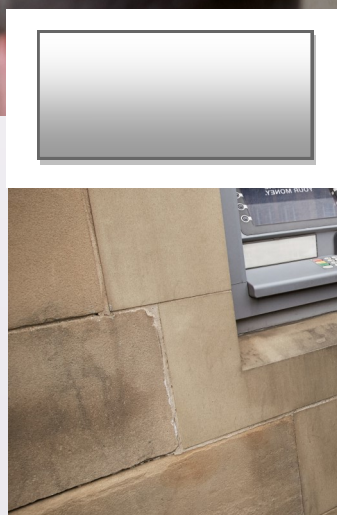
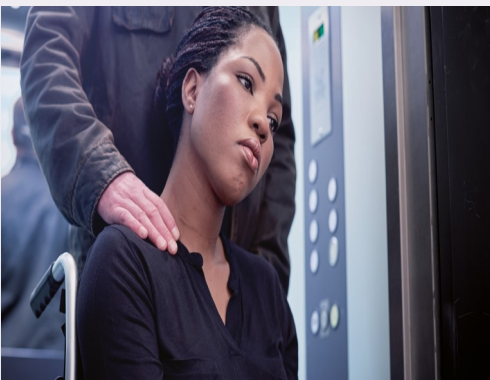
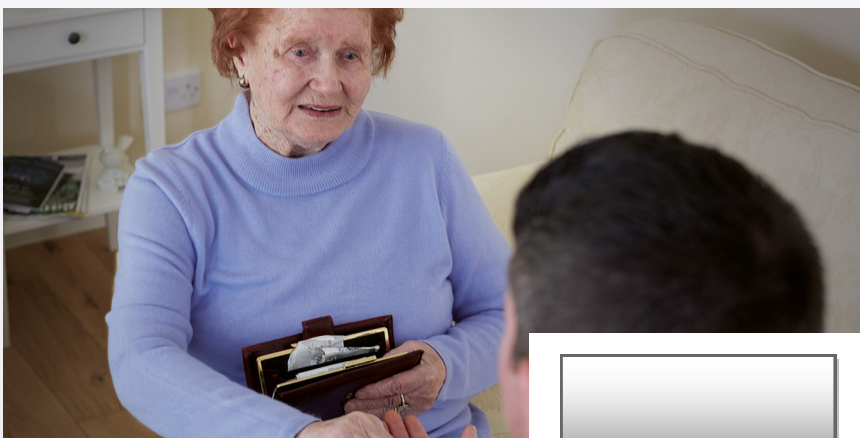


# **Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007**



## **Protecting Adults at Risk of Harm in West Dunbartonshire**



## **Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2016 - 2018**

## Forward

Welcome to the fifth Biennial Report of the West Dunbartonshire Adult Protection Committee. As always, this report will highlight the significant areas of work undertaken by the Committee over the past two years and will finish by looking at the challenges that lie ahead and suggesting what the priority areas for development and progress will be over the coming two years.

The past two years have seen some significant staff changes for the Committee. Most notably, our ASP Co-ordinator, Noreen McCarthy, moved to pastures new in June 2017. As you may be aware from the last Biennial Report, Noreen carried out sterling work on behalf of the Committee and drove forward our workplan with tremendous energy and professionalism. We will miss her enthusiasm and drive but wish her well in her new position. In her place, we have welcomed Heather Irving who took up the position in January 2018. Heather's post differs from Noreen's in one important aspect in that she is also the co-ordinator for West Dunbartonshire's Child Protection Committee. Although this represents a big and challenging workload for Heather, it also provides the considerable benefit of bringing the Adult Protection and Child Protection worlds closer together which has been a long running aim of the APC in the six years I have been here. During the past six months or so, Heather has got through a considerable amount of work and, among other things has been reviewing our work plan and procedures.

As you may note from the above, there was a six-month gap between Noreen's departure and Heather commencing work in her post. This presented the Committee with some difficulties, not least in ensuring that West Dunbartonshire's excellent ASP training programme was maintained as Noreen had been responsible for providing much of the training herself. To this end, I would like to offer sincere thanks to the Committee's admin support, Denise Toner, who worked tirelessly to ensure that the training programme was kept as up-to-date as possible and that Heather had good, reliable information at hand when she arrived in post to make the transition as smooth as possible. I am pleased to report that Heather and Denise have now been able to get the training programme back on track and Heather's report on this area of work is contained within the body of this report.

Given the changes that have been taking place, both in our internal posts but also in the wider world of adult protection, Heather is currently organising a development day in order to both re-energise and re-focus the Committee and to bring its work to the attention of as wide an audience as possible within West Dunbartonshire.

In each of the previous four Biennial Reports, we have provided comprehensive information on work undertaken in the field of adult protection and also information on how the various agencies have worked together positively to achieve our joint goals in making our service users safe. While we will continue to do this, we also hope to give some interesting insights within this report about some of the outcomes for the people who have been involved in adult protection processes in West

Dunbartonshire. It is crucial that we think about, and can find ways of evidencing, how the work we carry out in this challenging area has a concrete and positive outcome for the people we work with. I am confident that, over the past ten years, many people's lives in West Dunbartonshire have been positively impacted by the professional and sensitive implementation of our adult protection processes and I hope that we can begin to offer some evidence of this in this report and also in the coming months and years.

On the national level, the National Forum for Adult Protection has now been discontinued. Work is being led by the National Association of Adult Protection Convenors, however, to try to identify ways in which a national agenda of adult protection issues can be developed and progressed. Given the large number of people involved in such an agenda, this will be a difficult task to achieve but, nonetheless, one of considerable importance if we are to gain an understanding of the overall picture of adult protection in Scotland.

Finally, can I offer my sincere thanks to all the members of the Committee for their continued hard work and commitment. The past two years have presented many challenges but I am confident that, with the staff currently charged with developing the adult protection agenda in West Dunbartonshire, the further progress in this area of work will be positive and we shall continue to work together with our service users in a constructive manner which will lead to good and favourable outcomes.



