

# Edinburgh Adult Protection Committee



## Annual Report 2024 - 2025



*Ensuring adults in Edinburgh who need support and protection are safe and receive the highest quality, professional services from partner agencies involved in Adult Support and Protection*



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# Chair's Foreword

One year in post I remain very proud to be the first Independent Chair of the City of Edinburgh's Adult Protection Committee (APC). It has been a busy first year with many pieces of work underway and coming to fruition.

This past year has seen the submission of the Adult Protection Committee's Biennial Report for 2022-24 and the partnership undergoing a Progress Review pursuant to the 2023 Joint ASP Inspection. The work effected across the partnership and the evidence submitted resulted in a much-improved report from the Care Inspectorate.

My re-structure of the APC and its Sub-Committees is complete with new Sub-Committees for Communications and Lived Experience. The Learning Review Sub-Committee has been completely reinvigorated and we have a new chair for the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee. However, the demands of chairing and properly driving the work of these Sub-Committees is significant and much of the work here remains in its early stages with much yet to be done.

The Committee's work on Learning Reviews has evolved considerably from where it was in early 2024. The Learning Review Panel has met regularly to consider and decide upon Learning Review Notifications and the Learning Review Sub-Committee has a revised, clearer purpose in overseeing progress and managing final outcomes from any form of Learning Review. We have commissioned both internal and external independent Learning Reviews as well as making use of a variety of Alternative Approaches to Learning. We concluded our first external Learning Review under the new Learning Review Guidance.

The commitment to raising the profile of the Committee and its work is progressing. We published our first newsletter and, jointly with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector colleagues, co-hosted a successful multi-agency Development Day in February 2025 in support of National ASP Awareness Day. We released associated communications in support of its theme of financial harm in older people.

The Lead Officer and myself have developed our relationship with and involvement in national ASP structures. As well as attending the National ASP Convenors' Forum for Scotland I was invited to be part of the new conjoined adult and child protection National Learning Review Group.

The focus for the coming year will be to cement, embed and develop the work already underway, particularly for the new Sub-Committees. The Learning Reviews need to be concluded as quickly as is sensible to allow work to implement learning to be expedited.

Reviews of a number of policy areas are underway including the Learning Review Protocol, Human Trafficking Support Protocol, Escalating Concerns and Self-Neglect & Hoarding. This needs to be

brought to fruition and implemented with appropriate awareness raising, communications and training as required.

The Committee's accountability and focus will continue to be to help ensure the vulnerable in Edinburgh receive the protection and support they need and to deliver better workforce support & development to build confidence and competence in safeguarding professionalism for all staff.

Our Mission Statement remains as relevant as ever and the Committee remains accountable for and committed to it: "To ensure adults in Edinburgh who need support and protection are safe and receive the highest quality, professional services from partner agencies involved in Adult Support and Protection."

**Martin MacLean - Independent Chair - City of Edinburgh Adult Protection Committee**





## Statutory Requirements:

Adult Protection Committees (APCs) are a statutory requirement under section 42 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. Edinburgh's Adult Protection Committee is made up of senior representatives of key agencies (full list of membership at end of this report) who work together to effectively discharge its obligations in respect of policy and practice in adult support and protection matters. The APC reports on its work and progress and is accountable to the Chief Officers' Group (COG).

## APC Structure & Function:

To allow the APC to best deliver its statutory functions the Committee Chair reviewed the APC's Sub-Committees with a complete restructure now complete and all Sub-Committees now up and running as per Table 1 below.

**Table 1.**



## APC Sub-Committee Restructure:

The new APC Communications Sub-Committee is working on both internal and external messaging around ASP and will collaborate with the other Public Protection Committees particularly on the development of better online resource and visibility. The new Lived Experience Sub-Committee will allow the APC to harness the views, opinions and experiences of adults (and their families and carers where relevant) who become involved in ASP procedures.

# Statutory Requirements: APC Structure & Function

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The existing APC Quality Assurance Sub-Committee has remained, alongside a reinvigorated APC Learning & Development Sub-Committee and a refreshed APC Learning Review Sub-Committee (supported by a decision-making body, the AP Learning Review Panel).

Since coming into post, the Independent Chair has chaired the APC Learning Review Sub-Committee and Learning Review Panel to extend the benefits of true independence into the critical decision making and structures of the Learning Review function.

Whilst the Independent Chair has created this framework to allow the APC to best deliver its statutory function, the work of the Sub-Committees is only just starting in earnest. Their functions and work will be inevitably intertwined but resolutely focused on delivering excellent services in the city and providing workforce support and development, building competence and confidence in safeguarding professionalism.



## ASP Landscape:

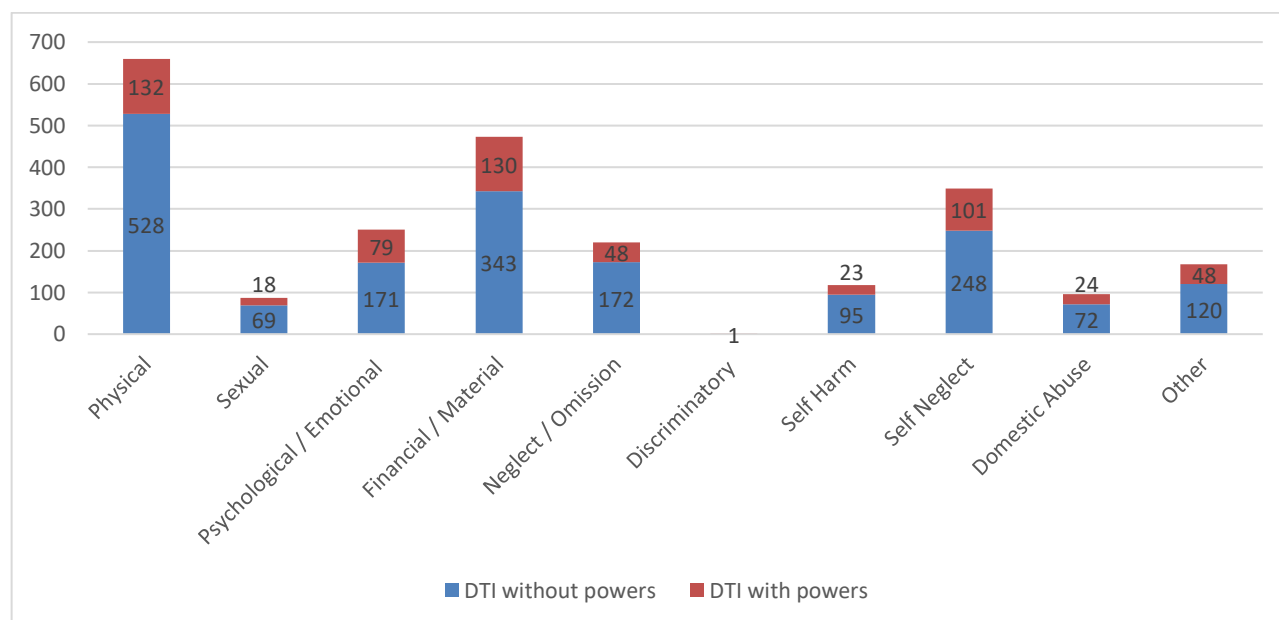
### Key Population Statistics:

