

Cumbria Adults Safeguarding Board is campaigning to raise awareness of adults in need of care and support who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse and neglect in Cumbria.

Mate Crime

What is Mate crime?

People with learning disabilities can often be befriended by people who then exploit them. This is known as Mate Crime.

There are groups and individuals who pretend to be friends but who are really taking advantage of people. Mate Crime often goes unnoticed due to the apparent friendship that the criminal has formed with the victim. People who experience mate crime rarely perceive it as a crime, and even when they do they are still very unlikely to report it.

Often starting as a friendship, Mate Crime can lead to the disabled victim being exploited, whether sexually, financially or physically.

Jilly's story

Jilly had lived in children's homes and residential care homes for most of her life. She'd always felt safe in care but was desperate to have her own place and be more independent. Jilly was delighted when she got her own flat and had it just the way she wanted. And she was really pleased when her neighbours began to visit her – she'd had never had friends before, so when they asked if they could borrow her toaster, microwave, pans and then TV, Jilly thought this was okay because they were her friends.

Sometimes Jilly's friends also asked if they could borrow money - she did this because she was so happy to have her own friends for the first time. Jilly's friends never returned her possessions or the money she had loaned them. After a while she told her social worker about what she was doing with her friends and her social worker explained that these people were not her friends. Jilly became very sad and reclusive - she kept her door locked and never went out - she didn't trust anyone any more.

How to report a concern

If someone is at-risk, or you suspect someone is at risk, you should tell someone as soon as possible. In the first instance, you can contact your local adult social care office:

South Lakeland	01539 713378
Furness	01229 407446
Eden	01768 812243
Allerdale	01900 706301
Copeland	01946 506352
Carlisle	01228 221590

In an emergency, people can contact the adult social care duty team (out of hours) on **01228 526690**, or call **999** for the police.

