



Methodist Church in Scotland

Safeguarding Meeting (Zoom) - May 2020

Euan Morrison – District Safeguarding Officer



Being unable to hold our traditional Safeguarding Development Day this year, an *on line* “Safeguarding Clinic” was held on Saturday 9 May 2020.

This was the first time that such an event had been held and it was with some trepidation that we decided to make use of “Zoom” to meet with the safeguarding community.

It was a very successful morning and judging by the feedback many of the 24 “attendees” thought it was worthwhile and of course it gave us all the chance to see each other again albeit on a computer screen.

The forum proved very useful in allowing discussions on a number of topics but the following points were discussed-

P.V.G. - Disclosure Scotland have issued guidelines regarding prioritisation of applications during the current pandemic and it is likely those submitted by us would not be treated as a priority.

There are planned changes to the system that will see an on-line process introduced and a move away from the general terms of “Regulated Work” to “Regulated Activities” which will be listed. It is hoped this will provide more clarity.

The Methodist Church utilises the services of Due Diligence Checking Ltd (DDC) to process applications to Disclosure Scotland and they have agreed to accept scanned copies of personal identification documentation which is already working well in some areas.

A briefing note, which will add further clarity on the whole process, will be widely circulated shortly.

Provision of On line Safeguarding Training - It is likely there will be significant advances in the use of *on-line* systems to communicate at all levels following current events. However, it will prove challenging to effectively deliver full training events in this way particularly when for example group exercises are important and content may be challenging. Where particular parts of a module are required to be rolled out use of *on line* training can be utilized but Lorraine should be notified in advance. Euan will be available to join the event and assist.

Unauthorised use of Church buildings during lockdown - Two people belonging to a group who hire rooms within a church had visited the building during lockdown. Clearly, this is in direct conflict to Government direction and should not have happened.

Bible Month - As the focus is the book of Ruth, it was highlighted that individuals should be aware of the potential for issues such as abuse and human trafficking coming up. The Learning Network are providing additional materials to help people engage with Ruth and

consider pastoral implications. More information will be available on our district website and Learning Network pages/social media for other regions.

Children, Youth and All age on line gatherings – Discussions centered on the care that must be taken to ensure that only appropriate participation is permitted and where appropriate consent forms are used for children’s activities. Detailed guidance is available on the Safeguarding website.

For guidance and good practice support resources and free downloadable forms for work with children, visit: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/the-well-learning-hub-equipping-and-supporting-workers/>

Support and ideas from Messy Church <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/covid-19>

Issues facing Churches post lockdown restrictions being eased- It is acknowledged that things will be very different and there will be many challenges around inclusion, attending, physically contact to name but a few things. Many of us have faced stresses and strains, which may have an impact on safeguarding concerns coming to light.

As the meeting drew towards a conclusion Mark Slaney took the opportunity of acknowledging the significant contribution made by Jenni Barr in her capacity as Independent Chair of The District Safeguarding Group over many years and on behalf of everyone thanked her.

Jenni, who is a psychologist, left us with the observation that “ We are in physical rather than social isolation”.

Finally, a big thanks to Lorraine Darlaw from the Learning Network for making the event happen.

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