The National Records of Scotland estimates the population of Edinburgh as 514,990 in mid-2022. This makes Edinburgh the second most populated city in Scotland. In 2023, the population was estimated to be 523,250, reflecting a growth of 8.4% in the ten years prior.

A more detailed breakdown:

- Mid-2022 Population: 514,990
- Mid-2023 Population: 523,250
- Population Growth (2013-2023): 8.4%
- Scottish Population Growth (2013-2023): 3.2%
- Percentage of Female Population (2022): 51.6% (51% national avg)
- Percentage of Population Aged 65 and Over (2023): 20% (20% national avg)
- Percentage of Population Aged 0-15 (2023): 16% (16% national avg)
- Population Density (2022): 1,955/km<sup>2</sup> (national avg 70/km<sup>2</sup>)

### Types of Harm Table 2.

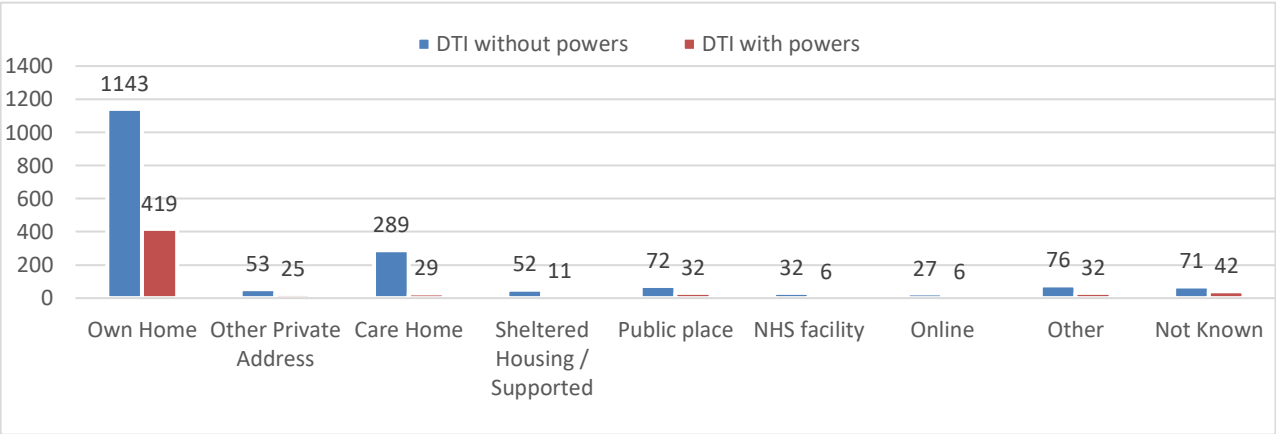


Type of harm data has remained consistent with the previous year, Physical, Financial/Material and Self-Neglect remain the highest recorded types using the national dataset. Table 3 above shows the latest updated national dataset with a split of recording at the initial DTI (without powers) stage and the DTI (with powers) investigation stage in orange.

### Location of Harm

As with type of harm, location of harm data requirements have been updated for this year’s report. Last year’s report had over 60% of location data marked as unknown. Unknown recording this year is far lower, work will be ongoing to drive improvement.

Table 3. Location of Harm



Age & Gender Table 4.

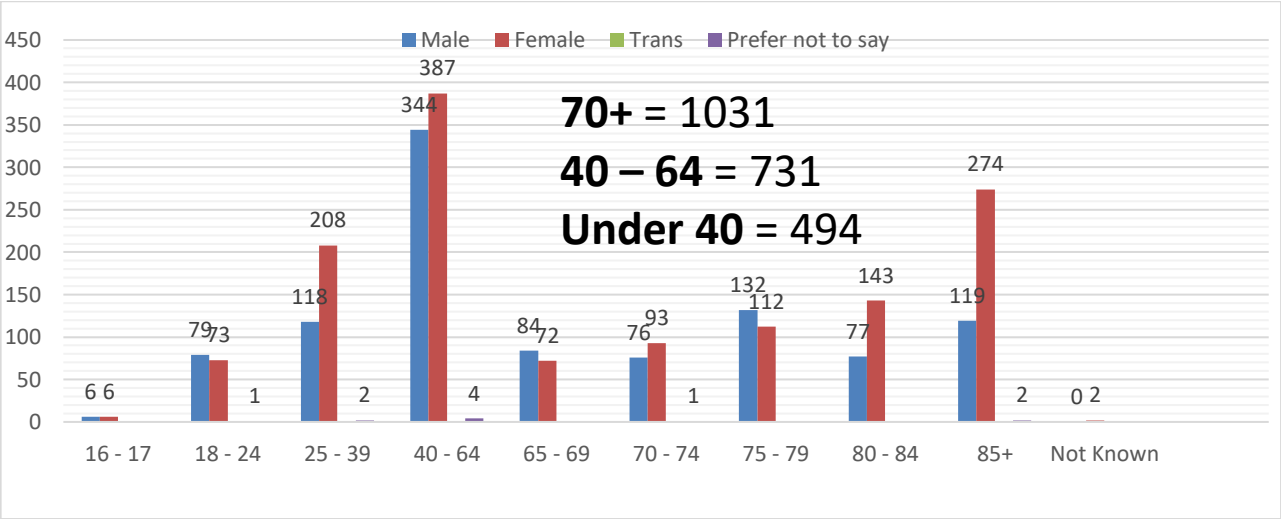


Table 4 shows the same distribution of harm across the life course as in last year’s report and is consistent with historical data. Over 70’s make up the largest proportion of referrals with 40 – 64-



year-olds next. Almost double the rate of young females 25-39 are at risk compared to male peers. Young males and males around retirement age (65-69) are interesting data sets.