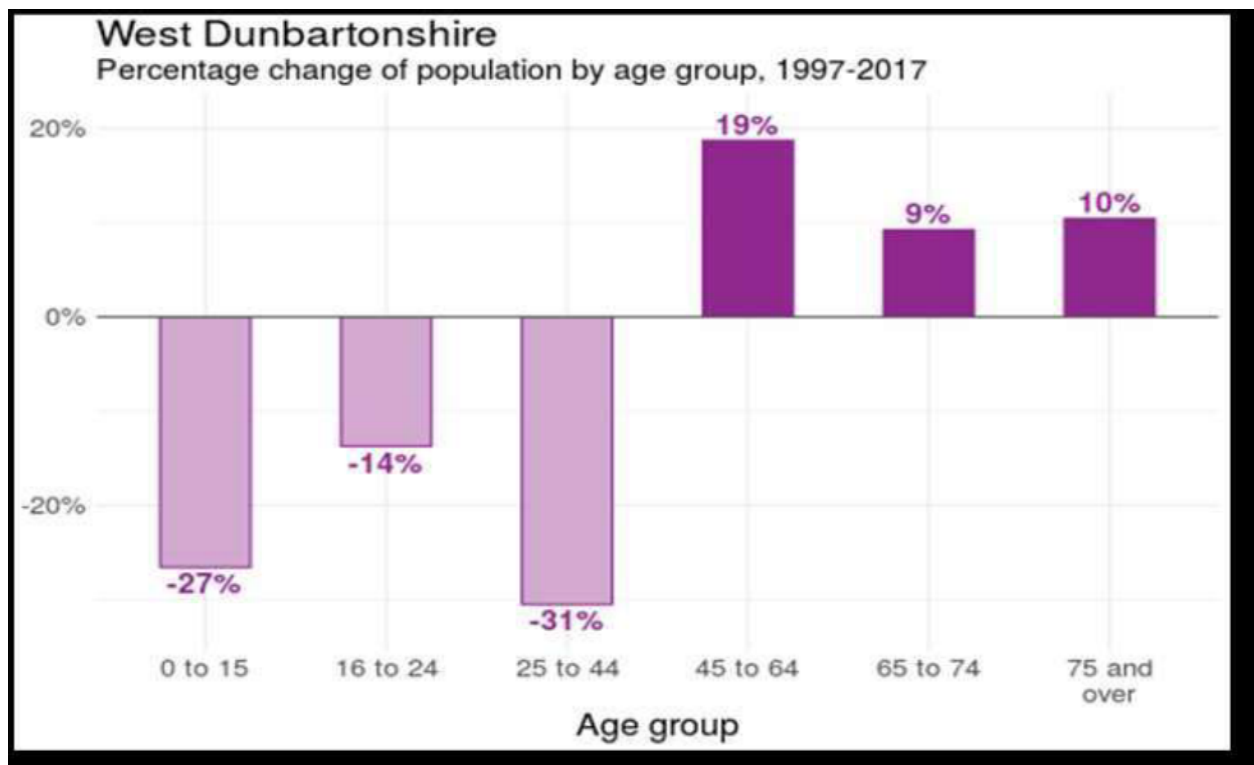
Peter Jennow

Independent Chair

## **Population Profile of West Dunbartonshire**

The population of West Dunbartonshire accounts for 1.7% of the total population of Scotland. Although population mid-year estimates for 2016 was 89 860, an increase of 0.3% from the 2015 estimate of 89 850, the trend over the last 10 years has seen a decrease from 91 420 a change of - 1.7%.

Scotland's population is projected to increase by 3% by 2024 and by 7% by 2039. In contrast, West Dunbartonshire will decrease by 7.1%, with the under and working age populations projected to fall. However the pensionable age is projected to increase by 24% by 2039. West Dunbartonshire is one of the few Scottish local authority areas to have a declining population

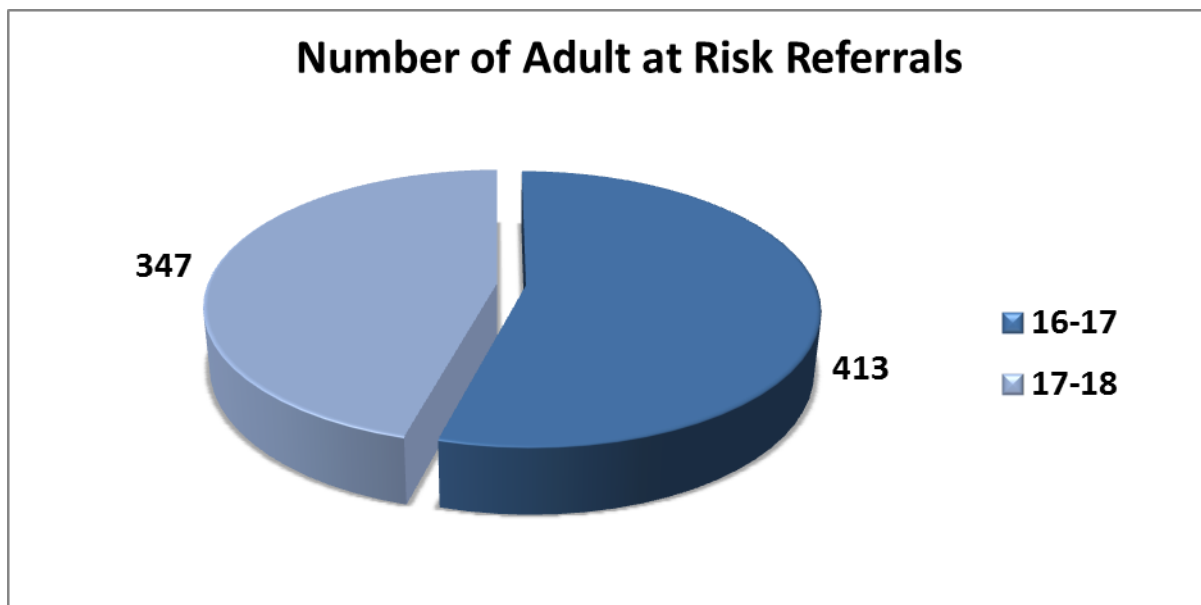


The trend over the last ten years has seen a decreasing population in West Dunbartonshire, with an increase in the proportion of people for pensionable age specifically increasing for over 75's. The current population gender split also widens with increasing age e.g. more females than males from the age of 25 upwards.. People aged 65 and over make up 18 per cent of West Dunbartonshire's population. This is in line with Scotland where 18.5 per cent are aged 65 and over. West Dunbartonshire population projections indicate that the age groups 65+ and 75+ will increase up to 2037 with other age bands decreasing.

