

Safeguarding Newsletter

URC NORTHERN SYNOD

December 2019



WELCOME TO THE NEWSLETTER FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

Hello and welcome to the new edition of the Northern Synod Safeguarding Newsletter and my first one as your Synod Safeguarding Advisor.

I'm sure most of you may have read that Geraldine has left us to retire to spend more time with her family and I have been in post since September 2019.

So to introduce myself, I am Matt Knowles and have taken over the role as Safeguarding Advisor for both the Yorkshire and Northern Synods – very similar as Geraldine did. I work 3 days a week spending 50% of my time each week looking after each Synod.

I come to the Synod after working for 29 years within the Police Service in Yorkshire and retired after being an Inspector in Leeds.

I have a large experience of managing organisational threat, harm and risk as well as working within the Safeguarding Department alongside partner agencies dealing with both adults at risk and vulnerable children as well as dealing with offenders involved in this abuse.

I have worked alongside some superb people in this time and I hope to do so in the future whilst we look together in making our churches safe for everyone to worship and come together as a church family.



GP5 CONSULTATION ONGONG

Just an update to let you all know that final consultation has commenced on the new Good Practice 5 Policy.

GP5 is the new document produced by Church House which will provide the updated safeguarding policy of the URC.

This document is in its final consultation period and will be published in January 2020.

It contains much needed updates so I will keep you all posted as to when it is available for you all!!

ANNUAL CHURCH RETURNS

The annual church returns have been received from Church House and are on their way to a church near you!!!

We have just been sent the annual church returns from Church House and I wanted to spend a bit of time in this newsletter discussing them with you.

I know it's another task to ask you to do but filling in these returns, especially the safeguarding section, is one dear to my heart and will make a huge impact on how we can safeguard those most vulnerable within our church and society.

This year the safeguarding section has been enlarged and there is only the need to complete the one return now, instead of the two that we sent out last year.

These returns cover all the information that we need from you to make sure that your church is fully updated when it comes to safeguarding adults and children and will help me ensure that you get the correct training within the correct timescales.

They also cover safeguarding concerns and pastoral support to make sure we know who needs help and when.

Please help me help you by completing the safeguarding forms as fully as possible.

Problems filling the forms in? E-mail me on matt.safeguarding@urc-northern-synod.org



Safeguarding Training



HANDS UP ALL THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE SOME UP TO DATE SAFEGUARDING TRAINING?

Lastly an update in relation to safeguarding training. There has been some fabulous work done within our churches in relation to safeguarding training and I'm wanting to continue in these footsteps as we go into 2020.

I have been appointed to sit on the Safeguarding Training Committee and we are working hard to put together new training packages which will sit alongside the upcoming GP5 document.

There are currently three training packages in development – basic, advanced and specialist

These packages will start to be rolled out in early 2020 and I will be in touch with all trainers out there to provide up to date training for them to take back to all of you at your churches.

As always I could do with new volunteers to assist with the safeguarding training across our Synod. If I have any new people who would like to help us with this, please get in touch.

I am looking at attaining official accreditation for all the trainers out there over the coming year so if you feel you'd like to bring out that budding teacher / coach in you I'd love to hear from you!!

Finally I'd like to wish you all a very safe Christmas and I look forward to working with you all and meeting as many of you as I can throughout 2020.