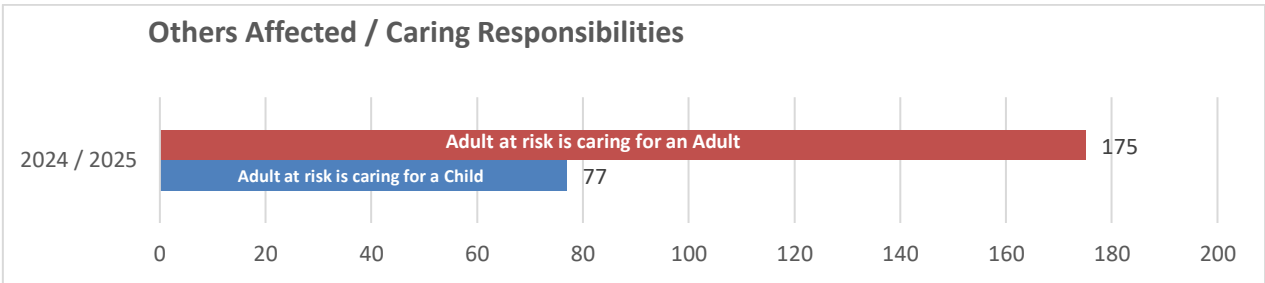
### Ethnicity & Client Group

Ethnicity data has been returned with the national dataset but is not yet reliable enough to be produced for this report. As with last year, **Scottish White** make up most of the referrals (58%). Similarly, client group returns a high proportion of unknown/other data (40%); like last year, frailty/old age topped this domain with 33%.

### Caring Responsibilities:

A new addition to ASP data, Table 5 shows a Total of 252 Adults at Risk held caring responsibilities. 175 for an adult and 77 for a child/ren.

Table 5.



### Process:

### Referrals and Source:

Table 6 below shows that for the year 2024/25 there have been a **total of 2153 referrals**, this is a **reduction of 453** compared to the previous year (2606). The monthly average this year is 180, compared with 240 last year.

Table 6.

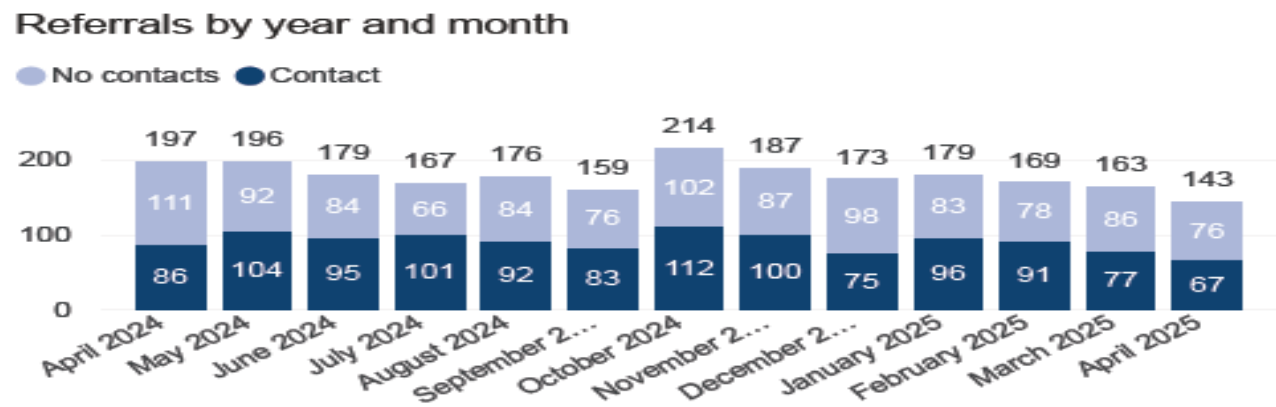


Table 7 shows Police (478), Social Work (460) NHS (295) and Care Homes (218) remain the most frequent referrals sources, followed by family and friends (89) as the largest single correctly recorded group. Recording of 'other' remains high. The remaining numbers spread evenly around other health providers, housing, support, care @ home and SFRS and are labelled as 'Categorised others' in the chart. No data exists for NHS drug and alcohol or financial institutions which might be expected to be areas recognising ASP issues.

## Referral Source % Share

Referral Source	% Share
Police	23%
Social Work	21%
NHS	14%
Care Homes	10%
Other (recorded as)	19%
Friends & Family	4%
Categorised Others	9%

## Operational ASP numbers at a glance & compared with last year

2023-2024

Adult Support and Protection Indicators - Data 2023-24 (Average)

240	305	254	57	114	33	69%	81%	19.5%
Referrals	Open cases	Assessments started	IRDs started	Conferences	Initial Review	Percentage of DTI assessments completed within timescales	Percentage of Adult Protection Case Conferences within 20 working days of IRD	Percentage of service users attending their case conference

2024-2025

Adult Support and Protection Indicators - Data 2024-25 (Average)

