



Collaboration Network

Supporting Cross-Sector Collaboration

www.collaborationnetwork.co.uk | www.cn-x.co.uk

A background image showing the silhouettes of five people on a rocky, mountainous terrain. They are helping each other climb; some are standing on rocks, while others are being pulled up or reaching out. The scene is set against a warm, golden-yellow sky, suggesting a sunrise or sunset.

Be Part of Vulnerability Week 2025

T.R.U.S.T

#VulnerabilityWeek2025

Vulnerability Week Guide

23 - 27 June 2025



Collaboration Network

Supporting Cross-Sector Collaboration

Vulnerability Week 2025 Guide

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I’m supporting Vulnerability Week; coming together to focus on the common themes and challenges our customers face across industries to bring about positive outcomes.

Karen Stewart
Vulnerability Lead
Phoenix Group

Contents

Page 4.	<u>What is Vulnerability Week 2025?</u>
Page 5.	<u>About Us</u>
Page 6.	<u>How to Get Involved</u>
Page 10.	<u>Events</u>
Page 16.	<u>How Can you Promote Vulnerability Week?</u>

#VulnerabilityWeek2025





What is Vulnerability Week 2025?

23 – 27 June 2025: A Focus on Trust

Following the success of the inaugural Vulnerability Week in 2024, we are thrilled to unveil plans for *Vulnerability Week 2025*. This year's theme will centre around trust, with a special focus on helping businesses foster greater trust within their vulnerable customer demographic and beyond.

About Vulnerability Week 2025

Vulnerability Week 2025 is dedicated to sharing insights and best practices across industries to help businesses create stronger, more empathetic connections with customers who have additional needs. The goal is to guide businesses in cultivating trust through transparency, empathy, and understanding, ensuring that vulnerable customers feel respected and supported at all touchpoints.

Our Mission

Our mission for Vulnerability Week is to help businesses demonstrate how they can build trust by:

- **Transparency:** Opening lines of communication to ensure clarity and understanding.
- **Empathy:** Developing an approach that reflects genuine concern for the needs of vulnerable customers.
- **Understanding:** Offering solutions that respect the unique challenges faced by these individuals.

By raising awareness of the barriers vulnerable customers face and the mechanisms that can be used to overcome these, we aim to inspire positive change. Vulnerability Week will encourage businesses, employees, and individuals to create safe and accessible spaces where trust is not only earned but actively nurtured. Through collaboration and meaningful action, we will strengthen the importance of trust as the foundation for empowering vulnerable customers and fostering lasting, positive relationships.

Why Participate?

By participating in Vulnerability Week 2025, your business will demonstrate a commitment to ensuring all vulnerable customers feel:

- **Valued**
- **Respected**
- **Supported**

Through transparency, understanding, and inclusive action, businesses will play an essential role in creating environments where vulnerable customers are treated with dignity and care. We look forward to working together to make Vulnerability Week 2025 a landmark event for driving positive, lasting change in customer relationships.

About Us

The Collaboration Network is a cross-sector membership community supporting our Members to improve their support for customers and colleagues through case study-led knowledge sharing, insightful discussions and training.

Vulnerability is one of our 6 core pillars, alongside:

- **Complaints**
- **Customer Experience**
- **Regulatory Compliant**
- **Colleague Mental Health & Wellbeing**
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.**

If you want to continue to develop your support for vulnerable customers through collaboration, or engage with the Network on other topics, please [reach out](#).



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How to Get Involved

Throughout the week, there are a number of ways in which you and colleagues can get involved. We have a range of activities for you to run within your business, online and in-person events for you to join and a variety of social media posts you can use to show your support and action.

Activities

“A Day in Their Shoes” Challenge

Activity: Organise “A Day in Their Shoes”, where employees are asked to live a day with the same limitations as their vulnerable customers encounter (e.g., limited income, mobility challenges, or language barriers). Ahead of the day, gain insights from your colleagues to understand what they believe to be the most common vulnerabilities your customers face are, and alongside your vulnerability data create a list of vulnerable circumstances that your customers face and offer this to colleagues to choose from.

Example: An employee could live on a low budget for a week to understand financial strain and how it affects purchasing decisions, or aim to complete their weekly tasks without using their car.

