

PUBLIC PROTECTION

EAST LoTHIAN & MIDLoTHIAN

SUPPORTING SAFER COMMUNITIES



STAFF NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3: MAY 2022

Welcome to East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee's (EMPPC's) latest staff newsletter. We hope you'll enjoy reading this and find something that sparks your interest. Let us know what you think by emailing us at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Our articles contain hyperlinks to connect you with current online resources and further reading.

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Meet the Committee

Every edition we introduce you to our EMPPC members...

Nicola McDowell is Head of Education for East Lothian Council. Her post involves leadership of Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary Education and East Lothian Works, East Lothian's employability service.



Nicola says " I bring extensive knowledge of education practice to the committee, having spent the last 30 years in teaching and education leadership roles. Through this, I can bring the school perspective to life for partners. Education plays a vital role in child protection and safeguarding, given the amount of time children and young people spend in schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings. Education staff are often the first to identify signs of harm or neglect, given their knowledge of learners and their families, and they play a key role in the resulting planning process to ensure children, young people and their families are supported.

Through the partnership, I assume shared responsibility for ensuring that children and young people receive the right support at the right time to prevent and reduce the impact of harm. Through this shared endeavour, I hope to contribute to further improving our multiagency training, policies and procedures to ensure that child protection concerns are recognised and responded to robustly, in a trauma informed way at all levels and that children's rights are central to the process".



We held a communications workshop last month for EMPPC and other invited partners, to learn more about how we can improve how we communicate!

Thanks to Jane Ogden-Smith, (Communications and Engagement Manager, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership) and Jo Allen (Communications Adviser, East Lothian Council) who brought their expertise and supported a great session. They encouraged us to think about how we can best communicate our vision and key messages, and to really know our audience. Jo and Jane helped us think about different types of communication methods and tools, including social media, videos, newsletters and 'good old fashioned' posters! They showed films of different campaigns which stimulated lots of discussion - someone summed it up nicely as "the challenge of comms – we all respond in different ways!"

We spent some time thinking about some of the messages we want to communicate as about Public Protection:

- It is about keeping everyone safe from harm caused by other people
- Everyone has a right to feel safe and a right to be protected
- It is really important never to blame a victim. The responsibility for abuse lies with the person causing the abuse
- Seen something? Say Something? If it doesn't feel right, report it

So we now just need to get on with communicating.....²

Training

Our training is free to staff working in East Lothian and Midlothian. We advertise our courses via your learning and development teams, and on our website. We have also recently started developing one hour briefings, which are a great way to get bite-sized learning without having to sit behind a screen for too long! Coming up.....

18th May at 14:00 – Advocacy for adults at risk of harm

Alan Laughland, our Adult Protection Lead Officer says “Every adult at risk must be offered an advocacy services. Being part of an Adult Protection investigation can be intimidating and bewildering even for more capable and articulate adults. So, having an independent advocate is a way to provide crucial support”. To promote the use of this service, we will hear from our local advocacy services about how they support adults.

24th May at 09:30 – Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme for Scotland (DS DAS)

This is our second session from DS Mandy Wilkinson from the Police Protection Unit, which is proving to be very popular around the country. She will give good practical advice on the scheme that gives some people the right to ask Police if someone has been abusive – and there is a very powerful video that tells a personal story about the impact of this scheme.

9th June at 14:00 – Predatory Marriage

In partnership with five other local authorities, we will hear from Daphne Franks, whose mother was a victim of predatory marriage, and who campaigns to raise awareness of this. It is a form of financial harm whereby adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage are led into it, only to be financially exploited.

12th July at 11:00 – Impact of Rape and Sexual Violence

Our partners from Edinburgh Rape and Crisis Centre will deliver this briefing for us. Read more about ERCC later in this newsletter.

If you have not seen our flyers for these events, contact us at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Check out our Training Calendar at emppc.org.uk



LEARNING



EDUCATION



DEVELOPMENT



TRAINING



East Lothian and Midlothian MAPPA Group (EMMG)

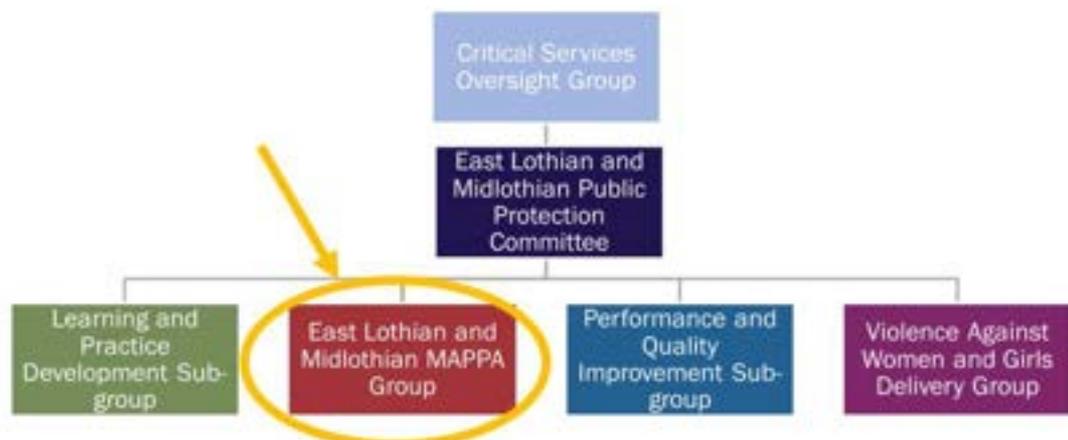


Judith Tait, Chair of EMMG
Chief Social Work Officer and
Head of Children's Services, East
Lothian Council

