



AVON AND SOMERSET CONSTABULARY

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Safer, Stronger Neighbourhoods

Crime Reduction and Community Safety, Somerset East
Yeovil Police Station, Horsey Lane, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1SN
Telephone: 101 (non-emergency)

Date: 21st January 2014

Dear Town/Parish Clerk

I am writing to inform you about a community safety scheme called 'Safe Places' being launched by Avon and Somerset Constabulary force-wide on 7th February 2014, in partnership with Somerset County Council, Compass Disability and Mencap Lufton College (in our Local Authority area). Safe Places is a national scheme aimed at vulnerable adults that already operates successfully in other counties, such as Devon and Cornwall, Gloucester and Sussex.

The Safe Places Scheme aims to help vulnerable adults with learning disabilities deal with any situation that makes them feel scared, threatened, at risk or confused when they are out and about in the community. This could be anything from being lost to missing a bus, losing a mobile phone or being harassed and bullied.

The idea is simple – logo stickers are displayed in the window of places that sign up to the scheme. A Safe Place location can be a bus station, a shop, café or any other public space, such as a library. Those who have joined the scheme carry an "I need help" card containing contact details of someone they trust.

Staff in the Safe Place location will be able to assist anyone who has an "I Need Help" card and approaches them for help. The assistance provided could be in the format of giving directions or simple advice such as bus times, calling the contact number on the "I Need Help" card and/or calling the Police if a crime-related incident has occurred.

The purpose of the scheme is to:

1. Make vulnerable adults be safe and feel safe when they're out and about.
2. Raise awareness of the greater likelihood of vulnerable adults being a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour.

The Police and Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and our partner agencies have a strong desire to protect and reassure vulnerable adults, as well as improving opportunities for engagement with minority groups. The scheme is service-user led, has been and will continue to be shaped by the service users i.e. vulnerable adults.

Neighbourhood Teams in South Somerset and Mendip are currently identifying and risk assessing potential Safe Place locations to join the scheme and we are keen to work with local organisations, businesses and service providers to promote the initiative to potential safe place locations and service users with learning disability. This is likely to later include vulnerable adults with autism and dementia.

I would be grateful if you could forward this information to your councillors and promote the Safe Places scheme in your town/parish, for example using town/parish newsletters or websites. I have emailed a webpage template for this purpose.

If you would like to find out more about the scheme, become a Safe Place location or know of someone with a learning disability, autism or dementia who would like to benefit from using the scheme, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of your local Neighbourhood Team.

Yours faithfully,

Beth Poole

Crime Reduction Officer, South Somerset
Police Community Support Officer 9593

Email beth.poole@avonandsomerset.police.uk