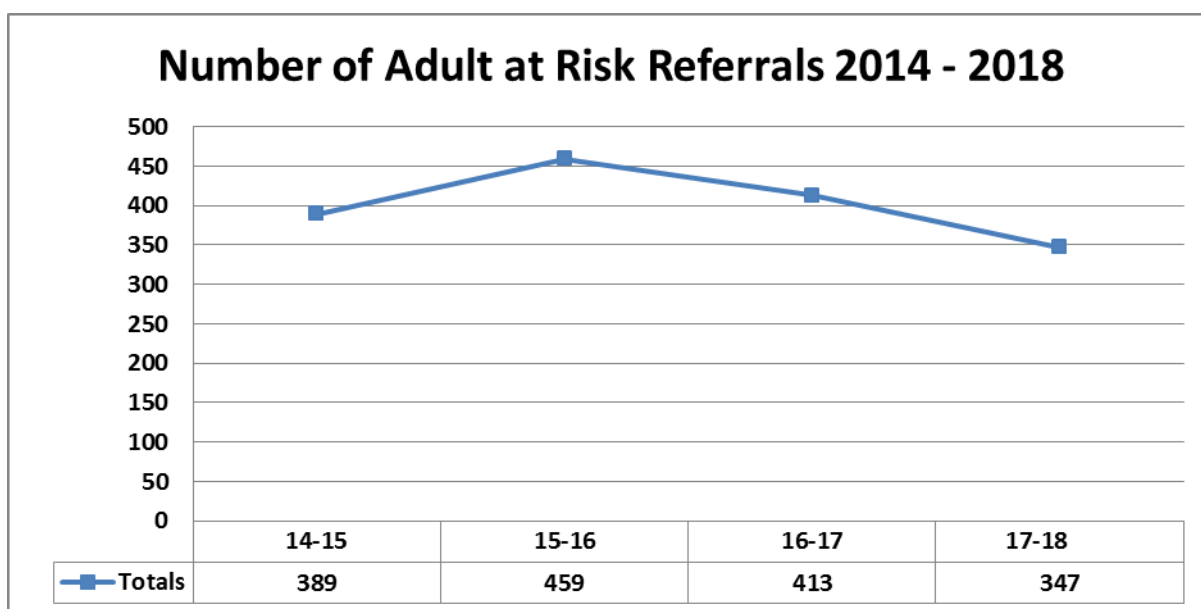
Given the high proportion of adult at risk concerns in West Dunbartonshire that relate to older adults, this reinforces the importance of supporting independence, recognise and address risk and ensuring that adult at risk support and protection processes are flexible and sustainable.

## Overview of Adult at Risk Concerns in West Dunbartonshire

347 Adult at Risk concerns/ referrals were received by West Dunbartonshire Council (Health and Social Care Partnership) in 2017-18, with referrals; a 16% reduction in from 413 received in 2016-17.



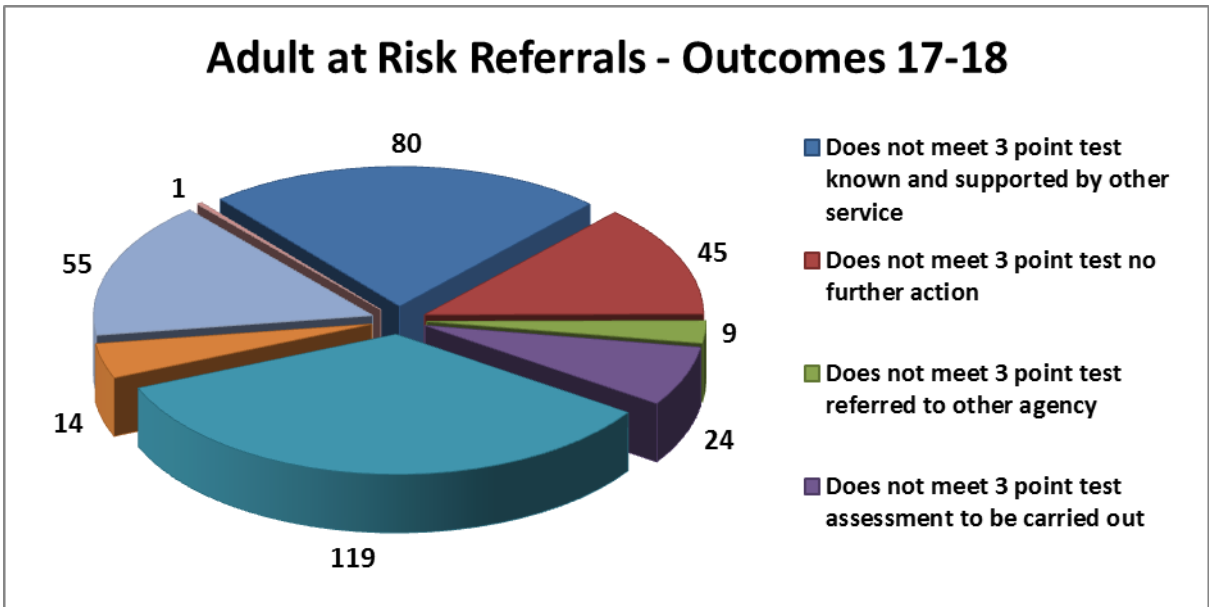
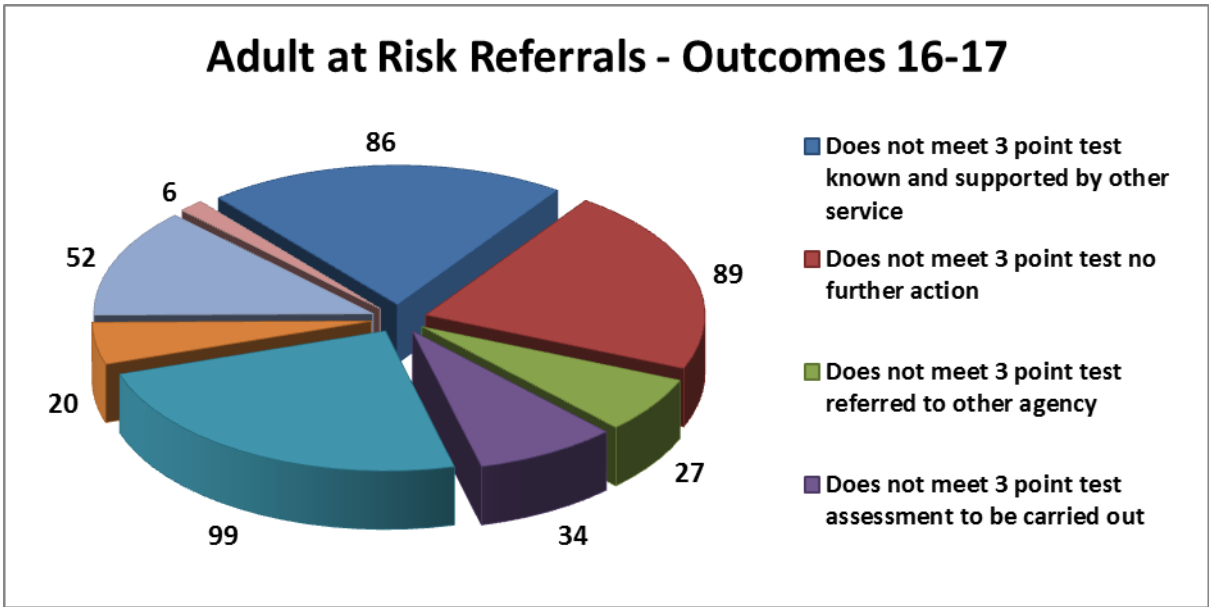
This is the lowest number of referrals in four years and continues an identified trend of reduced



The same proportion of referrals, (79%) were deemed to meet the criteria for adult at risk in both years.

