

Christ Church

PROTOCOL WHAT TO DO WITH CONCERNS AND INCIDENTS

Part of CHRIST CHURCH SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY

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(Figure 2a and 2B are in a separate document.)

INTRODUCTION

This document comes from the Diocese Safeguarding protocol and will explain what needs to be done if you suspect that abuse may be taking place – or that there is a potential risk of abuse. Please remember that abuse takes many forms, may affect children, young people or adults and that there are no stereotypes for those who do the abusing. (You can find more information on abuse in chapter 6 of Safeguarding Policy Vulnerable People of Christ Church or in The Diocese Safeguarding protocol section 6.1.

In the Diocese and in Christ Church any form of abuse will not be tolerated and it is very important that any suspicions (no matter how slight these may be) are raised with the appropriate people as soon as possible.

Obviously any suspected case of abuse carries with it the need to maintain a sensible level of confidentiality both to protect the individual who has been abused (and indeed the accused in the event that the suspicions are not subsequently confirmed). This does not however remove the need to report all suspected cases of abuse as outlined in this section.

What follows is a simple set of 'rules' to ensure that everyone who suspects that abuse is happening (or could be happening) knows what they must do.

Don't forget that we all have a personal responsibility (which cannot be delegated) to keep children and adults who may be vulnerable safe. If you think the safety of a child or an adult who may be vulnerable is at risk at any time, treat it as an emergency and please make every endeavour to notify the police or local children's services (or local equivalent) immediately. Also make sure the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and the church person to whom you are responsible (unless the concern is about them) are informed.

1 WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO IN CHRIST CHURCH

You may become aware of a possible case of abuse (no matter how slight this is) from a number of different sources, for example what the individual who has been abused might have said to you or to others, or from the behaviour of either that individual or their abuser. This may be in the context of a Chaplaincy activity, involving someone from the chaplaincy congregation, or something unrelated to the Chaplaincy.

Please remember that the most important thing is to share your concerns. Please do not attempt to 'investigate' (other than to ask simple questions for clarification), as this is a very specialised area requiring considerable skill and expertise to avoid further harming the individual, or alerting the abuser, or damaging evidence which may be needed in a criminal investigation.

Whilst the subsequent actions will vary, it remains important that you share the information with the appropriate people as soon as you can. You are asked to make your concerns known (in complete confidence) to one or other of the following people:

- ✓ Your Chaplaincy Overall Safeguarding Officer or your Safeguarding coordinator of your congregation; or
- ✓ Your Chaplain or one of your Chaplaincy Wardens; or
- ✓ The Archdeacon or Area Dean; or
- ✓ The Diocesan Safeguarding Team (contact details in chapter 5 of the Christ Church Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Policy) or
- ✓ The Diocesan confidential reporting line. This is a confidential recorded telephone line available 24 hours a day - please remember to leave your contact details so that the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can get back to you. (Tel +44 (0)207 898 1163 is the number to call.)

Procedure to follow in Christ Church

- ✓ The appropriate Safeguarding coordinator or chaplain who is notified by someone about a concern or an incident, inform (in confidence) the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as they can (this is a 'must' in every case no matter how trivial).
- ✓ The Safeguarding Coordinator and/or chaplain write down an accurate and acceptable record about what has happened. Guidance on how to keep accurate and acceptable records is given in section 3 of this document.
- ✓ The Safeguarding Coordinator and/or chaplain inform the Overall Safeguarding Officer and the Senior chaplain about the concern or incident. Together they will decide who will be responsible for:
 - Contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
 - The person who informed the Safeguarding Coordinator or chaplain.
 - Other (needed) persons involved, like e.g. the Dutch authorities (police, Bureau Jeugdzorg, Bureau Jeugdbescherming) etc.

All appointments will be written down according to the record keeping, see section 3 of this document.

What happens next?

