



Strategic Partnership Boards
SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING

Annual Report 2022 - 23

Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership Boards



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Opening remarks from the Local Safeguarding Partners

We are pleased to bring you the Strategic Partnership Boards' annual report for 2022 – 23, which outlines the achievements, progress and impact against our cross-cutting and individual Board priorities across our Partnerships for safeguarding, community safety and wellbeing.

The maturity and depth of our Partnership enables all of our services to collaborate and innovate. This helps us with discharging our statutory duties proportionately and appropriately whilst also considering the wider needs of our children, young people, and vulnerable adults in Waltham Forest which means they are safe, live well and can achieve their full potential.

We are working to ensure that the partnership's efforts are making a tangible positive difference to vulnerable residents in Waltham Forest. All safeguarding work across the partnership is underpinned by the Board's principles that everyone in the borough should benefit from fair and equitable delivery of services, with community voices playing a significant role in deciding how services are shaped and received.

London Borough of Waltham Forest:

Heather Flinders, Strategic Director, Families

NE London Metropolitan Police:

Simon Crick, Borough Commander, NE BCU

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board

Diane Jones, Chief Nurse and Caldicott Guardian

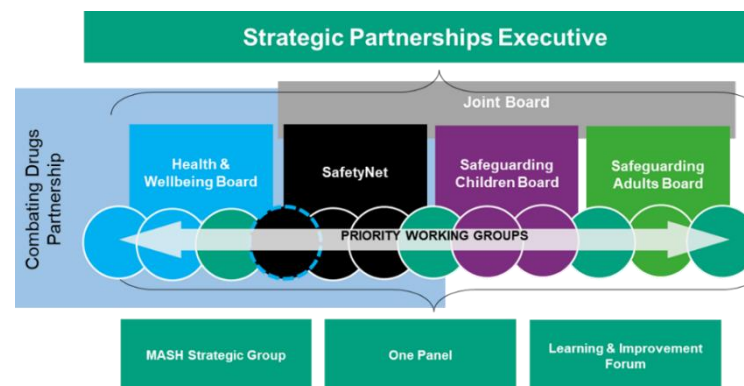


Purpose of this report

This report provides an overview of work that took place across the Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership Boards during 2022 – 2023. These comprise Safeguarding Children Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Health & Wellbeing Board and SafetyNet which is our Community Safety Partnership. The boards' collective and individual achievements are shared, along with the challenges, and the difference this has all made to Waltham Forest residents.

This report is divided up into sections, pertaining to cross-cutting themes that apply to all boards and then the specific areas relevant to each of the individual boards. You can use the colour coded tool bar at the bottom of each page to navigate between the different elements of the report. Each page is colour coded accordingly.

In 2021, the Partnership identified and agreed a set of priorities which included the cross-cutting themes violence & exploitation and better mental health for all, underpinned by a life course approach, hearing community voices and improving equity.



Governance

The Strategic Partnership Boards are made up of representatives from statutory and voluntary services across the Partnership that report to the Strategic Partnership Executive (SPE). SPE is a mature, decision-making forum comprising senior leaders from the local authority, police and health who have responsibility for oversight and governance of the Strategic Partnership Boards. In 2022, we mobilised the Combating Drugs Partnership under the Health & Wellbeing Board and SafetyNet, following the launch of the national 10 year plan drugs plan.

The coordination of Partnership work is delivered by the Strategic Partnerships Team who provide policy support and strategic planning to the boards, identifying opportunities to undertake cross-cutting work to reduce duplication, increase efficiency and improve outcomes for residents.

About Waltham Forest

Data from [London Borough of Waltham Forest statistics about the borough](#) is from a range of sources



Home to an estimated
278,400 residents and
102,900 households



One of the most diverse areas with an estimated
47% of residents from minority ethnic backgrounds



Top countries of origin for residents born overseas
Romania (11,000) **Hungary** (6,000) **Poland** (6,000)
Bulgaria (5,000), Lithuania (5,000) and Pakistan (5,000)



Top languages spoken other than English are
**Romanian, Urdu, Bulgarian,
Polish, and Turkish**



**Younger than average
population** with 24.5% of residents being
aged 0 to 19. Median age of residents 35.6 years
(compared to England average of 40.2)

High proportion of working-age adults
aged 16 to 64 and proportionately
fewer people aged over 65

Life expectancy
79.4 years for men
83.8 years for women
(like the England average)



currently ranked nationally
**82nd most
deprived
borough**



As of June 2022, more than
145,000 working age residents are
in employment (74.3%)



The median **annual earnings**
for full-time working residents is **£36,000**
Average house price as of March 2022
was **£500,000**, increase of 51% since 2015

Partners

One of our greatest strengths is how partners work together, evident in proactive engagement by statutory and voluntary agencies across the boards and associated subgroups.

During 2022 each partner was invited to consider how their service(s) had worked to progress the Partnership principles and priorities via an organisational self-assessment.

How have partner agencies kept individuals and families safe and well in Waltham Forest through the work of the board?

Barts Health NHS Trust – Whipps Cross Hospital

Barts Health aims to provide safe and compassionate care in East London by improving health and care services to communities, transforming clinical services while reducing inequities in provision. At Whipps Cross we have been working to reduce waits for elective and emergency treatment. New care models focus on the fundamentals of quality of care, such as safe discharge and the safeguarding of young people who arrive at A&E department with injuries derived by violent crime, in partnership with St. Giles Trust.

Our active engagement and lead in some key pieces of work, such as co-authoring of Child Safeguarding Practice review (CSPR) for Kubus, chairing of the MASH Strategic and Transitional Safeguarding groups have ensured Barts Health partnership work is well embedded across health and social care and continues to advance integrated care and deliver value to communities.

Change Grow Live (CGL)

As the commissioned provider for delivering substance misuse services, we have played a pivotal role across the Partnership both strategically and operationally, directly working with residents in need of support.

Our work within the partnership spans all the Boards' priority areas. Our strengthened collaboration with Adults' and Children's Services, Mental Health, Youth Offending and Probation services has led to improved pathways and engagement, joint learning and training opportunities to enhance the care and support provided to local residents.

CGL's role as Public Involvement Lead in the newly formed Combating Drugs Partnership has ensured that the voices of people with lived experiences remains at the heart of all that we do.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

During 2022-23, we have collaborated on safeguarding training and played a key part in the Team Around the Person Network meetings which has helped to improve outcomes for residents with additional needs, whose circumstances don't reach the threshold for statutory interventions.

Our active role in supporting the Boards' priorities work and our strengthened safeguarding functions have enabled vulnerable residents to better access the benefits and financial support to which they are entitled.



Healthwatch Waltham Forest (HWWF)

From May 2022, Local Voice began delivering the Healthwatch service in Waltham Forest, with the aim of providing an evidence-led service with strong links into the community, represented by people with lived experience.

Working with partners, we are working to develop a network of local people, ‘Community Influencers’ who can share their insights, represent community insights, and engage in setting Healthwatch, and stakeholders, priorities moving forward. To this effect, Healthwatch Waltham Forest has focused on two key engagement projects over the year:

- Focus on how services work together for people with complex long-term conditions
- Access to GPs – working alongside GPs and the people who contract their services, to improve GP access by adapting to meet the needs of different cohorts of patients

Our work with residents through forums, events and outreach has captured a diverse range of views and experiences which has meant that their voices have been an invaluable tool for improving services.

HM Prisons & Probation Service

We refreshed our partnership arrangements and involvement to make sure that we had the right agencies to provide interventions individuals on probation. We have also been working with our central IOM team to develop a best practice model which will be rolled out across the organisation. As a result of this, combined with our existing partnership work, there is evidence emerging that shows a reduction in reoffending for individuals on the IOM cohort. In 2022, reoffending for IOM had reduced to 22.4% from 42.9% in 2018.

Our approach and joint working with Youth Offending Services has enabled the smooth transition for young people moving in to adults’ Probation and further contributes to the reducing reoffending agenda. Another aspect of our partnership work is using data to identify any disproportionality which will help to improve the equity of services offered to clients.

LBWF Adults Social Care

We have been instrumental in the development work to embed the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) across services, including domiciliary and residential / nursing care provision. This has ensured better support for vulnerable residents and their families.

Following on from SAR Harry, our collaboration with Health and London Fire Brigade is ensuring greater awareness by the workforce of fire risks relating to self-neglect and hoarding residents which means that residents are kept safe in their homes.

LBWF Children's Social Care

Our statutory functions, along with Health and Police are a crucial part of the systems underpinning the Strategic Partnership Boards. Our data provides a window onto these systems which assists the Partnership with identifying practice areas of improvement. This means that the workforce is well equipped to support children and families to keep them safe.

This is further reinforced by our lead on the development of the regional 'Adolescent safeguarding in London' guide based on our local practice model and highly regarded partnership guidance.

LBWF Early Help

The Early Help teams remain at the forefront of the Strategic Partnership Boards' priorities, and we have continued to innovate, mobilising new projects at pace based on what residents are telling us. Most recently this has been the development of the Family and Youth Hubs and forms an integral part of how we are more effectively supporting children and families at the earliest opportunity.

Early Help has also led the Partnership's collaborative efforts to ensure that asylum seeking children, adults and families are kept safe and well and that they are treated with dignity and respect.

LBWF Housing

Housing Services in Waltham Forest continue to link strongly with the work of the Strategic Partnership Boards. Our successful accreditation to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) has resulted in improved process and policy around domestic abuse within our individual services and it has also reinforced how we work together more broadly with our partners agencies. This has ensured that survivors of domestic abuse were supported and kept safe.

The department has started to develop a new Housing Strategy for 23-27 and will consult with the Strategic Partnership Boards to ensure further joint working is developed.

LBWF & NEL ICB Integrated Commissioning

Our purpose and ways of working reflect the ethos and culture of the Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership Boards, of which we form a key part.

We have ensured the continued smooth running of provider and delivery services across adults and children despite the recent changes within the landscape of health. Particular focus through the Strategic Partnership Boards during 2022-23 has been placed on mental wellbeing, learning disabilities and carers. Our contribution through the partnership work has meant that residents are better able to access care they need closer to home and in a timely manner. We will be playing an active part in the year ahead to better join up the Health & Wellbeing Board with the Health & Care Partnership.



LBWF Public Health

Some of the key work programmes we have led on include the Marmot report, recommissioning of the 0 - 19 Healthy Child Programme Service and the new Healthy Weight Strategy. Each aspect of our work has sought the voices of the community which influences how we improve the systems that support our residents' health and wellbeing. This ultimately reduces local health inequalities and creates a fairer future for those living in Waltham Forest.

London Fire Brigade (LFB)

During 2022-23 our partnership work was most evident in the fire safety awareness training we delivered alongside multi-agency partners, following the findings from SAR Harry. We have also worked to improve pathways between the Fire Service and Health & Social Care which is ongoing.

Our active Partnership involvement has meant that we can undertake much more activity that is preventative, and the use of data has helped us to understand themes and trends that are pertinent to safeguarding, community safety and wellbeing. This combined with almost 2000 home fire safety visits has ensured that residents are safe in their homes.

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) North East Command Unit (NE BCU)

The NE BCU has ensured transparency and its continued commitment to the Partnership as one of the three local safeguarding partners amid the grave levels of public concern following the kidnap, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by a serving MPS officer and other deeply troubling incidents.

The recommendations of the independent review by Baroness Casey into MPS culture and standards of behaviour were published in March 2023 and alongside feedback from communities, partners and staff will inform changes to the overall MPS approach. The recent work by Safer Schools Officers within our Neighbourhood Policing team is an excellent example of how this is already happening in practice. Joined up working, better communication with schools and direct work with children is building back the trust of residents and consequently keeping them safe and helping them to feel safe.

