

Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Manager's Blog

July 2020

A tiny piece of flint: small acts ... big impacts

In a similar way that actors are said to [avoid saying the name of William Shakespeare's play Macbeth when in the theatre](#) (the euphemism 'The Scottish Play' is used instead), so do some cyclists avoid the word 'puncture'. The word 'mechanical' is used as an alternative.

Out for a ride last week, I got one such 'mechanical'. After 20 minutes of struggle (and with some help), a tiny piece of flint was found and removed from the tyre. The smallest of objects, and a small act that had a ripple effect on my day. Late back from my ride, I was late to do the weekly shop. I arrived at the supermarket to find a massive queue of socially distancing shoppers. And so, it rolled on through my day.

Sure, it had no big consequences for me, but small acts have been incredibly impactful in history. Take **Frank Wills**, a security guard at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. On 17th June, 1972 Frank was making his midnight rounds when he noticed tape over the lock of a basement door. Thinking another worker had left it there accidentally, he removed it. He later found tape again in the same place and called the police, and the rest is history. Two years later, President Nixon resigned in disgrace over his involvement in the cover-up of the Watergate break-in.

We can also think of **David Blair**. David was second officer on the Titanic and when his roster was changed at the last minute, in the rush he forgot to hand over the key to his locker in the crow's nest. Inside were his binoculars. After the ship's sinking, Fred Fleet, a surviving lookout, revealed that with those binoculars the iceberg would have been spotted earlier and the ship would have avoided crashing into it.

The idea of *small acts ... big impacts* has been integrated into work to develop NSAB's [Locality Safeguarding Adult Partnerships](#) (LSAPs). NSAB places high value on the work of LSAPs, and their community focus is more important than ever, particularly as lockdown eases dramatically.

As we are now working to restart our LSAP meetings, Joan Maughan, NSAB's independent chair, has written to partners urging all organisations (small, medium or large) to make a special effort to attend the meetings (virtually) in order to share issues and concerns but also to identify local actions that will help safeguard vulnerable people across Norfolk.

In the past we have struggled to support the LSAPs effectively due to lack of capacity. I am very pleased to say this has changed with the arrival on the team of Becky Booth as Deputy Board Manager - see [March's 2020 blog](#).

Becky has a key responsibility to support our LSAPs and to ensure that there are effective links between work in the localities and the work of the board overall. She has done some excellent work to help 'refocus' the partnerships, with a clear plan around a set 'theme' for each 2 month block. Becky is promoting the notion that it is not all about the meetings, but also what happens between the meetings. What can be done between the meetings can be *small acts*. In the words of Vincent van Gogh, '*Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.*'

Here are 3 suggestions of small acts to support adult safeguarding in Norfolk:

- Read and then share the [position statement on Safeguarding Adults Review](#) (published 26 June)
- Post the graphics for our See Something Hear Something Say Something campaign on your social media feed – [click here to download the graphics: NSAB Current Campaigns](#)
- If your service / organisation is not connected to your local LSAP, [check out the website for contacts](#) and dial in for the restarted meetings

To paraphrase Howard Zinn, the American historian, playwright and socialist thinker... '*Small acts, when multiplied by thousands of people, can transform [Norfolk safeguarding adult activity]*'

Thank you
Walter Lloyd-Smith
NSAB Board Manager

Email: walter.lloyd-smith@norfolk.gov.uk
Wednesday 01 July 2020