The Diocese has an agreed process, which will begin immediately, to ensure that the correct approach is taken to dealing with your concerns - and to keep you informed as to the outcomes. For information this is outlined below:

- ✓ The Chaplain or Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer will be made aware of all concerns (unless of course they are directly implicated).
- ✓ There will be a full written record of the concerns identified, how they were approached and the outcome of inquiries made. This will be initiated by the individual to whom you expressed your concern (i.e. the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in the case of the confidential reporting line).
- ✓ The Diocesan Safeguarding Manager, in appropriate consultation with senior members of the diocese, will then identify the appropriate next steps.
- ✓ The outcome will be formally recorded in Diocesan records and shared, in confidence and for information, with the Chaplain or Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer and the individual who raised the concern in the first place.

2 A METHODOLOGY FOR MANAGING SAFEGAURDING CONCERNS

The 2015 Diocesan Safeguarding Protocol contains an outline of the approach to be taken in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised. This information sets out the detailed diocesan methodology aimed at ensuring that we are fully prepared for handling all concerns in a proportionate and timely manner. The methodology is set out as a four step approach as outlined below. The details are explained in separate sections of this document.

Step 1: Initial 'Gatekeeping'

This stage is directed at ensuring that, following the raising of a concern, the correct next steps are taken.

The objective of this step in the methodology is to ensure that **all** matters are properly addressed and recorded irrespective of the nature or seriousness of the concern that has been identified.

Initial reporting of a concern

Concerns may be raised through a number of routes:

- ✓ From within Chaplaincies/Archdeacons: this may be through the Archdeacon, an Area Dean, a Chaplain, a Warden, a Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer etc. The Diocesan Safeguarding Protocol (section 6.4) requires that **all** concerns are to be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as they can. This is a 'must' in **every** case no matter how trivial. This will include rumour, gossip, anonymous reports and when individuals are told something of concern by a person who says that they are not prepared to become involved).
- ✓ By a call from an individual directly to the Diocesan Reporting Line (accessed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team only).
- ✓ By other routes – the recipient of the information must inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as they can. (Again this is a 'must' in **every** case no matter how trivial).

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team will commence a chronological record of the concern at this point.

Initial Response of the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager

The Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will, without delay, make an initial assessment (consulting with appropriate people as deemed necessary) of the nature of the claim to determine the next steps.

The outcome of the initial assessment may be either:

- ✓ There is no substance to the claim and the 'concern' may be dismissed and a documented record made with the reasons for the decision set out.
- ✓ The evidence points to a 'serious safeguarding situation'* and a conclusion reached that '*Step 2 – Managing a Serious Safeguarding Concern*' - may need to be invoked. To provide support and oversight for the decision making in relation to the concerns raised, the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will consult with and gain the agreement of:
 - *The Diocesan Bishop (or the Suffragan Bishop in their absence or if there is a clear Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) issue).*
 - *The Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee (and/or the member of the DSAC appointed for their legal expertise as appropriate).*
- ✓ The evidence points to a potentially complex situation which may or may not be a 'serious safeguarding situation'* but for which further consideration should be given to the appropriate way forwards. To provide support and oversight for the decision making in relation to the concerns raised, the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will consult with and gain the agreement of:
 - *The Diocesan Bishop (or the Suffragan Bishop in their absence or if there is a clear CDM issue)*
 - *The Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee (and/or the member of the DSAC appointed for their legal expertise as appropriate).*

- ✓ The evidence points to a matter of lesser concern** In this case there would ordinarily be no need to progress via 'Step 2' and the next stage in all cases would then be 'Step 3 - *Identifying what went wrong and identifying where we can improve*' as described in step 3.

In all cases, information will be shared on a strictly need to know basis

The Diocesan safeguarding Manager will report **all** concerns to the DSAC on a quarterly basis together with the agreed next steps.

* What is a 'serious safeguarding situation'?

The Church of England defines a 'serious safeguarding situation' as a situation (which includes reports of domestic violence and abuse) which may relate to a church officer (*i.e. anyone undertaking any paid or voluntary role on behalf of the church*) who has:

- Behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child or adult; or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult; or
- Behaved towards a child or adult or presented him or herself in a way that they may pose a risk to children or adults

This can be found at the following link: <https://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/protecting-and-safeguarding-children-and-adults-who-are-vulnerable/safeguarding-policy-statements-practice-guidance.aspx>

* What are 'matters of lesser concern'?