NHS North East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB)

Integrated Care Systems (ICS) are a central part of reforms introduced through the 2022 Health and Care Act on 1 July 2022. They were legally established as part of a fundamental shift in the way the health and care system in England is organised. ICSs now depend on collaboration, and a focus on places and local populations are the driving forces for improvement. The ICS brings together NHS organisations, local authorities and others to take collective responsibility for planning services, improving health and reducing inequalities across geographical areas. The NEL ICB is the statutory body responsible for planning and funding most NHS services in Waltham Forest.

In recognising our duty to make improvements in the quality of primary care, we have appointed Lead / Named GPs for Safeguarding Children and Adults to provide the necessary local leadership and support and to work closely with NHS England as commissioners. All our work-streams have GP involvement to ensure that our plans make clinical sense locally and that we are addressing issues which our GPs and other clinicians believe need to be tackled to provide better care and quality for our patients. In addition, our Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) team works to make sure resident voices are heard throughout and that we are tackling issues that matter to them.

Our role as one of the three safeguarding partners within the Partnership enhances our joint working and is underpinned by our Safeguarding Strategy. This is to ensure that our local populations receive high quality and safe health care, are effectively safeguarded and treated with dignity and respect for their human rights.

North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)

As a provider of core services to some of the most vulnerable residents, we have played an active role in the Strategic Partnership Boards, instrumental in many aspects of work such as self-neglect, mental capacity and adolescents safeguarding. Our partnership working in Waltham Forest has ensured the right support is provided to those in need at the right time.

The growing concern about increasing numbers of knife incidents involving young people led to a review this year by the serious incident team to understand any emerging themes. Learning from the review was disseminated widely and recognised commonalities with themes identified nationally around youth violence.

Tower Hamlets GP Care Group

As of July 2022, Tower Hamlets GP Care Group has led the local Healthy Child Programme for families, providing health services for families with children aged 0 -19 years. The programme is split into two age groups: 0-5 years, led by a health visiting service and includes antenatal and postnatal support; and 5-19 year, led by a school nursing service (5-24 for those with special educational needs and disabilities).

Since joining Waltham Forest, residents have benefited from family orientated, joined up services within our 15-minute neighbourhoods, with single points of access. We have played a key part through the Strategic Partnership Boards, in delivering an integrated approach that is ensuring that Waltham Forest's children have the best start in life.

Strategic Partnership Board Priorities

A unique aspect of the Strategic Partnership Boards' way of working is its shared priorities. This helps to ensure the best use of increasingly limited resources across agencies.

Priorities are formally reviewed every two years and 2022 – 23 was the second year of the existing cycle of priorities. The overarching priorities continued to be:

OVERARCHING PRIORITY 2021 -23	Violence & Exploitation: Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience	Led by Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board (WFSCB)
	Violence & Exploitation: Violence Against Women & Girls	Led by SafetyNet
	Violence & Exploitation: Modern Slavery	Led by Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)
	Better Mental Health For All	Led by Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB)

Whilst our overarching priorities recognise these issues affect a wide range of our residents, the Board with the largest role takes the lead on this area and on their own board specific priority.

The overarching priorities for this year were underpinned by an agreed framework that enables us to maintain a focus on key aspects that we have committed to as a Partnership. The board specific priorities were agreed as follows:

BOARD SPECIFIC PRIORITIES			
WFSCB	SafetyNet	SAB	HWB
Safeguarding in Settings (comprising early years and education + places)	Anti-Social Behaviour + Reducing Reoffending	Modern Slavery + Mental Capacity / Liberty Protection Safeguards + Transitional Safeguarding	Alcohol & Drugs + Healthy Living for All (Healthy Weight)

Recognising an emerging theme locally and nationally, Transitional Safeguarding was added as an area of focus and was led by the SAB however was also pertinent to the Safeguarding Children Board so considered a cross-cutting priority.

Violence & Exploitation

Comprises Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience, Modern Slavery and VAWG

Our approach to tackling violence stems from our well-embedded Violence Reduction Partnership which in recent years we have worked towards applying at a community level and in line with our 15 minute neighbourhoods.

A **15-minute neighbourhood** aims to enable everyone to be able to meet most, if not all, of their needs within a short walk or bike ride from home.

Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience

Led by the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board

Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience forms part of the overarching priority for Violence & Exploitation. We recognise both the complexity of safeguarding adolescents and the need to have a dynamic strategic and operational response that is live to the changing landscape and can reflect, review, and change as required.

Our Adolescents Safeguarding & Resilience Strategic Group oversees and steers the programmes of work that includes responding to issues of child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, children missing, those involved in the criminal justice system and harmful sexual behaviour.

What difference has the Strategic Partnership Boards' Adolescents Safeguarding priority made to children, adults, and families in Waltham Forest?

Front-line practitioners identify and understand risks that they may otherwise be unaware of and make informed assessments and decisions for the young people they are working with

- Launched the Waltham Forest-led Adolescents Safeguarding in London practice handbook for collaboration as part of the Department of Education's (DfE's) recovery funding.
- This DfE's recovery funding also supported the development of a London Adolescent Safeguarding dataset which aims to enhance understanding of impact and risk mitigation of multi-agency adolescent safeguarding work through improved data collation and analysis. The most at risk child identification tool (MARCIT) has been finalised and a training session has been developed for professionals to understand how best to use it in practice.
- The Safeguarding Adolescents Practitioner Network is well embedded and represents over 30 different services. Every six to eight weeks Safeguarding Adolescent Leads come together to hear from speakers on related subjects and to be reminded of the wide range of resources on offer to support practice.

- Training around safeguarding adolescents has continued to be rolled out throughout the year and has been well received by participants. Five sessions took place between May 2022 to February 2023 with an average of 25 multi-agency participants in attendance at each. Most fed back improved levels of knowledge and awareness of issues pertaining to adolescents' safeguarding.
- The Youth at Risk Service has delivered a range of workshops to Waltham Forest professionals raising awareness around issues such as drugs, missing children, gangs, healthy relationships and social media safety. Attendees' feedback indicates that the sessions have furthered their knowledge on these aspects of safeguarding.



Improved our collective response to adolescent safeguarding

- The Exploitation and Risk Panel (ERP) is well embedded, and partners are very engaged. Risks to over 300 children and adults have been considered at ERP where professionals from across the partnership worked together to keep young people and vulnerable adults safe from exploitation and extra-familial risk.

The **Exploitation and Risk Panel (ERP)** is a fortnightly multi-agency meeting coordinating and assessing extra-familial risk. It is well attended with agencies represented such as Health, Probation, YOS, Education, Social Care, Early Help, CAMHS and CGL, amongst others which allows for a shared understanding of risk and a wide range of knowledge to allow us to tackle the risks both on an individual level but also to consider wider community and service responses.

Over this year the panel reviewed 320 individual people who have been referred to ERP. This is similar to last year and a reduced number of new referrals (from 202 to 162) has allowed space to better review progress, and the difference being made to that individual child or adult. These reviews have supported a reduction in re-referrals and indicate the services are effectively working and supporting sustained change.

This is further supported by MARCIT to help identify the young people most at risk of exploitation which identifies those children who have been referred to ERP show a greater reduction of risk both in the short term but also sustained over a six-month period compared to those with risk identified who have not had support services put in place via this route.

- Housing services have improved provisions of safe, accessible community spaces for young people in new housing developments and estate regeneration schemes (such as Avenue Road and Hylands).
- Strengthened the multi- agency approach to managing serious youth violence using the MAPPA framework. Collaboration between ERP and MAPPA took place to ensure the approaches to the risk management of complex cases were appropriately aligned. Since then, a MAPPA bitesize session has been delivered, High Risk Management Policy updated, and independent review being commissioned to look at the youth justice system and court responses to a local child charged with murder in 2021.
- Launched a localised pilot expanding on the Metropolitan Police’s Autism Alert Card programme. The alert card project aims to help anyone with (clinically registered) autism encountering the police by highlighting their individual needs to officer(s) who will adjust their approach and responses accordingly.
- The CAMHS Transitions team has helped to bridge the gap to adulthood through a new project aimed at young people aged 17-25 and tackling contextual safeguarding concerns with CAMHS support for the networks addressing serious youth violence. Multi-agency services have been working closely with schools in Chingford addressing concerns about anti-social behaviour and working with parents to parents to look at materials around online safety.

Children / young people receive earlier intervention that builds their resilience and prevents them from being exploited

- Close collaboration between Newham and Waltham Forest across local authority and health has resulted in over 36 successful outcomes from the Vanguard Programme. In addition, trauma informed training has been delivered to 67 parents and professionals.
- Our Botvin Essential LifeSkills programme is well embedded and has reached **5400 children** in 20 primary schools, across 180 classes. Delivered with Barnardo’s, it supports teachers to build the resilience of children in Years 4, 5 and 6. The programme covers diverse topics such as self-esteem, decision making, advertising, dealing with stress, smoking, communication, social skills, and assertiveness.
- As part of their ‘patrols’ the Streetbase team engaged with 2644 children from a range of backgrounds. Out of these, 1732 young people were referred on to other services. Furthermore, detached work by Spark2Life has resulted in over 560 successful new engagements with young people including casework with 49 young people including education / training / employment support, court advocacy, housing resettlement and prison support.

The **NHS Vanguard Programme** is a pilot project to improve community wellbeing as a counterbalance to violence and delivers pre-referral therapeutic and wrap-around intervention to young people / young adults in Waltham Forest and Newham.

The **Your Choice** programme is a Pan London project using cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) interventions for victims of violence or those impacted by violence. It encompasses 12 weeks of intervention with young people through a minimum of three contacts a week with at least two that are face-to-face and are supplemented with virtual meetings and / or messaging.

- Your Choice is delivered by the Youth at Risk Team (YAR) and the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISS) team who were both randomly selected. Over 14 children have successfully engaged in the programme.
- The ERP now has mental health services well represented through the transitions CAMHS team.

Members of the community enabled to provide support

- The Community Mentoring Project promotes social cohesion by connecting young people with a diverse range of passionate volunteers from the community. Delivered by Spark2Life, mentoring is offered to young people who have been exposed to risks which increase their vulnerability to violence. During 2022-23, 34 mentees registered, 22 mentors trained and there were 25 pairings.

Parents empowered to support

- The Parent Champion Network (PCN) was rolled out. This peer-to-peer mentoring parent scheme supports parents with better navigating the criminal justice system and /or the school exclusion process. In 2022/23 there have been 27 one to one support sessions for parents by champions. 23 parent / carers have been supported in group sessions. A total of 160 parents and 68 children / young people have supported in total.

What's planned for 2023-25?

- Review ERP and its processes using the findings from the pan London MACE review as well as recent multi-agency audit into children criminally exploited
- Promote and embed the Adolescents Safeguarding in London practice handbook for collaboration locally and regionally within North East London
- Further refine the MARCIT tool, with a view to embedding into practice by exploring practitioners' responses and any reported issues

Modern Slavery

Led by the Safeguarding Adults Board

Modern Slavery was a cross-cutting priority for the Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership Boards between 2017 and 2019.

In February 2021, as part of our priority re-setting, agreement was reached by partners that modern slavery is an area that requires more collaboration and exchanging of ideas in the strategic space to further strengthen and embed agreed approaches into practice.

The scoping and preparatory work done in 2021-22 has meant that we have developed a better understanding of the impact of modern slavery locally. A deep dive into pan-London data revealed that criminally exploited children and young people are the most affected by modern slavery and who make up the majority of local National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals.

We produced a local performance dashboard which provided benchmarking, matching statistics with boroughs of similar size and demographic, that has enabled us to ensure quality assurance and objective progress-marking. We have been able to use this to identify an increase in national referral mechanism (NRM) referrals which evidences the work that has been done to increase awareness and understanding of modern slavery.



What difference has the Strategic Partnership Boards' Modern Slavery priority made to children, adults, and families in Waltham Forest?

Better support for victims / survivors

- In May 2022, a public-facing campaign began to raise awareness about modern slavery. 'Spot the Signs' flyers were translated to six of the most common languages understood to be spoken by victims of modern slavery and were distributed widely, for example, at events for newly arrived refugees and via housing estates' noticeboards. Resources for professionals were also produced and shared widely within networks.

- The campaign also provided an opportunity to improve access to information about modern slavery for anyone who wanted to find out more. There was a 1,200% increase in visits to the Council’s modern slavery webpage in the months after the campaign’s launch.
- Delivered a diverse programme of training to raise awareness about modern slavery and the support available to:
 - Multi-agency professionals – thematic sessions covering VAWG, young people criminally exploited and vulnerable adults.
 - Specialist team – dedicated training for MASH to ensure appropriate recognition of modern slavery at the earliest opportunity.
 - Local Councillors – recognising their positions within the community, local elected members received information and guidance about how to spot the signs and get help for potential victims / survivors.
 - Community based groups – this included registered social landlords, and the Women’ Institute
- The join up with the Metropolitan Police Service’s (central) Mental Health Lead has ensured holistic and appropriate support is provided to victims / survivors of modern slavery whilst in the criminal justice system.
- Continued joined up working and strengthening of links with the Human Trafficking Foundation, has ensured that we are connected to new and innovative ways of working shared within the London Modern Slavery Leads Network

- We worked closely with Stop the Traffik to support the build of the annual pan-London dataset which provides greater understanding of modern slavery regionally.



What’s planned for 2023-25?

- Continue to raise awareness of modern slavery, including training
- Utilise the modern slavery maturity matrix within the Local Government Association’s Council Guide to Modern Slavery as a tool for monitoring partnership progress

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Led by SafetyNet

We use a multi-strand approach to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG) which is helping to reduce numbers of incidents and provides focused and timely support for those affected.

Our VAWG Strategy sets out its aim of making the borough “part of a city and country where men and boys know that abuse and violence are unacceptable” and where women and girls can expect to live in “freedom and safety”. It recognises VAWG as both a cause and consequence of gender inequality and a manifestation of misogyny.

Our continued coordinated response to tackling VAWG recognises that responsibility for safety rests with systems and that survivors should not be responsible for their own safety. Our approach is based on collaboration, recognising individual and intersectional experiences, and seeing the whole person. As a Partnership we recognise the impact of coercive and controlling behaviour and its impact on survivors and we are ensuring that our systems are set up to manage risk and maximise recovery.

Recent statistics for Waltham Forest, show an increase of almost 30% in conviction rates for VAWG related (completed) prosecutions which evidences the work we are doing together to tackle VAWG.

What difference has the Strategic Partnership Boards’ VAWG priority made to survivors, children, adults, and families in Waltham Forest?

Survivors were supported and kept safe

- 150 Safe and Together Case consultations were delivered to Early Help and Children’s Social Care staff. This promotes a strength based approach when assessing survivors, and mapping patterns of behaviour and holding perpetrators responsible and to account for the abuse.
- We launched the Safe Streets app which allows street harassment to be easily reported and support to be sought from services if required.



- An extra 120 survivors were supported by the VAWG team during 2022-23. This was in addition to the existing specialist support provided by commissioned services and partners. They had experienced many forms of VAWG, including FGM, forced marriage, sexual harassment, domestic abuse, and sexual violence.

- Dedicated support by VAWG services was provided to asylum seeking survivors housed in local hotels
- The successful Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation in February 2022 has strengthened partnership working between Housing and other multi-agency services, reinforced by a dedicated housing, independent domestic violence advocate (IDVA). Our survivor led approach means that survivors receive safe accommodation when fleeing from domestic abuse and there is a robust housing offer in place tailored to individuals. The DAHA also ensures perpetrators are held to account through recognition of violence and abuse as a breach of tenancy which can be an additional tool for supporting and keeping survivors safe.

Survivors can find help and be helped in their community – which leads the challenge and response to VAWG

- We launched the VAWG Safe Neighbourhoods project which is an innovative new model to tackle domestic abuse (and hate crime) swiftly by creating safe spaces in community settings supported by a coordinated community response. The overall work is based on a coordinated community response that recognises that responsibility for safety rests with systems and the community and that survivors should not be held responsible for their own safety and risk reduction. Within this project over 300 people have been trained in local businesses community settings and council teams on VAWG awareness and responding appropriately to incidences of gender-based violence.



- We recruited and trained VAWG Community Champions during 2022-23 who all live, work or study in Waltham Forest and support each other to challenge VAWG and are a core part of engagement and awareness raising events.

- Regular street surgeries in partnership with other services and organisations have provided further safe spaces for survivors to get information and support.
- The VAWG in schools programme delivered sessions at 40 schools and colleges in the borough taking a whole school approach to safeguarding against gender-based violence. This included sessions for students, parents, teachers, governor, and DSL workshops. This compliments the Mayor of London VAWG Strategy which highlights the importance of early intervention in addressing VAWG.
- VAWG drop-in sessions have continued at the children and family hubs

Values and attitudes that underpin VAWG are deemed unacceptable

- A series of awareness raising events delivered across services as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence Campaign have helped to reinforce messages to end VAWG
- The VAWG Team has provided VAWG training to over 300 people in local businesses and services
- ‘Stand by Her’ training addresses misogyny in the earliest stage and aims to empower men to become allies to women and challenge harmful behaviour they see in their environment. Almost 400 male residents and professionals have received Stand by Her training and participant’s feedback has been positive:

“Reminding myself of how a man's actions can really affect the feelings and behaviour of the women that they are aimed at and that no matter how insignificant that action may seem, could have lasting damage to the women and their future in lots of different ways e.g., relationships / job roles / mental health and physical health among others.”

“When thinking of how a woman feels when confronted by situations like the very last video makes me extremely angry, anxious, and worried for my 16-month-old daughter (along with the other course content) - so it is extremely important for courses like this to take place and be mandatory. Presenting courses like this will hopefully make the world a better and more equal place and for everyone to respect everyone else's right to live their life unhindered by these issues. Thank you for creating and delivering this course.”

Hope and resilience for survivors after the abuse

- A Women’s Wellbeing Group has been started, for women impacted and / or experiencing gender based violence. Held weekly at a Families’ Hub, there is close working between the Early Help and Resettlement teams to deliver appropriate support. Feedback from attendees has shown how helpful and supportive it has been to those in need.

Perpetrators are held to account

- As a result of a range of intelligence which includes that gathered through the Safe Streets app, targeted outreach work has taken place in hot spot areas of the borough where concerns have been raised about sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other forms of VAWG. Local businesses and also residents have received relevant information and have been encouraged to take up offers of training.



What's planned for 2023-25?

- Continue to roll out the VAWG whole school approach
- Build on the coordinated community response through the Safe Spaces and community champions
- Ensure join up with the ongoing roll out of family hubs

Better Mental Health For All

Led by the Health and Wellbeing Board

Work around Better Mental Health for All continued to be centred around promoting the wellbeing of Waltham Forest residents post COVID and supporting people to adopt mentally healthy lifestyles. We also refreshed our Mental Wellbeing Strategy which at the time of this report, was nearing completion.

To support the development of our strategy, several engagement and research projects were carried out, including a survey of over 1000 residents and stakeholder focus groups that gave us some insight into residents' wellbeing. This informed the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which uses the evidence base to outline the current mental health needs in the borough. This has helped us to inform the work of the partnership going forward.

In 2022 we successfully signed up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health. The Prevention Concordat is intended to provide a focus for cross-sector action to deliver a tangible increase in the adoption of public mental health approaches. It promotes evidence-based planning and commissioning to increase the impact on reducing health inequalities. This will allow us to engage in best practice forums with other boroughs and receive national and regional support from the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

What difference has the Strategic Partnership Boards' Better Mental Health priority made to children, adults, and families in Waltham Forest?

Support for mental wellbeing is more easily accessible

Further developed the social prescribing offer in the Local Authority, Voluntary and Community Sector and Primary Care including improved and strengthened referral pathways for befriending services.

Professionals have an improved understanding of mental health in Waltham Forest which enables the right support to be made available to those in need, particularly for groups facing the greatest health inequalities

- The information gathered from residents as part of the development of the mental wellbeing strategy provided invaluable insight into the wellbeing of the local population
- Partnership sign-up to the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health
- Training on making every contact count (MECC) continued to be rolled out during 2022-23 which has built confidence, knowledge, and skills across the workforce

Residents and professionals are more aware of available services for supporting mental wellbeing

- The 'Warm Spaces' project was utilised to promote services available to support better mental wellbeing



- Targeted campaigns and comms took place (for World Mental Health Awareness Day and London Great Mental Health Day) to promote early intervention services, such as Talking Therapies and Good Thinking (an opportunity for communities across the borough to come together to talk about how we support mental health and wellbeing and to celebrate the great services, groups and initiatives done locally)
- Targeted work was carried out with individuals who are homeless to improve access to digital services with a specific focus on mental health services / charities
- A monthly programme of suicide prevention training was delivered to residents, community groups, voluntary sector, statutory services, and frontline staff by Mind - City, Hackney, and Waltham Forest

- The mental wellbeing section of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was updated and refreshed

Reduced stigma around mental health

- On 2 February 2023, as part of the Time to Talk Campaign, Time to Talk Waltham Forest, in co-production with young people from the Big Education Creative Academy and award-winning local artists presented a theatre show highlighting the impact of mental health on young people’s mental health. Over 60 local people attended and feedback from the audience demonstrates how impactful this performance was in shifting behaviours and attitudes around mental health

What will you do differently after today’s event?

‘Encouraged me to check up on my friends’

‘Educate people on mental health’

‘Listen more to young people.’

‘To be more open with how I am feeling. Talk about my health.’

‘I might talk to a friend. Join a dance class to express myself better and exercise.’

‘Continue being open about my mental health and ask other people.’

‘Spend longer giving people time to talk, share my issues more.’

‘Check up on my friends more often and open more to those around me.’

‘Talk to family, friends and acquaintances about mental health, perhaps talking schools about mental health.’

Community resilience – residents coming together to support each other

- The Togetherness Café was launched in Leytonstone. This weekly event brings together a diverse range of residents (from at least 20 different communities) to discuss and explore issues that matter to them. More than 35 families are signed up to the Togetherness Café.

What’s planned for 2023 – 25?

- Sign off and implement the Mental Wellbeing Strategy which has identified four themes that will be a focus:
 - Work to reduce stigma and discrimination around mental health in the population
 - Tackle the root causes, or ‘wider determinants’ of mental ill-health
 - Propose evidence-based approaches to promoting self-help for mental wellbeing in the population including the ‘5 ways to wellbeing’ and the promotion of good sleep patterns
 - Get support to people who are struggling with their mental wellbeing early, to prevent the development of more serious conditions further down the line
- Tackle inequalities and discrimination that impacts mental health and wellbeing in relation to groups most affected by mental health problems, wellbeing, and racism

Learning & Improving Practice

One Panel for statutory and local reviews

All referrals for child safeguarding practice reviews (CSPR), safeguarding adults' reviews (SAR) or domestic homicide reviews (DHR) are considered by One Panel. This arrangement has been in existence for many years and has worked well in bringing a wide range of expertise to look at specific cases.

One Panel consists of senior officers from different agencies including health, children's social care, adults social care, community safety and police. It receives referrals for individuals who may meet the criteria for any of the above statutory reviews and considers any circumstances that may require more localised learning.

