

# Midlothian Chief Social Work Officer

## Annual Report

### 2021/22



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# Introduction

I am pleased to present the Chief Social Work Officer's annual report for 2021/22. The report provides a high level summary of social work and social care activity, including key developments and information on statutory decisions made by the Chief Social Work Officer on behalf of the Council and Council services. The report is not intended to be exhaustive but gives an indication of trends, priorities, challenges and opportunities over the past year.

In recognition of the arrival and impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, the report includes a summary of how our services have responded and adapted during this time.

Staff have worked incredibly hard to meet the challenges of fulfilling their roles within the context of COVID-19, and I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to them for their commitment and dedication to protecting and improving the lives of the most vulnerable people in our Midlothian communities.

Joan Tranent

CSWO & Chief Officer Children's Services, Partnerships & Communities

# Background

The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) role ensures the provision of appropriate professional advice in the discharge of a local authority's statutory functions as set out in Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. The role also has a place set out in integrated arrangements brought in through The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. The CSWO's responsibilities in relation to local authority social work functions continue to apply to functions which are being delivered by other bodies under integration arrangements. However, the responsibility of appointing a CSWO cannot be delegated and must be exercised directly by the local authority itself.

The CSWO's annual report is a means of reporting to the Council and Integration Joint Board (IJB) on the delivery of social work and social care services within Midlothian, highlighting key activities, developments, and challenges. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years, the agreed template, has been reduced taking cognisance of the ongoing and current pressures being experienced across the sector.

The reporting period is from of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

During this very challenging reporting period we saw the national lockdown and introduction of emergency legislation (Coronavirus Act 2020, Coronavirus (Scotland) Regulations). Some services remained operational whilst adjusting to new regulations and guidance, however all were impacted and disrupted having to adapt to new working environments with some workers working remotely whilst others having to attend their workplace due to the level of risk and need. There was a significant move to digital working, including the use of MS Teams which has now become part of our everyday working practice.

In the early stages within Midlothian we focussed on continuing essential services, supporting the most vulnerable children, families and older people within our communities. This was very much a balancing act around responding to COVID-19 whilst trying to provide core social work and social care services as well as protecting and supporting our staff.

Throughout the last year there has been significant evidence that demonstrates true partnership working within the council and IJB services including working with other agencies, families, and volunteers across social work and social care services.

As recovery begins, learning from the changes to service delivery are being considered, but the impact of the pandemic on staff and services will continue for many months if not years.

## Next Steps

A draft of this report will be shared with the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government by the end of September 2022. The report shall go to both the Midlothian Council Meeting and the IJB for noting.



**94,680** people live in Midlothian

18% are over 65  
19% are under 16



The **over 75 age group** will see the largest  
increase of **41%** over the next 10 years



**167** children or young people are  
**looked after**

# Governance

The strategic direction for the role and contribution of social work and social care services in protecting and improving the wellbeing and outcomes of Midlothian residents sits within the context of community planning, and the integration of health and social care. The Midlothian Community Planning Partnership deliver the Single Midlothian Plan which has 4 priorities:

- Reducing the gap in learning outcomes
- Reducing the gap in health outcomes
- Reducing the gap in economic circumstances
- Reducing carbon emissions in Midlothian to net zero by 2030

Social work services in Midlothian are delivered between Midlothian Council and the IJB. Adult social work and social care services, including health visiting and school nursing services and justice social work are delegated to the IJB and delivered and managed by the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership. Children's social work services are managed and governed by the council and are part of the People and Partnership Directorate.

The role of the Chief Social Work Officer sits with the Chief Officer of Children's Services, Partnerships and Communities.

During the reporting timeframe of this report, services had to adapt to reflect the change to legislation and guidance from Public Health Scotland, providing essential services, whilst protecting staff, service users and the wider community.

The Scottish Government reminded partnerships that Chief Officer Groups had a central role in the oversight of risk management in respect of public protection, suggesting increased frequency of meetings and supporting oversight by introducing a weekly data set.

- Responding to this crisis initially the CPP Board met weekly.
- Within the local authority there were daily meetings with senior officers to ensure oversight of our risk register.
- Senior officers from the Public Protection Committee met weekly. This multi-agency approach offered assurance and scrutiny within the high risk areas of work.
- Within the Health and social care partnership there were daily meetings and updates on care homes. The level of reporting remains high in this area of work due to the ongoing transmission of Covid-19.
- The Justice Team contributed local data into both Scottish Government and Social Work Scotland, Justice Standing Committee. This happened along with increased reporting related to external funding.

As we progressed through the pandemic meetings began to reflect the national picture and reduce to fortnightly then monthly to ensure there was an overview and awareness of any new trends or potential areas of concern that required action.



## **Duty of Candour Statement for 2021/22**

All social work and social care services in Scotland have a duty of candour. This is a legal requirement which means that when unintended, or unexpected events happened that result in death or harm as defined in the Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016, the people affected understand what has happened, receive an apology, and that organisations learn from the experiences and put in place improvements.

An important part of this duty is the requirement for organisations to provide an annual statement detailing how the duty of candour is implemented across services. This brief statement describes how Midlothian Council has operated the duty of candour during the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. During this period, there were no incidents where the duty of candour applied. (These are unintended or unexpected incidents that result in death or harm as defined in the Act, and do not relate directly to the natural course of someone's illness or underlying condition).

# **Financial pressures**

Throughout 2021-22, the impact of the pandemic was most acute for those who had health and social care needs as services were disrupted.

Budgets continued to be stretched as we needed to both increase and backfill staff roles. Additional funding was made to local authorities to meet some COVID-19 pressures, however some of this was often restricted in nature and timescales often very tight for spending.

There continues to be significant financial pressures around the provision of care for adults with Learning Disabilities. There are two areas of pressure, the increasing number of young adults with complex needs and more people with a Learning Disability living longer. While there is some scope to provide services differently the increased number of people with complex care needs requiring individual or shared support 24/7 is the main source of pressure.

Within Children's services the financial impact on external agencies who offer short breaks for children with additional support needs has been significant, as children and young people we which in turn has resulted in us being unable to support several children locally due to the lack of resources. This has resulted in more expensive packages of support being required.

Justice continued to receive funding directly from the Scottish Government and received additional funding to support Bail Supervision, Diversion from Prosecution and Structured Deferred Sentence.

# Looking ahead

The last year has highlighted the need for sufficient provision and quality of social work and social care services. 2022/23 will be dominated by the ongoing financial and operational impact of the pandemic. In addition rising fuel and cost of living costs are a major concern which will impact significantly on many within our communities including our workforce.

We need to ensure we continue to work collaboratively within the council, IJB and with our 3<sup>rd</sup> sector colleagues to provide a holistic support service to those most at risk and in need.

There are also real concerns around the recruitment and retention of the workforce both in social work and social care which although a national issue impacts on our ability to provide high quality services.

The National Care Service has undertaken a consultation process resulting in the introduction of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill in June 2022. Over the coming year there will be many discussions and debates around the NCS which shall require a significant amount of time and resources from officers wishing to influence and contribute to the design of a National Care Service.



# Quality & Performance

## Justice Social Work:



**276** **Christmas Hampers** were delivered by the Unpaid work team, on behalf of foodbanks, benefiting 459 adults and 551 children.



**55** clients gained **qualifications**.



**18** women were supported by the **Spring Service**.



**208** referrals were completed by the unpaid work team - including assisting vulnerable people with **house & garden clear ups**.

The Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 places a legal duty on a range of statutory partners to plan and decide how services should support prevention and reduce the number of people reoffending following a conviction.

This was a difficult year for the Justice Service with the ongoing pressures of the pandemic, and the death of a member of staff. The service continued the use of a locum worker and used COVID-19 recovery monies to recruit 3 new members of staff on fixed term contracts from September 2021 until the end of the financial year.

COVID-19 impacted staff development – with limited numbers of staff able to attend mandatory training and a reduction of staff in the team with the skills and knowledge to assess and manage individuals convicted of a sexual or domestic violence offences. This is an issue which continues to be discussed with Community Justice Scotland.

The community justice outcome and improvement plan contains 40 actions. To date the partnership have completed 34 of these actions.

- **Improving Links to Education**

The community justice team worked with Edinburgh College Media students to facilitate lectures on areas of justice including a survivor led justice system. Students produced films, animations and documentaries.

- **Restorative Justice**

Midlothian was selected as part of the Sheriffdom pilot area for generic Restorative Justice and we worked with a third sector organisation, Thriving Survivors, to develop a national hub for restorative justice in cases of sexual harm. This promoted a survivor led justice system and facilitated research in determining motivation and suitability of those who have caused harm within the restorative process. These findings (including the benefits Restorative Justice can have on recidivism) have been shared at national events including the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abuse conference.

Midlothian is the only Scottish council to take forward this innovative partnership work. Consultation, engagement, research, training and development all contributed to an effective, person centred and trauma informed pilot that is available for people who request it. As such, we have actively promoted and prioritised the voice of survivors to ensure they are facilitated in their journey to recovery.

- **Training & Awareness Raising**

We provided a range of training and input locally and nationally:

- The Scottish Voluntary Sector 'The gathering' event – Restorative Justice in cases of sexual harm
- StopItNow! conference – Technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour
- East and Mid Public Protection Office – Harmful sexual behaviour
- Community Justice Scotland network event – Autism & sexual offending
- Community Justice Scotland network event – Minor attracted people
- Edinburgh College – Community justice mini lecture series

- **Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)**

The impact of COVID-19 presented challenges for staff assessing and managing people who pose a significant risk of harm to others. Individuals subject to MAPPA include people subject to Sex Offender Notification Requirements and people considered to pose an 'Other Risk of Serious Harm'. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 55 people were managed under MAPPA and of these the Justice Service were the Responsible Authority for 19 individuals; this meant that they were subject to supervision as part of a Community Payback Order, Throughcare Licence or Supervised Release Order.

The oversight and governance of the effectiveness of multi-agency working arrangements is reviewed on a quarterly basis through random selection of cases managed by Police and Justice Social Work. The findings of these audits continues to highlight positive examples of both good practice and information sharing as means to manage the risk to, and from, individuals.

- **Services to the Court**

In September 2021 a Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS) was made available as a sentencing option for people over 18 - primarily for people posing a low to moderate risk of re-offending. Since its introduction, up to the end of the financial year, six disposals were imposed. Services supporting the Justice Service in providing support and interventions include the Substance Use Service, Spring Service, Venture Trust and Change Grow Live.

We worked closely with colleagues in the Court, Bail and Diversion Team at Edinburgh Sheriff Court to review the delivery of supervised bail. Previously this was provided on our behalf by City of Edinburgh. To ensure that those living in Midlothian have access to local resources we brought this service in house from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to ensure we meet the Scottish Government commitment of increasing the use of Supervised Bail and reducing the number of people placed on remand.

- **Unpaid Work**

The Unpaid Work Team were able to get group work back up and running as soon as lockdown restrictions eased in April 2021. Group sizes remained at a maximum of 3. Another full time supervisor was recruited to work through our backlog of hours and keep group sizes small. People fed back that anxiety was reduced when group sizes were small and this allowed for more meaningful relationships. Pre-COVID-19 we provided 42 supervised client spaces Monday to Friday and 20 spaces Saturday and Sunday. This reduced to 33 spaces Monday to Friday and 14 spaces Saturday and Sunday. To further address our backlog of hours we procured services from the Cyrenians Charity to supervise a further 12 Spaces per week with placements at the Community Garden at the Bonnyrigg Community Hospital.

- We ran an **8 week course in Newbattle Abbey**. We were successful in a funding bid in partnership with the DWP, Newbattle Abbey College and our Council's Communities and Lifelong Learning team. The course ran for 3 days per week for 6 clients between May through June 2021. Clients achieved the Forest and Outdoor Learning award, First Aid at Work, CPR and Defibrillator Award, Health and Safety in the workplace Award at Level 5 and The Adult Achievement Award.
- We completed **208 referrals from Health and Social care services**, assisting vulnerable users with general house and garden tasks. These helped frontline workers deliver care packages.
- We supported **Foodbanks** with projects such as the Gorebridge and Mayfield Christmas Hamper project. Clients helped put together and deliver 276 Christmas Hampers for 459 Adults and 551 Children.
- We re-engaged with **placement providers** including the Salvation Army, Barnardos and new placements with Nivensknowe Boarding Kennels & Cattery, Mayfield and Easthouses Development Trusts (MAEDT) Community Café, Food Pantry and Garden.
- We ran our **Waste Amnesty Project** in October 2021 targeting areas of unregulated fire incidents and completing 107 uplifts – removing and recycling 395 items.
- We continued to deliver Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) awards for clients - including Level 4 in Health and Safety in the workplace and courses that would be of value to the client. **83 Accredited Awards were achieved by 55 clients**; 63 of the Certificates were delivered by the Unpaid Work Team In-House. We continue to work in partnership with Communities Life Long Learning (CLL) Team to ready clients for the CSCS Card.

- **Men's Group Work Service - Stride**

Stride supports men to desist from offending by using a psychoeducational group programme that focuses on strengths. The delivery is underpinned by the 'Decider Skills' framework that promotes resilience and clients gain new skills and share coping strategies. Stride started in September 2021 with the majority of referrals coming from justice social work. The group environment promotes equality and allows individuals to reflect on areas of their life including past or existing relationships. The skills and strategies that are central to the programme support participants to consider how their behaviour impacts others allowing the group dynamic to break down barriers of masculinity and challenges.

The Men's Group is facilitated by social workers from Justice and the Substance use Service and a recently appointed support worker and co-ordinator with lived experience. All men placed on a Community Payback Order will be considered for the Men's Service.

- **Women's Group Work Service – Spring Service**

Over the last reporting period both the Spring Team Leader and Spring Social Worker moved to secondments at The Willow Service in Edinburgh and The National Trauma Improvement Service. With this change in staffing we reviewed the pathway into service and the roles of the workers.

In November 2021 a full time social worker was introduced to supervise court orders. Research from the Female Offender Strategy recognised that 60% of female offenders have experienced domestic abuse and the complexity of female criminality is often embedded in family disputes, trauma and mental health. Providing continuity with the Spring social worker preparing the court report and then supervising the community based disposal is beneficial as it avoids women having to repeat information that is often traumatic. It is positive that both voluntary and statutory agencies refer into Spring. Work continues to engage teams who are located in the No 11 Health & Social Care Hub to help promote the multi-agency support that Spring offers.

# Children's Services



**167** children or young people are **looked after**



**9** young people secured **a permanent tenancy.**



Our Income Maximization Officer supported families apply for the equivalent of **£234,330** in unclaimed benefits.



**183** **young carers** were supported.

The strengthened partnership working within the Children, Young People and Partnership Directorate was key to us being able to offer the right support at the earliest opportunity to children, young people and their families.

Throughout 2021/22 children's services were impacted by the pandemic and experienced a higher than normal number of absences. Even so, we delivered services through creative and flexible solutions. For the most part, especially in our care homes, we relied heavily on the commitment and dedication of our staff to go above and beyond. Equally impressive was that the staff located in our children and families centre at Eskdaill Court continued to provide a high level of support to children and families by adopting an office based rota so that staff were readily available and able to visit safely.

- **Referrals into Services**

Unsurprisingly, there was a **significant increase in referrals**. While some were linked to the growth in our population many were from people seeking financial support due to lost income and a rise in fuel and food costs. We used a variety of methods to manage these referrals as well as simplifying the process for providing support and assistance. We also employed an Income Maximization Officer who supported families apply for the equivalent of £234,330 in unclaimed benefits.

- **Child Protection**

Despite the rise in referrals into children's services we maintained a lower than Scottish average number of children on the child protection register and the number of children who are required to be 'looked after' away from their families remains low. This continues to indicate that our models of early intervention are working.

We were a key partner in the **National Child Protection Guidance** and are part of the national implementation group responsible for implementing the actions locally. We rolled out our Safe and Together programme to keep people, primarily women and children safe from domestic abuse. During the pandemic we offered 7 briefings on domestic abuse to over 100 staff and trained 7 staff in the Safe and Together model.

- **Youth Justice**

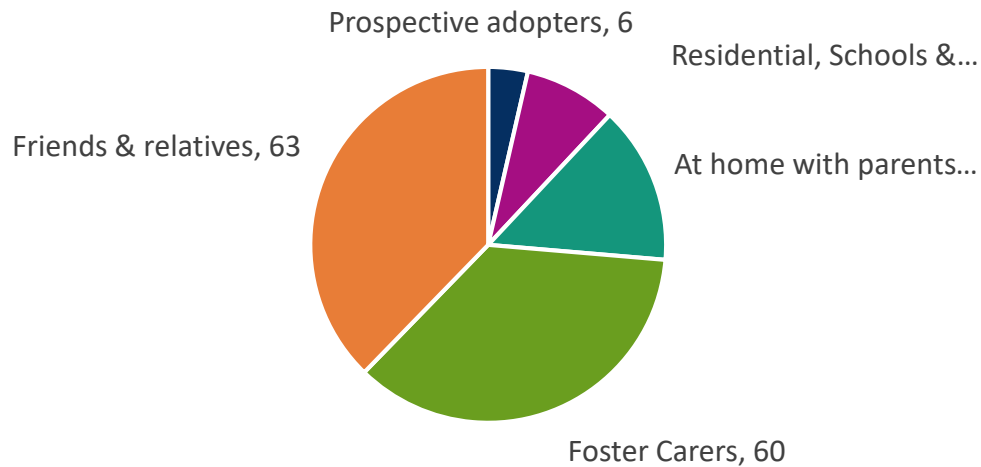
There were **202 referrals** to youth justice and out of these 54 were referred to children's services for an assessment of need and 7 were referred directly to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration with only one young person proceeding to a Children's Hearing. Our data shows that our repeat offenders has remarkably reduced which would suggest our multi agency diversion approach is working.



