

Support frontline workers to engage parents struggling with safer sleeping advice

The government needs to develop new tools to help prevent the [sudden unexpected death of infants \(SUDI\)](#), says a new review by the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

The independent panel of experts reviews serious child safeguarding incidents, when children have died or suffered serious harm, to learn how to improve the safeguarding system.

While the overall numbers of babies dying from SUDI are decreasing, a worrying number of deaths have been notified to the panel as serious child safeguarding incidents. Between June 2018 and August 2019, the deaths of 40 babies from SUDI were reported to the panel. Most of whom died after co-sleeping in bed or on a chair or sofa, often with parents who had consumed drugs or alcohol.

The review reveals families with babies at risk of dying in this way are often struggling with several issues, such as domestic violence, poor mental health or unsuitable housing. It found that these deaths often occur when families experience disruption to their normal routines and so are unable to engage effectively with safer sleeping advice.

Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and the associated anxieties about money, social isolation and mental health issues, disruptions that led to the deaths of these infants may be more prominent at present.

To address this, the panel is calling for local areas to reduce the risk of SUDI by incorporating it into wider strategies for responding to social and economic deprivation, domestic violence and parental mental health concerns. This should be backed up by new government tools and processes to support frontline practitioners and local safeguarding partners to make these changes.

Interim Chair of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, Karen Manners QPM said:

The unexpected death of an infant is a tragedy and although it's not always predictable, some babies appear to be more at risk.

Families with children at higher risk of SUDI are often struggling with several issues, such as domestic violence, poor mental health or unsuitable housing, and infants may die after co-sleeping on a sofa or with parents who have consumed drugs or alcohol.

Therefore, it's vital that practitioners work together to help

parents understand how to make sure that every sleep is a safe one for their baby.

Leading SUDI expert and Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Member, Prof Peter Sidebotham said:

It's important that we give all families information about safe sleeping, but for some families who are struggling with multiple issues, the existing information is simply not enough.

This is not about blaming parents who have suffered such tragedies. This is a societal issue and we need to listen to and talk with families realistically and honestly so we can make sure that their babies sleep safely all the time.

Chief Executive of The Lullaby Trust, Jenny Ward said:

This review highlights that safer sleep, despite being the best way to reduce the risk of SUDI, is not always easy to follow. We need to identify the families who require additional support to help make decisions that are right for them and their baby, particularly when faced with an unexpected situation such as when your baby is unwell or you are staying away from home.

Despite great reductions in SUDI rates over the past few decades there is still a lot of work to be done, and we know the devastation the death of a baby has on families. We welcome the recommendations and look forward to sharing our learning and knowledge around communicating with families to prevent more babies from dying.

The review examines the deaths of 14 babies from 12 local areas to understand how professionals can best support parents to ensure that safer sleep advice is heard and embedded.

The findings show that:

- families living within a context of recognised background risks, such as deprivation and overcrowding, domestic violence or poor mental health, are at heightened risk of losing a baby to SUDI – all those working with families need to recognise that and work together – this is not just an issue for midwives and health visitors
- we need a flexible and tailored approach to prevention that is responsive to the reality of people's lives – that means talking honestly with parents about how they will cope in different situations to ensure every sleep is safe
- the best local arrangements for promoting safer sleeping involve a range of professionals as part of a relationship-based programme of support,

embedded in wider initiatives to promote infant safety, health and wellbeing

- a prevent and protect practice model should be locally adopted to recognise the continuum of risk of SUDI, with support and interventions that are graded to reflect the needs of different families

The review makes recommendations for the Department for Education, Department of Health and Social Care, Home Office and Public Health England to:

- develop shared tools and processes to support front-line professionals from all agencies in working with families with children at risk to promote safer sleeping as part of wider initiatives around infant safety, health and well-being
- work with the National Child Mortality Database to explore how data collected through child death reviews can be cross-checked against those collected through serious incident notifications
- embed learning from this review as part of the refresh of the high impact areas in the Healthy Child Programme and the specification for health visiting

The review also recommends that further practice-based research is undertaken to establish the efficacy of different interventions to reduce the risk of SUDI and into the use of behavioural insights and models of behaviour change. The panel is exploring options to commission this research and is interested in hearing from organisations to partner on this work.

The panel's annual report shows that babies are most at risk of serious harm and death from abuse and neglect. Therefore, it is undertaking a further in-depth review into the non-accidental injury of infants under one year old.

The [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#) is an independent body that was set up to identify, commission and oversee reviews of serious child safeguarding cases. It brings together experts from social care, policing and health to provide a multi-agency view on cases which they believe raise issues that are complex, or of national importance.

The review examined 14 incidents of SUDI from 12 local areas that were representative of the 40 SUDI cases reported to the Panel between June 2018 and August 2019.

There were 4 parts to the review:

- fieldwork visits in the 12 local areas
- discussions with key professionals and experts in respect of SUDI
- a review of the research literature
- analysis of national child death review data 2018 to 2019

This was a qualitative study, based on interviews with practitioners and families, underpinned by factual details from each case.

