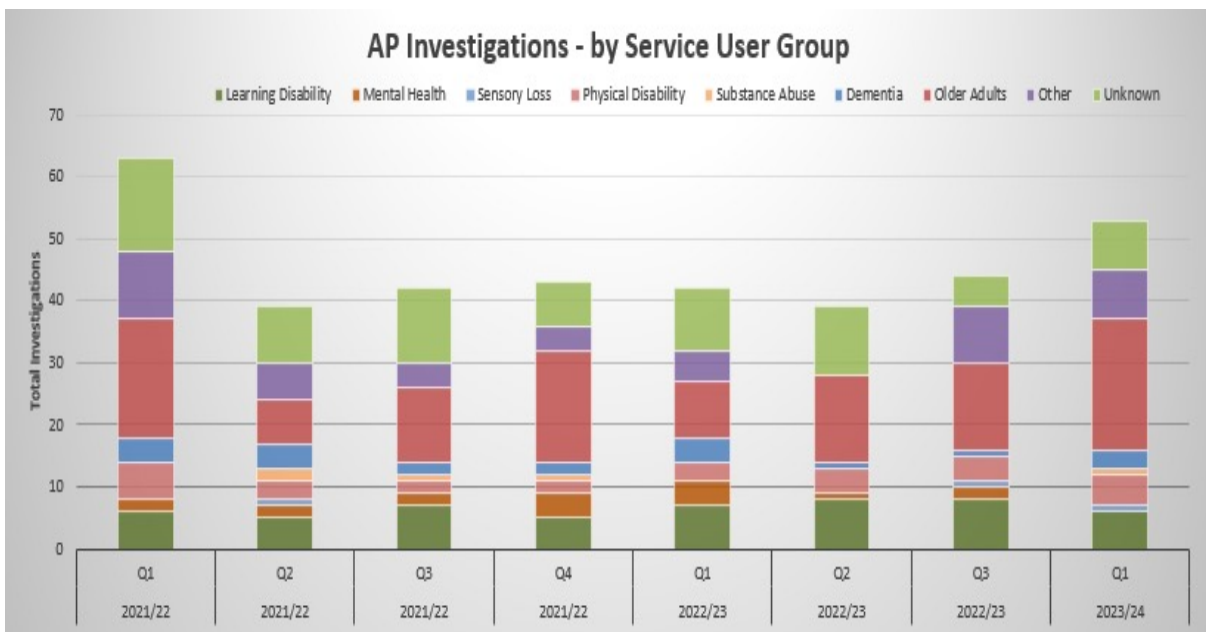
In April 2023 the Scottish Government introduced the Adult Support & Protection (ASP) National Minimum Dataset (NMD). As a result, how data is reported had to move from an August to July reporting year to April to March to meet the National requirement. This meant that there is no PPI data for Q4 22/23 and there is a duplication in reporting data for Q3 (Feb, March, April) 22/23 and Q1 (April, May, June) 23/24.



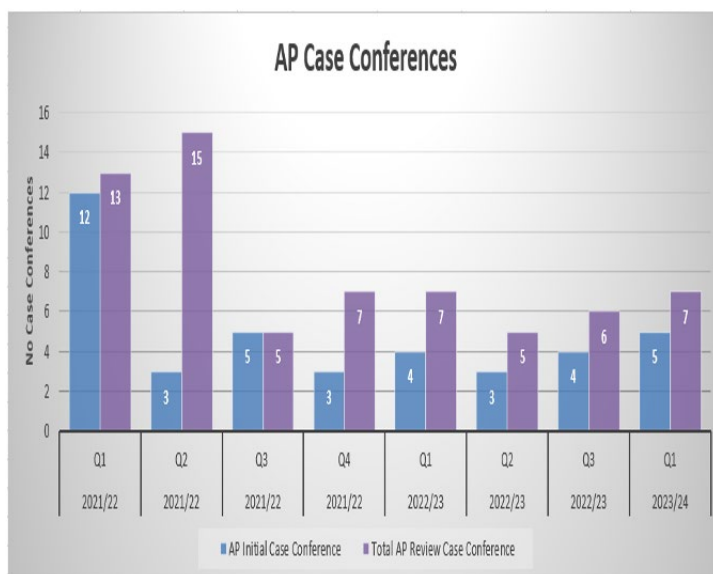
Over the year Financial and Physical harm have remained as two of the main identified types of harm at the point of referral. Neglect, Self-Neglect and Psychological / Emotional harm are areas that continue to fluctuate across the year.