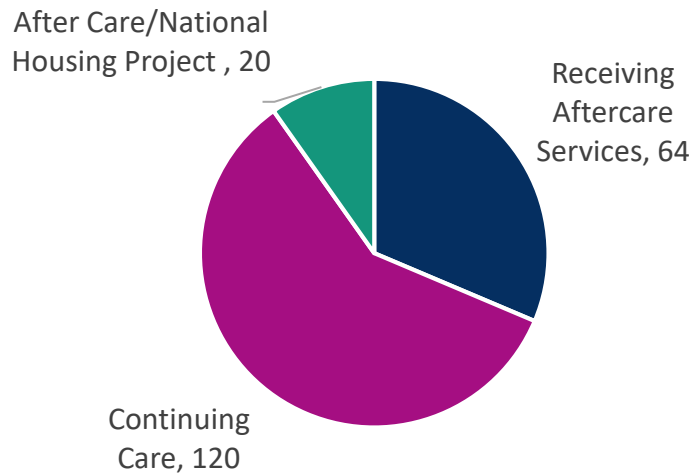
- **Midlothian's looked after children and young people**

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 there were **167 looked after children in Midlothian**. Our underpinning principle is that wherever it is safe to do so children and young people will live in a safe, stable and nurturing family environment. If it is not possible for a child to remain within their birth families we would always seek to place the child with their own kin before exploring any other alternative family arrangement.

**Place of residence for looked after children**



**Aftercare/Continuing Care**



- **The National Housing Project**

In the first year of the national housing project we successfully supported 9 care experienced young people move on from their care setting into their own permanent tenancy. As year two progresses we have identified a further 10 young people who we are currently working with, supporting them to secure their own tenancy with the ongoing support from the project team. The fact that all of the young people to date have sustained their tenancy with no significant issues is a great achievement and testament to the efforts of all of those involved. The project will come to an end in 2023 so we will explore how we can continue to offer the same level of support. The evidence is overwhelming that if young people are fully supported in a secure and stable tenancy their outcomes and future economic chances improve.

- **Family Group Decision Making/Kinship Carers**

This service has become a core part of children's services and **the service is growing** due to an external funding bid for additional staff. The work aligns with the Promise and supports a rights based approach. Given the success of the Family Groups Decision Making team we need to ensure that kinship carers have adequate support.

- **Family Placement Team**

The team **supported, recruited and trained a range of carers**. In keeping with the Promise and its 'language of care' the team are changing its name to Family Centred Care. This decision involved consultation with groups, children and young people. This service was successful in bidding for external funding to work with birth parents whose children have been permanently removed and a worker will be in place soon.

- **Local Children's Homes – Woodburn Court & Lady Brae**

The staff in our local care homes adjusted their working week to twelve hour shift patterns to make sure the children and young people were cared for during the pandemic. This was so successful staff have agreed to continue with this, knowing this is what the young people preferred. Over the last year staff have **provided care to a range of children, including children with complex needs, sibling groups and younger children**. Staff have also supported children to return home by providing a high level of outreach to those who were at risk of being accommodated away from home. Our local care homes are Woodburn Court (5 beds) and Lady Brae (4 + 1 emergency bed).

There continues to be a reduction in children and young people being placed externally. However data suggests that there is a national crisis in recruitment which is having a bearing on the ability of providers to provide care.

- **Hawthorn Family Learning Centre**

The centre provided a range of supports to the local community during the pandemic which led to an increase of referrals. The ability of the service to provide a range of supports which included **food hampers, meals, group work and drop in sessions** changed the community's perception of Hawthorn as much more than a

social work resource. Hawthorn now receives universal referrals and has increased their capacity to support children from birth until primary school.

- **Young Carers**

We worked alongside our Communities and Lifelong Learning colleagues to support **183 young carers**. Support is offered in various forms from 1:1 support, summer activities in which 43 young people accessed activities over a 6 week period, and many other different groups over the year including 25 applications to support children and young people to have a wee break from their caring role.

- **Looked After Children - Attainment Fund**

The support from the team is having a direct impact on the **attendance and attainment of children and young people**. Over the last 12 months 68% of children and young people had an improvement in their attendance and for 61% of those children and young people this increase was an improvement of 5% or more. However the impact of the pandemic cannot be ignored as many children were unable to have formal transitions to their high schools, this has resulted in high levels of anxiety and a reluctance to engage. The team have been signposting and supporting meetings with families and young people.

- **Foodbanks & Vouchers**

As part of the Child Poverty Strategy, our Early Intervention & Prevention Development Officers were involved in the co-ordination and supply of food to families by strengthening links with partners such as Churches, Dalkeith & Penicuik Storehouse and Penicuik North Kirk and the Trussell Trust. Throughout the pandemic we supported the co-ordination and the supply of food in school holidays as well as family food supplies throughout the year. In addition to food, many families received Christmas gifts via Mission Christmas as well as School Uniforms, camp funding and vouchers so that children and families could participate in a range of activities.

- **Mental Health Services**

The increase in requests for mental health support continued to be a challenge, not just within Midlothian but across the country. Additional funding from central government enabled us to work with our 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector colleagues to develop a range of less stigmatising services that children and families can access at an early stage.

# Health & Social Care Partnership



**1,492 carers** received an **adult** carer support plan



**100,586 care hours** were delivered by our internal care at home service.



**152 carers** accessed a **short break** through wee breaks service.



**Cowan Court & Newbyres Care Village** were rated as **'Good' (level 4)** for supporting people's wellbeing

The IJB has governance responsibility for the services that the Health and Social Care Partnership delivers and manages the allocation of the budget. It aims to ensure everyone has the right support, in the right place, at the right time to enable them to live longer and healthier lives.

- **COVID-19 Response**

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges with increased anxiety and pressure on many service users, unpaid carers and staff. While the challenges changed over 2021, they continued into 2022. Our priority was the safety of clients, communities and staff. Staff continued to see people face-to-face where this was clinically essential, but to reduce face-to-face contact, where feasible, teams made a number of changes to how they delivered services.

- **Duty Social Work**

The Duty Social Work Team provided a first point of contact crisis service to adults who may be at risk of harm. The team responded to **274 requests for urgent assistance over the year**. They provided crisis interventions including Social Work assessments, support to access Self-Directed Support and signposting to resources and support, for example emergency food or financial assistance.

- **Care Homes for Older people**

- **Newbyres Care Village** is a local authority managed Care Home in Gorebridge, and provides long-term care for 61 individuals. During 2021-22 a significant focus was supporting COVID-19 recovery, including infection control and supporting families to visit safely. The most recent inspection was initiated in November 2021 with a follow-up inspection in April 2022. It was identified that progress had been made in every area, with a focus on ensuring robust governance and quality assurance for delivery of medication, processes and management of skin integrity, and ensuring individuals were supported to engage in meaningful activities. Upon completion of the follow-up inspection, the service was evaluated as Good (4) for supporting people's wellbeing.
- **Cowan Court Extra Care Housing** includes 32 extra care housing units for individuals and families in Penicuik. A respite flat was introduced in February 2022 to reduce carer stress. Feedback has been positive, with one client stating there were "all the comforts of home with extras to make it a first class care package. The staff are outstanding".

- **Drug Misuse deaths**

In 2021 the National Records of Scotland recorded 23 drug-related deaths in Midlothian - 16 males and 7 female. This represents an increase of 2 from 2020. The 2021 figures are the most current and were published in July 2022. The Midlothian IJB Strategic Plan 2022-25 sets out the strategic direction for Substance Use Services in Midlothian and places a strong emphasis on the need for prevention and early intervention, support and treatment for those in need and a robust and timely response for those in crisis and requiring emergency interventions. There are a range of services to assist those individuals who face issues related to their own or others substance use. It is worth noting that a number of drug related deaths involve people not involved in services so the assertive outreach model and drive to get people into engaging with services is key. Moreover, a significant number of these deaths are people who have used drugs for a number of years and have a range of complex health issues.

The local substance use team has robust links with the fortnightly Lothian wide drug related death meeting where trends, data, and up to date intelligence around street drugs are discussed. Standard harm reduction and Take-Home Naloxone training are part of one to one work in the service. Pathways are established to support people being released from prison and a new initiative to provide medication assisted treatment to people in police custody is in development.

- **Care at Home**

Care at Home services were delivered by our internal Care at Home service and in collaboration with three external providers. External Care at Home provision was recommissioned in September 2021. Both internal and external providers worked collaboratively to ensure good communication and continuity of Care at Home services in Midlothian.

In 2021 the internal Care at Home service delivered **100,586 care hours**. An inspection was carried out in March with the service with a focus on what progress had been made for the areas of improvement previously identified. The service was evaluated as Good (4) for supporting people's wellbeing and leadership.

- **Older People**

The Older People's Social Work team provided a range of support to individuals over 65 within the community. The team worked with services, including the Older People's Occupational Therapy team, the Care Home Support Team, Vocal, and care providers. The team is responsible for undertaking statutory responsibilities under the Adults with Incapacity Act, Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act, Adult Support and Protection, and Self-Directed Support, as well as providing support for Large Scale Investigation work.

- **Support to Unpaid Carers**

During the pandemic, many people became carers for the first time or may have found their caring role was significantly changed. COVID-19 affected the way service offers and support could be delivered, and peoples care needs changed. Not all service offers and supports were available or able to work at full capacity due to restrictions and people had to take on tasks which the Care at Home services were unable to provide. Restrictions in the availability of some support services accessed by carers, e.g. residential respite for older people, led to alternative solutions being piloted. Additionally, more people recognised they carried out a caring role and the demand for support, information and advice for unpaid carers increased.

Recommissioning of carer support services in 2021 increased funding and enabled newly commissioned work to be underpinned by the duties, responsibilities and principles of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 implemented in 2018. We awarded new and increased contracts to local organisations to support carers. The British Red Cross, Dalkeith Citizens Advice Bureau and VOCAL increased capacity to support carers with financial advice and grants as well as improving earlier identification of those in a caring role. 7% more carers were supported by VOCAL with 1,492 people completing Adult Carer Support Plans, 152 people accessing a short break through wee breaks, and 500 people going on a day-attraction break.

- **Services to People under 18 Years**

Health visiting recruitment continued on a rolling basis with two intakes per annum for training. The birth rate across Scotland and across Lothian as a whole is dropping, however the population of Midlothian is growing and is increasing faster than any other area in Scotland. While we are almost at full establishment for Health visitors, we anticipate this growth to impact caseload numbers in the coming years. Health Visitors continue to be supported by Nursery Nurses and admin in the delivery of the Universal Pathway. The service has seen two staff retire and return, maternity leave and sickness absence continue to impact staffing levels.

Work continues to achieve full implementation of the Universal Pathway; with the support of Strategic Programme Managers, Modernisers and Data Analysts there will be a greater focus on the data produced by the Health Visitor workforce and analysis on how we use this to improve outcomes for children and families. We are focusing on and improving collaboration between Health and Education post pandemic.

- **Mental Health Services**

Across Scotland there is a shortage of Mental Health Officers (MHO) and additional funding has been offered to train more officers. Within Midlothian there are 3 full time MHO's and 1 team leader all of whom participate on the MHO duty rota as well as dealing with reports under the adults with incapacity act. Over the past year we have trained 2 new MHO's who will start in September. 2 more workers will start their training in December 2022.



During 2021-22, **256 statutory Mental Health** episodes were recorded. This is a 20% increase the previous year. This includes completing Compulsory Treatment Orders applications, reviews and short term detention orders. The service also provided input to Park Cottage, our residential rehabilitation resource and worked with housing and other agencies to ensure that people were discharged from hospital as quickly and safely as possible.

There were **55 completed guardianship applications**, an increase of 30% on last year. The MHO's complete guardianship reports for both local authority and private guardianship applications. They work with social workers from other teams and staff from other agencies to provide support and guidance in terms of the process and timescales. Requests for MHO reports were prioritised in accordance with the level of risk and other factors such as preventing or minimising a delayed discharge.

- **Learning Disability**

Teams worked to re-establish day services at pre-COVID-19 capacities. A key element of this was embedding positive aspects of service redesign that were identified during COVID-19 and ensuring services are more tailored and person centred. Closer and more integrated working with health services provided a more holistic approach to supporting people. Nurses with specialist skills in positive behavioural support worked closely with social work teams and care providers to increase early intervention and support when individuals display challenging behaviour. This resulted in a reduction in the number of care placements at risk of breakdown.

- **Physical Disabilities**

Development of more integrated health and social care service provision for people with Physical Disabilities and long term conditions was impacted by COVID-19. A dedicated social care team was established to support this client group. This is showing benefits in terms of staff being able to develop more in depth knowledge and skills and is enabling more integrated models of care to be developed.

# Learning & Development



**8** **Social Work student placements,**  
from the OU, Stirling, Edinburgh and Napier.



**1** **new Staff Health and Wellbeing lead**  
started to support staff in Health and Social Care.



**2** social workers completed **Practice  
Educators**

Developing the workforce is a priority for both Children's services and Health & Social Care. In the previous year due to the constrictions due to COVID-19 and face to face training the Practice Learning and Development team delivered training/assessment in alternative ways.

- **We invested in a number of new staff:**

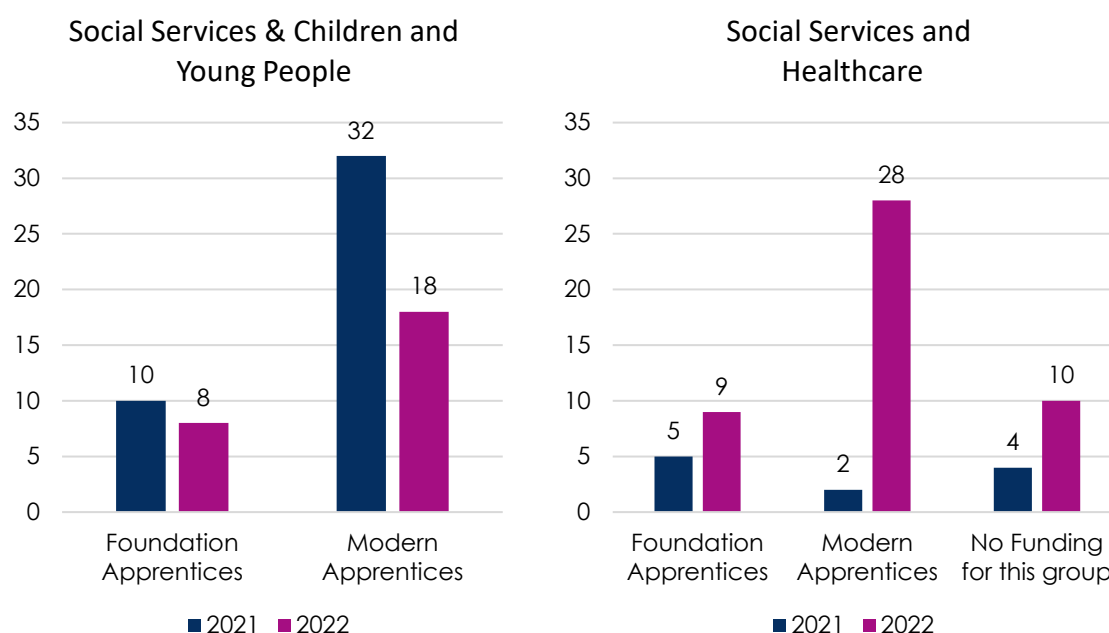
- **Staff wellbeing lead** to improve health and wellbeing for staff in health and social care through resources and supports such as free leisure access passes, staff focus support groups, one to one sessions and developing Rest, Refresh and Refuel hubs for community workers.
- **Additional 1.5 FTE SVQ assessors** to support the increased demand on SVQ programmes. The increase came from an uptake of the Foundation and Modern apprenticeship programmes which have been popular with "Social services and young people" and "Social services and healthcare" programmes. Due to an increase in staff turnover within front line social care staff roles who require to undertake an SVQ to become registered in their role with the SSSC, additional SVQ level 2 and 3 programmes were required.
- **A full time learning and development assistant** to develop LearnPro (the learning platform) to provide performance reports for managers on the qualifications and training for their teams as well as keeping an overview of training to assist with forecasting and planning future training and learning and development.

- **Social Work student placements**

- 8 student placements, from the OU, Stirling, Edinburgh and Napier.
- 2 sponsored students completed their SW training.
- 19 NQSWs. The team supported the NQSWs with face to face sessions which proved to be the most popular and effective forum. The team worked with Borders and East Lothian to offer a bi-monthly joint session.
- 6 members of staff completed the Link Work course
- 2 members of staff completed the Stirling PE course.
- 2 members of staff completed the Leadership & Management course at Stirling and 3 completed the Child Welfare and Protection course.
- 2 members of staff completed their Mental Health Officer training.

