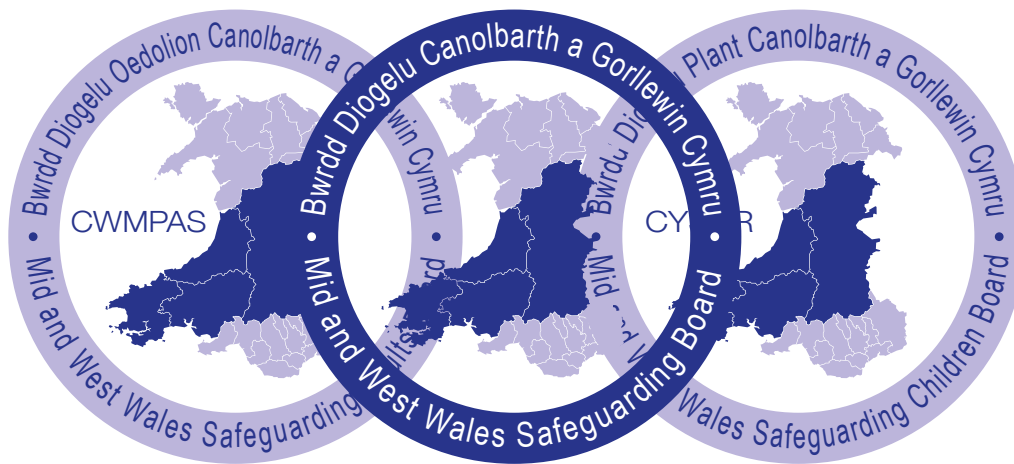




THE MID AND WEST WALES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS BOARDS



ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026

An Overview of the Objectives and Achievements of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Children & Adults Boards



Heddlu Police
DYFED-POWYS

Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Gwasanaeth Prawf
Cenedlaethol
National Probation
Service



Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Hywel Dda
University Health Board



Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Gwasanaethau Ambiwylans Cymru
Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust



Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board

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Introduction

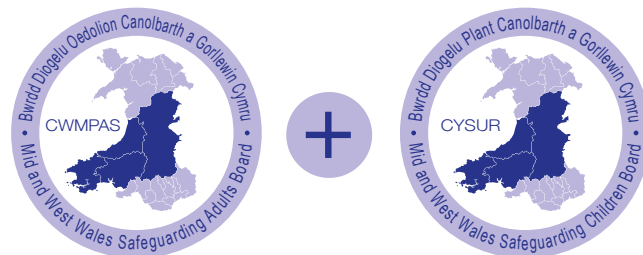
It gives us pleasure to jointly present the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards CYSUR and CWMPAS Annual Report.

This Annual Report outlines the progress we have made against the outcomes set by CYSUR and CWMPAS as part of our joint Annual Strategic Plan for the year 2025-26.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board. It is an opportunity to recognise the dedication, expertise and collaboration of our partner agencies, Board members and practitioners who continue to work together to improve outcomes for children, young people and adults at risk across the Mid and West Wales region, as well as the strong partnership and relationships we have developed with our stakeholders over the last decade.

We are pleased to report that this year, work has commenced on one of our key priorities, to establish a consistent model to capture and embed the voices of adults at risk into the Board's work via the Most Significant Change pilot project being undertaken in Pembrokeshire. Work in respect of the Safeguarding LINC project, utilising the latest advances in technology to develop an intuitive information sharing platform, which draws critical multi-agency information together into one easily accessible space, has progressed at pace. This landmark project offers significant potential for our partners in terms of facilitating more timely and effective information sharing in relation to children who may be at risk of harm.

Partnership work this year has been dedicated to responding to a number of national safeguarding priorities and workstreams, including: supporting the development of the National Action Plan for Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse; requirements from Welsh Government and



We wish to thank our colleagues for their continued support, and look forward to working together in the coming year to continue to develop our practice and build upon what we have achieved to date.



Inspectorates in response to the recommendations from the North Wales Child Practice Review, Our Bravery Brought Justice; work in response to the national audit on group-based Child Exploitation; and work to update Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures in respect of practitioners in a position of trust.

The Boards continue to support the implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) framework this year, following the publication of the accompanying statutory guidance in October 2024. The Boards continue to lead the delivery of the SUSR Learning and Development Framework, from which a comprehensive programme of training is being made available to key stakeholders across Wales.

The Boards continue to be supported by unwaveringly strong partnerships across the region, and the achievements shared within this report would not have been possible without partners' commitment, enthusiasm, and generosity of their time. We wish to thank our colleagues for their continued support, and look forward to working together in the coming year to continue to develop our practice and build upon what we have achieved to date.



Michael Gray
(CWMPAS Chair)

Director of Social Services, Housing and Public Protection - Pembrokeshire County Council



Audrey Somerton-Edwards
(CYSUR Chair)

Director of Social Services
Ceredigion County Council

Objectives of a Regional Safeguarding Board

The objectives of Regional Safeguarding Boards as outlined in the [Social Services and Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) are stated below.

The objectives of a **Safeguarding Children Board** are:

- to **protect** children within its area who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and
- to **prevent** children within its area from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.

The objectives of a **Safeguarding Adults Board** are:

- to **protect** adults within its area who –
 1. have needs for care and support (whether or not a Local Authority is meeting any of those needs), and
 2. are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- to **prevent** those adults within its area from becoming at risk of abuse or neglect.

Guidance on the functions of Safeguarding Boards

The focus for Safeguarding Boards is twofold. It is both the **protection** of children and adults who are in need of care and support from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and the **prevention** of children and adults from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. These two objectives should inform the priorities of Safeguarding Boards when they are considering their work programmes and annual plans and reviewing their performance.

Keeping children and adults who may have needs for care and support safe is everyone's responsibility. This means feeling safe and being safe with those with whom they live and who support and care for them, as well as being safe in environments outside the home where they may live, travel, play, learn, work or undertake sport, cultural, leisure and other activities. This responsibility lies primarily within the family or with carers and within the wider community.

Many organisations have responsibility for safeguarding children and adults through the services they provide directly to them, through the help and support provided to families and carers, or through their work to develop and strengthen communities.



Board Structure and Governance Arrangements

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards serve the communities of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys, working collaboratively and in partnership within a multi-agency setting. The Boards' aim is to raise awareness of safeguarding issues with members of the public and provide support, advice and guidance to practitioners working in our local communities who deliver a range of voluntary and statutory services. Mid and West Wales is covered by two sister Safeguarding Boards:

- **CWMPAS [Collaborative Working & Maintaining Partnership in Adult Safeguarding]:** The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Adults Board, and;
- **CYSUR [Child & Youth Safeguarding, Unifying the Region]:**

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Children Board.

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board Structure



“ The Boards' aim is to raise awareness of safeguarding issues with members of the public and provide support, advice and guidance to practitioners working in our local communities who deliver a range of voluntary and statutory services. ”

Executive Boards

The Executive Boards for CYSUR and CWMPAS work together as an overarching regional Board to monitor and improve regional safeguarding activity across Mid and West Wales. The Executive Boards consist of senior managers from all key statutory partners and agencies ([see Section A](#)). The Executive Boards' aim is to provide leadership and guidance to all its constituent agencies through the delivery of a series of strategic priorities for safeguarding activity and practice. The two Executive Boards support, guide and take advice from the regional Sub Groups.



Feedback from Board member:

The Board has provided strong leadership and constructive challenge, promoting shared learning, accountability and improvement across partner agencies.

Its focus on inspection learning, serious review findings and partnership engagement has supported meaningful system wide safeguarding improvement.



Local Operational Groups

Each of the four Local Authorities within Mid and West Wales host Local Operational Groups (LOGs). The purpose, membership and structure of these LOGs mirror that of the Executive Boards. However, the primary objective of LOGs is to monitor and analyse safeguarding practice locally, rather than regionally. Membership consists of the Heads of Children's and Adults' Services, who chair the groups, and senior and middle managers from local statutory agencies, including Health, Police and Probation.

LOGs seek to improve practice locally by discussing local safeguarding activity in an open and transparent environment, sharing and analysing performance data and completing practice audits to inform practice improvements and identify risk. LOGs seek to share and acknowledge examples of good safeguarding practice; in addition, they will professionally challenge and hold agencies to account when safeguarding practice falls below expected standards.

Regional Case Review Sub Group

The Regional Case Review Sub Group considers referrals from agencies where a Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) may need to be undertaken. This is in situations where a child or adult has either died or suffered significant harm as a result of abuse and/or neglect, or has been the victim of a domestic homicide or a mental health homicide.

The Regional Case Review Sub Group considers information against defined criteria for each type of review within the [Single Safeguarding Review Statutory Guidance \(October 2024\)](#) and makes a recommendation to the relevant Executive Board Chair as to whether there are identified learning outcomes, and whether an SUSR should be undertaken to learn lessons.

SUSRs are undertaken by a multi-agency group of professionals who collectively analyse information and identify any practice themes and lessons to learn. The report is then published on the Boards' [website](#) and added to the [Wales Safeguarding Repository](#).

Regional Board processes were amended and updated in the year 2024/25 to comply with the new statutory guidance which came into effect in October 2024. Prior to this, Board responsibilities were confined to cases that met the criteria for Child or Adult Practice Reviews as set out Working Together to Safeguard People Volumes 2 and 3, [Child Practice Reviews](#) and [Adult Practice Reviews](#) respectively.

Multi-agency learning is undertaken via a Multi-Agency Professional Forum (MAPF) which explores identified cases that do not meet the threshold for a full SUSR, but from which there is felt to be opportunities to obtain and share multi-agency learning and/or good practice. The Board Chairs agree recommendations for cases to be explored through the MAPF model. MAPFs are then undertaken locally on a multi-agency basis and are presented to the relevant LOG, who holds responsibility for the ratification of the report and delivery of the accompanying action plan. The Case Review Sub Group receives completed reports for information, to enable any possible regional learning to be considered, shared and acted upon.



Feedback from Board member on the Board's work:

CYSUR provides essential strategic direction and cohesion of safeguarding practices at a regional level.



Regional Policies & Procedures Sub Group

The Policies & Procedures Sub Group operates collaboratively and in conjunction with the Executive Boards. The Group seeks to provide guidance to professionals via the development of regional safeguarding policies and procedures.

The Boards have a significant number of multi-agency through-age policies to support practitioners in their practice, which are published on the Boards' [website](#).

CADW: Junior Regional Safeguarding Board

Until the end of March 2025, the CYSUR Board commissioned Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Independent Advocacy Service to facilitate its Regional Junior Safeguarding Board. The service was formally decommissioned when the contract ended, and a new model has been agreed to support the contribution of children and young people into the work of the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board.

The new model facilitates the views and input that children and young people make into relevant local groups and fora to feed into and inform Board work and discussions, via local lead officers acting as conduits for this communication via LOGs. Similarly, this mechanism can support the Board to feed back to children and young people on action taken, as well as to pose questions and propose collaborative work, via these local communication mechanisms. This new model seeks to reach a greater number of children and young people across the region and facilitate greater consistency in this engagement.

This newly agreed model is entering a pilot phase at the time of writing, which is subject to ongoing review. The Boards look forward to exploring this model over the coming year, with a view to establishing strong, consistent engagement with children and young people across the region.





Regional Training Sub Group

The Training Sub Group operates collaboratively and in conjunction with the Executive Boards. It seeks to support and guide the delivery of safeguarding training and learning across the four Local Authority areas and partner agency organisations. The Training Sub Group works closely with partners' training departments to promote the quality and consistency of safeguarding training and delivery. The Group can commission specialist, bespoke safeguarding training across the region, and works closely with other Sub Groups, such as the Case Review Sub Group, to ensure any learning outcomes identified in Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews are disseminated to staff, and any identified specialist training is commissioned.

Other bespoke regional fora and groups support and are closely aligned to the Boards' annual strategic plan and priorities. These include regional multi-agency Adult and Children's Safeguarding Leads Groups, a regional group for Child Protection Conference Chairs, and an Immediate Rapid Response Regional Steering Group that supports a robust multi-agency response following the death of a child or adult where suicide is suspected to be the cause.

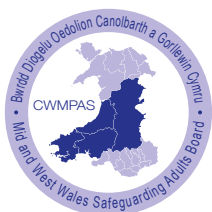
Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategic and Delivery Groups

VAWDASV incorporates all forms of violence against women and girls, including honour-based violence, forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), trafficking, sexual violence and exploitation, and domestic abuse.

The VAWDASV Strategic Group is a multi-agency collaboration that is driving forward the requirements of the [VAWDASV Act](#), including the implementation of the Mid and West Wales Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-27 ([see section b](#)). The VAWDASV Delivery Group supports the Strategic Group on the progression and implementation of regional priorities, as well as maintaining key links with specialist providers. Additional local fora have been developed to support the regional Strategic and Delivery Groups to manage local workteams and responses to the regional strategy and associated work plan.

(a) Membership

Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Executive Board Membership



CWMPAS (Safeguarding Adults Executive Board)

Michael Gray (Chair)

Director of Social Services, Housing
and Public Protection,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Ross Evans (Vice-Chair)

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable,
Dyfed-Powys Police

Audrey Somerton-Edwards

Director of Social Services,
Ceredigion County Council

Darren Mutter

Director of Social Services and Housing,
Carmarthenshire County Council

Nina Davies

Director of Social Services,
Powys County Council

Sharon Daniel

Executive Director of Nursing,
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Claire Roche

Director of Nursing and Midwifery,
Powys Teaching Health Board

Nadine Gould

Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality
and Patient Experience,
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Wayne Bevan

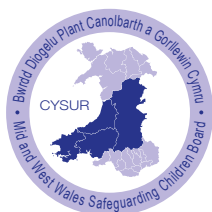
Head of Public Protection and Detective
Superintendent
Dyfed-Powys Police

Kate Burton

Head of Adult Social Care,
Carmarthenshire County Council

Donna Pritchard

Deputy Director of Social Services and
Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Gofal,
Ceredigion County Council



CYSUR (Safeguarding Children Executive Board)

Audrey Somerton-Edwards (Chair)

Director of Social Services,
Ceredigion County Council

Ross Evans (Vice-Chair)

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable,
Dyfed-Powys Police

Michael Gray

Director of Social Services, Housing
and Public Protection,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Darren Mutter

Director of Social Services and Housing,
Carmarthenshire County Council

Nina Davies

Director of Social Services,
Powys County Council

Sharon Daniel

Executive Director of Nursing,
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Claire Roche

Director of Nursing and Midwifery,
Powys Teaching Health Board

Nadine Gould

Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality and
Patient Experience,
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Andrew Edwards

Assistant Chief Constable,
Dyfed Powys Police

Wayne Bevan

Head of Public Protection and Detective
Superintendent
Dyfed-Powys Police

Gill Adams

Interim Head of Children's Services,
Interim Regional Representative of Youth
Justice Managers

Mel Laidler

Head of Adults' Services,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Sharon Frewin

Head of Adults' Services,
Powys County Council

Liz Bowen

Assistant Chief Executive,
National Probation Service

Charlotte Westacott

Head of Safeguarding Adults & Children
(Named Nurse),
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Jayne Wheeler-Sexton

Assistant Director of Safeguarding
(Named Nurse),
Powys Teaching Health Board

Debbie Pachu

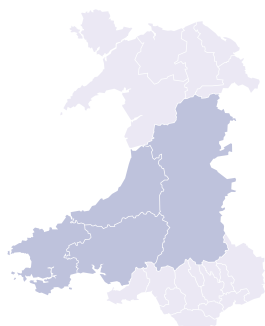
Designated Nurse, National Safeguarding
Team (NHS Wales), Public Health Wales

Chris Harrison

Regional Representative for Heads
of Commissioning,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Dafydd Llywelyn

Police and Crime Commissioner
for Dyfed Powys



Donna Pritchard

Deputy Director of Social Services and
Corporate Lead Officer, Porth Gofal,
Ceredigion County Council

Chris Frey-Davies

Head of Children's Services,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Sharon Powell

Head of Children's Services,
Powys County Council

Liz Bowen

Assistant Chief Executive,
National Probation Service

Charlotte Westacott

Head of Safeguarding Adults
& Children (Named Nurse),
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Jayne Wheeler-Sexton

Assistant Director of
Safeguarding (Named Nurse),
Powys Teaching Health Board

Debbie Pachu

Designated Nurse, National Safeguarding
Team (NHS Wales), Public Health Wales

Regional Education Senior Officers

Carmarthenshire – Vicky Jeremy
Ceredigion – Elen James
Pembrokeshire – Steven Richards-Downes
Powys – Judith Hickey

Gill Adams

Regional representative of
Youth Justice Managers

Dr Ingrid Prosser

Named Doctor, Child Protection,
Powys Teaching Health Board

Dr Faumy Hassan

Named Doctor, Child Protection,
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Boards Business Unit

Julie Breckon

Strategic Regional Safeguarding Manager
for Children and Adults at Risk

Rebecca Humphreys

Practice Review Business Manager

Stuart Hicks

Business Development Officer

Stanislava Kovacinova

Business Development Officer

(b) Work, achievements and activity this year to meet our outcomes and implement our strategic plan

Thresholds and Risk

Work to consolidate the application of consistent thresholds for children at risk and in need of services has been undertaken this year. A new updated multi-agency threshold document: [The Right help at the Right Time](#) has been developed via a multi-agency task and finish group. This new guidance document is the updated version of the original document initially developed in consultation with children, young people and their families in 2017.

The document is designed to provide guidance to practitioners to clarify in what circumstances to refer children and their families for support across the spectrum of need, building on families' strengths and personal outcomes. It has been updated to reflect and incorporate the ever-changing landscape of multi-agency safeguarding practice, the latest research that informs interventions known to work with children and families, and changes and developments that have occurred at a national level regarding legislation, statutory guidance and policy in respect of safeguarding. It provides clear guidance regarding different levels of presenting need and strengths across the spectrum, from universal services to protective support.

The updated guidance supports the outcomes and recommendations of the [Rapid Review of Child Protection Arrangements in Wales](#) undertaken by the various inspectorates, and the [Thematic Analysis of Child Practice Reviews in Wales](#) undertaken by the National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB) published in 2023, both of which acknowledged the need for better understanding and application of thresholds by practitioners in safeguarding work. Multi-agency training has been developed and delivered to support the implementation of the document.



Work to Support Changes to Crime and Justice Legislation

Work to ensure key safeguarding outcomes from relevant regional and national workstreams linked to crime and justice work, including legislative changes and government decisions, has been undertaken and embedded into the Board's workstreams. This has included ensuring multi-agency safeguards are in place resulting from any implications or increased risk as a result of the early release of prisoners into the community. An assurance exercise has been undertaken by the Probation service that has enabled proportionate mitigations to put in place against any identified risk.

