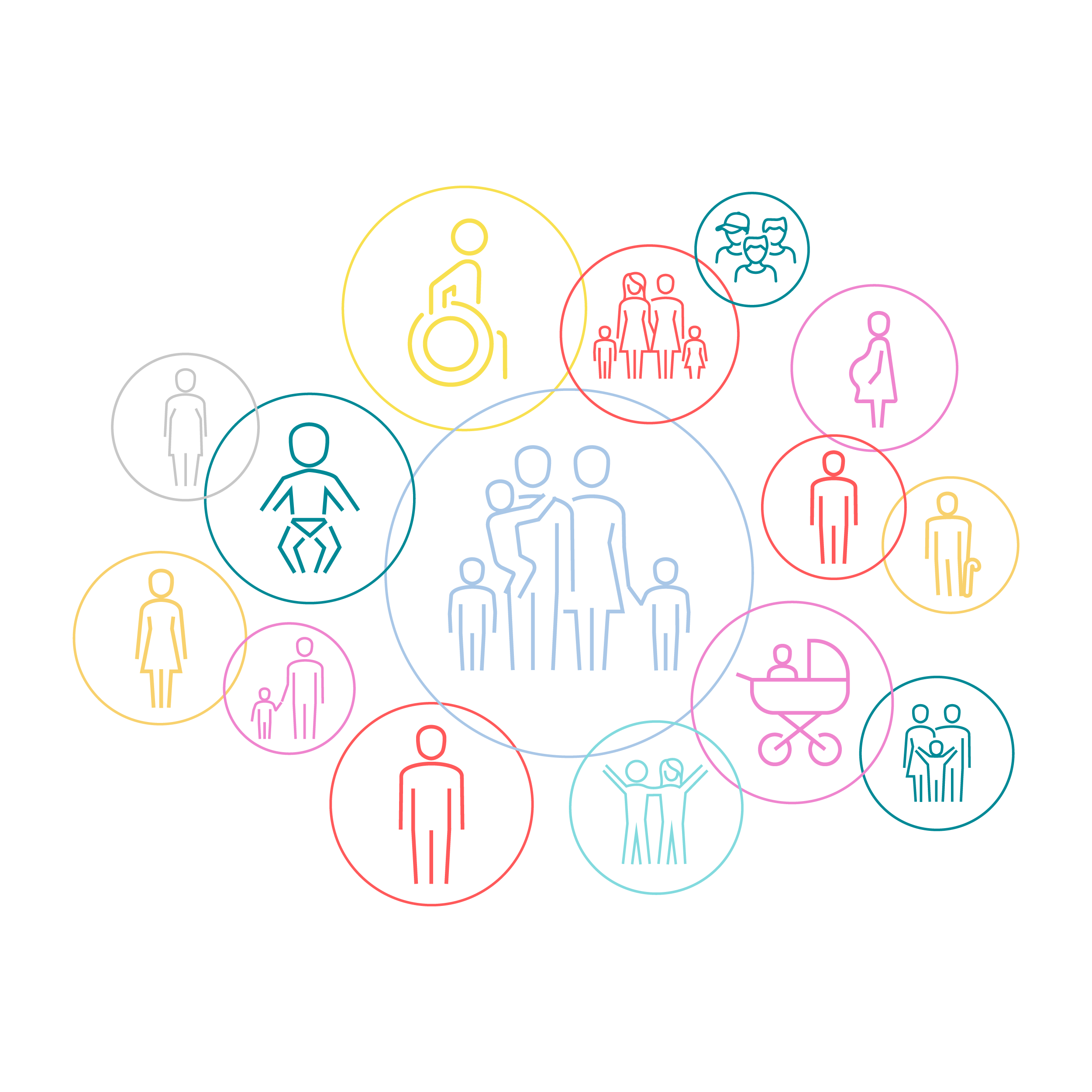


**CREATING SAFER SPACE**

Foundation Module   
2020 Edition (Modified 2022)



Foundation Module **Workbook**

Name: Role(s):

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## **Adults who may be vulnerable to harm or abuse**

A vulnerable adult is defined as “Any adult aged 18 or over (16 or over in Scotland) who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.”

**What can make an adult vulnerable to harm? Please capture your reflections below.**

**Note:** Not all churches will have children and young people, but there are adults who may be vulnerable in every single church.

