

Working with adults with care and support needs who are experiencing, or at risk of abuse and neglect. (adults at risk)

**Advice and guidance on the
Diocese of Gloucester's
policy and practices**

**Working with people who may at risk
in our churches and in local communities**

Updated May 2015

Introduction

The following pages are aimed at helping PCCs and parishes support adults who may be vulnerable.

Adults may be at risk for a variety of reasons, and individuals often turn to the church when they are at their most vulnerable. We must all be aware of how we can support vulnerable people as individuals and as a group; being aware of our own pastoral and practical limitations and roles; the roles of professionals; respecting the wishes of individuals who have the capacity to make their own decisions, whether or not we agree with them; and being mindful of the impact on friends and families of supporting and caring for them.

Each PCC should adopt a policy for protecting, supporting and working with vulnerable adults, and key individuals should be familiar with it as appropriate to their role(s).

If there are any areas that are not clear or a parish needs support interpreting and/or implementing the policy, please contact the Diocesan team:

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www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/protecting-and-safeguarding-children-and-adults-who-are-vulnerable.aspx	

Diocese of Gloucester's commitment to and policy for safeguarding adults

1. Diocesan Synod - introduction to the policy

- 1.1 The Diocese of Gloucester's Diocesan Synod has committed the Diocese to promote good practice that takes account of the broad understanding of vulnerability, whilst also accepting that criminal record disclosures only apply to a specified range of vulnerability (see below). It receives annual reports and updates from the Diocesan Team and the Chair of the Safeguarding Board.
- 1.2 Across the Diocese we will champion and promote good practice that respects the rights of individuals to enjoy privacy, dignity, independence and choice and which actively promotes the empowerment and well-being of vulnerable people. This includes the right to live a life free from abuse and neglect.
- 1.3 On this Christian basis, and championed by Synod, the Bishop's Council, Bishop's Senior Staff, and the Gloucester Diocesan Board of Finance are collectively committed to creating and maintaining an organisational culture that is respectful, non abusive and which takes allegations of abuse seriously.

2. Our commitment

- We are committed to respectful pastoral ministry to all adults within our church community.
- We are committed, within our church community, to the safeguarding and protection of vulnerable people.
- We will carefully select and train all those with any pastoral responsibility within the Church, including the use of criminal record checks and disclosures where legal or appropriate.
- We will respond without delay to any complaint made that an adult for whom we were responsible has been harmed, cooperating with police and the local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate healing ministry.
- We will challenge any abuse of power by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a vulnerable person.

3. Definitions of vulnerability

- 3.1 The church understands that vulnerability in adults takes many forms. Adults can be vulnerable for a variety of reasons and circumstances. Synod accepts the working definition for use with those who may be vulnerable set out in the national Church of England report *Promoting a Safe Church*:

“Any adult aged 18 or over whom, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation or specific circumstance is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”.

- 3.2 The introduction of The Protection of Freedoms Act in 2012 changed the definition of what is a ‘vulnerable adult’. No longer does the definition relate just to the person, but to the service provided to that person.

- 3.3 The Care Act 2014 has changed the descriptions of who is vulnerable from vulnerable adults to **adults with care and support needs who are experiencing, or at risk of abuse and neglect**. This has been shortened to adults at risk. The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

Has needs for care and support (Whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)

and

is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect

and

As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

4. Enabling responsibility

- 4.1 The Diocese champions the overall approach outlined in *Promoting a Safe Church*. This is based on enabling adults to be as responsible for themselves as it is practicable. It is the case that those who are most vulnerable are least able to report any abuse.

- 4.2 We believe that it is a Christian duty to recognise and support those who are identified in being more vulnerable. Some of the factors that can increase vulnerability include:

- A sensory or physical disability or impairment
- A learning disability
- A physical illness
- Mental ill health issues (including dementia)
- An addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Failing faculties in old age
- A permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, including bereavement, previous abuse or trauma, instability to economic or legal circumstances

- 4.3 We are committed to promoting activities and awareness which will help ensure that people are:

- Treated with respect and dignity

- Have their privacy respected
- Are able to lead as independent a life as possible
- Have the protection of the law
- Have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion, or cultural background
- Be able to engage in effective communication
- Be heard

This will support parishes in ensuring that everyone is able to worship and follow their Christian discipleship with encouragement and in safety.