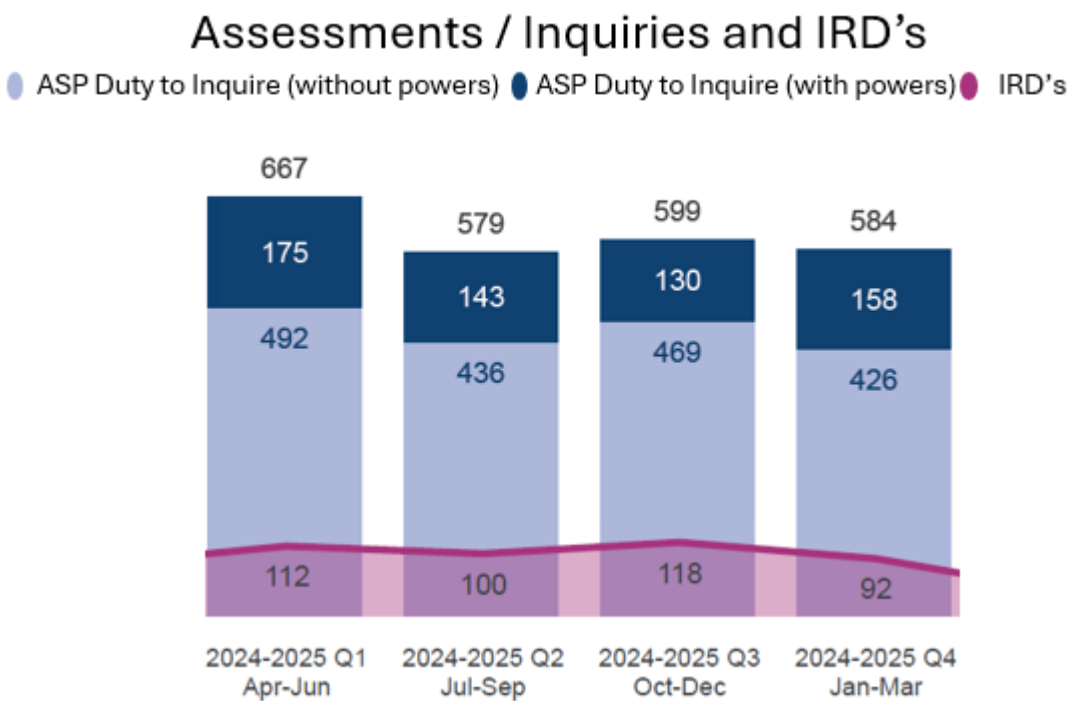
180	117	202	35	53	18	68%	66%	25.8%
Referrals	Open cases	Assessments started	IRDs started	Conferences	Initial Review	Percentage of DTI assessments completed within timescales	Percentage of Adult Protection Case Conferences within 20 working days of IRD	Percentage of service users attending their case conference

Table 8 above shows at-a-glance numbers for last year’s reporting data. Table 9 shows this year’s data demonstrating a large reduction in referrals and open cases. Despite this, timescale performance has gone down. Initial discussions and evidence suggest that this is due to renewed efforts to place the person before procedures, this can be evidenced by the increase in people (6%) attending their own ASPCC’s. There has also been an increase in requests for extensions to facilitate engagement. A brief analysis follows below.

- Referrals down by 25%
- Open cases down 61%
- Assessments started down 20%
- IRDs started down 41%
- ASPCC conferences down 53% (a 45% decrease in Initials with a 57% decrease in review)
- Proportionally, 34% of this year’s ASPCC’s are initial, with 64% reviews. Compared with 28% initial and 70% reviews last year. Showing a **proportional 6% increase in initial ASPCC’s despite** overall reductions in numbers.
- There has been **a rise of over 6% on people attending** their own case conferences, from 19.5% to 25.8%
- 6% increase in extension requests for DTI’s IRD’s & Initial ASPCC’s

Table 10 below shows the rates of DTI’s with and without powers alongside IRD’s for the year.

Table 10.



## National Engagement and Participation

Committed to the APC's ethos of looking up and out to other areas to learn and identify good practice, the Chair and Lead Officer have worked to interact and develop relationships with peers from across the country. As well as informal groupings and relationships, they have developed their understanding of and are committed to active participation in National ASP structures.

The Chair attends the National ASP Conveners' Forum Scotland and was invited on to the recently formed combined National CP & AP Learning Review Group.

The National ASP Forum Scotland continues to have **4 main Sub-Groups** on Chronologies (now combined with CP and reporting to NPPLG); Self-Evaluation Audit & Improvement; Service User Voice; and Inquiries, Investigative Powers & the Council Officer Role. Its analysis of the ASP Biennial Reports continues. Common challenges, emerging issues and areas of focus have been identified:

### Common Challenges

- Increases in the numbers of referrals and cases
- Increased complexity of cases
- Funding
- Inclusion of lived experience
- Cost of living crisis
- Workforce challenges

### Emerging Issues

- Financial Harm
- Self-Harm / Neglect
- Hoarding
- VAWG
- Missing Persons

### Areas of Focus

- Chronologies
- Risk Assessments
- Inclusion of Lived Experience
- Advocacy Access
- ASPCC attendance

Unsurprisingly many of these echo with experiences in Edinburgh and some areas of work already underway and referenced herein.

The National Learning Review Group's work is starting to solidify having only been incepted in late 2024 / early 2025 initially as an ASP group but quickly extending its remit to include both ASP and CP Learning Reviews. It has four main workstreams:

- Support for Reviewers
- Sharing of Learning
- Identification of National Learning & Themes
- Complex Landscape Reviews

Work has been ongoing to establish a list of persons available to and potentially suitable (i.e. subject to local vetting, procurement and approval) for conducting independent Learning Reviews. This is near completion and is a welcome step as Edinburgh is one of many areas that has experienced issues in identifying and securing suitable independent reviewers.

The Chair and Lead Officer will continue to be engaged to bring as much learning and national good practice to Edinburgh.

## **Reinspection of ASP – Progress Review**

Edinburgh faced a challenging Adult Support & Protection Joint Inspection Report in early 2023 and the Care Inspectorate revisited Edinburgh in the Autumn of 2024. [Read the Initial Joint Inspection report](#).

Inspectors revisited in September 2024 with the Inspection Progress Review Report published 26<sup>th</sup> November. An overview of the 7 improvement points and ratings can be seen on the next page. Jackie Irvine, Chief Executive of the Care Inspectorate, said:








*“Since 2022 the partnership has made steady progress improving key processes. They have also considerably strengthened the senior social work leadership team and the adult protection committee, adding key posts to the structure. These made a significant impact to adult support and protection leadership and governance within a relatively short timeframe. The Care Inspectorate will continue to engage with the partnership.”*

The partnership was assessed to have made significant progress across the majority of the recommendations. This was a much more positive report albeit work does still remain to be done. [Read the Progress Review report](#). One of the main outstanding challenges facing APC's nationally,



as highlighted in the review report, is learning and developing with the views and experiences of people with lived experience of ASP being folded into everything we do. At the time of the Progress Review, the APC had set in train the setting up of the new Lived Experience Sub-Committee but it had not met by the time of the deadline for the Progress Review evidence submission. This contributed to the 'Minimal Progress Made' grading.