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## **‘Somewhere’ Methodist Church – Good Practice**

**Read through this scenario and note down any issues that concern you.**

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| **‘Somewhere’ Methodist Church** | **Issues** |
| A steward talks through his report on church activity at the Annual General Church Meeting:  “Somewhere Methodist Church has a small but dedicated congregation and, as I always say, volunteers are so hard to come by, we can’t afford to be choosy, or to offend the ones we’ve got!  To be honest I am proud of this congregation’s efforts...  There’s the Browne sisters, Judy and Elaine. They work miracles with the youth club. They just open the hall and the kids come in off the streets, kids whose parents don’t even seem to care where they are. I go along about once a month and I was so impressed last time as Elaine opened up by herself. Some of the kids helped her set up - getting equipment out of that dark cupboard – and some of it was really heavy. Judy arrived later looking very frazzled, she’d picked up some of the kids from the group, but they had been very loud in the car!  The Sunday school continues, although small in number. Pat Jones runs it almost single-handedly. I have no idea how many children have been through Sunday school in Pat’s time, a hundred or so I would guess.  And we’re very ‘with it’ at Somewhere Methodist Church, our youth leaders are on Facebook. There are lots of photos on there to look at and they tell me they are 'friends’ with most of the young people – great news! Not that I really understand what that means, except that the youth leaders are able help the youngsters anytime of the day or even night.  Our community lunch club is going from strength to strength. We have so many wonderful people come along. Some are clients brought by the social services people and some people just turn up. It’s amazing how our volunteers make such hearty homemade food in that tired kitchen of ours!  And love is in the air! Brian and Chris have announced they are getting married next week! Brian is our longest serving volunteer and he recently met the love of his dreams at our humble lunch club! Although Chris did play hard to get at first! ​  Chris is one of our more recent visitors with social services. They don’t say much, but Brian’s hugs seem to have won the day! I am sure we all want to extend our warmest wishes to the happy couple. We are so pleased that they found love here. ​   And there is Florence – where would we be without the beautiful flowers she arranges each week? Florence is so dedicated that when she went to stay with her daughter for a few weeks she arranged for two or three of her neighbours to have the church key and pop in with the flowers. So thoughtful of her.  Although we have struggled with finances over the past few years that is all a lot easier now we are letting out the hall. There are quite a few groups coming in – dance classes, flower arranging clubs, music groups. And all without creating much extra work. There are no complicated forms, they just give me the money, I record it in the book and give them a key – job done!  Now, before I finish, we’ve had this email from the district safeguarding officer telling us what we should do if someone tells us they have been abused in the past. We don’t have to worry about that sort of thing here, we all know each other so well, I am sure we would know already. But the information’s at the back if you want it.  So as you see things are going well - thanks to everyone’s commitment.” |  |

**Recognise: Recognising barriers to disclosing abuse**

**What might stop individuals from disclosing abuse? Consider why children and adults might not feel able to disclose.**

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## **Respond: What stops us doing it well?**

1. **What might stop us as individuals from responding well?**

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1. **What might stop us as the Methodist Church from responding well?**

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1. **What might the impact be on the person who has experienced abuse if an individual or local church doesn’t respond well?**

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1. **What might the impact be on the wider community if an individual or local church doesn’t respond well?**

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**Case Studies**

**Take a minute to read the case studies and answer the questions.**

What do you **RECOGNISE** that causes concern?

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How would you **RESPOND** to your concern?

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What would you **RECORD**?

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To whom would you **REFER** this?

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**CASE STUDIES**

**1. GLORIA**

You are a pastoral visitor, and pop in to see Gloria who hasn’t been to Church for a few weeks. Gloria is very distressed, she has heard that her niece (now 8yrs old) has gone to stay with her grandparents, Mark and Claire for a few weeks, whilst her mum is in hospital. Gloria is worried for her niece and explains that when she was little Mark sexually abused her, and she worries the same will happen to her Niece. However she has never told anyone and is scared of what would happen to the family if she did.

1. **TASHA**

You are a youth club worker. One dayGabrielle, ayouth club volunteer talks to you with concerns about Tasha (14 years), who has cerebral palsy and attends youth club regularly. Gabrielle tells you that Tasha has been messaging her at all hours of the day and night mostly talking about how unhappy she is at home. Tasha has hinted there is something she needs to say about her stepfather that she does not want anyone to know because it is too embarrassing, so she would like to text it. She wants Gabrielle to promise not to tell anyone else about it. Gabrielle asks you what she should do.