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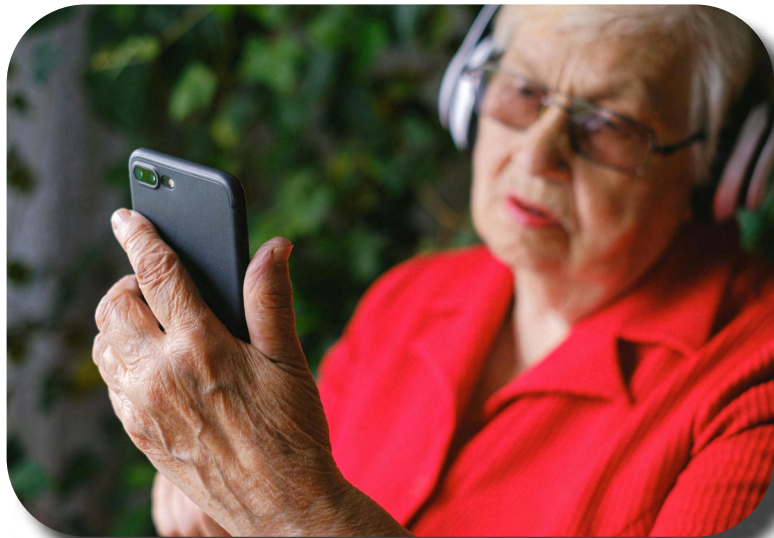
How to Get Involved



Vulnerability Simulation Workshops

Activity: Organise workshops where employees simulate living with various physical vulnerabilities (such as visual impairment and hearing loss,). They could try to use services, navigate a website, or complete tasks while facing these limitations.

Example: Hold a workshop where staff members wear noise-cancelling headphones and try to phone your contact centre with the phone on loud speaker, helping them understand accessibility issues for customers with hearing impairments.



Public Device Charging

Activity: We all rely on phones, tablets and mobile phones to manage our day to day lives, and how we communicate with businesses. Whether it is a mobile banking app, logging on to your energy providers account to compare fixed tariffs or calling your water company to let them know you can't make your next payment, devices are an essential tool to manage most interactions with businesses.

This week, challenge yourself to only use public charging points to charge any devices you have. Vulnerable customers, such as those experiencing homelessness, or individuals in financial distress, may have limited access to charging infrastructure which can therefore impact their ability to interact with a business.

Tip: Often the places we charge our devices in public require us to spend money, such as a local cafe or restaurant. Think creatively about places where you can charge for free, such as popping to the local library or to a friends house.

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How to Get Involved

Panel Discussion

Activity: Organise for a mix of operational, frontline and/or senior leadership colleagues from across the business to sit on a panel discussion to understand their views on whether your customers truly trust your business, and what you have done to earn that trust. Views may vary depending on the role of the colleague and will help give insights on how strategy and vision may differ from frontline action and potential customer views, and how these can be addressed.

Tip: Questions for the panel could come anonymously from colleagues in the weeks leading up to the panel, and the discussion can be recorded/summarised so everyone can access it.



Vulnerability Showcase

Activity: Bring to life your vulnerable customers and the support you gave. You can select customer cases where there was a disclosure of vulnerability, how this was handled and why the customer was right to trust the business with this information (i.e what benefit did they get and how were they supported through sharing information on their situation with you). This will give colleagues real life examples which help them further build trust with customers.

Tip: You could find five customers and share one per day during Vulnerability Week, aligning to the different themes of each day.



How to Get Involved



Vulnerability Quiz

Activity: Different teams from across the business can compete to see who knows your customers & the support you offer the best.

Questions could include:

- List 3 adjustments to communication preferences we can make for customers.
- What % of our customers are listed as vulnerable on our system right now?
- Do customers who are deaf have the ability to interact with us seamlessly, and if so how?
- Do we tell customers about the support they get if they disclose a vulnerability via our website and/or other channels?
- Why should our customers tell us about their vulnerability?

Tip: When providing the answers to the questions, make sure you give some detail where needed and links through to where colleagues can find out more information. Use the teams answers as not only an opportunity to shine a spotlight on vulnerability but also to inform future training/process changes/internal communications etc.

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Customer Interaction Reviews

Activity: Anonymise calls and/or webchats and offer colleagues the opportunity to review them. For each, you can provide high level feedback on where the colleagues have best supported vulnerable customers to enact trust, and potential areas for improvement and examples of these.

Tip: To encourage participation, offer colleagues who correctly identify the positive and negative aspects of the dialogue the opportunity to be entered into a draw to win a prize. Don't forget to let frontline colleagues whose interactions have been selected for the review ahead of time!





Vulnerability Week 2025 EVENTS

T.R.U.S.T

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Vulnerability Week 2025: Events



Monday 23 June 2025

Transparency

When businesses are open about their practices, policies, pricing, and any potential risks, it reduces confusion and empowers customers to make decisions based on clear, honest information. This sense of openness and honesty not only strengthens the relationship but also demonstrates a commitment to ethical practices, fostering long-term trust and confidence in the business, especially for those who may already feel uncertain or at risk.