All referrals submitted to West Dunbartonshire are subject to a level of inquiry under The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. They are screened at initial inquiry stage and a decision is made with regard to the most appropriate route they take. This may result in an Adult Protection Investigation and then Case Conference being undertaken.

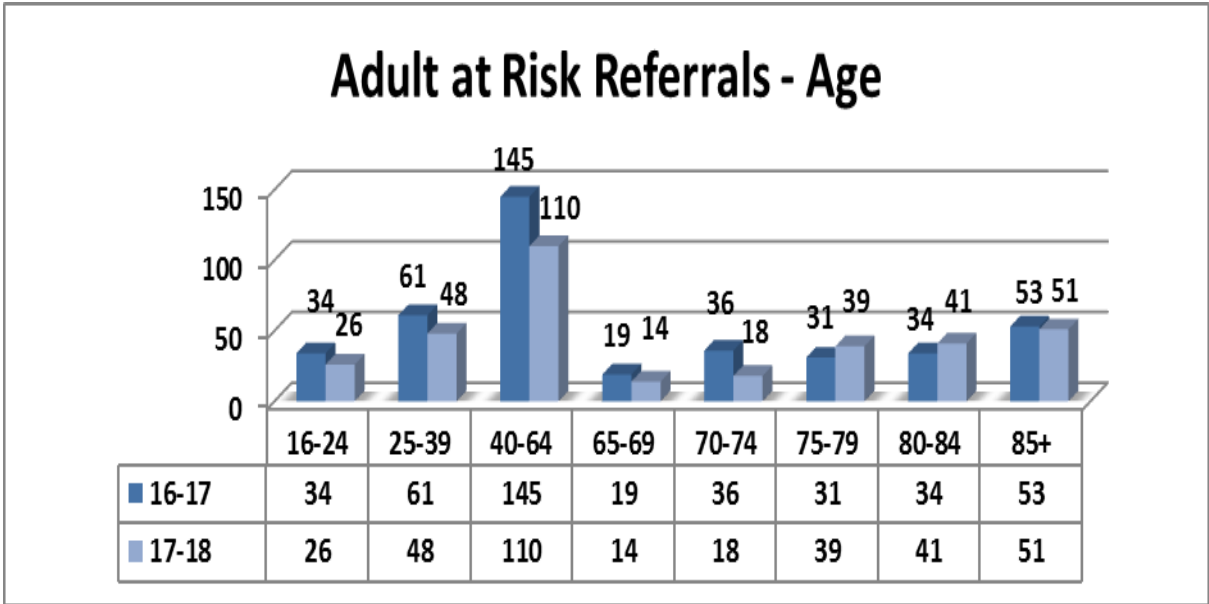
Inquiries may be progressed under Community Care legislation or consideration is given to working with other legislation such as Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003.



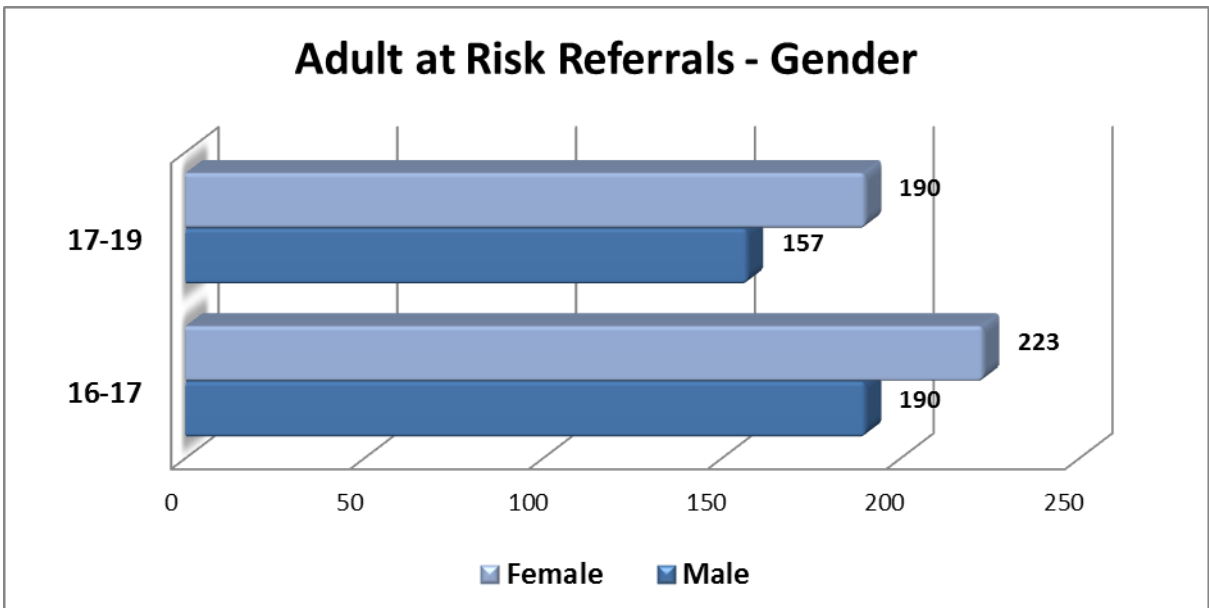
Of 347 adult at risk concerns received, there were 267 people referred, of which 54 people (135 referrals) were referred on more than one occasion. A trigger system is in place to identify repeat referrals.

Following Investigations, 23 of these were deemed as both being adults at risk and requiring Case Conference, including 14 Review case conferences that took place, all 100% included up to date risk assessments.

