

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH

**Policy concerning the
Protection of Vulnerable Adults**

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 Activities undertaken by employees of Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council (HT PCC) and volunteers from within members of the congregation of Holy Trinity Church, Ashby de la Zouch, often involve them working closely with adults and vulnerable persons. An adult is a person aged 18 years or older.
- 1.2 The document seeks to provide a basic awareness of the abuse of vulnerable adults, and to assist in recognising abuse and the procedures to be adopted in such instances.
- 1.3 This document also sets out policies relating to recruitment of HT PCCC employees and volunteers whose activities involve them working with vulnerable adults.
- 1.4 The core principles of equal opportunities and equality must apply to all persons with whom HT PCC employees and volunteers come into contact regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, culture, religious beliefs or, except where it is strictly relevant, their possession of a criminal record.
- 1.5 The term '**vulnerable person**' is used in the remainder of this document and covers vulnerable adults.
- 1.6 A separate Safeguarding Policy applies to children and young persons.

Section 2

Definitions and Forms of Abuse

- 2.1 **A vulnerable adult is defined as:** A person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.
- 2.2 Vulnerable adults include: People with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and disabled people may fall within this definition, particularly when their situation is complicated by additional factors such as:
- Physical frailty
 - Chronic illness
 - Sensory impairment
 - Challenging behaviour
 - Social problems
 - Emotional problems
 - Poverty
 - Homelessness
 - Substance abuse
- 2.3 **A child and young person is defined as:** A person under the age of 18 years.
- 2.4 **Abuse is defined as:** A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.
- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts.
 - Abuse is neglect, physical injury, emotional abuse, financial or material abuse or sexual abuse.
 - Abuse can be an act of neglect or an omission to act and may be the unintended consequences of a person's actions.
- 2.5 **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional development.
- 2.6 **Financial or Material abuse** includes theft, pressure around wills, property or inheritance, misuse or misappropriation of benefits.
- 2.7 **Neglect and/or Acts of Omission** occurs when adults fail to meet a vulnerable person's basic needs, such as for food, warm clothing or failing to provide adequate medical attention. Neglect might also occur during organised activities if vulnerable persons are exposed to risk of injury or there is a failure to ensure their safety and well-being.

Section 3

Vulnerable Person Protection Policy Statement

As members of this church, we commit to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of the vulnerable people in our care.

- It is the responsibility of all church members to do their best to prevent the physical, spiritual, sexual and emotional abuse of vulnerable persons and to report any abuse, alleged or suspected.
- We will respond without delay to any complaints made that a vulnerable person, for whom we are responsible, may have been harmed.
- We will work towards the code of good practice when working with vulnerable persons and create a culture of '**informed vigilance**' which children and all adults in the church take seriously.
- We are committed to supporting, resourcing and training annually those who work with vulnerable persons. We will provide supervision for workers because we recognise this is important in maintaining good practice.
- We will ensure that all those who work with or have any responsibility for vulnerable persons obtain an 'Enhanced Disclosure' under the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- HT PCC will accept responsibility for the appointment of the Vulnerable Person Protection Co-ordinator (VPPC) who will ensure that each person who works with vulnerable persons receives a copy of this parish policy and is familiar with, and follows, our policy, procedure and guidelines that are in place for our church.
- We have a health and safety policy in place.
- The VPPC will work with the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council to implement policy and procedures.
- The Parochial Church Council will undertake to display a copy of this policy statement in a prominent place in the church and the church hall so that all may be aware of its existence.

Our independent person who vulnerable persons, HT PCC employees and volunteers may talk to if they wish about any concerns is Gemma Barber. She can be contacted via safeguarding@trinityashby.net or via the Church Office.

This policy statement will be renewed annually and progress in carrying it out will be monitored by the VPPC who is Elizabeth Lunt. She can be contacted via safeguarding@trinityashby.net or via the Church Office.

This statement was agreed by Holy Trinity, Ashby de la Zouch, Parochial Church Council.

Date.....

Signed.....(Incumbent) Signed.....(Churchwarden)

**Procedures for Implementing the Parish Policy
of
Holy Trinity Ashby de la Zouch**

A copy of these procedures will be given to all volunteers and HT PCC employees who are involved in working with vulnerable persons. They should sign a declaration afterwards saying that they have read and understood them.