5. Our Christian belief

5.1 This policy is an expression of Christian belief in a number of respects:

- i) Each person is in the image of God, deserving of the best possible quality of relationships and care, and being in a state of vulnerability should not obscure the truth that God's spirit is reflected in each person.
- ii) Christ himself entered into a state of vulnerability on the cross, subjected to mistreatment and abuse, and so Christ is identified with those who are found in a state of vulnerability.
- iii) Christ's redeeming work and presence includes many gifts, especially gifts of healing, reconciliation, wholeness, empowerment, and responsibility, and this ministry is a witness and an inspiration to the Church. The Church is to share in the outworking of the ministry of the risen Christ so that God's purposes and Kingdom can become more fulfilled in creation.
- iv) The best quality of care and relationships, offered through the Church, are part of God's Kingdom because they express God's call for justice and Christ's presence with those who are vulnerable.

6. Protecting adults who may be at risk - the policy of the Diocese of Gloucester

Guidelines for nominated person for adults at risk

The reason for having a nominated person for each PCC (and individual churches where possible) is to ensure that general safeguarding awareness is shared with the parish priest who has the overarching responsibility for adults at risk. It is not intended that it should be an arduous, daunting, or time consuming appointment, but its importance should not be underestimated.

The nominated person can be a person to whom the leaders of adult groups may turn for support and advice, particularly if they have concerns about an adult or the behaviour of another worker.

Protecting children and adults who may be at risk requires continuing vigilance and ensuring that the nominated person's identity is well known to all (alongside details for those who run activities) in the parish is key.

Responsibilities

The nominated person for a PCC:

- Should be familiar with diocesan advice and guidance, and be jointly responsible with the parish priest for the implementation of these guidelines.
- Shares in the responsibility with the parish priest and PCC for the protection of adults at risk who come into the care of the church.
- Should take an interest in the work of his/her church with adults at risk so that he/she knows the adult leaders and is familiar with the type of activities undertaken.
- Should be involved with the careful selection and appointment of workers and should be one of the interviewers of prospective volunteers or paid workers within Safer Recruitment practices.
- Should ensure that the PCC have a full list of employees and volunteers working with adults at risk in the settings appropriate to that church/benefice – and should maintain the DBS rechecking details.
- Should be alert to any unusual behaviour or inappropriate relationship on the part of any church worker with an adult at risk.
- Should, in the event of suspicion or an allegation of abuse, know when to seek advice from one of the Diocesan Advisers and when it is necessary to inform statutory authorities immediately.

General

The nominated person in each parish:

- Should be known in the parish and especially to those who are working with adults.
- Should understand, and question how, church activities can ensure that adults at risk are best protected, and should develop their activities with the PCC to monitor good practice and suggest better ways of doing things.
- Should ensure adult's Workers know who to talk to if the Nominated Person is not available.
- Should seek appropriate advice and keep up-to-date on best practice.
- Should feel able to contact the Diocesan safeguarding team with any questions.
- Must be clear about the insurance cover for the church, so that appropriate and proper action can be made.

Allegations

- Nominated People need to know the appropriate telephone numbers:

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team (page 2)

Gloucestershire County Council Adult Helpdesk: 01452 426868

Out of hours emergency duty team: 01452 614194

Other local authorities:

www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-life/safeguarding/details-for-local-authorities/details-for-local-authorities.php

If an allegation or referral is made, then the Nominated Person should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as possible to share information, to seek advice and support.

If an allegation is made against an authorised minister, it is normal that this will happen directly to the police or statutory services who will then be in direct contact with the diocese.

If an allegation was to be made to the Nominated Person, they should immediately get in touch with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, or Head of HR and Safeguarding, who will refer immediately to the statutory bodies who lead on all allegations.