- **Creating a safe disclosure environment - 10am - 10.45am via Zoom**

Case Study from Elizabeth Blakelock, Accessibility & Inclusion Manager and Kate Graham, Process Manager - Vulnerability, Accessibility, Inclusion & Bereavements, Monzo Bank

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/w8n1J-KbT9WJyGEmKlGnXA>

- **Transparency on data sharing and how it helps customers - 11am - 11.45am via Zoom**

Case Study from Ren Hooi, Founder & CEO, Lightning Reach

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Nr2DSd8rTlu69-u8RacUaw>

- **The importance of clear communications to build trust - 2pm - 2.45pm via Zoom**

Panel Discussion with Plain Numbers and Guests

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/KflvbRLyRT60sGyHaMrXhQ>

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Vulnerability Week 2025: Events

Tuesday 24 June 2025

Respect

Respect plays a vital role in building trust with vulnerable customers, as it creates an environment where they feel valued. When businesses demonstrate empathy and treat customers with respect, it encourages open communication and confidence, allowing customers to feel more comfortable engaging with the business and sharing their needs or concerns.

- **Building trust through partnerships - 10am - 10.45am via Zoom**

Case Study from Mike Rees, Corporate Partnerships Manager and Adam Whiteley, Corporate Partnerships Manager, Independent Age

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/c7SCXebzQniFGhBtLT6jmQ>

- **Supporting colleagues to understand and respect customers situations using innovative approaches - 11am - 11.45am via Zoom**

Case Study from Elephants Don't Forget

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fMWHc-lwQMa5F7CoFhRL3g>

- **Vulnerability strategy - where do we go from here? - 2pm - 2.45pm via Zoom**

Fireside chat led by Chris Fitch, Vulnerability Lead, Money Advice Trust

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/rbmV392iSNqCIAJBbPWY3A>

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Vulnerability Week 2025: Events



Wednesday 25 June 2025

Understanding

Understanding your customers and their needs is vital to keeping their trust. Through partnerships with other organisations, continuously improving products and services based on need, equipping your colleagues with the appropriate skills and knowledge through training and utilising your data effectively, you can continue to build a culture of trust between your customers, colleagues and business.

- **Vulnerability Summit, In-Person Conference, 9am – 4.15pm**

BSI offices,
Kitemark Court,
Davy Avenue, Knowlhill,
Milton Keynes, MK5 8PP

[Tickets available to purchase here](#) or via [CN-X for Members](#)



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Vulnerability Week 2025: Events

Thursday 26 June 2025

Support

Providing the appropriate support to customers is key to gaining and keeping their trust. For example, onmi-channel contact options that can be switched between seamlessly, and are reflective of the needs of your customer base, are essential.

- **Providing support for customers during challenging times - 10am - 10.45am via Zoom**

Case Study from Sam Gale, Training & Engagement Programme Lead, Samaritans

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/HpNZ88EPSeqcDq-bBKKO5A>

- **Supporting customers using the right communication channels - 11am - 11.45am via Zoom**

Insights from DeafPlus Pilot

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/1ahUrlaKQ-i8BiSejRuLXA>

- **Behaviour insights: why people who don't use digital channels perceive it isn't for them, and how to overcome these barriers - 2pm - 2.45pm via Zoom**

Research insights from Cambridge University and Cambridge Connect

Register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/hqyw-gQ2RXCYxmB3g8FD9g>

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Vulnerability Week 2025: Events



Friday 27 June 2025

Tailoring

Customer trust can be gained through designing services and support which meet their needs. This can be partly achieved through inclusive design, but although through utilising data and feedback on an on-going basis to continue to enhance services, support and products offered to customers.

*We will be completing a **charity walk** along the River Thames to raise money for **Alzheimer's Society**. The walk will follow the Thames Path from Richmond to Battersea Park. We would be delighted to have you joining us for the day. Please let us know and we will share the full information if you are interested. If you would like to sponsor us, [please visit our fundraising page](#).*



[Support our Fundraising Initiative in 2025](#)



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How Can you Promote Vulnerability Week?

We are encouraging everyone to use LinkedIn during Vulnerability Week to share what they are up to and how their company is supporting the initiative. When doing so, don't forget to tag **@CollaborationNetwork** and use the **#VulnerabilityWeek2025**.

To help you post, we have created a template below which you may want to use. [You can download it here.](#)

Be sure to let others know you are getting involved in the week!



What next?

Let us know how your organisation got involved, the changes you will be making and your learnings from the Week. We want to hear the action you are taking on the back of the participating in Vulnerability Week so that we can share best practice. If you want to be involved in this, or want more information on other sessions the Network is running, please reach out to [Jess](#) for more information.



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