



SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

URC NORTHERN SYNOD

MAY 2019

WELCOME to the Newsletter for Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

With the busyness of the Easter period, and my hectic work diary, you may have noticed that I am a few weeks late with this edition of the Safeguarding Newsletter. Apologies for that!

I expect most churches will know by now that I am 'retiring properly' on 12th July this year, so these are the last few weeks of my role as Safeguarding Advisor to Northern and Yorkshire Synods. I have enjoyed my three years in post tremendously and feel that I have made lots of new friends in the Synod offices and in local churches. However, I look forward to having more time to 'be a Grandma' and to spend with my husband, when he retires in a few months' time.

The post will be advertised in 'Guardian Jobs' shortly, and I do hope that one or two of the church safeguarding officers consider applying for it because there are many advantages for the post holder in being 'an internal candidate' and understanding how the URC operates. Also, I have enjoyed seeing so many church safeguarding officers grow in knowledge and confidence regarding church safeguarding matters and feel that many of them could undertake the role. Please do feel free to contact with me if you want to find out more about what the job entails!



Future Safeguarding Training arrangements in the URC

As a recommendation arising from the URC's past case review, national URC safeguarding training materials have recently been developed and are being reviewed. The aim is to have consistent training materials and courses across all synods. Once there is more information on progress with this church will be informed, with the intention of establishing new training dates for Yorkshire and Northern Synods for autumn 2019.

Safeguarding Training

If you have missed the email circulations about courses, the full details and booking instructions can now be found here: <http://urc-northernsynod.org/safeguarding/>

The next advanced module will be delivered at:

- Leyburn Methodist Church, Saturday 11th May 10am -3pm

There are two foundation module courses currently being advertised on the website. Others will be added as they are scheduled:

- 1st June at St John's URC, Wideopen.
- 8th June at Stockton URC

I will be co-delivering the course on 1st June.

I look forward to meeting some of you at these training courses!

FINANCIAL ABUSE OF OLDER PEOPLE

Several churches have contacted me recently about this issue. For example, there may be concerns that an older member of the congregation may be experiencing financial abuse outside church, and they want to discuss the perceived 'warning signs' with me. I have therefore set out an extract from the website of the charity *Action on Elder Abuse* below, which may be helpful to churches in this position. Responding to potential financial abuse is not always easy, but please do get in touch if you require support with this.

Financial Abuse/harm is another name for stealing or defrauding someone of goods and/or property. It is always a crime but is not always prosecuted. Sometimes the issue is straightforward, for example a care worker stealing from an older person's purse, but at other times it is more difficult to address. This is because very often the perpetrator can be someone's son or daughter, or age prejudice means that other people assume it is not happening or that the older person is to blame.

Financial abuse/harm can happen because the older person can be seen as an easy way of getting money, particularly if they are dependent or confused. It can happen because there is an assumption that the likelihood of criminal penalties is small if the perpetrator is caught. And it can happen because the current protective systems are weak.

What are the signs of Financial abuse/harm?

- Signatures on cheques etc., that do not resemble the older person's signature, or signed when the older person cannot write.
- Sudden changes in bank accounts, including unexplained withdrawals of large sums of money by a person accompanying the older person.
- The inclusion of additional names on an older person's bank account.
- Abrupt changes to, or the sudden establishment of, wills.
- The sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to an older person's affairs or possessions.
- The unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family
- Numerous unpaid bills, or overdue rent, when someone else is supposed to be paying the bills.
- Unusual concern by someone that an excessive amount of money is being expended on the care of the older person.
- Lack of amenities, such as TV, personal grooming items, appropriate clothing, that the older person should be able to afford.
- The unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions such as art, silverware, or jewellery.
- Deliberate isolation of an older person from friends and family, resulting in the caregiver alone having total control.



NSPCC SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

Safer recruitment is a critical aspect of church safeguarding. It concerns how we recruit and engage volunteers, as well as paid workers. Safer recruitment is covered briefly in all safeguarding training delivered across Northern and Yorkshire Synods, but more in-depth training can be accessed via the NSPCC. Their new online course, which is relevant to organisations such as churches, costs £30.00 and can be accessed here:

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/advanced/safer-recruitment-training/?utm_source=Safer_Recruitment&utm_medium=CASPAR_Newsletter&utm_campaign=201901_Recruit



Have a wonderful and safe summer and thank you for working so hard on this important agenda,

Geraldine Sands

Synod Safeguarding Advisor

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS:

Any safeguarding concerns, referrals that have been made to our statutory partners (e.g. police, social services) and any allegations of crimes that have been committed, must be brought to the attention of the Synod Safeguarding Advisor.

WHO DO I CONTACT:

Geraldine Sands,
Synod Safeguarding Advisor, email:
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Tel: 07427857495

I am available during my working hours to provide advice regarding safeguarding concerns. At other times, free advice can be sought from CCPAS 24-hour helpline. This organisation has recently changed its name to thirtyone:eight.

Thirtyone:eight helpline number:

Tel: 0303 003 1111