

Policy on the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults

This statement was adopted by the Parish of St David's Church, Moreton-in-Marsh with St Mary's Church, Batsford at a 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 people who may be vulnerable, 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 people who may be vulnerable.
6. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
7. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable, including obtaining DBS checks where appropriate (see 11).
8. The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.
9. The parish adopts the Diocese of Gloucester's policy for safeguarding adults (see Appendix).
10. Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.
11. The PCC together with the incumbent will ensure that DBS checks are obtained for people who fall into the following categories:
 - Lay people commissioned by the Bishop for pastoral and community work
 - All those who become parish lead people under a parish policy
 - All lay people authorised in a formal way by the parish for pastoral and community work
 - All those commissioned by the Bishop to distribute Holy Communion to people in their own homes
 - According to the House of Bishops' policy, 'Those who regularly care for, train, supervise or are in sole charge of vulnerable people' (as defined 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.

12. The PCC nominates Judith Hartridge to be the Nominated Person to whom all cases of suspected or alleged abuse must be reported immediately. Her contact details are displayed in the church and the Centre foyer.
13. We will ensure that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any vulnerable adult who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint. We also commit to offer appropriate pastoral care to any member of our church community against whom an allegation is made.

Definitions and Scope

For the purpose of understanding the application of this policy, while vulnerability in adults may take many forms, we accept the working definition for use with those who may be vulnerable as 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".

The phrase "other situations" includes those who are vulnerable for medical and social reasons and also those who are vulnerable by virtue of their economic position or their status under 'immigration' laws (for example those who are asylum seekers or refugees).

We also recognise that those who are most vulnerable may be least able to report any abuse.

We believe that it is our duty to recognise and support those who are identified as being more vulnerable. Some of the factors that increase vulnerability include:

- a sensory or physical disability or impairment
- a learning disability
- a physical illness
- mental ill health (including dementia), chronic or acute
- an addiction of alcohol or drugs
- the 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

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

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** – not getting the food, care or clothing needed
- **Psychological abuse** – being bullied, threatened or verbally abused
- **Discriminatory abuse** – being ridiculed or threatened because of race, gender, disability or age
- **Financial abuse** – money or possession being stolen or used in a way that the person does not like
- **Institutional abuse** – being mistreated by an organisation or person that is providing care
- **Spiritual abuse**

Incumbent Date

ChurchwardenChurchwarden

Appendix

DIOCESE OF GLOUCESTER'S POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

1. **Bishops Council - introduction to the policy**

1.1 Bishop's Council has made a commitment to promoting good practice that takes account of the broad understanding of vulnerability, whilst also accepting that Disclosure and Barring Service disclosures only apply to a specified range of vulnerability (see below).

1.2 Bishop's Council 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, the Bishop's Council is committed create and maintain an organisational culture that is respectful, non abusive and which takes allegations of abuse seriously.

2. **Definitions of vulnerability**

2.1 Vulnerability in adults takes many forms. The Bishop's Council 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*:

2.2 "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".

2.3 The phrase "other situations" includes in the case of the Diocese of Gloucester those who are vulnerable for medical and social reasons and also those who are vulnerable by virtue of their economic position or their status under 'immigration' laws (for example those who are asylum seekers or refugees). Taking into account the breadth of the definition, it is probably the case that in a good proportion of congregations in the Diocese there are many people who could be considered vulnerable in some respects.

3. **Enabling responsibility**

3.1 The Bishop's Council supports **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.

3.2 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 increase vulnerability include:

- a sensory or physical disability or impairment
- a learning disability
- a physical illness
- mental ill health (including dementia), chronic or acute
- an addiction of alcohol or drugs
- the 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

3.3 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.

4. Our Christian belief

4.1 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.

5. The policy of the Bishop's Council of the Diocese of Gloucester

5.1 Each parish is asked to make arrangements for one or more 'lead people' to be able to assist in the implementation of a local policy which may also link with Safeguarding issues with regard to children and young people as appropriate for each parish situation. There are three tasks:

- i. advocacy with regard to the concerns and views of those who are vulnerable with someone to be a voice at PCC meetings and other meetings in the church and wider community
- ii. checking that the PCC policy for safeguarding adults of being followed in a coordinated way in the activities of the church, and advising the PCC
- iii. listening to any concerns about their care raised by adults who are vulnerable and being, where necessary, a point of contact with the person designated in the diocese (the Diocesan Human Resources Manager and Safeguarding Adviser at

Church House). Usually no concerns will be passed to an outside body without referral to the designated diocesan Adviser, except in an emergency.

5.2 Those appointed to listen to concerns will be required to undertake a DBS disclosure.

5.3 From a Diocesan perspective the Diocesan Safeguarding Board will have oversight of strategy, direction, training, resources and advice for parishes, and be accountable for reviewing and reporting to Bishop's Council on all matters of safeguarding.

5.4 The diocese will follow the proposals in 'Promoting a Safe Church' with regard to seeking Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosures for its officers and for those in parishes

5.5 The Diocese will appropriately follow up all allegations of abuse, including allegations against clergy, staff or volunteers acting on behalf of the Diocese. Professional advice will always be sought and referrals made to Local Authority Adult Services (and the police where appropriate). The Diocese will only conduct any investigations where this is appropriate. The advice of the Human Resources Manager and Safeguarding Adviser (see above) should be sought in the first instance and the guidelines providing in 'Promoting a Safe Church' will be followed.

5.6 When a complaint arises against an ordained person, the clergy discipline procedures will be followed.

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