- **SVQ programme**

Despite COVID-19 many SVQ programmes continued and moved to on line learning. Although the number dropped in 2021 we are seeing an increase take up for 2022 completion across the Foundation and Modern apprenticeship programmes. There are a range of SVQ programme across level 2, 3 and 4 in both adult and children's services along with some teams in Education with learning assistant posts. Community Justice in partnership with the SVQ team have developed a programme for unpaid work individuals to support them to gain a qualification.



There has been a real commitment and enthusiasm from social work and social care staff, especially Children's services staff to undertake further training related to their post, both at undergraduate and post graduate level. The Learning and Development team will continue to offer support/guidance and feedback to team leads and individual staff members to offer a range of options and learning programmes to enable individuals and teams to gain knowledge, experience and competence to deliver high quality services to citizens in Midlothian.

# Public Protection

The East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) is the local strategic partnership responsible for the overview of policy and practice in relation to Adult Protection, Child Protection, Offender Management and Violence Against Women and Girls. The primary aim of the Committee is to provide leadership and strategic oversight of Public Protection activity and performance.

Over the past year due to the impact of COVID-19, we established a senior managers' partnership meeting on a weekly, then fortnightly basis. This provided the opportunity for information sharing about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on service delivery, staffing and the work of the East and Midlothian Public Protection Office (EMPPO) in its support of the work of the EMPPC. This arrangement enabled us to have a dynamic and early response to emerging issues and risks.

- **Child Protection**

The Scottish Government Child Protection Annual Return Data highlighted that the rate of Inter-agency referral discussion in Midlothian is the third highest at 22.9 per 1,000 children, which is above the national average of 12.8. Assumptions cannot be made that is problematic, however, as we consider that our processes are aligned with the National Guidance for Child Protection. Within Midlothian, we operate an IRD Oversight Group, consisting of the core agencies who undertake these discussions (Police, NHS and Social Work) and chaired by the Child Protection Lead Officer.

The number of Child Protection registrations have remained fairly consistent within Midlothian over the past year

- **Audit Activity**

The EMPPC undertook an audit on the relationship between Marac and IRD (Interagency Referral Discussion) focusing on children's services records across East Lothian and Midlothian. A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Marac) is a local meeting where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to discuss individuals at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse. The audit outlined that the majority of cases did not trigger an IRD. Whilst this was appropriate for some in light of measures already in place to address the risks, for some there was evidence to suggest an IRD should have taken place of at least, should have been considered. Discussion of the findings at the Performance and Quality Improvement Sub-groups prompted a change to the Operating Marac Protocol where by all referrals to Marac are now sent to Children and Families for screening and active consideration of the need for an IRD to allow more robust information gathering, assessment and transparent recording of the decision making process.

- **Improvement Activity**

The EMPPC worked on the Cumulative Neglect agenda and established a multi-agency short life working group.

- **Adult Support and Protection (ASP)**

The data reported here is a combination of the annual reporting to the Scottish Government and EMPPC's local performance indicators.

There were 674 referrals categorised as Adult Protection in the year, an increase of 48.8% (221) from the previous year.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 requires Councils to make inquiries into an adult's wellbeing and financial affairs if it believes the adult might be an adult at risk and they might require measures of protection. The Act requires other agencies to assist the Council with such inquiries. A specially trained social worker called a Council Officer undertakes the Duty to Inquire (DTI). In line with an increase in referrals, there was a corresponding increase of 65.8% (129) in the number of DTIs completed. As part of an inquiry, the Council Officer may decide, on a single or multi-agency basis, that further investigation is required. The purpose of an Investigation by the Council is to establish if the adult at risk is suffering harm and to establish what measures can be provided to protect the adult from further harm. The number of Investigations increased by 50, an increase of 89.3%. 48.2% of referrals badged as ASP converted to a DTI, a year on year percentage increase since 2017/18. 32.6% of DTIs led on to an ASP Investigation, a year on year increase since 2018/19.

Of the 674 referrals received under ASP, the most frequent referral source was NHS, who made 21.4% of all referrals under ASP. Other organisations made 19.0% of referrals and Police 18.4%. This was a shift from the previous three years, where the most common referrer was Police.

In Midlothian, Council Officers completed 97.2% of Duty to Inquire within our standard of within seven calendar days. This standard is achieved through a well-embedded culture of prioritisation of this aspect of ASP work, and the majority of the DTIs being completed by the dedicated ASP team. This was an improved performance from 2020/21 (89.8%), in spite of an increase of 129 DTIs undertaken in the year, with no additional resources.

An Inter-agency Referral Discussion (IRD) may be initiated by any of the statutory agencies in line with the local Adult Support and Protection Procedures. They are a vital stage in the process of joint information sharing, assessment and decision making about adults at risk of harm. In the year, there were 73 Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) for Adult Protection. We have seen an increase in IRDs for the past three years, with a 65.9% (44) increase from 2020-21. Some of the increase can be explained by way of Large Scale Investigations in care homes, and concerned relatives/neighbours becoming more aware of adults at risk as lockdown restrictions eased. Within Midlothian, we operate an IRD Oversight Group, consisting of the core agencies who undertake IRDs (Police, NHS and Social Work) and chaired by the Adult

Protection Lead Officer. The Group meets every four weeks to review all IRDs that have taken place during the period, or remain open, authorise closure of the IRD and undertake quality assurance activity.

- **ASP Case Conferences**

There were 31 ASP Case Conferences in the year, of which 22 were Initial Case Conferences and 9 were Review Case Conferences. 87% of Initial Case Conferences took place within the timescale standard; where the Case Conference did not take place within the standard, the reason was to ensure attendance from professionals, and there was no identified detriment to the adult by delaying the date of the meeting. There is a timescale standard for completion of the Council Officer report, within three days of the Initial Case Conference. In all but one case, the standard was met in the year, and in all cases, a single agency chronology was available for the Initial Case Conference. In all cases where there was a first Review Case Conference (nine cases) a comprehensive multi-agency risk assessment was completed within 28 calendar days of the Initial Case Conference.

Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences continued to adopt a hybrid approach of Virtual Meetings, with the adult supported to attend, and where not in attendance, advocacy was offered. Health and Police personnel attended where invited.



# Conclusion

This reporting year has continued to be a challenge for social work and social care staff with COVID-19 remaining the focus of much of our work. The competing demands of having to manage, for some on a daily basis, the impact of COVID-19 and the impact this has on our workforce remain very much a live issue. Whilst the vaccination programme has been a success and invaluable in protecting us by reducing the numbers of people being admitted to hospital, we continue to face many challenges as we enter another winter. This coupled with the very busy landscape in social work services around new national policies and the National Care Service Consultation, which has just arrived in our inboxes means that the year ahead will require significant input from us as leaders.

The NCS and the proposed reforms around social care and social work represent one of the most significant pieces of public service reform to be proposed. The proposed inclusion of children's service and justice were not foreseen at the beginning of these discussions, and I hope when writing the next CSWO report in 2022 we have had the opportunity and time to fully consult and appreciate both the positives and the risks such proposals may bring. Finally, my thanks once again to all staff during what has and continues to be a very challenging time.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **The Midlothian Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2020-2023**

[Community Justice improvement plan | Community Justice 2020-23 Delivery framework \(midlothian.gov.uk\)](#)

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Report of a joint inspection of service for children and young people in need of care and protection in Midlothian - August 2020**

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/5788/Joint%20insp%20children%20&%20young%20people%20services%20Midlothian%20August%202020.pdf>

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Integrated Children's Services Plan- September 2020**

[https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/4492/final\\_childrens\\_services\\_plan\\_2020-2023](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/4492/final_childrens_services_plan_2020-2023)

## **APPENDIX 4 (see attached)**

### **East and Midlothian Public Protection Annual Report 2020**



## **East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee Annual Report (April 2021 – March 2022)**

### **Introduction by the Chair**

I am pleased to present the East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee's (EMPPC) eighth annual report, which seeks to outline key achievements and areas for improvement in the year ahead. Established in 2014 the EMPPC operates within the context of Public Protection national policy and legislation.

The past year continued to pose significant operational pressures across services, as a result of the ongoing impact of COVID on staffing levels, and the resource requirements for developing approaches to respond to the Ukrainian Crisis. This was alongside increased activity in relation to Violence against Women and Girls and increased referrals for adults at risk of harm. Notwithstanding this, operational and strategic staff worked hard to ensure that the highest risk aspects of our public protection responsibilities were prioritised and there was a continued commitment to partnership working to ensure the safety of children and adults at risk of harm and abuse.

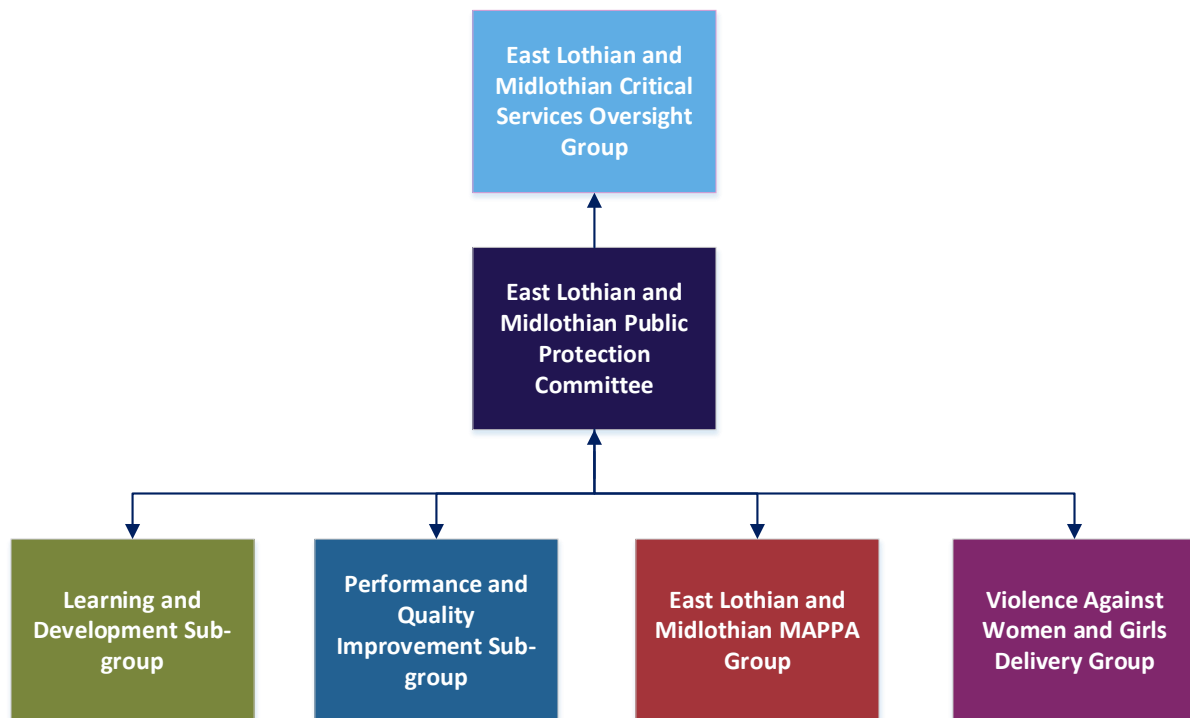
Despite the operational pressures, children and adults at risk of harm and abuse continued to have their needs assessed and supported on a face-to-face basis.

As a Public Protection Committee, we continued to meet on a virtual basis for all the quarterly meetings of our Committee and its associated Sub-groups.

I would like to thank partners for their support, resources, and continued commitment to the EMPPC and associated subgroups in working together to improve public protection services.

Anne Neilson,  
Chair, East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee

## Strategic Structure for Public Protection in East Lothian and Midlothian



Through the **Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG)**, the Chief Officers of our core partners provide strategic leadership, scrutiny, governance and direction to EMPPC. CSOG is co-chaired by Monica Patterson, Chief Executive of East Lothian Council and Grace Vickers, Chief Executive of Midlothian Council.

The **East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC)** is the local strategic partnership responsible for the overview of policy and practice in relation to ASP, Child Protection, MAPPA and Violence Against Women and Girls. The primary aim of the Committee is to provide leadership and strategic oversight of Public Protection activity and performance across East Lothian and Midlothian. It discharges its functions through four sub-groups. The Chair is Anne Neilson, Director of Public Protection, NHS Lothian.

The **Learning and Practice Development Sub-group (L&PD)** oversees the development and delivery of the Learning and Development strategy, and our multi-agency training programme. Our Chair for the year was Trish Carlyle, Group Service Manager, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership.

The **East Lothian and Midlothian MAPPA Group (EMMG)** ensures that the statutory responsibilities placed on local partner agencies for the assessment and

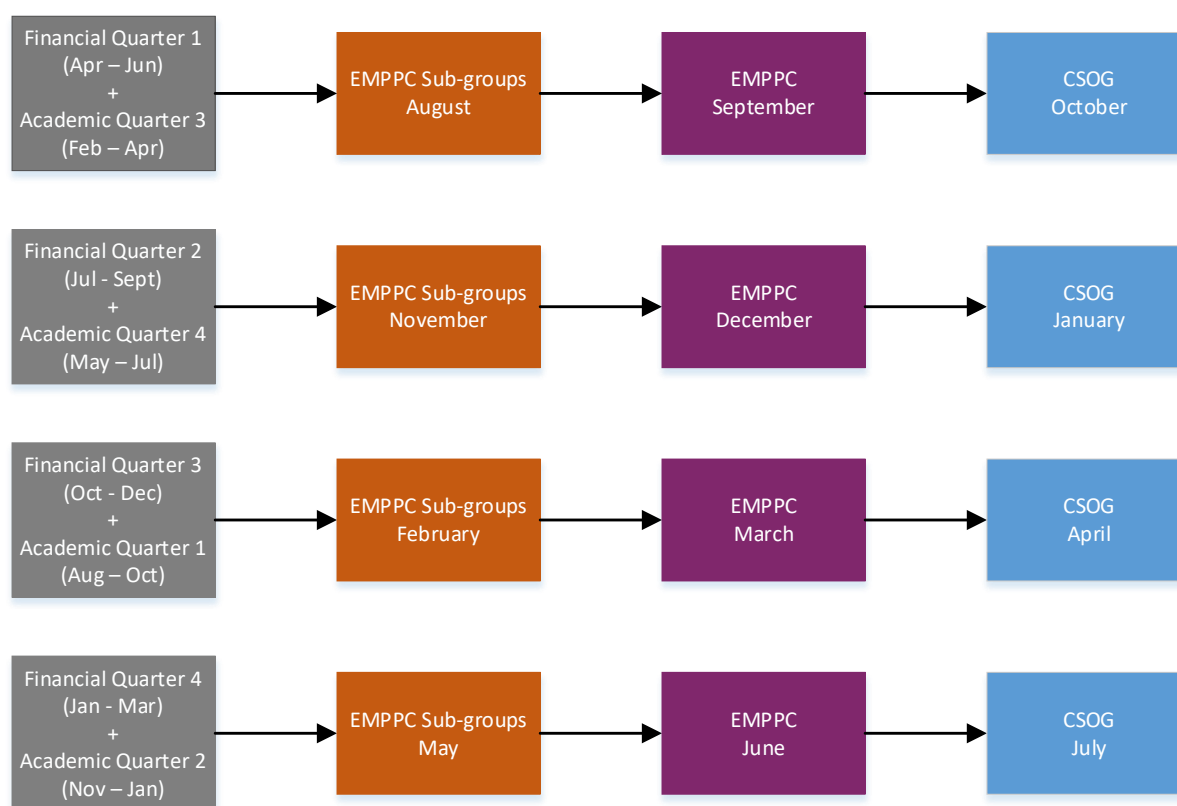
management of risk posed by offenders subject to MAPPA are discharged effectively. The Chair is Judith Tait, Chief Social Work Officer/ Chief Operating Officer, Children's Services, East Lothian Council.

The **Performance and Quality Improvement Sub-group (P&QI)** is responsible for the oversight and governance of the performance framework and improvement plan. The Chair is Joan Tranent, Chief Social Work Officer/Chief Operating Officer Children's Services, Communities and Partnerships, Midlothian Council.

The **Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group (VAWG)** works to support the delivery of Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls in line with the local context and priorities. The Chair is Keith Mackay, Detective Chief Inspector, J Division, Police Scotland.

## Reporting Cycle of EMPPC

Our Committee runs based on quarterly cycles, as shown in the attached diagram, and the reporting therefore covers the quarters detailed below.



The reporting of data and performance follows the academic quarters for Child Protection. We introduced the use of the national dataset of performance indicators (supported by

CELCIS) in Academic Quarter 2, 2020 – 21. At the time we recognised a potential challenge in considering a mix between financial and academic quarterly reporting, noting that the timeframe between the Academic-end quarter and reporting to EMPPC is almost five months. We introduced a Child Protection Minimum Dataset Sub-group to support more detailed consideration and early scrutiny of the data. This meets prior to the Performance and Quality Improvement (P&QI) Sub-group and worked well during the year.

