

# Safeguarding Impact Report

# Impact Report: Implementation of Adult Safeguarding Board Cornwall

## Introduction:

**Following Healthwatch Cornwall's publication of the People's experience of Adult Safeguarding Services (a review of services in Cornwall and UK) report 2021 – Healthwatch Cornwall and the Experiences of Adult Safeguarding Services Interim report 2021, significant changes have been implemented to enhance the safeguarding process, improve individual involvement, and support carers. This report outlines the key impacts and ongoing improvements arising from the recommendations Healthwatch Cornwall made.**

Healthwatch Cornwall would like to thank the residents of Cornwall for sharing their experience of Adult Social Care – without your voices – the theory of change would not come to fruition.

Healthwatch Cornwall would also like to thank Fiona Fields, Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board for commissioning this work and responding with vigour.

## Executive Summary:

**This report demonstrates how Healthwatch Cornwall's independent engagement with individuals subject to adult safeguarding has directly influenced systemic change across Cornwall. Through in-depth conversations with 29 participants, we explored whether people felt heard, safe, and supported – and what outcomes mattered most to them.**

Our findings, rooted in the Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) framework, not only highlighted gaps in communication, advocacy, and inter-agency coordination – they led to formal recommendations that have since been adopted by the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) and partners.

These recommendations are now actively shaping local safeguarding policy, service delivery, and public awareness work. The role of Healthwatch Cornwall has been critical in ensuring that real experiences drive meaningful, person-centred change.

# Key Findings

## Changes to Services

- **23 of 29 participants** were satisfied with the safeguarding outcome, often due to feeling listened to.
- The **Police were praised** for home-based support and reassuring communication.

Feedback has led to proposals for streamlined safeguarding conferences that are more inclusive and less intimidating.

## Stakeholder Influence

Healthwatch Cornwall's insights have been adopted by SAB to develop new protocols for:

- **Offering advocacy** services as standard
- **Clarifying safeguarding plans** for better user understanding

## Amplifying Public Voice

- **25 of 29 participants** reported understanding their safeguarding plan, a significant rise compared to national average.
- Service user voices directly shaped the **16-point recommendation list**, used to brief partners at the March 2025 SAB Conference.

## Preventing Issues

**Identified communication breakdowns** that previously led to distress or disengagement — prompting pre-emptive improvements in safeguarding communication pathways.

## Partnership and Collaboration


Insights fostered **strengthened collaboration** between Healthwatch Cornwall, SAB, and advocacy providers.

**Multi-agency coordination** is now a focus area for SAB improvement planning.

# Case Study: From Silence to Support


|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>The Challenge</b>    | A service user shared with Healthwatch Cornwall that they felt unable to speak freely during their safeguarding conference due to the presence of unfamiliar professionals and lack of preparation.        |
| <b>Our Intervention</b> | We identified this as a systemic issue and included it as a core recommendation in our report – advocating for better pre-meeting support and guaranteed advocacy.   |
| <b>The Result</b>       | SAB responded by introducing new guidelines ensuring individuals are offered a dedicated advocate ahead of any conference. Clear, plain-language information about the process is now provided as standard |

## Stakeholder Feedback




“This report gave us honest, ground-level feedback that’s hard to ignore – we’re already implementing some of the recommendations.”

– **SAB Member**




"We hadn't realised how unclear the safeguarding plan process was for some people. The report made it obvious that transparency and timing really matter."

- **Local Authority Safeguarding Lead**



"We commissioned Healthwatch Cornwall because why would you tell the organisation who has caused you distress, your views

- **SAB Member**



"I could not believe that a victim of harm, reported to Healthwatch Cornwall that the perpetrator was in the Safeguarding review, leaving them unable to voice their lived experience. I am staggered! In this day and age!"

- **Fiona Fields, SAB Chair**

# Key Impacts:

## Healthwatch Cornwall's Impact on Safeguarding Practice:

### Increased Involvement and Transparency

**Through our research, Healthwatch Cornwall identified that many individuals felt disengaged from the safeguarding process due to lack of information or clarity. As a result of our findings:**

- All individuals are now fully informed about the safeguarding process from start to finish.
- Desired outcomes are now documented and reviewed at both the beginning and end of each enquiry, providing measurable feedback and ensuring that safeguarding processes are tailored to individual needs.