These are all matters which do not otherwise fall within the definition of a 'serious safeguarding situation' as described above and which cannot be immediately dismissed as being of no substance. They will include a range of issues where no offence has been committed – or the behaviour of the individual did not pose an immediate risk – but where there remains a residual concern that a problem might otherwise have existed. This will include in particular 'near misses' such as individuals who have not disclosed a problem during their completion of their 'Confidential' Disclosure' but subsequently have a relevant blemished return from their criminal record checking.

Step 2: Managing Serious Safeguarding Concerns

This stage would be required where there is a 'serious safeguarding situation' (as defined in step 1).

The objective is to properly manage the emerging problem in 'real time' to ensure that all of the immediate requirements, including care for victims, are invoked in a timely manner.

In a very real sense this is the 'emergency planning' stage of the methodology. The aim is to properly manage the emerging problem in 'real time' to ensure that all of the immediate requirements are invoked in a timely manner. It is likely that this aspect will only be required where the evidence points to a 'serious safeguarding situation' as described in step 1.

The management of a serious safeguarding concern will be the responsibility of a 'CORE GROUP' as explained below.

The Convening of the Core Group

The Core group will be convened on the authority of the Diocesan Bishop (or the Suffragan Bishop in the Diocesan Bishop's absence) and will comprise the following membership as necessary:

- ✓ Chair – an independent Chair who is not a member of the clergy (e.g. typically the member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee appointed for their legal and safeguarding background).
- ✓ The Diocesan Bishop (or the Suffragan Bishop if the Diocesan Bishop is excluded because of their legal role within the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) process).
- ✓ The Diocesan Secretary.
- ✓ The Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee (if not the Chair of the Group).
- ✓ The Diocesan Communications Officer.
- ✓ An Archdeacon - this may be necessary for the purpose of CDM.
- ✓ A local member of the clergy relevant to the matter being dealt with.
- ✓ The Diocesan Registrar - as needed.
- ✓ The Diocesan Safeguarding Manager/ Adviser - to provide professional safeguarding advice.
- ✓ The Diocesan Safeguarding Administrator - to provide administrative support.

The Role of the Core Group

The overall purpose of the Core Group is to provide advice, guidance, oversight and support to the Diocese when dealing with serious safeguarding situations and also to provide the confidentiality, reassurance and independence needed in handling such matters.

The detailed function of the Core Group in managing a serious safeguarding situation will very much depend upon the circumstances of the complaint and consequently it is important to maintain a degree of flexibility in the approach

which will be taken at the time. Nonetheless the Core Group should be mindful of the need to address the following key issues:

- ✓ Strict confidentiality is essential in all the work of the Core Group as concerns raised may be personal and sensitive or they could also be unfounded or malicious. The Core Group must work on a strict 'need to know' basis.
- ✓ Establishing the facts where the concern raised has the potential to be a serious safeguarding situation but the information known is insufficient for referral to statutory agencies or to reach a reasoned conclusion.
- ✓ Taking such action as may be necessary to support the victim.
- ✓ Communicating with those involved locally.
- ✓ Communicating with the media both locally and potentially nationally within the country where the problem has arisen and within the UK where media interest is likely.
- ✓ Briefing other interested parties including Lambeth, other local players etc.
- ✓ Liaising with local law enforcement agencies where a criminal investigation is also being undertaken.
- ✓ Taking such action as may be necessary to isolate and remove the source of the problem.

A full record of the decisions and actions arising from the Core Group considerations must be made and maintained.

The next stage, at an appropriate time dependent on circumstances, will be '*Step 3 - Identifying what went wrong and identifying where we can improve*'.

Step 3: Identifying what went wrong and identifying where we can improve

This stage is directed at seeking to determine what went wrong and what lessons are to be learnt.