1. CONTACTS

Our Vulnerable Person Protection Co-ordinator is Elizabeth Lunt who can be contacted on::

Safeguarding@trinityashby.net or via the Church Office

Our independent person to whom vulnerable persons or adults can talk to about worries and concerns about possible abuse is Gemma Barber who can be contacted on:

Safeguarding@trinityashby.net or via the Church Office

2. Safe Working Procedures

Where contact is made with a vulnerable person at least 2 adults should be present with at least one of them being the same sex as the vulnerable person.

3. Safe Recruiting

Those responsible for an appointment should follow the principles outlined in Appendix 1 when seeking to appoint someone to a post involving direct contact with vulnerable persons.

4. Procedure to follow in the case of suspicion and disclosure of abuse

'The Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children' contains advice relevant to vulnerable persons and outlines the:

ACTION TO TAKE IF:

- there is an allegation of abuse
- you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse
- a person who is subject to investigation or has been convicted for child abuse is attending your church

How to react when a vulnerable persons wants to talk about abuse

It is important to reassure a vulnerable person that it is right to talk about it, that you will take everything they say seriously. It is wrong to promise confidentiality.

General points

The following are suggestions which may be helpful rather than precise guidance.

- Reassure the vulnerable person that you are taking what is said to you very seriously.
- Keep calm.
- Look at the vulnerable person directly.
- Don't prejudice anything.
- Tell the vulnerable person you will need to tell someone else – don't promise confidentiality.
- Whatever a vulnerable person may have done, it is not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware the vulnerable person may have been threatened, intimidated or made to promise secrecy.
- Never push for more information than is immediately given.
- Hear the allegation clearly, make a written note of it afterwards, refer the case correctly.

Helpful things to say

- "Thank you for telling me this"
- "I will have to share this with someone else who can help"
- "You needn't tell me any more about it, I've understood what you're telling me"
- "I am glad you have told me, it is not your fault, I will help you"

Avoid saying:

- "Why didn't you tell anyone before"
- "I can't believe it"
- "Are you sure this is true"
- "Why, how, when, who, where"
- "Don't tell anyone else"
- "This is dreadful"

Concluding the conversation:

- Reassure the vulnerable person that it has done the right thing to tell you
- You are taking what has been said very seriously
- You will tell someone who can help, straight away
- They are not to worry or feel they have done anything wrong.

What to do if you need advice about a situation or you suspect abuse

Contact the incumbent or the independent person.

5. Support, supervision and training of Volunteers and Employees.

Everyone should avoid working alone with vulnerable persons and there should always be more than one responsible adult available so that there is mutual supervision. Should one of the adults become ill or get called away, the other adult should call for additional help.

Volunteers and employees will be given the opportunity to review their work with the incumbent and the independent person or another named adult. This will enable them to comment on the work they are doing, give suggestions, review and further develop their work, if they so wish, and to discuss training opportunities.

Our church will hold annual training events on Protection of Vulnerable Persons, and all persons working with vulnerable persons will be expected to participate in that training.

6. The Lighthouse online community

This community is seen as a digital extension of our church. As such all safeguarding guidance and policies apply to it as for the physical church with respect to vulnerable persons. The community is for those 18 years and older only.

Usage policies and role descriptions have been developed for the community in line with relevant guidance. Key points with respect to safeguarding are:

- Safer recruitment will be used for all roles within the community
- Relevant volunteers will undergo safeguarding training as per 5. above
- Users will follow Church safeguarding guidance and reporting within the community as for the physical church
- Concerns will be reported via the routes identified in this document

7. Retention of information

After an employee, or volunteer has resigned, any relevant information that may have been accrued will be kept, for a period of 5 years, in a secure place by the VPPC.

8. Health and safety

A first aid box is kept in the church crèche room (formerly the vestry) and in the church hall.

The accident book, which is kept in the church crèche room, must be filled in if an injury or accident occurs.

One of the adults at all meetings must have a working mobile phone.

10. Implementation of the Policy.

The parish VPPC will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being practiced.

11. Procedure for regular reporting to the Parochial Church Council

The VPPC will report annually to the Parochial Church Council on vulnerable person protection matters and confirm that the policy is being fully implemented, or if not which areas require attention and how any problems identified can be satisfactorily addressed.

The Parochial Church Council will review this Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy and how it is to be implemented at least every two years.

APPENDIX 1

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SAFE RECRUITING PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTING PERSONS TO WORK WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS

