



SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

January 2022

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS DOCUMENT IS PART OF THE SAFEGUARDING SERIES:

1. *Safeguarding Policy for Children and Young People 2021*
2. *Safeguarding Policy for Vulnerable Adults 2021*
3. *Safeguarding Handbook 2021*
4. *Safeguarding Forms 2021*

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1 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

1.1 Document Details

Information Management	SAFE	
Document title	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy template	
Document Author	Emma Aiyere	6 October 2021
Document Approval	Trustee - Safeguarding Lead	

1.2 Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Comments
6 October 2021	0.1	Emma Aiyere	Draft version
12 October 2021	0.2	Adrian Galley	amendments
2 November 2021	1.0	Adrian Galley	Minor amendments

2 ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1 Contact details

Name of Place of Worship	Brackla Tabernacle
Address:	Oak Tree Way, Brackla, Bridgend, CF31 2DN
Tel No:	01656 650500
General Email address:	admin@bracklatabernacle.org
Senior Leader Name:	Craig Hopkins
Senior Leader Contact Telephone / Email:	craig.hopkins@bracklatabernacle.org / 01656 650500
Safeguarding Coordinator Name	Craig Hopkins
Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone / Email	craig.hopkins@bracklatabernacle.org / 01656 650500
Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator Name:	David Dando
Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone / Email:	david.dando@bracklatabernacle.org / 01656 650500
Membership of Denomination/Organisation	The Apostolic Church UK
Denomination Safeguarding Officer	Adrian Galley
Contact Details for Denomination Safeguarding Officer:	adrian.galley@apostolic-church.org 07817 409635
Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (ACUK)	Craig Hopkins
Contact Details for Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (ACUK)	craig.hopkins@bracklatabernacle.org 07814 332 250
Charity Number:	Charity Registration No. 284789 OSCR Registration No. SC037835
Thirty-one:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.	24 hour helpline: 0303 003 1111(This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact your Pastor-in-charge)
Insurance Company	Congregational

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

2.2 Our Vision

Brackla Tabernacle exists to be a place, a community, a family where 'God is known' where everything we do we do for the glory of God, for those who have yet to come through our doors, and for our community that all of us flourish.

As a local church family within the County of Bridgend, we want to serve our community and County with the real, life changing message of the Gospel of Jesus through our words and actions.

Brackla Tabernacle is part of the Apostolic Church UK, our charitable objects are:

The preaching of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. The promotion of any other charitable purpose consistent with the Christian mission of the church and in particular the relief of the sick, elderly and poor.

2.3 Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting vulnerable adults from significant harm. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised involving adults within our church, or those who attend our activities and events.

2.4 Who this policy applies to

This policy is approved and endorsed by the National Leadership Team of the Apostolic Church United Kingdom and applies to:

- all those who attend our church
- all the Pastors, members of the Leadership Team and staff (both paid and voluntary)
- organisations who hire our building with the agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy

2.5 Scope of this policy

The Leadership Team recognises that many vulnerable adults today are the victims of abuse. Accordingly, the Leadership Team has adopted the policy contained in this document, (hereafter "the policy"). The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- Responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against leaders or members of the church
- Appointing Safeguarding Coordinator
- Supervision of activities and practice issues
- Helping victims of abuse
- Working with offenders

The Leadership Team recognises the need to build constructive links with other agencies that work to prevent abuse of vulnerable adults.

Bridgend County Borough Council's Adult Social Care office telephone number between 8.30am and 5.00pm is **01656 643379** the out of hours number is **01443 743665**.

2.6 Policy Statement

The church values working with vulnerable groups. The church Leadership takes seriously its responsibility to protect, safeguard and promote the welfare of adults who attend our services.

2.7 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to assist everyone in the church, especially leaders to protect and safeguard adults who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding is everyone's business and the church in particular have a responsibility under law to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adult in the church. This includes

- Preventing the impairment to health or development
- Protection from maltreatment
- Ensuring adults live in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

The church is committed to ensuring that all its actions in respect of a vulnerable adult are compatible with this aim.

