



Summary Annual Report 2014-15

CHILDREN 1ST is contracted by the Scottish Government to assist Scottish Ministers with the management and operation of the national Safeguarders Panel in terms of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Safeguarders Panel) Regulations 2012

The role of the Safeguarders Panel Team includes recruitment and selection, training, managing appointments, complaints and monitoring performance of safeguarders across Scotland.

Summary of Achievements:

The key achievements of the set up phase, 2012-2014, were in designing and implementing national systems for a fair and transparent allocation process and recruitment, training and remuneration of safeguarders. Consolidating these new transactional processes and improving the operation of the national Safeguarders Panel continued in 2014-15. Updated policies were issued including Child Protection; Lone Working; Fees & Expenses, and, Complaints Issues & Concerns.

Developing a successful operational function has required continued strong and effective relationships with the Scottish Government Children's Hearing Team and also agility, responsiveness and resourcefulness from CHILDREN 1ST. Additionally there has been further development of the national Safeguarders Panel identity by the Safeguarders Panel Team becoming a key partner in the whole system improvement agenda primarily through links with Children's Hearing Improvement Partnership (CHIP).

Significant strides have been taken to realise the development of Practice Standards and a Performance Support & Monitoring Framework for safeguarders. The additional support from a fixed term contract with Clan Childlaw, the joint work with the Safeguarders Panel Team and serving safeguarders has led to a working group producing draft practice standards. A consultation exercise with all safeguarders and partners through CHIP is underway towards finalising the standards by June 2015. The working group has been expanded to include other safeguarders to inform the development of performance support & monitoring framework which is on target to be finalised by June 2015. It is hoped that these two important developments will further add to the vital role of the safeguarder to act in the best interests of children and young people.

This year there was significant change to personnel with a change to the Assistant Director and Service Manager and whilst the new personnel bring fresh energy and dynamism we extend our appreciation to the previous post holders for their early work in the challenging early days of the service.

Key Performance Indicators

1. Recruitment and Selection

It had been expected that there would be a need for two recruitment exercises per year to sustain the expected number of approximately 200 safeguarders. There has been close monitoring of the current availability of safeguarders against the level of appointment requests on a national and localised basis and a recruitment exercise was not required in the past 12 months. Throughout the year we have continued to accept notes of interest from individuals and we revisit this list to ensure it remained current. A steady number of around 90 individuals have noted interest and this would be an initial source of candidates for consideration in the future. This position was routinely considered jointly with the government team and agreed as a reasonable position. It is likely that future recruitment would be targeted to specific geographical areas rather than a national campaign.

Table 1.1: Safeguarder Recruitment

	As at 1/04/2014	As at 31/03/15
Existing Safeguarders appointed from Local Authority panels	152	154
Resignations between 1 April 14 and 31 March 15	3	16
New Safeguarder Appointments	29	58
Total Number of Appointed Safeguarders	178	196
Dates of re-appointment to Safeguarders Panel	Between 9/5 and 8/8 2016 Between 15/8 and 10/11 2016 13 June 2017	

Table 1.2: Safeguarder Gender and Age Range

Gender	Under 40	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+	Total
Female	17	17	35	38	10	0	117
Male	4	12	32	24	6	1	79
Total	21	29	67	62	16	1	196

2. Service Delivery

It is noted that there has been important strengthening of the allocation process (taxi rank system) and in 99% of cases, where children were appointed a safeguarder, a suitable appointment was made within two days. The introduction of a designated allocations post and diligence of safeguarders to respond has set this excellent standard for children. We continue to monitor, review & improve the allocations process to ensure it is fair and transparent.

As we move forward, this centrally held database on the operation of the national Safeguarders Panel will enable us with the Scottish Government team and partners to closely and effectively gather data for interrogation on local and national appointment trends and appropriately inform the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership to influence whole system improvement.