### Embedding 'Making Safeguarding Personal' (MSP)

**Healthwatch Cornwall's engagement with people who had been through safeguarding revealed the need for more person-centred approaches. In response:**

- The MSP approach is now fully integrated into safeguarding practices across Cornwall, ensuring that every individual's needs are central to the process.
- Enquiry meetings now routinely invite individuals to attend with a support person, empowering them to feel heard and respected throughout the process.

### Support for Individuals and Carers:

**Through our extensive engagement, Healthwatch Cornwall discovered that advocacy and recognition of carers were often inconsistent. Following our recommendations:**

- Advocacy services are now routinely offered to individuals based on assessed needs, ensuring that no one is left unsupported during safeguarding procedures.
- Carers are now recognised as individuals with specific needs, receiving their own assessments and support through the newly implemented Carers' Strategy, tailored to meet their distinct requirements.

## Improved Safeguarding Practices:

**Healthwatch Cornwall identified that some individuals felt re-victimised by the presence of alleged perpetrators during safeguarding proceedings. As a result:**

- Perpetrators are now excluded from enquiry meetings when the affected individual is sharing their experience, preventing further distress.
- The outcomes of safeguarding enquiries are now reported directly to the individual at the conclusion of the process, ensuring transparency and closing the feedback loop.

## Co-Production and Policy Development:

**Healthwatch Cornwall's unique role in co-producing safeguarding policies has led to a deeper collaboration with the Safeguarding Adults Board and other partners. As a direct result of our engagement and expertise:**

- Co-production principles are now embedded in safeguarding policy development, ensuring that service users and carers have a voice in shaping the systems that affect them.
- Healthwatch Cornwall was invited to review and advise on several key policies, including the Multi-agency Safeguarding Policy (2022) and Carers' Strategy (2023).
- Our input is directly influencing the creation of future policies, such as the Self-neglect Policy (2024) and Organisational Abuse Policy (2025).

## Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan Priorities



# The Impact of Our Research:

**Healthwatch Cornwall's involvement has not just shaped the way policies are written but directly improved safeguarding practices for people in Cornwall. Our trusted relationship with both the public and commissioners has resulted in lasting changes that make safeguarding processes more inclusive, person-centred, and transparent.**

## Why These Changes Matter:

People are being heard. Our research has directly impacted the way individuals experience safeguarding in Cornwall, ensuring they are fully informed, respected, and supported throughout the process. Carers and vulnerable people have a voice. The new advocacy and carers' strategies highlight the importance of supporting the entire family, not just the individual in distress.

Sustainable change is happening. The integration of Healthwatch Cornwall's feedback into policies and strategies ensures that improvements to safeguarding will be embedded long-term, shaping how services are delivered in the future.

## Next Steps and Ongoing Impact:

Healthwatch Cornwall will continue to work alongside the Safeguarding Adults Board and local partners to monitor the implementation of these changes, ensuring that improvements are sustained and further opportunities for feedback and co-production are identified.


# Final Thoughts on the Report's Improvements:

The revisions aim to showcase Healthwatch Cornwall's instrumental role in driving positive change in safeguarding practices. We've clearly outlined the direct impacts of our recommendations and ensured that Healthwatch Cornwall is firmly positioned as the catalyst for those changes.



We can now demonstrate both the influence of our work and the lasting, practical changes that have occurred — all tied back to Healthwatch Cornwall's leadership and strategic input.