Between 29 June 2018 and 30 June 2020, the panel received 757 rapid reviews relating to child abuse and neglect. Of these:

- 198 (26%) involved the death or serious harm of babies and young children due to non-accidental injury
- 62 (8%) involved the death of a child under one year old due to SUDI

Panel member, Dr Peter Sidebotham is available for interview on behalf of the panel. Please contact Amina Makele on 07889133791.

[New Homes England statistics show overall housing starts up in 2019-20, with a higher proportion of affordable homes](#)

- Proportion of affordable homes completed was up on the previous year.
- Overall starts were the highest since official starts were published in 2010-11, and completions the highest for five years.
- Homes for social rent were up by a 91 per cent increase on the previous 12 months, following the reintroduction of grant funding by the government.

Housing programmes delivered by Homes England saw an overall increase in starts and completions in 2019-20 compared to the previous year, according to [official statistics released today \(16 July\)](#).

Last year there were 47,965 new houses started on site and 40,452 houses completed between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. Three-quarters (75 per cent) of starts were for affordable homes, with the proportion up from two-thirds (67 per cent) from the previous year.

Homes England programmes are funded by central government to enable private registered providers, house builders, community groups and local authorities to deliver affordable housing.

Market starts – housing built for sale at market rates – were down by 21 per cent on the previous year. Fluctuations in the number of market starts and completions between periods reflects the nature of the programmes, with different types and sizes of sites starting at different times with varying build-out rates.

These latest figures show the highest overall level of starts since official figures were first published in 2009-10, and the highest overall level of completions for five years. Total starts for the previous year (2018-19) were 45,970 with 40,350 completions.

The drop in affordable completions is a result of delivery of different and

overlapping funding streams. Delivery through the 2015-18 AHP is tapering off as allocations complete, while the launch of SOAHP 2016-21 is now seeing increasing delivery.

Overall completions are likely to have been reduced by the impact of Covid-19 on housebuilding in March, when there has historically been an increased rate of completions very close to year end.

Of the starts on site, three-quarters (35,809 or 75%) were for affordable homes, a 17 per cent increase on 2018-19. These are the highest numbers of affordable home starts for ten years. Of the housing completions, 28,261 (70%) were for affordable homes, which is a 2 per cent decrease on 2018-19.

A total of 17,015 affordable homes started in 2019-20 were for Affordable Rent – down 4 per cent on the previous year. There were 11,656 starts under schemes including Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy – up 1 per cent on last year. There were 4,739 starts defined as “Affordable Tenure TBC” homes, where the ultimate tenure category is not known until completion (see note 4 below).

The remaining 2,399 were for Social Rent, a 91 per cent increase on the previous 12 months, following the reintroduction of Social Rent as an eligible tenure for grant funding by the government, which took effect in July 2018.

Of the affordable homes completed, 16,863 were for Affordable Rent – representing an 11 per cent decrease on the previous year, whereas the 9,920 completed under affordable housing schemes including Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy represent a 12 per cent increase on 2018-19. There were 1,478 Social Rent completions, up 49 per cent on the previous year.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP said:

“We are determined to ensure all have access to good quality housing and building green, well-designed homes is at the heart of this Government’s mission to support people in every part of the country.

“These figures show Homes England starting the highest number of affordable homes in a decade and a doubling of new social rent homes, meaning many thousands of jobs have been supported too.

“And more homes will be coming as we invest £12 billion to deliver up to 180,000 new affordable homes for families across the land.”

Simon Dudley, Interim Chair of Homes England, said:

“We are pleased to see that the proportion of affordable homes increased significantly last year, and that increased government funding has led to a big increase in the social rent start figures.

“We don’t know the precise impact of the lockdown on completions last year, but we do know Covid-19 is having a major impact on the housing sector and the wider economy in the current year. So it has been really encouraging to see work on site starting to pick up again.

“We welcome the Prime Minister’s recent commitment to building more homes and the additional £450m secured for the Home Building Fund underlines our determination to support SMEs.”

Summary table

HOUSING STARTS	2019-20	2018-19	Variance	% Variance
Affordable Rent	17,015	17,772	-757	-4%
Social Rent	2,399	1,255	1,144	91%
Intermediate Affordable Housing	11,656	11,540	116	1%
Affordable Tenure TBC	4,739
Total Affordable Housing Starts	35,809	30,567	5,242	17%
Market	12,156	15,403	-3,247	-21%
Total Housing Starts	47,965	45,970	1,995	4%
HOUSING COMPLETIONS	2019-20	2018-19	Variance	% Variance
Affordable Rent	16,863	18,889	-2,026	-11%
Social Rent	1,478	995	483	49%
Intermediate Affordable Housing	9,920	8,842	1,078	12%
Total Affordable Housing Comps	28,261	28,726	-465	-2%
Market	12,191	11,624	567	5%
Total Housing Completions	40,452	40,350	102	0.25%

Notes to editors

National housing statistics are published twice a year showing half and full year starts and completions as part of planned national statistical releases. The next release is half-year starts and completions, which are due to be published in November/December. Housing figures cannot be provided outside of these official releases.

