



Communication & Engagement Plan 2020-2023



Content

1. Introduction – why is this plan important?
2. Priorities – how are we going to do it?
3. Our Audience – who is this plan for?
4. Communication channels and resources
5. Who is responsible for communication?
6. How we will measure success?
7. Dealing with the media enquiries
8. Funding – who's paying for all of this?
11. Additional Information

1. Introduction – why is this plan important?



Safeguarding Adults is everyone's business and the Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board aims to promote the welfare of adults at risk and coordinate multi-agency working to protect them from abuse and neglect and promote their welfare.

The law says that if someone has care and support needs, is at risk or has been at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves then the Local Authority must act to work with them in a way to keep them safe from harm.

This Communication and Engagement Strategy has been developed to embrace the '**think family**' approach so that we engage with all adults (18+) that may be at risk. This also includes their families, practitioners and the wider community in Bexley.

This plan is important because of the challenges to identify the best way to share messages with the public and professionals to 'capture the voice' of our residents in Bexley. The Board will want to see evidence of how we are doing what we say we will do in order to get our safeguarding messages out.



2. Board Priorities – what we say we will do

Promote working with family members to involve them to reduce risks to individuals and to enhance support for them.

Improving access to information so people know where to go and who to speak to in a timely and effective way.

Driving professional knowledge and curiosity across the partnership to improve safeguarding practice.

2.1 Priorities – what they look like for you

We hope to share and provide information on how to prevent abuse and neglect.

We want to hear from individuals, so that their voices are heard and that their views help shape practice.

We also seek to establish links with other partnerships to develop a shared understanding of the needs of the 'adult at risk' and encourage the sharing of good practice.



2.2 How we plan to communicate



3. Responsibilities – who is responsible for safeguarding awareness?

Organisations in Bexley have a role in Safeguarding, they have the following responsibilities:

Empowerment – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decision and informed consent. Our responsibility is to ensure the public know what a concern may look like, how to report it and what options of support may be available to them.

Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.. Our responsibility is to provide information on what protection looks like and how individuals can seek help.

Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs. Our responsibility is to try to ensure that individuals know what they can do to get help early on before a crisis.

Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. Our responsibility is to promote best practice by learning from what works well and listening to the individuals that use our services.

Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.. Our responsibility is to work as a partnership across the sector by sharing information to make services better.

Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding. Our responsibility is to seek assurances from partners in a transparent and open way.

**WARNING:
JARGON AHEAD!**

Jargon

(noun) specialist vocabulary for a particular subject or profession.

3. Our Audience – who is this plan for?

The BSAB need to communicate with a diverse community and a range of groups, organisations that care for, educate, provide services for and protect young people and adults at risk.

In addition to service users and the wider community, the Board also have a responsibility to proactively engage with practitioners to gain feedback especially in the following areas:

- social care
- education settings
- healthcare settings
- the voluntary sector
- faith settings
- as well as elected members.

4. Ways we will communicate

Website:
www.safeguardingadultsinbexley.com -
The main communication vehicle is the Safeguarding Adult Board website. This will be the main method of accessing information about agencies with sections for Adults with Care and Support Needs, professionals, parents and carers for Bexley.

The website will also host the learning and development training programme, all safeguarding policies and procedures and a range of advice and guidance.

Partner agencies have their own respective websites which provide information about services, contact details and links to all the partners in Bexley's own websites.

Other methods of communication include:

- Newsletters and publications
- London Borough of Bexley's Communication Tools – i.e. Bexley Intranet, TV Screens, Emails, Announcements, Quarterly Bexley Magazine and Social Media outlets
- Information leaflets and posters
- Event attendance
- Multi-Agency Learning Events
- Minutes of meetings
- Policies and Procedures
- Provider Forums
- Boards' Annual Report and Strategy Plan
- Campaigns
- Press Releases
- Networking activity – i.e. attending Team Meetings
- Practitioner Forums
- Carer Forums
- Safeguarding Adult Champion Network

5. Who is responsible for communication?

- Lead responsibility for the BSAB external communications rests with the BSAB Independent Chair, in consultation with service providers. Conversations must be held with leads in relevant agencies before any communication is made on behalf of the BSAB.
- Publication of any external messages will be facilitated by the London Borough of Bexley's Head of Communications and its communications team supported by the BSAB Operational Team. All such communications will explicitly state why they are issues on behalf of the Board.
- The primary responsibility for sharing and following this plan sits with the BSAB members.
- All members must ensure that they take responsibility for communicating all key information with their respective agencies and ensuring that any issues identified within their organisation are communicated back to the Board.
- London Borough of Bexley's media team will support with communication and enquiries from the media where required and appropriate. More specific responsibilities for communication will be outlined in section 9 of this document.



7. How will we measure our success?

The Board are required to measure the effectiveness of the Communication and Engagement Work Plan, which will be evaluated as follows:

- Surveys of practitioners conducted by the Learning & Development Training offer and the Engagement Sub Group
- Number of hits on the BSAB website
- Feedback from annual events
- Auditing activity including MCA/DoLS (LPS)
- Practitioner Workshops
- Feedback from service users/carers when involved in safeguarding process
- Feedback from independent bodies – i.e. Healthwatch Bexley

This will provide:

- Greater understanding of key messages for all audiences
- Improved awareness of safeguarding issues
- Enhanced knowledge and understanding of the role and remit of the Board
- Better outcomes for young people and adults at risk
- Increase in positive media coverage

7.1 Action & Review

In order to achieve the objectives outlined above specific Communications and Engagement Work Plan has been developed to assist the planning and coordinator of communications and events across the partnership.

