Guidelines for



N.O.W. GROUP
(PASTORAL VISITING &
CHARITABLE OUTREACH)

St. John
Henry Newman
Parish

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Terms of Reference for N.O.W. Group *(**N**ewman **O**utreach & **W**elfare)*

1) Ensure that the sick of our Parish are visited, whether this be by Eucharistic Minister or a more general visit by an appropriately recruited and trained member of the group and to report back to the group and parish priest.

2) Pray together for the sick and the needs of the world

3) Reflect on the charities we wish to support in the forthcoming year (especially during Lent and Advent).

4) Receive reports regarding the work of Nicolas Barré House and Cabrini House and support where appropriate.

5) Seek to signpost to other organisations when appropriate.

Types of Membership

There are two types of membership of the Group:

1) Lay Member - attend meeting and support in charitable work and pray for the sick only. Also support in functions laid on by the group.

2) Pastoral Visitor Member - Social Contact with parishioners.

Role Descriptions

All appointed by and Responsible to: The Parish Priest

Reporting to: Newman Outreach & Welfare Group

Function: To assist the priest with pastoral support and care.

Main Responsibilities

- To assist the priest in a range of pastoral support situations. *
- To assist the priest in providing care for parishioners who are unable to come to Mass.
- To Pray for the Sick.
- To regularly visit those in need and engage with them on a face-to-face basis offering what assistance may be available within the resources of the parish, under the direction of the Parish Priest, as agreed in type of Visitor Role.
- Reporting to the NOW group (maintaining confidentiality of those that are being visited).
- To ensure that this role is conducted in accordance with the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Catholic Church in England and Wales as administered by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
- To exercise a duty of care towards people whose homes you are visiting, to promote safe practices and minimise risks of abuse and take action to report concerns and allegations in line with national guidelines.
- To support the Charitable aims of the Parish.

* *Pastoral, religious setting: Emotional, Physical and Spiritual Support.*
Care, the provision of what is necessary for the health, welfare, maintenance, and protection of someone or something.

Membership Roles & Training

1) Lay Member

- This person commits to attending the meetings and prays for the sick
- Will support the Group in its charitable work
- Support the Group in functions organised on by the group.
- Will undergo the Safer Recruitment Process and be required to maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding information received by the group. If you would like more information on the process then please click on this link to the Safer-Recruitment-Flowchart- NON DBS-Role.pdf for further information, but please don't worry, our Parish Safeguarding Representative will guide you through the whole process.

2) Pastoral Visitor - *Social Contact*

This pastoral visitor will engage in social conversations, enquire about the person's general health and well-being and keep them in touch with church life.

They will not be expected to become involved in day to day affairs or more personal matters. If the pastoral visitor is visiting the individual as a friend and not as their pastoral visitor, they should make this clear at the outset.

For example if as a friend you undertake any shopping for the person this must be made clear to the recipient.

The following tasks may be undertaken as part of this role:

- visiting occasionally for social conversation and to help reduce someone's feeling of isolation, acting as a listening ear for any matters of a personal or spiritual nature.

- passing information to someone who may not be able to attend church activities.

- delivering a newsletter, church notices or membership card.

- discussing someone's general health and well-being and reporting to Parish priest any concerns.

- offering prayer if required.

- notifying safeguarding issues to the safeguarding officer or minister.

- This role will not involve any 'regulated activity' or involve unsupervised contact with children. Those who do not provide any 'regulated activity' will still require a DBS (Non- barred list) check as part of the Safer Recruitment Process.

  If you would like more information on the process then please click on this link to the Safer-Recruitment-Flowchart-DBS-Role.pdf for further information, but please don't worry, our Parish Safeguarding Representative will guide you through the whole process.

- You will be required to undertake
  Level 3 Safeguarding for Volunteers in the Catholic Church (DBS)
  Training

Person Specification

- Be a person of faith and prayer, aware of the call to service and ministry in the Church.
- Have a caring attitude
- To be over 18 years of age
- To have the ability to show courtesy and respect within the homes of other people.
- Be willing to undergo the Safer Recruitment Process:

  Please note that as part of the Safer Recruitment Process for those who are willing to undertake any parish visiting will require a DBS check.
- Undertake the appropriate training required by the Church and to adhere to safeguarding guidance.

