



Safe & Sound - No. 20 - October 2009

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) - and deadlines

Many of you will be aware that the Independent Safeguarding Authority set October 2009 as the deadline by which all volunteers must be registered with the new **Vetting and Barring Scheme** and have a CRB Disclosure, or stand down from their role. Failure to do so would mean breaking the law and a possible £5,000 fine.

That 'legal' deadline has now gone back to July 2010. Early last month there was a lot of publicity (and public outcry) about the Scheme, and the head of the ISA promised a review of some of the details. That may delay things further, or not - but as I write we have no firm news either way. And we have as yet no firm news of when the new 16-digit Vetting and Barring Registration numbers will be available, and how we will apply for them.

However, if you have volunteers in your parish who have yet to obtain a CRB Disclosure **please do not delay further**. Adrian Childs, Director of our national body CSAS, reminded us recently that although the **legal** deadline is in flux just now, the **Church's** deadline for existing volunteers expired almost two years ago - in December 2007. He went on to say that any parish which continued to use volunteers without a CRB Disclosure could be considered 'reckless' and might well forfeit their insurance cover for any Safeguarding incident. If you have any existing volunteers who have not yet applied for a CRB Disclosure, please encourage them to act on this as quickly as possible.

For many parishes we have records of existing volunteers who submitted a Confidential Declaration Form (CDF) some time ago, but who have not yet moved on to complete a CRB Disclosure application. I had previously removed from the active list those whose CDFs dated from before the start of 2007; Adrian Child has now advised us to remove from the active list all those who submitted a CDF more than six months ago. I will do that at the end of October. From November onwards any volunteer who waits more six months after submitting a CDF before applying for a CRB Disclosure will be asked to begin the process again with a new CDF.

If you have volunteers in your parish who are reluctant to support the Church's policies in this matter, please give them a copy of this Newsletter and ask them to contact this office. We want to make sure that we comply with the new law, whenever it is finally introduced, but more than that we want to keep all our volunteers - and our children, young people and vulnerable adults - as safe from harm as possible.

Safeguarding Information for Volunteers (and others)

When volunteers come forward to take up a role in your parish, there is lots of Safeguarding information that you could give them - but what to choose? The Parish Pack is a lot to take in even for reps; the *Good Practice Guide* card is rather brief; and the *Safeguarding Office* leaflet is aimed at parishes as a whole. After taking advice from CSAS we have prepared a brief A5-format leaflet that sums up the most important points in a friendly and - we hope - accessible way. We are having enough copies printed to give one to every volunteer registered on our database, so if our database record does not show all your volunteers, please tell us.

I will post the leaflets as soon as I can after my return from holiday, if they are ready by then. We trust that you and your volunteers will find them useful.

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Training for Parish Reps

The first of a series of short and very practical training sessions to be held here at Hinsley Hall (St Monica's) began well in September, and all those involved said that they found it very useful. Other dates already fixed are:

Wednesday 4 November	19.30 - 21.30	Saturday 7 November	10 - 12 noon
Wednesday 13 January	19.30 - 21.30	Saturday 16 January	10 - 12 noon

The one-off sessions will concentrate on immediate and short-term issues such as:

- ✚ accurate completion of paperwork
- ✚ how to talk to volunteers in the parishes
- ✚ how to help reps and parish group leaders to see their way into the Parish Pack
- please tell us if you don't yet have your Parish Pack
- ✚ how to agree role descriptions, and how to obtain references
- ✚ any other practical issues that those attending want to raise.

We will **not** be discussing the longer-term implications of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) - see the first item overleaf - and there will be a further round of training on the ISA once all the details are confirmed; but not before May 2010.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided free of charge, and we will aim for a relaxed and informal - but busy - atmosphere. Parish reps in the process of appointment are very welcome to join us, and you may stay for as long or as short a time as you wish.

We would like to limit numbers to a **minimum of five, and a maximum of 14** - so do please tell us as soon as you can which of the sessions you wish to attend. There is no need for apologies.

And if none of these dates suits you, and you would prefer to call in at some other time that suits you better for a one-to-one session, just let us know and we'll put the kettle on!

Stephen Hanslip

Holidays

Stephen will be away after Weds 30 September, returning on Monday 19 October.

Suzanne will be away on Weds/Thurs/Fri 21-23 October, and 9-13 November.

Training in St Benedict's parish, Leeds

With the support of national Safeguarding trainer Maggie Nelson, Suzanne is piloting a new style of training for parish clergy, reps and volunteers in St Benedict's, Garforth, on Wednesday 30 September. We'll let you know in the next edition how it went!

CSAS First Annual Report

Most of you will be aware that in the wake of the Cumberlege Commission Report our national body COPCA changed its structure and its name, and is now known as CSAS - The Catholic Safeguarding and Advisory Service. They have just produced their first annual report, and we enclose a number of copies for each parish. And in case you were wondering, that's why this edition of the Newsletter is going out by snail mail to all parish reps - so we can send you copies both of the Report, and of the draft Safeguarding Information leaflet. Clergy will receive an electronic copy of the Newsletter, and if you would like one, please just say.

CHURCH MINISTRY CHN/VAD – A Change

CSAS now insist that volunteers who work only with children mark their CRB Disclosure application form (at line B13) **CHURCH MINISTRY CHN** – and likewise for adults - **CHURCH MINISTRY VAD**. Roles such as SVP and Eucharistic Minister can continue to use **CHURCH MINISTRY CHN/VAD**. I will mark our database record as CC for those who apply for a role with children only, and AA for adults only. We have already had several Disclosure certificates produced for **CHN** (only) and apart from the changed title under 'Position applied for' I can see no difference in the certificates compared with all the others we receive.