The Communications & Engagement Strategy will be reviewed at least annually and no less than every 3 years.



7.2 Communication & Engagement Work Plan

This section will outline how the Communication & Engagement Work Plan will meet these priorities.

Priority No.	Action	What does success look like?
1, 2, 3	Review BSAB Comms Strategy	Updated communications strategy produced to agreed timeframe
1, 2, 3	Plan a refreshed BSAB website	Refreshed website developed to agreed timeframe and ongoing analysis of number of 'hits; shows increased use of site
1, 2, 3	Review the use of social media to enhance the work of BSAB	The use of social media enhances the work of BSAB
2, 3	6-weekly BSAB Newsletters are sent out to key partners covering a range of local and national issues relating to safeguarding adults	Feedback from partners/colleagues about Newsletter is positive and information shared enhances frontline practice
2, 3	Induction of key colleagues in partnership	New key members of the partnership are contacted within 1 month of being in role
2, 3	Launch Safeguarding Adult Champions across the partnership	New Safeguarding Adult Champions across the partnership will share information to enhance safeguarding practice
2, 3	Linking with SHIELD and CSPB through joint conferences and events when shared learning can be identified – i.e. Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse	Feedback from partners/colleagues about events is positive and information shared enhances frontline practice
1, 2, 3	Invite carers, service users and practitioners to present their experiences at Board meetings as appropriate	Feedback from partners/colleagues about presentations is positive and information shared enhances frontline practice, policy and procedures
2, 3	Joint audits across the partnership every quarter 1 case from Adult Social Care, NHS, Police and Domestic Abuse	Findings will show partners/colleagues frontline practice, policy and procedures have enhanced frontline practice
1, 2, 3	Annual agency/organisational self-assessments and Challenge Events	Findings will show partners/colleagues frontline practice, policy and procedures have enhanced frontline practice

8. Responding with Media Enquiries

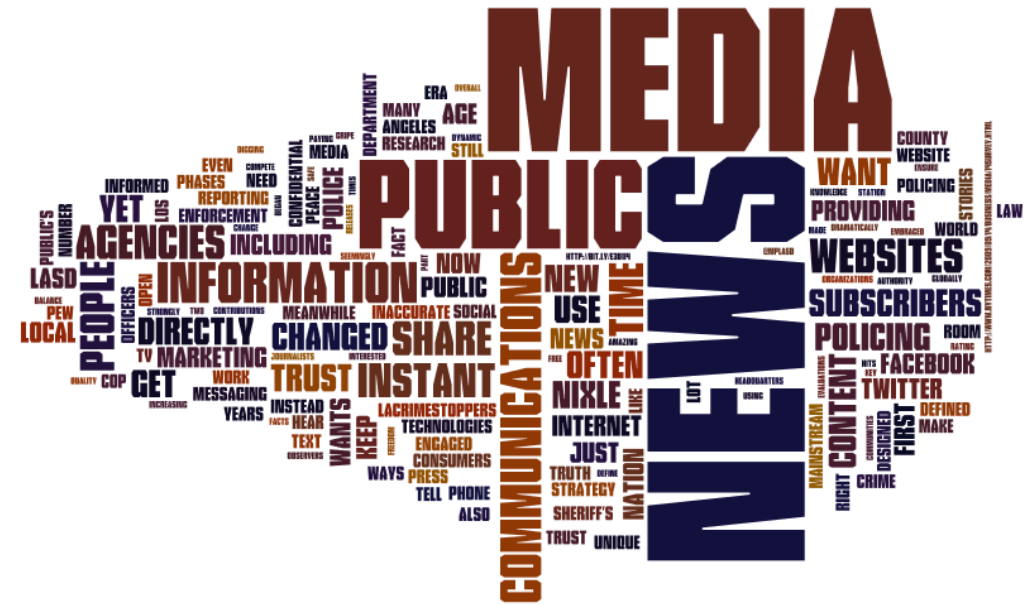
This section sets out the Board's approach to responding to media enquiries.

From time to time the media may ask the Board for comment or ask queries they feel are in the public's interest.

It is important when working with the media, the board should have planned and agreed statements prepared so that the lead statutory partner and/or the Board's Independent Chair can respond.

For the immediate support, the Board Manager needs be notified on receipt of such an enquiry, along with London Borough of Bexley's (LBB) Communications Team via the bsab@bexley.gov.uk and commsadmin@bexley.gov.uk email addresses.

Depending on the issue it may also be appropriate to contact the relevant Independent Chair and/or statutory partner communications teams too.



It must be noted, no agency or member of the Board is to make a comment during initial dialogue with the media this includes 'off the record' statements and all social media responses are the responsibility of the LA Comms Team.

9. Funding – who's paying for all of this?

The Board will use their website and networking emails to ensure minimal expenditure.

Specific promotional activities/campaigns must receive approval from the Board after full consideration of budget implications annually – i.e. BSAB Annual Budget 20-21 has already agreed the set amount for 20-21.

Note: As Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) cannot be predicted and can be commissioned at any time, it is the responsibility of the SAR Sub Group to consult with the relevant Independent Chair to determine the specific communication strategy for each individual review. Support can be sought from any agency's Communication Team as appropriate.

10. Additional Information

For further details contact email - Bexley Safeguarding Adults Operational Team at bsab@bexley.gov.uk

Or by –

Post:

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Bexley Safeguarding Adults Board
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Safeguarding Adult Team
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