Table 2.1: Allocation Timescales

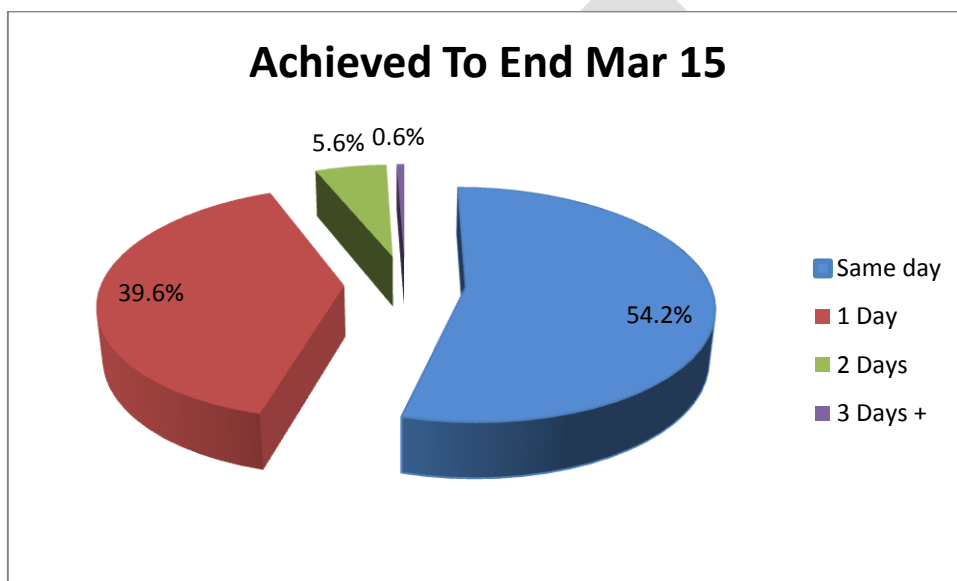
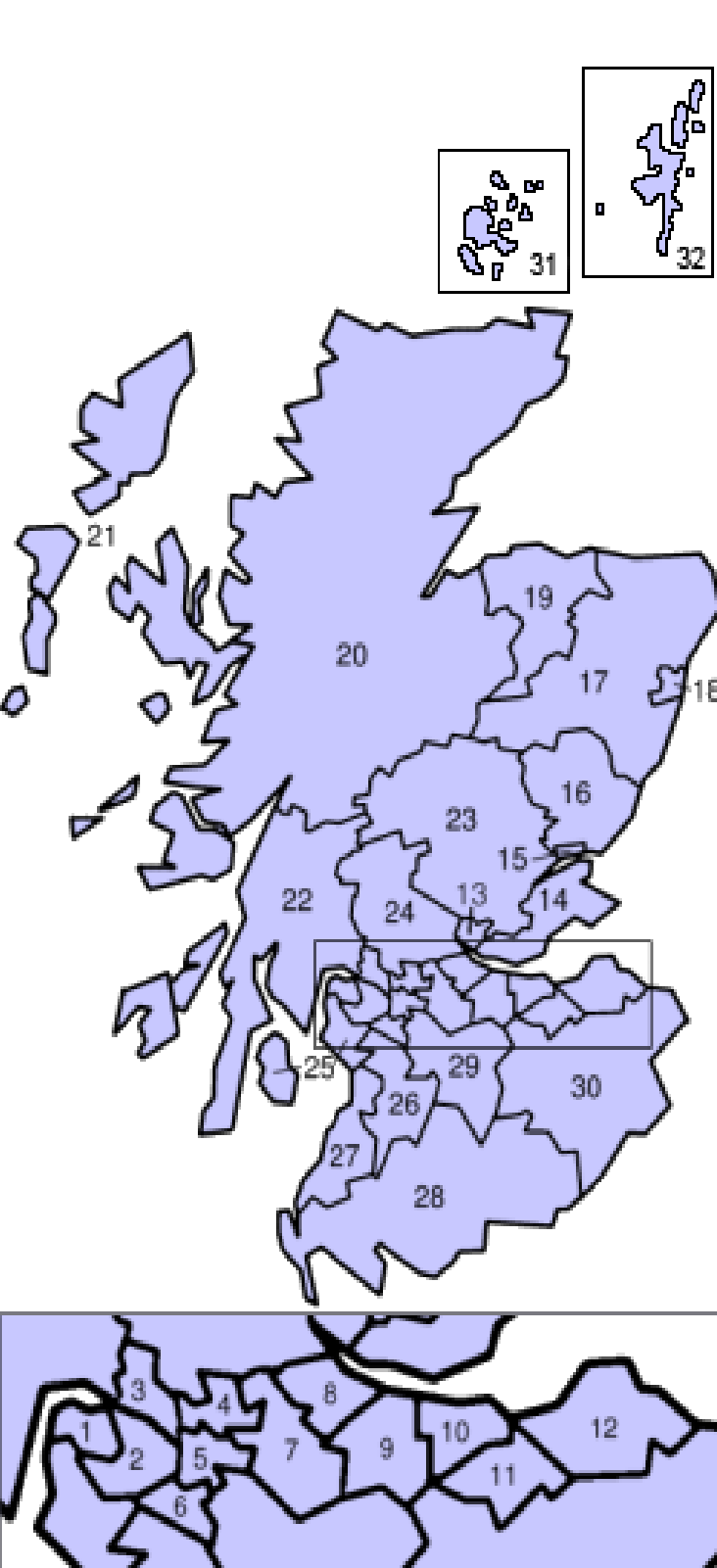