7. Diocesan Safeguarding Board

7.1 From a Diocesan perspective, the Diocesan Safeguarding Board will have oversight of strategy, direction, training, and the provision of resources and advice for parishes. It is accountable for reviewing and reporting to Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council annually on matters of safeguarding.

8. Allegations of abuse

8.1 The Diocese will appropriately follow up all allegations of abuse, including allegations against clergy, staff or volunteers acting on behalf of the Diocese.

8.2 The Diocese will always seek professional advice and referrals made to Local Authority Adult Services (and the police where appropriate).

8.3 The Diocese will not 'conduct investigations'. It may seek to determine enough information to raise appropriate concerns but these will not be intrusive, without an individual's express consent; or encroach on any potential police investigation.

8.4 Advice can always be sought from the Head of Human Resources and Safeguarding or the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (see page 2).

8.5 When a complaint arises against an ordained person, appropriate clergy processes will be followed eg Capability; or CDM (The Clergy Discipline Measure).

8.6 Recognising the sensitive nature of information held in regard to adults who are at risk, any information provided and/or stored will be treated with appropriate sensitivity and confidentiality and in line with data protection requirements.

8.7 The diocese will follow, and advise PCCs on the national church guidelines and legislative guidelines in all matters of safer recruitment linked to criminal records checking through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Safer recruitment and criminal checks

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Safer Recruitment includes the processes by which individuals working with adults who may be at risk, on a paid or volunteer basis, should be recruited.
- 1.2 It is important to remember that only some roles are eligible for a criminal record check; and it is therefore important that a more holistic view of recruiting to positions of trust and care is taken.

2. Safer Recruitment – steps

- ✓ **Clarity of the role to be undertaken**
(a task list, or job description).
- ✓ **The nature of the person needed**
(attributes needed for a role, or a person specification).
- ✓ **Application process**
(ideally an application form, CV and covering letter or individual approach).
- ✓ **Confidential declaration**
(from the individual declaring any previous convictions/charges).
- ✓ **Interviewing**
(asking questions about motivation to work in a particular role; checking out suitability or training needed).
- ✓ **Taking up references**
(ensuring previous employment or other roles have not given rise to any concerns).
- ✓ **DBS checks**
(criminal record check if appropriate to the role; taking diocesan guidance for blemished disclosures).
- ✓ **Induction and on the job learning and support**
(being aware of safeguarding issues, what to look out for, how to raise concerns, understanding boundaries; supervision and management. Developmental learning and training/qualifications and courses).

3. **What roles are eligible for a criminal record check (DBS) in respect of their ministry with adults who may be at risk.**

3.1 An eligible role must be a Regulated Activity

3.1.1 'A Regulated Activity' is undertaken under a specific church role (not as individual in a family); and at any time, it doesn't matter if it is a one-off or regular activity = **DBS Enhanced plus barring check**. Apart from the work of health or social work professionals, the activities include:

- ✓ Helping someone with washing and dressing, or with eating and drinking – or helping someone learn to do these tasks themselves.
- ✓ Helping someone pay their bills, dealing with their cash, shopping, collecting benefits/pension (eg helping someone pay a household bill. Posting the letter for the housebound person is not Regulated Activity but taking the money from them to take and pay at the post office counter is Regulated Activity).
- ✓ Helping someone conduct their affairs (eg Power of Attorney where the individual is not a family member).
- ✓ Driving someone (because of their age, illness or disability) to/from places in order to receive health, personal or social care (eg as part of a church role not as a family or friend).
- ✓ People undertaking home communion, and pastoral assistants are all included in this category because of the nature of their role in its broadest terms. This is in line with National Church of England advice and guidance. For more guidance visit www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-life/safeguarding/dbs/

3.2 The Diocese will ensure that all priests and Readers and those who have PTO have up-to-date DBS checks, but a PCC is always responsible for ensuring that their local people have up-to-date checks as required.

4. **Where there is uncertainty**

4. There will always be times when there is uncertainty about an individual/role and whether it is eligible for a criminal check or not, as the regulations are complex and differ from roles just working with children; and roles working with adults who may be at risk. If in doubt at any time, please get in touch with the Diocesan Team.