The objective is to review all of the available evidence surrounding the circumstances of the event to determine, if possible, what went wrong and what lessons are to be learnt. It is primarily a forensic examination of the facts which may point to:

- ✓ Failures of the processes we have in place; or
- ✓ Failure of people to follow due process; or
- ✓ A combination of both; or
- ✓ No specific failure (NB where this is clearly evidenced at an early stage then there would ordinarily be no consequential requirement for a formal inquiry of any form though the reasons for this approach will still need to be recorded).

Please note that this step is not to be used as a disciplinary tool. If disciplinary actions are needed then these come at Step 4.

The timing of the review will need to have regard to whether or not:

- ✓ A Core Group has been convened (where it may be necessary to delay the review to avoid conflict of interest).
- ✓ A criminal investigation is underway (where it may be necessary to await the outcome of that investigation before commencing the review).

Who will conduct the review?

The review will need to be undertaken at an appropriate level and may range from an investigation by the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager to a more structured 'inquiry' convened by the Diocesan Bishop. The approach to be taken will need to be determined based on the circumstances. The following commentary provides guidance on suitable approaches to be taken:

- ✓ For matters where 'Step 2' was not required (i.e. there was no need to convene a 'Core Group') it will normally be sufficient for the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to conduct a review consulting with the appropriate people as necessary.
- ✓ For matters where 'Step 2' was required (i.e. a Core Group had been convened) the seriousness of the complaint will normally necessitate the convening of a formal 'Inquiry Team'. This will be a matter for the Diocesan Bishop to determine in consultation with the Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee, the Chair of the Core Group and as advised by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. The Inquiry Team may be comprised as follows:
 - The Inquiry Team role may be incorporated into the role of the Core group; or
- ✓ Where this is not appropriate (i.e. there is a need for a greater level of independence) a separate inquiry team will be identified by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with appropriate parties within the diocese (as noted above) and, where independence from the diocese is a particular issue, from other third parties (in particular the National Safeguarding Panel and the National Safeguarding Advisor).

In either case the identified team must have clearly identified terms of reference.

How will the review be undertaken?

Irrespective of the nature of the review (i.e. whether it is simply undertaken by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or by a formal 'Inquiry Team') the review should consider the following:

- ✓ All available written evidence.
- ✓ Where possible, statements from people involved (oral or written). Particular care will need to be exercised in respect of victims where they may decline a request to provide information directly especially where children are involved.
- ✓ The testing of the evidence (if possible directly with those who have provided the relevant information).
- ✓ The relevant Church of England or Diocesan policy or protocol.
- ✓ Any relevant issues external to the Church of England that may be pertinent to the case in question.

From this it will be possible to determine in most cases where there might have been:

- ✓ A failure in our procedures; or
- ✓ A failure of an individual to comply with the procedures. This may be either:
 - A deliberate act (with consequential 'disciplinary' implications); or
 - A consequence of a lack of understanding because of poor training, information etc – with obvious implications for the delivery of our procedures rather than a deliberate act by the individual.

A written record of the review is to be prepared to include:

- ✓ The evidence considered.
- ✓ Statements received (if this is undertaken).
- ✓ The results of the testing of evidence (if this is undertaken).
- ✓ The conclusions reached.
- ✓ Recommendations for improvements and who is to be responsible for their implementation and by when.

Guidance on the taking of notes etc. relevant to the keeping of records can be found in section 1 of this document.

Further guidance on conducting an inquiry can be found in the Church of England's Practice Guidance: 'Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations Relating to Church Officers' by following the link given below:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2254740/responding%20to%20serious%20situations.pdf>

Step 4: Implementing improvements

This stage is to ensure that the conclusions of Step 3 are properly implemented in a timely fashion.

The objective is to ensure that the recommendations arising from Step 3 are properly and timely implemented.

The responsibility for implementing the recommendations will be identified during the Step 3 deliberations.

What might the implementation involve?