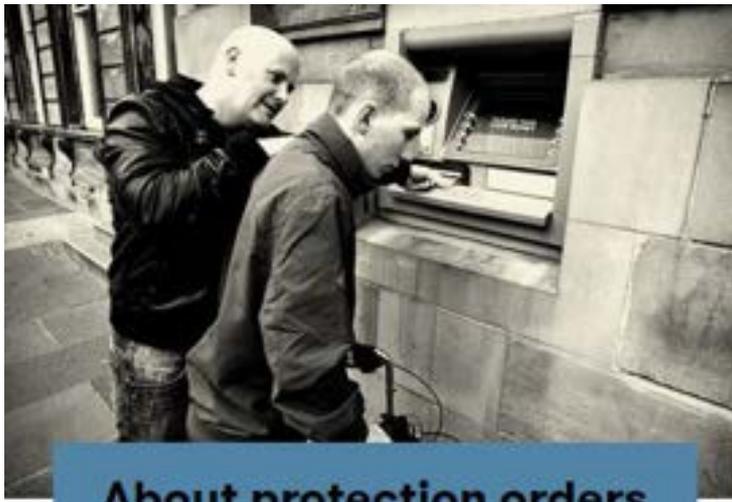
The EMMG is one of the four sub-groups of the Public Protection Committee, chaired by Judith Tait. It was previously called the Offender Management Group, but was recently re-named when we updated the terms of reference and membership. We did not feel that the previous name properly reflected the responsibilities of this group. MAPPA stands for Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, which provides a framework to manage the risk posed by certain categories of people offending, including: Registered Sex Offenders, Mentally Disordered Restricted Patients and Other Risk of Serious Harm Offenders. MAPPA brings together professionals from Police, Social Work, Housing, Health and the Scottish Prison Service, and the arrangements are co-ordinated by a central unit based in Edinburgh. The practical management of offenders who come under MAPPA is the responsibility of these agencies at a local level.

Judith says "I took up the role of chair of what was previously known as the offender management sub-group of the public protection committee in 2021 when the previous chair, Alison White moved post. This certainly pushed me out of my professional comfort zone and I am very grateful to Fiona Kennedy and Julie Morton the justice service managers in Mid and East Lothian and our MAPPA coordinator Bob Thompson for their support and expertise. We have taken some time to review and re-shape role and remit of the group and review our membership. I'm pleased to welcome Wendy McGuire, head of housing for East Lothian and Gillian McCusker, senior manager for housing and wellbeing in Midlothian as members on the group. One of the key changes is the name of the sub-group which we feel better reflects our role and function. There are five local authority areas within our full MAPPA strategic grouping and the role of this group is to identify the strategic and operational business of MAPPA as it relates to East and Midlothian. We consider performance and quality assurance data and provide assurance to the P&QI sub-group of the safe and effective operation of MAPPA in our area".

The EMMG receives data reports for 52 nationally reported indicators for East Lothian and Midlothian, so there is a lot of information about MAPPA processes. In each area there are between 50 and 60 registered sex offenders at any one time, the vast majority being managed at (the first) MAPPA level 1 and allocated to Justice Services. The vast majority are entitled to live in the community and are managed and monitored robustly via MAPPA processes.



Adult Support and Protection



About protection orders

Because every day work allows professionals to assess and help vulnerable adults to move away from situations of risk, Banning Orders tend to be those most frequently granted in Scotland. Banning can mean that unsupervised contact, or in some cases, any contact with them, is too risky for the adult. In East Lothian and Midlothian, Protection Orders are used infrequently, but it is important that staff know what they are, and of the need to consider when it might be appropriate to use one. An application would be made in writing by the Council Solicitor, with evidence provided by the Council Officer.