The largest number of Adult Support and Protection Investigations remains consistent with Adults over the age of 75 remaining the main group that referrals are received for.

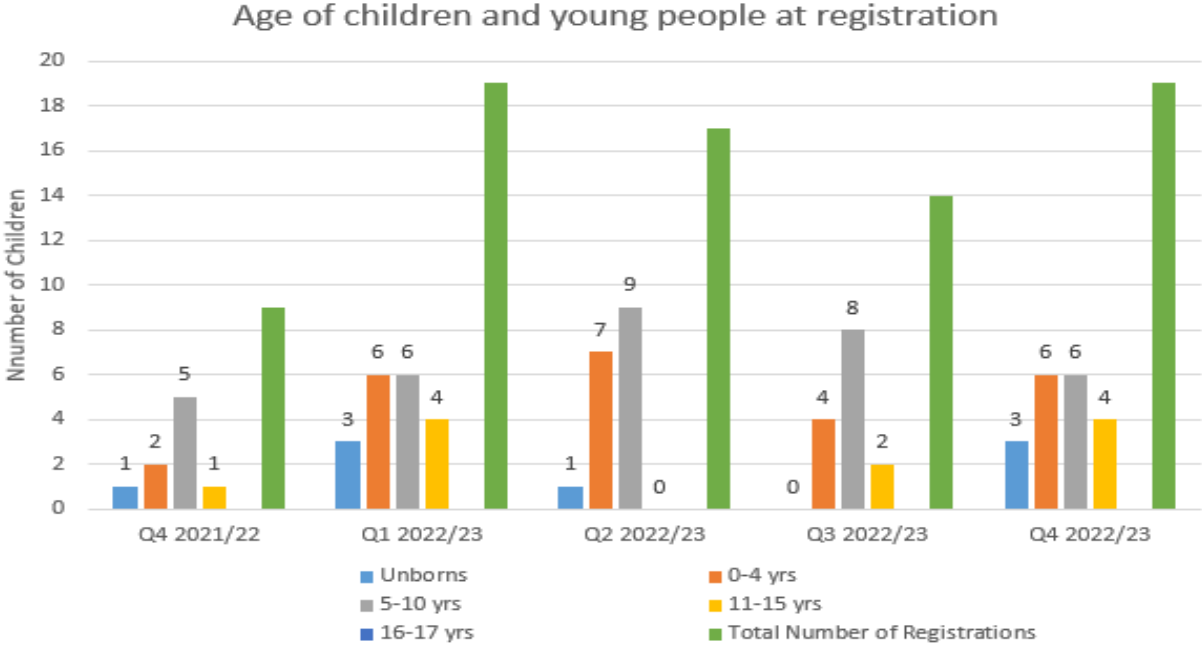


The majority of Adult Support and Protection referrals are in relation to Adults with a physical disability. ASP investigations in relation to Adults with a learning disability have remained stable throughout the year.

