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## Welcome to our April 2025 Newsletter

In this newsletter, we bring together information which we hope you will find useful and we highlight how the Partnership continues to communicate and keep in touch with all our agencies and provide guidance to support you in your role working with children and adults. In this edition, we bring you information in the spotlight about Mental Health Awareness Week 2025, updates and also information about Partnership work, important safeguarding updates and new training dates.

### Me Learning

**Don't forget to log in to your Me Learning account and see our new e-learning courses on a range of safeguarding topics**



## **In the Spotlight..... Mental Health Awareness Week 2025 (May 12th-16th)**

The theme for this year's campaign is community.

This Mental Health Awareness Week we want to celebrate the communities that support us to protect and nurture good mental health. We know that we thrive when we have strong connections with others and supportive communities around us. We also know that people who are more socially connected to family, friends, or their community are happier, physically healthier, and live longer, with fewer mental health problems than people who are less well connected. Communities can provide us with a sense of belonging, safety, support in hard times, and give us purpose.

Support this campaign by sharing resources and discussions with colleagues across Darlington. Click the link [here](#) to access the Mental Health Foundation website where you will find resources and tips on strengthening communities to support mental health.

For further information read the [CSPRP Annual Report 2023-24](#)



**People who are more socially  
connected to family, friends, or their  
community are happier, physically  
healthier, and live longer.**

**We all need community.  
What's yours?**

 **MENTAL  
HEALTH  
FOUNDATION**

**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**  
12-18 MAY 2025



# National Hoarding Awareness Week 2025 (May 12th-16th)



National Hoarding Awareness Week (UK) will be 12- 16 May 2025. This annual campaign aims to raise awareness about hoarding disorder, a recognised mental health condition and the risks associated with it, particularly fire safety. The week focuses on educating the public about hoarding disorder, its causes and its impact on individuals and communities and encourages people to seek help if they are struggling with hoarding or are affected by it. It also supports professionals in understanding and addressing hoarding. The theme for 2025 explores how executive functioning can contribute to hoarding behaviour. Executive functioning is a set of cognitive skills that help you plan, focus and multitask, it involves regulating your thoughts and actions to achieve goals. This year we will be looking at how this can play a part in hoarding behaviour. Raising awareness for hoarding disorder and behaviour is crucial because it helps break down stigma, promotes empathy, and encourages individuals to seek support without fear of judgment. Hoarding is often misunderstood as mere messiness or laziness, when in reality, it is a complex mental health condition that can severely impact a person's well-being, relationships, and safety.

Increased awareness can lead to better access to resources, earlier intervention, and more effective treatment options. It also educates the wider community on how to approach loved ones struggling with hoarding in a compassionate and supportive way, fostering understanding and collective action to improve lives

For more information visit [hoardingawarenessweek.org.uk](https://hoardingawarenessweek.org.uk)

For a personal account of the impact of hoarding and support which is available visit the BBC website [www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3vw33g2lxxo](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3vw33g2lxxo)

DSP offer training on the **Mental Capacity Act** which covers elements of executive functioning. This course is free and available for everyone across Darlington to access on their Me Learning account.

Hoarding featured in a Learning Lessons Review published by the Partnership in 2024 – Read the full report here [Philip and Loraine](#) and provided a practitioner briefing to share the learning and raise awareness of self-neglect and hoarding – You can read the briefing [here](#).

## **New Multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements – what this means for Darlington Safeguarding Partnership (DSP)**

Working Together 2023 Statutory Guidance introduced substantive changes to strengthen safeguarding arrangements which include:

- introducing new roles and clarifying responsibilities of safeguarding partners
- distinguishing between Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs)
- introduction of a partnership chair role – different to current arrangement of Independent Chair/scrutineer
- emphasises the role of education in safeguarding arrangements and its decision making strengthening accountability by clarifying expectations for information sharing, independent scrutiny, funding and reporting.

Whilst these changes are in response to safeguarding children, it was agreed DSP would remain as an Integrated Child and Adult Partnership as this has been a strength and promotes a 'whole family approach'. The new arrangements are effective from 1 April 2025.

