

SECTION 9

Authorised Listening: information for potential users.

'It is vital our churches are safe places for people to tell their stories of abuse, and where people listen and respond well...' Time for Action report

We have recruited Authorised Listeners who are available to support adults who need a confidential space to consider the issues they may be facing as a result of abuse they have experienced within the church environment.

All Listeners have skills and experience in counselling; in managing sensitive and difficult information; in assessing and identifying needs for specialist support and knowing where to find such support; and in safeguarding children and adults at risk. They are familiar with the church environment.

You may have requested to speak to an Authorised Listener. This information sheet explains how you will be referred and what you can expect. There is no charge to you for this service.

Process for referral

I will meet or talk on the phone with you about your need for a Listener and get an overview of the issues you would like to address.

I will ask you for your preferences for a Listener, and will then contact some Listeners to establish who may be available and best meet your needs at this time.

After that, I will offer you one or more Listener (where possible I'll offer a choice), and we'll then agree how contact will be made between you and your chosen Listener.

What you can expect from the Listener

The Listener will offer you an attentive and attuned listening ear in order to assist you in talking about your experience.

He or she will assist you in considering your next steps, and where appropriate will support you in making them. Such next steps may include reporting abuse to instigate a statutory investigation or disciplinary process; facilitating counselling or pastoral support; mediation etc.

Please note that the Listener does not offer you counselling sessions during these Listening sessions.

In the first instance, you will be offered 3 sessions with a Listener (in exceptional circumstances a 4th session might be arranged) these can be face to face or by telephone and you can expect each session to last approximately an hour.

Following your conversations with the Listener, and with your agreement, he or she will share relevant information with me, in order to facilitate your next steps.

Where appropriate, and again with your agreement, the Listener may enable referrals to be made to other professionals and/or support you in doing so.

Confidentiality and information sharing

With the exceptions below, you are ensured confidentiality, and information which you divulge to the Listener will only be shared to other parties with your consent.

In exceptional circumstances information you share may be divulged without your consent. This occurs if other people may be at risk; or if you are assessed to be at risk and unable to protect yourself; or if information is pertinent to a current statutory services investigation or assessment. Such information will be shared in the first instance, and without delay, with me.

If you would like to access this service please contact Ruth Rogan:

- **07825 167016**
- r.rogan@newcastle.anglican.org
- **Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE29 6HS.**