Guidelines for those undertaking Visits

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

As each person has their own identity and our differences make us unique and precious to God it is vital that we reflect this, as best we can, in our pastoral care.

Money matters

Any concerns about parishioner lacking mental capacity or suffering from a mental illness, do not accept any monies, including church donations.

It is the Archdiocesan Guidance that those visiting the sick should not assist people with any financial issues or legal matters of any sort.

You should never use a person's bank card even if they ask you to use it for them. You are not permitted to assist an adult with the financial day-to-day running of their household.

There is no expectation to undertake duties such as shopping for this role. Should you decide to support this for the individual it is considered a person to person agreement. You would be advised only accept cash reimbursement. Please take a photo of the receipt and give the actual receipt to the person and also give them a receipt for the money you are reimbursed.

There may be times when someone you are visiting wishes to make a donation to 'church funds'. This is to be recorded in your visit booklet and then placed in a sealed envelope in one of the white boxes at the back of church, clearly stating the amount (if known) and the name of the donor and the date given. You should provide the donor with a receipt at the time the donation is made (These slips can be obtained from the Parish Office). You should never receive personal monetary gifts. If a person insists on giving you any other kind of gift then it must be registered with the Parish Office. This is for your protection as well the donors.

Confidentiality

Anyone receiving formal pastoral care, should expect that any information they share with you will not be passed to others unless one of the following conditions is fulfilled.

1) The person gives consent in advance for specific information to be shared. This, for example, might be a request for intercessions or spiritual guidance.

2) The information disclosed by the person indicates that they or another may be at risk of harm, or coercion into illegal/criminal activities.

   The parish volunteer has a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team immediately who will assess risk and make referrals as required to statuary agencies.

   Please also notify the Parish safeguarding Rep that this referral has been made.

   If person thought to be at immediate risk of harm or abuse, volunteer to phone Police via 999.

3) It should never be assumed that family members, friends, ministers, lay leaders or other parties are aware of a situation without confirming this first with the person receiving pastoral care.

   Information should only be shared with the person's consent (unless one or more of the conditions above are met).

   PLEASE NOTE: Those visited should be notified that a simple record of the visit will be passed onto the Parish Office for record keeping.

Confidentiality and Technology

As a pastoral visitor you may be using technology to contact people, to follow up, to pass on information.

When using technology there are a number of key points to follow and take note of:

1) Email, text, WhatsApp and other social media messages: Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram etc. should be treated with the same level of care and security as written documents.

2) Personal details of individuals should not be discussed whilst using a mobile phone in a public place.

3) All sensitive information on computers and other digital storage should be password protected (e.g. if a safeguarding concern report is completed on home computer).

5) Documents stored should be converted into a secure format, such as a PDF, and password protected.

6) All sensitive data should be deleted when disposing of, or passing on electronic devices (e.g. mobile phones) or computers. ·

7) All paper documents containing personal or sensitive information should be shredded once they are no longer needed.

PLEASE NOTE: copies of any correspondence shared with or by volunteers via any means, phone, email, text, social media messages or WhatsApp and written records of visits etc can be requested for submission in any statutory investigation.

Conflicts of interest

As a pastoral visitor you may find there is a conflict of interest when visiting certain church members. This could be due to a professional relationship, for example a provider of health or social care, or because of friendship.

There is a difference between social visiting as a friend and pastoral visiting on behalf of the church.

If you do visit a friend, you both need to be clear on the different expectations and the need for you, as a pastoral visitor to share information with others if there is a serious concern.

A conflict of interest may also arise if you are the pastoral visitor for more than one person in a family or other close group. It is helpful for family members to have different pastoral visitors where this may be an issue. This is particularly the case in a situation of abuse within the family, where victim and perpetrator should not have the same pastoral supporter.