The reporting of all our other data (ASP, Violence Against Women and Girls, Drug and Alcohol, MAPPA and Learning and Development) follows financial quarters. In the year, we introduced a new reporting format, laying out our data in graphs and charts for easier reading. For ASP data, we introduced a pre-meeting to support the development of the reporting to our P&QI Sub-group, and are taking forward a similar pre-meeting for VAWG data reporting. All our data reports are reviewed and considered by our P&QI Sub-group, and thereafter to EMPPC. Our EMPPC members have welcomed the new format.

## **East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office**

The East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office (EMPPO) supports the delivery of the operational and strategic objectives and priorities of the EMPPC and its Sub-groups. The EMPPO is jointly funded by East Lothian and Midlothian Councils, Police Scotland and NHS (Health and Social Care Partnerships in East Lothian and Midlothian). Its operational base is the Brunton Hall, Musselburgh.

Staff include Senior Business Support Administrator, Business Support Assistant (0.5), Lead Officer for ASP, Lead Officer for Child Protection, Violence Against Women and Girls Co-ordinator, Marac Co-ordinator and Public Protection Manager. The staff within the office are responsible for:

- Working with multi agency partners to promote effective inter-agency policy and practice, by providing consultation, advice and guidance;
- Supporting the implementation of national policies, and developing local procedures and guidance;
- Maintaining an independent overview of inter-agency activity in ASP, Child Protection and Violence Against Women and Girls;
- The co-ordination, delivery and evaluation of multi-agency training, learning and development in the different areas of Public Protection;
- Supporting the collation and review of data and performance information and contributing to the identification and development of improvement actions;
- Co-ordinating the scheduling of meetings of the EMPPC and associated groups, and providing secretariat services to support their smooth functioning;
- Developing and delivering key communications and messages about Public Protection;
- Supporting and co-ordinating the process of carrying out learning reviews and ensuring learning is embedded into practice and policy;

- The operational delivery of the Domestic Abuse Service through the co-location of Domestic Abuse Staff employed by Women's Aid; and
- The operational delivery of Marac.

The EMPPO saw some staffing changes over the reporting period, with a new Lead Officer for ASP joining in March 2021, and a new Lead Officer for Child Protection joining in June 2021 (after a six month vacancy in the post). The Marac Co-ordinator took a period of absence from the post in September 2021, which was filled on a temporary basis the following month. The Domestic Abuse Service staffing complement was increased to three posts with the provision of the new Scottish Government Delivering Equally Safe Funding from October 2021, but we were unable to recruit to this and the other two posts when they became vacant in the latter part of the year. Discussions commenced in the reporting period about the options for a different delivery model for the Domestic Abuse Service, which continued into the year commencing April 2022.

## Adult Support and Protection (ASP)

### Data and performance information

The data reported here is a combination of the annual reporting to the Scottish Government and EMPPC's local performance indicators.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 requires the Council to make inquiries into an adult's wellbeing and financial affairs if it believes the adult might be an adult at risk and they might require measures of protection. The Act requires other agencies to assist the Council with such inquiries. In both areas, a specially trained social worker called a Council Officer participates in a duty rota to undertake referral screening and the Duty to Inquire (DTI). As part of an inquiry, the Council Officer may decide that further investigation is required on a single or multi-agency basis. The purpose of an Investigation by the Council is to establish if the adult at risk is suffering harm and to establish what supports and measures can be used to protect the adult from further harm.

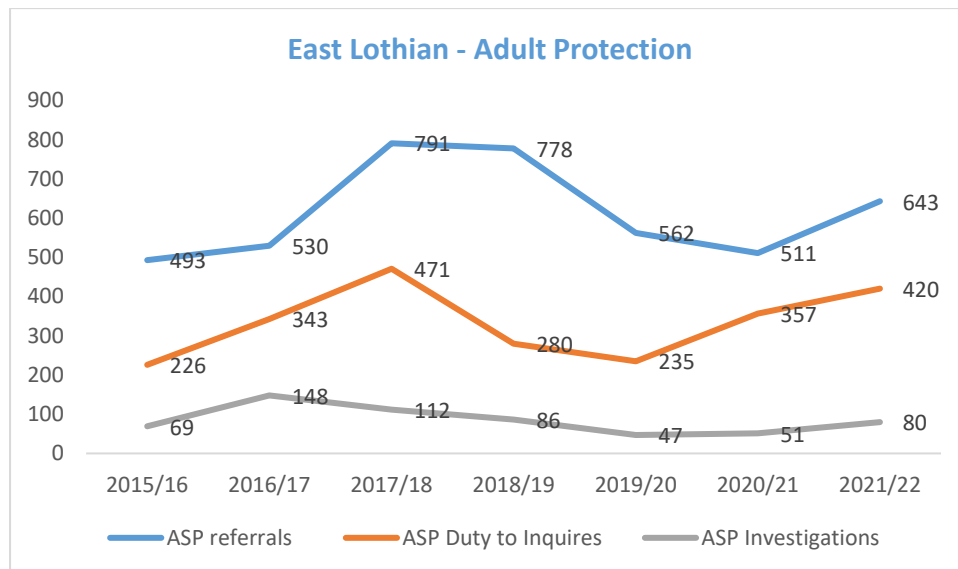
An Inter-agency Referral Discussion (IRD) may be initiated by any of the statutory agencies in line with the local Adult Support and Protection Procedures. This is a vital stage in the process of joint information sharing, assessment and decision making about adults at risk of harm. The core agencies involved in IRD are Social Work, Police and Health. In each area, we operate an IRD Oversight Group, consisting of the core agencies who undertake IRDs (Police, NHS and Social Work) and chaired by the ASP Lead Officer. The Group meets every four weeks to review all IRDs that have taken place during the period, or remain open, authorise closure of the IRD and undertake quality assurance activity.

Over the coming year, we will engage in the work that is being undertaken by IRISS and the Scottish Government to develop a national dataset of performance information. We already have a well-established structure through our P&QI Sub-group to support taking this work forward.

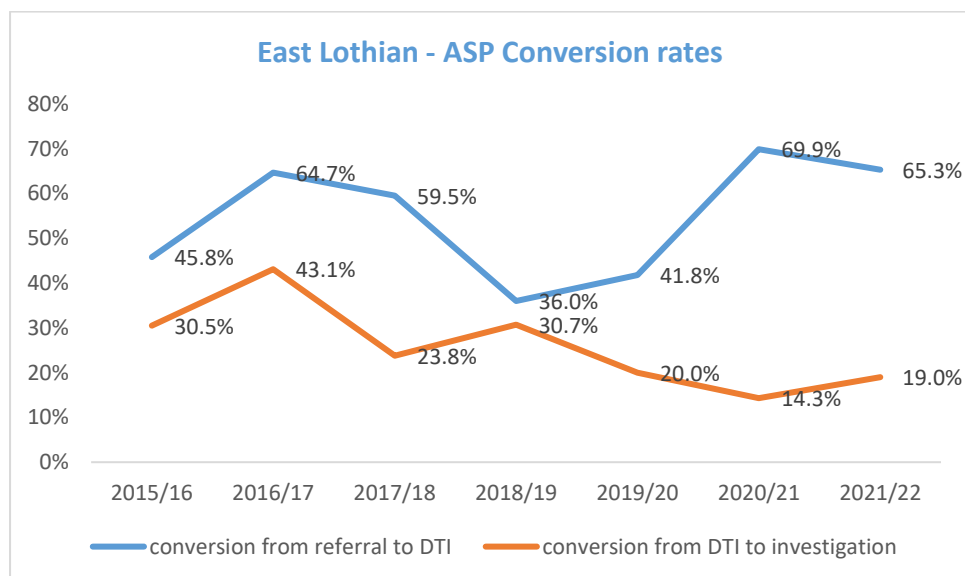


## East Lothian ASP Data and Performance Information

### Number of ASP Referrals, Duty to Inquires and ASP Investigations



There were 643 referrals categorised as ASP in the year, an increase of 25.8% (132) from the previous year. In the year, there was an increase of 17.6% (63) of the number of DTIs completed. The number of ASP Investigations increased by 29, which was an increase of 56.9%.



65.3% of referrals badged as ASP converted to a DTI, a slight decrease from the previous year, when 69.9% of referrals converted to a DTI. In the year, 19% of DTIs led on to an ASP Investigation, a slight increase from 14.3% the previous year.

### Referral source

Of the 643 referrals received under ASP, the three most frequent sources were Police (24.9%, 160), other organisations (16.5%, 106) and NHS (14.0%, 90). Police have been the most frequent referrer for the past four consecutive years. Other organisations (e.g. third

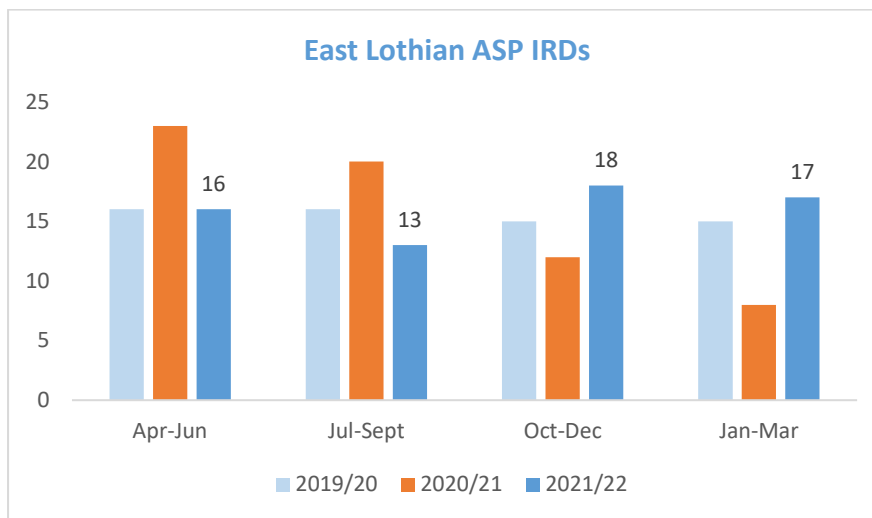
sector care at home providers) remained as one of the top three referrers of ASP to the Council with an increase in the proportion of their referrals from the previous year. This appears to reflect the increase in face-to-face contact with adults when lockdown restrictions eased.

Source of referrals East Lothian	Number of referrals
Police	160
Other organisation	106
NHS	90
Others	79
Social Work	60
Family	29
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	27
Scottish Ambulance Service	25
Council	25
Friend/Neighbour	16
GPs	10
Care Inspectorate	8
Anonymous	5
Office of Public Guardian	<5
Self (Adult at risk of harm)	<5
Other member of public	<5
<b>Total</b>	<b>643</b>

### Duty to Inquire

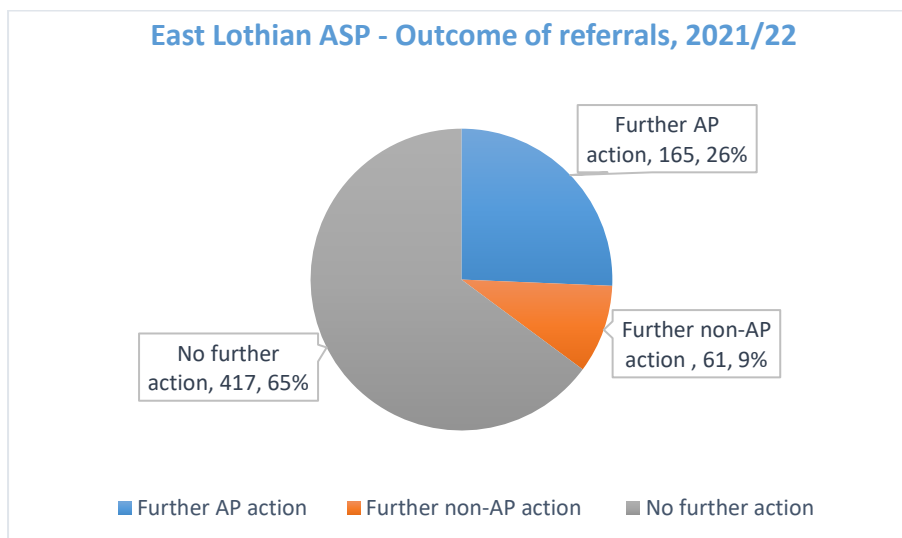
In the year, there was an increase of 17.6% (63) of the number of DTIs completed. In East Lothian, Council Officers completed 81.0% of Duty to Inquires within our local standard of seven calendar days. The two main reasons identified for the standard not being achieved were absence of the Council Officer who commenced the DTI (leave and sickness absence) and awaiting information from other professionals (most commonly health professionals). Whilst this was a similar percentage to the previous year (81.8%), there was an increase of 63 DTIs undertaken in the year, with no additional staffing resources to meet the increased demand around ASP work in East Lothian in the year. During the latter part of 2021/22, there has been a strengthening of the oversight arrangements for ASP work, and we should anticipate increased performance in the coming year.

## Inter-agency Referral Discussions



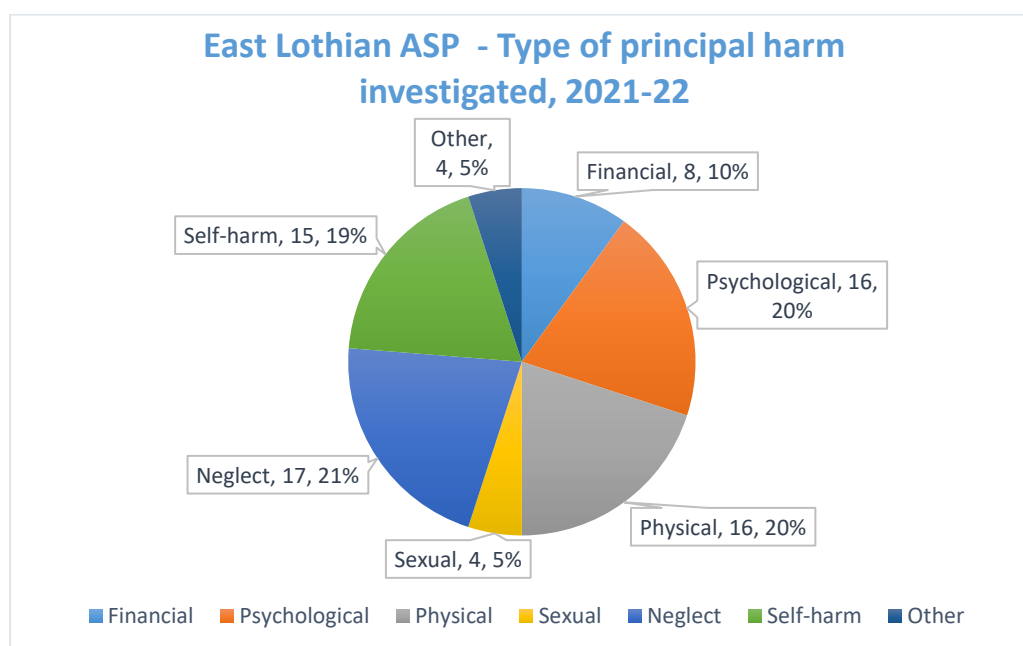
In the year, there were 64 Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) for ASP, with an even spread over the four quarters. We have not seen an increase in IRDs correlating to the increase in referrals, DTIs and Investigations, and have seen little change over the three years in the number of IRDs undertaken.

## Outcome of ASP referrals

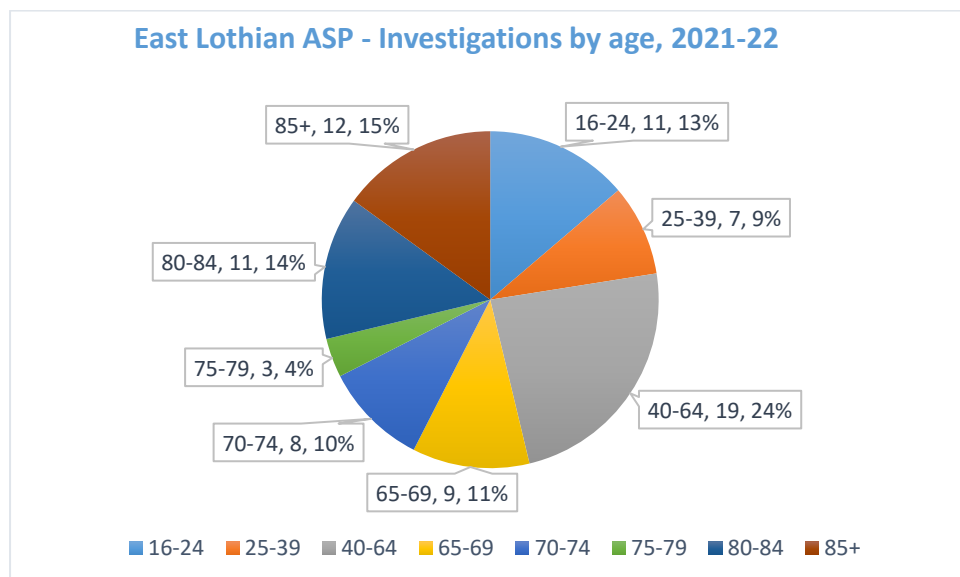


35% of ASP referrals made in the year had some form of further action. This was only a slight decrease from 38% the previous year.

