

Safeguarding – checking staff, trustees and volunteers **Information about the new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

Bristol City Council's Investment and Grants Team has recently received several queries from grant-funded organisations about CRB checks, particularly for volunteers.

Under the provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has now been established. This new body merges the services of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Criminal Records Bureau. Its primary role is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. More information can be found on the [DBS website](#).

On 21st December it was announced that DBS checks will now be portable and free for volunteers and that this will reduce costs for charities:
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/portable-crb-checks>

The new provisions under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 include changes to activities regulated under the Act and therefore changes for when and for whom DBS checks are required. The Charity Commission's recommended approach to the new DBS, regulated activities and checks for staff, trustees and volunteers is available from the Charity Commission [website](#).

In December Volunteering England (which merged with NCVO on 01/01/2013) produced a [user friendly guide](#) which may be useful for organisations working with volunteers. This was produced before the announcement on 21st December about free checks for volunteers and therefore may be updated but currently is the most useful information I have found.

Additional support and information about safeguarding is available from the following websites:

<http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>
<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/protectionandsafeguarding>

The Home Office website has a searchable database of umbrella organisations that can provide DBS checks and support. These include local organisations, two of which are listed below:

http://www.bandltd.org.uk/dbs_checks.html
<http://www.youngbristol.com/what-we-do/crbs>