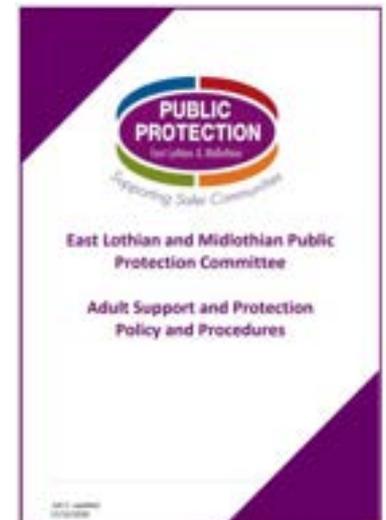
Sometime an adult's health issues (e.g. dementia, learning difficulty) can make them more vulnerable to harm from one or more individuals. They may need to be assessed, removed from a situation of harm or protected by banning someone from seeing them.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 has three legal Protection Orders that allows the Council to take further action to help them serve the best interests of an adult, where actions to protect the adult safe cannot be achieved by voluntary agreement. These are:

- Assessment Order - where assessment is being prevented by someone the Court orders access to the adult to assess them. This can have a warrant to allow the police to force entry if necessary;
- Removal Order - to remove an adult at risk of harm from a situation of risk (e.g. living with someone who is harming them and will not let them leave). This can have a warrant to allow the police to force entry if necessary; and
- Banning Order - to ban someone who is harmful from contact with an adult at risk, with powers of arrest if breached.

More information can be found in our [Adult Support and Protection Policy and Procedures](#)

and the [Act Against Harm](#) website



Act Against Harm



Adult Support and Protection

National Adult Protection Day - report on our Learning Event in February

84 staff from across East Lothian and Midlothian attended our on-line learning event in February, to hear about financial harm from a number of different perspectives, its impact and how to tackle it.

We firstly welcomed Keith Brown, emeritus Professor from Bournemouth University who told us that the people most at risk people are lonely, and particularly, elderly people in cognitive decline. The scale of scamming, and impact are huge, not just on the loss of money, but on psychological wellbeing and confidence, and indirect costs on wider society. Keith outlined a number of scenarios to highlight the scale and impact of scamming, not just on psychological wellbeing and confidence, but the indirect costs on wider society when savings are taken. Keith said “Look out for the dustbin bags, the unnecessary mail floating around, the jobs that are being done, scamming under the covid regulations (track and trace). Never underestimate how embarrassed people are....it is the last thing they are going to admit. If you could have any campaign in your communities the biggest part of the campaign is getting the message out “you are not a fool, the criminal is just very clever....the more you tell us about it, the more we can help others”.

Keith told us about new forms of scamming, including clairvoyant scamming where a group of criminals in Turkey scan obituary notices in UK local newspapers and contact family members claiming they can make contact with the dead person...for a fee.

Keith challenged us all to ask our ourselves what are we doing to better protect ourselves and our loved ones, and to talk about our end of life desires – for all adults, not just the elderly.

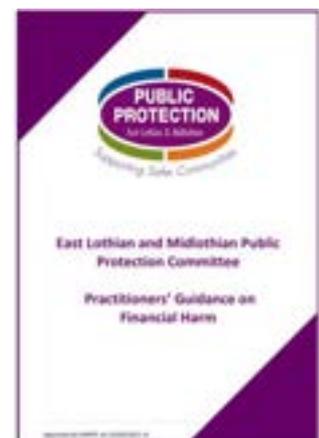
Here are some great resources from Keith

[Scams: the power of persuasive language – NCPQSW](#)

[Theft and Fraud within Families](#)



Read our practitioners' guidance on financial harm [here](#)



You can also hear more from Keith in this podcast [How isolation is driving financial fraud and scams — The Retirement Cafe](#)

Adult Support and Protection

Keith was a hard act to follow, but our next three speakers did not let us down, and continued with the theme of financial harm from three very different angles.

With a local angle, Gillian Bonnar from East Lothian Trading Standards gave a great overview of the work of Trading Standards. She told us about some of the things we can do to reduce the risk of scamming:

- trueCall, a device connected to a landline or mobile that collects and monitors data on scam calls and only allows pre-approved callers
- Telephone preference service (for UK calls only) easy to register to avoid cold callers www.tpsonline.org.uk
- Email preference service report@phishing.gov.uk
- Text message service 7726
- Use the [Trusted Trader](#) Scheme
- Advice Direct Scotland provides free, impartial advice to everyone in Scotland, on any subject matter. They can be contacted on www.advice.scot



Gillian was followed by Hannah Collins, a banking specialist from the charity [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) (learn more about the work of the charity by clicking on the link). The charity works to raise awareness of economic abuse and transform responses to it. Hannah told us how abusers create economic risk by exploiting existing inequality and/or creating economic dependency and instability. She gave us some stark facts to highlight the issue:

- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 7 men in the UK experience a form of economic abuse;
- 95% of women experiencing domestic abuse have experienced a form of economic abuse;
- 50% said they could not leave because they had no money; and
- 1 in 3 victim-survivors never tell anyone about the financial abuse.



We learned more about the local responses in East Lothian and Midlothian. DS Nicola Stewart from the Police Protection Unit told us how the Police can help investigate a crime of financial harm, and of the Banking Protocol, where staff in financial institutions are trained to recognise and respond to out of character transaction of potential victims, and to ask questions sensitively. You can read more here on the [Police Scotland website](#).

