

Safe Spaces Newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter - Issue 2
April 2021



Hello and welcome to the second Safe Spaces newsletter

Thank you for joining the mailing list to receive our newsletter. If you have received this via a contact and you would like to receive it directly, please contact us at:

safespacesfeedback@victimsupport.org.uk

In this second edition we'll be updating you on what the Safe Spaces team have been up to and sharing some extra content from people who have used our service.

Donna

Service Update

The Safe Spaces Team have achieved a lot since our previous newsletter.

As you can see, we have agreed our branding, which is now prominent on our website. Our website has been updated to include lots of helpful information. Over the next quarter, I will be developing the website based on survivor feedback, so if you have any ideas or feedback regarding the website, please do get in touch. Additionally, if you are interested in being further involved in the development of the website and other things, I encourage you to sign up to our Development Network. You can sign up for the Network using the feedback email address above.

We have also set up a steering group and are engaging with an independent researcher? Articles on this are featured later.

All of this has been happening alongside the amazing work that my team do every day. Since January, the team have picked up 44 new cases, whilst simultaneously working on cases from the previous quarter. They have taken 170 phone calls, sent 990 emails and engaged in 17 Live chats. The team have been working from home, but they have developed systems to provide peer support to one another, whilst continuing to receive case supervision from myself and their external clinical supervisors. If you are interested in reading more out about the work the team are doing, you can find our quarterly reports on our website here:

<https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/how-can-we-help-2/>

How & when you can contact us.

Safe Spaces is open:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
Friday and Saturday: 10am - 6pm

Thursday: 12pm - 8pm

Sunday: Closed

Email

safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk

Phone

0300 303 1056

Website and Live Chat

[safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk](https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk)

If you'd like to chat with us via live chat please visit our website. You can do so anonymously, if you prefer, and this service is available during the opening hours above.

When Safe Spaces is closed, you can leave a voicemail or drop us an email. We will get back to you as soon as we are able to.

If you are in crisis or need immediate help call 999.

Steering Group and Development Network Update

Safe Spaces ran a recruitment process throughout January and February, encouraging people to express an interest in joining the Safe Spaces Steering Group. Members for the group were finalised in time for the first meeting, and, with the Project Manager as Chair, we met on the 3rd March for three hours. There are currently eleven members, with spaces reserved for victims and survivors who have engaged with the Safe Spaces service. We are looking to meet again in the final two weeks of August.

If you are a Safe Spaces service user and interested in joining the Steering Group, please do contact us on safespacesfeedback@victimsupport.org.uk. By joining the Steering Group, you will have an opportunity to influence decisions about our service provision, co-produce resources and materials relating to Church related abuse, and drive the service throughout the pilot period.

Development Network

If the steering group is not for you, but you would still like to have an input on the development of the Safe Spaces service, we welcome you to join the Safe Spaces Development Network. This Network is for anyone who has an interest in the service, and you will have the opportunity to consult on materials and resources developed by the Steering Group, and on the decisions made about the service. This is a virtual pathway of engagement, and will not involve any formal meetings.

Safe Spaces caseworker Rebecca shares some relevant news items that you might find interesting

Radio 1 has launched a 24 hour 'Relax' music stream, with ASMR and Mindfulness sessions.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-56843999>

Lawyers for Women's Justice and End Violence Against Women accused the CPS of 'raising the bar' for rape prosecutions, meaning more cases are prosecuted, but far fewer are charged. The CPS denied any change in approach, and on 15th March, court Judges declined to examine the evidence needed to start a legislative review.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jan/26/cps-accused-of-systemic-illegality-in-charging-cases>

The UK Government has announced a mental health recovery action plan, and has pledged £500 million to support mental health schemes in the wake of the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mental-health-recovery-plan-backed-by-500-million>

The Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce, set up in August 2020, published its first report on 22nd April, proposing a number of changes to Church of England practice.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf>

Sajid Javid has called for the UK's 'abuse of a position of trust' laws to be more widely extended. Currently, teachers and care workers can be charged for grooming children between the age of 16 and 17, but other professions are not subject to the same rules.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9206047/Sajid-Javid-leads-calls-shut-legal-loophole-lets-sexual-predators-groom-children.html>

Safe Spaces Compliments

Feedback is incredibly important to the Safe Spaces Service. When we are nearing the end of support with service users, we send a form asking for feedback. Below are some comments regarding service user's experience of support.

When I initially contacted the service, I thought that I might be making a request that was out of remit but staff provided reassurance right from the beginning that I was in the right place

Finally, I would like to thank XXXXX specifically for her calm manner, patience, and thoughtful approach in working with me. There were times when I became very distressed on the calls and XXXXX always responded with empathy and compassion, while also using practical skills to ensure that I was grounded again before the call ended

I have been very impressed with Safe Spaces. The initial contact was very soon after I was referred and without being intrusive I know that I can both trust XXXXX and turn to her for support. As the investigation unfolds (slowly) it matters that I can access support as and when.

While I am now aware - thanks to Safe Spaces! - that I can receive counselling through the Catholic Church, there are various barriers (for me) to accessing this that I cannot face at the moment. I wonder whether funding could be provided to Safe Spaces for a (telephone/online?) counselling service for people like me who still need some time to talk things through? I cannot be the only person in this situation and I think it would be a very helpful addition to what is already being provided, and a cost-effective use of additional funds provided by the churches.