In looking at the profile of those referred, we continue to see high numbers of over 65 concerns. With regard to younger adults, we utilise Child Protection Processes for people aged 16-18. We continue to see more adult at risk concerns regarding women. This may be due to the high numbers of older people referred and disproportionate mortality rates. It is noticeable that the only age where concerns for men are more prevalent is age 25-39:

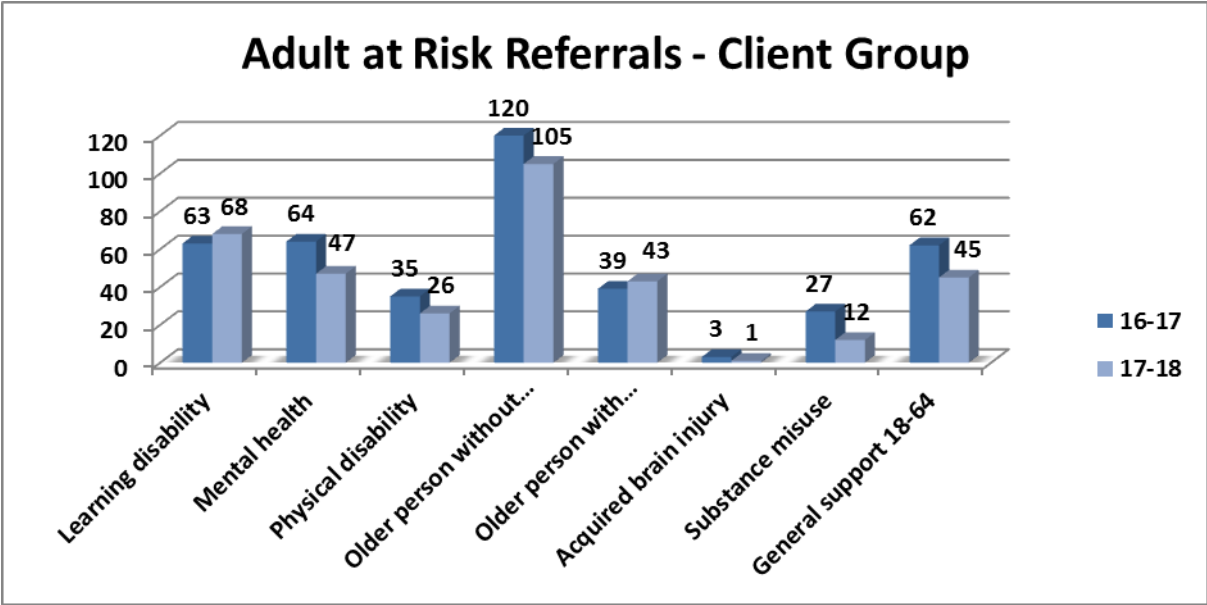


As noted above, we continue to see high referral levels for older people. It is noticeable that the majority of these are dealt with at Inquiry stage, with outcome planning often led through care and support processes.

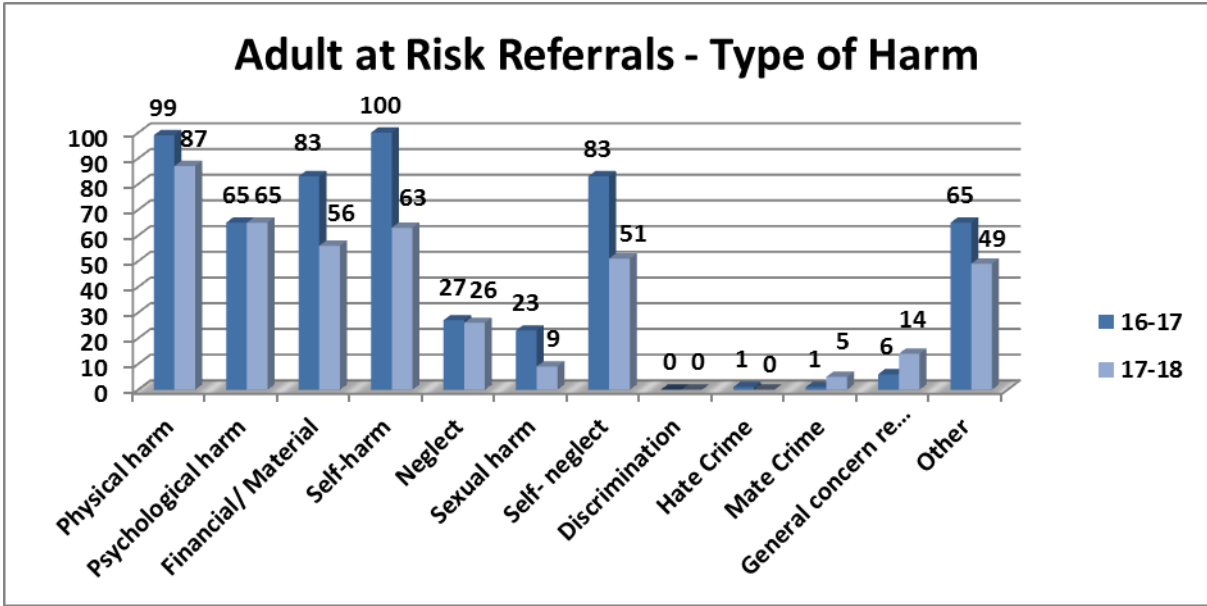




Despite a drop in overall numbers in 2017-18, we have seen a numerical increase in the referrals for people with learning disabilities (increase of 5: 4.5% proportionate increase) and older people with dementia (increase of 4; proportionate 3% increase) in the last year. Numerical reductions across other areas show small proportionate falls in referrals. Whilst the primary user group continues to be older people, the more complex concerns, leading to investigation and conference are almost