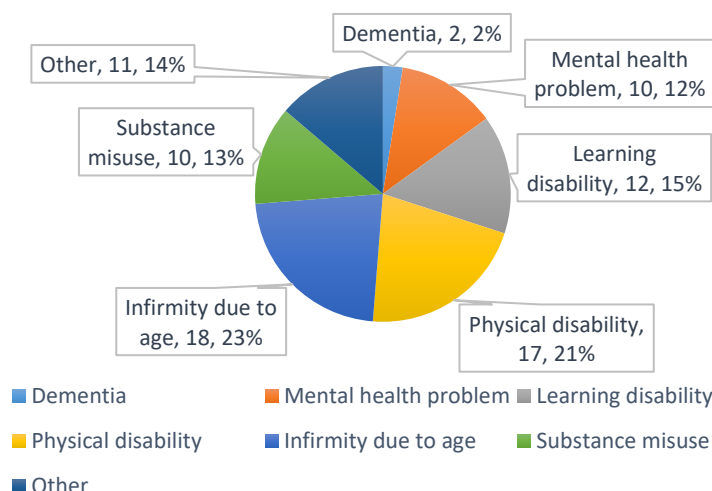
## Profile of Investigations



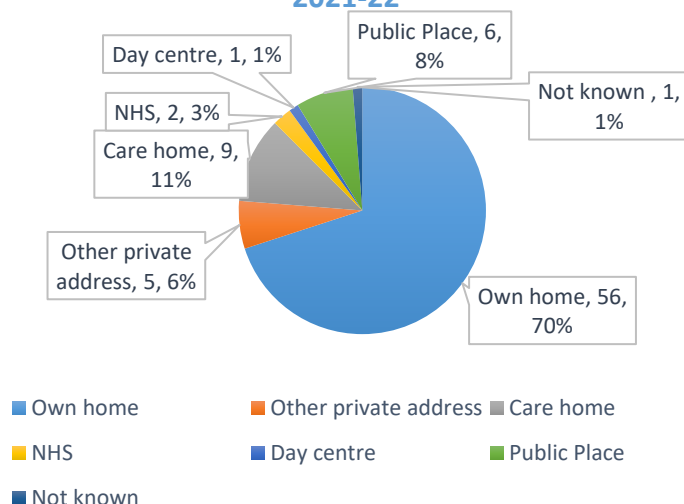
There are seven major categories of harm reported annually under ASP. In East Lothian, the most common type of harm investigated under ASP in 2021-22 was neglect (including self-neglect), followed by psychological and physical harm. This was a shift from the previous year, where the most common type of harm investigated was financial harm. Financial harm has been the most common type of harm investigated in four of the last six years. This was the theme for our successful Adult Support and Protection Learning Event for ASP Day in February 2022.



### East Lothian ASP - Investigations by client group, 2021-22



### East Lothian ASP - Investigations by location of harm, 2021-22



The location of harm experienced by the adult was the adult's own home for 70% (56) of ASP Investigations. There was no shift in gender balance from the previous year, with females accounting for 61% (49) of all ASP Investigations and 35% (28) being male (three cases where the gender was recorded as not known, which is likely to be explained as a recording error). 29% of ASP Investigations were for adults over the age of 80, with a pattern of Investigations in this age group more likely to be for females.

There is a notable under-recording (by 51%) of the ethnic group of adults who are the subject of an ASP Investigation. This is a similar percentage to the previous year and is a recording issue to be addressed in the coming year.

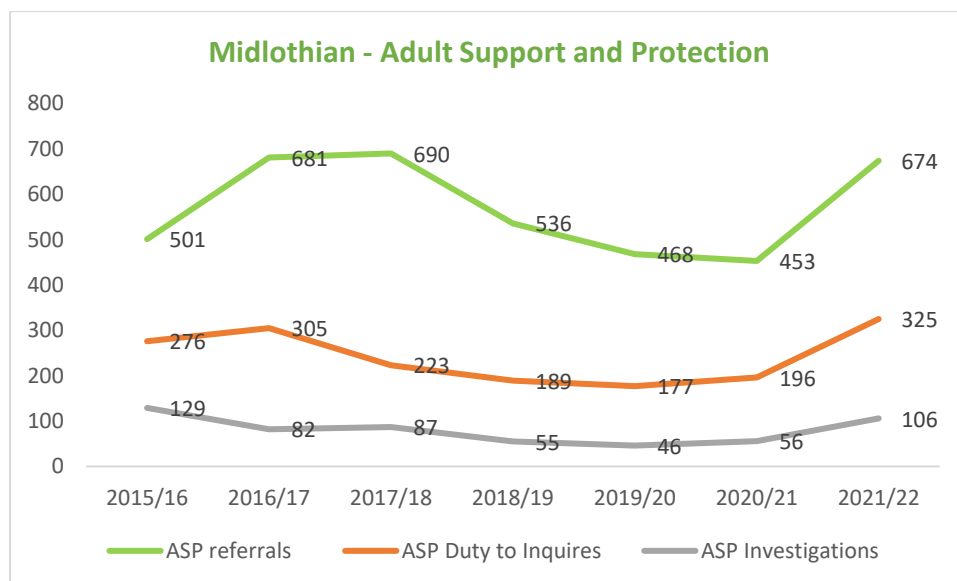
### ASP Case Conferences

In East Lothian, there were 51 ASP Case Conferences in the year, of which 26 were Initial Case Conferences and 25 Review Case Conferences. The standard is to hold these within 21 days from the date of the IRD to the Initial Case Conference, and within three months for

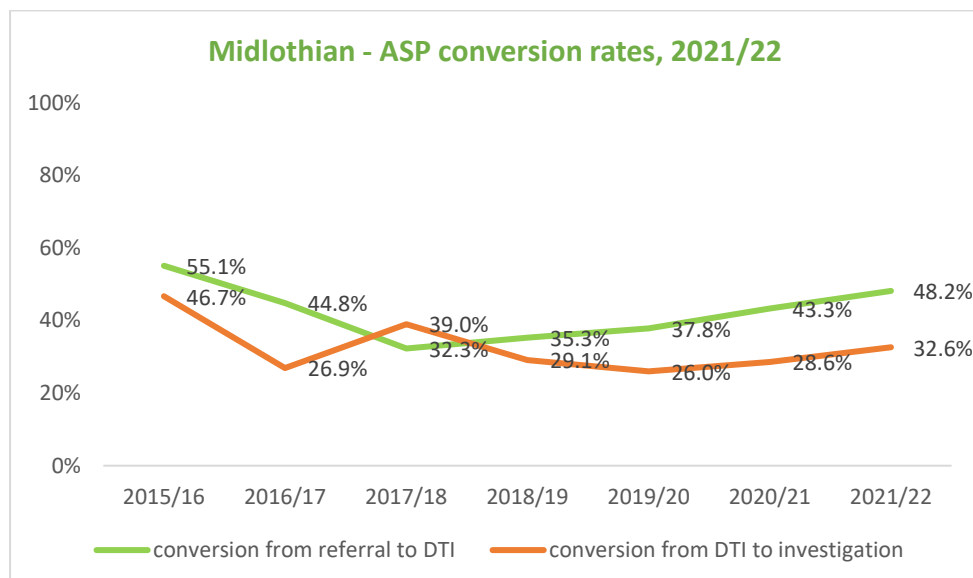
the Review Case Conference. 66.7% of Case Conferences were held within our timescale standards. Where timescales standards were not met, in 17 cases, this was due to a combination of staffing absences arising from COVID, and in some instances ensuring that the meeting had the right people in attendance. There was no identified detrimental impact to the adult where the Case Conference did not take place, as there was an interim safety plan in place. The timescale standard for completion of the report by the Council Officer no later than three days before the Initial Case Conference was met in 80.8% of cases (21 of 26 cases), and again, where not met, this was due to staffing absence. Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences continued to adopt a hybrid approach of Virtual Meetings, with the adult supported to attend where appropriate, and Health and Police personnel attending virtually. Through our P&QI performance reviews and self-evaluation activity, we identified that there was a need to improve the consideration and use of advocacy in ASP cases, and took steps to promote advocacy services to Council Officers.

## Midlothian ASP Data and Performance Information

### Number of ASP referrals Duty to Inquires and ASP Investigations



In Midlothian, there were 674 referrals categorised as ASP in the year, an increase of 48.8% (221) from the previous year. In line with an increase in referrals, there was a corresponding increase of 65.8% (129) in the number of DTIs completed.



48.2% of referrals badged as ASP converted to a DTI, a slight increase from the previous year, when 43.3% of referrals converted to a DTI. In the year, 32.6% of DTIs led on to an ASP Investigation, a slight increase from 14.3% the previous year.

### Referral source

Of the 674 referrals received under ASP, the most frequent referral source was NHS, who made 21.4% of all referrals under ASP. Other organisations made 19.0% of referrals and

Police 18.4%. This was a shift from the previous three years, where the most common referrer was Police.

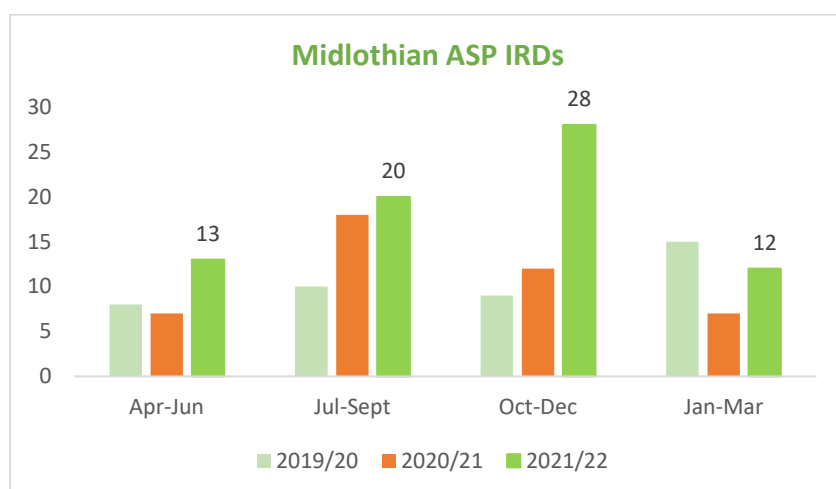
Source of referrals Midlothian	Number of referrals
NHS	144
Other organisation	128
Police	124
Social Work	87
Family	42
Others	24
Council	22
Other member of public	20
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	17
Scottish Ambulance Service	15
Self (Adult at risk of harm)	14
Care Inspectorate	10
Friend/Neighbour	8
GPs	7
Unpaid carer	6
Anonymous	6
Office of Public Guardian	<5
Mental Welfare Commission	<5
Healthcare Improvement Scotland	<5
Total	674

### Duty to Inquire

In Midlothian, Council Officers completed 97.2% of Duty to Inquires within our standard of within seven calendar days. This standard is achieved through a well-embedded culture of prioritisation of this aspect of ASP work, and the majority of the DTIs being completed by the dedicated ASP team, with close oversight and tracking of the progress of DTIs. There was an improved performance from 2020/21 (89.8%), in spite of an increase of 129 DTIs undertaken in the year, with no additional resources.

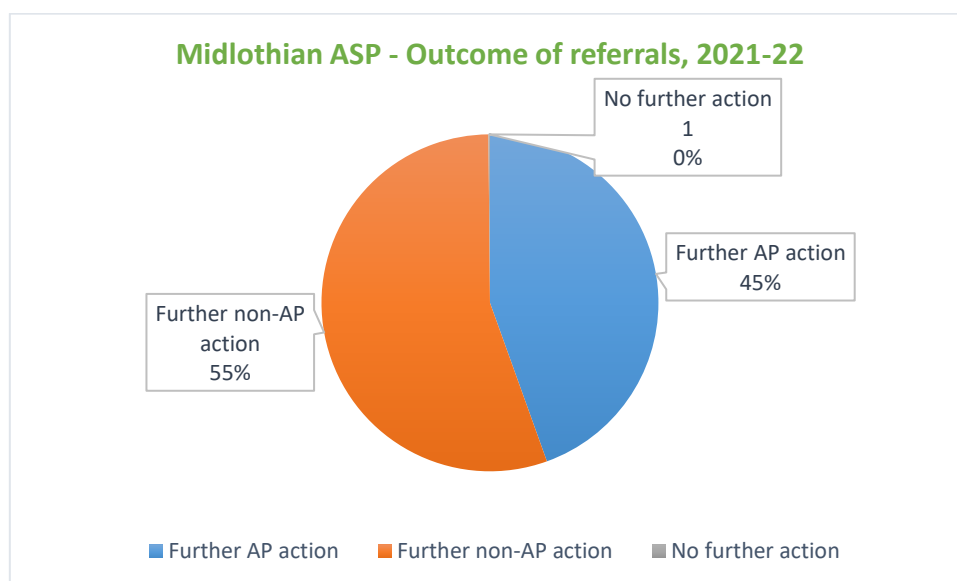


## Inter-agency Referral Discussions



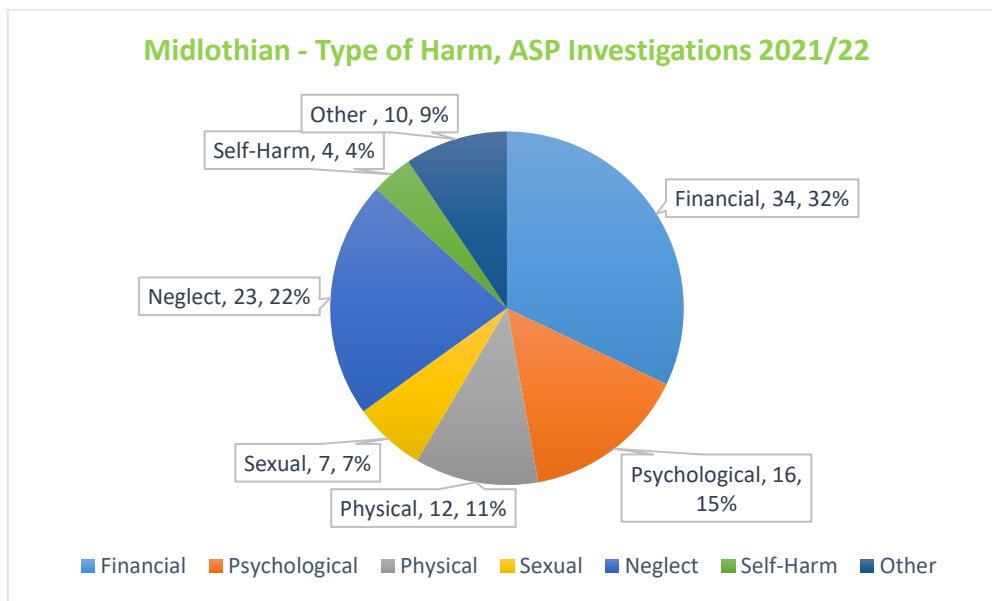
In the year, there were 73 Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) for ASP. We have seen an increase in IRDs for the past three years, with a 65.9% (44) increase from 2020-21. Some of the increase can be explained by way of Large Scale Investigations in care homes, and concerned relatives/neighbours becoming more aware of adults at risk as lockdown restrictions eased.

## Outcome of ASP referrals

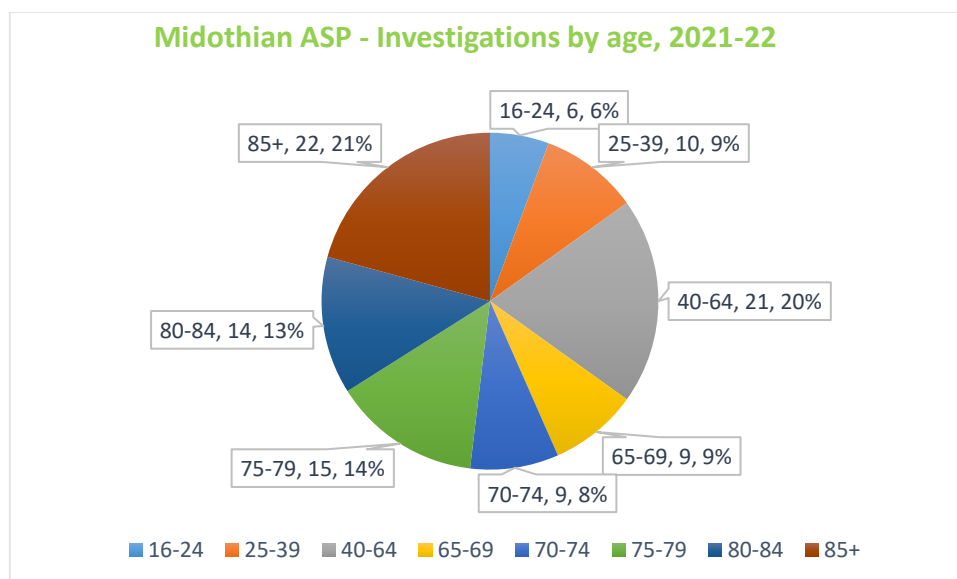


99% of ASP referrals made in the year had some form of further action. This is almost the same as the previous year (98%), and reflects the tight processes around initial screening of referrals being identified as ASP, with the vast majority of ASP referrals being handled by the ASP team that operates within the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership.