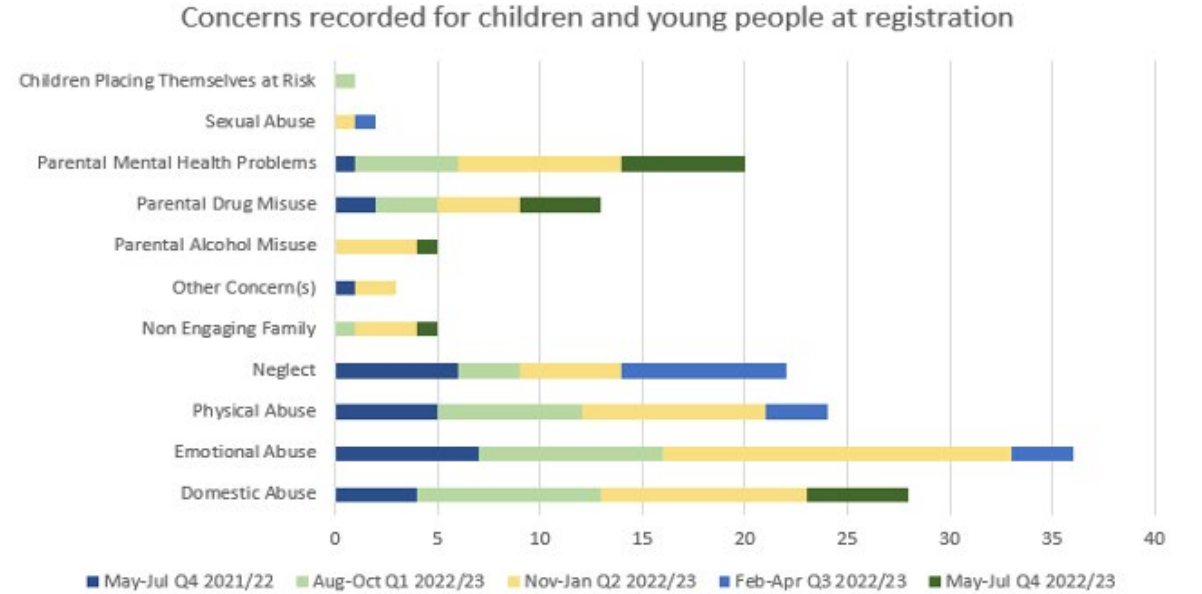


The number of (ASP) Initial Case Conferences and Review Case Conferences has remained steady throughout the year. The recent Care Inspectorate inspection confirmed that our robust Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRD) and fluid ASP process means that the key principles under the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 are met, which requires that any involvement under ASP should be the least restrictive and of benefit to the adult.

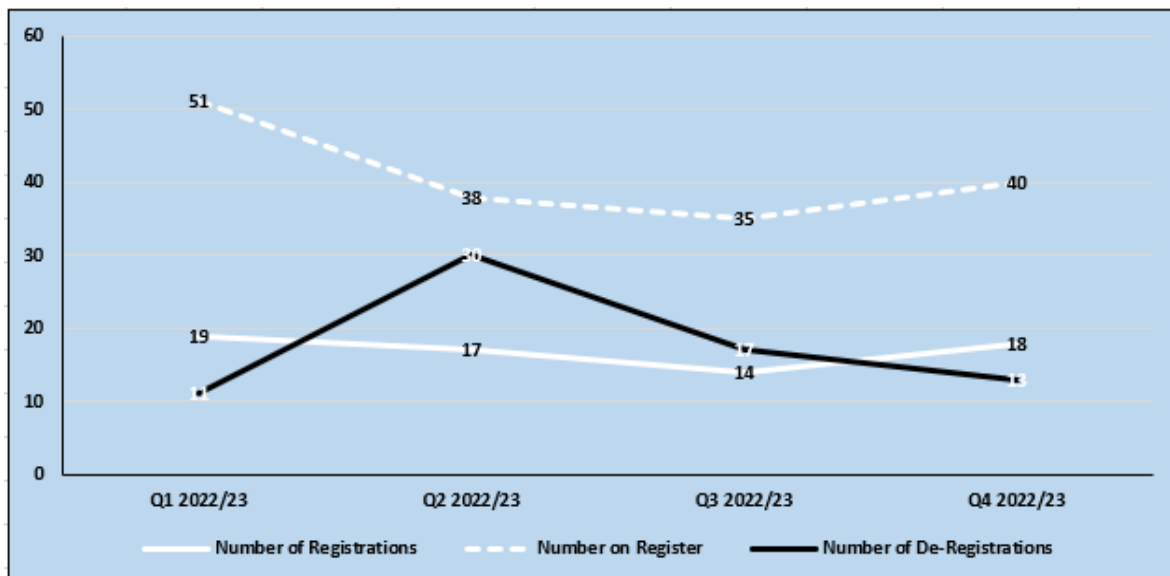
Child Protection



The age of children and young people at point of CP registration has remained fairly stable across the year with the highest number of children and young people aged between 0 – 10 year.



The above chart reflects the different types of harm that are impacting children and young people across the Borders. Children may experience more than one type of harm.