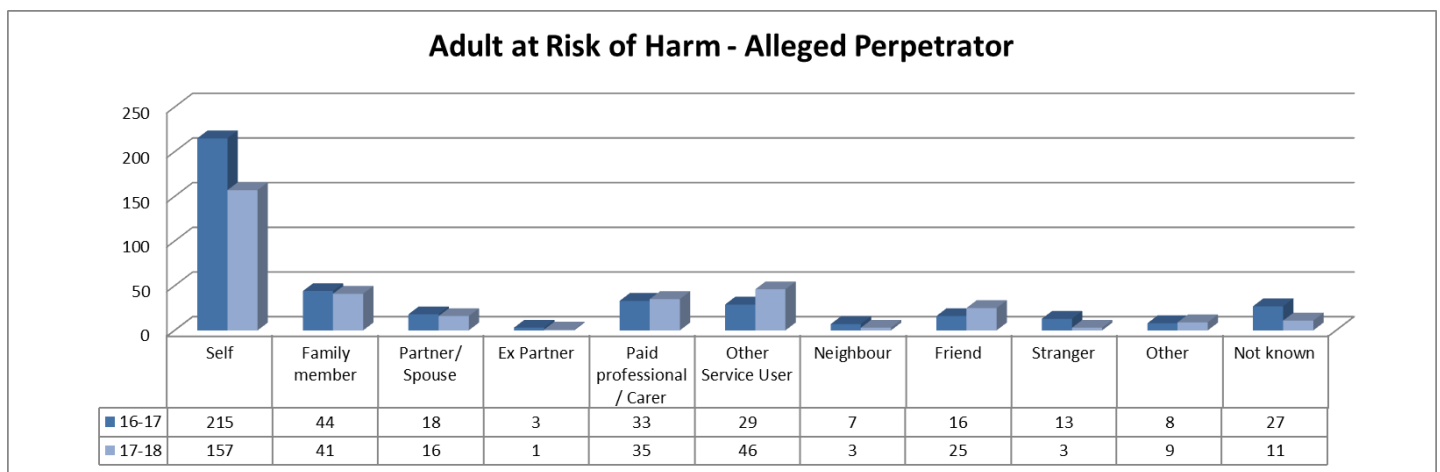


Despite a drop in overall numbers in 2017-18, we have seen a numerical increase in the referrals for people with learning disabilities (increase of 5: 4.5% proportionate increase) and older people with dementia (increase of 4; proportionate 3% increase) in the last year. Numerical reductions across other areas show small proportionate falls in referrals. Whilst the primary user group continues to be older people, the more complex concerns, leading to investigation and conference are almost exclusively from adult Learning Disabilities and Mental Health teams. This reflects the diverse nature of adult at risk concern forms.

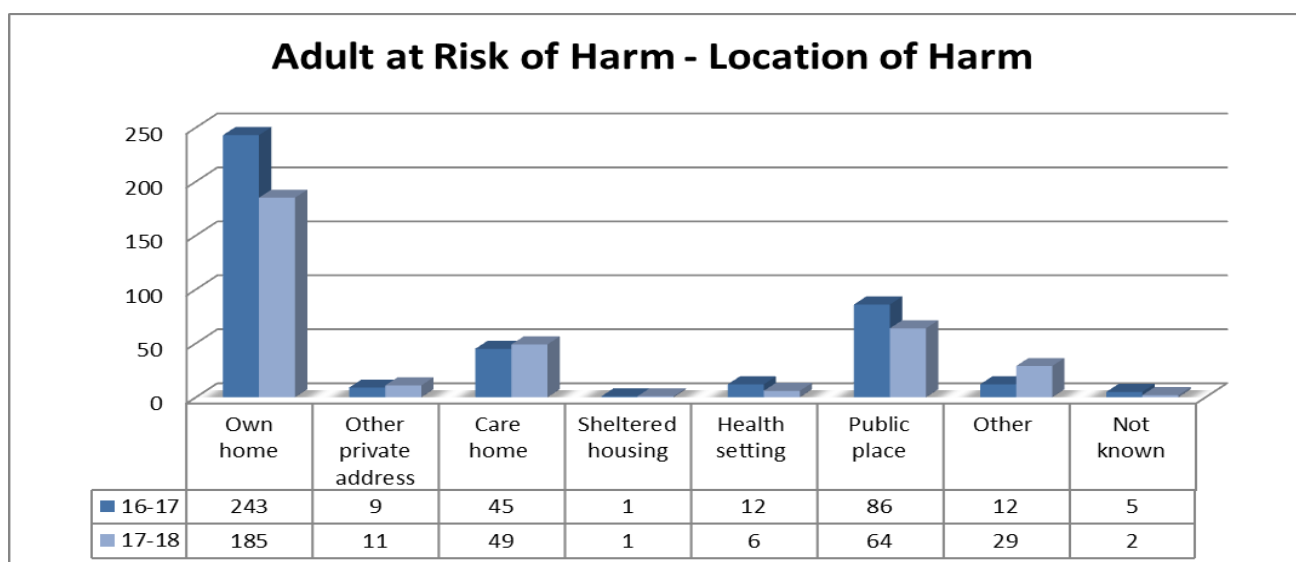


The biggest proportionate fall in reasons for concern is regarding self-harm and self-neglect. Whilst Physical harm is the greatest area of referral, the proportionate rise in psychological harm referrals also requires analysis. There is an increased awareness of the psychological impact of all types of harm and this may reflect the rise in proportionate referrals. This is reinforced as psychological harm is often reported as the secondary and not primary harm.

Work with council officers indicates that they have a good awareness of psychological harm. Council officers have also identified that Mate and Hate crime are often not identified as these indicate the motivation for harm and workers often identify the type of actual harm/ risk present. In response, paper work is being revised to promote awareness of the more thematic motivations within ASP, not merely the harm itself. Mate crime/ cuckooing awareness training is also planned in the Public Protection training calendar 2018-19.



Whilst people continue to be most likely to cause harm to themselves, there has been an increase in another person being involved, potentially through intentional harm. Most incidents of concern continue to be identified as at own home the proportionate rise places out with, reflecting this proportionate shift in the alleged perpetrator from self-harm and neglect. Moving forward work to consider financial harm and mate crime specific to West Dunbartonshire is being taken forward following review of these figures with Council Officers in West Dunbartonshire.