## Overview of progress made in Edinburgh City

Priority areas for improvement from Phase 1 in November 2022		Progress	Progress review findings in October 2024
1	The partnership should improve the quality of chronologies and risk assessments for adults at risk of harm. All adults at risk of harm who require a chronology and a risk assessment should have one.		Some progress made
2	The partnership should carry out prompt adult protection investigations for all adults at risk who require them.		Significant progress made
3	The partnership should take steps to improve the quality of adult protection case conferences. It had undertaken improvements by creating additional posts for minute takers. It was too early to tell the impact of this.		Significant progress made
4	Social work services faced the challenge of 30 social worker vacancies in adult services. This impacted adversely on adult support and protection operations, self-evaluation, and quality assurance activity. Social work leaders should work to increase the service's capacity to carry out adult support and protection work promptly, effectively and efficiently.		Significant progress made
5	The partnership's strategic leaders should ensure there is consistent, competent, effective adult support and protection practice that keeps adults at risk of harm safe and delivers improvements to their health and wellbeing.		Significant progress made
6	The partnership should prioritise recommencement of multi-agency audits of adult support and protection records, quality assurance and self-evaluation activities for adult support and protection.		Some progress made
7	The adult protection committee should ensure it has direct representation from adults at risk of harm and their unpaid carers. Thus, it would benefit from their lived experience of adult support and protection.		Minimal progress made
Significant progress		Some progress	Minimal progress

## Learning Reviews

The Committee's work on Learning Reviews has evolved considerably from where it was in early 2024. The initial conjoined adult and child protection approach, with both AP and CP Learning Review Notifications being considered at the one panel, was proving unworkable. The volume of work was impacting on decision making and in particular accurate recording of decision making.

In consultation with the Child Protection Committee Independent Chair and Lead Officer it was agreed to split the business and hold separate AP and CP Learning Review Panels.

The Adult Protection Learning Review Panel has met regularly to consider and decide upon Learning Review Notifications and has undoubtedly realised the hoped for benefits of fuller consideration of cases, clearer decision making and robust recording of same.

The Terms of Reference for the APC Learning Review Sub-Committee have been reviewed and revised. It now has a clearer revised purpose in overseeing progress and managing final outcomes from any form of Learning Review.

The Lead Officer has completely revised the associated document set and has raised awareness on when and how to submit a Learning Review Notification.

Finally the changes resulted in a need to review our local Learning Review Protocol. This has been done in collaboration with the other Public Protection Committees and is close to finalisation.

The past year has seen the commissioning of both internal and external independent Learning Reviews as well as making full use of a variety of Alternative Approaches to Learning. We concluded our first external Learning Review under the new Learning Review Guidance and work remains underway to publish an Executive Summary with the Learning Findings.

At the time of writing that leaves four (internal) Learning Reviews ongoing within the partnership – one led by NHS and two by Police Scotland.

There are 8 Alternative Approaches to Learning ongoing. These range from narrower, very focused pieces of learning work led by the Lead Officer (such as ASP referral pathways from Emergency Department Hospital settings and better use of Banning Orders) to multi-agency table-top exercises or short-life working groups (such as on Hoarding & Self-Neglect (led by social work)).

A significant challenge remains the capacity of the mid to senior level managers within the partnership to lead on and progress these important pieces of work whilst fulfilling invariably very busy day-jobs.

The APC remains committed to the fundamental ethos of identifying learning and using it to improve services for the benefit of the vulnerable in Edinburgh to help ensure they receive the protection and support they need.

## **Large Scale Investigations (LSI's)**

On completion of last year's annual and biennial reports it was clear there were issues in the LSI and Multi-Agency Quality Assurance (MAQA) systems.

Edinburgh had two published Large Scale Investigation procedures. The Pan-Lothian Large Scale Investigation Protocol and an Edinburgh Specific LSI procedure approved by the APC in November 2021.

To streamline the procedural landscape, the APC stood down the Edinburgh specific protocol and now operate using only the Pan-Lothian version. The Edinburgh specific procedures had effectively been superseded by the Pan-Lothian document. To streamline the procedural landscape, the APC stood down the Edinburgh specific protocol, now operating with the Pan-Lothian version only. The Pan-Lothian model places greater emphasis on multi-agency working and encourages greater participation of care providers, families and carers.

## **Multi-Agency-Quality-Assurance Sub-Committee Chairs:**

At the time of the last Annual Report there were 11 LSI's ongoing with two MAQA sub-committees, one for Care at Home and one for Care Homes. There was a significant backlog in concluding LSI reports and issues with recording and feeding into committee as well as a feeling that the Care at home MAQA was unable to adequately manage such a large and diverse area.

To provide increase effectiveness and speed up response, the Care at Home MAQA was separated into two new MAQA's in January 2025- one for Older People and another for Mental Health, Learning Disability and Substance Use services (MHLDSU). This restructure means we have three separate MAQA groups to more specifically meet the needs of service users, whilst increasing specific managerial oversight in each area. The restructure can be seen in **appendix 1**.

*The year started with 11 open LSI's, MAQA groups oversaw a total of 19 LSI's with 1 remaining open at time of reporting.*

This past year the MAQA's have overseen a total of 19 LSI's. At the time of writing Edinburgh has one active LSI open and ongoing. There are 10 care homes being discussed and monitored by the Care Home MAQA. The Care at Home MAQA's both have 8 providers being actively monitored and discussed, ensuring that assurance is ongoing out with LSI proceedings.

*MAQA's currently monitoring:  
10 x care homes  
8 x Care / Support @ Home*

A notable development this year was seeing the MHSU&LD MAQA utilise LSI procedures to work on contextual safeguarding issues such as cuckooing and a private doctor operating without a licence. These are issues which affected communities or groups rather than individuals and benefitted from the multi-agency joint strategic response of an LSI to establish facts and manage risk quickly. Once individuals were identified as meeting ASP criteria, they were picked up and supported as would be expected.

This recent LSI activity has seen a renewed energy with Contracts Officers, Quality Assurance Officers and Senior Practitioners more involved in the process of investigating and managing concerns as well as working with partners to improve quality and assurance. The Police provided Partners' Intelligence Portal has proved important in supporting the work of the APC and MAQA's through providing an opportunity for 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and non-statutory staff to report intelligence and observations into the police that can better inform inquiries and investigations.