Preparation has been undertaken throughout the year on a multi-agency basis in relation to changes to prisoner and offender management arrangements across the region as a result of the Sentencing Act. Changes include more individuals being managed in the community as opposed to prison, a move away from short term custodial sentences towards greater use of suspended sentence orders. A cultural shift towards more probation led risk management and the expanded use of electronic tagging in the community, alongside further changes to post-sentence supervision, has required clear multi-agency planning and partnership working at a strategic and operational level.

In addition, a multi-agency task and finish group is underway across the region to support more timely, robust information sharing to inform pre-sentence reports, to ensure any safeguarding risks are known and understood and can be taken into consideration in any custodial or community-based sentence issued by the courts.

Projects to support improved information sharing

Safeguarding LINC is a project sponsored by the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards, which aims to utilise the latest technological advancements to integrate data from multi-agency partners to enhance support for the protection of vulnerable children. The project is being undertaken in partnership with two of the four Local Authorities in the region, together with Dyfed-Powys Police and Hywel Dda University Health Board.



Safeguarding LINC supports practitioners to access a more complete picture of a child or young person's circumstances and supports the sharing of relevant information in a timely and systematic way, helping to inform safeguarding decisions at critical points of contact. This year, work has been undertaken with frontline practitioners to develop a system that provides a clear and accessible view of safeguarding information, including multi-agency contact history and household context. The system is currently being tested, with the first phase of implementation scheduled for the autumn of 2026.

Alongside implementation, Cardiff University is evaluating how the project can improve safeguarding practice, and how advanced analytics and artificial intelligence could support the earlier identification of risk. Looking ahead, Safeguarding LINC is being developed as a scalable model, with the potential to support wider health and care integration across Wales.

[Watch the project video here to learn more about Safeguarding LINC.](#)

Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR)

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards continue to lead on the coordination and delivery of the Learning and Development Framework in respect of Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSRs) in Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government, working alongside Welsh Government colleagues, as well as other Regional Safeguarding Boards and Community Safety Partnerships across Wales. We have supported the implementation of the new SUSR statutory guidance published in October 2024 via the provision of high-quality training, guidance and supplementary resources. This includes skills-based, in-person training packages for Panel Chairs and Independent Reviewers, as well as Panel Members, with an established annual programme which will continue into the coming year.

This year, we have built upon these packages via the creation of e-learning for Chairs, Reviewers and Panel Members. These materials are designed to act as pre-reading to the in-person training, covering the basic principles of the SUSR model and the key stages of the process.

They also serve, however, as a useful handbook following the training, as a resource which can be referred back to during an active SUSR to support Chairs, Reviewers and Panel Members through the process. The packages received overwhelmingly positive feedback when piloted alongside in-person delivery this year and are now a core element of the overarching programmes for these key groups going forward.

It has given us great pleasure this year to also launch a suite of training videos to support a number of other key groups within the learning and development framework. Three animations have been developed in total:

1. [An Awareness for All video, outlining the SUSR model, principles and process;](#)
2. [A video for Senior Leaders, exploring the SUSR model through an organisational lens; and](#)
3. [A video for Learning Event attendees, which helps to prepare identified attendees to a Learning Event by outlining the purpose and ethos of the event, and contextualising this within the overarching SUSR process.](#)

All videos are available bilingually and have been widely disseminated, forming a key part of regional toolkits to support the ongoing facilitation of SUSRs across Wales.

An additional programme of training has been introduced this year, specifically targeting senior leaders within organisations who may become involved in SUSRs.

The online workshops build upon the introductory resource outlined above by providing a space for senior leaders, including members of Executive Boards, Case Review Groups and Community Safety Partnerships, to reflect together on what the introduction of the SUSR model means for organisations, and the role that senior leaders play in supporting the process.

“

SUSR Panel Member Training Attendee feedback:

I found the day's training very comprehensive. It helped me understand the role and think carefully about how it may need to be approached, in particular understanding the time and commitment that will be needed is helpful. I feel much better prepared and understand my role and responsibilities.

”

“

SUSR Senior Leaders Training Attendee feedback:

I really enjoyed the session; I would have happily sat for another half a day listening to and being part of the reflective conversations.

I really enjoyed the way in which Barbara and Mel approached the subject matter, it felt very sensitive and facilitative.

”

Four sessions were held during the year, all of which were very well attended and received exceptional feedback. As a result, this training has been enshrined in the programme of delivery for the coming year.

The MAWWSB Strategic Regional Safeguarding Manager, Practice Review Business Manager and other Sub Group members have continued to contribute to national task and finish groups to progress this work.

This year, this has included the development of a flowchart and supplementary worksheets to support SUSR panels in their engagement

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SUSR Chairs and Reviewers Training Attendee feedback:

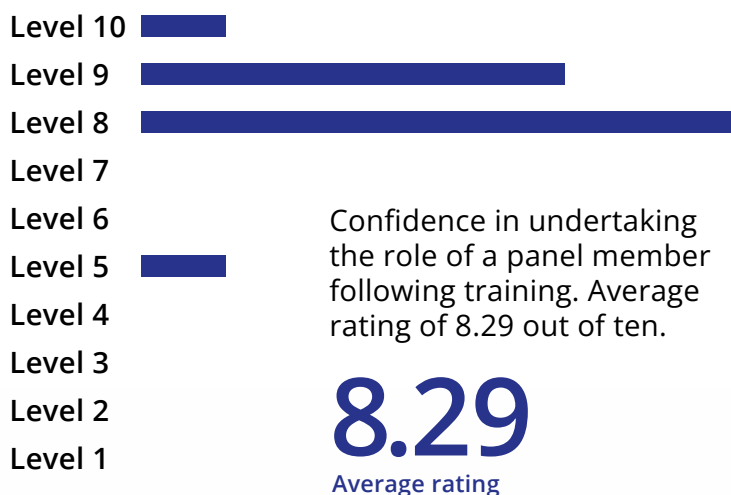
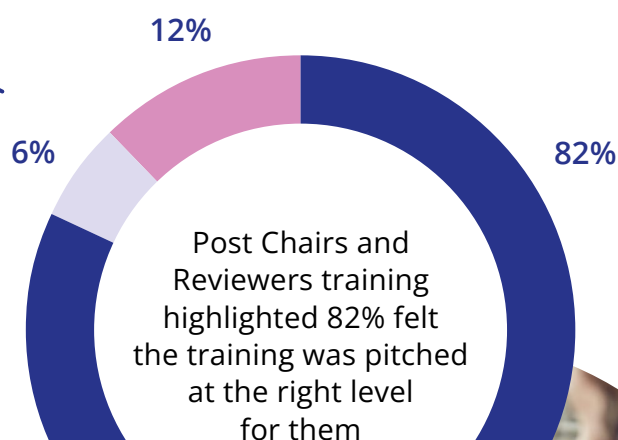
I really enjoyed the training - it maintained a good pace and the trainer was excellent, with lots of real-life examples which really helped to inform the process

”

with review subjects, family members, principal individuals, and perpetrators/alleged perpetrators, as well as input to the 1-Year Review of SUSR, the outcomes of which will be reported in the coming year.

The Boards are delighted to be able to continue to support ongoing practice development in respect of these critical Board functions and look forward to further opportunities to do so in the coming year as part of the ongoing delivery of the learning and development framework, and collaboration with Welsh Government on important national workstreams.

- This training covered a lot of knowledge/skills I already hold.
- This training did not explore the skills required to conduct an SUSR as much as I would have liked.
- This training was pitched at the right level for me.





Images from National SUSR Training, held in Cardiff



Images from regional SUSR Chairs and Reviewers Training



Safer Sleep Practice

In recognition of the tragic regional and national theme of infant deaths where unsafe sleep practices have been a factor, the Board has developed Regional Safer Sleep Guidance. Informed by specialist advice from regional Health Boards, the guidance is aimed at multi-agency safeguarding practitioners and includes key information on what is considered safe and unsafe in relation to a baby's sleeping environment, risk factors within the home that practitioners should consider as part of their overall assessment, the role of Health practitioners in providing safer sleep advice to parents and carers, and the role of multi-agency safeguarding professionals when concerns about unsafe sleep practices are identified.

The guidance forms part of a wider programme of work to promote safer sleep across the region, alongside resources and advice for parents and carers available through the CYSUR website.

Read the guidance and access safer sleep resources for parents and carers via the links:

<https://cysur.wales/resource-hub/safer-sleeping/>

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2023-2027

Work has continued with rigour and pace across the region in relation to the [Building Happier, Safer, Stronger Lives, Mid and West Wales Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2027](#).

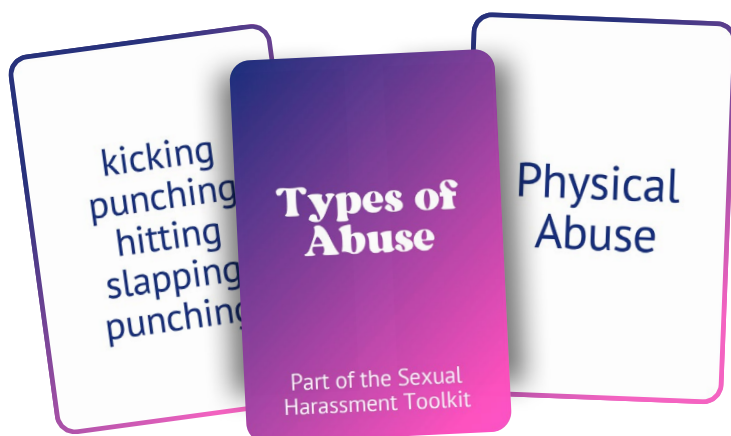
This regional strategy encompasses the experiences of survivors' voices and individual experiences regarding the services they have received, and how these can be improved. This has been developed within the national context and the Welsh Government's National Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2022-2026.

The strategy is underpinned by a regional delivery plan with six high-level overarching actions.

These include challenging public attitudes to violence against women and sexual violence through awareness raising, early intervention with children and perpetrators to support healthy relationships, and timely, high-quality services and responses to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Key achievements and areas of focus this year have included an agreed extension to the existing commissioned regional perpetrator contract, that will continue to address the behaviour of those that commit acts of domestic abuse in all forms, including violent and coercive and controlling behaviour, as well as the development and launch of [Relationship and Sexual Education \(RSE\) curriculum videos](#).

Other key achievements include a new launched Sexual Harassment Toolkit alongside a very successful She is Not Your Rehab event with young people in the region.



Sexual Harassment Toolkit content above;
Toolkit cover above right.

“

This regional strategy encompasses the experiences of survivors' voices and individual experiences regarding the services they have received, and how these can be improved.

”



Image from the Sexual Harassment Toolkit launch event



Image from the recent **She is not your rehab** event

The current delivery plan, which is reflective of the experiences of those with lived experience of domestic abuse, continues to be enhanced via the ongoing work of a regional Survivor Advisory Panel. The panel continues to be embedded and operational within existing regional structures, and its members regularly attend various regional and national meetings to share their experiences. Work continues to be undertaken with practitioners on awareness raising in respect of dual allegations and the impact of post-separation abuse.

Activity across the region has been comprehensive and sustained, which includes ongoing work to develop a regional protocol for responding to cases where there are counter allegations of VAWDASV, and preliminary work to develop a performance framework to measure, monitor and evaluate the regional strategy.

The strategy continues to strengthen preventative and support services for children and young people, survivors and perpetrators across the Mid and West Wales region.

Work To Support Isolated Organisations and Institutions

Pembrokeshire Local Authority has taken a lead role in providing support to Caldey Island and Abbey, whose estate is located within its locality. This follows the publication of an independent review published in December 2024, in respect of historical allegations of abuse.

Safeguarding lead officers from the island have attended regional Executive Board meetings periodically to provide updates on the progress and implementation of the associated action plan and recommendations from the review, as well as sharing the findings of a comprehensive safeguarding audit undertaken.

A response group has been established by Pembrokeshire Local Authority consisting of senior safeguarding managers from Pembrokeshire and the Regional Safeguarding Board who are providing support, guidance and advice on current safeguarding arrangements including training, human resources and governance arrangements.

This work will continue in the coming year, and the regional Boards will further consider how they can extend this work and support to other similar organisations and institutions in the region who are isolated from mainstream safeguarding infrastructures, services and governance structures.

Executive Board Development Day

On 23rd January 2026, the Executive Board came together to hold their Annual Development Day in Llandovery. This standing annual event provides an essential opportunity for colleagues to consider as a collaborative the outcomes and successes of the previous year's Annual Plan, and to use this reflection to look forward to the key aims to be included in the plan for the coming year.

This year's event provided an opportunity for partners to come together to reflect on the year's achievements and set new objectives for the year ahead, aligned with our overarching strategic priorities.

The day consisted of a series of structured exercises, including consideration of the implications of the thematic review undertaken by the National Independent Safeguarding Board into Adult Practice Reviews, as well as a reflective session on the Boards' journey over our 10-year history and how this will inform our future direction. Board members then explored agency engagement and how this can be strengthened in some areas of the Boards' work moving forward.

To view the full annual plan for the coming year, please see [here](#)

“ Board members feedback on the Boards work: ”

The Safeguarding Board facilitate good, effective communication between all agencies and nurtures effective multi-agency working. The Board functions as a well-established, cohesive Board and is very creative in developing new ideas for progressing safeguarding policies and procedures to establish consistent best practice across the Board region.



Images from
MAWSB
Development
Day 2026



“ This year's event provided an opportunity for partners to come together to reflect on the year's achievements and set new objectives for the year ahead ”

Serious Violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty places a duty on specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The duty commenced on 31st January 2023 and is a strategic initiative led by the Home Office. The duty is therefore not devolved, however is relevant to Wales and requires a multi-agency approach, involving Police, Local Authorities, healthcare providers, and community organisations to collaborate on strategies to address the root causes of serious violence and implement effective interventions.

Although it is not a statutory requirement for the Police and Crime Commissioner to be members of Regional Safeguarding Boards, they have been formal members of the Regional Executive Boards in Mid and West Wales for several years.

Partner agencies have supported and actively engaged in the development of the regional strategic needs assessment and accompanying delivery plan. The work has been overseen by the Police and Crime Commissioner, with Dyfed-Powys Police being the lead agency driving the work that complements several Board workstreams, many of which support the innovative work undertaken in respect of the VAWDASV agenda.

Throughout 2025/26, statutory partners across Dyfed-Powys continued to embed the Serious Violence Duty through established partnership arrangements, including Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Justice Services and the regional Serious Violence and Organised Crime governance framework. Activity is focused on strengthening early intervention, improving multi-agency working and preventing serious violence among children and young people. Youth Justice and Youth Services worked collaboratively to identify and support young people at risk, delivering targeted interventions, wellbeing programmes, youth voice initiatives and community-based activities aimed at reducing vulnerability and promoting positive outcomes.

Partners also delivered a range of outreach and prevention activities across the region, including community youth provision, hotspot patrols and targeted support for young people at risk of antisocial behaviour, exploitation and County Lines involvement. Commissioned projects funded through the Serious Violence Duty continued to provide diversionary activities, mentoring, domestic abuse prevention work and early support for children and young people affected by trauma. The Swansea City AFC Premier League Kicks project remained a particularly high-impact intervention, extending positive opportunities for children and young people across the Dyfed-Powys area.

During the year, partners also focused on long-term system improvement and sustainability. Funding for 2026/27 was confirmed by the Home Office, supporting the continuation of preventative work across the region. Crest Advisory was commissioned to support the development of a regional response strategy, helping partners strengthen collaboration and identify evidence-based interventions. In addition, developments linked to the Government's Young Futures Programme and Prevention Partnerships continue to support a coordinated approach to violence prevention, early intervention and safeguarding for children and young people across Wales.

Development, Completion and Publication of Regional Strategies and Policies

A significant amount of time was dedicated in the preceding year to the development of practice guidance to support practitioners who work with fabricated and induced illness. A multi-agency task and finish group was led by the two named Doctors for the region, and the [Fabricated and Induced Illness, Regional Multi-Agency Practice Guidance](#) was finalised and launched this year.

Work to develop a [Child Protection \(CP\) Conference Chairs Escalation Process](#) was also completed this year by the regional CP Chairs Group. This work complements the [Rapid Review of Child Protection Arrangements in Wales](#) undertaken by the various inspectorates. The process seeks to provide an additional safety net for children on the Child Protection Register by strengthening the responsibilities and role of CP Conference Chairs to identify and escalate, where appropriate, any children deemed to be at significant risk and/or where an existing child protection plan may not be effective and proportionate to the identified level of risk.

In addition to the above policy documents, the Boards also this year developed and ratified a regional [Multi-agency Guideline for Safeguarding Children and Adults Around Dogs](#).

All of these projects have been completed within the Boards' various groups and Sub Groups, and extensive support has been provided by all partner agencies to the development of these policies. All resources provide guidance to staff, and seek to support and improve professional safeguarding practice, closely aligned to the Boards' strategic priorities.

Please see link to our [policies page](#) on our website, in which a full list of our regional policies can be found, along with links to key national policies and guidance documents.



Left and above: Two images from CP Chairs Development Day in Llandovery, September 2025

Information to Support 5 Key Elements of Safeguarding Effectiveness



Bwrdd Diogelu Annibynnol
Cenedlaethol Cymru

National Independent
Safeguarding Board Wales

The following supplementary specific information is provided to support the 5 domains of effective safeguarding, as requested by the National Independent Safeguarding Board this year.

NISB - 5 Key Elements to Safeguarding Effectiveness



The Safeguarding Process

(How is the Board assured that arrangements are effective in identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns? What are the outcomes of regional processes and interventions?)

The Boards' structures continue to support a clear and accountable governance process for agencies to report on a regular basis their safeguarding activity and performance to the Regional Safeguarding Executive Boards. This is supported by a well-established regional performance and quality assurance framework that provides quarterly performance data, which is interrogated and analysed, supported by a regional audit programme.

The Boards' Local Operational Groups are key local multi-agency fora that meet regularly to discuss local operational safeguarding practice and strategic issues. The four Local Authority areas within the Mid and West Wales region host the Local Operational Groups, which are chaired by a Head of Children's or Adults' Services. They function and operate under an agreed regional integrated all-age structure, aligned to the overarching legislative framework in Wales. Each Local Operational Group is required to provide a quarterly summary report to the Regional Executive Safeguarding Boards on local safeguarding activity and performance, as well as wider safeguarding activity and information such as training, safeguarding in schools and education, SUSRs and MAPFs (including the monitoring of action plans), and commissioning information in relation to care and nursing homes. The report also has a section dedicated to the outcome of any local inspections. Each Local Operational Group has an established audit programme which is led by the relevant Local Authority. The outcomes and findings are shared periodically with partners. Examples of themes shared at LOGs this year include family network meetings, pathway plans and safeguarding discussions.