This will be very dependent on the nature of the case but might typically require one or more of the following aspects:

- ✓ Revising the diocesan processes to take account of any procedural deficiencies.
- ✓ Undertaking additional training/information provision if the processes were correct but not properly understood.
- ✓ Disciplinary proceedings where an individual deliberately (either intentionally or because of incompetence) failed to follow a correct process.

It is essential that the corrective actions are taken expeditiously to help in preventing a reoccurrence of the problem.

Keeping others Informed

The diocese (through the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Committee) will ensure that lessons learned (in an appropriately anonymised form as appropriate) are shared both across the diocese (through the Archdeacons), across the broader Church of England (through the National Safeguarding Panel) and with all other parties who might be considered to have an interest in the conclusions

3 RECORD KEEPING

The maintenance of suitable records is an essential element of the protocol. The importance of generating and maintaining adequate records cannot be understated. They provide confidence that the policy is being properly delivered and in the event of an issue being raised provide crucial evidence to any inquiry.

What Records do we need to keep?

In the following you will find information on which records need to be kept and who is responsible for them:

1. A "**Record of Safeguarding checks**"; this includes who has been checked, which checks have been made and who has followed the appropriate training. This is the responsibility of the safeguarding coordinators and part of their work.
2. A "**Record of Concern**" for use when a matter of concern (or possible concern) is raised within a Chaplaincy.

Record of Concern

The '*Record of Concern*' is a simple record which provides for the recording of all relevant information regarding a safeguarding concern reported within a Chaplaincy. Two record formats cover, respectively, all of the initial and follow-up information **that will need to be passed without delay to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team** (with a copy of these forms) and should be completed by the individual receiving the information relating to the concern (i.e. the Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer, Chaplain, Warden, Archdeacon or Area Dean).

An individual 'folder' is to be maintained for each case of concern containing these forms and any ancillary documentation (e.g. subsequent correspondence and the outcome of investigations/inquiries). All such folders should be stored in a lockable cabinet with access limited to the Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer.

The model record forms are illustrated in Figure 2 at the end of this document:

- ✓ Fig 2a illustrates the model form to be used to record the initial concern
 - ✓ Fig 2b illustrates the model form to be used when further information becomes available and action is taken.
- The forms are available on the Diocesan Website. Electronic copies are available on the Diocesan website (section 6.10 on the friendly web version) <http://europe.anglican.org/what-we-do/safeguarding>

Guidance on keeping accurate and acceptable records

Taking or making notes is very important with any allegation or concern about safeguarding. The simple rules set out below will help to provide accurate and acceptable records which you may need to refer to at some later date.

Notes recorded must be:

- ✓ Comprehensive – as much detail as possible about what you saw or heard, who did what, who said what, what was reported to you as a third person, etc.
- ✓ Factual – nothing that could not later be read out in a court or tribunal. Direct speech should be quoted, even if it is offensive.
- ✓ Dated and timed – give the date and the time of the event to which the notes refer and record or store them in a chronological order.
- ✓ Written in ink at the time or as soon as possible afterwards. State when the notes were written and why there was a delay. Give the time at which the note taking ended. (Printed copies of original email communications will satisfy this requirement.)
- ✓ Original written notes and not copied from elsewhere. If the original notes were made on a notepad or other paper, retain this together with your completed set of notes.

Errors and alterations:

- ✓ If you make a mistake, cross it out so it remains legible and initial it. Do not erase the mistake.
- ✓ No blank spaces should be left – if there are blank spaces they should be lined through and initialled.
- ✓ No overwriting.
- ✓ No writing between lines.
- ✓ Amendments and alterations should be initialled and the reasons why they have been altered set out in the notes.
- ✓ Notebooks and other documents should be stored until required by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

Diocesan Records and Archiving

The Diocesan Safeguarding Team will maintain records in a similar manner as appropriate to the circumstances. The archiving of records (for 100 years) will be in accordance with the extant Diocesan Archiving Policy which allows for access to information in future years.

Archiving redundant records.