If at any time you feel there is a conflict of interest, you should discuss this with the Priest or Parish Safeguarding Rep.

Good practice in visiting

Before a visit, contact the person to arrange a convenient time, date and venue, being sensitive to what is an appropriate length of visit.

After the visit remember that anything talked about should not be shared with friends or family or mentioned in communal prayer without permission.

When visiting the housebound you must remember that you are there at their invitation. It is a special relationship that you have, one that includes a degree of trust on the part of the recipient.

Many housebound people may be elderly, living alone and frail. We must be aware of our physical presence and use it to give confidence to the person. Relationships can develop and, particularly where there are no immediate or close family members. You may be trusted with confidential information (e.g. of the location of valuables). It is recommended that for your own protection, your parish priest be made aware of such instances.

Having got to know the people you visit, do only what you feel is right and proper for their wellbeing and, if in any doubt, consult with your parish priest or seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Department.

Be aware that carers (social services, nurses) may call before or whilst Communion, or a visit is taking place and that medical care should take precedence.

If you are concerned that a person is at risk of immediate harm contact emergency services and advise the Parish Priest and Safeguarding Department of the action taken.

Visiting in hospitals and care settings.

When visiting in a hospital or care setting please always follow the organisations ‘sign in’ procedures and seek permission to visit.

This is important not least for your own protection in cases of fire and infection in a setting.

You should report concerns arising from the standard of care, to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team who will support with referrals where required.

They will then ensure that the issue is raised via the provider's reporting system, or to the local authority and/or Care Quality Commission, as appropriate.

Your Safety

When making arrangements for a visit, it is important to think about your own personal safety. Considerations may include:

The suitability of the location

Whether lone visiting is appropriate
travel to and from the location at the time planned

Taking a list of useful phone numbers (e.g. the priest, Safeguarding Rep) and a charged mobile phone in case of emergency

The use of a calling card or other form of ID with contact details for the local church.

Ensuring someone (this could be a family member) knows about the location of the visit and the expected timeframe.

There are occasions when it is better for more than one pastoral visitor to visit, these situations should be discussed with the Priest.

Visiting in pairs

Circumstances where visiting in pairs should always take place:

1) If the person being visited and/or carers specifically request that 2 people attend.

2) The person being visited is new into the Parish and there is little available information about support needs, diversity needs or the individual circumstances of the Parishioner. Once the relationship has become established and if there are no concerns then you can change the arrangement to suit.

3) Where there are known risks about the person being visited (these should be recorded within the Parish and shared with anybody who is carrying a home visit. A risk assessment would be carried out and a strategy put in place for ongoing visits.

4) If circumstances arise that a risk assessment would be required and a strategy implementing (if you observe anything of concern during the visit, please speak to the Parish Priest or Safeguarding Rep in order that this can be arranged if necessary.

Examples of concerns that you may encounter:

Whilst not an exhaustive list, here are some examples of concerns that you may encounter and must notify the Safeguarding Rep and Parish Priest about

Any direct disclosure of any kind of abuse should be reported back to the Safeguarding Rep. Whilst conversations will be required to be confidential and consent to share is best practice, where there is a known risk of harm, information can be shared without consent for the purposes of protection of the public, as previously noted.

1) *Signs of Self Neglect* and poor welfare conditions - you may notice rapid weight loss, changes in standards of hygiene, changes in the appearance within the house - all are signs that the person is having difficulties in managing their self care.

2) *Signs of financial abuse* from family members/others involved in the person's Care - there may not be any obvious signs of this, conversations from the person may indicate that this is happening. If a person is provided money for carrying out shopping and helping with meal preparation but there never seems to be enough food in the house. You may notice that personal possessions are diminishing and the person indicates they don't know where these items have gone or why they have gone.

3) *Signs of physical abuse* - you may notice certain patterns of bruising that could indicate physical assault. Whilst in many cases bruises can be explained, in some cases you may notice that there is reluctance around answering questions about the injury and that the explanation does not feel plausible.