Alan Laughland, our Adult Protection Lead Officer rounded up a successful event with some key messages:

- Financial harm can affect anybody, especially those vulnerable due to health issues;
- Trading Standards, the Police and Social Work all play their role in supporting and protecting from financial harm; and
- If you suspect financial harm may be happening – report it.

Adult Support and Protection

Human Rights Town – the app!

Supporting everyone to know and understand their rights helps them to stay safe and get fair treatment. Making this information accessible to adults and children with disabilities is vital, particularly given their increased vulnerability to harm and abuse. The [Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities](#) (SCLD) has launched a new app called Human Rights Town, designed to empower people with learning disabilities to recognise and realise their human rights.

The app invites users to travel around a virtual 'Human Rights Town' where they encounter different scenarios at each location, such as using public transport or working at the supermarket. It uses practical examples, for adults and children, to introduce them to each one of their human rights. Each answer can be read or listened to from a recorded voice of a person with learning disabilities.

The Human Rights Town app is available to download for free. Click [here](#) for an easy read guide to download and [here](#) for a quick guide to using the app.



Unable or Unwilling?

We all have the right to make choices that may put us at risk. In Adult Protection being unable to protect ourselves from risk is different from being unwilling. Those who are unable to protect themselves from risk require support and protection. Look at the picture.



If this person had someone who was about to harm him, is he unwilling or unable to protect himself from harm? Health issues can sometimes leave a person unable to protect themselves from harm. It is not that they are unwilling. The Codes of Practice for the Adult Protection Act guide us to use the Oxford English definition of unable as “lacking the skill, means or opportunity to do something”. Just because someone may be able to make decisions to protect themselves, does not mean they can always act on them. A frail older person, for instance, may be unable to withstand bullying to hand over money. They may, for instance, require a Banning Order to protect them.

So, if in doubt, rule Adult Protection in, not out and report your concerns

Adult Support and Protection



United Nations

**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
15 June**

Older people can sometimes be at risk of harm due to health vulnerabilities. Every year, more than a million older people are physically, psychologically, financially or sexually abused, or neglected in the UK. That's one in six people who are victims of abuse. [Hourglass Scotland](#) says "this is a truly damning indictment of how our society views and values older people. Sadly, the abuse of older people is not a new issue, but one that has reached a critical threshold that can no longer be ignored, nor tolerated". Hourglass Scotland will continue to work with the Scottish Government to push for legislative change to enable safer ageing, and will campaign for new statutory protections for greater prevention of crimes against older people. Hourglass has a confidential Helpline (0808 808 8141) to provide information and support to anyone concerned about harm abuse, or exploitation of an older person.



Seen Something? Say Something

Remember, **you** may have vital information that can help protect an adult at risk of harm. If you are concerned about an adult click on the links for

[East Lothian](#)
[Midlothian](#)

Child Protection

Born into care

The removal of a new born baby from his or her mother at birth in a response to child protection concerns is traumatic for birth parents and painful for professionals. The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory has published a report on findings from a study that analysed qualitative data from the lived experiences of parents and professionals where the state intervened at birth. Key challenges (many of which were systems level) were identified along with examples of good practice. Overarching principles to guide practice identified were:

- focusing on the vulnerable unborn child and parents;
- understanding of the impact of trauma;
- timeliness and planning;
- process and service alignment, continuity of care;
- family-inclusive practice;
- partnership and collaborative working;
- change-orientated practice;
- adequacy;
- availability and fit of resources;
- sensitivity and respect; and
- transparency and choice.



To read more click on [Born into Care](#)

The internet, relationships & you

The **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)** work with safeguarding and child protection partners across the UK and overseas. It protects children from harm online and offline with a focus on child sexual exploitation and online protection issues. CEOP has created a new website for children aged 11-18 that has information on relationships and keeping safe on line. It covers themes like exploring your identity online, healthy and abusive relationships, gaming, catfishing, sharing pictures and videos, sexual consent, video chat, what to do if you are worried about something that has happened online and sending nudes. This is an excellent website to share with all children and young people: [CEOP Education](#)



We all need to ensure that we keep our knowledge and skills up to date so we can reduce and prevent on-line harm of children and young people. CEOP supports professionals to deliver education and raise awareness of online child abuse and exploitation. Click [here](#) for resources, training and guidance.

Child Protection

Child Protection Committee Scotland Neglect Learning Events 2022

CPC Scotland, with support from CELCIS and Scottish Government, are hosting a series of free, online learning webinars. The first webinar in March was called **Thinking critically about adolescent neglect** and comes highly recommended in promoting critical reflection on how we as professionals can view neglect – “even the best evidenced tools still require thoughtful practitioners, adopting an equalities lens”. Click [here](#) to watch the video.



19 May 9:30-11am – Early years and primary school age (ANEW Project and CELCIS)

16 June 9:30-11am – Young people and adolescents (Phil Raws, The Children’s Society)

To register for these webinars please contact celcis.learning@strath.ac.uk



The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre) has published a guide to help professionals provide a confident, supportive response to parents and carers when concerns about the sexual abuse of their child have been raised or abuse has been identified. It is for anyone whose role brings them into contact with the parents and carers of children under 18 years old. For example, you may be a social worker, teacher, police officer, health professional, voluntary-sector worker or faith leader/worker.