In addition, an annual programme of reports is provided to the Boards by specific agencies on a rotational basis. For example, Dyfed-Powys Police provide a summary of the outcome of their annual inspection undertaken by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and any information relevant to safeguarding. As a further example, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board provide an annual report on the outcome of their yearly self-assessment in respect of the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix, which is a tool for Health Boards that provides assurance, shares practice and drives improvements towards a consistent approach to safeguarding practice within Health services across Wales.

Assurance in relation to safeguarding practice in schools is provided via the submission of an annual Section 175 report to the Regional Executive Boards. This is a comprehensive assessment of all safeguarding systems and processes within Education services across the region, and includes an assessment of partnerships and working relationships, training and the management of allegations against staff.

Commissioning reports are provided to the Boards on a regular basis. In general terms, commissioning is the process of meeting needs at a strategic level for whole groups of service users or populations. This can include, for example, older people in receipt of domiciliary care provision in the community, those in residential care or nursing homes, and children in need

of specialist residential provision, as well as advocacy for adults and children. Safeguarding is central to the commissioning of care and support services, and it is essential that good, effective safeguarding practice is integrated across the full commissioning cycle.

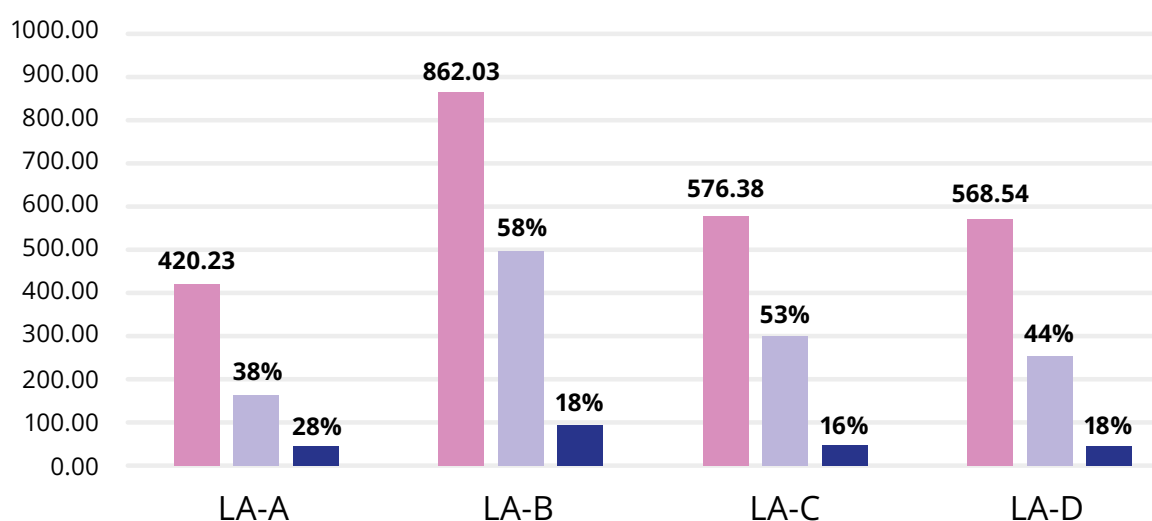
A standard template has been developed this year to support the provision of regular assurance reports in respect of practice and activity across the region. Work this year has continued to focus upon the implementation of the regional Quality Assurance Framework. This has been implemented jointly with each Local Authority, and Hywel Dda University Health Board are now adopting the framework. The evaluation and feedback from providers have been positive. This work will be enhanced and complemented in the coming year with the implementation of the Code of Practice on Quality Assurance and Performance Management, Escalating Concerns, and Closure of Regulated Care and Support Services, published in March 2026.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Activity and Data

(How does the Board assure itself that existing protocols between agencies are effective, when individuals are at risk of harm? What data is collected in respect of this, how is this shared and what evidence has emerged in the period?)

Supporting effective challenge and professional accountability in the delivery of safeguarding practice

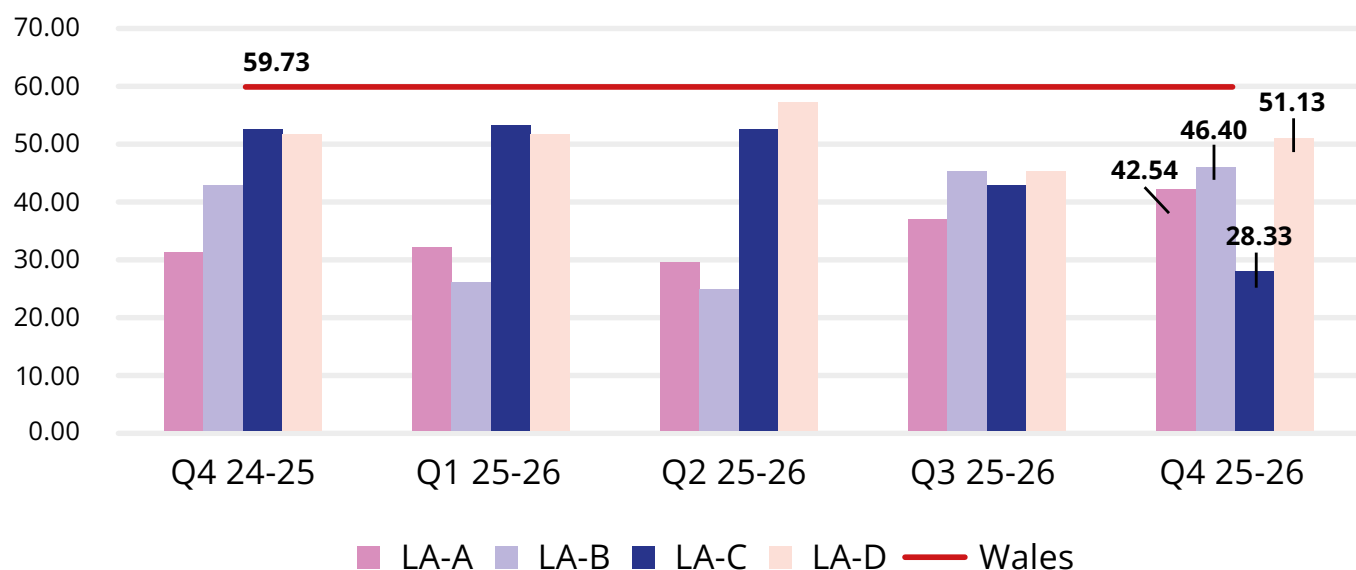
Initial Strategy Meetings, Section 47 Enquiries and Initial Child Protection Conferences (Per 10k) - 2025/26



■ Initial Strategy Meetings (YTD) ■ % Section 47 Enquiries ■ % Initial Child Protection Conference

Graph above showing exemplar from regional data set showing the number of Initial Strategy Meetings/Discussions held in each LA in a quarter per 10k population, the of those which progressed to Section 47 enquiries, and of those, the percentage that further progressed to an Initial Child Protection Conference

Children on the Child Protection Register per 10k - 5 consecutive quarters



Graph above showing exemplar from regional data set showing Children on Child Protection Register per 10k population. population.

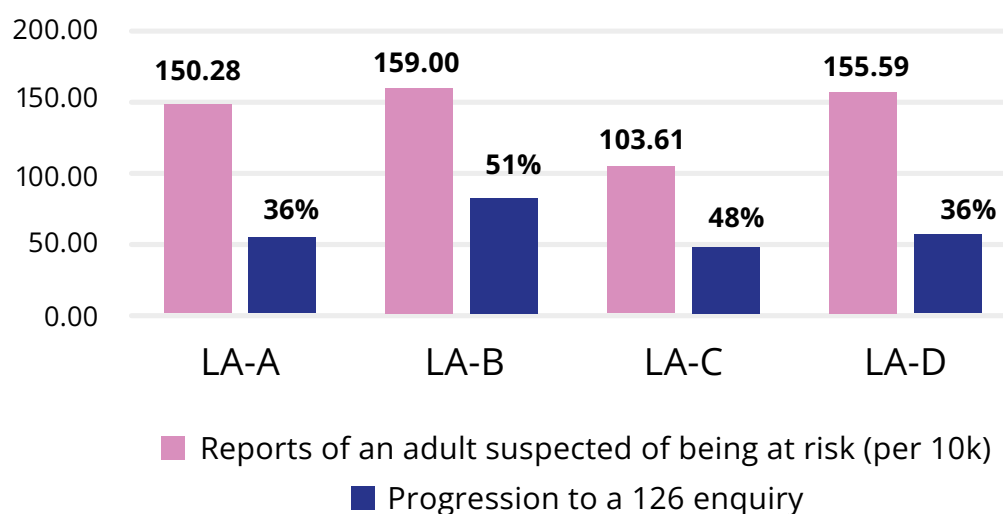
The Boards' Quality Assurance and Reporting Framework referenced above includes a comprehensive dataset. This aids the Boards' understanding of professional safeguarding practice within a multi-agency context across the region, utilising data which aligns with the Welsh Government performance indicators.

As well as information provided by the Local Authority, the Police and Health Boards also provide data on key measures related to their safeguarding activity and practice.

Examples of data submitted across agencies includes information in relation to children at risk, section 47 investigations, children on the child protection register, looked after children (LAC), exploitation and modern-day slavery, hospital admissions as a result of self-harm, and performance against compliance with requirements for deprivation of liberty safeguards, as well as trends and patterns in respect of suspected suicide.

For adults at risk, information is provided in respect of, for example, section 126 enquiries and the 7-day enquiry, domestic abuse and provider performance. The data and information reported covers all key areas of safeguarding activity and practice, and are measured using formulae which take into account the population of each area to facilitate a truer reflection of local and regional trends. A report with analysis is produced by the Regional Safeguarding Manager and Business Unit staff, highlighting any key trends. This is discussed at length at the Executive Board, and local data is explored at Local Operational Groups.

Reports of adult suspected of being at risk (per 10k) and progression to 126 enquiry



Graph showing exemplar from regional data set showing reports of adult suspected of being at risk and progression to 126 enquiries (per 10k population).

This continues to support the Regional Executive Board's robust helicopter view of high-level multi-agency safeguarding practice across the region, via the scrutiny of quarterly overview reports, containing analysis of key regional and local trends. This supports the Boards in their commitment to effective challenge and holding agencies to account when safeguarding practice and service delivery falls below expected standards.

Thematic Hotspots

(What key thematic sources of harm which require a safeguarding response of harm locally are evidenced in the Board data? What steps have been taken to respond to this thematic evidence?)

The processes outlined in the two sections above support seamless identification of key thematic trends across the multi-agency partnership and region. Over the years, since the existence of the current Mid and West Wales All Age Safeguarding Boards and partnership, a number of thematic trends and hotspots have been identified through these processes that have resulted in more in-depth pieces of work being undertaken in the form of deep-dive exercises, independent reviews of practice and research. Examples of themes explored through this work include suicide, elective home education, thresholds, domestic homicides and the workforce. The outcome of these pieces of work have influenced the Boards' strategic priorities, reflected in its published annual plans and accompanying workstreams.

Audits are undertaken at a local level are shared and discussed where appropriate at Local Operational Groups. Regional audit work this year has prioritised the development of a regional audit tool in respect of the new updated Section 5 process for those in a position of trust; this will be undertaken in the coming year.

A regional multi-agency risk register into QA reporting mechanisms enhances and supports existing processes, to highlight patterns and trends across the region that have a multi-agency impact on the delivery of safeguarding services.

Service User Feedback

(What are the RSB's objectives regarding gathering service user feedback in relation to directing safeguarding activity? What do the metrics that capture this feedback tell the Board? How does the Board plan to respond to this evidence and over what time?)

There is no one overarching framework or process for gathering consistent service user feedback; a number of arrangements are in place at a local agency level that influence safeguarding work, response and activity across the region.

A number of Local Authorities, for example, have referenced mechanisms in place for obtaining feedback from service users as part of the child protection conference process.

Dyfed Powys Probation has a strong and developing approach to engaging people on probation and learning directly from lived experience. The Engaging People on Probation (EPOP) group is well established in Llanelli, is now starting in Pembrokeshire, and will be rolled out across the remaining counties in the Dyfed-Powys region. These forums provide meaningful opportunities to hear from people on probation about what is working well within services and what matters most to them.

During the HMIP inspection in August 2025, the EPOP group in Llanelli was identified as good practice, described as inspiring and providing genuine, meaningful engagement with service users.

Dyfed-Powys Police utilise the regional Victim/Survivor panel as well as the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Victim Engagement Forum. When change is being considered, they proactively reach out and engage with victim/survivors to seek their opinions. An example of this was consultation in relation to the new Domestic Abuse and Stalking Victim Information Pack to inform the finished product.



Dyfed-Powys Police also engage and fully participate in the OPCC Quality Assurance Panel, whereby independent panel members with lived experience will quality assure thematic areas. Reports are created with findings and recommendations that feed into and support service improvements alongside improved strategic planning.

The regional Survivors Panel, linked to our regional VAWDASV programme of work, has continued to directly influence key workstreams this year. Their voice and experiences are actively embedded into the Boards' wider structures and are actively influencing the shaping of services across the region for survivors of domestic abuse. This year has continued to focus on the impact of post-separation abuse and counter-allegations made by perpetrators of domestic abuse.

The pilot project for the Most Significant Change model of engagement in respect of adults is underway, and will seek to utilise the stories of those with lived experience to inform safeguarding practice and the delivery of services across agencies at a wider, more strategic level. More information in respect of this can be found in section (h).

Workforce Information

(What is known about the profile of the safeguarding workforce?)

How is recruitment and retention affecting the delivery of safeguarding duties?

To what extent is multi-agency training provided to and taken up by the safeguarding workforce?

What evidence is available to assure the Board that agencies understand and respond to the wellbeing and support of the safeguarding workforce?)

A commissioned review and analysis of children and adults safeguarding workforce risk factors was previously jointly commissioned by the Regional Safeguarding Boards and the West Wales Regional Partnership Board as a collaborative endeavour. This followed and built upon previous work carried out in 2018 by the Regional Safeguarding Boards in respect of children's social care. This has assisted the Board in gaining a full and clear understanding of the regional social care workforce and any associated risk factors.

The improved stability acknowledged in last year's report has continued into 2025/26, and it is extremely positive that the emerging picture identified in last year's report has continued along an overall more positive trajectory. Alongside investment in developing long-term strategies to maintain a skilled, stable workforce, creative measures implemented across the social care workforce in recent years continue to pay dividends, alongside long-term recruitment strategies. This includes continued investment and focus on "Grow Your Own" approaches across the Local Authority areas within the region. This has involved continued investment in the creation of paid traineeships for qualified social work positions, to mitigate against the trends and risks identified within the recruitment and retention of staff. In Pembrokeshire, recruitment and retention have been maintained at 10% again this year, which continues to be a significant improvement compared to previous years.

In Powys, the Children's Services workforce has continued to stabilise over the last two years in respect of vacancies and retention rates, and they continue to follow a detailed recruitment and retention action plan, which has enabled some reduced activities due to the more stable position. The service is continuing to see more starters than leavers. The coming year will see 8 new social workers qualify and take up positions from the "Grow Your Own" cohort.

More recent recruitment activity in Powys has centred on residential homes, where there continues to be challenges. This has included attending recruitment events, producing home specific promotional materials, advertising relief posts to internal staff and weekend and school holiday workers, and developing new promotional videos. These efforts have resulted in several successful recruitment rounds with a more positive picture emerging.

Care Career Connector in Powys have worked with the Health and Social Care Academy and helped to deliver care and education experiences in local schools and colleges. These hands on learning sessions have given students practical experience in a safe environment, and have helped inspire future careers in health and social care, as well as promoting clear pathways into the sector.

Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion have robust systems and structures in place to maintain oversight of vacancies, and trends generally continue to see an upward trajectory in terms of workforce stability. Ceredigion report a much greater level of workforce stability this year, with successful recruitment into business-critical services including frontline childcare teams.

Both Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Boards have robust structures in place to oversee any workforce challenges. Relevant directorates and clinical care groups have oversight of workforce profiles and participate in annual workforce planning. Any risks related to the workforce and safeguarding are on service risk registers and escalated accordingly, including where risks are very significant to the Regional Safeguarding Executive Board, as has been the case in previous years with regards to challenges in some parts of the region in respect of the Health Visiting Service.

In commissioning, workforce data is considered as part of the commissioning quality assurance process including staff turnover, exit interviews, vacancies, and agency usage. Waiting lists for domiciliary care have reduced during 2025/26, however providers are having to be creative to ensure they are actively recruiting as well as retaining staff. Reliance on overseas workers is significant across all sectors.

Although the Regional Safeguarding Boards are not directly responsible or accountable for the workforce within third sector organisations, they do support many preventative safeguarding services, including those that support domestic abuse work. Specialist providers continue to highlight this year the significant strain on retention of trained, skilled and experience staff, as well as significant issues in recruiting into the sector.



Training

As outlined under section (j), all agencies have their own internal safeguarding training programmes. The Regional Safeguarding Board Training Sub Group commissions and provides multi-agency training throughout the year. This is generally specialist safeguarding training linked to multi-agency themes and need, which is therefore not widely available through single-agency training programmes, as well as training linked to recommendations from Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews. When multi-agency training is available, there is usually a high demand for places, and feedback is consistently positive. Views are widely expressed by agencies within Mid and West Wales that more multi-agency training is needed, and this model is deemed to be more effective overall in terms of outcomes. The focus of this year's multi-agency training programmes and packages are covered under section (j).

Work continues to embed the [National Safeguarding Training Standards](#) and Framework across the region. As fully outlined in section (J), work this year has focussed upon supporting implementation for practitioners and managers that fall within group C.

All agencies have structures and support in place to support staff well-being. This bespoke support is targeted towards staff providing safeguarding services, in addition to Occupational Health and staff counselling services available to all staff widely across organisations. For example, Ceredigion have a Well-Being Officer whose role is to develop initiatives to support all staff's well-being. They also have formal structures of supervision and peer supervision support within teams.

Powys Local Authority has continued to invest heavily in staff well-being initiatives in recent years as part of their broader workforce strategy. An in-house clinical psychologist provides different interventions to support the wellbeing of staff across Children's Services. This includes sessions to support practitioners, managers, groups and teams, alongside specialist be-spoke trauma informed training.