1. **JUNE & SALLY**

You are pastoral visitor for June (85yrs) and Sally (60yrs) they are a mother and daughter, who have lived together for the past 40 years as Sally has a learning disability and needs ongoing support. Two months ago, June broke her hip in an incident in the home, and on discharge from hospital was sent to a care home 100 miles away, leaving Sally living on her own. You visit Sally who says that she is missing her mum terribly, she hasn’t had any contact with her for weeks and she talks about feeling depressed and suicidal. You are very concerned and raise Sally’s situation with the minister, who tells you that June has recently been in contact to say she is frightened of Sally, who has physically abused her for many years, and that she does not want her to know where she is.

1. **KEN**

You are a worship leader and are having IT difficulties setting up a presentation. Joy, a church member, offers you her husband’s laptop to use, and gets it from the car. Her husband, Ken is a Local Preacher and involved with the youth group. When the computer is loaded you notice that his internet browser is opened on a pornography site that concerns you. You quickly close it down, but later that night you start to worry that you should have done something else at the time.

1. **JAMES**

James is due to be released from prison after serving a sentence for indecent assault of his teenage daughter. In prison he has become an active Christian. The prison chaplain contacts the minister to see whether he can hope to find a welcome at the church, and what arrangements need to be put in place. You are a steward and parent of two teenage children, and the minister shares this information with you when he asks you to become a member of a special group to monitoring and support group because of your position of trust within the church.

1. **REBECCA**

Rebecca is a local preacher on trial. She is married toSam and has two young children. Sam works in a highly pressured, but financially well paid, management job, which involves working long hours. Consequently, Rebecca carries most of the childcare and homemaking responsibilities, and does not have any paid employment. Her church community is a very important source of support to her. You are Rebecca’s pastoral visitor and she confides that she feels as though she is responsible for damaging her marriage. This is because Sam is really disappointed in how she is running the house; Rebecca says she feels depressed as it is all her fault for not doing better. She doesn’t think the children know, but there have been lots of rows with raised voices and some smashed crockery. Rebecca shares that she is worried things might get worse.

1. **BENITA**

Benita is on the flower arranging rota and goes into church most Saturday afternoons to get the flowers ready for the Sunday service. She arrives early one week and finds that the doors are unlocked, and all the lights are on despite no one being in the building. She sees that there is litter and mess all over the church building, which she assumes must have been left by the local dance school, which holds classes in the hall throughout the morning. Even the sanctuary and vestry have chairs, books and papers out of place. What do you think Benita should do?

1. **JASMINE**

You are a youth worker at your church and have organised a weekend away at a self-catering cottage in the country. It’s a small mixed group of 8 young people and another leader. On the way to the cottage in the minibus, Jasmine, aged 15, tells you that her new boyfriend, who has an expensive new car, did not want her to come on this weekend, but that she has been looking forward to it and spending some time with her mates. Jasmine tells you, light-heartedly, that he’s a bit older than her and that he was worried that she might get too friendly with a boy her own age in the group. Later that first night you see her withdraw from the group campfire and study her new, latest model phone intently for a few minutes. When she comes back, she looks pale and says she feels ill and needs to go home.

1. **RITA**

You are a pastoral visitor and regularly visit Rita, an 86 year old lady who lives in sheltered accommodation. On one visit she breaks down and tells you that she is very unhappy as her daughter keeps shouting at her, telling her she is stupid, and that she has changed the address of where the bank sends Rita’s statements so that she cannot keep track of her finances any more. You have no reason to suspect that Rita is exaggerating or that her memory is confused given your previous conversations, so you express sympathy and then ask Rita what she would like you to do about it. She asks you not to tell anyone else and that she doesn’t want anything to happen as she is scared that if anyone finds out it will jeopardise the relationship she has with her daughter, her only close relative.

1. **ABDUL**

It is well known that Rev Franks has a close friendship with the Khan family; mother, father and 16-year-old son Abdul. Rev Franks lived with the family for a few months when he had been unwell; he went back to live at the manse but continued to have regular contact with the Khan household. You are a church steward and youth club leader; Mrs Khan spoke to you after church this morning and told you that she is worried about her son, Abdul. He has changed over the last few months, from being happy and outgoing tobeing nervous and jumpy. You agree that Abdul seems different, in fact he rarely attends youth club now. Then Mrs Khan breaks down and cries. She tells you that Abdul hasn’t been the same since Rev Franks started coming around every evening to give Abdul ‘coaching’ sessions. Rev Franks won’t allow a family member to be present at the sessions, but Mrs Khan tells you that she has overheard Rev Franks telling Abdul that he [Rev Franks] is God’s anointed one and that someone has died because they didn’t do what he [Rev Franks] told them to do. Mrs Khan is very concerned.