5. **PCC members and DBS eligibility**

5.1 This is another area that can depend on a number of circumstances. Previous guidance was that three members of a PCC should be DBS checked in line with Charity Commissioners guidelines. These included the Incumbent and Churchwardens as Trustees of the charity.

- 5.2 National Church/guidance now is that, if there is designated Children's Work or Adult Work clearly designated as a PCC activity, then ALL members of the PCC are eligible for a DBS disclosure as Trustees of that Charity.

Such activities can include Sunday School, youth clubs etc; home visiting projects for frail elderly; lunch clubs where people have particular disability needs.

For more advice contact the Diocesan Team.

Parish perspective, understanding and recognising signs and symptoms of abuse against adults who may be at risk

1. The following is the definition of an adult at risk as set out in the House of Bishops' Report (Promoting a Safe Church p2):

Any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

1.1 The definition of an adult with care and support needs who are experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect as set out in the Social Care Act 2014 is

**Any adult who has needs for care and support (Whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
and
is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
and
As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.**

2. What is abuse, where can it happen and who could be abusing people living in your parish?

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.' (Human Rights Act)

Abuse can take many different forms:

- **Physical abuse** – being hit or restrained, or misuse of medication
- **Sexual abuse** – being harassed, teased or touched in a way that the person does not like; being forced to have sex against their will
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – not getting the food, care or clothing needed
- **Self neglect**- being neglectful of one's own personal hygiene, health or surroundings this can include behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Modern Slavery**- being trafficked, forced into slavery, domestic servitude or forced labour.

- **Domestic violence** – can include Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- **Psychological abuse** – being bullied, threatened or verbally abused
- **Discriminatory abuse** – being ridiculed or threatened because of race, gender, disability, beliefs or age
- **Financial abuse** – money or possession being stolen or used in a way that the person does not like
- **Organisational abuse** – being mistreated by an organisation or person that is providing care
- **Spiritual abuse** – the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; this can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in vulnerable people experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. (Promoting a safe Church, (2006)

Where can abuse happen

Abuse can happen anywhere, for example:

- In the domestic home
- While with family and friends
- While receiving treatment
- In a day centre
- In a care home, residential home, nursing home
- In hospital
- In church

Who could be abusing people who live in the parish?

- A partner (husband or wife)
- A friend or relative
- Someone employed to help look after an adult at risk
- Someone living in the same care home, hostel, housing scheme
- Someone attending the same day activities or centre
- A stranger

Developing a parish policy

I. Developing a parish policy

1.1 The PCC needs to consider how best to introduce, adopt and own a policy on safeguarding adults. In preparation for this, the PCC or a sub group may find it helpful to:

a) work through the diocesan checklist:

www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-life/safeguarding/safeguarding-resources-/safeguarding-resources-.php

b) work through these questions and examples of good and bad practice:

- With regard to your own parish, who are the adults at risk?
- In what ways are they at risk?
- In what settings in your parish do you meet adults at risk?
- Are there ways in which you already, or could better safeguard the adults at risk that we meet in our parish?

2.2 Examples of good and poor practice for parish debate – aides for discussion

Good Practice Are we? Do we?	Poor Practice Are we? Do we?
Being careful of our language. Always use positive language, for example, a person has a physical, mental or learning disability.	Maintaining a 'them' and 'us' divide in our attitudes, speech and actions. By not speaking to adults at risk as one would other adults or by only talking about 'them' without using individuals' names.
Treat adults at risk with the same respect as you would when speaking to or about anyone else. Always refer to them by name, eg 'We must remember to save a seat so Bill can join in.'	By not speaking to or about adults at risk as one would to other adults. Grouping people together as if they are all the same increases unhelpful stereotyping and removes their individuality.
Use proper sign language for the deaf and for those with learning difficulties.	Using action songs as a substitute for signing is inappropriate. The 'actions' are not necessarily intelligible to deaf people or those with learning difficulties. They may be fun but actions don't use the words; they are only fine for children or as an aid to worship.
Make sure everyone can get to where the coffee is served and that they receive the necessary books or papers on arrival	Assuming that the person with a disability has no need of books, etc. Assuming that all disabled people have to

