

# BURNT BRIDGES?

## Thematic Review 2021 - 7 Minute Briefing

This 7 Minute Briefing gives an overview of the Thematic Review undertaken by the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board.

### 1.0 Why did the review take place?

Over a 4-month period in winter 2018/19; 5 men died on the streets in Halifax. There was no process for reviewing the deaths of people who live on the street, but there were concerns as to how these men were supported and safeguarded. Therefore, the thematic review considered how systems and multi-agency working in Calderdale could be improved.

### 2.0 What did we learn?

The overarching finding was that these men had multiple and complex needs (MCN) (homelessness, addiction, offending behaviour, and mental ill-health) resulting in multiple disadvantages. There was evidence of trauma in their lives which has been shown to impact on a person's ability to cope, their sense of safety, ability to self-regulate, sense of self, perception of control and interpersonal relationships. This has a significant impact on seeking help and on engagement.

### 3.0 Learning – Engagement

Professionals must understand barriers to engagement and support, advocate, and refer to services rather than rely upon the limited success of simply signposting.

### 4.0 Learning 2 – Culture and attitude

Professional or concerned curiosity must enable a holistic view of needs. Professionals must look beyond labels such as Beggars/ Rough sleepers/Drug Users to understand the real person if they are to safeguard them from harm.

### 5.0 Learning 3 – Burnt Bridges

People who experience MCN need professionals who are persistent in their efforts to provide services. A multi-agency response and robust inter-agency communication is essential. This is not a housing problem alone. Their multiple needs disadvantage them in securing and maintaining tenancies, reportedly 'burning their bridges' with landlords and agencies.

### 6.0 Learning 4 – Access to Health Care

All these men had significant health concerns and any missed appointments should give cause for concern. Dual diagnosis of substance misuse and mental health causes a risk of failing to respond to either need.

### 7.0 Learning 5 - Safeguarding

People living street-based lives are vulnerable to harms and must be seen as such with a robust multi-agency response to safeguarding. Pathways should be clear into statutory services.