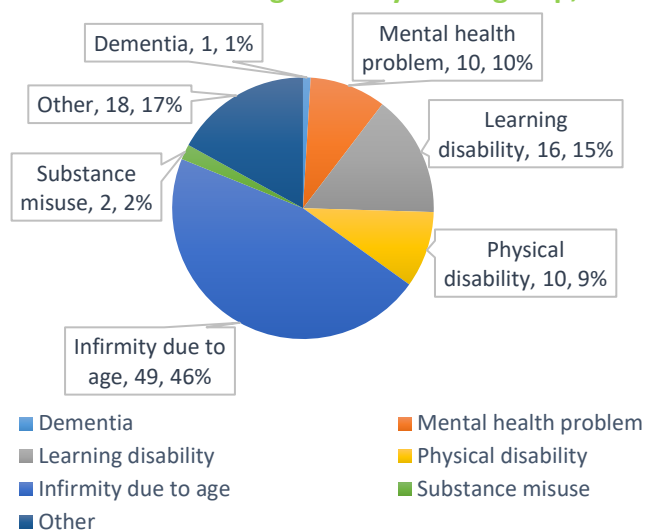
## Profile of Investigations



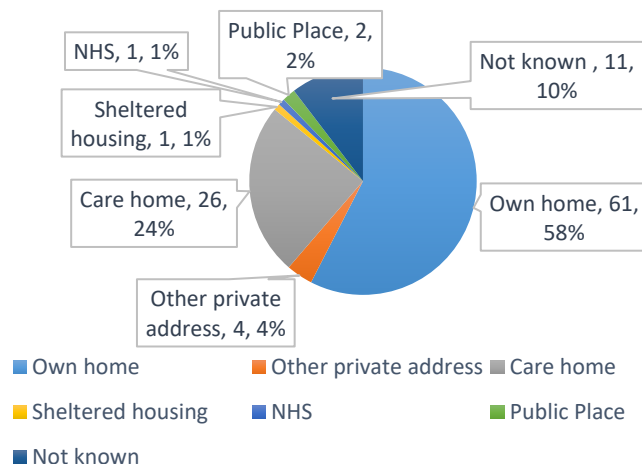
There are seven major categories of harm reported annually under ASP. In Midlothian, the most common type of harm investigated under ASP in 2021/22 was financial harm, followed by neglect (including self-neglect). Financial harm has been the most common type of harm investigated in five of the last six years.



### Midlothian ASP - Investigations by client group, 2021-22



### Midlothian ASP - Investigations by location of harm, 2021-22



53% of ASP Investigations were for females (56) and 47% (49) were for males. In the previous year, 71% of ASP Investigations related to females, and 29% related to males. There is no identified explanation for the shift in gender balance.

38% of adults who were the subject of an ASP investigation in the year had their ethnic group recorded as not known. This is the same percentage as the previous year, and is a recording issue to be addressed in the coming year.

### ASP Case Conferences

In Midlothian, there were 31 Case Conferences, of which 22 were Initial Case Conferences and nine Review Case Conferences. The standard is to hold these within 21 days from the data of the IRD to the Initial Case Conference, and within three months for the Review Case Conference. 87.1% of Case Conferences were held within our timescale standards, with only four being held out with that timescale. Where the standard was not met, the timescale was extended to ensure that all the appropriate people attended to support good

decision making, and there was no detriment to the adult involved, with an interim safety plan in place.

We operate a timescale standard for completion of the Council Officer report, within three days of the Initial Case Conference. In all but one case, the standard was met in the year, and in all cases, a single agency chronology was available for the Initial Case Conference. In all cases where there was a first Review Case Conference (nine cases), a comprehensive multi-agency risk assessment was completed within 28 calendar days of the Initial Case Conference.

Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences continued to adopt a hybrid approach of Virtual Meetings, with the adult supported to attend, and where not in attendance, advocacy was offered. Health and Police personnel attended virtually when invited.

## **Supporting Practice in ASP**

### **Learning and Development**

A change in the focus of, and arrangements for, the Council Officer Forums in East Lothian and Midlothian took place during the year. They moved from service updates and intermittent case studies, towards regular briefings on key topics delivered by the Adult Support and Protection Lead Officer, and the development of an approach to present case studies to promote the transfer of learning to practice. The development of this derived from self-evaluation activity in East Lothian, which highlighted areas of developmental need and informed the content of the programme that started in East Lothian during the year. The content of the programme is sufficiently flexible to respond to developmental need, but covers core topics including analytical risk management, evidential risk analysis, professional curiosity in ASP and chronologies. We also agreed to implement the same approach in Midlothian from April 2022.

Formal training for Council Officers was redesigned, the inspiration for this being taken from the pilot run in Dundee and Angus, which was presented to the National ASP Lead Officer's Learning and Development forum towards the end of the year ending March 2021. This was one of the key priorities identified in our previous year's annual report. Moving from a one-day training course to a modular approach of nine half days over nine months, the Adult Support and Protection Lead Officer delivered this from October 2021. The first six sessions were taught modules on key areas of ASP legislation and practice, with input from key partners, and the final three sessions were aimed at supporting the transfer of learning to practice through reflective presentations. We originally started out with 11 Social Workers from East Lothian and Midlothian, four left the programme due to changing jobs/personal circumstances, which resulted in seven Social Workers successfully completing this training and able to act as Council Officers. Evaluation of the training was positive and we used this to revise the programme for the second round of training during the year commencing April 2022, including reducing the length of time to complete the full training.

## **Audit Activity**

The Lead Officer and a Senior Operational Manager in East Lothian carried out an audit of the last year's chronologies and Multi-Agency Risk Assessments (MARA). The MARA takes place after the initial APCC when it is agreed there will be a review APCC.

The chronology audit found that recording was generally good, however, there needed to be a greater focus on including the point of view of the adult as per the principles of ASP legislation. The MARA audit identified that most risks were appropriately identified and managed; however, there was a need for increased granularity in the analysis of risk. The learning from both audits is being progressed via Council Officer Forums and ASP training.

Similar audit activity in Midlothian was planned for the year commencing April 2022.

Every IRD is reviewed at the monthly IRD Overview Group. This is chaired by the Adult Support and Protection Lead Officer and has representation from the NHS, Police Scotland and operational Social Work staff. There was a strengthening to the work of this group over the year, to ensure that the learning is captured and quality assurance activity is robust. An audit of IRDs in each area over a six-month period between November and March was completed, reporting to the P&QI Sub-group shortly into the next year. Strengths in information sharing were evident in both areas, with some improvements around SMART planning identified. Observational learning opportunities for all IRD participants at the IRD Overview Group was also established and will continue into the coming year.

## **Self-evaluation of ASP**

In East Lothian, we commenced some self-evaluation activity in relation to ASP, using the Care Inspectorate Quality Indicator Framework for ASP. A staff survey and focus groups highlighted areas of strength and improvement, which we used to refresh our improvement activities. Along with a strengthening of the operational management and oversight of ASP work this programme of activity is continuing into the year commencing April 2022.

In Midlothian, similar self-evaluation activity in relation to ASP will be undertaken over the course of the next year.

## **Guidance and Procedures**

During the year, we began work to develop our approach for escalating concerns for managing cases relating to adults where existing frameworks are not appropriate or able to reduce levels of risk and where a multi-agency approach may be beneficial. Implementing this new guidance and monitoring its use and effectiveness will continue into this year.

We engaged in the consultation to the proposed refresh of the ASP Code of Practice by analysing the implications of the proposed changes from a local perspective and consulting with ASP staff. In the coming year we will take forward the development of our local ASP procedures to reflect the changes in the new Code of Practice.

## **National ASP Day**

84 staff from across East Lothian and Midlothian attended our on-line learning event in February, to hear about financial harm from a number of different perspectives, its impact and how to tackle it. We received positive feedback about the content and structure of this event. Our focus on financial harm arose from our recognition that financial harm has been the principal type of harm investigated in recent years in each of our two areas. Our keynote speaker, Keith Brown, emeritus Professor from Bournemouth University, delivered a stimulating presentation on financial harm by scams, how to recognise this and its impact. He was ably supported with further presentations from Trading Standards in East Lothian, and Police Scotland who provided an overview of how the Police can help investigate a crime of financial harm and of the Banking Protocol, where staff in financial institutions are trained to recognise and respond to concerns. Our speaker from the charity Surviving Economic Abuse told us about the experience of economic abuse as a form of gender based violence. The ASP Lead Officer also promoted our Practitioner's Guide to Financial Abuse at the event.

## **Herbert Protocol**

During the year, we undertook some communications activities to raise awareness of the Herbert Protocol, through our newsletter, social media communications, development of a video by East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership and a radio interview in December 2021 by the ASP Lead Officer and Alzheimer's Scotland on Black Diamond FM (serving the Midlothian area). Our local Missing Persons Co-ordinator with Police Scotland commenced some on-line briefings for staff, which will continue in the coming year.

## **Large Scale Investigations**

A Large Scale Investigation is a multi-agency response where an adult who is a resident of a care home, supported accommodation, NHS hospital ward or other facility, or receives services in their own home, has been referred as at risk of harm; and where investigation indicates that the risk of harm could be due to another resident, member of staff or some failing or deficiency in the management or operation of the service. In the year, there were four LSIs pertaining to older people's care homes, three of which started and concluded in the year. One remains ongoing. One of the care homes closed following issues being raised in the LSI process around the suitability of the environment and standards. The need for improvements in the leadership within the environments was a key feature of the LSIs, and in each, standards were restored whilst under the LSI process. The ASP Lead Officer commenced a piece of work to review the themes and learning arising from LSIs, which is continuing into the year commencing April 2022.

## **Care at Home Service Provision Challenges**

There was a significant challenge in meeting the demand for care at home services in the second half of 2021, due to the impact of staffing absence arising from COVID. This arose particularly in East Lothian, where a significant proportion of the providers are third sector organisations. The ASP Lead Officer supported the oversight and monitoring of the

response in East Lothian to this by developing a risk assessment framework for the allocation of care at home services and proposed a new risk assessment framework to complement existing processes. This led to the implementation of the T.I.L.S. risk assessment framework that looks at the interaction between types of harm; imminence of harm; likelihood of harm and the severity of impact of harm. This helped support the risk assessment processes in the allocation of pressured care at home resources. The Care at Home Oversight Group in East Lothian, a multi-disciplinary group of senior partnership managers and the ASP Lead Officer, met weekly to monitor and support performance in the sector to ensure safe delivery of services to an extremely vulnerable client group. This was effective in managing the service provision challenges. Whilst there were pressures in Midlothian arising from staffing absence due to COVID, the higher proportion of in-house provision rather than private sector made the co-ordination of response easier to manage. The approach and framework used in East Lothian was subsequently shared with managers in Midlothian.

### **Initial Case Reviews and Significant Case Reviews**

Whilst we awaited the publication of the new Learning Review Guidance for conducting a Learning Review we continued to follow our Significant Case Review (SCR) Guidance. This sets out the processes for conducting a review where an adult has been harmed or died, and where abuse or neglect was a factor, or where the adult was involved in ASP processes, and the incident(s) give(s) rise to serious concerns about service involvement. An Initial Case Review (ICR) is carried out in order to inform the decision about the need for a full SCR. We commenced and concluded one ICR in the year, concluding that the learning points had been addressed without the need to progress further to a full SCR. Our CSOG was assured that improvements identified had been implemented.

We commenced a further two ICRs in the year, concluding and reporting on these in the year commencing 2022, and taking forward the sharing of learning further in ASP training and other learning opportunities to raise awareness of identification of ASP risk of harm.

## Child Protection (CP)

### CP Data and Performance Information

EMPPC follows academic quarterly reporting for Child Protection, and we have fully implemented the national child protection minimum dataset (along with some additional local measures). A separate multi-agency Sub-group of the P&QI Sub-group reviews the data and performance, and prepares the report for the P&QI Sub-group.

Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) involve a discussion between the 'core' agencies of Police, NHS and Social Work, and we have the benefit in both our areas of having the same Police and NHS personnel involved, creating a consistency of approach. Our IRD Overview Group operates four weekly in each area and again has the same Police and NHS personnel, which supports consistency of approach and shared learning opportunities. The Child Protection Lead Officer attends this to support the drawing out of learning themes and quality assurance.

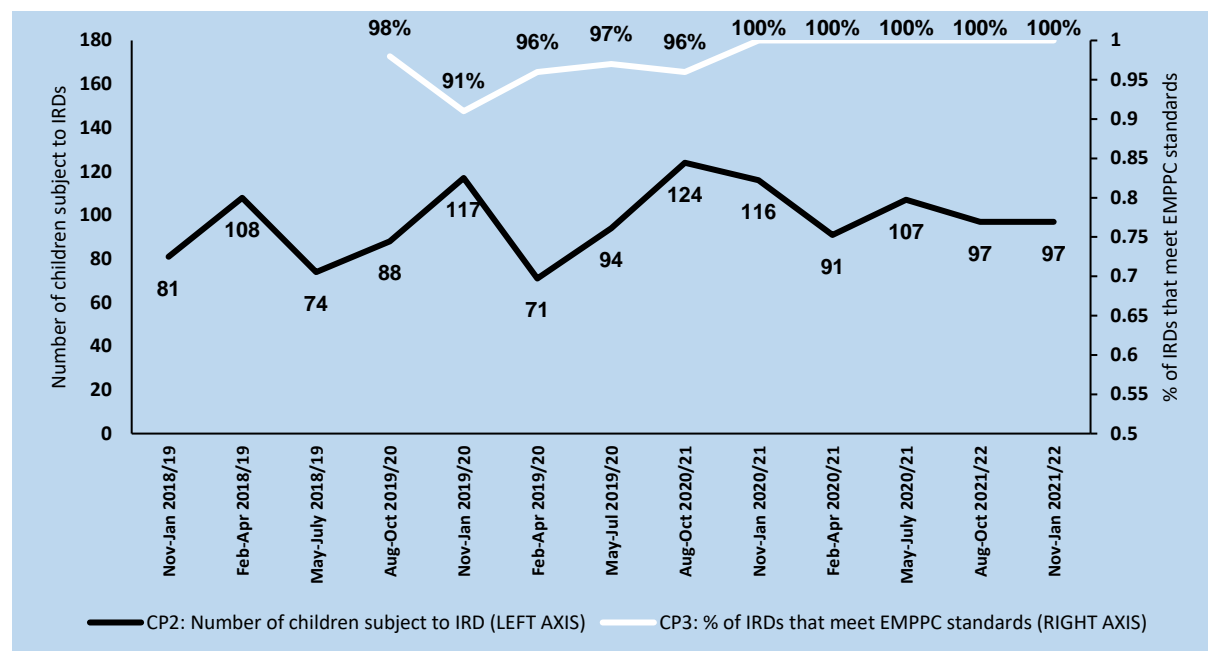
East Lothian uses the Signs of Safety approach to their Child Protection assessment and planning, and consequently, it was agreed that the timescale for holding an Initial Case Conference is within 28 days from the raising of the IRD.

Vulnerable children and children on the Child Protection Register continued to be seen on a face-to-face basis by professionals in both areas. East Lothian and Midlothian continued to strive for 'going back to business as usual' in terms of Child Protection Case Conferences and aimed to have meetings face-to-face where possible. A blended approach of virtual meetings and face-to-face meetings have been used for Case Conferences, with the majority of professionals joining the meeting on line but the family, Chair and Social Worker being in the same room.



## East Lothian CP Data and Performance Information

### IRDs

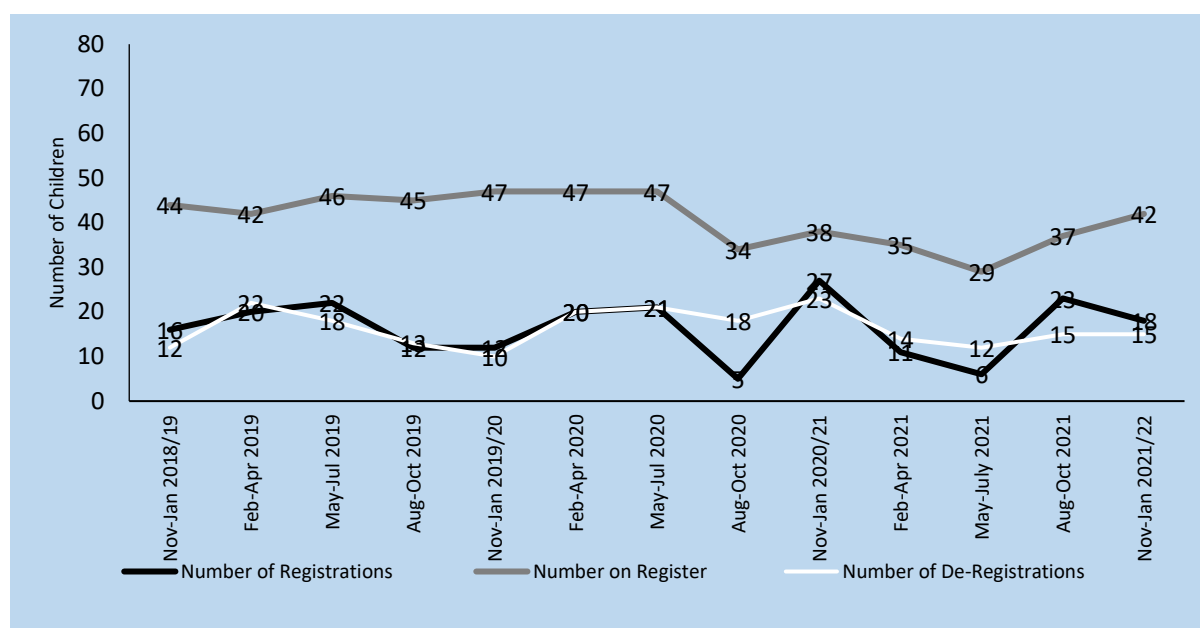


Levels of IRDs over the last year have remained consistent in East Lothian, with over two thirds of IRDs being for children and young people between the ages of 5 and 15 each quarter. The largest single age category each quarter was the 11 to 15 age group, highlighting the increased challenges and vulnerabilities for this age group. The EMPPC Vulnerable Young Persons Protocol gives a helpful framework for supporting and protecting this age group; this has been promoted and used more during the past year in East Lothian.