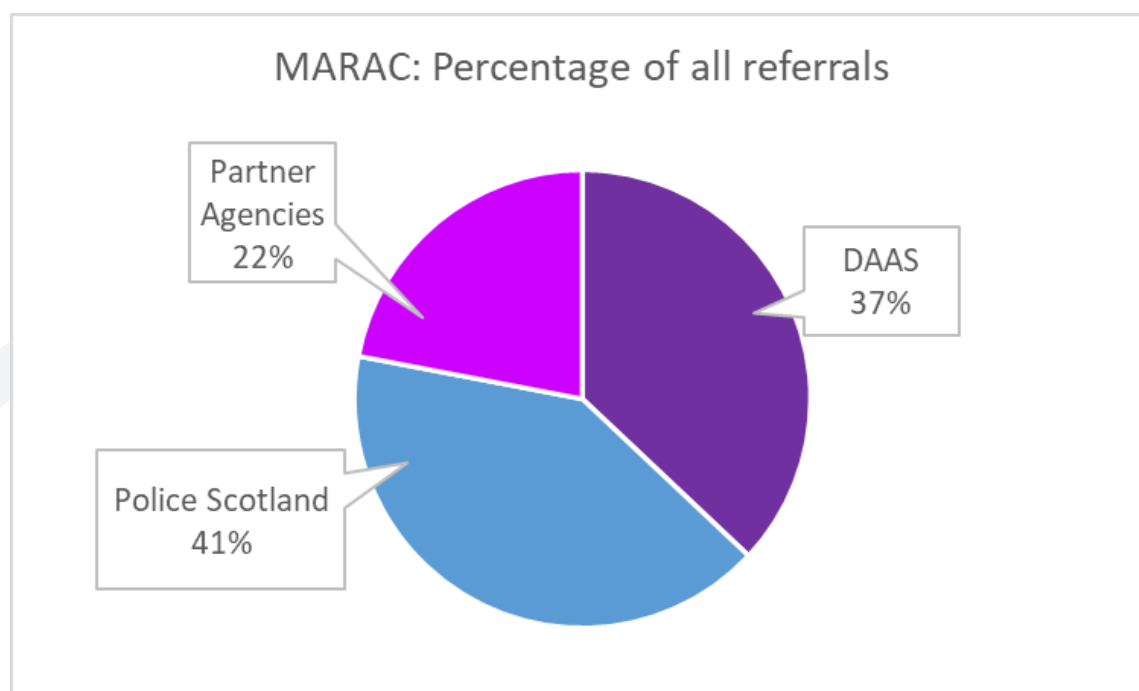


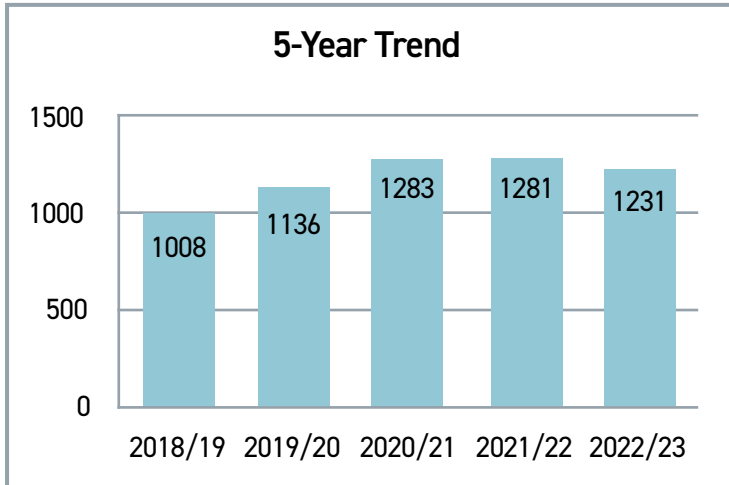
There was an increase in the **number of de-registrations** in Q2. When audited it showed that although the numbers were smaller across the previous quarters, when broken down to numbers of families per quarter there was only an increase of 3 families in Q2