Team Manager Feedback

Sessions have been invaluable in helping me to work through my own struggles linked to witnessing traumatic events and highly emotive situations at work. They have given me space to process my own feelings and accept and develop strategies for managing the emotional impact on my managerial role. They have helped me to build trauma-informed responses for my team, who are regularly working with very sensitive and tragic circumstances.

Staff Member Feedback

I witnessed a very traumatic event (with a young person) ... and had to take time off work. (The sessions) really helped me to transition back to work and regain my confidence.

These consultations offer a safe and supportive space for staff to reflect on the emotional impact of working with trauma and vulnerability. Feedback from staff indicated this support is both utilised and highly valued by staff.

Carmarthenshire operate a team POD system with an in-house psychologist providing specialist support and guidance to staff on the most complex cases.

Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board have an array of services available to staff, including biweekly online

wellbeing sessions offered to all staff, group and individual debriefs following traumatic events, and a “speak up safely” portal and process, alongside specialist safeguarding Intranet pages providing a host of resources for staff.

The Boards have taken opportunities to promote and raise awareness of “Canopi” again this year through our communication platforms, including our newsletter.



Canopi offer a free and confidential mental health support service for social and healthcare staff in Wales. Canopi provides support to those with mental health and psychological symptoms, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and alcohol-related issues.

“*Canopi offer a free and confidential mental health support service for social and healthcare staff in Wales.*”



What difference have we made and what outcomes have we achieved?

- The Boards have strengthened safeguarding practice across the region through improved thresholds guidance, learning and robust quality assurance arrangements, supporting more consistent and effective responses to children and adults at risk.
- Investment in prevention, early intervention and partnership working has improved opportunities to identify vulnerability for children and adults earlier, reduce harm and promote better safeguarding outcomes across Mid and West Wales.
- Creative approaches to recruitment and workforce planning, together with investment in support to practitioners, including well-being services, support a strong, resilient multi-agency workforce better equipped to respond to children and adults at risk of harm.



“

Investment in prevention, early intervention and partnership working has improved opportunities to identify vulnerability for children and adults earlier.

”



(c) How we have collaborated with other bodies engaged in activities relating to the Boards' objectives

Welsh Government

The Boards have continued to work closely with Welsh Government this year. The Strategic Regional Safeguarding Manager and staff in the Boards' Business Unit attend national briefing meetings and bespoke events to support the development of national safeguarding work and policy.

The Board Chairs continue to attend and engage in regular meetings with senior Welsh Government officials and the National Independent Safeguarding Board. Much of the Boards' focus this year has been on continuing to support the implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) as fully outlined in section (b). Further work has focused on supporting the development of the [Welsh Government's 10-year national strategy for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse](#), and by agreeing collaborative solutions and work in response to national reports, such as [Baroness Casey's Independent Inquiry into Grooming Gangs](#).



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Older People's Commissioner for Wales

We have worked with and actively promoted the work of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales. This has included widely promoting and sharing a survey that supported [Growing older in Wales: A snapshot of older people's experiences report](#) as well as supporting her [strategy and work programme](#).



Comisiynydd
Pobl Hŷn
Cymru
Older People's
Commissioner
for Wales

The Commissioner attended the Regional Safeguarding Executive Board in October 2025 to outline her work and priorities, which include: launching a consultation on older people's experiences of social care; addressing digital exclusion and digital ageism (including the impact of artificial intelligence); reviewing access to dental services; improving support for independent living and advocacy; strengthening services for older people experiencing abuse, including sexual violence; and introducing training for policymakers and public sector staff to challenge ageism.

The strategy also focuses on working with Local Authorities to create age-friendly communities. The Board has promoted further work linked to the strategy outside of formal Board meetings, and has provided advice, insight and observations on additional workstreams, including some challenges in respect of the update and use of advocacy for adults at risk directly to senior staff at the Commissioner's Office.

Police and Crime Commissioner

The Boards' existing positive relationship with the Police and Crime Commissioner has been sustained this year via continued attendance and contribution to Regional Safeguarding Executive Board meetings, and they remain a fully integrated member of the regional Executive Board. Through this avenue, the Boards have received frequent, in-depth updates in respect of the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty since its commencement on 31st January 2023. The year has continued to focus on implementation of its delivery plan following the completion of the regional strategic needs assessment.



Other Regional Safeguarding Boards across Wales

Regional Safeguarding Board Managers across Wales continue to meet regularly to share good practice, discuss areas of development and identify emerging national safeguarding trends. The ongoing implementation of the SUSR Learning and Development Framework by Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards on behalf of the Welsh Government is overseen by a Training Steering Group, which features representatives from all Regional Safeguarding Boards in Wales, thus continuing to allow a collaborative approach to training development and delivery. The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards also meet frequently with other Boards across Wales to plan National Safeguarding Week, discussing ideas and sharing regional plans to allow good practice to be shared.

Social Care Wales

Work has continued this year to support the ongoing implementation of the National Safeguarding Training Standards and Framework. Work has focused on support with the development of Group C resources, a key staff group across agencies with direct responsibility for people who are in receipt of statutory safeguarding services and support.

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards have continued to be represented on the national development group leading on the implementation of this work and remain actively engaged in this project.



Public Health Wales (National Safeguarding Service)

Public Health Wales's National Safeguarding Service works closely with Welsh Government, Health Boards and NHS Trusts to improve safeguarding across NHS Wales.

They provide consistent attendance to the Regional Executive Board and to Board Sub Groups, as well as supporting bespoke pieces of work such as the development of regional Safe Sleep Guidance.



Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)



The Boards continue to respond to and provide information when requested by CIW. Regional work has continued this year to progress actions and work arising from the outcome of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Child Practice Review in North Wales. This review has generated a significant amount of work for all Regional Safeguarding Boards in Wales, and we have responded to information requests and provided assurance documents in respect of practice for practitioners in a position of trust who may be considered under Part 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

In addition to this specific workstream undertaken during the year, the Boards have supported and provided information in respect of ongoing inspections where appropriate in the region. CIW are routinely offered a designated slot at all regional Executive Board meetings and have attended this year to discuss the findings and requirements in respect of the aforementioned Child Practice Review.

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)



The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards continue to maintain strong links with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in the region. Following publication of the SUSR Statutory Guidance in October 2024, work and collaboration to support implementation of the SUSR model has taken place. Work has focused upon strengthening existing regional processes to ensure proportionate links and robust governance processes are in place during the completion and publication of an SUSR with a domestic abuse element.

National Independent Safeguarding Board

**National Independent
Safeguarding Board**

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards continue to enjoy a constructive relationship with the National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB), and members regularly attend and contribute to Regional Executive Board meetings.

Discussions and dialogue with Welsh Government and the NISB continue to take place regularly via Board Manager meetings, as well as supplementary meetings with Board Chairs.

The Boards have utilised the offer and resourcing of support from Manchester Metropolitan University to support and develop safeguarding practice, through the undertaking of regional work to improve and strengthen responses to adults at risk, with a focus upon the section 126 enquiry process.



(d) Requests made to qualifying persons under sec 137(1) and whether they were complied with

For the purpose of enabling or assisting the Boards to perform its functions, Section 137 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 allows Safeguarding Boards to ask a qualifying person or body to supply specific information. The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards made no such specific requests this year.

.....

(e) To what extent have agencies contributed to the boards' effectiveness

Hywel Dda University Health Board



Hywel Dda University Health Board are an engaged and consistent member of the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Boards of CYSUR and CWMPAS, providing representation at Executive Board level, as well as on multiple Board Sub Groups and each county's Local Operational Group.

This year, multi-agency and partnership working has been strengthened within the organisation, with the Safeguarding Team now working more closely and collaboratively with partner agencies to support effective communication, coordinated responses, and improved safeguarding outcomes.

Hywel Dda are also actively engaged in numerous national workstreams, such as the development of the All Wales Integrated Referral Form (AWIRF), which seeks to develop a unified referral form across Wales for safeguarding concerns. The Health Board have also co-led on the revised draft of the National Safeguarding Service (NSS) Routine Enquiry Minimum Standards, which relate to routine enquiries made by Health professionals in relation to whether a service user may be experiencing domestic abuse. The Health Board have also engaged with Social Care Wales in relation to the Section 5 Review, further contributing to national learning and improvement.

In addition to these bespoke pieces of work, Hywel Dda are also active and visible members of the NHS Wales Safeguarding Network and Sub Groups. The Lead Nurse is also a member of the Transition Task and Finish Group led by the National Strategic Clinical Network for Child Health (NHS Wales).

The Safeguarding Team continues to offer a single point of contact for all Health Board and Local Authority staff to access for advice and support, ensuring the workforce have a designated contact point for any safeguarding-related concerns or queries.

Furthermore, restorative supervision is now available to all members of the Safeguarding Team, supporting staff wellbeing, reflective practice, and resilience in managing complex safeguarding work. Restorative supervision has contributed to a more supported, resilient, and effective safeguarding workforce, resulting in improved outcomes for children and adults at risk.



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

Hywel Dda University Health Board have established a weekly touchpoint meeting with all Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments and Minor Injury Units (MIUs) across the Health Board. These meetings are attended by the safeguarding team alongside medical and nursing staff from clinical areas, supporting strengthened communication, improved coordination, and enhanced outcomes for vulnerable children and adults at risk.

Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB)

Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) contribute fully to both the CYSUR and CWMPAS Boards, demonstrating a strong commitment to partnership working by providing consistent representation at the Executive Boards and at all Board Sub Groups, including the Safeguarding Leads Group, Training and Development and Policy and Procedure Sub Groups.

This year, PTHB have provided significant support to a regional workstream in relation to safe sleep, which is fully outlined in section (b). This piece of work arose primarily from a regional Child Practice Review, but is also linked to tragic instances of infant death where unsafe sleeping practice has taken place in both regional and national cases.

In addition to this key workstream, the Health Board have also actively supported other regional workstreams this year, including the Fabricated and Induced Illness Regional Multi-Agency Practice Guidance. PTHB have also been engaged in the work previously outlined in relation to reviewing and updating the National Safeguarding Service (NSS) Routine Enquiry Minimum Standards.



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

Powys Teaching Health Board have implemented a Virtual Women's Health Hub, containing content and training resources

co-produced with victims and survivors of domestic abuse.

The Hub provides an opportunity for the Health Board to take a proactive approach to preventing all forms of VAWDASV, while also protecting and supporting those who have experienced it.

Powys Teaching Health Board actively support regional practice learning processes, and have this year provided a Panel Chair to a regional SUSR and to a local MAPF. PTHB also support and more widely disseminate learning arising regionally and nationally, utilising means such as their Intranet to share appropriate resources and links to a wide practitioner audience.

More specifically, PTHB have worked closely with Powys County Council to facilitate practitioner attendance at the newly developed regional training in relation to submitting high-quality MARFs. In addition, PTHB have contributed to task and finish groups with Powys County Council on the themes of neglectful home conditions and harmful sexual behaviour, piloting tools developed within Health Visiting teams.

Public Health Wales (National Safeguarding Service)



Public Health Wales's National Safeguarding Service works closely with Welsh Government, Health Boards and NHS Trusts to improve safeguarding across NHS Wales. They provide consistent attendance to the Regional Executive Board and to Board Sub Groups, as well as supporting bespoke pieces of work such as the development of regional Safe Sleep Guidance.

Dyfed-Powys Police



Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) continue to be committed members of the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Boards this year across all Sub Groups and workstreams.

The DPP Assistant Chief Constable Board representative has taken on the role of Vice Chair of the CYSUR and CWMPAS Boards, and the Regional Case Review Sub Group continues to be chaired by a DPP Detective Chief Inspector.

DPP host CYSUR and CWMPAS' quarterly Executive Board meetings, which operate in a hybrid format facilitating both in-person and virtual attendance, which supports rich engagement whilst ensuring the meetings remain accessible in light of the vast geographical footprint of the Board.

DPP hold responsibility for a number of key regional meetings. They Chair both the PRUDiC process and the Rapid Response to Suicide, and currently lead the Daily MARAC process, supporting its administrative and coordination functions. The force has led a change to the MARAC process this year to increase efficiencies and remove duplication, thus increasing the effectiveness of victim safeguarding for high-risk victims of domestic abuse.

This year, Dyfed-Powys Police have introduced the CARA (Cautioning and Relationship Abuse), as a means of out of court disposal for domestic abuse (DA). This aims to address the behaviour of low risk (first time perpetrators) of DA to prevent escalation in their behaviour.

In November 2025, DPP held the first ever All Wales Protective Orders conference in Parc y Scarlets. There was attendance from all Welsh Police forces, along with specialist support services, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Buddi, BAWSO, and legal services.



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

Dyfed-Powys Police have initiated a Multi-Agency Stalking Improvement Panel (MAJSIP) to review stalking cases that have been finalised by both Police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The panel includes Paladin, who represent the victim's views and feedback.

This supports the identification of good practice and areas of improvement, allowing both the Police and CPS to learn from these outcomes and in turn, improve services and support for victims.

The objective was to increase knowledge and improve working practices within the application of protective orders.

With the support of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Police Force have increased resources to support prevention, intervention and engagement with children and young people. Additional workers have been identified to work with further educational establishments and Youth Justice Services to prevent children entering the criminal justice process. This implementation remains ongoing at the time of writing.

Dyfed-Powys Youth Justice Service (YJS)

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) is represented on the Safeguarding Boards via regular and consistent attendance by a dedicated YJS Manager at the Executive Boards and all Local Operational Groups and Sub Groups.



Each Youth Justice Service/Team is overseen by a Local Management Board which is multi-agency, and its membership shares considerable overlap with the CYSUR Board. As a result, YJS have strong working partnerships with services including Education, Social Care, Health, Police and third sector organisations, through which preventative and diversionary programmes are jointly delivered for young people in the region.

This year, YJS led on the Boards' revision of their [CSSI Policy and Procedure](#), and added the new criteria of arson, kidnap and endangering of life as reviewable offences under the policy. This has supported emerging learning and themes in this area via the facilitation under the policy of appropriate and proportionate action to review such incidents should they arise.

Other achievements within the service this year include growing youth participation in strategic planning and evaluation, continued development of early intervention and youth wellbeing programmes, and the ongoing commitment to sharing best practice and learning across the service.

The National Probation Service (NPS)



The National Probation Service (NPS) continues to be represented on the Executive Boards, Local Operational Groups and some Sub Groups.

They work collaboratively with partner agencies in a number of fora, such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Serious Violence and Organised Crime (SVOC), Integrated Offender Management (IOM), PREVENT and the Criminal Justice Board.

A key focus for the NPS this year has been the implementation of inspection learning into practice and partnership engagement, leading to more timely, informed and proportionate safeguarding decisions, and improved continuity of care and risk management at transition points.

Information sharing has been a particular focus during the year. In particular, improved information sharing has been achieved with Children's Services, including a pilot of a mechanism whereby the Probation Service are able to have direct access to systems, to obtain key information in the most efficient way possible. In addition, the NPS have worked closely with Dyfed-Powys Police to improve the timeliness and quality of domestic abuse information informing pre-sentence reports. This has included reducing delays, addressing unnecessary redaction, and strengthening shared understanding of why checks are required to identify victims and safeguard children effectively.

The NPS have also worked closely with West Wales Action for Mental Health to deliver in-person training focused on improving practitioners' ability to engage early with individuals at risk of dying by suicide, and increasing confidence in developing meaningful, person-centred safety plans alongside individuals at risk.

Carmarthenshire County Council

Carmarthenshire County Council have continued to make regular and valid contributions to the work of all Regional Safeguarding Board Sub Groups, as an active and engaged partner agency. They are also actively engaged in numerous national workstreams; notably, Carmarthenshire are currently engaged in the national development and pilot of the All Wales Integrated Referral Form, which seeks to establish a consistent national referral form to report concerns in relation to children or adults who may be at risk of harm.

Carmarthenshire County Council also continue to lead on the ongoing delivery of the Safeguarding LINC project, as fully outlined in section (b). The current focus of the project is on sharing information in respect of children on the Child Protection Register; however, this scope will expand as the project continues to progress.

To further develop services in relation to children on the Child Protection Register, Carmarthenshire Children's Services have this year commenced the practice of inquisitive enquiries with parents of children on the CP register, so that their views can inform and further develop local services.

The Regional VAWDASV Advisor and Coordinator posts continue to be hosted by Carmarthenshire, and a Senior Manager within Carmarthenshire Adults' Services continues to chair the Regional VAWDASV Delivery Group. Carmarthenshire are also actively engaged in key ongoing workstreams including the national development of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures Section 5 guidance, and on regional work to achieve a consistent approach to Channel arrangements. In addition, the Head of Adults' Services leads on regional suicide prevention work, including the Immediate Response to Suspected Suicide.

The 2025 National Safeguarding Week conference was hosted by Carmarthenshire, and full information in relation to this and all other regional National Safeguarding Week events can be found in section (j).



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

Carmarthenshire Children's Services' Youth Support Service have led on the multi-agency development of an Offensive Weapons and Knives Carrying Protocol for schools, which is designed to help support incident and risk management and to contribute to making school communities feel safer.

Pembrokeshire County Council



Pembrokeshire County Council has acted as the host authority for the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards since their inception in 2016, which includes facilitation of the Regional Safeguarding Boards' Business Unit. The Director of Social Services and Housing continues to undertake the role of the Chair of the CWMPAS Board.

Pembrokeshire County Council are piloting the Most Significant Change model within their Local Operational Group, to ensure the lived experience of adults at risk through stories is informing the ongoing development of the adult safeguarding service. More information on this pilot and the overarching model can be found in section (h).

A particular focus within Pembrokeshire this year has been on the theme of transition. A Transitions Operational Group has been established to discuss high risk and/or high need service users on a monthly basis within a multi-agency forum.

Comprehensive audit and benchmarking exercises have been undertaken to scope out key actions required to ensure quality, comprehensive transition planning is available for all 14-25-year-olds, and a bi-monthly multi-agency forum has been established with people who have lived experience in relation to transition within services, to aid continuous service delivery and improvement.



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

*This year, **Pembrokeshire Children's Services** have implemented a planned transformational change programme, arising from a commissioned academic piece of work within the Child Care Assessment Team.*

The project has focused on examining thresholds and practice in relation to referrals received at the front door.

The impact of practice changes is already evident, with a less reactive and more measured and proportionate response in place, and an identified reduction in the number of children and young people becoming looked after in comparison to the previous year.

The Children's Services Safeguarding Lead represents Pembrokeshire and the region in key national suicide prevention workstreams, developing guidance in cluster response and locations of concern, as well as working with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board to incorporate suicide prevention guidance into the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Pembrokeshire's Local Operational Group is multi-agency with a combined, through-age agenda, facilitating effective and integrated meetings which are well-attended and engaged in by all agencies. Topics explored within the LOG this year have included the principles of the Additional Learning Needs Code, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process, and updates in relation to the action plan in relation to Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE).

