

**Act
against
harm**

Argyll and Bute Adult Protection Committee

**SUPPORTING AND PROTECTING
adults 'at risk of harm'
in ARGYLL AND BUTE**



Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

Why do we need a Protection Act?

The 'Borders' Report Miss A (In the year 2000)

Who needs to be protected?

Older People

People with disabilities

People with mental health difficulties

People who are frail

People who suffer ill health

and others

May find themselves in situations where they are unable to safeguard themselves.



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What does the Adult Support and Protection Act do?

First of all it gives responsibility to the council to inquire into reports where adults may be at risk of harm

Where an adult is being harmed the council, police and health have to work together to make sure the adult is supported and protected from harm.

But what if the adult does not want support or help?

If the person does not want help or support (people interfering in their lives) then this cannot be forced upon them. (The council must listen to what the adult says and take notice of it)



How does the council know that an adult is 'at risk'?

To be an adult at risk the person must:-

Be unable to safeguard themselves and

Be at risk of harm and

Be affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity

(all of these must be met – and adults are 16 years old and over)

So this is what the council, police and health workers need to find out before we offer support or protection.

Let's look at some situations we are already be aware of.

Steven Hoskins – A young man in his 20's died at the hands of his 'friends'. Steven had a learning disability – he lived in his own home which was taken over by three young people who he considered were his friends.

Steven died after being pushed off a viaduct having been found 'guilty' by his friends of being paedophile (there was no evidence to support this) Before he died he had been burned, treated as a dog, had his hands stamped on and other horrific actions

But not all concerns reach the newspapers or courts.

Sally was looked after by her daughter who had a drug problem. Sally was an older person whose memory was not as good as it had been. A very smart woman she was now dressed in what were not much more than rags – her daughter collected her pension. Sally was malnourished when she was found. Was Sally at risk of harm?

Yes! Sally Was at risk of Financial harm; she was being neglected and her health needs were also not being met.

It is the council's duty to follow this up and the council can get support from the police and health services if they need it.

What about Jimmy?

Jimmy was in his 80's he had been married for 59 years to May. Jimmy had dementia and May could not keep up with his demands on her because she was becoming frail. May locked Jimmy in a room because she couldn't cope with him – Jimmy became distressed and was heard crying.

Was Jimmy an adult in need of protection?

What did we do?

What we did :-

We visited Jimmy and May and spoke to them both

We recognised that Jimmy and May each needed help and support.

By giving Jimmy things to do away from home this gave May a break from her caring role.

In following up reports of protection concerns we deal with problems sensitively and in proportion to the concern.

For Steven Hoskins the police were involved.

For Sally we took action to deal with the financial and neglect/health concerns to ensure she had a better quality of life.

For Jimmy and May we offered them support to manage and to live together in a better and safer way.

Some Details about Argyll and Bute – Oban, Lorn and the Isles

In the last year (2010 – 2011) we received *53 referrals*

8 older people 3 people with dementia

27 people with mental health difficulties

9 people with a learning disability and 5 people with an addiction

1 person did not fit any of the descriptions already noted

6 people of the 91 were given support or protection and the rest received support from doctors, community nurses, social workers, housing workers and other agencies

4 people refused to accept support and 2 were not ‘adults at risk’

Whose job is it to ask for support or protection for someone?

The police tell us about most people (45 in OLI)

Social workers knew of 7 people in OLI

1 person was referred by health workers

Family members tell us about concerns and the person themselves also tell us about harm they suffer.

The referrals come from many sources

But the main message is that YOU can tell us when you believe that an adult is at risk – it is the job of social work, health and police to check the concerns and to do what is needed, and wanted by the person, to keep them safe.



Finally

What is the key message?

‘Sometimes adults need protecting too’

If you are concerned about an adult who is being mistreated, neglected, bullied or harmed in any way and they are not able to protect themselves and they are infirm, ill or disabled in any way then you should tell us.

Phone numbers and other contacts

Thank you for listening

Questions

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