XXXXXX has been excellent as an advocate. She has been very clear and helpful in her support, and has gone above and beyond in liaising with bodies such as the Diocese and the NST. I am glad that I have had her on my side throughout this process.

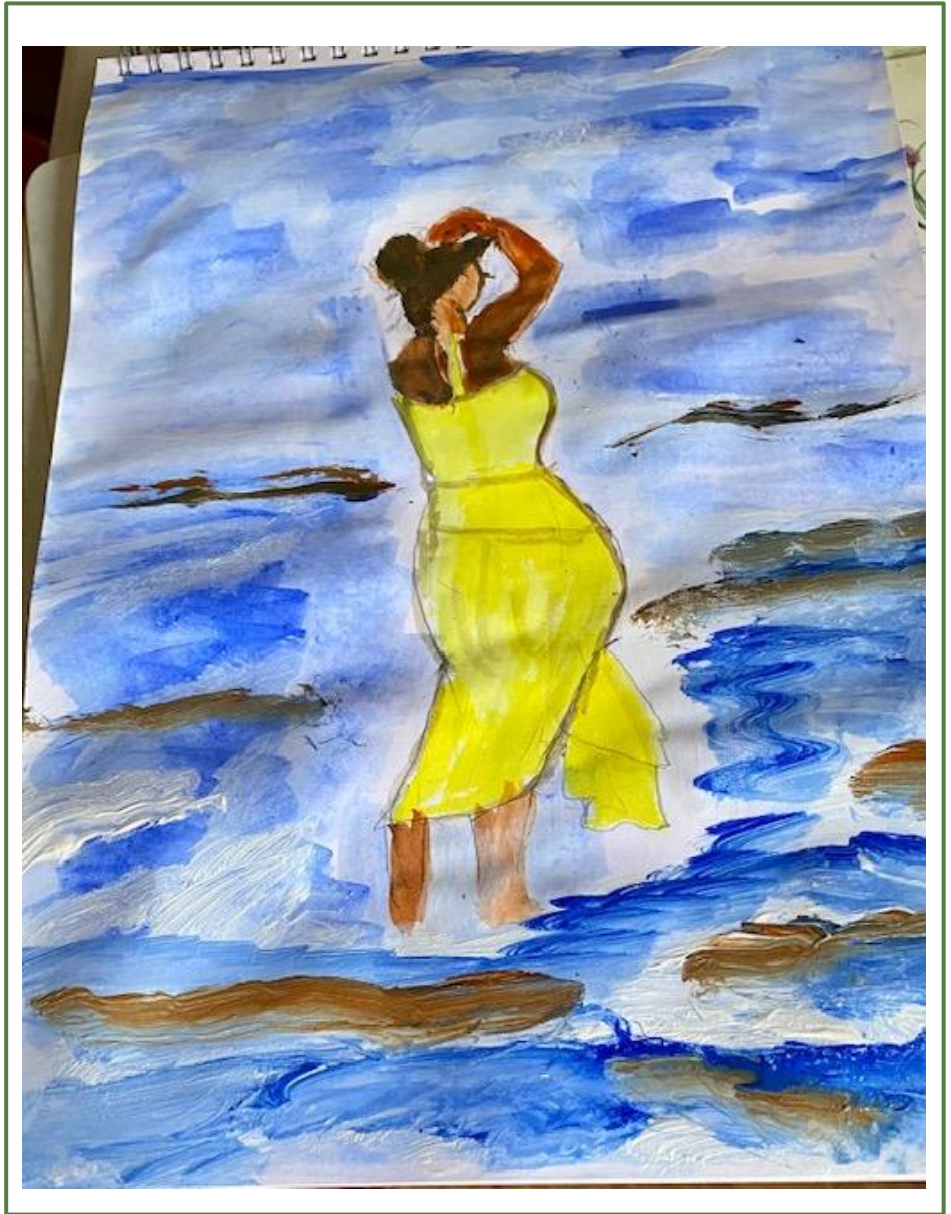
Survivor Artwork

One of our incredibly talented clients wanted to share her artwork with us and gave us permission to add it in this newsletter:

Here's what she had to say...

*This is a picture of me
'feeling calmness within' and
'feeling the serenity of the
sea'.*

If you have anything you would like to share then please get in touch we'd love to see it.



Watch this Space...

Safe Spaces will be promoting the Grants Scheme soon. This service will provide small grants of up to £5000 per application, to community groups supporting victims and survivors of Church related abuse.

If you are on our mailing list or development network, we will send you more information about this closer to the time. If you would like to join the mailing list or development network, please contact us on safespacesfeedback@victimsupport.org.uk

Alternatively, keep your eye on our website:

<https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/grant-funding/>

Safe Spaces Research

The Safe Spaces Commissioners have commissioned a piece of research from an independent researcher, to evaluate the service and make recommendations to develop the service beyond the pilot period. They are keen to speak to Safe Spaces Service users, with their consent.

If you would like to participate in this research, please contact us at safespacesfeedback@victimsupport.org.uk and we will introduce you.

Can you help us with future newsletters?

We at Safe Spaces hope that eventually this newsletter will be co-produced with service users. We therefore welcome anyone who has engaged with us to write to us with any suggestions for input, or even write an article.

Keeping in touch

If you would like to continue to receive our quarterly newsletter please email safespacesfeedback@victimsupport.org.uk

If you have already registered to receive this newsletter you will remain on our mailing list, until you ask to be removed. If you know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter in the future ask them to email us directly @safespacesfeedback