Powys County Council

Powys County Council continue to play an active role in the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards and their various workstreams. Powys Children's Services Senior Manager continues to chair the Regional Training Sub Group, and Powys Children's Services have once again provided valuable contributions to ongoing Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews this year by provision of a Panel Chair role.



As part of their role as Chair of the Training Sub Group, Powys Children's Services Senior Manager has been instrumental in developments in relation to the provision of joint Section 47 training for social workers and Police officers, which has been piloted this year with overwhelmingly positive feedback received. This is a key achievement in relation to the Boards' multi-agency training programme, and more information on this workstream can be found in section (j). Powys County Council have also supported developments in relation to the regional audit programme as part of the Boards' overarching Quality Assurance Framework.

Within Powys Adults' Services, significant progress has been made this year in how the views of adults at risk and, where appropriate, their families, are captured within safeguarding interventions. Powys also have a well-established practice model based upon the principle of the least restrictive option for the adult at risk.

Powys Adults' Services Safeguarding Lead has recently retired from their post, and the Boards wish to formally thank them for the immeasurable contribution they have made to numerous Board workstreams since the Boards' inception in 2016. Powys Adults' Services Safeguarding Lead has been instrumental to several key developments in relation to adult safeguarding practice

regionally and nationally, such as training, policy development and the completion of Adult Practice Reviews, and has been a consistently engaged member of the Boards and their Sub Groups since their inception.

In relation to Children's Services, Powys have cemented engagement with children and young people across their services, with clear two-way communication on a multi-agency basis via their Local Operational Group. Examples of co-production achieved within Powys include the receipt of advice from young people in relation to funding, employment, engagement and support, and the establishment of a Youth Interview Panel for all externally advertised senior roles.



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

Powys County Council have implemented Multi-Agency Supervision sessions (MAS), which bring practitioners from different agencies together in a structured, independently facilitated space, supporting open discussion, professional curiosity and shared understanding of complex safeguarding issues.

Early feedback highlighted the value of all voices being heard, the calm and focused facilitation, and the opportunity to explore safeguarding concerns from different professional and child-centred perspectives. Learning from these sessions will inform the continued development of MAS during 2026–27, supporting ongoing improvement in multi-agency safeguarding practice.

Ceredigion County Council



Ceredigion County Council are an active and engaged partner agency who attend and contribute to all Executive Board Meetings, Sub Groups and all task and finish groups associated with the work which emanates from the Boards.

Ceredigion's Statutory Director is the Chair of the CYSUR Safeguarding Children's Board and is acting as a Lead Reviewer for a Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) for an ongoing review within another Board area.

Ceredigion's Safeguarding Lead holds the Second Reviewer role within this same SUSR, as part of a reciprocal arrangement whereby this Welsh Regional Safeguarding Board has provided reviewers to Mid and West Wales for an ongoing SUSR in our region. This arrangement is working well and has been a positive means of utilising the new Approved Chair and Reviewer List coordinated by Welsh Government to support Boards in their appointment of skilled Chairs and Reviewers for SUSRs.

Ceredigion continue to take a proactive and committed approach to practice learning. Ceredigion's Practitioner Forum, which disseminates learning from local, regional and national reviews, as well as audit findings and feedback from service users and practitioners, is now well established within the locality. Within the forum, staff are asked to consider via group work how themes and feedback can support improvements to practice, and these sessions will be increased from biannual to quarterly in the coming year.

In the last year, Ceredigion County Council have been able to create greater stability within their Planned Care Children's Team, the Independent Reviewing Officer Team and the QA Contract Monitoring side of the QA Teams via recruitment of staff into permanent roles. This increased workforce stability has subsequently enabled greater stability and consistency of practice for children, families and adults who are or may be at risk.

Ceredigion have this year established and developed their in-house Safe Accommodation facilities for children and young people in county, which has supported a transition for some children/young people who were placed out of county, to return to their home county area of Ceredigion. These transitions have been managed very successfully and through significant multi-agency partnership working, with a focus on supporting these young people to become re-established in their own communities.



Safeguarding Practice Highlight

In response to the Our Bravery Brought Justice North Wales Child Practice Review, Ceredigion County Council promptly convened a local Learning Event, bringing relevant areas of the corporate service together to analyse the findings, consider the recommendations and discuss any immediate actions that could be taken locally in light of the learning shared within the Review. Ceredigion then developed an action plan outlining how key practice issues would be implemented and presented the findings to their Leadership Group.

Regional Directors of Education

Education Services across the region work closely with other partners including Health, Police, Youth Services, Probation Services, and Youth Offending Teams. They attend Rapid Response meetings and engage in regional SUSRs and MAPFs, as well as VAWDASV meetings, and the Daily Discussion meetings as part of the MARAC. Education also participates in a high number of Channel Panel meetings and provides information and feedback to schools to ensure children's safety and appropriate safeguarding.

Following agreement to move away from the previous Executive Board representation model whereby regional Education representation alternated between the Statutory Directors, all local Education Services now attend Executive Board meetings quarterly, supporting increased collaboration with Education colleagues and strengthened multi-agency dialogue.

A particular focus within Education this year has been the continued rollout and embedding of Section 5 (Wales Safeguarding Procedures) training to ensure consistency across schools in relation to the management of professional concerns regarding individuals in a position of trust. This forms part of a wider programme of work being undertaken in relation to applying learning identified within the Our Bravery Brought Justice Child Practice Review, which highlighted areas for national consideration in relation to education and schools.

Policies and procedures in relation to site safety have also been a priority across Education Services during the year, as have emerging challenges in relation to social media and artificial intelligence. The theme of misogyny has been a particular focus, with Pembrokeshire Education Services developing training in conjunction with the regional VAWDASV partnership and with secondary school pupils which addresses this emerging theme.

Regional Further Education (FE)

Further Education (FE) colleges within the region are represented on the Sub Groups of the Boards by the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding at Pembrokeshire College, who is the regional designated Board link for FE Colleges. In this way, FE have contributed to all levels of the Boards this year, engaging in active participation within Sub Groups and key workstreams.

The Designated Safeguarding Person continues to actively engage in and support the Boards' SUSR programmes of work, in relation to both regional delivery and supporting national training and events for Panel Chairs and Reviewers. The Designated Safeguarding Person is also a valued and active partner in the delivery of the regional MAPF programme, having taken on a lead role in relation to a MAPF undertaken during the year.

Peer-on-peer sexual harassment has been a particular area of focus among regional FE colleagues during the year. Following the publication of the Peer-on-peer sexual harassment in education settings: action plan, comprehensive work has been taking place with the aim of effectively implementing a whole-system approach to preventing and tackling peer-on-peer sexual harassment, and this year saw the development of a comprehensive Pembrokeshire action plan for Education which was presented jointly at the LOG by the DSP and the PCC Education Manager.

The FE sector across the Board region has participated in an innovative Taith Pathway 2 project, which facilitated the sharing of knowledge and expertise between Welsh and international organisations to create a community of practice in relation to misogynistic attitudes and cultures.

Regional Commissioning Representative

The Mid and West Wales Commissioning Partnership is represented on the Executive Boards and supports a strong West Wales collaborative approach to commissioning. It has been identified, however, that links with the Powys Commissioning Partnership could be strengthened, and a focus for the coming year will be the full implementation of the regional commissioning template to support greater consistency in service representation and engagement within the Boards and their workstreams.

The West Wales Commissioning Partnership's governance structure supports a collaborative approach to emerging challenges and themes, and the West Wales Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and the Public Service Board are now more strongly connected across the region.

A significant achievement within the partnership in the previous year was the development of a regional quality assurance framework document, which has now been tested and fully embedded within the sector. Positive feedback has been received in relation to this framework.

Additionally, the West Wales Regional Market Stability Report has been refreshed this year, and as part of this work, a regional commissioning portal has been developed. This will allow the service to consider trends, anticipate market issues and therefore, collectively consider market risks and mitigate any identified safeguarding risks. By way of example, investment in commissioning capacity within Pembrokeshire has resulted in greater oversight of the market, an increase in commissioning of placements closer to home, a reduction in out of county unregulated placements and improved quality.

What difference have we made and what outcomes have we achieved?

The combined expertise of multi-agency partners has improved the quality of safeguarding practice and support available to children and adults at risk.

This includes working collaboratively to support the delivery of the Boards' strategic priorities, providing assurance, professional challenge and specialist knowledge to inform decision-making and service improvement.

(f) An assessment of how the Boards use their resources

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards use the national funding formula to assess and identify annual financial contributions from statutory partner agencies. The charts below illustrate how the Boards have made use of their financial resources within the context of income, expenditure and partner contributions in the preceding financial year.

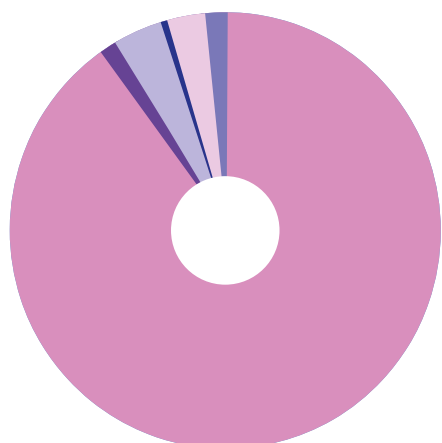
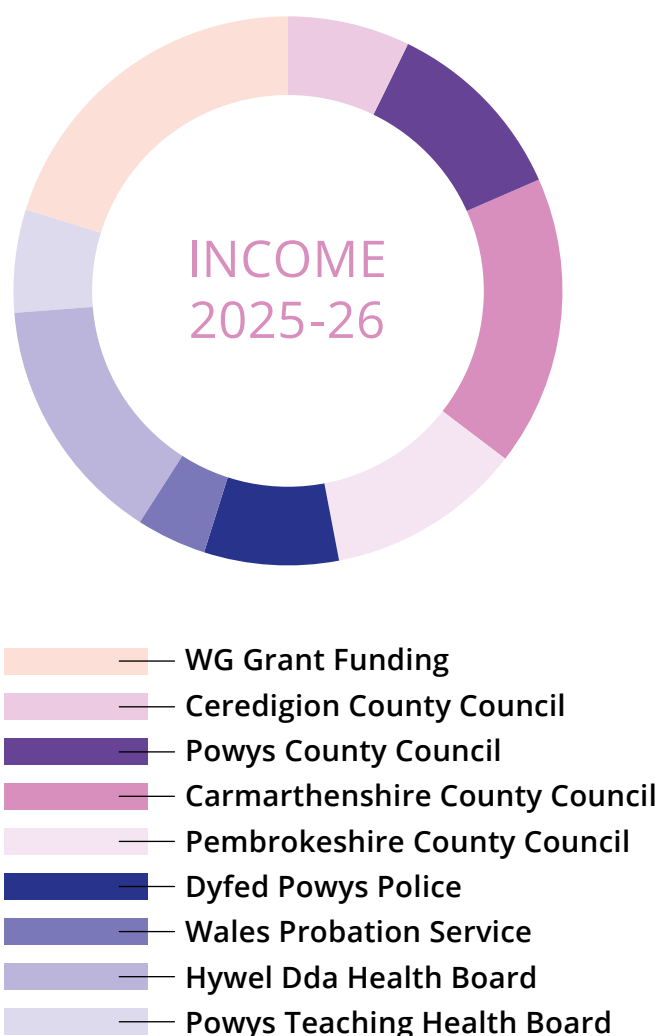
Resources used to support the work of the Regional Safeguarding Boards are not confined or restricted to financial contributions from statutory partner agencies. The Regional Safeguarding Board Chairs, Executive Board Members, Sub Group Chairs and members provide a significant amount of their time to support the Boards and their work.

The variable and diverse nature of the Boards' work makes this difficult to report on within a quantifiable and measurable resource context, and is not always overtly visible to other

professionals and agencies outside of the Board. The process, management and publication of SUSRs, the delivery of the MAPF programme, the development of regional protocols and policies, as well as projects that require high levels of professional input, knowledge and expertise are just some examples of Board work.

This is often in addition to their professional roles and day-to-day responsibilities, and the Boards remain sincerely grateful for this continued support from colleagues across agencies in the region.

All statutory partners of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards contribute financially to the running of the Boards, with the exception of Public Health Wales. This contribution is based on population areas within the region across the varied organisations. The total income into the Safeguarding Boards this year excluding grant funding was £205,398.



The staffing of the Business Unit, who centrally manage and support the Boards' day-to-day functions and programme of work, continues to comprise the majority of the Boards' expenditure, at nearly 90% of total expenditure this year.

The commissioning of research, projects and training comprised 2% of expenditure this year, with office, administrative and recruitment costs comprising 4%, in keeping with the previous year.

Expenditure in respect of publicity, promotion and translation costs remain consistent with the previous year at 3%.

Travel, venues and communication costs have further reduced this year, comprising 0.5% of overall spend. This reflects the Boards' use of virtual means to collaborate with partners across the vast geographical region, balanced against the ongoing commitment to come together in person for specific events and meetings where it is felt that this will enrich collaboration.

IT equipment and software costs remain consistent at 1% of overall spend, which funds costs associated with maintaining the MAWSB website, as well as other bespoke software which supports core Board functions.

(g) Underlying themes in the way the Safeguarding Boards have exercised their functions

Supporting Board partners and agencies to deliver against and implement requirements and recommendations from national safeguarding priorities and work

The year 2025/26 has been an exceptionally busy year in respect of ongoing and emerging national safeguarding priorities and workstreams, many of which have been driven and overseen by the Welsh and UK Governments.

The Strategic Regional Safeguarding Manager and Business Unit team have supported Board members and agencies in their delivery against these national priorities, within the context of ensuring representation at national forums and groups, the coordination of regional task and finish groups to consider and respond to national recommendations, and the compilation and analysis of regional action plans in response to this work.

This has included, for example: support and representation on the national working group in the development of the National Action Plan for Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse; requirements from Welsh Government and Inspectorates in response to the recommendations from the North Wales Child Practice Review, Our Bravery Brought Justice; work in response to the [National Audit on Group-based Child Exploitation and Abuse](#); and work associated with the updated [Channel and Prevent and Multi-Agency Panel \(PMAP\) Guidance](#).

Further support and input have been provided by Board partner agencies and Board Business Unit staff to established national Boards and bespoke working groups. This includes: the Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board and associated workstreams to update Part 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures for Practitioners in a Position of Trust; meetings associated with the continuing implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review model and guidance; and support to develop an All Wales Integrated Referral Form (AWIR) for safeguarding. These numerous national projects and workstreams have been significantly active this year, and have placed considerable demands on the time of partner agencies and Business Unit staff over and above core safeguarding responsibilities and statutory duties.

Capacity and Demand

The capacity to respond to increasing and complex need, in a context of high demand and lean resources, has continued to be a common feature that has been reported by all agencies without exception in their annual returns this year. Examples include increased and continuing rising demand on front door services, increases in the number of professional concerns meetings, and rising numbers of Channel Panel meetings, as well as pressures within foster placement capacity and the ability to meet the requirement of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) legislation.

Agencies who are responsible for providing services across the whole region cite additional challenges of working within a predominantly rural demographic and geography. Safeguarding practice is further challenged by increasing complexity of need among people on probation that include co occurring risks linked to domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse and family functioning, as well as the ability to manage risk effectively at key transition points, including

upon release from custody. The continuing rise in technology-enabled harm through cybercrime and digital abuse, alongside new and emerging risks (for example, from COM Networks who target vulnerable individuals online) have required multi-agency responses and resources this year.

Prevention

Irrespective of the challenges cited above, agencies of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards continue to invest heavily in preventative strategic planning and services, to ensure they are able respond to their legal duty to prevent children and adults suffering harm, abuse or neglect. Many Local Authorities across the region have invested in supporting increased capacity in early help provision. Carmarthenshire, for example, continue to develop their Early Help Hub, which enables children and families to have support at the very earliest opportunity and earlier statutory interventions. Clear processes are in place to divert and step families down to the Hub where appropriate, and before the need for, as well as after, statutory interventions with a seamless transition.

In Powys, Early Help services continued to play a vital role in ensuring children and young people receive the right help at the right time. Investment in Family Centres has played a key role in strengthening early help and prevention arrangements during 2025–26. Through a whole family approach, the centres have provided accessible, community based support including parenting programmes, targeted family support, advice and guidance, and opportunities for early identification of safeguarding concerns. Strong links with Social Care, Health, Education and third sector partners have enabled timely information sharing and coordinated responses where risks have been identified.

In response to learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews, Pembrokeshire have worked closely with local housing providers to develop a new single point of contact for Housing Support Grant-funded projects, with a more seamless and direct commination pathway now in place with Pembrokeshire Domestic Abuse Service. A practical example includes a newly purchased two-bedroom bungalow for people aged over 55 fleeing domestic abuse.

Dyfed-Powys Police have invested in early intervention and support for victims of stalking, in response to needs and wider learning identified through national and regional VAWDASV work and SUSRs/Domestic Homicide Reviews. This includes the introduction of the Stalking Intervention Programme (SIP) in April 2025. The SIP process involves a monthly multi-agency meeting to discuss stalking incidents, and the process seeks to ensure management and safety planning of stalking cases, providing enhanced protection of victims through a trauma-informed response. During 2025-26, 107 cases were discussed within the SIP, and 39 Stalking Protection Orders were agreed for progression.

Protection

A number of Board-facilitated and agency-specific safeguarding workstreams, groups and programmes are underway across the region. The primary objective of these workstreams is to ensure timely, robust and effective responses are in place, to ensure children and adults who are risk of, and/or who are experiencing harm are adequately protected. This includes:

- *Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Practice Development*

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards are fortunate to continue to have a strong and committed group of multi-agency senior managers and strategic leads, who have continued to work together collaboratively this year to strengthen and improve safeguarding practice and intervention across the region for adults at risk. The group meets regularly to establish

consistent practice across the four Local Authority areas of Mid and West Wales. A number of in-person and online workshops have taken place with a focus on strengthening the process for 126 enquires, and to broadly gain a more consistent interpretation of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. This work is in its final stages and will be shared with national forums, including the Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, when complete, to inform and influence potential updates to existing procedures.

- *Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination Meetings (MATAC)*

The above are led by Dyfed-Powys Police to support implementation of the Drive programme, which seeks to address the risk posed by high-harm perpetrators. This is a collaborative multi-agency approach that aims to reduce the number of victims of domestic abuse via intense case management with perpetrators and effective partnership working.