Violence Against Women and Girls

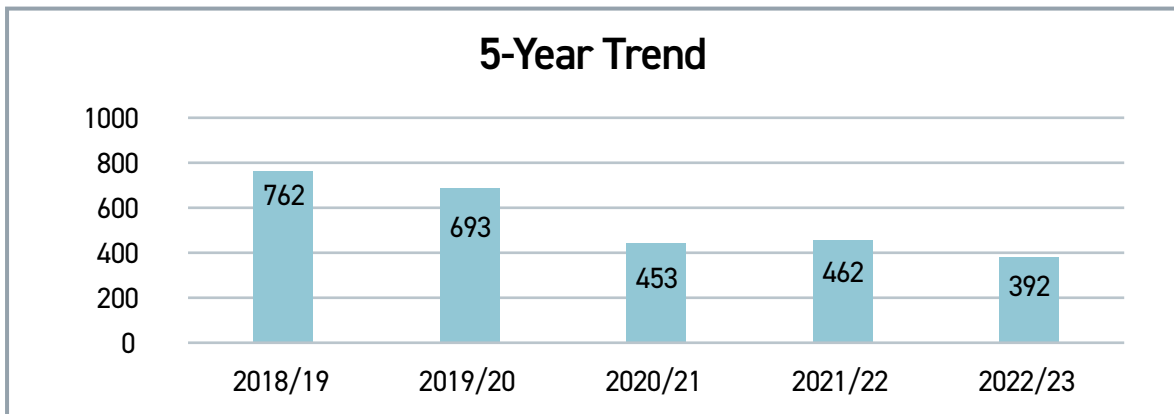
Scottish Borders Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a multi-agency approach to reducing risk of further harm for high risk victims of domestic abuse in the Scottish Borders. At the heart of MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety.

MARAC meets for a full day every four weeks, and discusses referrals made by all agencies. The chart below shows the percentage of referrals received from Police Scotland, the Domestic Abuse Advisory Service (DAAS) and other partner agencies.





50 fewer incidences of **Domestic Abuse** were reported to the Police when compared to 2021/22, which equates to a 3.9% decrease. There remain concerns that domestic abuse is underreported. Scottish Borders have increased scrutiny of the number of recorded incidences and related number of referrals to the Domestic Abuse Advisory Service (DAAS), with regular updates provided to Police Scotland and Scottish Borders Council Management Team.



392 referrals for adults were made to DAAS, a 15.2% decrease from the previous reporting year. Referral numbers have increased in Q3 and Q4, and this is being closely monitored on a weekly basis.

Active engagement with partner agencies to increase and reinforce the referral pathways continues, and there are plans to engage with Police Scotland's Domestic Abuse Champions to assist with key messaging on this.



APPENDIX 3: TRAINING PROVISION

Public Protection, Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection Training

These courses are developed and generally delivered by the CP and ASP Training and Quality Assurance Team with support from CP/LAC and ASP Nurses. Most courses are multi-agency and open to staff across all statutory and 3rd sector organisations. Most courses are delivered online.

The information below relates to courses delivered from 1st August 2022 – 31st July 2023. Fewer courses were delivered over this reporting year than the previous year, this reflects ongoing review of demand and the capacity of the CP and ASP Training and Quality Assurance Team. We continue to monitor the percentage of places filled, and adjust the number and frequency of courses offered to reflect demand.

A copy of the Joint Learning and Development Strategy and Framework can be obtained by contacting committee.publicprotection@scotborders.gov.uk

Tier	Course name	No of sessions	Total places available	No of attendances (% filled)
Multi – agency courses delivered by CP and ASP Training and Quality Assurance Team				
2	PP2: Introduction to Public Protection	12	620	285 (46%)
	ASP2: Adult Support and Protection for Care Home and Care at Home (Train the Trainers)	1	8	4 (50%)
3	PP3: Thinking About Risk	5	180	147 (82%)
	ASP3: Contributing to the process	5	130	52 (40%)
	CP3: Contributing to the process	6	160	78 (49%)
	CP3: Neglect Toolkit	2	40	26 (65%)
4	ASP4: Council Officer Training (in person training)	1	20	11 (55%)
	ASP4: Council Officer Refresher	2	44	33 (75%)
	ASP4: Code of Practice Briefing	1	50	26 (52%)
	total	35	1202	662 (55%)
Single Agency courses for Education, Early Years and CLD staff (including Passenger Transport)				
2	CP2: Child Protection Inductions	4	160	72 (45%)
	CP2: Child Protection Annual Update (delivered by education)	70	n/a	2277
	CP2: Child Protection for ASN Transport Escorts	1	n/a	12
Multi – agency courses delivered by partner agencies				
1	PP1: Fire Risk Recognition (delivered by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)	3	160	72 (45%)
2	ASP2 – Adult Support and Protection for Care Home and Care at Home (delivered by partner agencies) *incomplete information	20	n/a	143
	Overall total	133	n/a	3221

