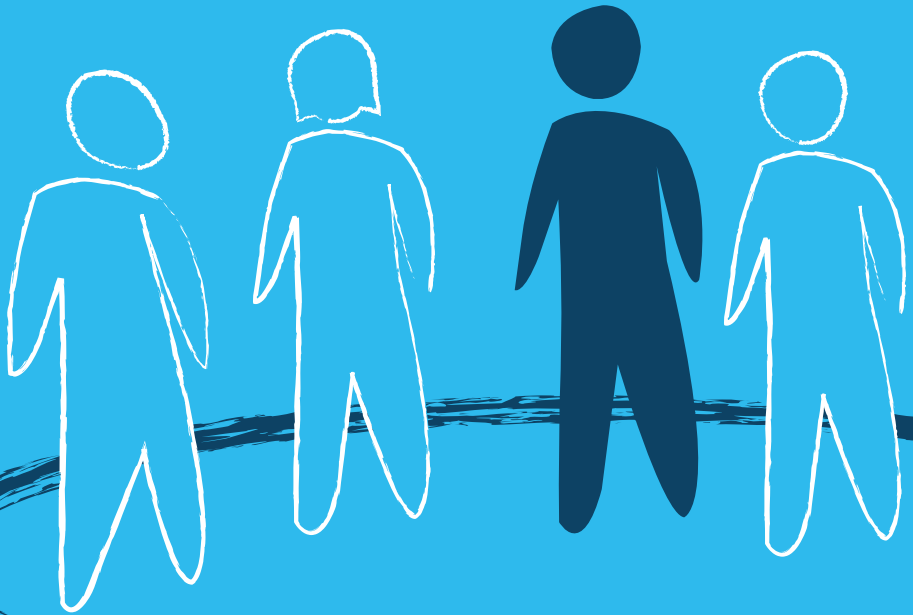


“The Circle holds the offender to account for their behaviour but also helps them to develop ways to reduce their risk of committing further offences”

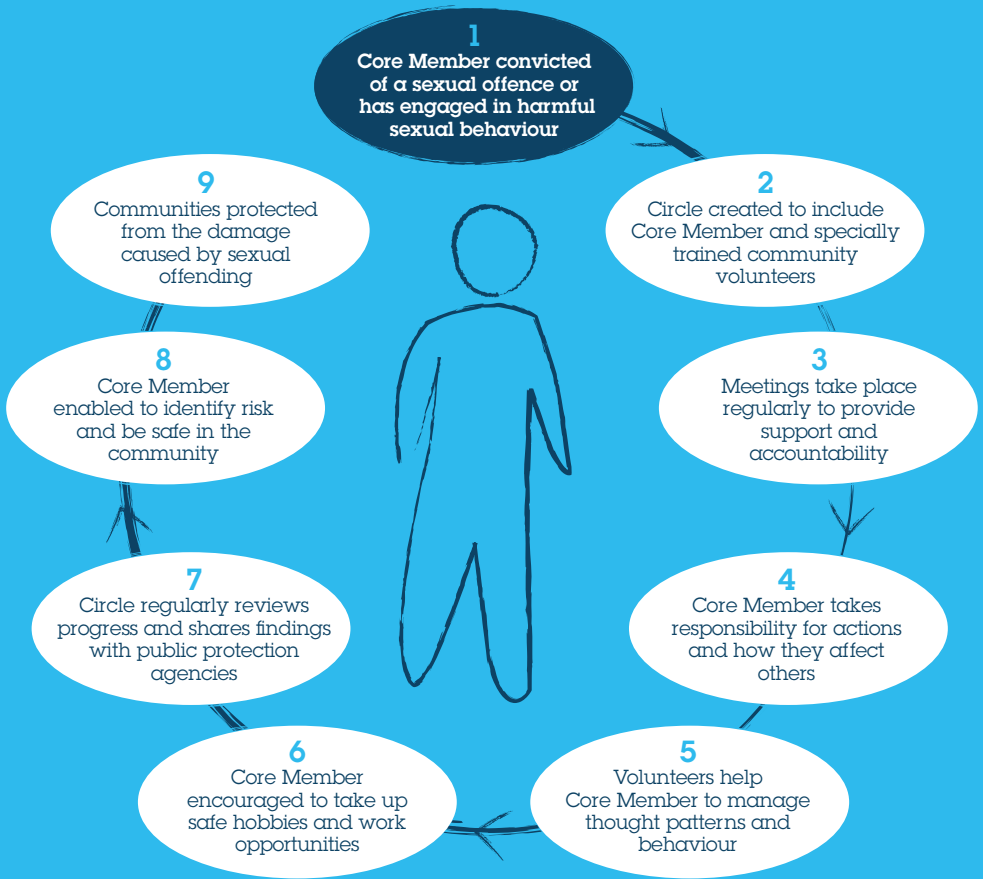
Police & Crime Commissioner



**circles
south west**

delivering circles of support
and accountability

How Circles work



Information for referrers – Adult Core Members

No more victims

Circles South West works in partnership with statutory services to assist in risk management of those who have perpetrated sexual harm and/or are registered sex offenders by providing Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA). Referred individuals will usually be living in the community, though in some areas we have capacity to offer support starting in prison. Our mission is 'No More Victims' and reducing reoffending our objective.