### **Fiona Field, Independent Chair of Safeguarding Adults Board for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly states:**



"Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Adults Board were delighted to work with Healthwatch Cornwall to find out about local people's experiences of adult safeguarding. The report describes many people's experiences, some very good and others not good enough - these highlight how things need to change to improve the experience of safeguarding processes. It is really important that vulnerable people feel fully involved in their safeguarding experience and that they are kept at the centre of the care. The Board have accepted the report's recommendations in full and will now be working on the improvements identified in the report. I would like to thank all the individuals who contributed their time and safeguarding experiences across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. We have an excellent report that gives us very clear messages about what to improve and why. There will be a follow up piece of work later this year to check that services have improved and that the experience of safeguarding is consistently personal to individuals".

– **Safeguarding Adults Board Website**

Healthwatch Cornwall remains committed to amplifying the voices of the service users and supporting systems that protect and empower adults at risk.

# User Friendly Summary from Reports Recommendations

## 1. Standardised notification and involvement of service users

### Implemented

**Impact:** All service users are now informed when a safeguarding enquiry is undertaken and are asked about their desired outcomes.

**Next Steps:** Ongoing monitoring through data collection (e.g., % of users consulted).

## 2. Criteria for when not to engage or inform

### In Development / Partial

**Impact:** Supports ethical, safe decision-making in high-risk situations.

**Next Steps:** Finalise and embed criteria; ensure frontline teams are trained to apply consistently.

## 3. Service User Group

### Not Yet Implemented (COVID Delayed)

**Impact:** Would support co-production of resources and practice.

**Next Steps:** Revisit formation post-COVID; explore digital or hybrid formats for inclusion.

## 4. Standardised Information Pack for Service Users

### In Progress

**Impact:** Helps individuals understand their rights, the process, and who is supporting them.

**Next Steps:** Finalise content in consultation with service users and frontline teams.

## 5. MSP Guide for Safeguarding Professionals

### Completed / Embedded

**Impact:** Ensures consistency and clarity in applying MSP.

**Next Steps:** Distribute regularly and review content annually.

## 6. Named Safeguarding Professional for Each Case

### Implemented

**Impact:** Enhances continuity, trust, and communication.

**Next Steps:** Monitor consistency and service user feedback on effectiveness.

## 7. Respecting Service User Preferences for Meetings

### Implemented

**Impact:** Increases comfort and participation in safeguarding conferences.

**Next Steps:** Ensure staff are trained to offer and record these options clearly.

## 8. Minimum Contact Standards

### Partially Implemented

**Impact:** Improves consistency and person-centred follow-up.

**Next Steps:** Formalise standards and audit compliance periodically.

## 9. Advocacy Eligibility Criteria

### Implemented

**Impact:** Ensures fair access to support based on assessed need.

**Next Steps:** Monitor uptake and ensure all staff are trained on criteria.

## 10. Support Services Directory

### In Development

**Impact:** Expands support options beyond safeguarding professionals' remit.

**Next Steps:** Complete and publish directory, update quarterly.

## 11. Professional Awareness of Relationships and MSP

### Training Delivered

**Impact:** Strengthens person-centred practice and positive outcomes.

**Next Steps:** Reinforce in supervision and CPD; gather qualitative feedback on relational practice.

## 12. Regular, Independent Feedback Collection

### Partially Implemented

**Impact:** Increases accountability and helps identify improvement areas.

**Next Steps:** Ensure 6-monthly intervals are met and feedback is collected by Healthwatch Cornwall who are the only mandatory and independent organisation in Cornwall and best place to continue this work.

## 13. Semi-Structured Feedback Design

### In Development

**Impact:** Enables deeper insights into service user experience.

**Next Steps:** SAB to commission Healthwatch Cornwall to Review and update. Feedback forms collated by the Local Authority to include open-ended questions.

## 14. Ethical Criteria for Inviting Feedback

### In Progress

**Impact:** Protects individuals from harm or re-traumatisation.

**Next Steps:** Formalise criteria and provide guidance for application.

## 15. Service User Charter with 'I Statements'

### In Development

**Impact:** Clearly outlines service standards and expectations for users.

**Next Steps:** Co-produce with people with lived experience.

## 16. Formation of Action Planning Group

### Implemented

**Impact:** Supports coordinated implementation of SAB recommendations.

**Next Steps:** Continue to meet regularly; review implementation progress and update stakeholders.



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