1. **GRACE**

Gracewas an active member of the church but now she is 93 and has been a resident in a care home for some months due to limited mobility. She is starting to become forgetful and her only son works in South Africa. You have been Grace’s Pastoral Visitor for several years and still visit her regularly; you are her ‘emergency contact’. One day you are informed that Grace had been in hospital overnight following a fall from her chair. You go to the care home to visit Grace who has extensive bruising and ask her what happened. She is distressed and tells you that she fell because she leaned too far out of her chair. It was a hot day and she was very thirsty. She rang her call bell several times for someone to help her reach a cup of water which was just out of reach. No one came and she was desperate. You decide to tackle the Officer in Charge about the incident. You have to wait for 20 minutes to see her. She tells you that they are short staffed. She dismisses Grace’s account of events, commenting that Grace often doesn’t remember things correctly as she is confused. You go back to say “Goodbye” to Grace, who repeats the same account of her fall. She tells you that the staff in the home are not very kind to her and wonders what she has done wrong.

1. **JOSH AND BEN**

Josh and Ben (both 14) are best mates and are inseparable when at youth club and church, and are always seen playing on their phones or tablets. You, a steward responsible for the church Audio-Visual equipment approach Ben one day when he is on his own and asks if he and Josh would be interested in helping out with the AV, as you know they are interested in computers. Ben suddenly looks upset and says that he doesn’t know about Josh, as he barely sees him anymore. He then goes on to share how Josh spends all his time with a new online gaming friend, Nick, and he’s now given up all his other hobbies. He’s even stopped going to youth club, which he loved. Neither of the boys have ever met this new gaming friend, but it seems he’s managed to convince Josh that Ben is manipulating and controlling him and so Josh will no longer speak to or see Ben. Ben is clearly devastated as he doesn’t know what to do, and suspects Josh is planning to meet Nick.

1. **KYLIE AND ASHER**

At the Christmas Toy Service, you see one of the stewards asking Kylie and Asher (aged 9 and 7 years) if they have brought any gifts to be donated. They look down and shake their heads before walking off, visibly shivering, into the sanctuary. As you walk past, the steward mutters to you about those selfish children not bringing toys for less fortunate children, not to mention the lack of effort made in their appearance. “I mean, fancy coming to church in some tatty shorts and t-shirts, what are their parents thinking!” they exclaim. You know that Kylie and Asher’s dad drops them off every Sunday and rumour has it that he goes to visit another woman while they are at church.

1. **DESMOND**

You have been giving Desmond, a neighbour, a lift to church most weeks for the past few years. One day, as you are driving Desmond home after church, he asks if your electricity is still working. You query why he would ask this, and he explains that he has been dealing with a very nice woman from the Electricity Board who has told him that there is a problem with the cables on our street. This problem can be sorted with the use of some expensive equipment, which needs to be hired by the residents. Desmond then tells you that he has transferred the necessary £1000 for his property, but he had been made aware that some of his other neighbours weren’t able to afford it and might be embarrassed to discuss it, so he was considering covering their costs too. He admits that he has never met the nice woman from the Electricity Board as she has only been in touch via email. But he reassures you that it is not a scam as he is a retired bank manager and so would know if it wasn’t all above board.

1. **KIM**

You are a door steward and part of the welcoming team at your church when one day a young woman, Kim, arrives for the first time. You welcome her in and ask her to stay for coffee after the service, so that you can introduce her to some other church people. Kim is learning English in addition to other languages, and in beginners’ English, she timidly explains that she cannot stay as she must get back to work at the local nail bar after the service. As the service starts and you check outside for latecomers before taking your seat, you notice a large, muscular man, whom you have never seen before, waiting on the edge of the church car park. As soon as the service is finished Kim jumps up and hurries out of the church before you can speak to her. As you look out of the doors to see if you can catch her to say ‘goodbye’, you see her walking away accompanied by the large, muscular man.

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| **Creating Safer Space:**  **Foundation Module** 2020 Edition (Modified 2022) | | |
| **Name** | | **Date** |
|  | | |
|  | **What have I learned?** | **What might I need**  **to say / do?** |
| **Our Church context** |  |  |
| **Good Practice** |  |  |
| **Recognise** |  |  |
| **Respond** |  |  |
| **Record & Refer** |  |  |