

Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Manager's Blog

January 2021

A trusted scheme

I hope you were able to get some downtime during the Christmas holiday. Last year was like no other and [at times it I felt like I was inside a washing machine](#). As we begin the new year, my sense is that we are in for a rough start to 2021.

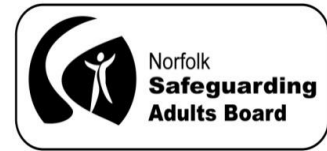
During my downtime I did enjoy a few mornings of waking and then drifting back to sleep, appreciating the slower pace of the days, out walking and riding the bike* watching some TV, and time with the family. I watched a number of reviews of 2020, one of which included very interesting socially distanced (of course) studio debate about *disinformation and fake news*. This prompted me to catch up on a number of articles by **Marianna Spring**, Specialist Disinformation and Social Media Reporter for BBC News and BBC World Service, see [The casualties of this year's viral conspiracy theories \(26 December 2020\)](#).

Sources of trusted information came to mind when a family friend asked who she could contact to get some building work done. One of the concerning safeguarding issues of the pandemic lockdowns has been financial abuse and incidents of [rogue traders](#). My advice to her was to look at [Norfolk County Council's Trusted Trader scheme](#).

[Norfolk Trusted Trader](#) has, for over 10 years, successfully *supported older and vulnerable people in Norfolk to remain safe and independent in their own homes* by providing access to quality, reliable local businesses and voluntary agencies. Norfolk Trusted Trader gives residents a safe way to access traders and services within the home, and avoid the rogue traders who sadly exploit the vulnerable in our communities.

A wide range of services are registered on the scheme, such as help around the home, help with shopping, bathing and gardening, hot and cold meal delivery, home repairs and maintenance, painting and decorating and IT support.

So when advising my family friend to look for a builder through this service I was confident the information could be trusted.



All Norfolk Trusted Trader members have passed a range of checks to join the scheme and agree to abide by a code of conduct including:

- trading fairly and honestly and having appropriate insurance
- clear pricing and providing all required documentation for work undertaken
- ensuring all employees and sub-contractors are appropriately trained
- that members will not seek work by cold calling
- fully participate with the scheme's complaints process should an issue arise between a customer and the trader

Recently this has been expanded to ensure that all members have appropriate Covid-19 risk assessments in place and are delivering their work in a Covid-19 secure manner.

Key to the scheme is customer feedback. Members provide forms to customers allowing them to provide their review on aspects of the member's work, for example cost, timescales, communication or cleanliness. This form is returned to Norfolk Trusted Trader and published on their website. More than **21,000 reviews have been posted** on the website so far by customers for work worth almost £23 million.

A simple adult safeguarding step that we can take for 2021 is to recommend this 'trusted network' to family and friends, and reduce the risk of financial exploitation and abuse in Norfolk.

Thank you

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* For regular readers of this blog you may remember in December part 1 ([Light on the road ahead](#)) I mention I was trying to cycle 3,000 miles in 2020. I am pleased to say I did manage it (3,003) and with 2 days to spare.

[Search the Norfolk Trusted Trader directory and see members' feedback here](#) or call 0344 800 8020