The Diocese is responsible for archiving records relating to safeguarding matters. Any records maintained by a Chaplaincy must be passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team once they become redundant to the needs of the Chaplaincy. This will typically be because

- ✓ For safeguarding checks the individual who has been subject to the need for a record has left the roles in which they were engaged.
- ✓ For matters of concern the case has been closed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Once records have been passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for archiving the Chaplaincy copies should be securely destroyed (e.g. shredded or incinerated). Because of the potential for questions to be raised many years into the future, the Diocese will retain records relating to safeguarding matters for 100 years from their date of creation.

If you have any questions you can get advice on this topic from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

4. HELPING THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ABUSED

Introduction

The needs of those who have been abused (in whatever form; at whatever time in their lives; or in whatever setting) are very complex and demanding. Chaplaincies throughout the diocese can be well placed, often in the heart of the communities, to offer safe places for the abused to come and where they can share their experiences. This section gives guidance on what our response should be.

What can we do?

The challenge of meeting the needs of those who have been abused is enormous and is generally well beyond the experience and abilities of Chaplaincy members. Such is the challenge that we all need to be mindful that inappropriate advice (no matter how well intentioned) can simply serve to reinforce the level of emotional harm which the abused will already have suffered. The provision of counselling and specific practical help requires both specialist training and practical experience.

We therefore need to approach this sensitive matter in a very careful manner. The following gives outline guidance on how Chaplaincies might seek to provide support to those who have been abused:

- ✓ It is crucial that any support offered in whatever form must be with the agreement of the individual or their family. (The individual may already be receiving help from professional bodies and this must not be affected.)
- ✓ We should seek to support the individual through prayer if they wish (both with and for the individual – perhaps with a focus on seeking professional help and counselling).
- ✓ If asked by the individual we can provide a local 'listening ear' – but please be very careful about commenting on or judging situations which, if done inappropriately (no matter how well meaning), can have the effect of exacerbating the concerns an abused individual may have.
- ✓ We can explore with the individual (and perhaps with their families) the benefits of professional help and counselling. This can typically be sought through the local health/medical networks, through local agencies that provide support on the particular form of abuse experienced, or through the Diocese (see below). We can support the individuals to find their way to professional help.

Professional support through the Diocese

With special regard to accessing professional help for those who have been abused, the Diocese has established a network of 'Authorised Listeners' who can help those who have been abused. These are people who are fully trained and experienced counsellors who may be contacted by telephone in complete confidence. The contact names and numbers are available through the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (contact details in chapter 5 of Christ Church Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy) who will treat all requests for information in complete confidence. Please remember that the Diocesan Safeguarding Team is there to help and offer advice on what to do.

It's also possible to seek for professional help within the Dutch psychological network. There is the Dutch Meldpunt Seksueel Misbruik in de kerk (SMPR) www.smpr.nl but there are other possibilities for professional help.

5 WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

In this section you will find guidance on how to work with those in your Chaplaincy who have a record of abuse of children, young people or adults. This may be a criminal record or as advised by another organisation through, for example, a reference sought because of a particular role the individual was seeking to undertake, or by the inappropriate behaviour of a person, which suggests that they may pose a risk to children or adults who may be vulnerable. Throughout the section we need to be mindful of our Christian principles, taking account of the issues that may emerge on a case by case basis but, as a general rule, we need to be very cautious when working with offenders.

What does the Church of England say?

The House of Bishops have considered this and the key practical messages are:

- ✓ The need for the individual to accept responsibility for their actions.
- ✓ An overwhelming need to be mindful of the safety implications.
- ✓ And we should be ready to offer help to offenders, or those who pose a risk, who genuinely seek it.

What to do if someone wants to have a confession heard in relation to a safeguarding matter?

The Church's current position in this is clearly stated in the House of Bishops publication "*Protecting All God's Children*" <https://www.churchofengland.org/37378/protectingallgodschildren.pdf> and your attention is drawn to this. In summary whilst it notes the constraints of Canon Law, it recognises the requirements of criminal law to prevent crime (abuse) and to prosecute offenders. If there is any doubt in your mind then you '*may judge it necessary to withhold absolution*' and alert the Bishop to the matter. The next steps will be for the Bishop to advise.