## **SFRS Review of Fire Deaths in Edinburgh**

SFRS recently led and published a multi-agency review of fire related deaths in the city which highlighted the importance of raising awareness of SFRS's Home Fire Safety Visit service. The APC is working with SFRS to help promote a SFRS App being introduced to make it easier for professionals to refer those they are working with for a Home Fire Safety Visit. In addition to this work changes have been made to the DTI so that Council Officers are prompted to consider a Home Fire Safety Visit as a matter or process.

## **New Interagency Procedures**

New Interagency Procedures have now been live since 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Feedback from across agencies indicates the procedures were well received. Ongoing feedback is being collated for an initial review in the coming months with an aim to make the document easier to access with addition of a quick reference section and process maps. [Read the Interagency procedures.](#)

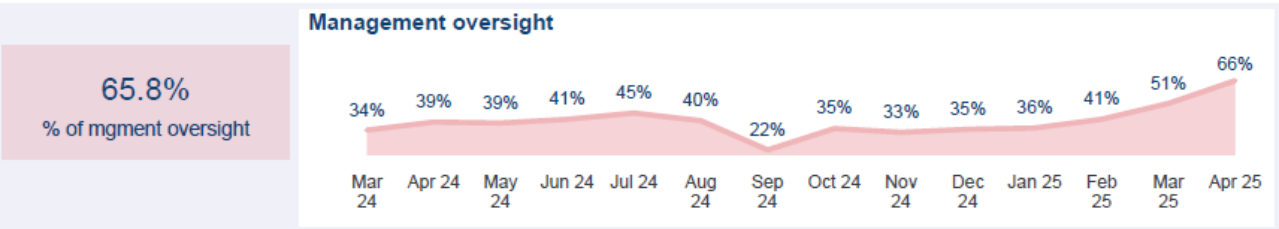
New Single Agency Procedures and Practitioner Guidance

Following the publication of the new Inter-Agency ASP Procedures, focus turned to reviewing and updating the HSCP’s internal Single Agency procedures for ASP. In consultation with front-line practitioners, managers and advocacy partners, it was concluded that our ASP activity could often feel like the process felt more important than outcomes for people. Too many people were being progressed and held onto under ASPCC processes for too long placing strain on the system. To address this, we have introduced a new single agency key steps procedure. This includes a process map, key practice points and key decision-making points that further improve alignment with the revised codes of practice. The introduction of key practice points and key decision-making points is intended to prompt reflection and collaboration throughout the process in an effort to increase person centred, proportional practice.

HSCP Restructure

Both phases of the HSCP restructure have now been completed with a new Chief Officer in post for the IJB. We have a new depute CSWO and an incumbent PSWO. Importantly for the APC and ASP activity, 10 new Team Leader Posts have been created and mostly filled with experienced practitioner leaders to provide better managerial oversight and connectivity between practitioners, seniors, and senior management. Indeed, Table 11 below shows 66% managerial oversight of ASP activity, the highest recorded figure since data began.

Table 11.



Changes to MHO Allocations Process

In response to the ASP Inspection, the findings of the Mr E report and other Learning Review activity, the MHO Service has, in conjunction with the APC, made changes to its operating systems. This includes a change to the system of allocations, the introduction of centralised screening and clearer interaction with ASP Processes. There has been recognition by all parties that ASP is explicitly linked to MHO work. MHOs regularly attend ASPCCs when invited to do so and MHOs take part in ASP processes when this is required / helpful. The MHO duty line is central to providing expert advice on a case-by-case basis.



## **New Public Protection Learning & Development team**

This year has seen the addition of a team of 6 Council L&D workers to lead and deliver training, learning and development across the public protection sphere including on a multi-agency basis. Alongside this, we have improved integration with existing Council wide L&D services, Human Resources and Comms / Digital Web teams. Much of the L&D team's initial 6 months was spent conducting a learning needs analysis to help develop a strategic tailored response.

The L&D team has worked closely with practitioners and subject experts to develop a range of training materials, briefings and courses. We have inserted guidance on using IT systems and material on inquiry and investigation skills, TILS risk assessments, chronologies and using a risk matrix. Together with additional guidance and templates for SMART protection planning, as is evident from data in section 1. This has led to an increased confidence in early 'shared' decision making and managerial oversight to ensure that the system is not overwhelmed and focus lost.

The learning and themes from Learning Review, MAQA and QA activity has informed all APC activity with the new L&D team putting plans into action across the multi-agency, statutory and non-statutory space. Senior Practitioners in ASP continue to provide ASP multi-agency training and support to practitioners from all sectors.

## **New Online Booking Management System**

The L&D team, in conjunction with the APC have created a new online training booking system. It will provide a streamlined and accessible method for the **multi-agency workforce**. The system is designed for those employees or volunteers with responsibilities for child, adult, and wider public protection across the city.

## **ASP (council officer) Network**

The ASP L&D link workers are now working with the APLO on managing the council officer ASP network. This has brought about increased discussion and supportive environments in live events where workers have expert experienced colleagues but lacked the discursive learning focussed arena for mutual support.

## **Learning Review Panel & Learning Review Subcommittee**

The Learning Review Panel received a total of 8 new Learning Review Notifications in this reporting year - 5 for females and 3 for males. The Panel has overseen the completion of Edinburgh's first full Learning Review for Adult A under the new procedures and following new national LR guidance. There are 4 ongoing Learning Reviews with 8 ongoing Alternative Approaches to Learning. These are being chaired by a mix of Police, Social Work and Health leaders. Early outcomes are already steering the work and activity of the QA and L&D Sub-Committees regarding proportionate use of powers, care experienced young adults, screening & referral pathways, Mental Health practice & response.

## **Quality Assurance Sub-Committee**

The Quality Assurance Sub-Committee has had a challenging year with two changes of chairperson since last report. Regardless, work has been ongoing to integrate the learning and action points from committee activities. The single agency end-to-end quality assurance auditing is now up and running with early learning being identified and actioned. The QA Sub has produced ASP audit reports on Through Care Aftercare (TCAC), Social Care Direct, as well Mental Health and Substance Misuse ASP activities. This year has also seen the introduction of auditing in numbers and the application of Statutory Powers & Legal Orders. Multi-Agency case file audits, IRD Review Groups, performance & data and MAQA's all contribute to the QA Sub's ongoing reviewing and updating of ASP improvement plans and strategies which are being integrated to work with the National Quality Improvement Framework (QIF). Next steps for the QA Sub are focused on referral pathways, medical pathways, screening & response times, quality of ASPCC's and recording improvements.