The publishing of the Scottish Government Child Protection Annual Return Data in March 2022 (for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021) sparked a comprehensive discussion of the rates in East Lothian in comparison to other local authorities. East Lothian had the fourth highest rate in Scotland, at 22.9 per 1,000 children. The national average was 12.8 per 1,000 children.

On review and consideration of various hypotheses, we were not overly concerned about our higher rates in East Lothian, as we consider that our IRD processes are well aligned with the 2021 National Guidance for Child Protection, and the IRD Overview Group considered that local standards for IRD were consistently met. We recognise that comparison with other local authority areas should be made with caution, and we will continue to keep a watching brief on this via our IRD Overview Group and P&QI Sub-group.

## Child Protection Registrations



The number of Child Protection registrations at each quarter-end remained below pre-lockdown levels in East Lothian. The flow of children being placed on the Register and removed is shown in the above graph, and on review of this data throughout the year, nothing exceptional or concerning has come to our attention. Through our P&QI Sub-group, we review the number of children who are re-registered within periods of up to 24 months, and nothing exceptional has stood out from this.

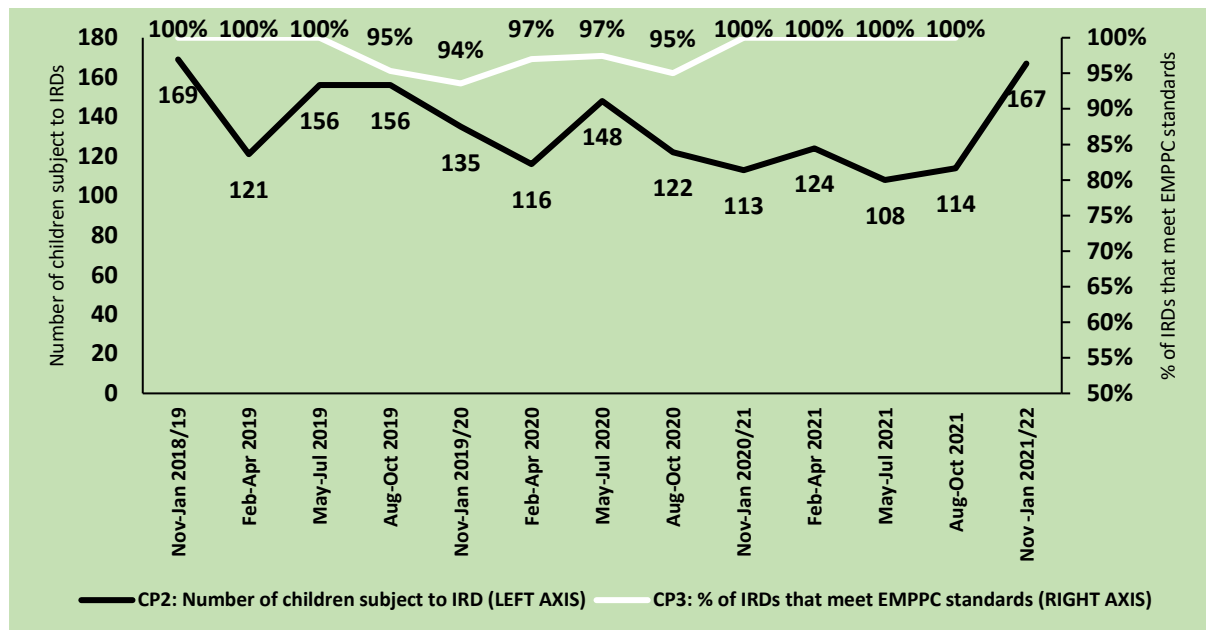
In East Lothian, the most common concerns raised at registration over the year were parental drug misuse and domestic abuse, followed by emotional abuse. Domestic abuse featured as the most common reason the previous year.

Where East Lothian did not meet the standard for holding an Initial Case Conference within 28 days, or an Initial Core Group within 15 calendar days of the Initial Case Conference, staff absence due to COVID was the primary reason. Meetings were held at the earliest opportunity thereafter, with no adverse impact on the child being identified. Parental attendance at Case Conferences was supported primarily by Social Workers. Over the year, we have seen a quarter-on-quarter improvement in the sharing of plans with children, which has been supported by a re-launch with training for staff to embed Signs of Safety.

The use of Multi-agency Chronologies within Child Protection continues to be well-established in East Lothian. The CP Lead Officer and Social Work staff in East Lothian are linked into the wider work of the Pan Lothian Chronology Groups and the standard Pan-Lothian template is in use for Initial and Review Case Conferences. Over the coming year, some audit and peer-review of Multi-agency Chronologies will be undertaken, supported by the CP Lead Officer.

## Midlothian CP Data and Performance Information

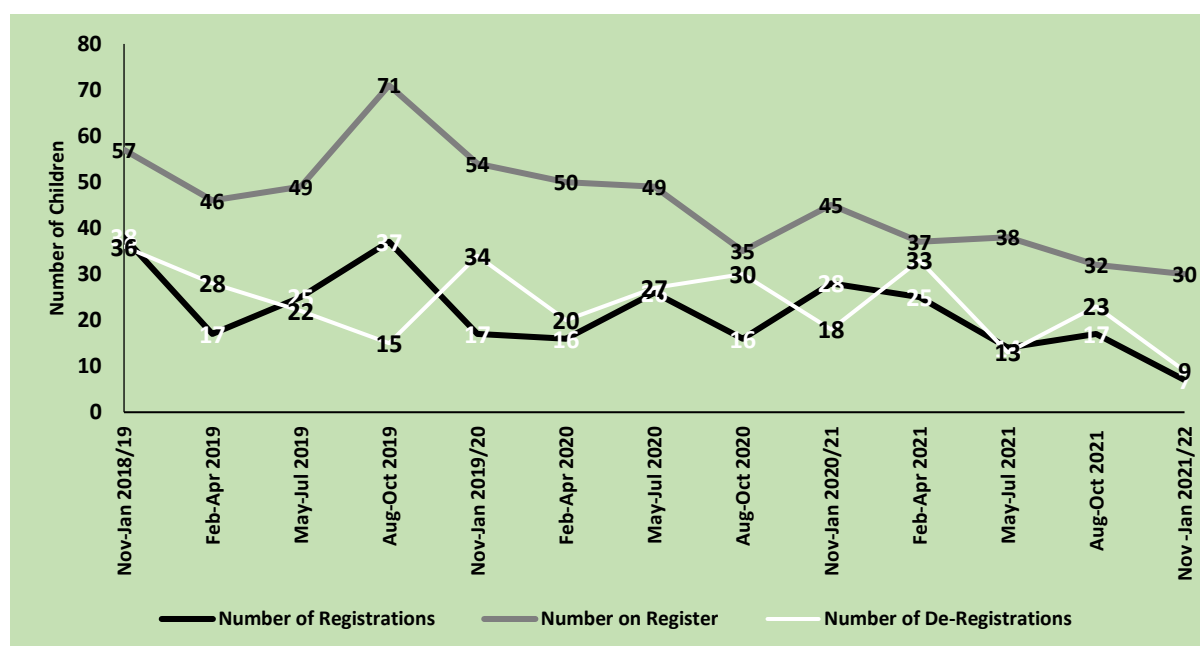
### IRDs



IRDs in Midlothian ranged from 108 to 167 per quarter in the year. There was a significant increase in the academic quarter 2 (November 2021 to January 2022), occurring around the New Year period, with double the number of IRDs for the 5 to 10 year old age group, and an increase in the 0 to 4 age group.

The comparative rates of IRDs to other local authority areas as published in the Scottish Government Child Protection Annual Return Data in March 2022 (for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021) saw a similarly high rate, with Midlothian sitting at the third highest rate at 17.7 per 1,000 children (in comparison to the national rate of 12.8). Processes in Midlothian are aligned to the National Guidance for Child Protection 2021, and we will engage in further monitoring and scrutiny of local processes and practice over the coming year to ensure that IRDs are appropriately instigated. The IRD Overview Group monitors whether threshold guidance is met, and assessed that IRDs routinely did meet local standards. We will continue to monitor this over the coming year.

## Child Protection Registrations



In Midlothian, conversion rates from ICPCC to CP Registration decreased in the two quarters during the year. Whilst we exercised caution about interpreting percentages where the number is small, the CP Lead Officer and Clinical Nurse Manager, Public Protection Team, NHS Lothian undertook a small audit to explore any themes. The findings highlighted the need to undertake and evidence a robust assessment and child's plan to justify decision making about registration, incorporate the child's voice within that, and the need to further explore how we ensure that all agencies are clear on their roles and responsibilities within the Case Conference processes. The CP Lead Officer and partners will share the learning from this work over the coming year to support improvement activity, in training, partnership work and development of local procedures.

In two of the four quarters, domestic abuse featured as the most common reason for a child being placed on the CP register, but across the year, the concerns noted at registration were multi-faceted, reflecting the complexity of circumstances facing children and families.

## Supporting Practice

### Audit Activity

During the year, the CP Lead Officer undertook an audit on the relationship between Marac and IRD, focusing on Children's Social Work records across East Lothian and Midlothian. A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Marac) is a local meeting where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to discuss individuals at high risk of serious harm or murder due to domestic abuse. The audit outlined that the majority of cases did not trigger an IRD. Whilst this was appropriate for some in light of measures already in place to address the risks, in a third of cases there was evidence to suggest an IRD should have taken place, and in a further third, an IRD should have been considered. We have subsequently implemented a change to our local processes and practice around Marac,

whereby all referrals to Marac are now sent to Children and Families Social Work for assessment and active consideration of the need for an IRD.

### **Improvement Activity**

In the year, we commenced work on the Cumulative Neglect agenda, establishing a multi-agency short-life working group to develop our approach in East Lothian and Midlothian. We have agreed to adopt City of Edinburgh's Neglect Toolkit, which will support a consistent approach by partner agencies working across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

East Lothian and Midlothian sought to take part in a Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework Audit, which will be facilitated by the NSPCC and funded by the Scottish Government. In both areas, there has been an increase in incidences involving Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) and the aim of the audit is to further develop and improve multi-agency responses to children displaying HSB.

### **Initial Case Reviews and Significant Case Reviews in Child Protection**

We had one Significant Case Review that continued during the year; delays in the light of COVID and changes of professionals in the review group membership impacted on bringing this to conclusion. Face-to-face practitioner and manager workshops were held to inform the findings and learning. We will take forward the learning from this over the coming year.

### **Development of Child Protection Procedures**

During the year, an agreement was reached by Chief Officers in East Lothian and Midlothian to collaborate with our partners in City of Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and West Lothian to develop our local procedures in line with the National Guidance for Child Protection that was published in October 2021. An independent writer was commissioned to undertake this work, which commenced in the last quarter of the year, and will continue through the coming year.

### **Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019**

The Act raised the age of criminal responsibility from the age of eight to 12, with children under 12 no longer being held criminally responsible for their actions. To support the implementation of the changes introduced in December 2021, a short-life multi-agency working group was established. The CP Lead Officer produced communication materials, including a seven minute briefing, flowchart to outline the key changes and what they would mean for practice. This was made available to all partner agencies across East Lothian and Midlothian.

### **Scottish Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative Interviewing**

In preparation for going live with the new Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) for Joint Investigative Interviewing in April 2022, East Lothian and Midlothian joined the Scottish Borders to develop our approach. This new approach is designed to minimise re-traumatisation for the child as well as improving the quality of evidence gathered to avoid

children having to give evidence in person as part of court or children's hearing processes. The model recognises that the forensic interviewing of children is a specialist skill. To support implementation, eight staff (four social workers from East Lothian, Midlothian and the Scottish Borders, and four Police Officers from our 'J' Division) completed the specialised training. The CP Lead Officer supported the launch of this approach by developing communication materials, including a seven-minute briefing, to enhance multi-agency understanding of the approach. We also hosted a launch for all services and partner agencies across all three Local Authorities. There is a multi-agency steering group in place, led by the Police to oversee the operational delivery of SCIM.

## **EMPPC IRD Threshold and Outcome Guidance**

Our IRD Threshold and Outcome Guidance was revised within the year to reflect the Promise and New National Child Protection Guidance, and specifically refer to the Safe & Together principles to ensure their consideration within the earliest stages of child protection risk assessment and planning.

## Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

There are two operational elements of the delivery of services for victims of gender-based violence that come under the oversight and governance of EMPPC, Multi-agency Risk Assessments (Marac) and the Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway (DARP). EMPPC has developed and implemented supporting guidance, the former of which was updated during the year.

### Marac

A Marac is a multi-agency meeting where information is shared about the victims who are at the highest risk of serious harm or murder due to domestic abuse. The aims of Marac are to work with victims of domestic abuse to help keep them safer and respond to their needs, manage perpetrators' behaviour to reduce risk, and ensure that risk and support needs attached to family members or extended networks are identified.

We operate Maracs every four weeks in each of the two areas, with additional meetings to respond to demand as required. Our model for delivery of Maracs closely follows the design and approach recommended by SafeLives, the national organisation that provides resources, training and quality assurance framework for Maracs.

In the year ending March 2022, we continued to hold our meetings virtually over Microsoft Teams, and held 16 Marac meetings for 123 cases in East Lothian, and 15 in Midlothian for 115 cases. In East Lothian, we saw an increase for the fourth year in a row (albeit an increase by four from the previous year) and in Midlothian, the number of cases discussed was the same as the previous year. In both areas, two thirds of referrals to Marac were made by Domestic Abuse Services. In both areas, there were fewer cases than SafeLives would anticipate, estimating that for the adult female populations, which indicates that there is more work to do to promote Marac as one response for supporting the highest risk victims of domestic abuse.

In both areas, just over 84% of cases involved children (defined as under the age of 18 with an association to the victim/perpetrator). This was an increase of 19.7% in East Lothian, and an increase of 7.8% in Midlothian, compared to the previous year. This rise may reflect a shift in the understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on children as the Safe & Together model is becoming embedded in practice in each area.

An increase in the number of victims referred with a disability in both areas brings us closer to the SafeLives indicator that 18% of cases would be representative of the UK population. 10.5% (13) cases in East Lothian had a known disability in the year. This is more than double the number of cases from 2020/21. 14% (16) cases in Midlothian had a known disability in the year.

There were no recorded male and/or LGBT+ referrals; increasing awareness of Marac, its benefits and referral processes will be an area of development over the coming year.

Following our first Marac self-assessment in the year, our improvement plan was developed and is progressing. In the year, we agreed to develop a separate Marac Steering Group and made arrangements for its operation during the year commencing April 2021.

## **Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway**

The Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway is a partnership arrangement whereby following a Police attendance arising from a domestic abuse incident the victim consents to a referral to a specialist service for advocacy and support.

In the year, in East Lothian, there were 244 referrals to the DARP, and in Midlothian, there were 208. The number of referrals reduced significantly from the previous year, by 99 from 343 in East Lothian and by 107 from 315 in Midlothian. As the service operates based on consent and is offered at the time of the Police involvement, it is not clear why there was such a reduction, albeit we had seen an increase in referrals the previous year.

One of the specialist services that supports the DARP has been the Domestic Abuse Service, whereby specially trained staff employed by Women's Aid East and Midlothian were located within the Public Protection Office. Due to challenges in recruitment to these posts, we commenced discussions about alternative options for this service provision, which have continued into the year beginning April 2022.

## **Delivering Equally Safe Funding**

The VAWG Co-ordinator worked with partners in East Lothian and Midlothian to prepare an application for funding from the national Delivering Equally Safe (DES) Fund, commencing for a three year period from October 2021 to September 2024 (this was subsequently extended to March 2025). We secured funding for three Domestic Abuse Support posts to support the DARP and Marac, safety equipment and leaflets for victims of domestic abuse, and training for staff in the Safe & Together approach.

## **Supporting Practice**

### **16 days of activism 2021**

The 16 days of activism is an annual international campaign that runs from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, International Human Rights Day. It is used as an organising strategy by individuals and organisations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. It provides an opportunity to increase awareness of violence against women and girls, galvanize advocacy efforts, and share knowledge and innovations.