This release presents the housing starts on site and housing completions delivered by Homes England between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2020 in England excluding London (for both the current and historical series) with the exception of the Build to Rent (BTR), Builders Finance Fund, Get Britain Building and The Home Building Fund – Short Term Fund (HBF – STF) programmes which are administered by Homes England on behalf of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and where delivery covers all of England including London.

Since April 2012, the Mayor of London has had oversight of strategic housing, regeneration and economic development in London.

“Affordable Tenure TBC” refers to units that have reached the start on site milestone but where the tenure of these units has not yet been specified. This was introduced as a flexibility for Strategic Partnerships to enable them to determine tenure close to or at the point of completion. These starts will be restated under their specified tenure headings in future national statistics updates once the tenure has been established at completion.

The list of programmes included in these totals are detailed in the official housing statistics report, which can be found [here](#)

Homes England also manages the Help to Buy equity loan scheme in England (including in London on behalf of the GLA). However, the completions are reported by the Department for Communities and Local Government and, therefore, are excluded from these statistics.

Changes to Ofsted's post-inspection processes and complaints handling

Press release

Ofsted revises post-inspection processes and complaints handling to bring about greater consistency across its work.



Ofsted is revising its post-inspection and complaints-handling arrangements so that any queries or concerns about an inspection can be dealt with quickly and before an inspection report is finalised.

This follows a [public consultation](#), published in March 2020. Ofsted received more than 600 responses from a wide range of respondents, including early years providers, schools, further education and skills providers, social care providers and parents.

Ofsted will:

- introduce greater consistency in post-inspection arrangements across inspection remits
- standardise at 5 working days the period allowed for providers to review their draft report and raise any issues of factual accuracy and about the inspection process
- consider and respond to formal complaints from inspected providers before we publish their inspection report, if these complaints are submitted within 5 working days of Ofsted issuing the final report
- retain current arrangements for internal reviews into complaints handling, including the scrutiny panel

Most respondents supported the proposals and responses were broadly consistent across all the different areas that Ofsted inspects. After considering all the consultation responses received, Ofsted plans to implement the new arrangements, including providing more time for formal complaints to be submitted. The [consultation outcome](#) is published today.

Ofsted will also update its complaints policy and will publish this in the coming months.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman said:

I am pleased with the positive responses to our consultation. We need to be able to deal quickly and effectively with queries and concerns before we finalise and publish an inspection report.

The changes we are making will help to make sure our processes are efficient, fair and responsive to the providers we inspect.

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[Illegal waste activities targeted in Essex](#)

Environment Agency staff joined forces with officers from Essex Police, Essex County Council Planning Enforcement and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service to enter onto a suspected illegal waste site in Essex.

The visit, which took place on 30 June under the name Operation Nutmeg and with strict adherence to social distancing measures, followed on from an earlier visit to the site in the Bradwell Wick area carried out at the start of June.

The aim behind the planned action was to work with enforcement partners to gather intelligence and evidence and disrupt those believed to be involved in illegal waste activities.

Environment Agency Enforcement Team Leader Lesley Robertson said:

Waste crime undermines legitimate business, can cause harm to the environment and misery for local people.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, we are continuing to work with our enforcement partners to disrupt illegal waste activities and remain committed to the closure of illegal waste sites, whilst always adhering to social distancing measures.

We urge anyone with information about waste crime to contact our hotline 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or on [their website](#).

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, said:

Illegal waste disposal is damaging to the environment, but also has significant social and economic impacts.

It is not acceptable and we are working hard in Essex to tackle offending and stop it happening in the first place. We welcome activity, such as Operation Nutmeg, which helps to tackle this activity and send a clear message to offenders.

We encourage all residents and businesses in Essex to be vigilant when disposing of waste; to make sure they understand their duty of care and to always check for a waste carrier license when someone is disposing of things on their behalf.

Sergeant Paul Brady from the Essex Police Rural Engagement Team said:

We treat the illegal depositing of waste extremely seriously and work with our partners to bring offenders to justice. Disposing of waste illegally will not be tolerated in Essex and you will risk a prison sentence or a hefty fine from the courts.

Cllr Tony Ball, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Growth said:

As the Waste Planning Authority we will not hesitate to take enforcement action against those who breach planning regulations. The success of this operation shows what effective partnership working between ourselves and the Environment Agency can achieve.

Illegal waste sites can cause serious pollution incidents, bad smells, chemical spills, blight on the landscape, and misery for surrounding communities.

Sites that store or treat hazardous waste and chemicals without safeguards are breaking the law and risk causing serious pollution incidents that damage rivers, habitats and pose a risk to human health.

Vacancy: Safety Data Co-Ordinator

News story

The Air Accidents Investigation Branch are recruiting a safety data co-ordinator



Are you data fluent, able to provide quality analysis and reports to support good business decision-making?

Can you work with databases, data collection systems, data analytics and dashboards?

If so, this exciting opportunity as our Safety Data Co-Ordinator is for you, and we'd love to hear from you.

Further information including how to apply can be found on the [Civil Service Jobs Website](#)

[Read more about working at the AAIB.](#)

The deadline for applications is 11:55 pm Thursday 13th August 2020.

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