4) Signs of Sexual Abuse – There may be very few physical signs of sexual abuse that you would be able to observe, and concerns may instead arise through conversations, changes in behaviour, or something the individual discloses.

   Possible indicators can include unexplained injuries, pain or discomfort, difficulty walking or sitting, torn or stained clothing, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, or sudden changes in personal hygiene.

   Behavioural signs may include becoming withdrawn, anxious, fearful or unusually distressed; avoiding a particular person or place; displaying age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour; experiencing sleep problems; or showing sudden changes in mood, relationships, attendance or performance.

   No single sign necessarily confirms abuse, but any concern or disclosure should be taken seriously, recorded accurately using the person's own words, and reported promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

   Do not investigate or ask leading questions; listen calmly, offer reassurance, and seek appropriate safeguarding support via the Diocesan Safeguarding

Teams.

If someone is in immediate danger, please contact the Police on 999.

Keeping records.

Pastoral visitors should always make a note when they have contact with someone, especially if a visit has taken place.

This will always be reported back via the electronic 'Pastoral Visit Record Form'.

This is important for several reasons:

1) to help record who has been seen, including dates and times.

2) to demonstrate accountability and transparency.

3) to avoid misunderstandings and manage expectations.

4) to identify any follow-up actions.

5) in the rare case of a complaint being made, there is a record of what support has been offered and the times you were in someone's home.

6) to record consent given for sharing information or the reasons why consent wasn't requested.

7) to identify, over time, if someone is becoming vulnerable or needs additional support.

8) to record information passed to the Safeguarding Team and any details known on referrals when made to statutory agencies.

9) Recording protects both you and the person being visited.

10) It is important to note that anyone can request to see their records as part of a Data Subject Access Request.

The use of Identification Badges

We ask all those who undertake pastoral visits, including those taking the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound, on behalf of our parish to wear an identification badge.

This helps those receiving a visit, as well as their families and carers, to feel confident and reassured that the person calling is genuinely representing the parish.

It also provides reassurance to those in positions of responsibility within care settings, including nursing homes and hospitals, by clearly identifying the visitor and confirming the capacity in which they are visiting.

The details provided on the badge may also be used by a care setting to contact the Parish Office should they wish to verify the person's identity and their role within the parish. Such checks should not be regarded as a sign of mistrust or as questioning the integrity of the individual minister; rather, they may form an important part of the safeguarding and security procedures which hospitals, nursing homes and other care settings have a responsibility to follow.
We fully support and respect these procedures, which help to protect those who may be vulnerable, as well as those who visit and care for them.

Each badge will include the minister's photograph and clearly identify who they are and the parish they represent. For simplicity and clarity, everyone carrying out this ministry will be described on the badge as a "Lay Minister", as we believe this is a more easily understood term, particularly for those who may not be familiar with Church language or different ministry titles.

The reverse of the badge will also include contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Department, should the minister, the person being visited, a family member, carer, or anyone within a care setting need safeguarding advice or support, or wish to raise a concern.

The badges are professionally produced and are supplied complete with an official parish lanyard.

Both the badge and lanyard are issued specifically to the named individual for the purpose of carrying out their assigned ministry on behalf of the parish. They must not be lent, given to, or used by another person, even temporarily.

They should only be worn or displayed when you are carrying out your assigned parish role and should not be used at any other time or for any other purpose. This is important because displaying the badge identifies you to others as someone who is acting with the authority and on behalf of the parish.

Badges and lanyards should therefore be treated with care and kept securely when not in use. If a badge is lost or stolen, this must be reported to the Parish Office immediately, so that appropriate action can be taken and, where necessary, those who may rely upon the badge for identification can be informed.

If you cease to carry out this ministry, for whatever reason, the badge and parish lanyard must be returned promptly to the Parish Office.

These arrangements are intended to provide a simple and consistent means of identification while supporting good safeguarding practice.

They help protect those whom we visit, give confidence to families, carers and care providers, and help protect and support our lay ministers as they undertake this important ministry on behalf of the parish.