One Panel considered nine individuals (six adults and three children) between April 2022 and March 2023. Whilst none of these were taken forward as statutory reviews, it was agreed that there was learning that could be taken from many of the circumstance and the following themes have been fed into our learning and improving practice framework outlined below.

We published a safeguarding adults review (SAR) and child safeguarding practice review (CSPR) as detailed below that had been commissioned in preceding years.

Safeguarding Adults Review for Harry

Harry was a single 68 year-old white British man, who died in a house fire at his home on 25 January 2021. He rented a room from his friend David, effectively a 'live in' landlord, who helped with shopping and cooking. Harry died from smoke inhalation and burns after a towel had fallen on a fan heater. Contributory factors were related to poor health, poor mobility and intoxication. There were a number of findings that came out of Harry's experiences that related to:

- a. the safeguarding response
- b. assessment and support planning
- c. awareness of fire risk
- d. unsuitable housing
- e. impact of prescribed drugs and excessive alcohol consumption
- f. risk assessment
- g. Harry's engagement

[SAR Harry](#) concluded that our response to self-neglect wasn't sufficient. It also recognised that deaths of vulnerable people by fire is not out of the ordinary and that the issues in this review resonate with other SARs relating to self-neglect. The Waltham Forest Local Safeguarding Partners have accepted the review's findings and recommendations and have committed to working together to improve practice. This review is driving partnership collaboration, including London Fire Brigade to address fire risks related to self-neglect in the borough. An action plan is now in place and partners are working together to gather the impact of this review.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review for 'Kubus'

Kubus, a 15-week-old baby boy, died while sleeping on his stomach on an inflatable mattress with his mother. They had recently moved into a new area. This review explores the services provided to him / his family during his mother's pregnancy and his short life, in which domestic abuse featured significantly. Cause of death was recorded as sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI).

A key finding in [CSPR Kubus](#) was the cumulative risk to mother and child with the varying health, social and environmental risk factors present from conception. Missed opportunities, such as mother's experience of domestic abuse and lack of trust in services alongside challenges with housing, and paternal alcohol use all had an impact. This was all compounded by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

An action plan has been pulled together to improve practice which has also taken into consideration the increase in SUDIs during 2022 -23 and will ensure further exploration with relevant health partners into this as an emerging theme and what further action may be required to improve guidance and support to parents around safer sleeping.

Learning and Improving Practice Forum

The Learning & Improvement Forum (LIF) is aligned with the One Panel and operates across the four strategic boards. It brings together key agencies in the partnership to ensure a joined-up 'Think Family' approach to enable meaningful learning from reviews and audits, as well as any referrals not progressing to formal review. The LIF facilitates joint improvements in practice and aims to build a culture of continuous learning, development and improving practice. During 2022 reflection was given to the different mechanisms we have for learning and a new framework (below) was developed that will help us to better evidence impact.



As we entered 2023, we collated all the themes for learning, and we have started to produce a strategic plan that aims to bring all the learning together in a more structured and cohesive way. Themes that arose in 2022-23 through the One Panel and wider work of the Boards were as follows:



DV and hidden victims		Escalation	Mental capacity / fluctuating capacity	Asylum seekers	Safe discharge
Self-neglect	Fire Safety	Child first approach	Cultural competence	Safer sleeping (SUDI awareness)	Cost of living
Challenging conversations e.g. Alcohol / prof curiosity		Transitional safeguarding	Engaging family / support for residents in owned homes		

Many of these have featured in our work this year and others will be fed into future work as we prepare for the next cycle of priorities.

Multi-agency audits

In 2022 -23 we renewed our annual programme of multi-agency audits. Multi-agency audits are deep dives into case files, from a multi-agency perspective, that provide opportunities to reflect on quality of practice, learn from, build on existing good practice, and identify lessons learned.

Two multi-agency audits were carried out over 2022/23 which focused on the multi-agency response to:

I. the identification of initial need and risk

The voice of the child, timeliness, professional curiosity and management oversight were identified as areas of strengths within the partnership's response. Areas to develop were noted around multiagency communication / information sharing, escalation and use of language that cares.

II. criminal exploitation of children

Engagement with families, agencies' understanding of their roles / responsibilities and voice of the child being at the centre of planning and interventions were the strengths that emerged from this audit. Areas for development included joint planning between agencies, information sharing and escalation and approached to further exploration of indicators of harm.

Work is taking place to address the learning and embed change into practice.

Training

All learning activities are “in-house”-led, coordinated by the Strategic Partnerships Team, and delivered with support from practitioners and managers from across the Partnership. We understand that practitioners have limited capacity to both attend and deliver full / half day training sessions. Our multimedia / format approach is innovative and addresses this through the use of short online training, bitesize videos guides, recorded sessions and our ‘spotlights’. All of these are posted online so can be easily accessed.

Our ‘spotlights are monthly e-bulletins co-produced with relevant services and shared across the partnership, with a reach of over 1,000 professionals. There is a different focus each month drawn from emerging themes from reviews, and marking important dates in the safeguarding calendar, promoting upcoming training and important news. ‘Spotlights’ circulated in 2022 – 23:

April 2022 Self-neglect	May 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pressure careMental health awareness	June 2022 Disabilities week and MECC
July 2022 Training	September 2022 Resources for newly arrived refugees	October 2022 World Mental Health Day
November 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Safeguarding Adults Week16 Days of Activism	December 2022 Alcohol Awareness	
January 2023 Learning and improving practice	February 2023 Fire safety awareness	March 2023 Child exploitation

A programme of training has been delivered over the last year, to raise awareness and embed understanding of issues related to Board priorities and emerging themes.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 32 training sessions were delivered to approximately 900 professionals. The majority of participants who provided feedback declared that the session(s) they attended had improved their knowledge and understanding, and 99% would recommend these sessions to others. Respondents also fed back that the training had helped them to better understand relevant processes in place; knowledge of where to go for specialist help and support and there was a commitment to share related information and resources with their colleagues.

Safeguarding Adults Week 2022

We used the Safeguarding Adults Week campaign (21 to 27 November 2022) to raise awareness of safeguarding issues pertinent to the SAB. The programme drew expertise from the partnership, touching on issues that appeared in SARs and based on strategic priorities – for example, fire risk and hoarding, self-neglect and mental capacity, transitional safeguarding, safeguarding for carers and support for vulnerable residents during the cost-of-living crisis. Similar to the previous year over 200 colleagues attended five online sessions.

Session on carers and cared for persons: “This session has clearly demonstrated that this is NOT a lip-service but a DOER and action focus to better review and develop the best possible care needs for those carers and families and professionals.”

Team Around the Person Network

This monthly peer support group was established as a six month pilot to support practitioners working with individuals (aged 14+) for whom there are concerns around wellbeing / safeguarding, who do not meet the threshold for statutory interventions, and for whom there are challenges with effectively supporting / engaging with. This network has involved representatives across relevant partnership agencies, including Social Prescribing, London Fire Brigade, NELFT, Housing, CGL, Barts and Mental Health services.



The pilot period ended in March 2023. There were varying degrees of positive outcomes for 17 out of 24 individuals discussed within the network and partners' feedback indicates that it is a well-valued multi-disciplinary forum where good practice is shared, and challenges unblocked. A neighbouring borough is considering adopting a similar approach within their partnership. A recommendation is therefore being made to the SAB (the lead Board) that the network continues to be delivered and embedded into business as usual. It will support the roll out of the new SAB priority – Team around the Person.

Other areas of note for the Strategic Partnership Boards

Safeguarding asylum-seeking children / adults / families

In November 2022, partners came together to seek assurances about asylum-seeking children / adults / families who had been placed by the Home Office in a local hotel. This also followed two safeguarding incidents where children were alleged to have been sexually abused. Representatives from across the Partnership conducted a visit and concluded that safeguarding processes were not adequate nor effective. The findings from the safeguarding assurance visit and a number of recommendations were put to the Home Office and their provider, to rectify and mitigate the safeguarding risks to residents.

Despite a commitment that safeguarding assurances would be shared and fed into the review, at the time of writing these have not yet been received, however there have been some changes and improvements to the general service delivery.

Some of the children shared their experiences, and also their hopes and dreams. Here is just one...

"..... I hope to create an organisation that enables asylum seekers to work and not get paid (except for transport fare). They can use the talents and skills they have learnt from their country to work here (the income they possibly make goes to the government). These skills could consist of teaching, tailoring, cooking and even if they are just good at talking; they can uplift other people who are feeling down or depressed..... (15 years)

A follow up assurance visit was carried out again in February 2023 which comprised ten partners from across health, police and the local authority. It was carried out during half term so as to maximise the opportunity to observe and speak to children as well as the adults.

Since the visit in November 2022 the timetable of activities that the partners have mobilised has had a clear impact on the residents' social integration and wellbeing, however there is still much to do to enable these adults and children to live safe and well lives with dignity and respect.

What difference has the Strategic Partnership Boards made to asylum seeking people in Waltham Forest?

Improvements to general wellbeing

- Children are making friends through routine and a life outside the hotel
- Children and their families are feeling supported and encouraged through support from school and receipt of equipment
- Adults are feeling part of the community because they can now access services for adult learning and other support networks such as supper clubs, gym sessions, conversation classes and women's groups etc.
- Improvements to the quality of food

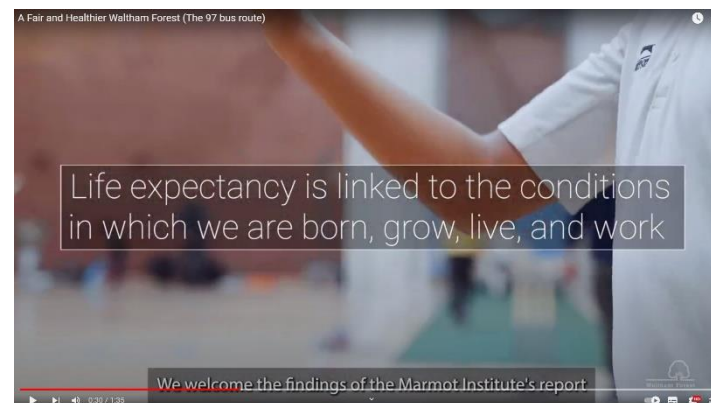
Improved safety and safeguarding

- A dedicated floor for single males
- Additional safeguarding measures in place for children through appropriate protocol
- Extra scrutiny on the quality of staff working in the hotel
- Facilities for storing medicine and milk for babies
- Improvements to fire safety

Marmot review

In December 2022, the final report from the Sir Michael Marmot Institute of Health Equity – [A Fairer and Healthier Waltham Forest](#) - was published.

This report highlights deprivation and disproportionality experienced throughout the borough and has over 80 system-wide recommendations to reduce local health inequalities through addressing social determinants. A key objective of this research was to gain a deeper understanding of health inequalities across the borough, and how these vary in different areas. It followed collaboration with teams across the Partnership, led by Public Health, through the Health & Wellbeing Board. Work has already started to implement some of the recommendations and during the first part of 2023-24, the Partnership will come together to co-produce a joint response and action plan.



Combating Drugs Partnership

The Waltham Forest Combating Drugs Partnership was established as per requirements set out by the Home Office following the launch of the [10 Year Drugs Strategy, From harm to hope](#), in December 2021. Building on the Health & Wellbeing Board's previous alcohol and drugs priority, and given the intersectional nature of substance misuse, a decision was taken to include alcohol in the scope of the work being undertaken.

The Health & Wellbeing Board merged with SafetyNet to bring together criminal justice and health agencies to develop an effective, local whole system response to drug related harms and crimes. This & Wellbeing Board's previous alcohol and drugs priority to provide a coordinated approach to addressing the complex relationship between drugs, crime and anti-social behaviour, health inequalities and deprivation. The Partnership will provide strategic oversight of criminal enforcement of drug related crimes and delivery of drug treatment and recovery interventions.