- *Channel/ PREVENT Pilot Referral*

The region has recorded and noted a significant rise in the volume of PREVENT referrals received in the last year, with a notable proportion of referrals relating to children and young people aged 12–17. These figures reflect an increase where no single ideology is clearly identified. There are identified challenges at the interface between PREVENT processes and statutory safeguarding arrangements, particularly where delays occur due to deconfliction and partnership scanning stages. Such delays can result in safeguarding agencies being unaware of concerns for extended periods, which may hinder timely intervention, especially for children and young people.

In response, the region has agreed to undertake a pilot project designed to improve timeliness, reduce duplication and strengthen safeguarding responses to cases where radicalisation may be an identified concern. The pilot will operate in the coming year, and will involve PREVENT referrals being accepted by Local Authority safeguarding teams in place of a MARF. These will be submitted directly to the safeguarding “front door” and treated in line with existing safeguarding thresholds and procedures, with Counter Terrorism policing engaged as appropriate.



Corporate Safeguarding

Board annual reporting and evaluation processes provide a framework for assurance to the regional Boards on Corporate Safeguarding arrangements at a local agency level, with a focus upon leadership and governance, safe recruitment practice, commissioned services, and training. This provides assurance that safeguarding activity and practice is embedded across wider teams, systems and platforms beyond services with prime responsibility for safeguarding.

This year, all agencies continue to report that robust local arrangements are in place within their relevant governance structures. Within a Local Authority context, Corporate Safeguarding Boards are in place, and have lines of sight and communication channels linked to Local Operational Groups. Annual self-assessment processes are in place, and arrangements are subject to external scrutiny by Audit Wales. Reports provide assurance that robust oversight arrangements are in place in respect of safe recruitment, training and contract monitoring. Health Boards, Dyfed-Powys Police and other statutory partner agencies, report robust internal mechanisms that include clear internal governance and reporting structures linked to delivery groups, and annual assessments in line with the national Safeguarding Maturity Matrix, alongside audits and monitoring via internal risk registers.

Safeguarding in Education

Board governance structures enable Education members to provide assurance on strategic safeguarding arrangements alongside support arrangements in schools with a focus upon children's voices, partnership and collaboration, training and guidance, and policy and procedures. These processes complement the robust annual 175 audit and report undertaken by the Board annually as part of its quality assurance work, as outlined under section (b).

Assurance that robust safeguarding arrangements are in place has been provided by all of the four Local Authorities across the region this year. A variety of processes exist to obtain children's views via school surveys and focus groups during safeguarding visits, as well as through the safeguarding fora and links with youth councils. Carmarthenshire, for example, have established the Through the Doors project, a collaborative partnership between Carmarthenshire Youth Support Service and ProMo Cymru. Through this initiative, pupil views were gathered on school attendance and barriers, providing valuable insight to inform service development and targeted interventions.



Designated school safeguarding officers are linked into a variety of strategic and operational meetings including Local Operational Groups, Corporate Safeguarding Boards, Channel Panel meetings and regional exploitation meetings.

The Regional Safeguarding Boards have worked with designated safeguarding lead officers this year to seek assurance on the quality and availability of safeguarding training available to school governors, within the context of the North Wales Child Practice Review Our Bravery Brought Justice. All Education departments across the region are implementing the National Safeguarding Training Standards and Framework for relevant staff, although some have cited challenges in respect of demands on time to comply with requirements.

Overall, challenges in respect of weapons in schools, and increasing incidents of sexualised behaviour (including peer-on-peer incidents), have been identified as common challenges. The region has seen two major knife-related incidents take place in schools in recent years requiring lockdown measures to be implemented. Partnership working is ongoing to address some of these challenges, including the development of a Weapons in Schools policy to try and mitigate some of the identified risks identified.

Suicide Prevention Work

[A Rapid Response Model in respect of Suspected Suicides](#) for children and adults is now firmly embedded into Board structures. This follows significant planning and work undertaken in previous years. The purpose is to provide targeted, rapid support to family members, peers and the community when incidents of suspected suicide occur. This forms part of the Boards' broader mental health, suicide and self-harm programme of work. The work has been further developed this year, with agreement to implement a regional multi-agency suicide review group in light of rising numbers across the region.

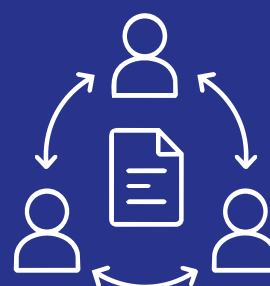
An Established Learning Culture

A strong culture of shared learning exists across our regional partnership. This golden thread is embedded and established across many of our work programmes and Sub Groups, and is generally embraced and welcomed by Board members, as well as practitioners and managers. Prior to the implementation of SUSR in October 2024, practice learning reviews were conducted under the Child and Adult Practice Review framework (CPR/APR). Any referrals made for review prior to October 2024 therefore took place as CPRs and APRs, and this year, the Boards published the last remaining Practice Reviews open within the region.

As well as the publication of these two Practice Reviews, this year also saw the completion of four MAPFs across the region, as part of the well-established programme in place across Mid and West Wales.

Themes that have emerged from these practice learning mechanisms during the year include:

- Cumulative risk and recognising/responding to risk below the threshold of significant harm
- Complex needs and the coordination of care for adults
- Dual diagnosis (substance misuse and mental health)
- Neurodiversity
- The availability of services and resources for electively home educated children
- The need for better information sharing between agencies
- Child voice and children's access to services and support
- Disguised compliance and professional curiosity
- Trauma-informed practice
- Resourcing and rising and increasing demand on teams and services



The outcomes of these processes, and any associated learning and identified actions, are considered by the Boards' various Sub Groups, and are reflected in subsequent workstreams, including the commissioning of bespoke training packages, policy development and specialist development groups.

An established and consistent communication network to share learning exists through various platforms, such as practitioner dissemination events and 7-minute briefings.

In January 2025, Probation delivered a presentation to the Board focusing on HMIP inspection findings, including safeguarding strengths, areas for development and learning from the Bendall Serious Further Offence Review. This supported shared understanding of probation safeguarding responsibilities, as well as broader understanding of offenders who may pose increased safeguarding risks to children and families in the community and the context of this.

Ceredigion Local Authority has invested in its commitment to the MAPF programme, and in the last year, have increased the number of MAPFs that have commenced, as well as increasing the number of people who have become skilled and experienced in being able to chair and lead them.

Whilst overseen by the regional Case Review Sub Group, ongoing implementation of local learning alongside MAPF action plans is driven and managed by Local Operational Groups, ensuring any learning is targeted and focused to local practitioners and agencies.

What difference have we made and what outcomes have we achieved?

- Children and adults at risk have benefited from a more coordinated and informed safeguarding system that is increasingly shaped by learning, evidence and lived experience.
- The Boards have strengthened their ability to identify and respond to complex safeguarding challenges through effective leadership, multi-agency collaboration and strategic oversight.
- A continued focus on prevention, protection and continuous improvement has enhanced safeguarding practice and supported better outcomes for children and adults at risk across Mid and West Wales.



(h) When and how children and adults have had an opportunity to participate in the Boards' work

• *Junior Regional Safeguarding Board*

Up until the end of March 2025, the CYSUR Board continued to commission Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP) Independent Advocacy Service to facilitate its regional Junior Safeguarding Board. The service was formally decommissioned on 31st March 2025. A new revised model was agreed by the Mid and West Wales Executive Boards and has now been endorsed across all LOGs.

This new arrangement embeds junior safeguarding activity within existing structures rather than operating as a standalone forum. Specific sections on junior activity will now be incorporated into future LOGs to support consistent monitoring, identification of themes and coordinated actions. This responsibility on LOGs is expected to drive local engagement and ensure learning and feedback are effectively looped back to the regional Boards. The Executive Boards acknowledge the importance of maintaining clear feedback loops so that children and young people understand how their views influence safeguarding practice and decision making. Implementation is currently at varying stages across areas.

All local areas across the region have well-established existing local participation models that will support this model and provide a mechanism to identify local safeguarding issues. Examples of this work include:

Powys Ambassadors of Youth Safeguarding (PAYS) have recruited to their *Children's Services Youth Led Strategy Committee*, with the focus being on their service and what is important to their young people.



Youth-Led Strategy Committee

In June 2025, Powys launched their Youth Led Strategy Committee, made up entirely of care-experienced young people. They meet monthly and have already begun work on key improvements, including:

- A welcome video for young people entering care
- A dedicated email address through which young people can share their views (managed confidentially by the Participation Officer)
- Improving the transition experience for young people aged 16+

School-based participation groups

Fifteen participation groups have been established across primary and secondary schools in the county, bringing together young people involved with services including care and support, child protection, early help, youth justice, and third-sector organisations such as Adferiad, CAMHS and Credu. The groups help co-produce service improvements, providing feedback on areas such as child protection letters, the youth engagement strategy, and local issues including transport, education and recreation. Their views have been shared with the Corporate Parenting Group.

National Influence

Powys care-experienced young people continue to influence policy at a national level. Ten young people took part in the Radical Reform Summit this year, speaking directly with senior Welsh Government leaders including Mark Drakeford, Dawn Bowden, Lynne Neagle, Jane Hutt and Alistair Davey. Their involvement has contributed to shaping the “closer to home” and “not for profit” policy agendas.

POWYS JUNIOR START WELL BOARD (JSWB)

The Junior Start Well Board continues to provide a platform for young people to share their views and influence Start Well priorities in Powys.



Trusted Adults

This year, the Junior Start Well Board continued its focus on emotional safety by exploring what a “trusted adult” means to children and young people in Powys.

Odd Socks Day

As part of this year’s Odd Socks Day campaign, the Junior Start Well Board prepared a Powys wide presentation using information from the Anti Bullying Alliance.



Youth Café

The Youth Café is an initiative developed by the young people on the JSWB to create safe spaces and promote wellbeing for their peers. During 2025–26, the Youth Café has provided a safe, accessible and supportive space for young people, contributing positively to safeguarding, early intervention and wellbeing.

Ceredigion ‘Sêr Saff’ and Ceredigion Youth Service

Ceredigion use an advocacy service to consult with care experienced children and run activities to engage these young people. The recruitment pool is via the Children Looked After (CLA) activities team and through advocates. All of the young people involved have personal experience of safeguarding and have had contact with social services.



Ceredigion Youth Service

Over the past year, Ceredigion Youth Service has continued to engage children and young people across the county, ensuring their views inform service development, decision-making and local priorities. This work includes any issues relevant to safeguarding. Between January and March, more than 400 young people and 30 partner organisations contributed to the development of the new 5-Year Youth Work Strategy through surveys and engagement sessions.

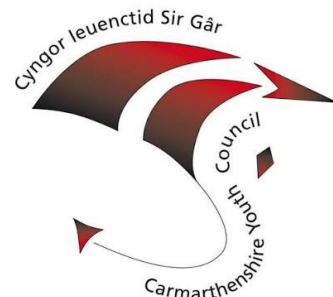
Youth provision remains strong, with around 60 young people attending four youth clubs each week, and a new club established at Penparcau Hwb through partnership working and grant funding. Swansea Kicks Football, funded by Dyfed-Powys Police, also engages an average of 43 young people weekly.



The Ceredigion Youth Council continues to play a key role in youth participation and influence, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2025/26. Highlights included youth-led democratic events, engagement with the UK Parliament, and recognition of young people for their contribution to youth voice. Planned celebrations include digital testimonies and a cultural exchange visit to Welsh Patagonia.

Youth-led forums, including Aberystwyth Community Ambassadors and Panel Dewis, remain active, delivering initiatives such as a grief and bereavement awareness project and the youth-led allocation of the Ceredigion Youth Bursary. The service has also supported campaigns and events such as Growing with Grief and Period Dignity, improving access to education and resources through strong youth involvement.

Young people's safeguarding matters and issues in Carmarthenshire are captured via **Carmarthenshire Youth Council (CYC)**, who continue to run the Children's Rights Community Ambassadors scheme. Their main role as Ambassadors is to promote the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to act as a voice for local young people and to pass on their opinions to the Children's Rights Commissioner in Wales.



Carmarthenshire Youth Council's engagement in campaigns and consultations

Over the past year, members of Carmarthenshire Youth Council have actively engaged in a range of campaigns and consultations, providing valuable opportunities to represent young people's voices and share their perspectives on issues that matter both locally and nationally.

A key engagement was with the Hywel Dda School Nursing Service, where members contributed to discussions on new educational resources covering a variety of topics, including emotional wellbeing.

Youth Council members also participated in two consultation sessions with Carmarthenshire County Council's Human Resources team. During these discussions, members gained insight into the council's recruitment processes and provided thoughtful feedback on how to encourage more people under the age of 25 to apply for roles.

As of June 2025, ten Youth Council members had taken part in the Council's Panel Performance Evaluation. This process examines how effectively the council carries out its functions, uses its resources, and maintains good governance, including safeguarding considerations.

Members also collaborated with the Carmarthenshire Period Dignity project, contributing to the development of an ongoing campaign.

CYC: Our Voice, Our Vote, Our Future 2

Our Voice, Our Vote, Our Future is a project that empowers young people across Carmarthenshire to highlight the issues that matter most to them.

It ensures that young people's voices are heard, valued, and considered by decision-makers, with the aim of improving services and making a meaningful difference in relation to challenges affecting their lives.



Volunteers

The Volunteers is a platform connecting young people with meaningful volunteer opportunities, who believe that through volunteering, young people can develop new life skills and give back to their communities.



Over the past year, **Pembrokeshire Junior Safeguardians** has continued to grow, with active recruitment to expand membership and ensure a wider range of young people's voices are represented. Around 60 young people completed a co-produced Introduction to Safeguarding module, initially delivered through a youth-led conference and now embedded within the induction programme for Pembrokeshire College Learner Voice Representatives.

Members have also taken part in a range of participation opportunities, including contributing to the appointment process for the new Head of Children's Services, and engaging with local decision-makers through initiatives such as the Great Council Bake Off. These activities have strengthened youth voice and links between young people and local services.

A key achievement was the delivery of the Strong Routes, Safe Futures safeguarding event, which brought together secondary school pupils from across Pembrokeshire to explore safeguarding issues, particularly road safety. Delivered in partnership with agencies including Police, Fire and Rescue, and road safety teams, the event increased awareness of issues such as antisocial behaviour, peer pressure and personal safety, while enabling young people to help shape future safeguarding priorities.

The group has also contributed to national policy development through the Welsh Government consultation on the draft [ten-year strategy for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse](#), ensuring young people's views were represented.

Looking ahead, the group plans to build on this momentum by hosting a further safeguarding conference during Safeguarding Week, bringing together secondary schools from across Pembrokeshire to strengthen engagement, share learning and promote young people's role in safeguarding their communities.

Most Significant Change Pilot Project for Adults at Risk (MSC)

Guidance from Pembrokeshire's Together for Change programme has supported the ongoing implementation of the Most Significant Change (MSC) model and pilot project to be undertaken as part of Pembrokeshire's Local Operational Group. The purpose of the project is to build a participation model that can incorporate the voices of adults at risk who have been subject to the safeguarding process into the work of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards, and will enable Board members to hear, understand and act upon the voices of those with lived experience, thus supporting and enriching the Boards' annual reporting and planning cycle. The MSC method is a qualitative, participatory approach to evaluation that centres on collecting and discussing real-life stories of change. It is particularly valuable in complex or evolving contexts where traditional metrics may not capture the full picture. Rather than seeking representative outcomes, MSC focuses on illuminating the changes that adults at risk themselves perceived as most meaningful in relation to the interventions and services they received.

This work supports the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards' broader strategic priority of implementing greater qualitative evaluation and data into its overarching Quality and Assurance Framework. The one-year pilot in Pembrokeshire will build a method and model to gather stories from adults identified to be at risk of abuse or neglect by practitioners using the MSC model, and will provide qualitative information alongside traditional metrics. The story panels

will be incorporated into the existing Pembrokeshire Local Operational Group, and over the next 12-month period, four panels will be convened to hear and consider the stories. The outcome and messages of these stories will be considered as part of the Boards' annual Development Day in early 2027 as part of its annual strategic planning.

(i) Applications for Adult Protection & Support Orders (APSOs)

There has been one application for an Adult Protection & Support Order in Mid and West Wales during 2025-26, the second application in this region since the introduction of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The practice outcome as a result of this application is considered to be very positive, and the learning and themes have been shared with the regional Boards' relevant Local Operational Group, as well as with the Executive Boards.

(j) Information or learning the Boards have disseminated and training recommended or provided



Website

The Boards' website continues to serve as a central hub for safeguarding information, providing access to guidance, news, legislation updates, regional policies and procedures, safeguarding resources, and published Child and Adult Practice Reviews (completed prior to the implementation of SUSR). The website also plays an important role in promoting Board activity, events and campaigns, including National Safeguarding Week.

Website engagement remained strong throughout 2025/26, recording 41,000 page views and 17,000 active users.

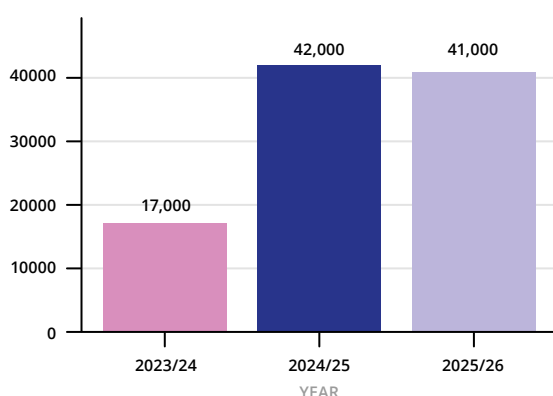
While page views remained consistent with the exceptional increase seen in 2024/25, active users continued to grow, demonstrating sustained engagement from practitioners, partner agencies and members of the public accessing safeguarding information and resources.

Development work has continued throughout the year to improve accessibility and navigation, including enhancements to support Welsh language requirements, the reorganisation and alphabetisation of regional policies and procedures, expansion of the Resource Hub, and the development of dedicated areas for Child and Adult Practice Reviews.

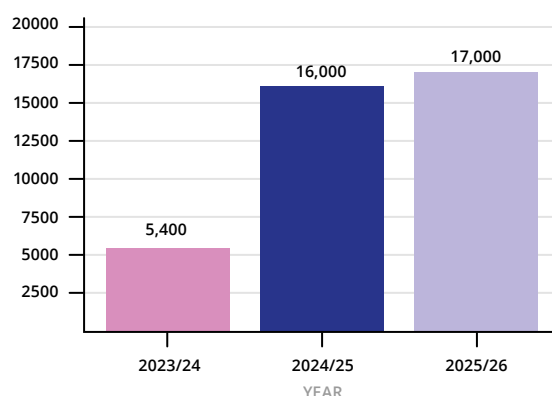
The website will continue to evolve during the coming year, with further enhancements planned to the Resource Hub and training pages to improve access to safeguarding learning, information and resources.