The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are:

- James Stroyan, Darlington Borough Council
- Nicola Lawrence, Durham Constabulary
- Hilary Lloyd, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

The LSP's will have overarching responsibility and accountability for the multi-agency arrangements in Darlington. James is taking on the role of Partnership Chair for the first year.

The introduction of Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs) who are:

- Darlington Borough Council
  - Chris Bell - Assistant Director, Children's Services)
  - Joss Harbron - Assistant Director, Adult Social Care
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
  - Vicky Playforth - Director of Nursing
- Durham Constabulary
  - Andy Reynolds (Detective Superintendent)
- Education representatives covering primary, secondary, tertiary and SEND provision
  - Primary – Jenni Bowe, Harrowgate Hill Primary
  - 11-19 – Angela Sweeten, Longfield Academy & Carole Todd, Darlington College
  - SEND – Helen Dummett, Darlington Nursery Schools

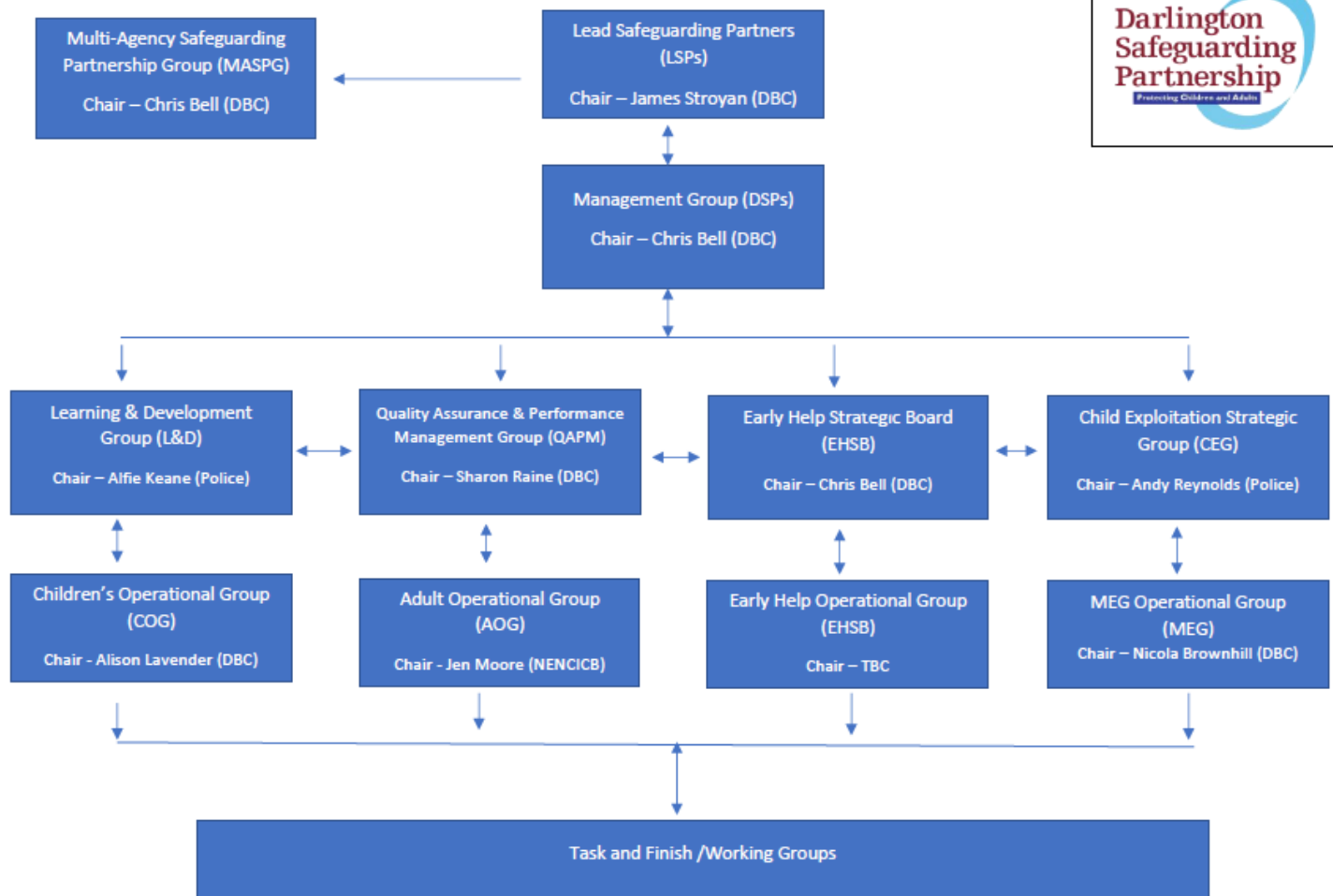
The DSP's are a decision making group with responsibility for the delivery of statutory duties and will meet as the Management Group and report to the Lead Safeguarding Partners. Chris Bell is taking on the role of Chair for this and the Multi-agency Safeguarding Partnership Group for the first year.