During 2022-23, the Partnership was mobilised, and agency leads were identified. A needs assessment was carried out and the local strategy, delivery plan and performance framework were beginning to take shape. This includes how we will hear from residents with lived experiences.

Impact of the cost-of-living on residents

During 2022 - 23 we acknowledged that we were in an unprecedented economic crisis which was likely to have a profound impact on the communities we serve, demand for services and financial outlook for organisations and our staff.

We focused our attention on the potential impacts on safeguarding, community safety and wellbeing, with a view to thinking about how we anticipate and respond to these collaboratively. Together we identified the key risks we should be mitigating. A risk log was developed that includes consideration of:

- Financial implications
- Inequality - certain population groups are more vulnerable to safeguarding challenges
- Workforce / providers

We recognise that the increasing cost of living as a crisis will be with us for some time and as we moved into 2023, we continued to monitor and scan for the emergence of other impacts.



Transitional Safeguarding

Throughout the year, transitional safeguarding emerged as a theme that the Partnership needed to consider.

Led by the Safeguarding Adults Board, a group of multi-agency partners have mobilised to identify gaps in services and support for young people involved in the child safeguarding system moving into adulthood whose needs may not meet the threshold for Adults Social Care. They have been:

- gathering insight into the current service provision(s) to understand the gaps in delivery
- examining relevant data (i.e., Children’s services vs adults) to understand the extent of the issue
- seeking out examples of good practice in other areas / services that can be modelled for improving transitional safeguarding locally

Going into April 2023, all relevant information was being compiled with a view to providing recommendations for solutions to address those gaps to the relevant commissioners and decision makers.



Hearing from residents

During 2022-23 we took stock of the way we gather and use residents’ views to inform and influence what we do as a Strategic Partnership. There is consensus that this needs to be meaningful and should come from all the diverse voices that make up our communities. Over the years we have adapted how we do this which has helped with finessing how we will hear from residents, going forward. There is a renewed commitment from the Partnership that we will use a range of mechanisms to capture community voices which gives us the foundations of a framework. Below are just a few examples of how the Partnership used residents’ voices:

Health inequalities - the analysis and recommendations from the Marmot Report were shaped by the views of Waltham Forest residents. In May and June 2022, Community Organisers and volunteer Community Ambassadors conducted interviews with residents and five focus groups ran with those who may experience health inequalities.

Stop and Search (and Child Q) – Building on responses from a previous survey in 2020, [Streetbase](#) gathered views from over 350 children and young people about stop and search, particularly relating to whether they felt that this should be treated as a safeguarding issue. They overwhelmingly said it that it should, and work continues to improve and equip our safeguarding systems to ensure that the right support is on offer to do this really well.

Fear of Crime – The local resident insight survey highlighted the extent of residents’ fear of crime and violence. This will now be a priority for 2023 -25.

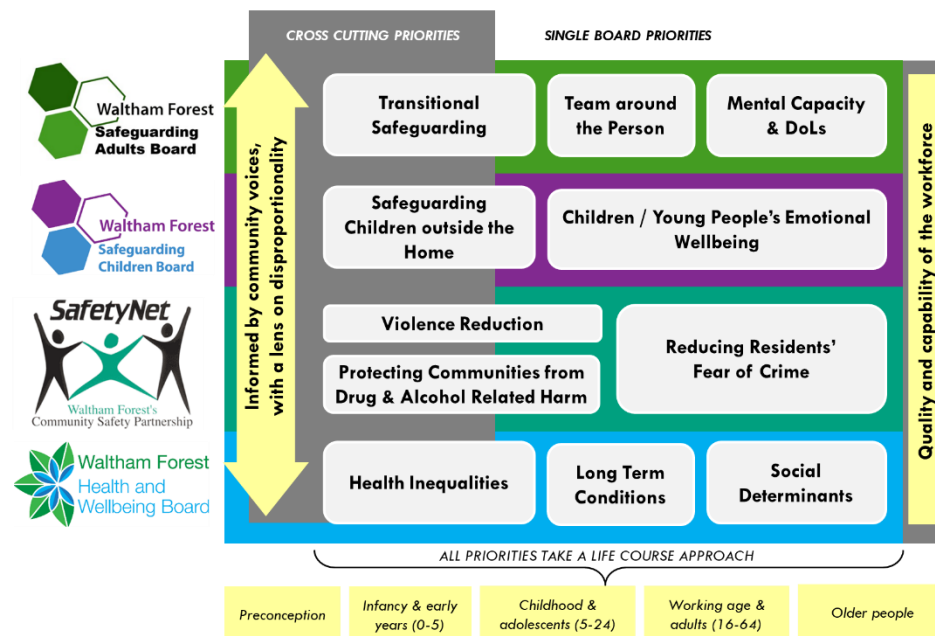
What's next for the Strategic Partnership Boards in 2023-25?

Key multi-agency partners convened on 28 March 2023 for the biennial review of the Strategic Partnership Boards' priorities to reflect on the past two years and to identify areas of focus across safeguarding, community safety and health and wellbeing for 2023 – 2025.

In 2021, the Partnership identified and agreed a set of priorities outlined earlier ([on page 11](#)).

A Strategic Partnerships needs assessment, and a wide range of accompanying information were used as part of an in person workshop, which led to a set of renewed priorities for 2023 – 2025 as illustrated across.

The Partnership also shared ideas about how to better work together which will be implemented accordingly. This includes reinstating some face to face meetings.



Over the coming two years we will improve how the boards work together to address shared priorities and also with wider Partnerships such as the Integrated Care Board. Frameworks are being developed to ensure that we are informed and influenced by community voices and that a lens on disproportionality is consistently applied to all that we do. We will also concentrate on the quality and capability of our workforce as they are a crucial and very valued part of our systems.

Annual report addendum for the

Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board (WFSCB)

Message from our independent Scrutineer, Dave Peplow

I am pleased to be able to contribute, once again, to this Safeguarding Children Board annual report covering April 2022 to March 2023. This report sets out the Board's work and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across Waltham Forest. It aims to provide an understanding of how agencies work together to keep children safe.

Stepping in as interim chair for SafetyNet allowed me the privilege to have deeper oversight across the partnership, particularly around serious youth violence which as we entered 2023 continued to be a concern both locally and nationally. The launch of the London Handbook for Adolescents Safeguarding which was led by Waltham Forest exemplifies the proactive steps this Partnership takes in continuous improvement.

The mobilisation of the Combating Drugs Partnership which occurred at pace is hugely welcomed, given the intersectional nature of substance misuse across safeguarding, community safety, health and wellbeing. Establishing this this area as a cross cutting priority will no doubt be far reaching in the difference that can be made for children and young people.

It only remains for me to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to all of you who plays a part in keeping children and families in Waltham Forest safe and well.

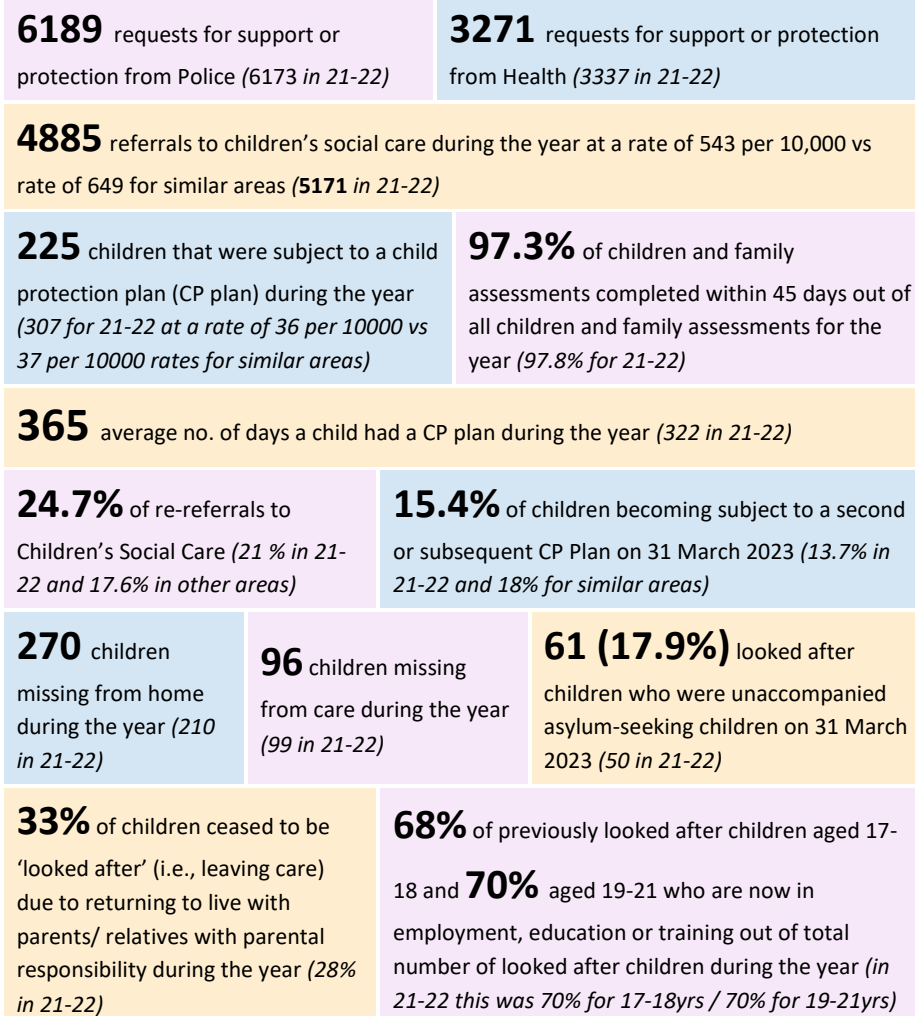
About the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board

Under Working Together 2018, Local Safeguarding Partners are required to oversee multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements across each borough. The [Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements](#) were reviewed and amended this year, given the changes as part of the implantation of the Integrated Care System. They reflect the joined up way we work together across safeguarding, community safety and wellbeing.

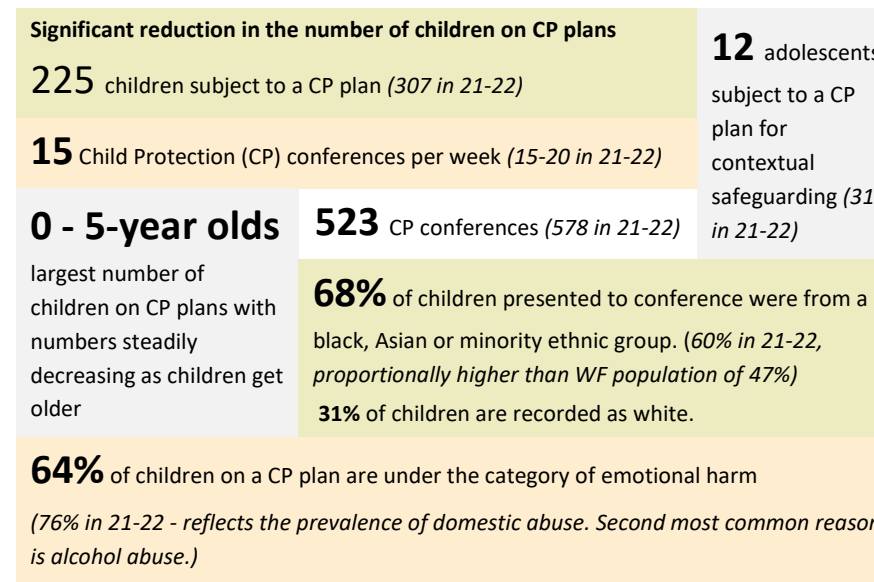
The Waltham Forest Safeguarding Children Board (WFSCB) is the body that carries out this statutory function in Waltham Forest, ensuring the effectiveness of local agencies that provide services for children up to the age of eighteen. These functions are carried out through the full board, joint board, along with the associated priorities and activities as outlined throughout this report.