Borders Alcohol and Drug Partnership Training courses

Borders Alcohol and Drug Partnership deliver and facilitate a range of training and information sessions, open to all multi-agency partners. Overall evaluations show that training provided is positive and learning is relevant to need. The table below indicates the courses offered during the reporting year, and attendance by statutory and voluntary sector staff, and others.

COURSE	Attendees	Statutory	Voluntary	Other
Alcohol Brief Intervention Training (2 courses)	51	38	13	
Drug Trend Monitoring Group CPD Benzodiazepines	30	27	2	1
Drug Trend Monitoring Group CPD Crack Cocaine	25	22	3	
Understanding Stigma (SDF)	7	6	1	
Meet The Services 4 courses	52	40	11	1
Hepatitis Information Session (2 courses)	11	9	1	1
Sex Drugs & Vulnerable Y P (2 courses)	12	8	4	
Into to Drug & Alcohol Services	14	10	4	
Family Inclusive Practice (SFAD)	14	11	3	
Everyone Has a Story Education (2 courses)	16	16	0	
Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse	7	7	0	
O'Lila	9	3	4	2
Emerging Drug Trends (CREW)	20	8	11	1
Drugs and Mental Health	9	4	1	4
Staying Alive	7	6	1	
Motivational Interviewing (3 Day)	16	6	10	
Drug Awareness & Harm Reduction	16	11	2	3
Everyone Has a Story	7	6	1	
Trauma & Substance Use	7	3	0	4
Total	330	241	72	17

Violence Against Women Partnership – Workforce Development Activity

Courses developed and delivered by Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service (DAAS) or commissioned by the Violence Against Women Partnership.

Course name	No of sessions	Total places available	No of attendances (% filled)
Intimate Image Abuse Awareness session (Delivered by Revenge Porn Helpline team; commissioned by Violence Against Women Partnership, online)	1	100	64 (64%)
Domestic Abuse Awareness – single agency DBI team (delivered by DAAS team, online)	1	12	8 (66%)
Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour Based Violence Risk Indicator Checklist session – single agency, Health Visitors (delivered by DAAS team, online)	1	20	12 (60%)
Coercive Control – single agency, Mental Health Officers Forum (delivered by DAAS team, online)	1	n/a	8
Domestic Abuse Awareness – single agency Dynamic Fusion team (delivered by DAAS team online)	1	n/a	4
Human Trafficking Awareness	1	n/a	51
TOTAL	6		147



APPENDIX 4: "SPOTTING THE SIGNS" POSTER



Everyone in the Scottish Borders has the right to live safe from abuse, harm and neglect.

You may see or hear something that makes you worry that a child or adult is being abused, harmed or neglected.

Telling someone about your worries can help to make sure that the person gets the right help, from the right people, to stay safe and well.

Concerned about a child?
Call Children and Families
Duty Social Work
01896 662787

Concerned about an adult?
Call the Council
0300 100 1800

Out of office hours?
Call the Social Work
Emergency Duty Team
01896 752111

Emergency, or don't know the
name of the adult or child?
Call the Police
101 or 999



**Child and Adult Protection
is EVERYONE'S business**



APPENDIX 5:

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD OR ADULT

If you are concerned that a child, young person, or adult may be at risk of harm, has been harmed, or is a risk to others, you must tell someone immediately.

Children & Young People

The Children and Families Duty Social Work Team

01896 662787

Adults

SBC Customer Services

0300 100 1800

**For all concerns out of normal office hours,
DO NOT WAIT**

Social Work Emergency Duty Team

01896 752111

**Or if you think the person is at risk of
immediate harm 999**

You can get this document on audio CD, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

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