Here is a snap shot of what it covers. It:

- Explains why parents of abused children need support, outlines the impact of sexual abuse on children and the wider family, and explores parents’ and children’s reactions when abuse is discovered or suspected.
- Sets out how you can support parents effectively, including in relation to their relationship with the child.
- Contains more detailed advice on the support you can provide based on your professional role, the context in which the sexual abuse took place, and the parents’ circumstances and background.
- Describes how you can look after your own wellbeing when working with families affected by child sexual abuse, and lists useful resources for you and for parents.

[Supporting Parents and Carers: A guide for those working with families affected by child sexual abuse](#)

Using our collective responses to understand the impact of domestic abuse post-separation and within family time (contact)



Click on the link to listen to this podcast [How to perpetrator proof custody & access processes](#)

This is essential listening for anyone who is interested in child safety and well-being in the context of post separation coercive control. The discussion includes practical steps and has implications for all multi-agency staff working with children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse.

In this episode, Ruth & David from the Safe & Together Institute talk about:

- How professionals can properly identify and assess coercive control in the context of residence and contact matters;
- How professionals can use a behavioural lens to identify how systems and professionals are targeted, post separation, by parents who choose coercive control;
- How to protect yourself as a practitioner against these behaviours and be resilient in your work;
- How, by using a lens of working alongside parents to identify the risks and harms created by domestic violence perpetrators, we can make sure that courts and services have all the right information to make informed decisions – for example, through the use of the perpetrator mapping tool;
- How it is essential to understand patterns of pre- and post-separation coercive control and the actions taken to harm the children in the family is essential for contextualising and validating the protective parents' behaviours; and
- How acknowledging differing cultural expectations of men and women as parents is essential to assessing child safety and well-being in the context of post separation coercive control.

This is one of a series of podcasts that are available from the [Safe & Together Institute](#).

David Mandel founded the Safe & Together Institute which trains systems in domestic violence aware practices from a child safety lens. Ruth Stearns Mandel is a survivor of complex abuse, child abuse and domestic abuse growing up in a cult. She is a former teacher and trainer using her experience to clarify messages and complexities around abuse and survivors.

Child Protection

We are all now hearing more about The Promise in our workplaces. [The Promise Scotland](#) is responsible for driving the work of change demanded by the findings of the Independent Care Review. Watch these short videos to learn more:

[The Story of the Independent Care Review](#)

[Promise Video East Lothian long - YouTube](#)

[The Promise one year on Midlothian](#)



What has the Promise got to do with Child Protection?

The Promise goes beyond care experienced babies, children and families. It is about us working together collaboratively to create the optimum environment for children, young people and families to grow and develop. If we get this right – East Lothian and Midlothian could be the best place for babies, children and young people to grow up free from harm. We know that children and young people's experiences of harm can have a long and lasting impact on their physical and emotional health into adulthood. Offering support and/or protection at the right time and in the right can greatly reduce or prevent these catastrophic or negative experiences.



“Whatever work organisations are doing in relation to care experienced children and families, these 5 fundamentals must form a solid core around which everything operates”.

What matters to children and families – Gain an understanding of what matters to children and families from planning right through to intervention and the delivery of services/resources.

Listening – Take time to listen to understand and not just to react. Support others to take time to listen more to what children and young people are saying.

Poverty - “Children growing up in poverty are over-represented on the child protection register and are more likely to be removed from their families...” (The Promise) We must fully understand the impact of poverty on our families across East Lothian and Midlothian.

Children's Rights – Supporting children and young people to know and understand their rights help them to stay safe and get fair treatment.

Language – Be mindful of the language you use in your day-to-day work with and about families. Always look and think through a trauma informed lens

Violence Against Women and Girls

VAWG – a major public health issue in Scotland

Public Health Scotland has published [six new briefings](#) that outline the relationship between Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Scotland's public health priorities.

