

SPPC News Letter

Adult Support and Protection Day – 20th February 2021

See Something, Say Something

Shetland Public Protection Committee is supporting the national Adult Support and Protection day on 20th February 2021. From 15th to the 19th February there will be information going out throughout Shetland to raise awareness of the need to protect adults from harm.

Protecting and supporting adults and helping to make Shetland a safe place to live in is the aim of Safer Shetland and the Shetland Public Protection Committee. The pandemic and lockdown has increased concerns about adults at risk of harm. There is evidence of increased financial abuse, mental distress and self-harm and also domestic abuse. SPPC would want everyone to be as vigilant as they can be and look out for vulnerable friends, neighbours and family.

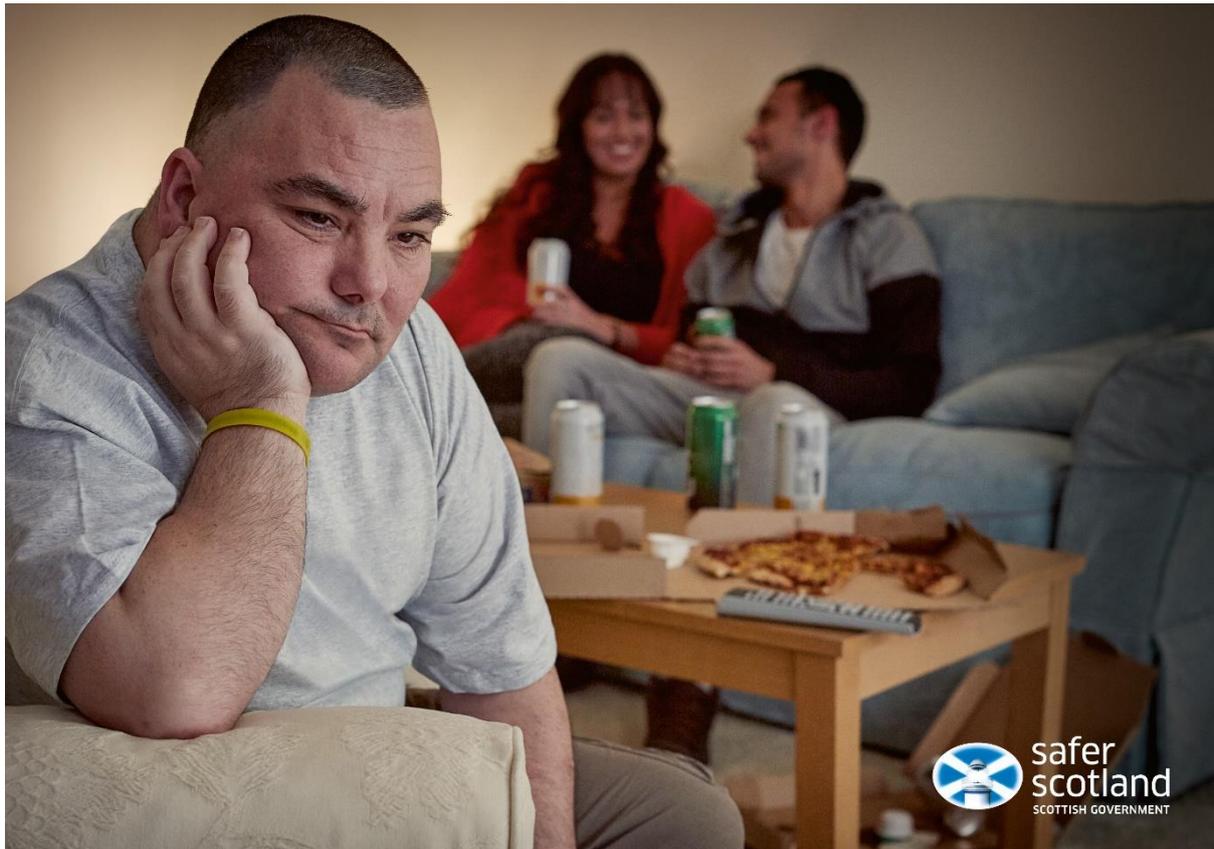
Adults can be harmed by others in a range of ways - physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically and by being financially exploited. Financial harm can be perpetrated by criminal scammers or by friends and family. In some cases adults with disabilities and mental health problem may be the victims of discrimination and hate crime. No form of harm is acceptable, if you see something that bothers you or if you hear something that worries you, then act against harm, and contact adult duty social work, they are there to help.

In 2019/20 225 Adult Concern referrals from a number of different sources were made to social work. Some situations needed to be responded to under Adult Protection processes however, for most adults the response offered was help and support from a range of sources such as Housing and Mental Health.

For those small number of situations that needed a formal response under Adult Support and Protection investigations took place, a case conference was called and an adult protection plan was put in place to help improve their safety.

The Scottish Government campaign is seeking to raise awareness of situations where adults who cannot protect themselves are taken advantage of by others to use their property, financially harm them and in some cases physically abuse or sexually exploit them. A more recent form of abuse which has happened in Shetland is “cuckooing”. This is a crime where drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for drug dealing. The people who target vulnerable people in the community present themselves as a friend with the aim of exploiting the adult for their own gain. Signs of this happening can include an increase of people entering and leaving the home of a vulnerable adult, an increase in cars or bikes outside, anti-social behaviour, increasing litter outside and signs of drugs use. In some cases adults do not feel safe in their own home and may move out- often into poorer circumstances.

Friends or Freeloaders?



If you're concerned an adult is at risk of harm you have a duty to report that and discuss it with your line manager and if need be with Adult Duty Social Work. Advice can always be sought from the Duty Social Worker if you are not sure what to do. Sometimes, instinct tells you things aren't right. Like seeing an adult who is at risk of harm persistently having people 'hanging out' at their house – whether friends or strangers. Once information is passed onto Duty Social Work the situation you're worried about can be carefully checked out and support given, if needed. It may be nothing, but it is always the right thing to do to check it out.

Note for Schools Staff and those working with children and young people

If staff are concerned that a child or young person up to the age of 18 may be at risk of harm then the right course of action is to make a child protection referral to Children's Duty Social Work. Having some awareness of adult protection is important, as there may be situations where it is the adult in the family or the child's parents who are not safe. If it is a parent you are worried about and you think they may be at risk of harm then discuss this with the Children's Duty Social Worker in the first instance as they can provide advice about adult protection too.

Seen something? Say something.

Call Adult Social Work – 01595 74 4468

Out of Hours – 01595 69 5611

In an Emergency call Police Scotland – 999

To access adult protection procedures and for more information visit
www.safershetland.com

To book adult protection training please contact
WorkforceDevelopmentTeam@shetland.gov.uk