The WFSCB is a Partnership of statutory and voluntary sector partners as well as lay members and for the period of this annual review, has been chaired by the Independent Scrutineer. It has a range of roles scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice and works with partners to support the effective collaboration of all services being delivered to children and young people in Waltham Forest that in turn keeps our children safe & well.

A picture of safeguarding children in Waltham Forest



Snapshot: Child Protection Conferencing in Waltham Forest



Safeguarding In Settings

WFSCB specific priority

Safeguarding in Settings has been a priority since 2017, when it was broadened out to include safeguarding within community, voluntary and faith settings. In January 2022 we agreed as a Partnership to the importance of continuing Safeguarding in Settings as a priority and we committed to reframing it. In March, the need for this was further reinforced after hearing about the horrific experiences of Child Q which helped to frame some self-reflection around our own safeguarding systems.

What difference has the WFSCB Safeguarding in Settings priority made to children and young people in Waltham Forest?

For Early Years and Education:

Children's voices are influencing change

- A peer-to-peer consultation around stop and search by Streetbase follows the one carried out in 2020 and the findings are shaping how stop and search can be improved from a safeguarding perspective
- The need for youth voices within the borough's Police Independent Advisory Group was identified, and a Youth Independent Advisory Group representative / spokesperson is now attending

Relationships between police, schools and young people are improving

- 'Walk and Talks' have been taking place between police officers and students in colleges and within schools and are being well received.
- The Police Schools and Youth Engagement team have been running a range of activities each month in schools for children / young people and for parents, alongside multi-agency partners. Activities include drop-in sessions for pupils for guidance & referrals, and support sessions held online for parents. Themes include VAWG / online safety / knife crime / stop & search / exploitation / drugs / hate crime

Children and young people are more resilient, as are their parents / carers and the professionals that support them

- Workshops delivered by Violence Reduction Coordinators to children and young people in schools via form groups, assemblies and targeted groups. have covered online safety, keeping safe in the community, making positive choices, exploitation, decision making, and conflict management.
- Multi-agency training has been provided by the gang's liaison officer and the Youth At Risk team to partners covering substance misuse, online safety, exploitation, and substance misuse. The sessions are very well attended with professionals sharing they feel well informed to support young people, after attending. There are separate sessions for parent/carers on the topics listed above, attended by up to 25 parents per session.

Places (community, voluntary and faith settings):

Garnered insight into the understanding of safeguarding responsibilities by the community

A scoping exercise was undertaken to better understand the need and types of resources that would be useful for those in the community, voluntary and faith sector in relation to safeguarding children (and adults). This has provided a steer as to what might be helpful for enhancing knowledge and awareness.

What's planned for 2023 – 25?

- Progress the recommendations from Child Q in terms of improving the safeguarding systems for stop and search
- Roll out a programme of awareness to the community and measure the impact
- Coordinate the biennial section 11 audit and use the findings to identify areas that settings may require support from the partnership
- Implement the local recommendations from the National Panel Review into children with complex needs and disabilities in residential settings
- Improve, as a partnership, our children and young people's school attendance
- Gain more insight into the Police Schools and Youth Engagement team's Safer School Programme

Other areas of note for the WFSCB

Child Death Review

The broadened approach to reviewing child death is now well embedded via the Child Death Review Hub which covers Waltham Forest, Newham, Tower Hamlets, City & Hackney. We are fine tuning how the findings and learnings that come from a larger footprint are implemented as detailed in the Learning & Improving Practice section earlier. We will continue to work with our neighbours to ensure the necessary systems improvements as they arise. In 2022/23 in Waltham Forest there were:

25 child death notifications

12 – expected		13 - unexpected			
8 - female		17 - male			
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
10	5	1	1	7	1
Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Not known
<i>Locality</i>					
13	1	1	5	4	1
E17	E7	E4	E10	E11	E15

Local Authority Designated Officer

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) service is a statutory service responsible for managing allegations against staff / volunteers working in regulated activity. In Waltham Forest, this is delivered through the Safeguarding in Education team via a full time LADO, an assistant LADO and an early years safeguarding lead practitioner.

Safeguarding concerns are actioned via a robust referral process and referrals must be shared within 24 hours of the concern becoming known. Where a referral meets the LADO threshold for harm or risk of harm, consultation and collaboration takes place with the relevant employer alongside partners.

Where the harm threshold is not met, the LADO / Safeguarding in Education team provides guidance, support and advice to manage the concern raised. A range of safeguarding training is also delivered across education and early years settings in addition to safeguarding audits (including section 11 audits).

During April 2022 – March 2023 the LADO/Safeguarding in Education service dealt with 510 contacts to the service which included 188 referrals to LADO.

162 contacts were dealt with as safeguarding consultations wherein the team provided advice / guidance and support to settings and individuals to effectively manage safeguarding concerns. The LADO also responds to complaints shared via Ofsted and during this period, the team responded to 40 Ofsted complaints.

Edge of Care

We have a historically low rate of children in care. In 2022-23, 55 children per 10,000 were in care, (compared with a rate of 70 across England.) The numbers of adolescent children entering care increased and at least 49% of children entering care aged 10-17 years did so in an unplanned way. In 2022, 23.9% of all children aged 10 years + entered care via police protection – this dropped from the previous year from 11%.

Unplanned entries to care create disruption and anxiety for families and often have significant impact on schooling, healthcare, and emotional wellbeing. A need to improve how families are supported was identified in 2021, averting teenagers entering care, and thus preserving the right to family life. A new service, running seven days a week was launched as a pilot in August 2021 and has meant that families in crisis have access to daily intensive support, rather than just usual office hours, adding value to the Emergency Duty Team service.

The Edge of Care strategy focuses on both crisis and planned re-unification to keep young people with their families wherever possible. All other family and friends' options are explored prior to bringing a young person into care. There is a focus on early identification of young people whose outcomes are not improving at home, to enable appropriate and timely intervention.

Between September 2022 and March 2023, the service has worked with 16 new young people. Work ceased with 11 young people and of those, only one had come into care. 9 young people have been supported to remain at home and the risk of coming into care reduced sufficiently. 1 young person who had been looked after has now exited care. The Pilot has been further extended to April 2024.

Annual report addendum for the Safeguarding Adults Board

Message from our independent Chair, Deborah Cohen

The last year was a very busy one for the Board: we were responsible for two of the priorities of the Strategic Partnership - preparing for the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) and overseeing the work on Modern Slavery in the Borough.

In addition we looked at a number of other issues. We oversaw the pilot of a new multi-agency approach to tackle emerging safeguarding concerns through a Team Around the Person network, supported the valuable and important work done by unpaid carers, and worked on the impact of the cost of living crisis on the risk to vulnerable adults of abuse or neglect. We set up a transitional safeguarding task and finish group, which will report in the coming year.

With many of my colleagues, I was very disappointed to be notified that implementation of the LPS was to be delayed. This means that practitioners have been left working within the existing Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards arrangements under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 which, compared to the proposed LPS, are more limited in scope as a tool to keep adults with vulnerabilities safe.

The work on Modern Slavery is one of three strands comprising the Strategic Partnership's theme of Preventing Violence and Exploitation. A public facing campaign was run on "Spot the Signs" of modern slavery and this resulted in an increase in the number of referrals. This work has become even more important with an increase in Waltham Forest in the year of new refugees, through the Homes for Ukraine scheme - and for refugees temporarily housed in local hotels. These are groups of people who are particularly vulnerable to such exploitation.

July 2022 saw the formation of the North East London Integrated Care Board. This has stimulated the working together of the Safeguarding Adults Boards across the whole of North East London and, with our ICB partner, we are able to identify common areas of concern where a joint approach is beneficial. An example of this was the safeguarding input in relation to the use of hotels for asylum seekers and refugees where a number of safeguarding issues arose.

We commissioned one SAR during the year, SAR Harry, and this is described further in this report. The impact of self-neglect continues to feature significantly in reviews coming through One Panel, so it is only right that this area of work will continue into the new year as part of the priority areas for the SAB.

I thank all the professionals working across the partnership for their tireless work and dedication in supporting residents in Waltham Forest and I wish to underline the value of the collaborative partnership model that does so much to safeguard and protect those who need it most.

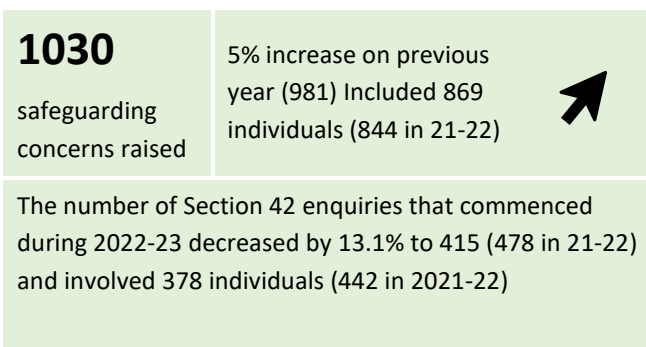
About the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Board

Waltham Forest’s Safeguarding Adults Board is a Partnership of statutory and voluntary sector partners. It has a range of roles scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice and works with partners to support the effective collaboration of all services being delivered to adults with care and support needs in Waltham Forest.

Under the Care Act, the SAB must lead adult safeguarding arrangements across its local area to oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its partner agencies. These functions are carried out through the full board and its priorities and activities as outlined throughout this report.

A picture of safeguarding adults in Waltham Forest*

SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY



SAFEGUARDING ENQUIRIES


92.9% of section 42 safeguarding enquiries concluded and reported outcome was risk was reduced or removed (191 and 112 respectively)

‘Neglect & acts of omission’

The most common type of risk in Section 42 enquiries that concluded in the year, which accounted for 37.6% of risks (192) compared to 44.7% in 2021-22 (349)

The most common location of the risk was the **person’s own home** – 67% (346)

MENTAL CAPACITY

35.4% of individuals involved in concluded Section 42 safeguarding enquiries lacked capacity (142), a decrease from 38.7% in 21-22 (180). 

In 89.3% of concluded Section 42 enquiries where the adult at risk was lacking capacity, support was provided by an advocate, family, or friend (down from 91.7%)

MAKING SAFEGUARDING PERSONAL

Of the concluded Section 42 enquiries where outcomes were expressed by individuals involved or their representative, **89.5%** were fully or partially achieved (229 and 87 respectively).

96.1% of individuals involved in concluded Section 42 safeguarding enquiries or their representative were asked their desired outcomes (whether they were expressed or not) (395). This is a decrease or increase from 93.5% in 2021-22 (435)

**This data is taken from the statutory Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC) for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and aims to inform users about aspects of safeguarding activity at national, regional, and local level*

Mental Capacity and Liberty Protection Safeguards

Led by Safeguarding Adults Board

The Mental Capacity & Liberty Protection Safeguards subgroup were tasked with the following strategic objectives:

- A clear joined-up approach to Mental Capacity Across the Partnership
- Implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)
- Consideration of data and audit that has taken place and will need to take place to make further recommendations
- Implementation of training/training materials for Mental Capacity across the Partnership

It was understood that LPS would trigger a significant change in terms of how services would be delivered for the borough's most vulnerable residents. However, the Government announced on 5 April 2023 that it had taken the "difficult decision to delay the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards beyond the life of this Parliament" as part of its wider plans to reform and improve adult social care. Whilst a degree of preparatory work had taken place for LPS, as a Partnership we had already acknowledged the need to further embed an improved understanding of mental capacity, following themes from One Panel and through the range of scoping activity that was undertaken during the year.