at church. Clear access to enable independence is always the preferred option, but remember to be available to offer help should it be needed.	be served and cannot help themselves or express a choice or preference.
Giving the same respect as to others. Always knocking on the door before entering a room or home. Asking permission to join them; respecting their home and possessions.	Touching or moving personal possessions without permission. Many people rely on familiarity as navigation aids around their homes.
Respecting differences – be it in appearance, ability or ideas.	Attempting to change someone's appearance to a more acceptable style. Assuming that odd or challenging behaviour is a sign of demon possession. Imposing 'ministry' on adults at risk without their informed permission. Assuming that everyone shares your Christian values.
Make sure that everyone has access to all the projected words, pictures and presentations by offering seating with a clear 'sight line' by, for example, offering seats near the front (if they are wanted). Have more than one screen for OHPs or PowerPoint presentations and ensure that the images are not adversely affected by light, or provide written copies.	Ignoring or excluding people from everyday events or special occasions either by not inviting them or by not making communication possible. Ignoring people that are below your eye-level by only talking to their companions who may be on your eye-level. Standing whilst talking to someone in a wheelchair assumes you are talking down to them (even if you aren't) and makes two-way communication difficult.
Have a proper conversation using appropriate language. Ask about interests and hobbies.	Using euphemisms, irony and some jokes with some adults at risk can sometimes be misunderstood and your true meaning will not be grasped or it may be felt to be offensive. Just because someone has a disability, it doesn't mean they can't hold an adult conversation with you – avoid using childish language.
Adults at risk sometimes welcome physical contact, but remember to ask first. Not withholding physical contact because someone has a disability.	Hugging people without asking can cause distress; people who have disabilities have preferences too. Leaving a disabled person out of 'hugging' or handshakes can be very rejecting and hurtful.
Check the building for accessibility. This doesn't only mean doors, steps and toilets, but also includes sight lines, lighting, acoustics, etc.	Failing to see that we all have similar needs.

<p>Respect for dignity and feelings. Ask about personal preferences, forms of address and how much help might be needed.</p>	<p>Excluding adults at risk from events like funerals because, in your opinion, it may be upsetting. Assuming that help is needed all the time with everything.</p>
<p>Remember the needs of carers who may benefit from breaks and short times of respite from their commitment.</p>	<p>Being insensitive or neglectful of the emotional needs of carers. Judging how they spend their time or money.</p>

Draft template PCC policy on the safeguarding of adults who may be at risk

This statement was adopted by the PCC of

.....

at the Parochial Church Council meeting held on (date).

This policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved and a copy shared with the Archdeacon at the time of the Visitation.

1. We recognise that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.
2. As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults to whom we minister.
3. We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of all adults who may be at risk, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
4. We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
5. The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of all adults who may be at risk.
6. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of adults who may be at risk and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
7. We undertake to exercise proper care in the safer recruitment practices of all appointment processes of those who will work with adults who may be at risk.
8. The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst adults who may be at risk.
9. The parish adopts the national Church of England guidelines; and those of the Diocese.
10. Each person who works with adults who may be at risk will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.

Incumbent Date

ChurchwardenChurchwarden

Guidelines for those in positions of trust or exercising pastoral ministry with adults who may be at risk.

I. Introduction

- 1.1 Exercising any kind of ministry involves developing an understanding of ourselves and how we relate to others, how we increase the well-being of others and how we ensure our, and their own, well-being and safety.
- 1.2 People in positions of trust necessarily have power, although this may not be necessarily apparent, and respecting professional boundaries is particularly important. Many pastoral relationships can become intertwined with friendships and social contacts making this guidance even more necessary.
- Particular care should be exercised when ministering to people where there is a close personal friendship or family relationship.
 - Awareness of the dangers of dependency in pastoral and professional relationships and seeking advice or supervision when these concerns arise should be developed.
 - Healing ministry should only be undertaken by designated trained diocesan staff/clergy with expertise in the theology and non-intrusive practice of that work.
 - Clergy and other people with pastoral responsibilities must recognise their limits and not undertake a role that can be confused with a professional role – a role that is beyond their competence or qualification (eg therapeutic counselling, deliverance ministry, counselling victims of abuse and domestic abuse , or their perpetrators or giving legal advice). In such instances, the person should be referred to someone with appropriate expertise and/or a professional agency/body.