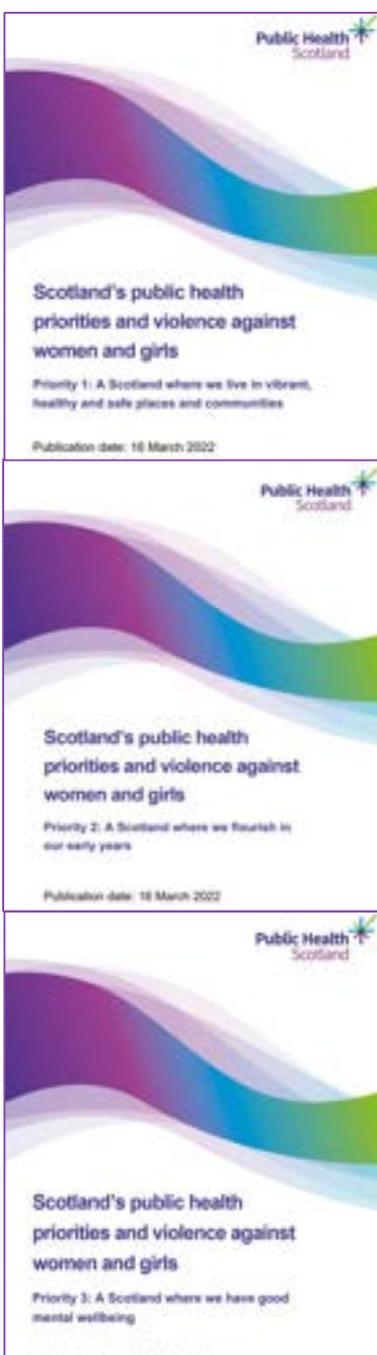
In Scotland, VAWG is a major public health issue. Gender and sex are important determinants of health with many health conditions, health behaviours and exposures to health risks varying because of gender inequality. We know it is important to consider gender and recognise the impact of gender inequality to address VAWG. The briefings take this into account and offer recommendations for what a public health response to VAWG could look like. The briefings highlight:

- The challenges faced by women in Scotland to live in safe places and communities
- How the early years shape attitudes towards violence against women
- How the impact of experiencing violence as children can impact on adulthood
- The challenges faced by women in Scotland to achieve positive mental health
- The complex relationship with alcohol and drugs
- The weaker economic position of women in Scotland, relative to men
- The barriers to eating well, having a healthy weight and being physically active.

Each briefing paper is around 20 pages, easy to read, with each paper following the same format, so check them out. They include:

- Key messages
- Gender and VAWG relating to that issue
- Overview of the policy context of the issue in that paper
- Impact on health and wellbeing
- Recommendations

“Poverty in Scotland is gendered and linked to gender inequality. Women are more likely to experience sustained poverty due to economic and labour inequalities and the prevalence of VAWG. Lone parents are much more likely to be women, and women of working age are much more likely to be carers than men. The economic impact of this can lead to poverty among children and young people, affecting their development and health. Poverty is both a cause and consequence of VAWG, as poverty makes women and girls vulnerable to exploitation and abuse”



Violence Against Women and Girls



Safer, Sooner - Domestic Abuse Network

SafeLives Scotland is inviting frontline professionals across Scotland to join a new network of other domestic abuse professionals to share practice and experiences, and hear about what is happening across the sector, both at a local and national level. This network builds on the work of the [Safe at Home in Scotland](#) network which was set up earlier in the pandemic to connect Scottish domestic abuse professionals to each other and feed into wider recovery and resilience planning.

The **Safer, Sooner** network will meet 3-to 4 times a year. There will be opportunities to hear from guest speakers and network members will be able to help suggest what meetings should cover. Members will also be kept up to date on any new developments and opportunities in the sector through a mailing list.

The network is open to both specialist and mainstream frontline services professionals working with domestic abuse in Scotland, both in the third sector and in statutory services, and those working with adult, and/or child victims as well as perpetrators of domestic abuse. You can register your interest to take part [here](#).

In the news.....misogyny

You may have heard on the [news](#) that Baroness Kennedy QC spoke to the Scottish Parliament's [Criminal Justice Committee](#) last month talking about misogyny. **But do you know what misogyny is and why she was talking about it?**

The Scottish Government commissioned Baroness Kennedy to look at any gaps in the law following the introduction of the Hate Crime Act last year. She has now produced a report called [Misogyny – A Human Rights Issue](#).

“Misogyny is prejudice, malice and/or contempt for women’.... a way of thinking that upholds the primary status of men and sense of male entitlement, while subordinating women and limiting their power and freedom. Conduct based on this thinking can include a range of abusive and controlling behaviours including rape, sexual offences, harassment and bullying and domestic abuse.....Few men actually ‘hate’ women but many men still harbour deeply ingrained attitudes about male primacy and manifest a deep sense of entitlement with regard to women and their bodies”.

If you don't have time to read it all, section 4 of the report is really powerful reading, telling us about the research carried out for the report and we can read about real experiences about “Living with Misogyny; Where it Happens, Who it Happens to, and the Harm it Causes”.

The report says that harmful conduct which has its roots in misogyny should have consequences in law, and calls for a separate Act and offences to be created to deal with some of the issues around misogyny, harassment and stirring up hatred against women and girls.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Making Rights Real – new project on Gender Based Violence and Learning Disability



This new two year rights-based project is led by the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities and People First Scotland and funded through the Delivering Equally Safe Fund. The vision for the project is that women with learning disabilities lead policy, and the development of legislation and practice to ensure that women with learning disabilities have equitable access to protection from gender based violence (GBV) and supports. It aims to:

- support women with learning disabilities to act as leaders to recognise and understand GBV and to contribute to decision-making;
- ensure GBV services improve accessibility and support for women with learning disabilities
- Ensure learning disability support services have a better understanding of GBV and provide appropriate referrals; and
- Ensure that national policy and legislation changes to reflect and meet the needs of women with learning disabilities who have experienced GBV

The three areas of work of the project over the two years are Research, Capacity Building and a Sector Self-Assessment Tool. As we hear more about the work of the project we will keep you informed.