## **Learning & Development Subcommittee**

The L&D Sub-Committee had initially been in hiatus during the HSCP's restructure with the incumbent PSWO to resume chairing when in post. However, the Deputy CSWO has now chaired 2 meetings and has committed to continuing the chair-ship indefinitely. This is most welcome. For this year the APLO and L&D team have been linking the recommendations and directions of the Sub-Committees into live learning and development provision.

## **National ASP Day - 20 February**

February 18<sup>th</sup> saw the committee host an event at Norton Park to mark ASP awareness day which occurs annually on 20<sup>th</sup> February. This event aimed to highlight the role and presence of the APC with partners.

Attended by over one hundred people, from a mix of statutory, private and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. Our “Adult Protection is Everyone’s Business: Protecting through Partnerships” event introduced the committee and its new structures with a brief introduction from the chair. Committee members further provided the foundation for our improvement plans with our housing member giving a presentation on the housing and homelessness emergency in Edinburgh before our SFRS member presented the report on the thematic review of fire deaths and explained the new referral systems for Home Fire Safety Visits.

The events Keynote speech was from Edinburgh’s previous AP Lead Officer Kate Fennel, now based at Napier University conducting research on ASP, Kate shared her work on relationship-based practices in Adult Protection, the importance of ‘doing with, rather than to’.

The event then split into smaller workshops on financial harm, cuckooing, advocacy, human trafficking and exploitation amongst other themes. Attendees gave a lot of feedback on the partnership’s referral pathways, how ASP processes are received and experienced by both people at risk, and partners.

Demand for the event led to waiting lists and prioritisation of ticket reallocations to get the committee’s message to the priority groups first. Further events are planned to repeat this and update partners on a regular basis.

## **APC Newsletter**

March saw the publication of the APC’s first newsletter. With assistance from colleagues in the council’s Communications Dept and the multi-agency APC Communications Sub-Committee, the first publication went out to all council staff, partner agencies and support providers through existing networks. Of note, the new Interagency ASP Procedures were included in the newsletter and were of particular interest to care providers and care homes who contacted the Lead Officer to share gratitude for the document being more visible. One would hope this is an indicator that the procedures empower partners, educating them on their roles and responsibilities (and those of others) and the expected responses to any adult at risk of harm.

## **APC Communications Sub Committee**

The multi-agency APC Communications Sub-Committee has had a difficult start due to organisational restructures and pressures on members' time. Much progress has been made on analysing existing web-based resources and designing new public and internal facing web pages relating to all public protection in Edinburgh. The Sub-Committee lost its 3<sup>rd</sup> sector chair due to resource demands and the web developer who had been leading on web page design and updates. Regardless, the bulk of work has been done and digital platforms have been kept updated and refreshed over the past year with some pages being over 10 years out of date prior to this. A new communications strategy will be developed to better integrate VAWG and other Public Protection themes across partner agencies and in communications with the public. A revival of the 'see something – say something' campaign of previous years is in progress.

## **ASP Council Officer Network**

The Council's ASP Network has been re-established with a new wider reaching role and remit intended for all Council Officers, Registered Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and "2<sup>nd</sup> workers". The Network is now on its own TEAMS channel with 445 members and growing.

The channel has live chat and support facilities, learning & development resources such as reports and videos, files and folders with policy, procedure, guidance and templates accessible to all council staff with access to TEAMS and who are registered on the Network.

The channel also provides a platform to share APC papers, APC reports and updates allowing for staff to have fuller awareness and better connection to the APC and its members. This further cements our commitment to improving leadership and staff morale whilst supporting people to learn and build confidence. These were priority improvements highlighted by the ASP inspection.

The Network relaunched with the first of our planned Live quarterly events. The Lead Officer discussed the roles and functions of the APC and Lead Officer, the Quality Assurance and Regulation team, before discussing current Learning Review activity, including a look at themes and findings from all QA work. This led to an introduction with the new council Public Protection L&D team who helped facilitate a lively discussion with senior leaders from SOHTIS (Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland).

The second event saw further Quality Assurance and APC areas covered as well as a relaxed presentation on Learning Reviews from the independent reviewer who has just completed Edinburgh's first full independent Learning Review utilising the new models and protocol. Future events are planned to cover Relationship-Based Practice and Advocacy (the role of) as well as visits from organisations run by those with Lived Experience of ASP issues

## Challenges and Areas for Improvement

The ongoing funding challenges contrasted with general increases in requirements for social care and associated and likely proportionate increases in ASP response brings enduring tension. In Edinburgh, as in other areas, this has been particularly acute for third sector colleagues with ongoing deliberations around disinvestment in services by IJBs presenting boards with extremely difficult decision making as well as existential predicaments for many third sector organisations.

Many such services do not represent critical ASP functions BUT do contribute to the eyes and ears of any locality and the ability to pick up on early concerns and report - allowing for cost effective early intervention.

Related are consequential organisational restructuring and staffing realignments that can have unintended but sometimes inevitable adverse effects on, for example, line management and supervisory capacity, the ability to commit to L&D (whether contributing to the development thereof, being available as an expert presenter at, or attendance at as a training delegate).

It also impacts on the mid to senior level management personnel critical to the functions of the APC and its Sub-Committees and their ability to commit to the work required, whether, for example, single or multi-agency audits, learning reviews or alternative approaches to learning.

Operational challenges include: the ongoing aspiration to effectively include lived experience; the efficient development of and effective use of multi-agency chronologies; and ensuring robust, well evidenced and recorded decision making.

Much work has been done in the past year and many pieces of work incepted, but do remain at the very early stages and, as such, effectively remain areas for improvement. This includes the work of the Communications, Lived Experience and Learning & Development Sub-Committees albeit the work of this last Sub-Committee is now starting to build momentum with the Deputy CSWO now committing to chairing this group for the foreseeable future.