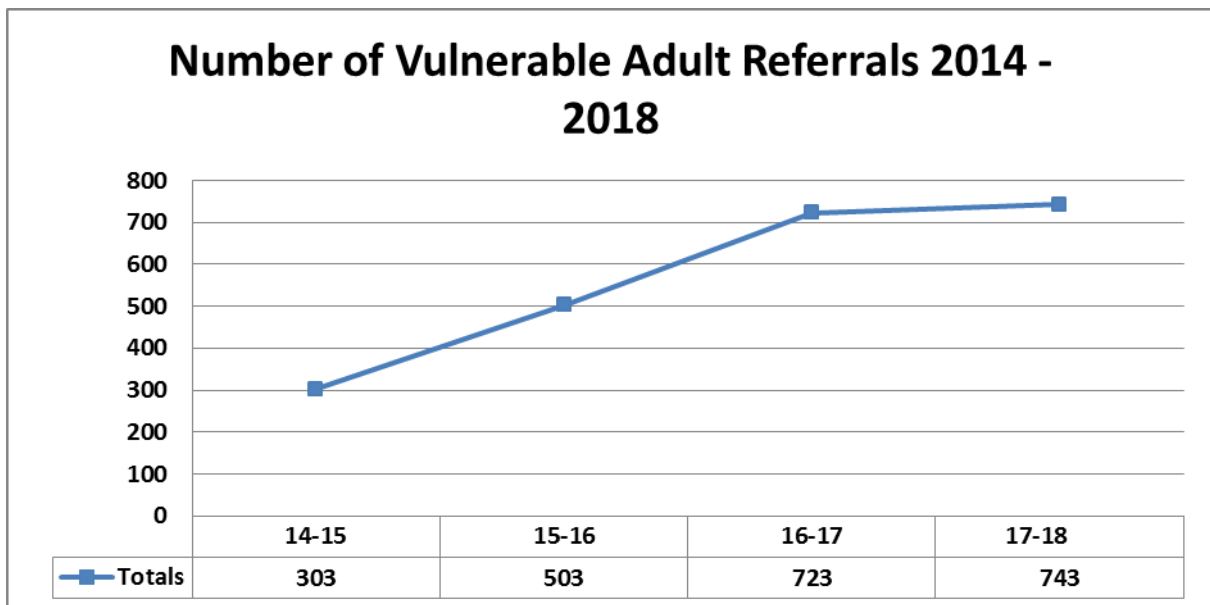




## Vulnerable adults

In addition to adult at risk referrals, where there concerns about an adult but they do not reach the adult at risk criteria, they may be viewed as vulnerable adults. They may be referred to HSCP for assessment and support. To promote consistency in how we report and respond to vulnerable adult concerns we have streamlined and strengthened vulnerable adult processes received by the HSCP adult duty teams. This looks to ensure that irrespective of referral source all vulnerable person concerns are reported and addressed consistently.

There has been a rise in the concern forms for vulnerable adults, from 723 in 2016-17 to 743 in 2017-18. This is anticipated that this will be a continuing trend as agencies become more consistent and skilled in recognising and referring adults they are concerned about. Where required, vulnerable adult referrals can be 'upgraded' to adult at risk concerns.



## **Adult Protection Governance in West Dunbartonshire Performance over view**

We have continued to closely monitor our practice and performance in 2016-18, both to consider our outcomes, and also to review their impact

### **Timescales:**

West Dunbartonshire's targets regarding timescales mirror or in some cases are tighter than West of Scotland Guidance. There are no national targets for ASP and the ongoing challenge to benchmark. However targets are a guide to good practice and allow us to focus our continuous improvement.

In 2017/18, of 347 referrals, 83% (289) of enquiries were carried out within timescale. This is largely unchanged for 2016/17, which saw 85% carried out within timescale. These largely met our target of 85%. Of 54 investigations, 74% (40) were carried out within WD target timescales. Of 23 Case conferences, 11 (48%) were carried out within timescales.

There have been a number of practical issues that may have caused some of these delays, including staffing and a change to practices. Work is required to ensure that current referral rates are appropriate.

Following recognition at the PPCOG the timescales for enquiry stages were increasing, considerable effort in both support and structural/practical changes led to improvement. Similar work is now being implemented across all areas of the adult protection process (investigation and conference). This has already seen significant improvement to investigation timescales, reaching 100% for the last recorded quarter.

We have considered the challenges in timescales and number of practical actions implemented and planned to ensure timely and client centred practice. These include:

- Improved monitoring of ASP enquiry, investigation and case conference timescales
- Automated care first triggers implemented to better ensure that recording reflects practice
- Increased breakdown of statistics to understand the profile of Adult protection in WD
- Working with IOMs to consider duty processes and consistent approach to receipt of ASP concerns
- Introduction of vulnerable adult form across all teams

Where timescales are not being achieved we are considering individual cases which do not meet target timescales and the balance between practice and process through quality assurance. We have increased monitoring and reporting of missed timescales, increasing managerial oversight and accountability. This has led to increased understanding of the causes.

## **Outcomes / impact / making a difference**

West Dunbartonshire HSCP has continued to collect comprehensive information on all adult protection referrals which are then discussed at quarterly committee meetings. This enables members of the committee to compare and contrast statistics on a monthly, quarterly and yearly basis. We recognise the importance of focussing on outcomes and are developing more comprehensive processes for service users to be involved in both their individual care in ASP, but to speak to and influence

West Dunbartonshire Adult Protection Committee is responsible for monitoring and advising on Adult Protection procedures, practice and issues within the local area and ensuring that the public agencies involved in Adult Protection work together to ensure effective service delivery in this area of work.

The connectivity between the Committee and operational services across West Dunbartonshire partners is crucial in ensuring that our adults at risk and their families and carers continue to be safeguarded appropriately. This report evidences our work in ensuring that adults at risk of harm in West Dunbartonshire are identified, supported and protected.

## **Governance**

Governance for Adult Support and Protection continues to be with West Dunbartonshire's Public Protection Chief Officers Group (PPCOG) and brings together public protection issues of; Child Protection, Adult Protection, Criminal Justice (High Risk Offender) and Addiction Services and a cross cutting theme is domestic violence.

In the 2016 to 2018 period, our governance around Adult Support and Protection has been strengthened by:

The remit and membership of West Dunbartonshire's group has been reviewed in line with a national Chief Officer Leadership programme events.

A Public Protection Risk register has been developed, including Adult Support and Protection Monitoring indicators and performance targets across Public Protection have been reviewed. These The APC Chair and Public Protection Co-ordinator report to the quarterly Public Protection Chief Officer's Group in order to provide assurance to Chief Officers that adult protection requirements are being adhered to effectively. Information is provided to the Chief Officer's Group regarding performance, developments and policy initiatives.

We have revitalised our Adult Support and Protection Council Officer's and Senior Workers Forums.

These include social workers/council officers in and senior workers, Team Leads and Integrated Operations Managers who have oversight over ASP processes and staff who are involved.

These groups assist the development of current and emerging knowledge and understanding of ASP and influence good practice. They are integral to planning, service development wider practice.

## GOOD LIFE GROUP

### **Strengths**

A section on what has gone well might relate to the outcomes but perhaps with less emphasis on the actions e.g. the number of training events and more on the outcomes for people at risk of harm.

## Training



**In 2016-18, over 470 people received Adult Support and Protection Training**

Training is an ongoing priority for Adult Support and Protection in West Dunbartonshire, as reflected in the Chair's forward.