Table 2.2: Safeguarder Allocations by Type of Proceedings

Type of Hearing	Nos.	%
Sheriff Court	773	49%
Children's Hearing	812	51%
Total	1585	100%

Table 2.3: Safeguarder Allocations and Availability across Scotland: 2014-2015

20. Highland Safeguarders - 16 Appt by hearing – 21 Appt by Court – 27	31. Orkney Islands Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing – 4 Appt by Court – 2	32. Shetland Islands Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing – 3 Appt by Court – 2	19. Moray Safeguarders - 13 Appt by hearing - 7 Appt by Court – 21
21. Eilean Siar Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing - 2 Appt by Court – 2			18. Aberdeen Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing - 8 Appt by Court - 20
22. Argyll & Bute Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing - 11 Appt by Court – 8			17. Aberdeenshire Safeguarders - 11 Appt by hearing - 11 Appt by Court – 8
23. Perth & Kinross Safeguarders - 19 Appt by hearing - 11 Appt by Court – 36			16. Angus Safeguarders - 17 Appt by hearing - 10 Appt by Court – 36
24. Stirling Safeguarders - 21 Appt by hearing - 15 Appt by Court – 25			15. Dundee Safeguarders - 27 Appt by hearing - 87 Appt by Court – 78
29. South Lanarkshire Safeguarders - 15 Appt by hearing - 27 Appt by Court – 24			14. Fife Safeguarders - 22 Appt by hearing - 52 Appt by Court – 121
25. North Ayrshire Safeguarders - 17 Appt by hearing - 50 Appt by Court – 10			13. Clackmannanshire Safeguarders - 18 Appt by hearing - 12 Appt by Court – 23
26. East Ayrshire Safeguarders - 16 Appt by hearing - 23 Appt by Court – 4	30. Borders Safeguarders - 11 Appt by hearing - 13 Appt by Court – 3		
27. South Ayrshire Safeguarders - 17 Appt by hearing - 31 Appt by Court – 5	28. Dumfries & Galloway Safeguarders - 4 Appt by hearing - 43 Appt by Court – 3		
1. Inverclyde Safeguarders - 10 Appt by hearing - 15 Appt by Court – 1	7. North Lanarkshire Safeguarders - 16 Appt by hearing - 41 Appt by Court – 7		
2. Renfrewshire Safeguarders - 15 Appt by hearing - 25 Appt by Court – 9	8. Falkirk Safeguarders - 17 Appt by hearing - 21 Appt by Court – 6		
6. East Renfrewshire Safeguarders - 15 Appt by hearing - 5 Appt by Court – 2	9. West Lothian Safeguarders - 20 Appt by hearing - 17 Appt by Court – 30		
5. Glasgow Safeguarders – 37 Appt by hearing - 105 Appt by Court – 114	10. Edinburgh Safeguarders - 32 Appt by hearing - 67 Appt by Court – 95		
4. East Dunbartonshire Safeguarders - 13 Appt by hearing - 7 Appt by Court – 3	3. West Dunbartonshire Safeguarders - 15 Appt by hearing - 36 Appt by Court – 29	11. Mid Lothian Safeguarders - 27 Appt by hearing - 9 Appt by Court - 1	12. East Lothian Safeguarders - 29 Appt by hearing - 13 Appt by Court - 18
N.B. safeguarders may choose to cover more than one local authority within reasonable travelling distance			