Yearly comparison of page views and active users of CYSUR's website...

CYSUR website page views



CYSUR website active users



Newsletter

The Boards continue to use their established quarterly newsletter to share safeguarding news, learning, resources and key developments across the region. During 2025/26, the newsletter was further developed through the use of Microsoft Sway, improving accessibility, presentation and integration with the Boards' wider digital communications. The newsletter remains an important mechanism for engaging practitioners, partner agencies and stakeholders, supporting the dissemination of safeguarding learning and the promotion of regional activity across Mid and West Wales.

Current and archived editions of the newsletter are available on the [Boards' website](#).

Social Media and Digital Communications

The Boards continue to utilise a range of digital communication channels to share safeguarding information, resources, events and key messages throughout the year.

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#) have been used to promote regional and national safeguarding developments, learning opportunities, Board activity and awareness campaigns. Working with partner agencies to share and amplify communications has helped increase the visibility and reach of safeguarding messages across Mid and West Wales.



National Safeguarding Week

National Safeguarding Week took place this year from 10th to 14th November 2025, with the theme of “Positive Safeguarding Practice”. Under this broad heading, a wide-ranging programme was designed in response to some of the safeguarding themes and issues that have emerged across the Mid and West Wales region in the last year.

Throughout the week, both in-person and online events were held in the form of conferences and webinars that sought to raise awareness and highlight issues that currently affect children and adults at risk. The regional programme was supported by a local events day on Tuesday 11th November, which included a range of events facilitated by each of our partner agencies.

Regional Conference: Positive Practice in Safeguarding

The flagship event for the week was a Regional Conference: “Positive Practice in Safeguarding”. This in-person event was hosted by Carmarthenshire Local Authority and was held at the S4C Building, Yr Egin, Carmarthen. The conference was hosted by comedian, presenter and foster carer Kiri Pritchard-McLean, and included presentations and workshops from several keynote speakers.

“

Attendee Feedback

*Thoroughly enjoyed the day.
Enjoyed every speaker
and workshop.*

”

These included a presentation on the outcome and findings of the review undertaken on the events that took place in Southport in July 2024, information on the Most Significant Change model of practice, vulnerability in neurodiversity, using artificial intelligence (AI) to support information sharing, alongside input from service users and those with lived experience in relation to suicide.

Feedback from practitioners in attendance noted the excellent delivery and facilitation at the conference.

Attendees found the day both informative and emotive, also complimenting the venue and the balance of speakers with useful workshops.

Particular praise was offered for the host Kiri Pritchard-McLean and for the lived experience workshop, with attendees praising their courage to share their stories. Delegates welcomed the opportunity to meet in person to network, participate in interactive workshops and meet new colleagues.

“

Attendee Feedback

The day was excellent! A really varied mix of presenters, many bringing their lived experience into their presentations and offering insights that I will definitely think about in my work and share with colleagues.

”

Creating a Positive Safeguarding Culture

The Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board hosted a successful multi-agency webinar led by Nicole James from New Pathways.

The session provided an overview of what a positive culture of safeguarding is, why it is necessary for every organisation/setting, and how to ensure this culture complies with safeguarding legislation and guidance.

The session explored the various elements of creating, embedding and strengthening a positive culture of safeguarding into every facet of day-to-day operations.

A number of related resources were also shared online to support further learning. These offered additional information around information sharing in safeguarding.



Feedback from the event

The event was rated highly, with attendees scoring an average rating of 8.49 from a possible 10 when asked to what extent what they have learned will influence their practice.

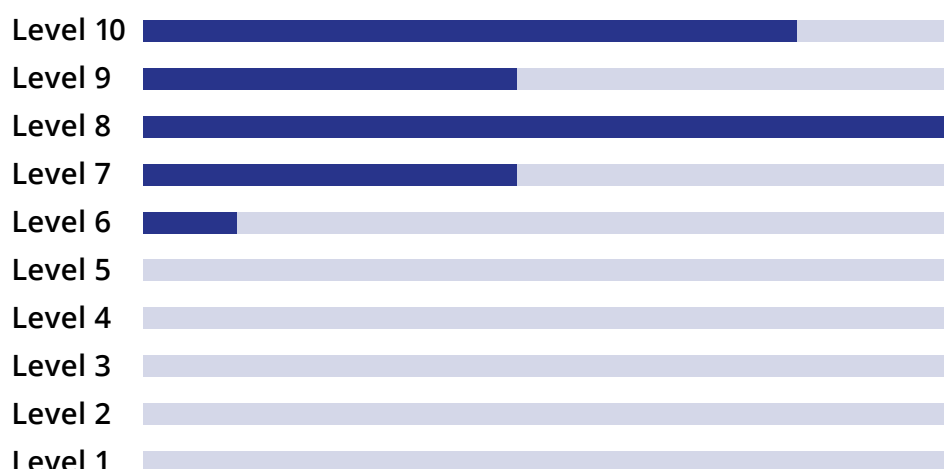
The webinar was attended by 145 participants from across the region. Excellent feedback was provided, praising the presenter and the promotion of attendee engagement, with questions and observations being encouraged throughout. This feedback is summarised in the illustration below.

“

Attendee Feedback

Fabulous and informative in an accessible way.

”



facilitation was great delivery
facilitation was excellent **great** Nicole is brilliant chat
interesting longer sessions Nicole was concise
best sessions duration was great **informative**

Thematic Learning from National Adult Practice Reviews (APRs) by Professor Michelle McManus

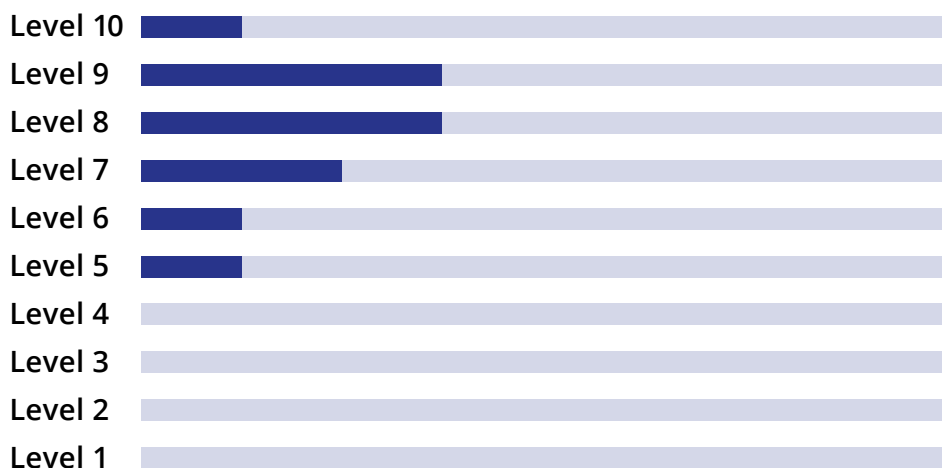
Commissioned by the National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB) Wales, the 2025 thematic review analysed 25 APRs undertaken in Wales from 2016–2022.

This webinar, which was delivered by review author Professor Michelle McManus, shared findings from the thematic review and explored the implications for policy and practice in Wales.

Feedback from the event

Attendees were asked the extent to which what they learned will influence their practice. Their responses are shown below.

The webinar was attended by 47 participants from across the region and received positive feedback, with those present praising the delivery and the subject knowledge and expertise of the presenter.



“

Attendee Feedback

Excellent session delivered by Michelle, very useful thank you.

”



Beyond Clutter: The Safeguarding Matrix and Multi-Agency Response – Llanelli Mind



This regional webinar was facilitated by Llanelli Mind. The session was designed for safeguarding professionals across statutory services and the third sector who frequently encounter individuals whose hoarding behaviours present significant risk and who have complex support needs.

The session explored the deep-seated psychological, practical, and systemic issues surrounding hoarding disorder, and provided practitioners with a comprehensive overview of how to identify, assess and support individuals at risk within Mid and West Wales.



Attendee Feedback

The training event was excellent, well delivered and informative. The resources and links shared after the event were first class.

The actual work/support groups that you provide are clearly sensitive and supportive and obtaining results for people who "hoard". Thank you for sharing your knowledge and resources. Very much appreciated.

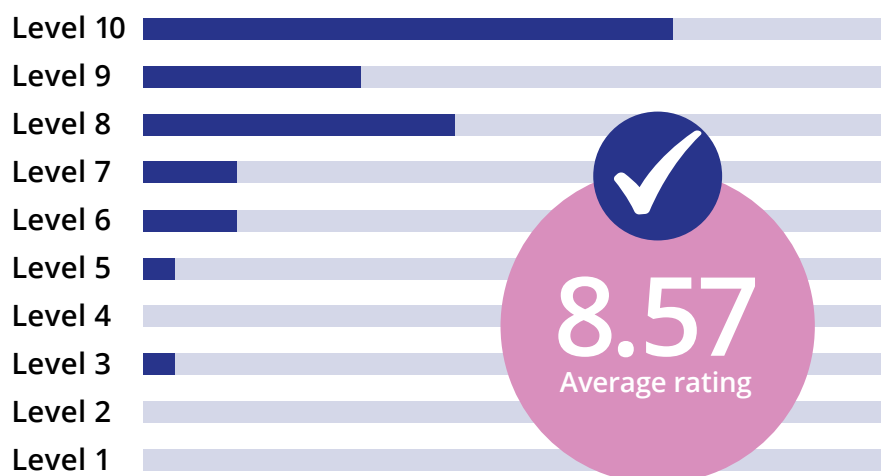


Feedback from the event

The event was rated highly, with attendees scoring an average rating of 8.57 from a possible 10 when asked to what extent what they have learned will influence their practice.

The webinar was attended by 92 participants from across the region and received very positive feedback. Participants found the presenter to be very engaging, stating his passion for this topic was evident.

Some of this feedback is summarised in the illustration below.



conversation starters

spoke clearly

good breakout session
valuable session

event & the
resources

session

informative event

social care great

Freddie was very engaging
presentation/training



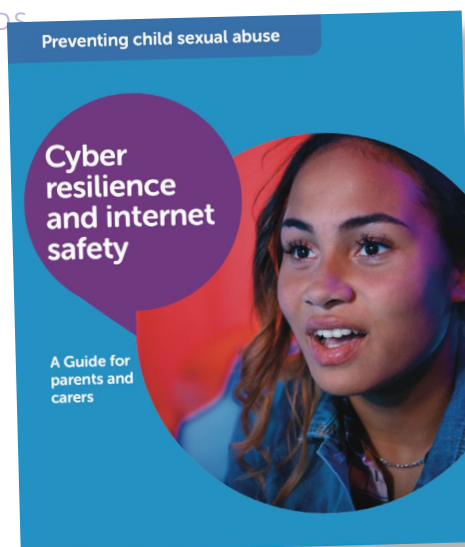
Digital Resilience by Lucy Faithful Foundation

This regional virtual event was facilitated by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation Wales and explored how to keep children and young people safe online, with an aim for attendees to increase their confidence in communicating effectively about internet safety. The webinar also explored legislation and concerning behaviours online.

Feedback from the event

The event was rated highly, with attendees scoring an average rating of 8.71 from a possible 10 when asked to what extent what they have learned will influence their practice.

The webinar was attended by 91 participants from across the region. Feedback from attendees noted that the session was very well facilitated and very engaging, further noting that the resources and links provided were extremely useful.

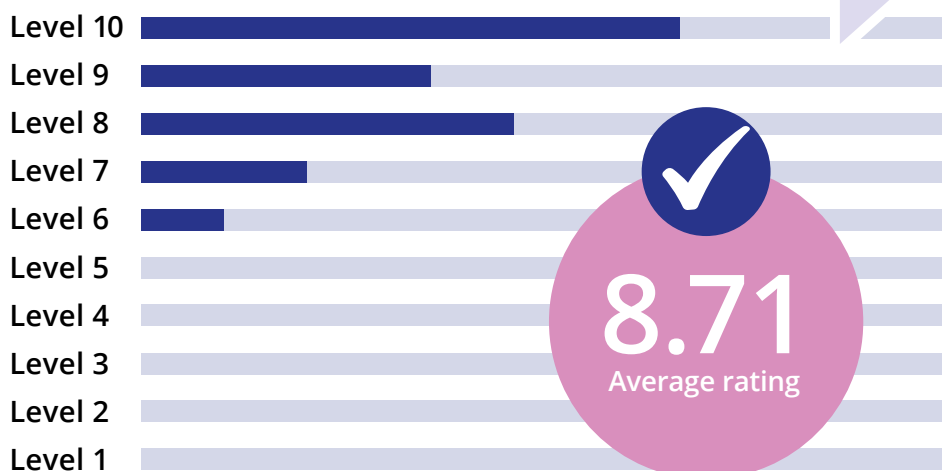


“

Attendee Feedback

*Amazing session which
I can't wait to share
with the team*

”



lots of resources

amazing session

good safe online

valuable session

training

great facilitator

fab trainer useful

lots of informative
resources helpful training

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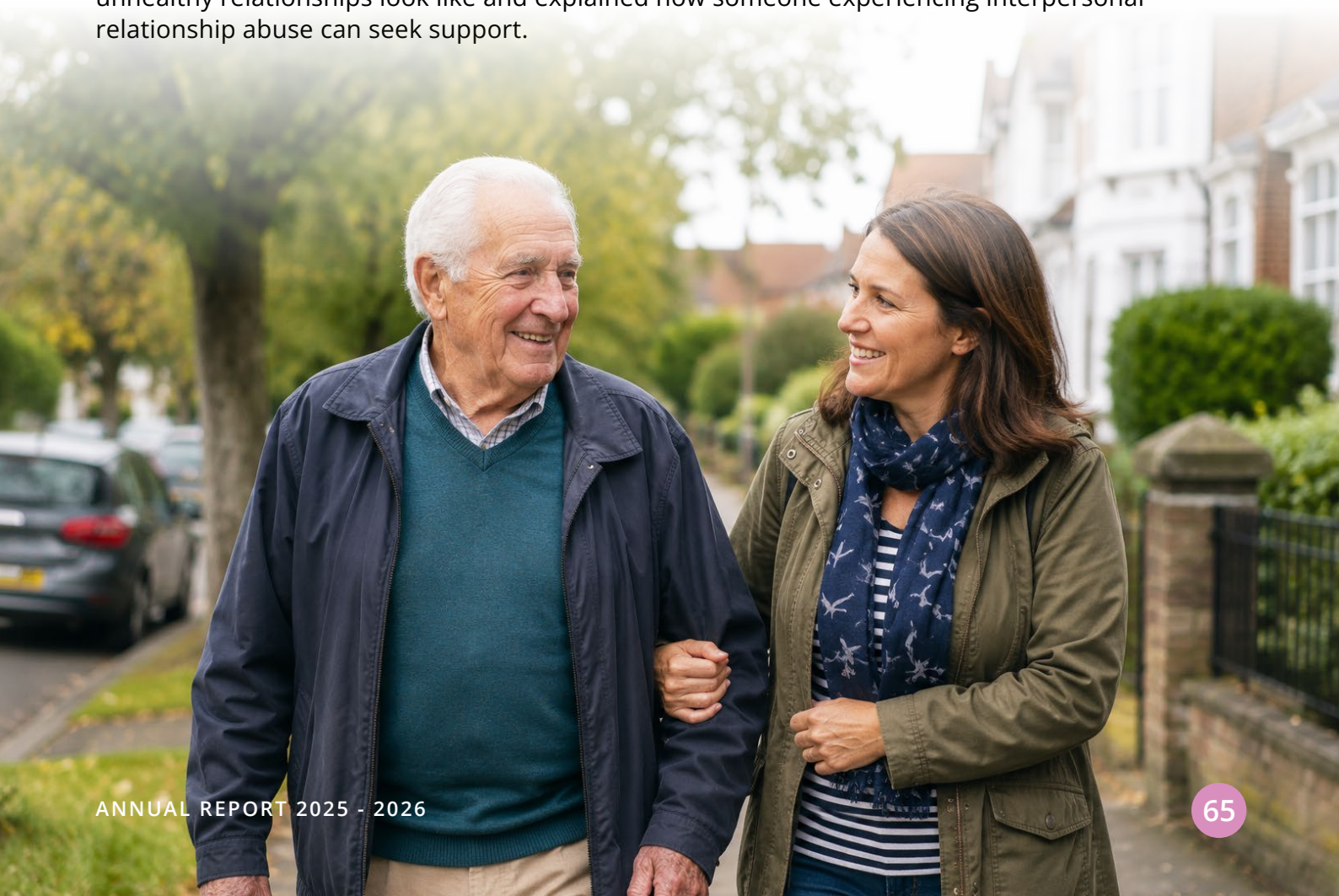
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Other National Safeguarding Week events

Four additional webinars were offered during the week, with invitations extended to Local Authority employees across the Mid and West Wales region. These included:

- ***The Mental Capacity Act in Practice:*** This event was facilitated by Mark Evans and revisited key elements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and how these should be applied in safeguarding practice in a variety of situations, contexts and scenarios. The session explored the challenges of applying the Mental Capacity Act 2005, including working within areas of uncertainty and key considerations when undertaking MCA assessments.
- ***Do You Work with Or Care for Someone Living with Dementia? - The Herbert Protocol:*** This event was facilitated by Rob Burley, CEO of MedicAlert, and discussed how practitioners can help keep people living with dementia safe, independent, connected and living in their community, using the Herbert Protocol. Attendees heard how this free service in partnership with MedicAlert and Dyfed-Powys Police is safeguarding vulnerable people with dementia who are at heightened risk of going missing.
- ***National Counter Trafficking Centre - Barnardo's:*** This regional virtual event was facilitated by the National Counter Trafficking Centre (NCTC) and provided an introduction to the Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) Service and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The session provided an outline of who the NCTC are, when to refer and what support they offer, alongside an exploration of the NRM in relation to child exploitation and trafficking.
- ***It's Not Love - NSPCC Learning:*** This was a regional virtual event facilitated by Lil Dunn from NSPCC Cymru. The It's Not Love session explored the themes of healthy and unhealthy relationships, including behaviours relating to interpersonal relationship abuse, both peer-on-peer and familial. The session provided professionals with guidance on what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like and explained how someone experiencing interpersonal relationship abuse can seek support.