Accepting Responsibility

This is not as simple as it might seem. Remember that abusers are often **very devious and manipulative** and are not generally given to being completely frank and honest. Admissions of guilt, remorse etc. should be treated with caution

pending confirmation of the veracity of the statements. The Diocesan Safeguarding Team must always be informed and will be able to advise you on a case by case basis.

Being mindful of the consequential safety implications

Where we are presented with an abuser within our communities who wishes to become involved in a Chaplaincy then it will be essential that the risks are fully explored before that individual can undertake any of the relevant activities. This is a task requiring experience and training and must be undertaken in association with the Diocese Safeguarding Team who will deal with the issue in close liaison with the Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer and the Chaplain. In most cases the Diocesan Safeguarding Team will undertake a risk assessment and may formalise a Safeguarding Agreement to reduce the risks of continued involvement in the church.

Helping Offenders

The challenge of working with abusers who have fully acknowledged their offending is generally well beyond the experience of Chaplaincy members. The provision of therapy and specific practical help requires both specialist training and practical experience.

We need therefore to approach this sensitive matter in a very careful manner. And the advice of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team must be sought before embarking on any further action. Subject to the advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team the following gives outline guidance on how Chaplaincies might seek to provide support to offenders:

- ✓ We should seek to support the individual through prayer if they wish (both with and for the individual – perhaps with a focus on seeking professional help and counselling).
- ✓ If asked we can provide a listening ear – but be very cautious (offenders are often very manipulative) and be careful about commenting on or judging situations.
- ✓ We can explore with the offender the benefits of professional help and counselling to aid them in addressing their problems. This can typically be sought through the local health/medical networks, or through local agencies who provide support on the particular form of offences committed. We can support the individuals to find their way to professional help.
- ✓ We should never leave a known abuser, or someone who poses a risk of abuse, unsupervised at any church service or activity, especially where children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable are present.

Please remember that the Diocesan Safeguarding Team are there to help and advise you on what to do.

6 CARE FOR THE CONGREGATION

In addition to the care given to both the victim and the abuser, the congregation also has a need for pastoral care. Any form of abuse within a congregation can cause feelings of guilt, anger and resentment. Because of the need for confidentiality, it is very easy for an atmosphere of misunderstanding and gossip to arise. In order to avoid this, there needs to be open communication, while still keeping the details of the incident confidential. It is important to create an atmosphere of open communication so that members of the congregation feel able to seek pastoral care and prayer. In particular, members of the congregation who have worked closely with either the abused person or the abuser may need pastoral care and prayer, and may also need guidance in seeking professional help.

Appendix 1 Records relating to Safeguarding Concerns

Due to the sensitive nature of these records all information must be maintained in a locked cabinet (or similar) with access restricted to those with a genuine 'need to know'.

Description of the Record	Chaplaincy responsibilities The following records will be retained by the Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer	Diocesan responsibilities The following records will be retained by Diocesan Safeguarding Team
Initial record of Concern*	A full note of the initial record of concern	A full note of the initial record of concern
Subsequent correspondence, actions or occurrences	Copies of all correspondence generated by or received by the Chaplaincy and a full note of any subsequent actions or occurrences	Copies of all correspondence generated by or received by the Diocesan Office and the Chaplaincy, as well as all full notes of any subsequent actions or occurrences
Investigations/Enquiries	A full note of any enquiries undertaken at the request of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team	Copies of all investigations or enquires undertaken under the auspices of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
Outcome of Investigations/Inquiries	Copies of outcomes as supplied by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team	Copies of all outcomes, internal and external to the Church

** In the event of the concern being raised with an Archdeacon or Area Dean, the recipient of the information will need to make a note of that concern (see Appendix 4 to this Section) and agree with the Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer who should retain this and the subsequent information.*

N.B. All concerns, no matter how slight, must also be notified to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.