Our ambitious training programme has been achieved and progressed in the last two years and in 2016-18, over 470 people received Adult Support and Protection Training directly from West Dunbartonshire. This included:

- 257 people Basic Awareness training; reflecting a prioritisation of increasing understanding that 'adult protection is everybody's business'. This training is available to all and is specifically useful for people to have increased knowledge of adult support and protection, identifying and reporting concerns
- 9 completing detailed awareness, for managers and senior workers who may have to support staff to identify and refer concerns of harm
- 52 Council Officers completing refresher training and 6 newly trained Council Officers

This has been added to significantly through the provision of bespoke training, including to Housing colleagues, community planning partners and community members has seen a wider audience for adult support and protection awareness.

Evaluations of the training almost universally identify it as positive, informative and relevant

**I learned a lot**

**Very interesting and useful case examples**

**Good training, informative and enjoyable**

**Really beneficial**

Reflecting the new post of Public Protection Coordinator, we have developed our online Public Protection Training Programme.

## **Processes**

In the last two years processes and procedures have been reviewed and updated reflecting national and local agendas and need.

Where Vulnerable Person concerns are received by HSCP, these are all assessed through established processes. In 2018 we have introduced a single streamlined process across all HSCP Adult service. This has included

Police hub

Increased role of Scottish Fire and Rescue

PPC creating closer links and shared work – cp and ap group

Advocacy

### **Processes**

Significant time resource working across agency to improve processes and ensure timeous and best practice.

This has included the implementation of the vulnerable person form to allow a better profile of the vulnerable person concerns. This ensures that those adults not identified as being at risk but where concerns are identified.

We have drafted

## **Challenges**

For an example of the balance between timescale and good practice, of the 12 of 23 case conferences not within the 20 day timescale in 2017-18, there are accountable and client centred reasons for the majority that operational managers and PPC are aware of. These are being analysed and discussed at WDAPC and PPCOG.

Analysis found that, the majority of conferences out with guidance time had timescales agreed by operational /ASP management, with the decision made in the best interest of the service user, with work ongoing to militate against risk of harm.



## **Legal Requirements**

Legally, the Biennial Reports have to be a general report on the exercise of the Committee's functions to:

- keep under review the procedures and practices of the public bodies and office-holders which relate to the safeguarding of adults at risk present in the council's area (including, in particular, any such procedures and practices which involve co-operation between the council and other public bodies or office-holders),
- give information or advice, or make proposals, to any public body and office-holder on the exercise of functions which relate to the safeguarding of adults at risk present in the council's area
- make, or assist in or encourage the making of, arrangements for improving the skills and knowledge of officers or employees of the public bodies and office-holders who have responsibilities relating to the safeguarding of adults at risk present in the council's area,
- In performing its functions a Committee must have regard to the desirability of improving cooperation for the purpose of assisting those public bodies and office holders to perform functions in order to safeguard adults at risk present in the council's area.

*Considering the above, sections summarising the following may be useful within the reports:*

*2. What actions have been taken over the last two years to address the risk of harm identified (including information on each of the functions)*

*changes to procedures and practices relating to safeguarding of adults at risk and why  
information or advice given to public bodies/office holders in exercising their functions  
work done to improve skills or knowledge of public bodies/office holders*

*3. What impact/difference has this activity had/made for adults at risk of harm over the period of the report.*

*4. What challenges do the Committee and/or public bodies with a duty to co-operate continue to face.*

*5. What is the Committee's focus going to be over the next two years (for example, as a result of re-analysis of data about types of harm/particular people at risk).*

## **Concluding Comments**

The fifth Biennial Report from the West Dunbartonshire Adult Protection Committee reflects the continued commitment of our staff to ensure that the safety of all adults involved in our adult protection processes remains a priority and we are now collating evidence to show how the lives of those we work with have been enhanced through involvement in these processes.

As in previous periods, referrals from the general public remain low despite ongoing publicity about the adult protection agenda at both the national and local level (including the more recent types of harm such as human trafficking). Work undertaken by our co-ordinator and the local Police, however, indicates that the general public do indeed make referrals about adults at risk of harm but these referrals are made, almost exclusively, directly to the Police who then relay them to the Social Work Department. Although more work is required on this matter to ascertain why this happens, it is encouraging to know that the public do seem to be aware of the issue and do take steps to ensure that their concerns about vulnerable adults are passed on.

As mentioned in my Forward, the six-month gap in having an Adult Protection Co-ordinator raised concerns about the maintenance of our excellent ASP training programme. Although there was an inevitable backlog in some training courses as a result of this hiatus, Heather's report highlights that this backlog was resolved in the first six months of Heather being in post and our training programme is now fully back on track and will continue to provide comprehensive and targeted information to a wide range of staff from various agencies.

Self-evaluation continues to be high on the APC's agenda and quarterly inter-agency audits of our adult protection work are now firmly established. The results of these audits are shared with the Committee so that both strengths and weaknesses in our practice can be identified and any remedial actions can be agreed and endorsed.

As in previous years, it has not been possible to bench-mark our data set with those of other local authorities around the country. Although this is a hugely disappointing position to be in some ten years after the implementation of the Adult Support and Protection Act, work is ongoing within the Scottish Government to provide us with consistent and reliable figures from across the country. It is my sincere hope, therefore, that, by the time the next Biennial Report comes around, we will be in a position to provide some information on how the ASP figures within West Dunbartonshire compare with other authorities around the country.

## **Concluding Comments** <sup>(Cont)</sup>

For the past two years, our management figures.....

In terms of previous hopes that a review of the Adult Support and Protection Act would be forthcoming, there are no current plans for the Scottish Government to carry out such a review. It is the continued belief of our Committee, however, that such a review would be beneficial. It is to be hoped, therefore, that once the Scottish Government's current review of the Adults with Incapacity is completed next year, it will become evident that the next logical step would be to review adult protection given the overlap between the two pieces of legislation.

Over the past four years, the Committee have discussed different ways of offering more meaningful ways for service users to engage with the Committee. Work is planned over the coming months to enter into a dialogue with some of the local groups representing user's views which, hopefully, will lead to a more concrete way of ensuring that user and carer's voices are heard.

From the foregoing, therefore, it is evident that there is still much work to do but I am confident that our Committee will continue to work together to ensure that this work is carried out professionally and with enthusiasm. The Adult Support and Protection Act is now over ten years old and it will be important that it is kept to the front of people's mind, both locally and nationally, and the Committee will be instrumental in achieving this goal.

Peter Jennow

Independent Chair

West Dunbartonshire Adult Protection Committee

October 2018