3. Conversations and interviews in a ministry context

- 3.1 Conversations in a ministry context are pastoral encounters. People need to be aware that innuendoes or compliments of a sexual nature are always inappropriate. When a person asks questions or seeks advice around topics of a sexual nature, the motives and needs of that person should be questioned, and the ability to assist effectively reviewed.
- 3.2 Clergy and those with pastoral roles should consider in advance:
- the place of the meeting, arrangement of the furniture and lighting, appropriate personal attire;
 - the balance of privacy for conversation with the opportunity for supervision (open doors or windows in doors, another person nearby);
 - the physical distance between people determined by hospitality and respect, being aware that someone may have suffered abuse or harassment in the past;
 - whether the circumstances suggest a professional or social interaction;
 - the propriety or danger of visiting or being visited alone, especially in the evening and the personal safety and comfort of all participants;

- establishing at the outset the nature of the interview in respect to subject matter, confidentiality and duration;
- the appropriateness of initiating or receiving any physical contact, for example gestures of comfort, which may be unwanted or misinterpreted.

4. Record keeping and privacy

- 4.1 It is a good idea to keep a note of a meeting or visit
- The content of any encounter should only be recorded with the person's consent unless it is a matter of child protection or might be a record of suspicion of abuse or mistreatment
 - Any record should be factual and avoid rumour or opinion.
 - Records concerned with abuse should be kept indefinitely (at least 50 years).
 - The publishing, sharing or keeping of personal data or images should follow the appropriate legislation.

5. Working with colleagues

- 5.1 The standards maintained within a pastoral relationship are equally relevant in relationships with colleagues. Harassment or bullying should never be condoned. All workers need to be aware of the possibility of stress within the work place. The needs of family should be acknowledged and all who work together should acknowledge the boundaries between work and home, allowing sufficient time for relaxation and holidays.
- 5.2 Everyone who works with vulnerable people should know to whom they are accountable and have a designated person with whom to discuss their work. Such mentoring is especially necessary for those undertaking a continuing individual pastoral ministry of counselling, or when their ministry takes them outside normal church work.
- 5.3 When leaving office or relinquishing any task, those in church roles should relinquish any pastoral relationship except with the agreement of any appropriate successor.

5. Sexual conduct

- 5.1 The sexual conduct of those in church roles may have an impact on their ministry within the Church. It is never appropriate for workers to take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with anyone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- 5.2 A power imbalance is inherent in pastoral relationships and conduct should be of the highest standards at all times. Individuals should avoid situations where they feel vulnerable to temptation or where their conduct may be misinterpreted. Responsibility should be taken for words and actions if there may be physical contact with another adult (eg a hug may be misunderstood) or discussions about sexual matters. This will include seeking permission, respecting the person's wishes, noticing and responding to non-verbal

communication, refraining from such conduct if in doubt about the person's wishes.

6. Financial integrity

6.1 Financial dealings can have an impact on the church and the community and must always be handled with integrity. Those with authority for such matters should maintain proper systems and not delegate that responsibility to anyone else. Those working in a church role:

- Should never seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances.
- Should never be influenced by offers of money.
- Should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart and should avoid any conflict of interest.
- Should ensure that money received by the church is be handled by two unrelated lay people.
- Any gift received should be disclosed to the incumbent so it can be decided whether it should be accepted.
- Should take care not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk.

Following up concerns or issues raised

What should you do if you suspect, or become aware of, or are told that an adult who may be being abused?

