



Warwickshire
Safeguarding
Adults Board

Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR)

Protocol and Guidance

Date of Publication:	(Refreshed) August 2026
Version:	v5.2



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1. Introduction

Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board's Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup is responsible for overseeing Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR), managing the process and assuring Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) that recommendations and associated actions have been addressed by the multi-agency partnership and individual agencies.

This document has been produced referencing the West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Guidance¹ and The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance, Section 44². It sets out the criteria for conducting a SAR and outlines options for conducting those reviews, mandates when they must be arranged and gives WSAB flexibility to choose a proportionate methodology. The associated guidance is designed to ensure governance and to provide a local process for achieving a complex and challenging task more effectively. The process flowchart illustrated in Appendix 1 provides an overview of the different stages of a SAR and how these will be managed by WSAB.

2. The Purpose of a SAR

Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR) provide an opportunity to:

- improve inter-agency working and outcomes for adults at risk of abuse and/or neglect
- share best practice; and
- Identify and disseminate lessons learned from the case to help prevent similar harm occurring again

SARs should help to achieve understanding for individuals, families, friends of adults who have died or been seriously abused or neglected.

Agencies will have their own internal procedures to review practice and raise standards, such as complaints, audits and serious incident investigations. A SAR is not intended to duplicate those processes, or to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect: other processes exist for that including criminal proceedings, disciplinary procedures, employment law and systems of service and professional regulation.

SARs are not enquiries into how an adult died or who is culpable; that is a matter for Coroners or Criminal Courts to determine, as appropriate.

¹ West Midlands Regional Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Guidance

² The Care Act 2014, s.44



3. Legal Context

Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 states that:

A Safeguarding Adults Board must arrange for there to be a review of a case involving an adult in its area with needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority has been meeting any of those needs) if:

- (a) there is reasonable cause for concern about how the SAB, members of it or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult, and
- (b) condition 1 or 2 is met.

Condition 1 is met if:

- (a) the adult has died, and
- (b) the SAB knows or suspects that the death resulted from abuse or neglect (whether or not it knew about or suspected the abuse or neglect before the adult died).

Condition 2 is met if:

- (a) the adult is still alive, and
- (b) the SAB knows or suspects that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect.

SARs can also be used to explore examples of good practice where it is likely that lessons can be applied to future cases.

4. Criteria for conducting a SAR

A SAR is not restricted to occasions where the safeguarding procedures have not been followed and can be applied where this has not been the case.

Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board will consider undertaking a SAR when it is known or suspected that:

1. Actions or omissions in a number of agencies involved in the provision of care, support or safeguarding of an adult, or group of adults, at risk of abuse or neglect have caused (or are implicated in) the death or serious harm of that individual or group of individuals; OR
2. An adult or group of adults at risk die or experience serious harm and there are concerns about how agencies have worked together to prevent, identify, minimise or address that harm and there are concerns about how this may place other adults at risk of serious harm; AND
3. There are clearly identified areas of learning and practice improvement or service development that have the potential to significantly improve the way in which adults at risk of abuse and neglect are safeguarded in the future.

³ Serious Abuse: considered to be life threatening which requires intervention to prevent death and/or where there is significant psychological impact of the abuse on the individual



5. Identification and referral for a SAR

Any agency or professional body, elected members, MPs, the Coroner or the individual concerned, or a family member may refer cases to Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board for consideration of a SAR.

Referrals must be made in writing using the SAR referral form illustrated in **Appendix 2**.

6. Deciding whether a SAR should be held

WSAB adopts an initial screening process for the management of all new SAR referrals received by the Board. This involves the Business Manager undertaking initial cross checks with relevant partners and then sharing this information, together with the new SAR referral with the WSAB Independent Chair & Scrutineer, who then determines the next steps. This process can conclude with one of the following outcomes:

- a) There is sufficient evidence to progress the SAR referral to a Rapid Review, or
- b) More information is needed to decide whether or not to progress the SAR referral to a Rapid Review, or
- c) There is no evidence of abuse or neglect and therefore, neither element of the SAR statutory test criteria (refer to section 3 above) is met and the referral is closed, and the referrer notified of this decision.

Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board has adopted the [Rapid Review](#) process introduced within Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) for new SAR Referrals. The application of this process will be based on the decision of the WSAB Independent Chair & Scrutineer.

The responsibility for conducting the Rapid Review meeting sits with the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup. They will consider the referral for a SAR taking into consideration any initial case information provided by agencies involved with the adult in respect of whom the referral has been made.

If the Rapid Review concludes the case has the potential to identify local or national learning and a decision is made to proceed with a SAR, the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup will use this information to consider the type and scope of the SAR to be undertaken.



7. Relationship to other Reviews

When a case meets the criteria for a SAR, WSAB will seek to identify what other reviews and processes are taking place, or being considered in relation to the same case, such as:

- Child Safeguarding Practice Review (formerly known as Serious Case Review)
- Domestic Abuse Related Death Review (DARDR)
- Police investigation/criminal proceedings
- Health and Safety Executive investigation/charges
- Coroner's inquest

Early contact will be made with the Chair of any parallel process in order to:

1. determine how the reviews can be effectively managed to maximise learning for individuals and organisation; and
2. avoid duplication for families and professionals.

Consideration will be given to:

- whether the actions of all agencies and all aspects of the case could be effectively covered by one of the reviews;
- whether it would be appropriate for related reviews to be chaired by the same person;
- whether some aspects of related reviews could be commissioned or undertaken jointly;
- ensuring that the terms of reference for related reviews effectively cover all aspects of the case;
- how to engage with adults, families and/or advocates to enable involvement and contribution to reviews, and how their expectations can be managed appropriately and sensitively.

8. Recommending the overall approach to the SAR

Once a decision has been taken by the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup to progress with a SAR, in consultation with the WSAB Independent Chair & Scrutineer, the Business Manager will determine which review methodology is to be used for the SAR. The following points will also be taken into consideration as part of this process:

- Which agencies should be asked to participate in the SAR
- Whether the agencies concerned are required to secure their files
- Which methodology should be used to facilitate learning in the case
- The Terms of Reference for the SAR and outline timescales
- The required output from the SAR (e.g. a report)
- The timescales for completion of the SAR
- The appointment of an Independent Reviewer and agreement of their terms of reference
- How and when to communicate the key messages of the review with the public/media
- How the adult and/or their family or advocate will be involved in the review and the level of their involvement and how they will be informed



- Whether or not to communicate with the person who is alleged to have caused the abuse or neglect

All reviews will establish a Review Panel who will be responsible for overseeing and contributing to the SAR process on behalf of their respective organisations and have decision making authority.

9. SAR Methodologies

WSAB is clear that there are many ways for the Partnership to achieve learning, but the review must be proportionate in the approach it takes.

Listed below are some examples of review methodologies which could be considered. This is not an exhaustive list, and the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup may wish to use its collective expertise to recommend an alternative approach, if and where appropriate:

- SCIE Learning Together Model
- Individual Management Reviews (IMRs)
- Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
- Peer Review (PR)
- Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)
- Root Cause Analysis (RCA)
- Multi-Agency Combined Chronology

Regardless of which methodology is used, contributing agencies need to be mindful that there may be public scrutiny of information provided by agencies to the SAR and, in particular, HM Coroner may request information. All agencies should therefore ensure their senior managers approve any written submissions to a SAR, and where they consider it appropriate, seek legal advice prior to submission.

The WSAB Business Manager will write to agencies to confirm their knowledge of the review and request them to secure files.

10. Information Sharing

This SAR Protocol and Guidance needs to be viewed alongside Section 45 of The Care Act 2014, Supply of Information, and be fully compliant in those circumstances where information is required from other persons to enable WSAB to exercise its functions.

Information shared as part of the SAR process is confidential and therefore the following information security precautions will be taken for information shared:

- A confidentiality Agreement will be signed by each member of the SAR Panel on/before the first meeting of the SAR Panel
- Information pertaining to a SAR will be marked as 'SENSITIVE'
- Information will be transferred by email only when there is a secure email available. In all other circumstances information will be transferred via recorded delivery or hand delivery



marked for the attention of the addressee only. A return address should be included on the outer envelope to avoid the need for it to be opened should it not be delivered.

