

## User Guide

# Ensuring the Security and Safety of Chaplains and their Family

### Introduction

Ensuring the security of our Chaplains is a fundamental responsibility of the Diocese and local Chaplaincies. Whilst the legal requirements in respect of health and safety and ensuring personal safety and security will vary dependent upon the location of your Chaplaincy, nonetheless there is an underlying need to exercise a general 'duty of care' in all situations.

This User Guide outlines the important matters which should be borne in mind by both Chaplains and Chaplaincies (and indeed including all Chaplaincy officers and volunteers). Much of it is basic common sense – but nonetheless it is important to make sure that all sensible precautions have been applied.

### Time off and taking Leave

It is essential for their well-being that Chaplains take appropriate time off both every week and for longer periods of 'leave'. The User Guide covering Paying Expenses and Taking Leave outlines the basic requirements in this respect.

### Chaplaincy Accommodation

The Chaplaincy accommodation, whether a house or an apartment, can be a target for those with an inclination for misbehavior – either deliberately or simply as a consequence of despair. The User Guide covering Chaplaincy Accommodation and Transport outlines the basic requirements to help to ensure the safety of the Chaplain and their family in respect of location and basic security measures.

Strangers arriving at the front door should always be treated with considerable caution no matter how plausible they may seem. Allowing strangers into the accommodation should be avoided if at all possible and care should be exercised in providing any material support. Having simple basic 'supplies' easily available by the door, such as canned soft drinks and biscuits can be useful. It is useful to know where to direct people to help them deal with their problems. None of this is 'passing by on the other side'. It's simply taking sensible precautions for the safety of the Chaplain and their family – and indeed there are sadly instances across all churches where individuals have sought to create difficulties and worse.

### Personal Safety when 'out and about' and in the Church premises

Fundamentally this is no different to any situation encountered generally in life – other than that wearing clerical dress can sometimes be a trigger for abuse and Chaplains need to be extra wary as a consequence. A few obvious points are worth remembering:

- Being extra careful when in neighborhoods you are not familiar with. If they are known locally to be problematic and if you really need to be there, can you have a companion with you?
- Being extra careful when visiting homes or other premises where you are not familiar with the people who may be there. Again if you really need to be there, can you have a

companion with you? Indeed it is always preferable to have someone with you if only for safeguarding reasons.

- In either case, always ensure someone knows where you are – and what your schedule is and, if you perceive there could be problems, check with them when you are safely home.
- When in Church premises – try not to be alone – but if this is necessary then make sure the premises are safe and secured whilst you are working.
- Always carry a mobile phone with you. If you can set it up to make a ‘panic’ call to an appropriate person at the touch of a button then that is a sensible precaution
- Consider carrying a ‘panic’ alarm that emits an ear-piercing sound when activated.
- Don’t be ashamed to need to shout for help – a piercing (and definitely non-ecclesiastic) scream can do wonders.

## **Bullying**

If anyone believes they are being bullied (by anyone,) you can find out what to do (particularly who you should notify of the problem and what will then happen) in the [Diocesan Anti-bullying Policy](#).

## **Safeguarding**

If anyone has a concern regarding safeguarding, you can find out what to do (particularly who you should report your concerns to and what will then happen) in the [Diocesan Safeguarding Policy](#).

## **General Health and Safety (H&S)**

As already mentioned, the health and safety rules and regulations will depend on your location. Nonetheless there is a general ‘duty of care’ incumbent on Chaplaincies irrespective of the local requirements. In particular, Chaplaincies must be aware of how local rules and regulations apply to your church and any consequential requirements (eg H&S policies, reporting of injuries, risk assessments etc) must be implemented.

## **What to do if things go wrong?**

If it is a matter of bullying or safeguarding, what you need to do has been explained above. If it is a more general matter of safety and security then the matter should be discussed with your archdeacon as soon as possible. The objective will be to identify what steps need to be taken to resolve the issue which may include reporting the matter to the relevant local agencies for action. It is always a useful approach to keep a diary entry of problematic events so that an ‘trail of evidence’ can be demonstrated as necessary.

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