- Do not dismiss your concerns
- If the person is in immediate danger, call the police or an ambulance
- Keep any evidence such as letters, emails, other paperwork
- Do not confront the alleged abuser
- Report your concerns to the Incumbent or the Nominated Person in your parish
- Write an account of what you have heard or been told for future reference and keep it safe. This shouldn't be a long detailed narrative, but the key points, and what you remember someone saying or doing.

You must never assume that somebody else will recognise and report what you have seen or heard.

It can be difficult if the allegation is about a colleague/friend or it is difficult to believe what you have heard, but...

What should I do if someone starts telling me they have been abused?

- Listen very carefully; give them your full attention.
- If the person is in immediate danger, call the police or ambulance.
- Do not agree to keep it a secret; you cannot do this. Explain to them you have to pass it on.
- Reassure them you will deal with the allegation discreetly and will take it seriously.
- Avoid asking questions about the alleged abuse
- Do not make judgements.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser.
- Report the allegation to the Incumbent and/or Nominated Person; to the Diocesan Head of HR and Safeguarding; or to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
- Write what you have been told for future reference

- If your incumbent or any other parish/retired priest or Reader is implicated report it immediately to the Head of HR and Safeguarding; the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer; or the Bishop of Gloucester or Archdeacon on 01452 410022 x 270.

Promoting wellbeing and good practice with organisations and groups using church premises

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Promoting a safe church is key for the duty of care the Church has to all who worship, visit, or use its premises.
- 1.2 Church buildings should be inspected to ensure they meet Health and Safety standards and should allow people with physical and other disabilities to participate as much as possible.
- 1.3 Parishes should undertake a regular audit of their buildings in order to ensure that premises enable the church to carry out its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act. Issues of access, visibility, audibility and toilet facilities are among the issues that should be addressed.
- 1.4 Appropriate public and employee insurance cover should be in place at all times.

2. External organisations and church premises

Advice for churches letting premises, church halls etc

Churches often have facilities (e.g. a church or parish hall) that can be booked for use by groups and for private functions.

It is advised that any specific groups using the premises regularly or occasionally should be able to produce their own policy (e.g lunch clubs, age uk, NHS groups).

Churches need to ensure that they are complying with the requirements of their insurance company. Ecclesiastical Insurance's Public Liability (Third Party) insurance protects policy holders, as long as you use 'best practice' procedures in the management of child and adult protection and care. This includes:

- The observance of 'reasonable care' is a standard insurance condition;
- The hiring body requires that anyone booking the premises signs a general hiring agreement which includes the clause;
- Being responsible for ensuring that children and adults at risk are protected at all times, and taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this.

- 2.1 Many community bodies use church premises for a variety of events, clubs and groups.
- 2.2 The church should ensure that all relevant signage such as emergency exits, power and lighting switches, fire extinguishers, and first aid are all accessible at all times and that user groups have the contact details for a responsible person/caretaker should there be any problems.
- 2.3 Whilst the church is not responsible for these independent groups, building relationships with representatives and leaders of these groups is key to ensuring that the church's commitment to the safety of all can be shared.
- 2.4 It is good practice for any external users to be asked to give assurances that they have their own policies and practices in place to ensure the safety of those in their care and for the activities they put on. This is especially important for activities with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- 2.5 In addition all external users should be able to provide evidence of current insurance cover for their own activities as part of any usage agreement.
- 2.6 A church may decide to agree to regular usage of its premises on the condition that an organisation is able to provide a copy of their own current practices and policies especially in relation to safeguarding and health and safety generally. This should be clearly stated on any hiring agreements.

Useful telephone numbers

Helpline

Contact

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gsab

Safeguarding Adults services

- for concerns about an adult 01452 426868
- out-of-hours emergency number 01452 614194

- for concerns about a child 01452 426565

Action against Elder Abuse helpline 0808 808 8141

Gloucestershire rape and sexual abuse centre helpline 01452 526770

Gloucestershire Domestic abuse support service 0845 60209035

Health watch
(to find health and social care services in Gloucestershire) 0800 652 5193

Samaritans 01242 515777

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service 08451 204550