For the 2021 campaign we co-ordinated with the Scotland-wide campaign which focused on #WhatWillYouDo and #LightUp. The campaign encouraged leaders and staff to make their pledges #WhatWillYouDo. Midlothian Council Cabinet approved a groundbreaking Equally Safe Housing and Homeless Policy in November 2021.



## **Safe & Together**

East Lothian and Midlothian have been committed to embedding the Safe & Together approach since 2018. It is an internationally recognised suite of tools and interventions designed to help child and adult professionals become domestic violence informed. In light of COVID, the Safe & Together Institute developed virtual programmes. We purchased licences with the DES funding as our approach to the training delivery.

In the year, 32 practitioners across East Lothian and Midlothian (32 East Lothian Council, 13 Midlothian Council and 6 Third Sector staff) completed the four-day practitioner-training course. The number completed was well below the annual target of 65, and completion of the four days proved challenging in the light of operational demands arising throughout the year, undoubtedly impacted by staffing pressures during COVID. At the end of the year, 37 staff were registered for the training but had not completed this. Through the two implementation groups in each area, and our L&PD Sub-group, we took time to understand the barriers to completing the training and we piloted a blended approach for staff to physically meet together to undertake the virtual training. Eight staff successfully completed this, feeding back that they would not have completed the training had they not been able to come together to undertake the training. Although a resource intensive approach for a small group, we are continuing this approach in the year commencing April 2022 to support some practitioners to undertake the training.

We have 38 managers who have completed the Supervisor Training, three of whom completed the programme, with a further eight starting the training in the year.

Audits have evidenced that supervisors who have undertaken the training programme are more likely to use the approach and associated tools within supervision. The implementation groups have assessed that there is evidence that training is having a positive impact on practice. The Implementation Groups are now well established and linked with the Improvement Service and national forum for Safe & Together to start exploring the evaluation framework.

## **Learning and Development**

We introduced on-line briefings for staff in the year, our first being on the Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme for Scotland (DSDAS), led by our Police partners. This proved to be popular, with 109 people attending our first briefing, and it has proved to be an efficient use of staff time (lasting one hour) and resource as no booking was required.

Our specialist agency partners at Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre and Shakti Women's Aid supported our learning and development on VAWG by delivering four sessions on specific topic areas around gender based violence. These complemented our core training on VAWG and we will continue to raise awareness of some of the issues covered in these events – specifically around Black and Minority Ethnic Women's experiences of Domestic abuse, no recourse to public funds, responding to disclosures of rape and sexual assault and sexual violence and the justice process.

## **Development of Equally Safe in East Lothian and Midlothian**

To complement the work of our VAWG Delivery Sub-group, we commenced discussions with partners about ways to take forward an Equally Safe Strategy for each local authority area, focusing on prevention through culture change and education, and enhanced service response for survivors and their families. In November 2021, Midlothian Cabinet agreed to establish a Midlothian Equally Safe Strategy, the development of which was delayed due to operational and strategic capacity challenges arising from COVID and the response to the Ukrainian crisis. This will be taken forward in the year commencing April 2022 with support from the Improvement Service. East Lothian considered embedding Equally Safe into existing planning structures and will take forward their approach under their revised structural arrangements for the Community Safety and Justice Partnership.

## East Lothian and Midlothian MAPPA Group

One of our four Sub-groups is the East Lothian and Midlothian MAPPA Group (EMMG). Previously operating as the Offender Management Group since 2008, the Group had not met consistently during the previous year due to the impact of COVID. We undertook some developmental work to re-establish this Sub-Group, and changing its name was an important step in re-focusing its scope and purpose. The Group, with a new Chair from August due to the departure of the previous Chair, took time to properly consider its scope and relationship to the wider Edinburgh, Lothians and Scottish Borders Strategic Operating Group and MAPPA Operational Group. There are long established effective links.

The terms of reference for EMMG were revised and approved by EMPPC in March 2022, and the membership was reviewed. On a quarterly basis, the EMMG reviews the national dataset of 51 indicators relating to the different MAPPA levels, and we commenced work to review our local dataset that is considered by the P&QI Sub-group.

Over the year we have noted that in general, the data in relation to MAPPA in both East Lothian and Midlothian is stable, reflecting that quality assurance processes are working efficiently and effectively.

## Training and Learning and Development

During the year, we developed and published our [Learning and Development Strategy for 2021-23](#). Our Learning and Practice Development Sub-group is responsible for implementing and overseeing the strategy.

The overall aim of our strategy is to support our workforce across East Lothian and Midlothian to become increasingly competent and confident over time in their specific areas of responsibility and across all areas of Public Protection. We aim to promote a multi-agency learning culture and best possible practice. The focus of the strategy is on creating opportunities for delivering multi-agency training and learning, through training courses and online briefings. Our training is free to staff and carers from East Lothian and Midlothian.

The strategy covers a two year period from 2021-23, reflecting the changing landscape in how we design and deliver our services and the work of EMPPC, particularly given the challenges that the COVID pandemic posed on a traditional model of face-to-face training.

Our focus in the past year was on delivering a training schedule that provided 'recovery' from the impact of the operational challenges posed by the pandemic. Our key priority was to re-establish our 'core' training courses, which had not been taking place the previous year, and adapt our approach and training materials for on-line delivery. All our training in the year was delivered over Microsoft Teams, the details of which are shown in the table

below. Re-establishing training has taken up a significant amount of Lead Officer resource in the year.

We streamlined our approach to seeking feedback from attendees on training, moving to an electronic survey, which is easy to access on various devices and quick to complete. Our L&PD Sub-group reviewed evaluation reports of all training courses and we have used the feedback to make any necessary changes. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly the multi-agency facilitation and mixture of presentations, case studies, short videos and input from different agencies. Some staff have commented that face-to-face training would be beneficial, and we will seek to introduce more face-to-face training over the coming year, blending this alongside on-line training.

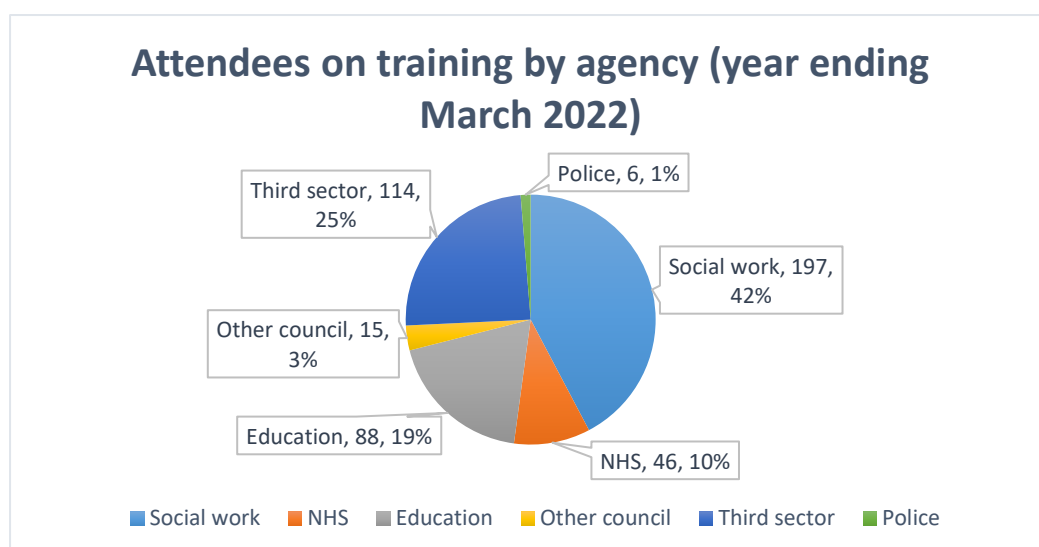
In the year, we streamlined our learning and development performance indicators and made improvements to the quantitative data collation, data quality and data presentation for the new reporting period of 2022/23.

We have good support from, and thank, our multi-agency partners who support and co-deliver our training with our ASP Lead Officer, CP Lead Officer and VAWG Co-ordinator.

### Our Training in the year – key highlights

- We delivered 20 training courses, three more than 2020-21;
- 466 staff, volunteers and carers from East Lothian and Midlothian attended training courses, which was an increase by 83.5% from the previous year; and
- 60.5% (282) of attendees at training provided feedback, with almost all reporting that they had increased their knowledge as a result of attending.

Time period	Number of attendees	Number of courses
Quarter 1, Apr - Jun	58	3
Quarter 2, Jul - Sept	68	3
Quarter 3, Oct to Dec	180	7
Quarter 4, Jan to Mar	160	7



Course	Number delivered	Partners involved in delivery
Child Protection Risk Assessment and Processes (Core training)	5	Education – East Lothian and Midlothian, Social Work – East Lothian and Midlothian, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration, Public Protection Unit Police Scotland, NHS Lothian, Lead Officer, Public Protection Office
Improving our Practice on Violence Against Women (Core training)	4	Women’s Aid East and Midlothian, Public Protection Office
Adult Support and Protection Roles and Responsibilities (Core training)	2	Public Protection Unit Police Scotland, Social Work – East Lothian and Midlothian, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian
Public Protection is Everyone’s Responsibility (Core training)	2	Public Protection Office
Trauma, Domestic Abuse and Children and Young People	1	Caledonian Service
Domestic Abuse and Migrant Women who have No Recourse to Public Funds	1	Shakti Women’s Aid
Sexual Violence and the Justice Process	1	Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre
Protecting Children and Young People with Disabilities	1	NHS Lothian
Protecting People from Serious Harm from Domestic Abuse – Assessing Risks and Referring to Marac	1	Women’s Aid East and Midlothian, Public Protection Office
Black and Minority Ethnic Women’s Experiences of Gender Based Violence	1	Shakti Women’s Aid
Responding to Disclosures of Rape and Sexual Abuse	1	Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre

## Communications

### EMPPC Newsletter

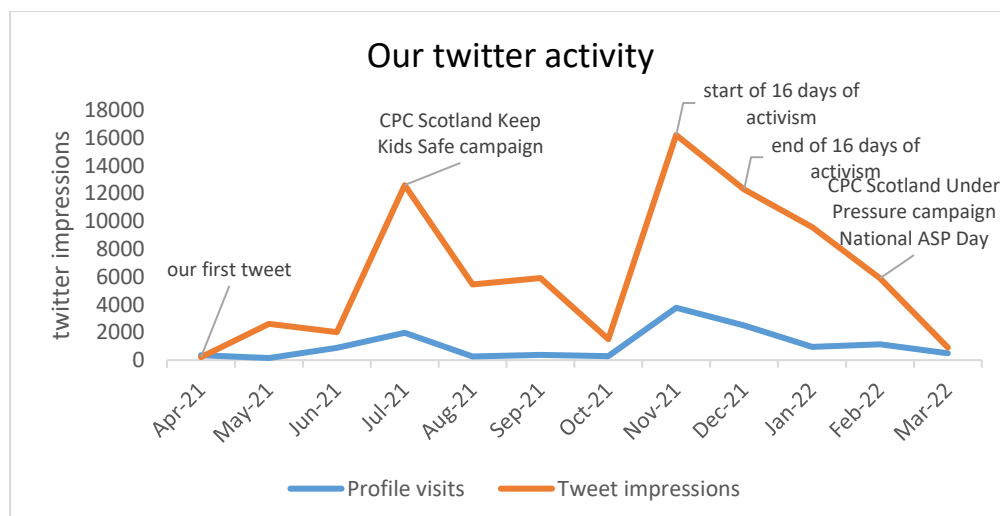
We launched our quarterly EMPPC Newsletter in November 2021, and our second in February 2022. It is distributed widely across our public and third sector partners and is primarily for staff working in East Lothian and Midlothian. Our aims are to provide an opportunity for staff to learn more about:

- The work of the Committee and its sub-groups and to help see its relevance and link to their day to day work. Our 'Meet the Committee' section gives an opportunity to hear direct from a Committee member about their role and contribution to the work of the Committee;
- Key practice topics through our 'Spotlight on' section – in our November edition we did a Spotlight on Prevent and Online Harm for Safer Internet Day in our February edition; and
- What is happening in the worlds of ASP, Child Protection and Violence Against Women and Girls, both locally and nationally – we covered a range of practice issues, with links to research, podcasts and videos.

We have had some positive and constructive feedback about our newsletter which we will use to build our approach over the coming year.

### Twitter

We made a modest foray into the world of twitter when we launched our twitter page in April 2021. The graph below shows some of the analytics from our twitter feed in the year, with our biggest audience reach at the launch of the 16 days of activism in November, and supporting national campaigns such as those from Child Protection Committees Scotland.



*Key: A Twitter impression (or impact) is generated when someone sees our tweet - e.g. if my tweet has been seen 10 times it means it has 10 impressions (or impacts). Profile Visits – The total number of users visiting your Twitter profile. Twitter Analytics will not count your own visits to your own profile. It does not include multiple visits from the same user*

## Some examples from our Twitter page

Apr 2021 • 30 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

**Top Tweet** earned 213 impressions

Wondering what cuckooing is after [#LineofDuty](#)? It's when drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person to deal drugs. Worried about someone you know? Phone local social work or the police on 101 (or 999 in emergencies).

[#AdultProtection](#) [#Cuckooing](#)

[@ELHSCP](#) [@MidGov](#)

[pic.twitter.com/DmhhuKkmg2](https://pic.twitter.com/DmhhuKkmg2)



Nov 2021 • 30 days

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

**Top Tweet** earned 5,256 impressions

Today is the global launch of 16 days to end violence against women and girls - it's everyone's business to take action!

[#whatwillyoudo](#) [#LightUp](#)

[@ELCouncil](#) [@midgov](#) [@ELHSCP](#)

[@MidlothianHSCP](#) [@PoliceScotland](#)

[@WomensAidEML](#) [@EdinRapeCrisis](#)

[@QMUniversity](#)

[pic.twitter.com/mziMLTgWoN](https://pic.twitter.com/mziMLTgWoN)

Violence Against Women Worldwide



## Our approach to Communications

We had planned on a workshop with Committee and Sub-group members during the year, but had to cancel this due to technical difficulties in delivering this by Microsoft Teams. Nonetheless, we completed the planning for this to take place in early April 2022, the outputs of which we will use to further develop our approach to our communications as a Committee.

## Looking Ahead

There is a lot of work underway in East Lothian and Midlothian, via the Sub-groups of EMPPC and partnership activities. Our high-level aims are outlined overleaf. In addition to continuing to deliver training, learning and development activities and support communications about Public Protection, some of our current priorities include the following:

### **Adult Support and Protection**

- Support self-evaluation activity in East Lothian and Midlothian, and work with our partners in East Lothian to prepare for and engage in an external Adult Support Inspection
- Revision of our ASP Procedures and other associated documents in light of changes to the Code of Practice
- Implement an Escalating Concerns Protocol for use where other existing frameworks and legislation are not appropriate or feasible, but where concerns still exist about an adult at risk of harm

### **Child Protection**

- Work with NSPCC to undertake a Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework (HSB) Audit to identify and develop an action plan to improve our responses to children displaying HSB
- Continue to work with partners in City of Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and West Lothian to develop revised Child Protection Procedures and will develop plans for implementation
- Implement the Scottish Child Interviewing Model

### **Violence Against Women and Girls**

- We will work with East Lothian and Midlothian to progress local strategies for Equally Safe
- We will develop supporting guidance to support staff and leaders in embedding the Commercial Sexual Exploitation Position Statement into practice
- Continue to support the embedding of the Safe & Together approach



## Our Strategic Priorities

What will we do (our high level aims)	What we are working to achieve	What difference will it make (outcome and impact)
<b>Continue to strengthen our leadership arrangements in Public Protection</b>	<p>To have effective partnership working arrangements and shared responsibility for Public Protection</p> <p>To have and communicate a shared vision for the delivery of Public Protection services across East Lothian and Midlothian</p> <p>To work with the planning partnership arrangements to identify issues and influence responses within local plans</p>	<p>We can demonstrate that children, young people and adults are safer and better protected from risk of harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children, young people and adults receive the right support at the right time to prevent harm and reduce the impact of harm</li> <li>• Child and ASP concerns are recognised and responded to in a trauma informed way (with compassion, care and protection)</li> <li>• We are meeting and improving our agreed performance standards in key processes and practice</li> <li>• Staff are competent and confident in recognising risk and harm and responding appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Provide and support the implementation of multi-agency procedures and guidance for staff working in Public Protection</b>	<p>To lead and guide staff in their practice</p> <p>To promote a collaborative and integrated approach to reducing harm</p>	
<b>Continue to develop our performance framework and approach to quality improvement</b>	To ensure that we are collating and analysing the right type of information to support performance monitoring and continuous improvement	

## Our Strategic Priorities

What will we do (our high level aims)	What we are working to achieve	What difference will it make (outcome and impact)
<b>Promote and support a learning culture by providing staff with multi-agency learning and development opportunities in Public Protection</b>	To ensure that we are influencing services to respond to emerging risks and trends	
	To support the transfer of learning into practice	
	To promote and embed a culture of learning	
	To support the workforce in East Lothian and Midlothian to become increasingly competent in their specific areas of responsibility and across all areas of Public Protection, through the provision of shared learning opportunities	
	To support staff to build effective working relationships and shared understanding of roles and responsibilities	