Circles can enhance the work of statutory partners by:

- Addressing the significant gap in provision of long-term support/monitoring of high-risk offenders.
- Tailoring support networks specific to need and risk.
- Providing a service to the police after end of supervision.
- Providing an essential source of intelligence, information, monitoring and support.
- Contributing to ongoing risk-assessment and risk-management plans.

A Circle offers support and holds individuals to account for their behaviour, attitudes and thoughts. Each Circle is designed in response to the individual's risk and needs according to an assessment made in conjunction with referrer and statutory partners.

Each Circle is managed by a qualified criminal justice professional, experienced in working with those who have sexually offended/harmed and comprises up to five volunteers and one "Core Member". Our volunteers are required to undergo mandatory training and vetting procedures to ensure suitability for this role. They meet with the Core Member regularly (usually once a week at the start of the Circle) for 12 to 18 months in a risk-assessed, confidential, community venue.

Volunteers will help the Core Member to reintegrate safely and responsibly into the community by:

- Addressing practical matters, such as housing, employment, disclosure, self-management, distorted thinking and risky behaviours.
- Offering a 'safe', non-judgemental environment to meet and talk, build social skills, reduce isolation and increase confidence and self-esteem.

Circle objectives are achieved by offering the Core Member a safe space in which to explore their law-abiding and purposeful future goals, develop social skills and consider appropriate employment, volunteering and social opportunities.

Referrals can be made by police, probation, youth offending services and health professionals. Referrer involvement is central to the success of each Circle.

The local coordinator will undertake interviews with the Core Member to share information about the process, assess risk, need and motivation. Prospective Core Members must be committed to no further offending and be prepared to discuss themselves, previous history, any relapse prevention plans and risk management within the Circles. Offender managers are required to participate in the initial meeting and quarterly reviews thereafter.

The central ethos of Circles is honesty and transparency. Core Members must consent for information about themselves to be shared confidentially between the referrers, coordinator and volunteers. Volunteers take minutes of each meeting and these are forwarded via the coordinator to the referrer/offender managers.

There is no set agenda for meetings, rather an emphasis on looking towards positive change and moving away from offending or harmful sexual behaviour. Discussions about what led to criminal behaviour and how s/he will desist in the future are encouraged, learning from any treatment and sharing their Relapse Prevention Plan.

Our volunteers are trained to understand risk management, encouraged to appropriately challenge the Core Member and report any progress and concerns to the coordinator so that these can be forwarded rapidly to offender managers/referring agency.

We invite an initial telephone discussion with the relevant local coordinator prior to referral.

All referrals meeting the stated criteria will be considered with priority given to those assessed as high or very high risk of serious harm and/or reconviction, in consultation with the local MAPPA Coordinator.

Eligibility

| | |
|---|--|
| Offence type: sexual | Current conviction for a sexual offence against child or adult – includes non-contact offences. Historic sexual offences may also be considered if relevant risk and need criteria met. Convictions for contact offences are prioritised but non-contact convictions will be considered where there is evidence of escalating risk and high need |
| Risk classification OASys: RM2000: | Medium, high or very high risk of serious harm. All risk classifications will be considered in recognition that RM2000 is a static assessment tool |
| Gender | Any |
| Age | Over 21 years* |
| Attitudes and beliefs | Acknowledges that s/he has committed harmful sexual behaviour |
| Status | Statutory supervision by probation and/or police (eg. registered sex offender). |

Notes: Please discuss suitability with Circles South West before completing the referral form if there are issues relating to mental health, learning difficulties, personality disorder, substance misuse, etc. We have adapted the model for those with an intellectual disability who have a conviction for a sexual offence or a Mental Health Treatment Order for harmful sexual behaviour. Contact us for more information. We are delivering a similar Young People's Service for 14 to 20-year-olds who have been convicted of sexual offending and/or display harmful sexual behaviour. Contact us for more information.

Suitability

Motivation Committed to creating no more victims and to stop his/her harmful sexual behaviour

Level of engagement Prepared to engage with a Circle on a voluntary basis

Situation Living in the community or is within six months of release into the community

Areas of need include

- Sexual preoccupation
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of appropriate intimate relationships
- Lack of pro-social network
- Emotional loneliness
- Social isolation
- Impulsivity
- Poor problem-solving
- Lack of employment/ hobbies

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Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset,
Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire

www.circles-southwest.org.uk

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NO
MORE
VICTIMS