

# Safeguarding Newsletter

March 2020



## Welcome to the March 2020 Regional Safeguarding Newsletter: Safeguarding during the Covid-19 shutdown



### Visiting Guidelines

It is more important than ever, during this difficult period, to look after the vulnerable; particularly the elderly, the ill and those who are living alone. **This must be done, however, in a way that keeps everybody, including volunteers, safe.**

The Methodist Church has issued some useful, safeguarding specific, guidance which can be found on the [website](#). There is also a more detailed [document](#) with advice around carrying out visits. Please note in particular:

- All transactions involving money (such as doing someone's shopping) **must** be accurately recorded.
- Each volunteer **must** be directly responsible to a coordinator (such as the minister or pastoral secretary).
- Every effort should be made to avoid face-to-face contact where possible (e.g. conducting pastoral 'visits' by phone).
- All new volunteers **must** be recruited safely following church safeguarding guidance.

Feel free to use the forms at the back of this [document](#) as a template for keeping records.

### DBS Checks

DBS rules have been updated to allow checks to be completed without people having to meet face to face to examine documents. Documents can now be scanned or checked by videolink. The full announcement, with guidance, is [here](#).

Please note: **Anyone handling money (e.g. doing someone else's shopping) needs the highest level of DBS clearance.**

DDC, like so many other organisations, are having to cope with the effects of the Covid-19 shutdown. Applications will be processed as quickly as possible, but there may be some delays - please be patient!

### This issue contains:

- Visiting Guidelines
- DBS Checks
- Online Safety
- Safeguarding Training
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Domestic Violence Advice
- Useful Contacts

### Online Safety

During this period of social distancing and isolation it is likely that children and vulnerable people will be spending more time than usual online.

There are some resources [here](#) that parents, carers and those working with children may find useful to help keep children safe online.

## Domestic Abuse

During this period of lockdown, those who are living with domestic abuse are likely to be at an increased risk.

The following may prove useful resources :

**Domestic abuse during a lockdown:** [what you need to know](#)

**Restored:** [Working from home and domestic abuse](#)

Though these articles specifically talk about the abuse of women, the principles also apply to male victims.

**Help for male victims of abuse can be found through:** [Mankind](#)

## Useful Contacts

### Regional Safeguarding Officer:

Carolyn Godfrey  
07534 346374  
newcastle.darlington@dso.methodist.org.uk

### Chair of Regional Safeguarding Group:

Mark Braithwaite  
07771 771360  
markbraithwaite@btinternet.com

### Regional Safeguarding Administrator:

Ruth Godfrey  
07903 710759  
neregsafe.office@gmail.com

## Safeguarding Training

**All safeguarding training is now cancelled until further notice.**

Under normal circumstances, volunteers and employees are expected to complete the relevant level of training within six months of taking up their role. This may not be possible while the current restrictions are in place but the recruitment of new volunteers/employees should still be done according to safer recruitment practices.

- **Foundation Module Training:** If you need to complete the Foundation Module, please let your Circuit Safeguarding Officer know so that they can inform you when new dates are arranged.
- **Advanced Module Training:** If you need to complete the Advanced Module, and want to be contacted when new dates are arranged, please contact Ruth at: neregsafe.office@gmail.com and she will add you to her mailing list. (Please note, if you had a place booked at one of the cancelled sessions, you will automatically be contacted when new dates are arranged).
- **Train the Trainer Training:** Safeguarding Trainers will be contacted once the restrictions are lifted and new training can be arranged. In the meantime, if you have any questions, contact Ruth at: neregsafe.office@gmail.com

## Protecting Vulnerable People

While times of crisis do often bring out the best in people, it is also unfortunately true that they can be used by some individuals as a means to exploit others. It is worth being aware of the increased risk to vulnerable people (such as the elderly and those living alone) and following these basic rules:

- **Be wary of emails and phone calls from people you do not know**, especially if they are offering medical advice or requesting money.
- **Check the identity of anyone purporting to be from a church or community support project.** When checking, use a different phone number to the one the 'volunteer' has provided.
- **Never give money up front for shopping or other services.**

## Methodist Church Website

### [Covid-19 Guidance](#)

It is worth checking this page frequently as it is being updated regularly with the best new advice.