



Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Manager's Blog

October 2016

A safeguarding community

I popped into my local corner shop at the weekend to buy a paper and some milk and Angie, the woman who served me, asked 'How have you been? Haven't seen you in recently!' (I normally go in most Saturdays). 'No,' I replied, 'just had some things on'. We then had a few moments of chat, you know the sort of thing, about the weather that day, who Norwich City FC were due to play, small stuff. I didn't feel she was being nosy or prying, we were just sharing a few minutes.

On the walk home this conversation prompted two thoughts. The first was about a story in the press a couple of days previously, about [Doreen Mann](#) and Sonia Congrave. Doreen is a regular customer of Sonia's, who works in a restaurant called Tomassi's. When Doreen hadn't been in as she normally did for her lunch, Sonia become concerned, and concerned enough to act and call the police. When the police called at Doreen's home they found she had been stuck in her bath for four days!

A second example is closer to home. A young man (I will call him Peter, not his real name) came into a Norfolk library very distressed and upset. A member of staff asked if he needed any help. Sobbing, Peter explained he was working long hours and everything had got on top of him. He felt exhausted and had recently lost his father. He was staying with a friend, but walking a long way to work and back. Peter didn't want to take any time off work as he didn't want to let his colleagues down.

A member of the library staff supported Peter to call work and say he was not able to come in that day. They also made some calls to find emergency accommodation, so he didn't have to impose on friends any more. Another visitor to the library, who had been sitting with Peter, also offered help.

A few days later, Peter came back into the library and said he felt much better from having a rest. Staff then supported him with finding more permanent accommodation and with other paperwork. Peter was asked what had made him come into the library that day, when he was at a complete loss about what to do.

He said “*you are all always so kind and helpful. I needed to feel safe and not alone and I just thought ‘the library, they will help me’*”

The second was a reminder of a very interesting area of work an ex colleague was researching, [social capital](#).

The [Office for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) notes that the concept of social capital became fashionable only relatively recently. However, the term has been in use for almost a century and the ideas behind it go back further still. “Social capital” may first have appeared in a book published in 1916 in the United States that discussed how neighbours could work together to oversee schools. Author Lyda Hanifan referred to social capital as

“those tangible assets [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely goodwill, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit”.

It was the relationship between Doreen and Sonia which triggered Sonia to act. Or to think about it from a different perspective, this was about safeguarding with a small ‘s’, supporting Peter the day he needed to feel safe and not alone. Although if Sonia had not thought to make that call it could have triggered safeguarding with a capital ‘S’.

Even in large towns and cities, there is always a small shop, café, garage, post office or pub who know their regulars and, may like Sonia, spot when someone has not been around as they have grown to expect. They can play a valuable role in safeguarding. **So next time you call in to a shop you use regularly, maybe start a conversation with the person who serves you - about what they could do if they notice a regular customer has not called in for a while. Like our parish councils, the business community can help us make Norfolk a safeguarding county.**

A heads up on Sustainability and Transformation Plans

In December 2015, the NHS shared planning guidance 16/17 – 20/21, outlining a new approach to help ensure that health and care services are built around the needs of local populations. To do this, every health and care system in England will produce a multi-year [Sustainability and Transformation Plan](#) (STP), showing how local services will evolve and become sustainable over the next five years – ultimately delivering the [NHS Five Year Forward](#).

The final STPs covering 44 geographic areas known as ‘footprints’ will be submitted by providers and clinical commissioning groups to NHS England in October. There is a STP for [Norfolk and Waveney](#)

While STPs may not be the top of your reading list, they will shape a significant part of the landscape in which we take adult safeguarding forward. The extent of any impact is hard to judge at the moment, but the interplay with adult safeguarding could give new ways to widen opportunities to take it forward. I will keep you posted.

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