

North Kent Methodist Circuit

Safeguarding Report to the Circuit Meeting 19 May 2021

Circuit Safeguarding Policy

The Circuit Meeting is required to review and approve the Circuit Safeguarding Policy each year. An updated copy of the policy has been provided with the meeting papers. Please read the policy carefully since it includes not only the responsibilities of church officers but also the responsibilities of the Circuit Trustees in relation to safeguarding.

Safeguarding Training on Zoom

We have just completed another round of **Foundation Module Safeguarding Training** on zoom. Thank you to those who gave up their time to attend.

Advanced Module training on Zoom. The zoom version of the Advanced Module (AM) is still to be rolled out; the Connexional Office is saying online training will be available from June but earlier attempts at the roll out have all been postponed. At present there is no arrangement for an extension of time for people to undertake this training. Those who require AM training must complete it by the end of 2021. It is essential that the people who need to attend book their place as soon as they become available in the South East District. If your role requires training it is **your responsibility** to make arrangements to attend.

I appreciate that this is all very unsatisfactory, but it is a consequence of the pandemic. However, as it stands if you do not attend the required training before the end of 2021 you will have no option but to resign from your role. It is understood that some people cannot access training on zoom: until restrictions on meeting in person are relaxed training will not be possible which we recognise will leave some people in difficulty.

Please ask your Church Safeguarding Officer (or me) if you are not sure about whether you need to attend training for any roles you have.

DBS checks

A DBS check is still necessary if your role requires it. These can be completed remotely but **the applicant must present the original versions of their documents when they first attend their lay employment or volunteering role.**

Reopening churches

The Church Safeguarding Officer must be involved in planning for reopening whether for worship and/or lettings. Please ensure that all DBS checks and Safeguarding training is up to date before people resume any activities with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

A reminder about Lettings. If church premises are used by other people (whether or not they pay to do so) they must complete the relevant forms which are available from TMCP www.t MCP.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use. They must also be given a copy of the church safeguarding policy and must formally accept that policy and agree to keep to it, unless they are a recognised organisation (eg scouts, guides) when their own policy applies.

Any Safeguarding Contracts should be reviewed to identify any changes that might need to be made.

Dealing with safeguarding issues during the pandemic

During the pandemic, please continue to report any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns in the usual way. Issues may come to your attention from providing pastoral support, providing essential services (if your church falls into this category) or from communication with people online.

Your District Safeguarding Officer (Philippa Read), Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Sue Byard) and your Church Safeguarding Officers and Ministers continue to be available for support and advice.

I am delighted that we will be voting at this meeting for new joint Circuit Safeguarding Officers to be appointed. Subject to their election (which will have happened by the time this agenda item is reached!) please support them by replying to their requests for information and being proactive when checks or training becomes due.

Sue Byard**Circuit Safeguarding Officer**