- Information relating to a SAR should not be stored alongside a person's normal records. They should be stored separately, with limited access to those identified as requiring access.
- The SAR report and learning resources are the property of WSAB.

11. Communications

Effective communications are a key part of the SAR process. It is important that whenever a SAR is to be conducted, the communications professionals in the different organisations are alerted.

The WSAB Business Team will work with Warwickshire County Council Communications Team who will be the lead organisation in guiding WSAB's communication requirements. This will include liaising with communications leads in WSAB's member organisations and initiating and implementing a communications plan.

The communications plan for each SAR will take account of communication requirements for a range of audiences / stakeholders including:

- The family
- Between member organisations of Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board
- Within the different organisations
- With the public
- With the media

All communications will need to take account of any legal issues e.g. requirements for information to be published, constraints relating to identification of individuals involved in SARs, on-going legal action and Coroners' Court proceedings.

WSAB will be kept informed regularly throughout the SAR process. This will be achieved by:

- Agreeing a timetable and protocol at the outset of all SARs
- Regular updates at WSAB meetings
- Presentation of final reports and briefings for sign-off ahead of publication.

12. Implementation of the learning from SARs

WSAB will ensure that the findings, recommendations, and action plans from SARs are endorsed at a senior level by each agency.

SARs action plans will be constructed in the following way:

- Who will be responsible for the actions
- The timescale for completion of the actions
- The intended outcome of the various actions and recommendations
- The means of monitoring and reviewing the intended improvements in practice and systems

