

## St James Church Taunton

### Caring for our community safely in these strange and unusual times

It has been very evident over the past months that as a church we have been caring and supporting each in many different ways. It is also clear as Revd. Fabian initially advised us, we are in a Marathon not a Sprint and that we have had to adapt to a "New Normal". It therefore continues to be important that we look after ourselves as well as others, and that we do it safely.

As we know there has been a lot of information, some of it confusing and inevitably there have been changes as the pandemic has developed. We put out guidelines for volunteering at the beginning of the pandemic which we are now reviewing. The basic guidelines remain much the same and if we want to help others and ourselves it's a good idea to remind ourselves of them from time to time.

### Volunteering and coronavirus – how can you help?

The Council for Voluntary Service has put out the following guidance if you are assisting friends, family, church members or neighbours and more detail can be found at:

[guidelineshttps://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/i-want-to-volunteer/volunteering-coronavirus](https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/i-want-to-volunteer/volunteering-coronavirus)

#### 1. Look out for your neighbours

The simplest thing everyone can do right now is look out for their neighbours and offer help with shopping and other errands.

It's not just about neighbours who are self-isolating or vulnerable. Other people in the community who might also appreciate help are:

- stretched medical staff and volunteers
- staff and volunteers in key worker roles
- supermarket workers
- delivery drivers.

#### 2. Stay safe when supporting others - HANDS – FACE - SPACE

1. Keep washing your hands often for 20 seconds.
2. Stay at least two metres - about three steps - away from people you're helping.
3. Wear a mask where requested (and wash and change them frequently)
4. If you're trying to help someone with very serious issues – don't be afraid to flag with appropriate statutory services.
5. Support family, friends and neighbours by phone or video call.
6. Offer to run errands for people but stay outside of people's homes.
7. Let family and friends know what you're doing.
8. The Cof E advises going in twos where practical
9. Be very careful about payments – this is potentially a difficult area as housebound people may not have ready cash on them, but they won't want to be indebted to you. Make clear arrangements for reimbursement, give a receipt and tell someone else what you have done
10. Don't take on too much - it's often better not to offer at all than to let someone down.

### 3. Volunteering with the Church

- a) All the above is relevant
- b) Those who are already safely recruited for working with children or vulnerable adults may be asked to redeploy their volunteering as needed. If your DBS or training needs renewing your Parish Safeguarding Officer will let you know.
- c) If you are volunteering on behalf of the church, you will need to have completed our volunteering process which if involved with children or vulnerable adults will require DBS checks and references in accordance with our Parish and Church of England recruitment policy.
- d) **Follow safe practice guidelines** – We follow the Church of England's National policy and the Church guidance for keeping safe is set out in **the Parish Safeguarding Handbook**

The National Safeguarding Team has provided a safeguarding update for the Coronavirus period which can be found at

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/COVID-19%20NST%20update%20July\\_.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/COVID-19%20NST%20update%20July_.pdf)

#### Children:

If you work with children, please refresh your awareness of the CofE's safeguarding policy: go to [www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding/policy-practice-guidance](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding/policy-practice-guidance) and download the **Parish Safeguarding Handbook (2019), the Code of Practice and Safer Environment and Activities** which remain the standard for practice and includes guides for managing contact using social media. Guidance has been processed for working with online group via zoom. <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/Being%20connected%20with%20ZOOM%20safely.pdf>

#### Vulnerable Adults

If you work with vulnerable adults again please familiarize yourself with the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook* – see the link above.

If you are asked by a vulnerable person to help them with their affairs, please be aware of the general guidance in section 2 above to safeguard both the person you are helping and yourself. Keep the vicar or the person who has asked you to carry out tasks aware of what you are doing.

If you are wanting to volunteer please contact the Vicar Fabian Wuyts via the Church office 01823 272931)

#### Concerns:

If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or vulnerable person, **do not ignore or dismiss them**. Discuss them with either the Vicar, Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Pastoral Coordinator or Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor with 24 hours.

If you are concerned that the person may be at risk of serious and immediate harm you should report this immediately to the Police or Adult Social Care (The DSA should be informed with regard to church related concerns) Contact details can be found on the Safeguarding page of our website <http://stjamestaunton.org/safeguarding> and the Diocesan Website: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/diocese/safeguarding/>

## 4. Volunteering with local community organisations

Charities are working with the government and local authorities to create ways for people to get involved.

Don't get involved in something that makes you feel uncomfortable or out of your depth. Talk to your family so that they know what you are doing and are supporting you.

If you involved with a local charity you will probably already know what they are doing and how you can help.

Follow the charities rules and guidelines

St. James church has links with several organisation that are involved with community action. You can find the details on our Serving Taunton page <http://stjamestaunton.org/serving-taunton>

There are Government and NHS sponsored schemes, and there is already an opportunity to sign up You can sign up to [NHS Volunteer Responders](#) or Somerset Volunteers <https://sparksomerset.org.uk/covid-19> who are recruiting volunteers to support the NHS and the community in a number of ways

All these organisations will have their own codes of practice you will need to follow.

### **Related documents:**

Keeping safe online (hyperlink needed)

Safeguarding pages (hyperlink needed)

Useful numbers and addresses (below)

## Some useful Numbers and addresses

**AGE UK** <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/discover/2020/03/ways-to-help-older-people-coronavirus/> has useful guidance for helping the elderly

For practical information and advice, call Age UK Advice: **0800 169 65 65**

For a cheerful chat, day or night, call Silver Line: **0800 470 80 90**

**THE SAMARITANS** 0330 094 5717 have had to close their drop in but are available by phone

**MINDLINE Somerset** 01823 276892 and online <https://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/> for help with mental health issues

[Childline](https://www.childline.gov.uk/) 0800 1111 (for children)

[Silverline](https://www.silverline.gov.uk/) 0800 4 70 80 90 (for older people)

[Family Lives](https://www.familylives.org.uk/) (formerly Parentline) 0800 800 2222

National Domestic Violence Helpline:08082000247

Action On Elder Abuse: 08088088141

**Local Coronavirus Facebook groups in Taunton**

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/205973310624650/213610126527635/?notif\\_id=1585174221396975&notif\\_t=group\\_nf\\_highlights](https://www.facebook.com/groups/205973310624650/213610126527635/?notif_id=1585174221396975&notif_t=group_nf_highlights)

## EMERGENCIES

**Health Emergency Number is: 111**

**Police Emergency number is 999 or 101**

## Health

The NHS have a lot of useful information on line <https://www.nhs.uk> and links to help you stay healthy in the Coronavirus Emergency.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Its really important to keep healthy and active at this time when we are confined to our homes.

## Safeguarding children or adults

Please see our safeguarding page for general advice for contact details

<http://stjamestaunton.org/safeguarding>

**IF DURING THIS TIME YOU BECOME OF A SITUATION WHERE IS AN IMMEDIATE RISK TO A CHILD, YOUNG PERSON OR VULNERABLE ADULT YOU SHOULD CONTACT:**

the Police on 999 or 101 or the Local Authority Social Care Service on 0300 123 2224 (out of hours 0300 123 23 27 (children) / 01823 368244 (Adults and Mental Health)

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/report-a-child-at-risk/>  
<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/report-an-adult-at-risk/>