What difference has the SAB Mental Capacity priority made to adults and families in Waltham Forest?

Systems are in place for residents to be supported via liberty protection safeguards (LPS)

- 70 representatives from services and organisations likely to be affected by the implementation of LPS came together to share ideas, opportunities and challenged and to consult on the Government's proposed Code of Practice, to which a partnership response was submitted.

- National / regional resources, such as videos and briefing have been circulated to partners to improve understanding of the expected regulations
- Caseloads have been reviewed to consider the impact of LPS on Waltham Forest residents and what this might look like in practice.
- Strengthened links with NHS North East London representatives responsible for LPS

Residents are supported through sound identification of need and effective assessments in relation to capacity

- An audit across adults and children’s services took place to identify strengths and gaps in understanding and awareness by practitioners of mental capacity, with a view to delivering further targeted training to services at the level required.

The results were promising with 78% of professionals across adult social services having a strong or reasonable ability to assess mental capacity in residents. Of 98 respondents, 71% stated that they were familiar with support pathways for residents who might lack capacity, and 84% said they would know who to ask if they were concerned about a person’s mental capacity.

Independent mental capacity advocacy is more readily available

New commissioned provider (PoWhER) have delivered a series of information sessions to raise awareness of their services



What’s planned for 2023 – 25?

- Reframed priority as Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs)
- Further engage partners with a focus on appropriate information sharing
- Build more awareness about fluctuating capacity and the impact of substance use and / or physical health (as this has been a theme from One Panel)
- Refresh of local Mental Capacity Guidance

Message from interim Independent Chair, Dave Peplow

It has been my privilege to have chaired SafetyNet for the majority of the past year. Providing scrutiny to this Board and the Safeguarding Children Board has afforded me an even more strategic view of how the Partnership addresses the issues that matter to residents and how the balance of enforcement and safeguarding are managed accordingly.

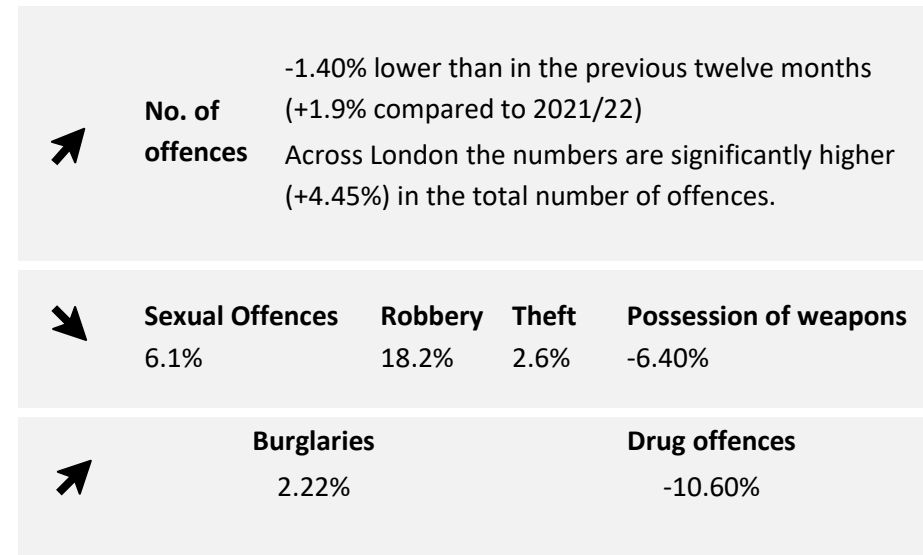
VAWG remains a perennial issue, as can also be seen through a child protection lens, with how domestic abuse featuring so prominently in safeguarding. The ‘Stand by Her’ training is a valuable initiative and I urge all men in the Partnership to attend if they haven’t already. Men’s role in tackling VAWG is crucial as is the innovative Safe Streets app launched during this time, reinforcing the message that misogyny will not be tolerated. The work around VAWG is well embedded however will remain in focus through the new Violence Reduction priority.

Whilst the Safe Streets pilot was in its early stages toward the end of this year, it seemed promising in terms of delivering a hyper local approach, in line with 15 minute neighbourhoods. I look forward to hearing more of the outcomes as work progresses and how this aligns with the new priorities.

I would like to thank everyone who works to keep the community safe. This Partnership appreciates the skills, dedication and resilience it takes to do the jobs you all do.

About SafetyNet

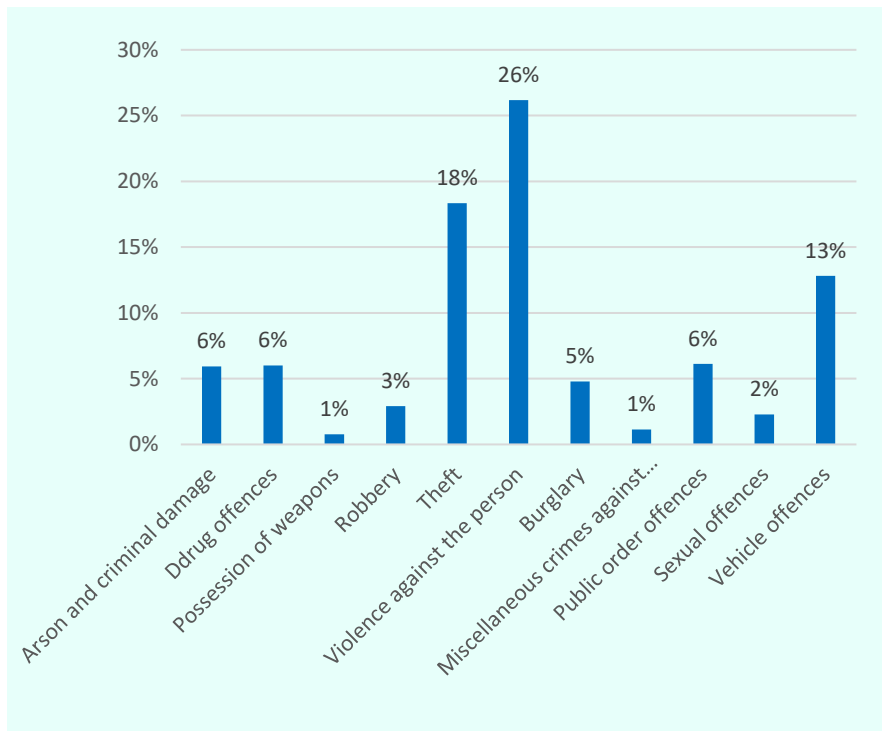
A picture of community safety in Waltham Forest



The proportion of Waltham Forest residents who are worried about crime and anti-social behaviour has seen a slight decrease in the last financial year 49% and 45% in 2022, a decrease by -15 and -8 percentage point (ppt). The decrease was slightly higher than in London (-9 ppt and -5 ppt).

In 2022/23, the proportion of residents who said that they are worried about knife crime was 66%, while in the rest of London was 60%. This also decreased significantly from 2021, 82% and respectively 71%.

As displayed in the chart below, the most frequent crime type in Waltham Forest was violence against the person, followed by theft and vehicle offences, similar to last year.



7,570

anti-social behaviour (ASB) calls received by the Waltham Forest Metropolitan Police Service. A decrease of -12% compared to the previous year

4,549

domestic abuse incidents were recorded in 2022/23, a slight decrease (-6%) compared to the previous twelve months



The number of hate crimes decreased in all categories compared to 2021/22 except transgender hate crime which stayed the same. The police recorded 576 racist and religious hate crime offences in Waltham Forest in 2022/23, which represents a decrease by 4% compared to the previous twelve months. A similar decrease (4%) has been identified in the volume of reported homophobic hate crime offences (81). In the twelve months to March 2023, 12 disability hate crime have been reported to the police which is 37% down from last financial year. The only hate crime category staying the same in the twelve months to March 2023 was transgender hate crime (8).

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

SafetyNet specific priority

We know that ASB is a concern for our residents as levels of those worried about it have remained the same for some time, however we are working with residents to better understand and address this. The Partnership has a single overarching vision for tackling anti-social behaviour:

“As a Borough we want to see a reduction in incidents of ASB and the harm it causes across Waltham Forest, with any incidents dealt with quickly and effectively using a multi-agency model.”

What difference has the SafetyNet Anti-Social Behaviour priority made to residents of Waltham Forest?

Incidents of ASB are dealt with efficiently and the impacts of ASB are reduced, especially in hotspot areas. Support is provided to those affected

The Safe Street Pilot was launched in early March, in Chingford Mount and South Leytonstone. The 4 month pilot brought together a multi-agency team on a hyper-local basis and included officers from the Police - Safer Neighbourhoods Team to establish different ways to coordinate engagement.

More effective support for victims

- Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) are an integral part of the Partnership’s joint work to tackle ASB, enforced by the Council and Police to reduce incidents of ASB

Support is provided to perpetrators to lessen the chance of further anti-social behaviour

The multi-agency approach to enforcement continues to be developed which recognises that the involvement of officers across a range of disciplines and organisations allows the best enforcement option to be identified and pursued. Such action will, where appropriate, involve parallel enforcement being taken across a range of service areas and partner organisations to maximise the legal/financial impact upon the non-compliant persons. Victims of ASB and any vulnerable persons identified are safeguarded and wrap around support provided with the case being managed at the ASB Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC).

Residents feel safer and more empowered to report ASB

- A range of community engagements pieces were delivered such as health & wellbeing sessions, ‘walk and talks’, door knocking and drop in surgeries. Residents were consulted on the refreshed roll out of PSPO powers
- Pop up Police stations created more visibility
- Merging Police and Council Operations (20x20x20 + Community Matters)

What’s planned for 2023 – 25?

- Safe Streets pilot is evaluated with a view to taking forward any recommendations for improvement
- ASB becomes business as usual and features as part of all the new priority areas

REDUCING REOFFENDING

SafetyNet specific priority

Reoffending forms part of the statutory duties of Community Safety Partnerships and work locally in this regard during the past year has focused on repeat offenders and those causing the greatest harm.

What difference has the SafetyNet Reducing Reoffending priority made to residents of Waltham Forest?

Stronger links around YOS transition to IOM

- Improved link up with the gang's unit regarding IOM nominals

In Waltham Forest, the rate of reoffending amongst children within the Youth Justice Service has reduced by 25% in the past year. The number of children within this cohort that are in some form of education, employment or training has continued to rise. This may be in part be due to our robust recording and oversight of all children of statutory school age as well as children who are post 16. We are working with colleges and further education placements to reduce the risk of children being excluded from their placements due to their involvement in the criminal justice system.

Reduction in reoffending for individuals on the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohort

- In 2018 reoffending was 42.9% and in 2022 this has reduced to 22.4%, however it is worth noting that during the COVID period there was an overall reduction in offending.
- The local IOM team have been focussing on increasing the number of individuals on the scheme through:
 - monthly monitoring of data of all nominals that meet the IOM criteria.
 - Additional screening to be accepted onto the IOM cohort - this will increase the numbers significantly as the referral process has been removed for the identified cases.
 - Probation Practitioners / Police are continuing to use the referral process if an individual does not meet the automatic selection criteria.
 - Briefings on the IOM scheme have been delivered to all Waltham Forest Probation Staff and NE BCU Police Officers highlighting the criteria for the IOM scheme
- Waltham Forest IOM has made significant changes to the way meetings are chaired, now incorporating the four pillars from multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) to manage risk and protect victims.



Tailored / targeted interventions for IOM nominals

- The core IOM panel has expanded, now with representatives from the prisons to support pre-release work, which has improved this process. There is also a representative from the Jobcentre who supports with Education, Training and Employment initiatives and supporting benefit claims.
- Waltham Forest IOM was included in a Bus Pass pilot which aims to increase the number of attendances at Probation appointments and support with community integration.