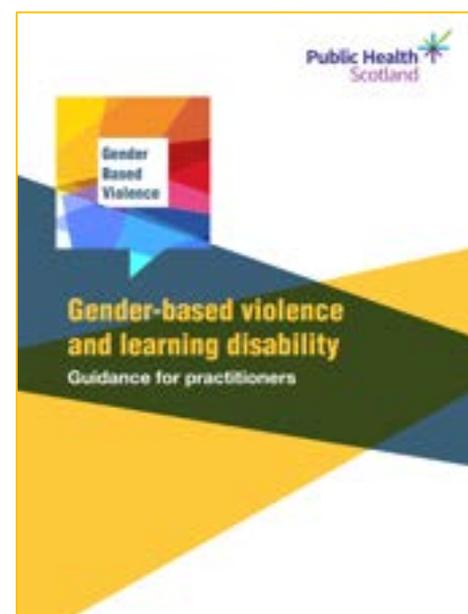
What's the scale of the problem in Scotland?

- There is no available data on crimes of Gender Based Violence reported by women with learning disabilities in Scotland (Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006);
- Global rates of gender-based violence highlight that 90% of women with learning disabilities have been subjected to sexual abuse, with 68% experiencing sexual abuse before turning 18 (United Nations General Assembly, 2017);
- A small-scale study conducted in Glasgow supports the above, showing that 73% of the 62 participating disabled women had experienced domestic abuse, and 43% had been sexually assaulted (Wise Women, 2015); and
- There is no readily available research or data regarding disabled women and their experiences of social care or child protection systems in Scotland [Engender \(2018\)](#)

For some really good resources for practitioners, click on the links below:

[Gender-based violence and learning disability - guidance for practitioners](#)

[Let's get Active, Connected and Included!](#)



Violence Against Women and Girls



This is a new programme led by SafeLives, Improvement Service and, Resilience Learning Partnership in partnership with survivors of domestic abuse and trauma, and funded by the Scottish Government. The project was created and shaped by survivors, will be overseen by the newly formed Scottish Authentic Voice Panel and involve specialist services.

What Authentic Voice will do:

- Support women with experience of domestic abuse and other forms of complex trauma to use their experiences to help shape the pathways to support and service delivery;
- Enable professionals to embed the survivor voice and lived experience into the way in which services are designed; and
- Help decision makers see how meaningful change be achieved through seeing living examples.

The first stage was to gather learning on how survivor voice and lived experience is currently used in organisations across Scotland. The findings are presented in the [Discovery Report](#).



The findings highlight:

- There is a wide range of lived experience activities being carried out across Scotland. The most common activity that survivors are involved in, is providing advice and guidance to services on their projects and work streams.
- A trauma informed approach is paramount when working with lived experience participants to ensure they receive 'wrap around' care and can request particular support if needed.
- Lived experience work was described as being empowering and improving the confidence and self-esteem of participants.
- There are some concerns that lived experience work can be tokenistic and avoids exploring the complex issues experienced by survivors.
- The majority of activities were focussed on 'service users' rather than professionals with lived experience of trauma.

This report picked out the themes of what works, challenges and what is needed to fully embed lived experience and participation. The report findings will inform the work of the project going forward. Stage two will be a series of Deep Dive Workshops for professionals to embed lived experience in local systems and service design processes. Read more [here](#)



Violence Against Women and Girls



edinburgh rape crisis centre
supporting survivors of sexual violence

Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) offers free and confidential emotional and practical support, information and advocacy to women, all members of the trans community, non-binary people and young people aged 12-18 in East Lothian and Midlothian, who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives. This includes, rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, childhood sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation.

Sexual violence is a general term used to describe any sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or where there was pressure, coercion or force. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, fondling, sexual harassment, threats of violence, pressurised sex, flashing, penetration by objects, childhood sexual abuse, non-consensual sharing of personal images. It does not have to be physically violent. Consent can be withdrawn at any time including during a sexual act. Just because consent was given before does not mean that the same can be expected in the future. The majority of sexual violence is perpetrated by someone known to the victim, very often a partner or ex-partner.

Survivors of sexual violence are often worried about not being believed or blamed, therefore, if someone discloses the best thing you can do is believe them, let them know it is not their fault and that support is available.

It is possible that for some of you, you will have to take further action to protect further harm especially if there is ongoing risk. However, it is very important for survivors to have control about what decisions they make; especially about reporting sexual violence to the Police.

1 in 4 women, 1 in 20 men experience sexual violence, and 1 in 6 children experience sexual abuse, so it is very likely that survivors are using your service.