Whilst the work of the APC Learning Review Sub-Committee and its decision-making body, the Learning Review Panel, are now settling in to an effective rhythm of operation it is invariably the pace of progress of any type of review and breaking out the learning that always remains an area of tension and, effectively, for ongoing improvement.



# Looking Forward

## Looking Forward

Many of the issues identified thus far nationally from the ASP Biennial Reports echo in Edinburgh. Whilst we have not suffered the same rises in referrals as other areas, complexity of cases and professional confidence and competence in tackling a multi-faceted ASP case must remain a focus. Similarly improving how we quickly assimilate and build multi-agency chronologies remains an enduring area for future work.

The chair personally and the Committee collectively champion professional curiosity and its application to investigations - typically events that or matters that have happened. We need to develop our active imagination and work to better anticipate what might become issues in the future and develop strategies to combat such threats.

Much has been achieved in the last year. Reflecting on the conclusions of last year's Annual and Biennial Reports many of the matters depicted have been addressed or at least work has commenced. The new Mission Statement, realising the benefits of in-person meetings, initial steps in raising the profile of the APC and its work via the published Newsletter, public communications and a co-hosted development day with valued 3<sup>rd</sup> sector colleagues. Creating the Lived Experience Sub-Committee, published revised Interagency ASP Procedures and Single Agency (Council) Guidance. As this report is written, revised draft guidance for Escalating Concerns, Guidance on Hoarding and Self-Neglect and a first APC Risk Register will be placed before the July 2025 APC. A review of LSI Guidance is underway pending the finalisation of new national LSI Guidance.

Some of this is complete and other aspects are well underway but are building blocks requiring further work in this coming year.

The early focus of getting the basics right will continue, building on the work already done and assimilating learning from across the country to ensure the partnership successfully withstands future scrutiny.

The APC and its Sub-Committee structures have been reviewed and revised but the work of at least three remain in their early stages and continued focus and support is required.

The new QA End to End Process is still not yet one year in place and will rightly merit some level of evaluation itself to ensure it is fulfilling its anticipated benefits.

The APC, its Independent Chair and Lead Officer remain committed to developing better learning and development to build the competence and confidence of the workforce across all sectors delivering vital adult protection services in Edinburgh. Our mission is to ensure the vulnerable in

## Looking Forward

Edinburgh in need of protection receive the highest levels of service from all sectors involved in Adult Support & Protection.

The City of Edinburgh Adult Protection Committee's Annual Report 2024-25 provides the Chief Officers' Group with an overview of the multi-agency approach to adult protection in Edinburgh. It demonstrates the key role of the Committee in shaping the inter-agency response to the protection of adults in Edinburgh. The report summarises key work, performance data, achievements and challenges during the last year. It highlights the Committee's strong sense of accountability and ownership towards delivering future positive development.



## APC Membership

**Independent Chair:** Martin Maclean

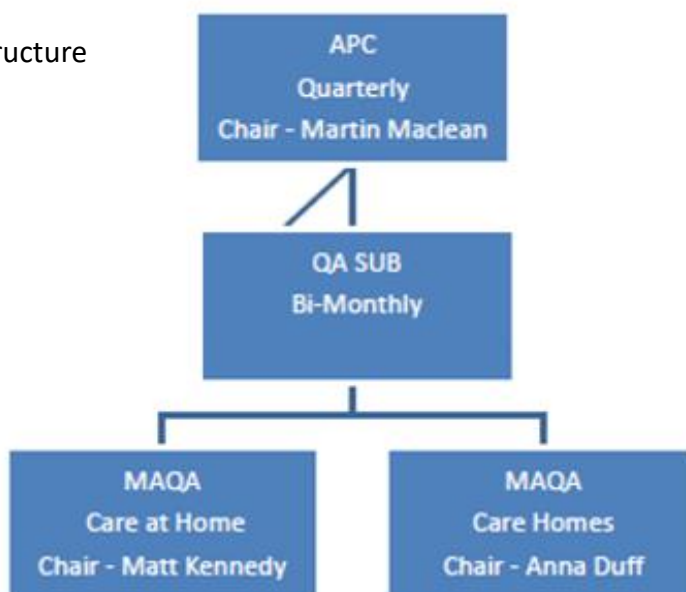
**Membership:**

- Rose Howley – CSWO, City of Edinburgh Council
- Mike Massaro-Mallinson – Service Director, EHSCP
- Matt Kennedy – Depute CSWO / Head of Service Assessment & Care Management
- Anna Duff – Head of Service MH, LD & SM – EHSCP
- Caroline Wilson – Detective Chief Inspector, Police Scotland
- Karen Allan – Housing Manager, City of Edinburgh Council
- Carolyn Wyllie – Director of Public Protection, NHS Lothian
- Angela Lindsay - Head of Service for Home First, Community Rehabilitation and Reablement, EHSCP
- Marion Findlay – Operations Manager, Volunteer Edinburgh
- Claire Borthwick – Head of Nursing, Mental Health, Learning Disability & Substance Use - EHSCP
- Claire Kapusciak – ASP Nurse Lead, NHS Lothian
- Murray Dalgleish – Group Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Iain Templeton – Operations Manager – Partners in Advocacy / Lived Experience Sub-Committee Chair
- Kieren McGrotty – Adult Protection Lead Officer
- Angela Voulgari – Equally Safe Committee Lead Officer.
- Mike Wright – Senior Service Manager, Cyrenians Outreach Service
- John Skouse – Care Inspectorate
- Kathleen Liddle – Mental Welfare Commission
- Keith Dyer – Quality Assurance & Regulation Manager, City of Edinburgh Council
- Laura Brown – Child Protection Lead Officer
- Mark Phillips – Service Manager, Access to Industry
- Tracy Thomson – Business Support, Learning Reviews
- David Morrison – Fire Safety Enforcement Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue
- Philip Brown – Strategy and Insight (data), City of Edinburgh Council
- Carey Fuller – Head of Justice Services, City of Edinburgh Council
- Nieves Nieto – Senior Information Analyst, City of Edinburgh Council
- Linda Gibb – Advance Customer Support, Department for Work & Pensions (DWP)<sup>4</sup>
- Colette Wormleighton – Sector Manager, Justic Services, City of Edinburgh Council

# Appendix 1.

## MAQA Structure

Previous MAQA Structure



Current MAQA Structure