Use of innovation is creating positive impacts on youth offending

- The restorative justice worker has built good relationships with schools and is able to complete 1:1 sessions with young people at school. In building these relationships, advice is readily available to staff as well as support with mediation between pupils. Restorative justice work takes place where young people feel comfortable Joint working with other teams /services, such as Edge of Care and alternative provisions and active engagement on multi-agency panels. Use of innovative techniques such as ‘shuttle communication’ has been successful
- An Educational Psychologist works with children in the Youth Justice System on a fortnightly basis during term time with flexibility about where they meet children whether at their school setting, over the phone, or online, depending on where they feel most comfortable.
- Wipers have been commissioned to deliver the ‘Ether Programme,’ (an eight-week group work programme aimed towards children within the service that identify as belonging to a ‘minority ethnic’ group. As a motivational and inspirational leadership course, it aims to address issues around race and identity and perceptions of self, as well as self-esteem and confidence, stereotypes, breaking barriers, and perceptions of masculinity). 7 children have been supported through this project and feedback has been very positive

- The Turnaround programme, for children ‘teetering on the edge of criminality’ has been implemented and it is hoped that this intervention will help to address the over-representation currently seen in all areas of the YJS and support diverting children away at the earliest opportunity.

Children in custody are appropriately safeguarded and resettlement is well planned

Those children remanded have regular looked after children reviews and this is part of regular joint management oversight between youth justice, children’s services, and virtual school managers. Each child’s constructive resettlement continues to be discussed as part of the monthly High-Risk Panels.

Children / young people from black and minoritised communities are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system

The number of children from Black and other minority ethnic groups has reduced by 10% in the past 12 months. We are continuing to commission the Ether Programme which is an evidence based personal development and leadership programme for children from minority ethnic backgrounds. The programme addresses issues around race, identity, and self-esteem.

Reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system

End of March 2023, saw a 10% reduction in statutory caseloads (85) compared to the same period last year. Despite the reduction, needs of the children and families we work with are often complex. There was also a slight reduction in children entering the Youth Justice Service as first time entrants. Within the

service, there has been a significant reduction in the number of children remanded to custody. We offer robust bail packages to the Courts as an alternative to custody wherever possible.



Children’s voices are heard and provide opportunities for positive change

- Intervention such as the Stay Safe programme, Your Choice and the Ether programme are currently being delivered to children and young people to address some of the identified factors contributing towards offending.

What’s planned for 2023 – 25?

- Reinforce our child-centric approach by moving the governance of Youth Justice Management under the Safeguarding Children Board.
- Further focus on females entering the criminal justice system as well as on Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) communities
- Deliver another Ether project
- Increase numbers on nominals on IOM scheme

Annual report addendum for the Health and Wellbeing Board

About the Health and Wellbeing Board

Health and Wellbeing Boards were established as part of the Health and Social Care Act in 2012 to act as a forum in which key leaders from the local health and care system could work together to improve health & wellbeing and tackle health inequalities for their local population. Meeting in public, the Health and Wellbeing board is a formal committee of the local authority charged with promoting greater integration and partnership between bodies from the NHS, public health, and local government.

The Health and Care Act 2022 introduced new architecture to the health and care system, specifically the establishment of integrated care boards (ICBs) and integrated care partnerships (ICPs). In this new landscape, HWBs continue to play an important statutory role in instilling mechanisms for joint working across health and care organisations and setting strategic direction to improve the health and wellbeing of people locally.

The Waltham Forest Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), is a partnership of statutory and non-statutory organisations, representing those that plan and provide health services and the people who use those services across the borough. The Board has a statutory duty to produce a joint strategic needs assessment for their local population.

Message from the Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs

**Councillor Naheed Asghar, Lead Member for Health & Wellbeing and
Dr Ken Aswani, Clinical Director, Waltham Forest Health & Care Partnership**

2022-23 has been another busy year, full of system changes, driven by the hard work at ground level to improve outcomes for our diverse communities.

We welcomed the Marmot report which will be instrumental in how we tackle health inequalities. Crucially, it was informed by our residents' views and experiences which remains central to all that we do as a Partnership, and we are looking forward to how this work progresses and the difference it will make to our communities' lives.

In July 2022, our Integrated Care Partnership was formally established and brings together another broad set of system partners, who similarly to the Health & Wellbeing Board work together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services. Going into 2023-24 we will explore the huge potential this brings to work better together as a system, with a much greater focus on population health outcomes and tackling inequalities.

These remain challenging times and we are confident in the Board and its partners delivering high quality interventions that lead to discernible and essential improvements in the health and wellbeing of people who live and work in Waltham Forest.

Alcohol and Drugs

Health & Wellbeing Board specific priority

In 2022-23 we achieved many of our aims including carrying out a comprehensive drug and alcohol needs assessment to define and assess new priorities; embedding the work of two grants from the Office of Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID) which included recruitment to a range of ongoing projects and roles; and additional investment into and support for the young person service which has resulted in increased numbers of children / young people and adolescents / transition age individuals accessing services.

The partnership has also strengthened with increased links to the housing / homelessness teams, employment, training, and education teams and young people partners. We have maintained a regular focus at each meeting throughout the year, on an area of inequity.

The mobilisation of the Combating Drugs Partnership enabled a broader focus on substance use to include a lens on early help and prevention and also enforcement.

What difference has the Health & Wellbeing Board's Alcohol and Drugs priority made to residents of Waltham Forest?

Residents receive the right help and holistic support at the right time for their alcohol and / or drug use and are at the centre of what we do

- New needs assessment and prescription medications dependence review conducted in September 2022 provided greater insight into resident's

needs. With a particular focus on health inequalities and how we can better engage with groups with high unmet need / disadvantaged groups

- Developed new Alcohol and Drugs strategic priorities and action plan for next 2 years to complement the grant priorities and new project.
- Established the Combating Drugs Partnership which seeks to take a comprehensive approach to tackling drugs and alcohol
- Embedded projects through a universal grant which will be continued and built on through a new supplemental grant
- Developed and focused more on the young people service with the recruitment of a new transitional lead, embedding pathway with CAMHS and increasing / improving engagement / awareness / promotion of activities, which increased the number of 18-24 year olds in treatment
- Additional funding resulted in more clients being able to access Tier 4 treatment, especially clients with complex needs, including rough sleepers, and clients for whom detox / rehab pathways have not previously been accessible
- Gradually improved rates of unmet need / clients in treatment for alcohol

Residents know where to get help and support

- Recovery groups and activities were set back up and running post-COVID
- The community engagement post increased community presence / awareness raising opportunities
- Improved links across to Employment Training and Education team including Department for Work and Pensions attendance at steering group, attendance at training and provision of Drug and Alcohol information via Job centres
- Joint working and sharing of information to promote and support to access KOOTH and SHOUT to those not currently accessing support for Mental Health needs or do not meet thresholds
- KOOTH & CGL joint workshops to schools to promote awareness of services and make aware of links between Mental Health and Substance misuse

Increased numbers of children / young people in treatment and longer periods in treatment

- New young person transitional worker which has also seen an as the volume of training / awareness workshops that are delivered by CGL's team throughout the Borough and better retention of YP clients as we are able to do more Outreach / face-to-face work.

- In 2022-23, Change Grow Live Waltham Forest (a service for Young Persons with multiple vulnerabilities) received 28 referrals from mental health services which is a 700% increase from 2019-20. 16 were from children's mental health and 12 from adults. Mental health referrals to this service were stable but low during the lockdown (2019 - 2021) but started to increase as restrictions were reduced (2021 - 2022) before the figures jump in 2022 - 2023 as restrictions were lifted completely.

What's planned for 2023 -25?

- Build on the foundations of the Combating Drugs Partnership
- Continue to deliver work in line with external funding (OHID Rough sleepers grant and OHID Supplemental Grant)
- Seek more opportunities for joint working with housing / homelessness and licencing
- Criminal justice, policing and ASB new structure
- Meet the needs of women with multiple complex needs including domestic abuse and substance use
- Further explore trends including inequalities and mortality data
- Review of physical and other health needs of people with substance misuse including cardiovascular disease and links across to Health Checks
- Explore the drug and alcohol use among those with learning disabilities and in supported living settings

Healthy Weight for All

Health & Wellbeing Board specific priority

2022-23 started with a commitment to develop a new Healthy Weight Strategy. The subsequent five year strategy was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2023, following a range of activity that engaged 1200 residents and stakeholders through surveys, focus group discussions and workshops.



Our vision is to create a borough that makes healthy choices easier for everyone and is supportive towards people living with obesity. To deliver the vision, the strategy adopts a whole system approach through collaborative working with stakeholders to develop a healthy weight environment. We have subsequently developed an action plan, restructured the steering group and are continuing work to improve engagement with stakeholders across the system.

What difference has the Health & Wellbeing Board Healthy Weight for All priority made to residents of Waltham Forest?

Residents received help earlier for managing their weight

- Continued to commission Tier 2 weight management programmes for children and adults despite an end to OHID funding, via a Public Health grant. Beezee Bodies delivered a variety of programmes for families and GLL delivered a structured weight loss programme for adults, including a weight management service specifically for carers. Work took place to ensure that services worked together and that pathways were aligned.

Residents are supported to take action to make healthier choices

- New School Superzone programme launched in January 2023 with Mission Grove Primary School which involves work to make the environment both around and within the school healthier for the school community, including additional weighing and measuring for year 5 students with referrals to support services as required.
- Ensured other programmes like Making Every Contact Count training and Health champions are aligned with the Healthy Weight Strategy to support residents to make small changes to their lifestyles and access support services when needed.
- Continued to promote Healthy Catering and Sugar Free Campaigns - activities have involved targeting local food outlets to encourage participation, improving the look and feel of the environment outside the school and supporting active travel to and from school.

The partnership understands the needs of its residents which enables the right help at the right time

- Launched the new Healthy Weight Strategy which comprised a comprehensive range of consultations with residents and stakeholders as well as the development of a needs assessment.

What's planned for 2023 -25?

Implement the five-year Healthy Weight Strategy through stakeholder collaboration via newsletter and steering committee meetings to make healthier choices easier choices and to reduce stigma experienced by people with obesity.

Other areas of note for the Health and Wellbeing Board

Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

MECC is a valuable approach to delivering our priorities and embodies the cross-cutting work in practice.

By the end of March 2023, 455 professionals had attended MECC training. These came from 58 different teams / organisations including Council, NHS, Police, Education and DWP, along with the voluntary sector and council delivery partners.

Almost all participants would recommend the training to others and the overall feedback demonstrated high levels of satisfaction, along with increases in confidence and motivation.

A network was established this year to support the MECC approach. There are currently 133 members, and it continues to grow. Further training, focussing on motivational conversations about drugs and alcohol, is currently under development and will be launched in June 2023. In addition, a MECC eLearning course is being created to put in place when our current resource for 'live' training runs out.



Appendix 1 – Strategic Partnerships Funding and Resources

Strategic Partnerships Team Income	£248,325
NHS NEL Integrated Care Board	£100,000
North East London Foundation Trust	£10,000
Barts Health NHS Trust	£27,000
Police (<i>Nationally agreed</i>)	£10,000
National Probation Service (<i>Nationally agreed</i>)	£1,000
London Borough of Waltham Forest	£110,325

Strategic Partnerships Team Expenditure	£248,325
Strategic Partnership Unit Salaries	£222,299
Salaries for Chairs	£22,863
Running costs, bitesize, etc.	£3,163
Statutory reviews	£0
Reviews (which commenced in 2021-22) have been carried out internally and agencies have provided their time:	
SAR: NHS NEL CCG + LBWF	
CSPR: Whipps Cross University Hospital - Barts Health + NHS NEL CCG	