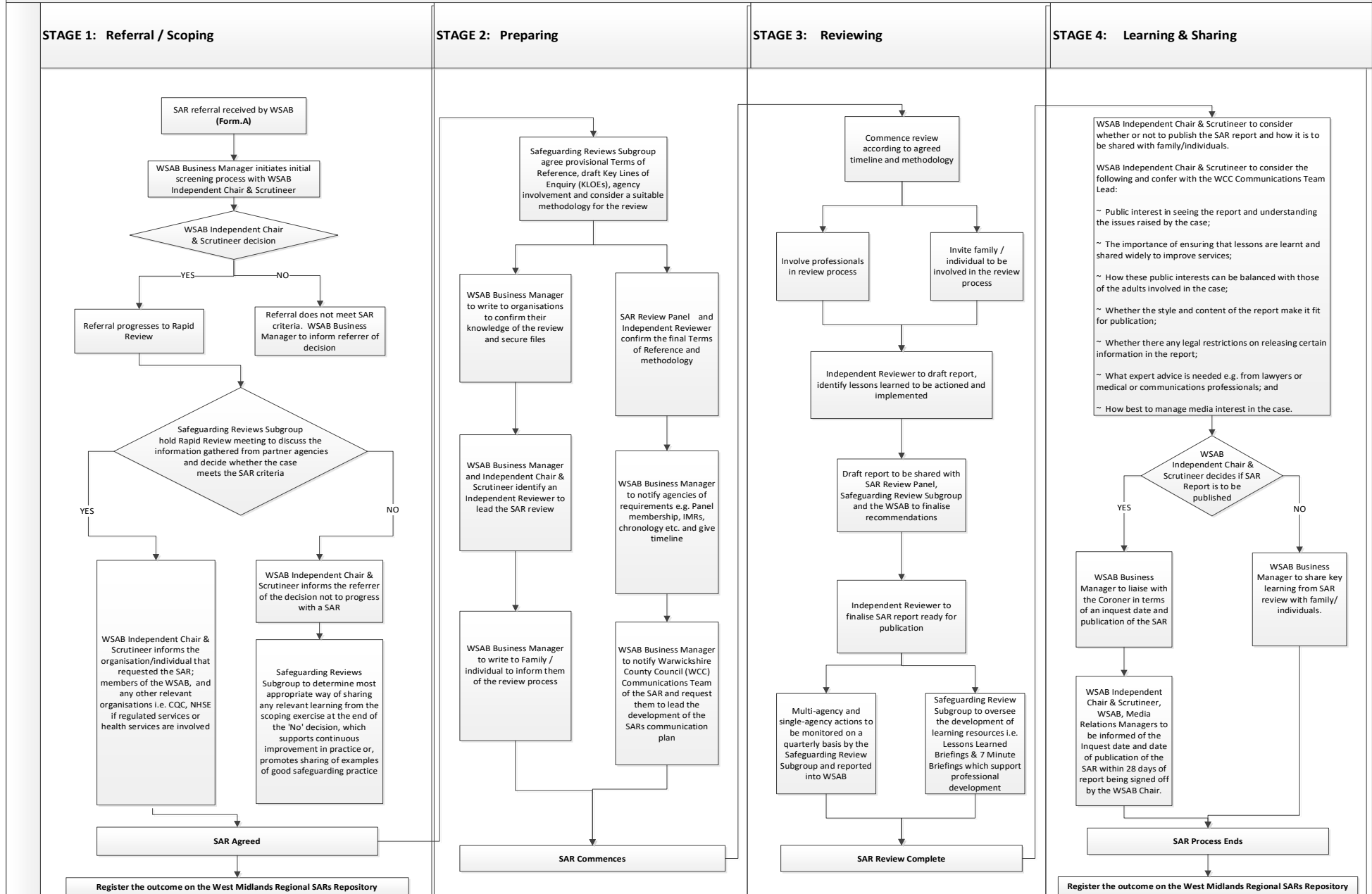


The Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of actions arising out of all safeguarding reviews.

WSAB will ensure that learning from SARs is shared across the wider partnership to improve frontline practice. Lessons Learned Briefings will be published to help cascade the learning from completed SARs, as well as learning from initial scoping exercises where cases did not meet the criteria for a formal review, but which did identify key learning points.

Appendix.1

WSAB Safeguarding Adults Review Flowchart





Appendix.2

SAR Referral Form (SAR Form A)

Please provide as much detail as possible to Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board to enable the Safeguarding Reviews Subgroup to agree an appropriate and proportionate response to the referral.

Please share this referral with your organisational Safeguarding Lead prior to submission to ensure that internal governance has been applied.

If you have any questions, please contact Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager via email:
WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk

(Electronic versions preferred)

1. Referrers Details	
Date of Referral	
Name of Referrer	
Designation	
Organisation	
Address	
Tel. No	
Secure Email Address	

2. Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(if appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			
Faith/Religion			
Disability			
Next of Kin			
Contact Details <i>(inc tel no)</i>			
Name and contact details of any formal/informal carers for the adult			
Details of any Dependents			
3. Other Organisations / Service Providers Involved <i>(If known)</i>			
Organisation	Contact Person	Tel. No	Email

4. Details of Adult Death / Serious Incident
Please provide as much detail as possible, including the location / address where alleged incident or incidents occurred.

5. Please state why you think this case may meet criteria for a SAR
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Please state which of the following Care Act s44 criteria does this case meet? Tick all that apply. Please see Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board SAR guidance for further information: <https://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk>

- ☐ The adult has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority has been meeting any of those needs)
- ☐ There is reasonable cause for concern about how the Safeguarding Adult Board, members of it or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult
- ☐ The adult has died and you know or suspect that the death resulted from abuse or neglect (whether or not it knew about or suspected the abuse or neglect before the adult died)
- ☐ The adult is still alive and you know or suspect that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect

Further information:

6. Is there a legal case pending?	Y / N / Don't Know
7. Is this case undergoing a Police investigation?	Y / N / Don't Know
8. Is the case awaiting a Coroner's Inquest?	Y / N / Don't Know
9. Your Manager's Details	

Full Name(s)	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Address	
Secure Email Address	
Tel.No	

10. Where to send this form

Please return this completed form to:

WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk and title your email '***SENSITIVE: SAR referral FAO
Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager***'

This form must only be sent by secure email. Please contact Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board Business Team at WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk for advice if you do not have access to secure email.

FOR WARWICKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD OFFICE USE ONLY	
Date referral received by Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board	
Date referred to WSAB Independent Chair & Scrutineer	