3. Training, Development and Regional Networks

Whilst targets were met it is acknowledged that the operational function and core training (pre-appointment and court skills) has taken priority. In the latter half of the year, there has been an intensity in the planning and design work to realise the second phase of the development of the national panel by creating the minimum standards of safeguarding practice and the means to monitor and evidence this. It is envisaged that training and regional networks will now be reconfigured into this support and monitoring framework.

Table 3.1: Training and Regional Network Events

Date	Course Name	No. of Events	No. of Safeguarders Attending
May 2014	3 rd Day Pre-Appointment Training	1	22
June 2014	Pre-Appointment Training	1	9
June 2014	Court Skills	4	42
August 2014	3 rd Day Pre-Appointment Training	1	10
September/October 14	Regional Network Events	7	93
Mar 2015	Follow up Training	1	16

4. Investigation of Complaints about safeguarders

Over the past year there have been 29 complaints made against safeguarders. Whilst the number of complaints is small in relative terms to the total number of appointments, some have been complex and protracted in nature. The learning from the complaints so far has been incorporated into the work on the new standards and the performance support and monitoring framework. Learning and experience has also informed the revisions of the complaints policy to include concerns and practice issues.

Table 4.1: Complaints Summary

Source of Complaint	Complaints Received
Relevant Persons	12
Children's Hearings System Partners	11
Others	6
Total	29

Reasons for Complaint	Nos.
Content of report	7
Knowledge, attitude or behaviour	23
Other	1

Complaint Outcome	Nos.
Fully upheld	2
Part upheld	9
Not upheld	4
No finding made	1

Complaint Outcome	Nos.
No further action	7
Decision pending	4
Pending further investigation	1
On hold	1

Notes

1. Complaints classified as "No Further Action" were not progressed by the complainant following initial contact with CHILDREN 1ST.
2. "No Finding Made" applies to complaints where insufficient information is available to support a formal finding.

Looking ahead...

The Safeguarders Panel Team has established strong operational consistency and has used key learning from the set up phase in collaborating with safeguarders, key partners and stakeholders to continually improve. The strong leadership of the team delivered a clear analysis to the Scottish Government and in collaboration this has resulted in joint design and more suitable resourcing going forward. This will more effectively equip the Safeguarders Panel Team to deliver the fundamental intention of the 2012 changes: a national Safeguarder Panel to benefit children by delivering national, systematic consistency in the management of the safeguarder service in Scotland.

The consolidation of the transactional changes so far has provided stability and greater consistency to the national Safeguarders Panel. This has all served to inform the planning and design of the transformational change set for 2015 to 2017 around safeguarders' performance and this is well underway. The close work with safeguarders and stakeholders has led to a clear vision for the future delivery of a national Safeguarders Panel.

Vision - The overarching Vision for the Safeguarders Panel is as follows:

Excellent: what every child deserves, we will aspire to and support excellence

Transparent: be fair, equitable and accessible

Accountable: through ownership our actions stand up to scrutiny

Respectful: to the role and in all relationships and actions to fill it

Next steps and priorities

Begin to realise the vision, by clear communication of the finalised standards for safeguarders.

Clear communication and implementation of the Standards and accompanying Performance Support & Monitoring Framework

Phased implementation of the performance support and monitoring framework

Work with safeguarders and partners on the training and development needs of safeguarders

Improve understanding of the role of safeguarder

Build an evidence base of safeguarder practice

Develop the profile of the national Safeguarders Panel through collaboration with partners and stakeholders

Consider improved participation of children and young people in the national Safeguarder Panel.