If survivors are unsure what they can do next, there is very useful information and resources on the [ERCC](#) and [Rape Crisis Scotland](#) websites. Providing a safe non-judgemental space to listen can make a huge difference to survivors lives, as this survivor reflects on her experience of therapeutic support from ERCC:

“ In the past two months, we really have talked about a myriad of topics.....I rarely wake up overwhelmed with anxiety anymore. I make a big cup of tea, I cradle it in my hands, feel the warmth of it, I read, I look outside my window, I hear sounds of people, I smile. Good gosh, I am so happy to be alive. Before meeting you at ERCC, I never knew therapy could be so transformative and healing. You made me realise that 22-year-old Me was taken advantage of. Back then, my own voice felt like a foreign object in my mouth. 22-year-old Me was called delusional, a liar, a whore, a victim, an attention-seeker. As you have told me, that pen was really snatched from my hands. People around me did write that narrative for me. You are the first adult in my life that has made me feel safe and heard.”

ERCC offers outreach services in both East Lothian and Midlothian, criminal justice advocacy support including for those survivors who are thinking about reporting, and young people’s service called STAR. To make a referral or to self-refer please make contact using this secure referral [form](#) or by phone on 01315569437.

Spotlight on Professional Curiosity

Professional curiosity or professional nosiness.....?

Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. This has been called 'professional uncertainty' in case reviews.

Professional curiosity can require all practitioners to think 'outside the box', beyond their usual professional role, seeing past the obvious and consider families' circumstances holistically. Curious professionals engage with individuals and families through visits, conversations, observations and asking relevant questions to gather historical and current information. It is a combination of looking, listening, asking direct questions, checking out and reflecting on information received.

How did the term professional curiosity come about?

Professional curiosity in social work practice is not a new concept. It stemmed from the report into the death of Victoria Climbié at the age of nine in 2003. Lord Laming, the chair of the review, spoke of a 'lack of inquisitiveness' during professionals' visits to Victoria Climbié's home. He said

"The concept of "respectful uncertainty" should lie at the heart of the relationship between the social worker and the family. It does not require social workers constantly to interrogate their clients, but it does involve the critical evaluation of information that they are given. People who abuse their children are unlikely to inform social workers of the fact. For this reason at least, social workers must keep an open mind. Their managers must also keep an open mind".

Although published 19 years ago now, Lord Laming's comments are still so relevant today, and the lack of professional curiosity has since featured in other reviews, not just in deaths of children but adults.

Michael Preston-Shoot [reported](#) in 2017 on 26 serious case reviews relating to adults in the South West of England. He said "The quality of the relationship that can be built with the individual, through persistence in engagement and an understanding of their history, is a crucial element of safeguarding. Important too is practitioners' curiosity about the relationship dynamics between an individual and others in their household or network, with recognition of the power dynamics that might be at work, and about situations where individuals do not keep appointments. "Did not attend" could actually be "was not taken/brought".

Professional curiosity is needed when working with families who display 'disguised compliance'. This involves parents or carers giving the appearance of co-operating with agencies to avoid raising suspicions and reduce concerns. It can range from superficial co-operation to concealing deliberate abuse, and can lead to delays in intervening in families.

Spotlight on Professional Curiosity

What are the barriers to professional curiosity?

- Losing focus on the child or adult through over-identifying with carers;
- Over optimism that a situation is changing for the child or adult;
- Making assumptions based on what is being said;
- Being afraid to raise concerns;
- Time constraints;
- Lacking the confidence or assertiveness to ask sensitive questions;
- Unconscious bias; and
- Remote working and hot-desking can present challenges to practicing in a curious way, as talking with colleagues and discussing situations support reflective learning and practice change.

What supports professional curiosity?

It is important therefore that everyone takes time to think about how they can be enquiring in their contact with families in a way that keeps the door of engagement open. Professional curiosity is much more likely to flourish when practitioners:

- are supported by good quality training to help them develop;
- have access to good management, support and supervision. Agencies need to support the development of remote working strategies to enable and encourage case discussions and support across practitioners.;
- 'walk in the shoes' (have empathy) of the child and/or adult to consider the situation from their lived experience;
- remain diligent in working with the family and developing the professional relationships to understand what has happened and its impact on all family members;
- always try to see all parties separately; and
- focus on the needs, voice and 'lived experience' of the child, young person or adult.

And remember, there is no magic way of spotting disguised compliance other than the discrepancy between an adult or carer's accounts and observations of the needs and accounts of the child or adult. The latter must always take precedent.

Where can I learn more about professional curiosity

- The Dartington Trust has published a [Research in Practice](#) briefing with lots of great practical advice about what we can all do to be more professionally curious
- Sue Woolmore talks about disguised compliance in this four minute [video](#)
- Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Partnership encourage us to rethink 'did not attend' in this short [video](#)
- Read about disguised compliance in this short article in the [Community Care](#) magazine



What would you like to see in our next newsletter? Would you like to contribute to it?

If so, please get in touch with us at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk

Follow us on  @EMPPC1

Contact us

Here are our Lead Officers' email addresses. They support the work of the EMPPC and you can contact them for more information about anything in this newsletter, or about their role:

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