The Partnership is looking to appoint an Independent Scrutineer, with details about the role included in the newsletter.

The new governance and lines of accountability are shown on the chart below.

Further details are available on the [DSP website](#).

#### Governance and Lines of Accountability (April 2025)





## Goodbye and Farewell.....

This month we said goodbye and farewell to Ann Baxter the Partnership's Independent Scrutineer/Chair. The implementation of the new multi-agency Partnership arrangements means there has been a change in roles with the introduction of a new Partnership Chair which is different to the current arrangement and will be undertaken by a Lead Safeguarding Partner.

Ann has provided a valuable contribution to the Partnership since its inception in 2019 and before that under the old Board Arrangements. Ann's commitment and proactive approach has been a real strength which has helped the Partnership to develop and embed its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements across Darlington. Ann's leadership has been greatly appreciated, and she will be very much missed by all.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ann and express our sincere gratitude and wish Ann all the very best for the future.

## INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER OPPORTUNITY

***Darlington Safeguarding Partnership*** is an integrated, multi-agency partnership providing strategic leadership, direction and governance for the delivery of statutory and local requirements for safeguarding children and adults in Darlington.

*The Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) are committed to creating the safest possible environment for children, young people and adults with care and support needs and ensure they receive the right quality service at the right time and are at the heart of arrangements, providing direct feedback that will inform policy and practice.*

*To support the critical work of the partnership, the Partnership is seeking to appoint an Independent Scrutineer to drive continuous improvement through scrutiny and challenge.*

*Do you have the expertise, independence and commitment to make a real difference in safeguarding children and adults? If so, you could be who we need.*

*The role will require someone with the passion, vision, and commitment to strengthen, scrutinise and develop the work of the partnership and provide independent, rigorous, and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level.*

*If you are interested in applying for this role, full details including the job description can be found here:*

[DSP Website—Vacancies](#)

# OUR PLEDGE

To have open, honest, bold conversations with each other as multi-agency partners in order to do the very best we can for adults and children in Darlington.

For many families across Darlington, multi-agency working is vital to maintain a focus on children and adults while also keeping them at the heart of all decisions.

Our Pledge is an opportunity to:

- Seek out professional conversations with each other at the earliest opportunity
- Have a shared understanding of the strengths and risks within a family
- Actively listen to each other and share important information
- Respect each other's expertise
- Be open and empathetic to the professional views of others
- Be professionally curious and evidence what we say
- Use common language that everyone understands



**Concerned about a child?**

Contact the Children's Initial  
Advice Team  
Professionals on **01325 406252**  
Public on **01325 406222**

**Concerned about an  
adult?**

Contact the Adult  
Contact Team  
on **01325 406111**



**PARTNER SHIPS**

## Statutory Safeguarding Partners

James Stroyan, Executive Director of People

Nicola Lawrence, Detective Chief Superintendent

Hilary Lloyd, Chief Nurse