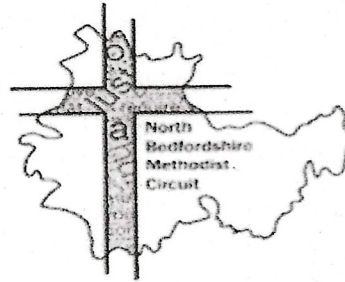

North Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit



Charity number 1129523

Circuit Policy for callers to churches and manses

Who are these guidelines for?

Everyone including Ministers, Stewards and Congregations

Why have they been given to us?

The guidelines are designed to keep everyone safe and help us respond well as individuals, churches and a circuit to those visiting or calling at churches and manses asking for help with a wide variety of needs. This might include with food, travel, housing etc.

Where should they be kept

The guidelines should be made available at a suitable location in the Church such as the vestry so that they can be referred to easily should the need arise. Some individuals may also find it helpful to keep a copy for reference.

The Guidelines

Please do not give out money – money collected in the church is not ours to give and we have a duty of care to those who might be vulnerable to ensure they can come to church without feeling they might be asked to respond in this way

Please do refer people to the Food Bank – in Bedford Stephanie can issue vouchers as can other local agencies and towards Biggleswade ministers can contact The Need Project to refer people

Please do learn about and make use of the Benevolent Fund – this can be used to purchase things such as food, top up of gas or electric and travel tickets, but cash cannot be given from this fund. Some places have other local funds that can be accessed by clergy for people living in that area.

Please do make sure that your church has some items of food that could be given out if needed. It is helpful if these have good dates and at least some items do not require any facilities such as kettle or microwave.

Please do think very carefully before going anywhere with someone – never go alone, make sure others know where you are going and be aware that there may be implications for insurance if you are using your car.

What else can I do?

There are times when we might need to refer people to other agencies who can best help. A table listing help for those who are homeless in the broad area of Bedford is available and ministers have received this on email. Learning about the help available locally is also a really good thing to do. Some rural areas now have community agents who can help with a range of support, Citizens Advice is available in some areas and many of the night shelters and food banks are able to signpost to other help and support.

Signed

Dated

9/9/2024

Document updated April 2019

Agreed at Circuit meeting for 2 years

North Bedfordshire Circuit Meeting September 2024
Issues requiring circuit action

1. Adoption of the North Bedfordshire Methodist policies as listed below for 2 years unless they need updating before.

Issue

To approve the Circuit policies as follows:

- Circuit Safeguarding Policy
- Circuit Social Media Policy
- Circuit Electronic Communication Policy
- Circuit Domestic Abuse Policy
- Circuit Callers to Manses Policy

Timing

Immediate

Recommendation

All of the above policies are approved for 2 years, unless revision is needed before.

Background and argument

All policies to be agreed where no changes are needed at the September North Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit Meeting every two years.

Next Steps

Proposed by *Stephen End*

Seconded by..... *Phil Dams*

Abstained.....

Agreed by the Meeting

Signed Rev Michael Giles *M Giles*

Superintendent Minister

9th September 2024