Online Activity

Alongside the programme of in-person and virtual events, the Boards utilised their website and digital communication channels to promote National Safeguarding Week and share safeguarding messages across the region. Working collaboratively with partner agencies helped extend the reach of campaign messages and encourage wider engagement.

Dedicated webpages were created to support National Safeguarding Week, providing access to presentations, learning resources, guidance, useful links and event materials. These resources remain available via the Boards' website, enabling practitioners, partner agencies and members of the public to revisit learning and access further information.

Training and resources to support learning from Practice Reviews and SUSRs

A significant amount of time and investment has been dedicated to developing a seamless system of promoting and disseminating learning associated with published Child and Adult Practice Reviews. In the last year, dissemination events utilising online platforms have been held in respect of the following published reviews:

- [CWMPAS 1/2022](#)

- [CYSUR 1/2024](#)

Through the Dissemination Event model, virtual presentations and Q&A sessions are facilitated to enable practitioners to hear and discuss the key themes emerging and multi-agency learning arising in respect of recently published reviews. These events have been well attended across the Boards' partner agencies and have received overwhelmingly positive feedback. This well-established model has continued to support wider dissemination of learning arising from reviews, which helps to ensure the learning identified can reach and inform operational practice beyond the implementation of the review recommendations.

A supplementary library of recordings of these events delivered by the Independent Reviewers and Chairs who undertook these reviews is available on the Boards' website.

Training

As outlined in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Regional Safeguarding Boards are responsible for ensuring practitioners have access to appropriate safeguarding training and learning opportunities. The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards continue to provide the framework for supporting consistent, high-quality safeguarding training across organisations and professional groups.

Throughout 2025/26, the Boards continued to support the development and delivery of safeguarding training and learning opportunities across Mid and West Wales. A range of regional events, workshops, e-learning resources and multi-agency training programmes were delivered in both face-to-face and virtual formats, supporting practitioners, managers and strategic leaders to strengthen safeguarding knowledge, skills and practice.

Regional Training Projects and Delivery

Joint Section 47 Training for Police Officers and Social Workers

Following extensive development work undertaken in previous years, the Regional Safeguarding Boards successfully launched the Police and Social Services Joint Investigation Training programme during 2025/26. Developed collaboratively with partner agencies, the programme aims to strengthen the quality and consistency of joint Section 47 child protection enquiries by bringing together Police officers and social workers in a shared learning environment.

The training focuses on promoting effective joint working, improving understanding of respective roles and responsibilities, and supporting practitioners to undertake skilled child protection investigations. Feedback from participants highlighted the value of multi-agency learning, increased confidence in undertaking joint investigations, and a greater understanding of the challenges and responsibilities faced by partner agencies.

An evaluation of the pilot programme found that participants considered the training relevant, informative and beneficial to practice. The training represents a significant achievement in supporting a consistent multi-agency approach to safeguarding children across Mid and West Wales.

Most Valued



- Multi-agency learning • Interactive activities
- Scenario-based exercises • Real-life examples
- Information sharing guidance
- Increased confidence



What participants valued most from the session

"Very enjoyable and relevant training which I think should be mandatory."

"Great training, very informative and thought provoking."

"Learning about the whole process and how Social Services and Police work together and support each other."



Above and below: some collective photos from the Joint Section 47 Training in 2026.



Transitional Safeguarding Research Roadshow

During 2025/26, the Boards supported Social Care Wales in delivering a regional Research Roadshow focused on Transitional Safeguarding. The event brought together safeguarding partners from across Mid and West Wales to explore research, practice developments and the lived experiences of young people transitioning between children's and adults' services. The roadshow provided an opportunity for practitioners and strategic leaders to consider the challenges and opportunities associated with safeguarding young people and young adults, including the importance of relationship-based practice, effective multi-agency working and improving continuity of support during key life transitions.

Following the event, the Boards participated in continuity planning activity facilitated by Social Care Wales to consider how learning could be translated into future regional action. Transitional Safeguarding remains an important area of development for the region, and partners continue to explore opportunities to strengthen pathways, improve collaboration and promote a more seamless safeguarding approach for young people as they move towards adulthood.

Further information is available via [Social Care Wales' Transitional Safeguarding Research Roadshow resources](#).



Above: some collective photos from the Transitional Safeguarding Roadshow event at the John Burns Centre, February 2026.

National Safeguarding Training Standards: Group C Resource Pack Implementation Day

In February 2026, the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board worked in partnership with Social Care Wales to host an implementation day focused on the Group C Resource Pack, developed as part of the National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards. The event brought together safeguarding professionals from across the region to explore the resources, share learning and consider their practical application within training programmes and safeguarding practice.

The implementation day provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on current practice, discuss local delivery arrangements and consider next steps in supporting the consistent application of the National Standards. Following the event, the Group C resources were made available through Social Care Wales, providing trainers across Wales with a suite of resources to support safeguarding learning and development.

The Group C resource pack and related safeguarding training resources can be accessed via Social Care Wales: [Safeguarding Training](#).



Some collective photos from the Social Care Wales Group C Implementation Day held in February 2026

How to Complete a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)

In February 2026, the Regional Safeguarding Board commissioned and delivered two multi-agency information sessions facilitated by an independent consultant, to support practitioners in completing high-quality Multi-Agency Referral Forms (MARFs). The sessions were designed to strengthen understanding of the purpose and principles of MARFs, covering key issues including appropriate threshold application, professional judgement, information sharing and the importance of capturing the child's voice within referrals.

The training supported practitioners from a range of agencies to develop confidence in identifying when a MARF is required and how to provide clear, evidence-based information that supports effective safeguarding decision-making. Particular emphasis was placed on the relationship between MARFs, threshold application and ensuring that children and families receive the right help at the right time.

Evaluation findings demonstrated a high level of participant satisfaction, with attendees describing the sessions as practical, informative and directly relevant to their roles.

Participants reported increased confidence in completing referrals, applying professional judgement and ensuring that the child's voice is clearly represented within safeguarding referrals.

The use of practical examples and case studies was highlighted as a particular strength of the training.

When asked what primary messages attendees would take back into their practice from the session, the following was shared:



Average Score: Learning Impact and Influence on Practice



What participants said they would take away from the session

"Greater awareness in practice of professional curiosity and keeping the voice of the child at the centre."

"To remain confident in my decision-making and to ensure I respectfully challenge decisions I do not agree with."

"Emphasise in supervision that child-centred practice is fundamental."



Average Score: Learning Impact and Influence on Practice



What participants valued most from the session

"Being more confident in professional judgement; our voice advocates for children who cannot advocate for themselves."

"Making sure the child's voice is heard throughout, using different forms of communication."

"Including the person's own language in the report."

Understanding Thresholds and Assessing Risk of Significant Harm

In January and March 2026, the Regional Safeguarding Board delivered two multi-agency training sessions to support implementation of the updated CYSUR Threshold and Eligibility Support Document, The Right Help at the Right Time. The training brought together practitioners from Local Authorities, Health services and Dyfed-Powys Police to explore threshold decision-making, professional curiosity, risk assessment, cumulative harm, disguised compliance and effective multi-agency information sharing.

Feedback was highly positive, with participants describing the training as practical, insightful and directly relevant to safeguarding practice. Attendees particularly valued the use of case studies and opportunities for multi-agency learning, with the importance of keeping the child's voice at the centre of assessment and decision-making emerging as a strong theme.

Following delivery of the training, updated threshold training resources were developed and distributed to partner agencies across the region, including introductory, half-day and full-day training packages to support ongoing implementation of the regional Threshold and Eligibility Support Document.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

The VAWDASV Regional Training Sub Group consists of all four Local Authorities and both Health Boards, and continues to meet and oversee the Regional Training Plan to deliver Groups 1-3 and 6 of the National Training Framework. The region has committed to a joint delivery plan and reporting framework directly into Welsh Government for national oversight with regular training in respect of this rolled out across agencies.

Other Agency Training

In addition to the above regional training commissioned and delivered on a multi-agency basis by the Regional Safeguarding Boards, all agencies have comprehensive safeguarding training plans and programmes delivered on an inter-agency basis.

This year, agencies have focused upon embedding the National Safeguarding Training Standards, as outlined above with a particular focus on implementing training in respect of Groups B and C. Training delivered at a local level covers a wide breadth of topics, such as trauma informed practice training targeted at residential staff and foster carers; the use of creative digital platforms such as Virtual Reality (VR) to deliver safeguarding training in an immersive way; and training in respect of professional curiosity, mental capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.



Some collective photos from National Safeguarding Week Conference 2025



Some collective photos from National Safeguarding Week Conference 2025



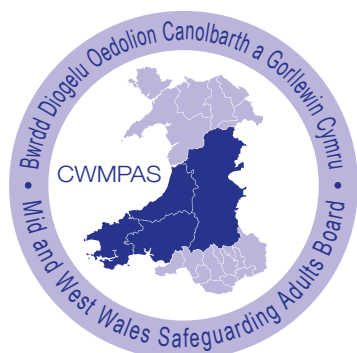
What difference have we made and what outcomes have we achieved?

- Children and adults at risk have benefited from a more skilled and informed workforce through sustained investment in safeguarding training, learning and professional development.
- Shared learning from safeguarding reviews, audits and national developments has improved practitioner confidence, professional curiosity and multi-agency decision-making.
- The implementation of national training standards and safeguarding frameworks has contributed to greater consistency in safeguarding practice and improved outcomes for children and adults at risk.

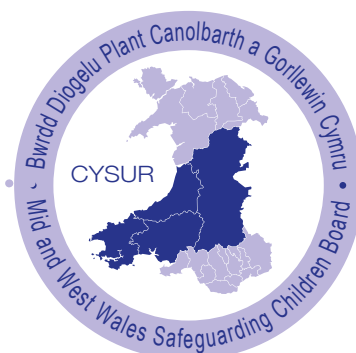
(k) How the Safeguarding Boards have implemented advice from Welsh Government and the National Independent Safeguarding Board

The Chairs of CYSUR and CWMPAS, and the Regional Safeguarding Manager and Business Unit team, continue to work closely with senior Welsh Government officials and the National Independent Safeguarding Board on areas of mutual interest, and where it is identified improvements can be made to professional safeguarding practice.

Focus this year has continued to be upon the implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review process, alongside the continuing training and development framework and associated in person, online and digital training packages, alongside high-profile national safeguarding work and projects fully outlined under [section \(b\)](#).



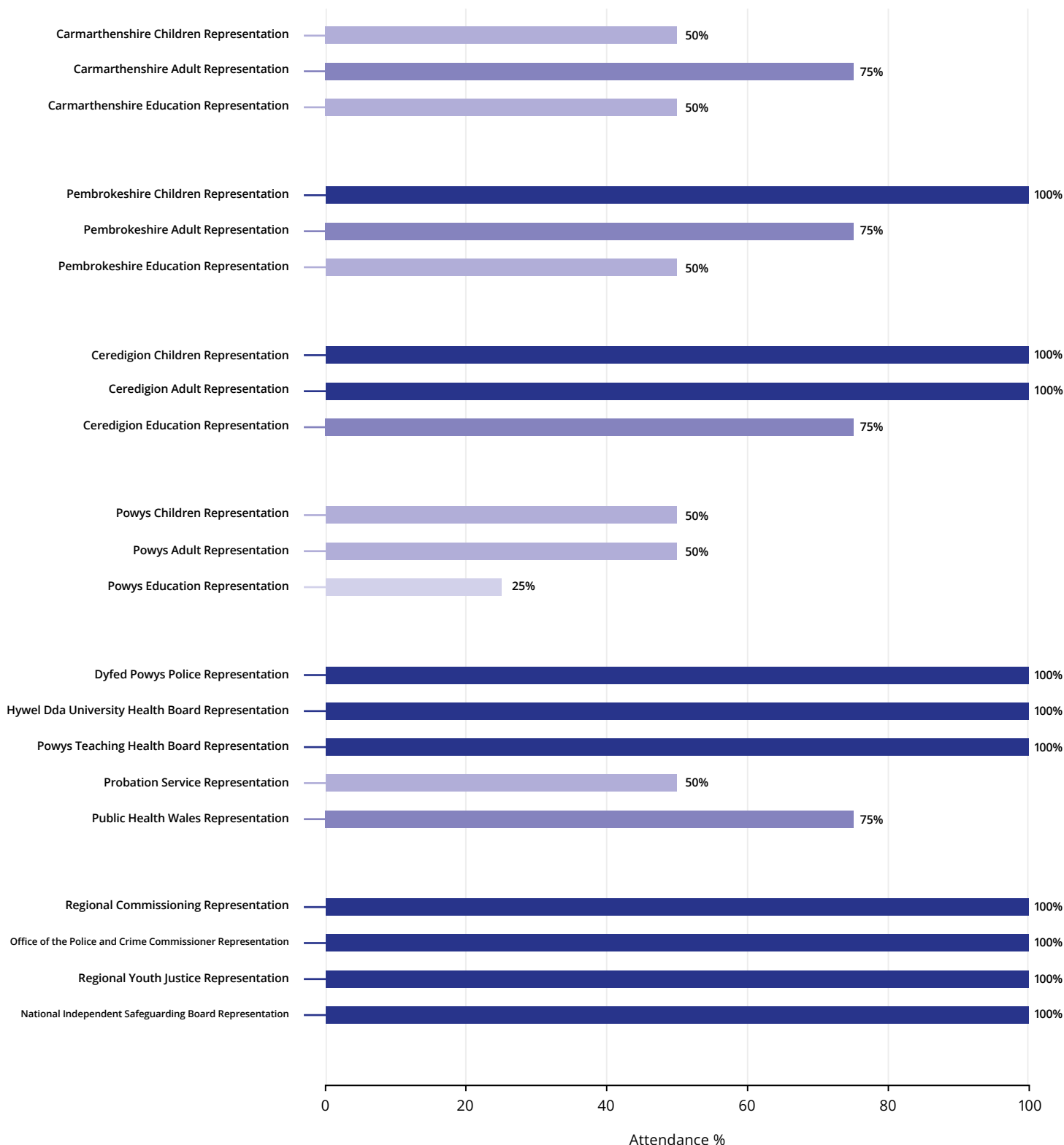
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Appendix 1

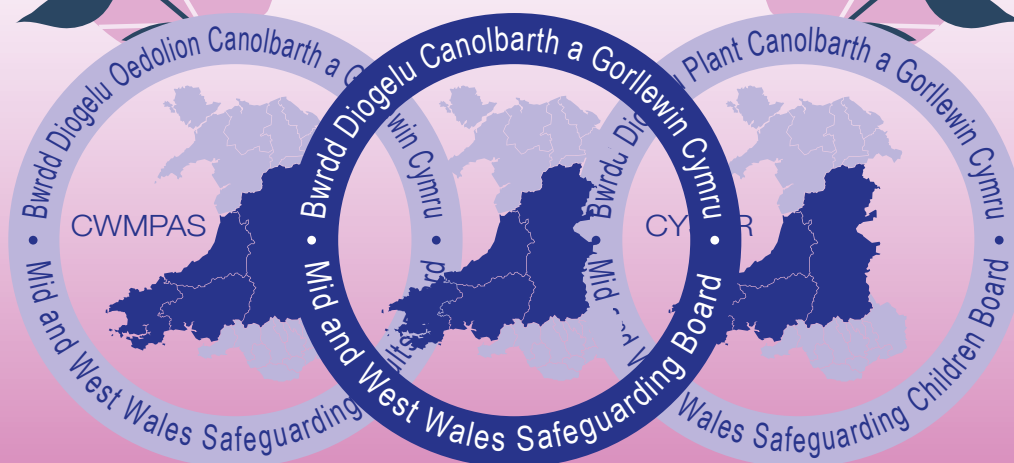
The following provides information on the level of attendance and engagement at the Regional Executive Boards meetings by the named senior strategic representative member, at Director or Head of Service level and agency equivalent, over the 12-month reporting period.

Executive Board Attendance by Nominated Senior Representatives (2025/26)



Appendix 2

- **APR/CPR** – Adult Practice Review/Child Practice Review
- **MAPF** – Multi-Agency Professional Forum
- **VAWDASV** – Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
- **MACE/CSE** – Multi-Agency Child Exploitation/ Child Sexual Exploitation
- **LOG** – Local Operational Group
- **NSGW** – National Safeguarding Week
- **ERW** – Education Regional Working
- **EHE** – Elective Home Education
- **RASSO** – Rape and Serious Sexual Offences
- **FGM** – Female Genital Mutilation
- **NISB** – National Independent Safeguarding Board
- **DoLS** – Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- **CIW** – Care Inspectorate Wales
- **IICSA** – Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
- **PRUDiC** – Procedural Response to Unexpected Death in Childhood
- **ACEs** – Adverse Childhood Experiences
- **PTHB** – Powys Teaching Health Board
- **CYPP** – Children and Young People Partnership
- **CAMHS** – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- **MARAC** – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
- **MATAC** – Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination
- **MAPPA** – Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
- **PHW** – Public Health Wales
- **NST** – National Safeguarding Team
- **WAST** – Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
- **DPP** – Dyfed-Powys Police
- **YJS** – Youth Justice Service
- **NPS** – National Probation Service
- **CRC** – Community Rehabilitation Company
- **SoS** – Signs of Safety
- **PSE** – Personal & Social Education
- **ADEW** – Association of Directors of Education in Wales
- **DBS** – Disclosure and Barring Service
- **MARF** – Multi-Agency Referral Form
- **DHR** – Domestic Homicide Review
- **DA** – Domestic Abuse
- **SARC** – Sexual Assault Referral Centre
- **BAME** – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
- **CSPII** – Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incidents
- **YJB** – Youth Justice Board
- **UNCRC** – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- **CSA/CSE** – Child Sexual Abuse/Exploitation
- **CCE** – Child Criminal Exploitation
- **IRISI** – Social enterprise established to promote and improve the healthcare response to gender-based violence
- **DSP** – Designated Safeguarding Person
- **SUSR** – Single Unified Safeguarding Review
- **IDVA** – Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
- **ISVA** – Independent Sexual Violence Advisor
- **NSPCC** – National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- **CPD** – Continuing Professional Development
- **MCA** – Mental Capacity Act
- **DASH RIC** – Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-based Abuse Risk Identification Checklist
- **MSC** – Most Significant Change



THE MID AND WEST WALES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS BOARDS ANNUAL REPORT

Produced by the Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Board

Rebecca Humphreys
*Practice Review
Business Manager*

Julie Breckon
*Strategic Regional
Safeguarding Manager for
Children and Adults at Risk*

Stuart Hicks
*Business
Development Officer*

Stanislava Kovacinova
*Business
Development Officer*



CYSUR@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

CWMPAS@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

www.cysur.wales