2.8 Our commitment

As part of the mission, the Leadership Team is committed to:

- Listening to, relating effectively and valuing vulnerable adult whilst ensuring their protection within church activities.
- Encouraging and supporting carers
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities.

This church

- acknowledge adults' right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- consider that the welfare of vulnerable adult is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice in order to protect vulnerable people in our church.
- believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living and recognise that it can affect both adults and children.

This church will also

- seek to establish a caring environment in which there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse.

- implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in this policy, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to abuse.
- appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator (for detailed information, see appendix 1) and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator, who will have specific responsibilities for safeguarding, although we recognise that safeguarding is a whole church responsibility. The Safeguarding Coordinator is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed. In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator should be contacted. Their contact details can be found on the cover page of this policy.
- organise activities in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to adults.
- follow a safer recruitment process for the selection and appointment of people to work with vulnerable adult, whether voluntary or paid.
- be committed to providing support, supervision, resources and training to those who work with vulnerable adult.
- use rigorous and careful supervision to protect people from the risks associated with known offenders within the congregation, including implementing contracts with known offenders and those who have been assessed as posing a risk.

2.9 Managing allegations

- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the statutory authorities if necessary.
- We will
 - co-operate with the statutory authorities in any investigation
 - follow multi-agency decisions and
 - maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.
- We will refer concerns about staff - volunteers and paid - that meet the relevant criteria to the Local Authority Adult Social Care.

2.10 Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of the church, whether adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality at all times, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm.

3 UNDERSTANDING ABUSE

3.1 Who is a vulnerable adult

A vulnerable adult is an adult who is at risk of significant harm. While vulnerability is not absolute, certain factors can increase the vulnerability of an individual such as:

- a sensory or physical disability or impairment;
- a learning disability;
- a physical illness;
- mental ill health (including dementia), chronic or acute;
- an addiction to 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, for example bereavement or previous abuse or trauma.

For the purpose of this policy, **The Apostolic Church UK considers as a vulnerable adult 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.**

3.2 What is abuse of vulnerable adults?

In drawing up this policy, it is recognised that the term 'abuse' can be subject to wide interpretation. The starting point for a definition is the following statement: 'Abuse is 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. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

3.3 Definitions of Abuse

Physical abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the a vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the a vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

Sexual Abuse

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

Neglect, or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the a vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the a vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired.

Financial or material abuse

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.

Discriminatory abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability, etc.

Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

4 SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE IN ADULTS

4.1 Physical

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

4.2 Psychological

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

4.3 Sexual

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

4.4 Neglect or Omission

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

4.5 Financial or Material

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents

- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

4.6 Discriminatory

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

4.7 Institutional

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls, etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity.

4.8 How to recognise abuse

It is important to be aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse stated above. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories of abuse.

It is essential to note that these are only indicators of possible abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for these signs and/or behaviour. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for an adult's behaviour.

5 DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS

5.1 What to do if there is a disclosure or allegation of abuse

If an adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and / or an allegation of abuse against someone, it is important that the person being told:

- stays calm and listens carefully
- reassures them that they have done the right thing in telling
- does not investigate or ask leading questions
- explains that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- does not promise to keep secret what they have been told
- informs the church Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, informs the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator)
- makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record (using the template in Appendix 2). This should be given to the church Safeguarding Coordinator and stored securely.

5.2 Procedure in the event of a concern of abuse

If there is an immediate threat of harm, the Police should be contacted without delay.

Where it is judged that there is no immediate threat of harm, the following will occur:

- The concern should be discussed with the church Safeguarding Coordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to the statutory authorities (see Key Contacts, in Appendix 3)
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and the circumstances surrounding it. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory authorities if a referral is made.
- The person about whom the allegation is made must not be informed by anyone in the church if it is judged that to do so could place an adult at increased risk. If the statutory authorities are involved, they should be consulted beforehand.
- The Safeguarding Coordinator should be kept informed of any serious concerns.

5.3 If someone in the church is alleged or known to have harmed adults

The Safeguarding Coordinator will be informed so that they can offer advice and support, and we will contact the relevant statutory authority.

5.4 If the allegation concerns a church staff member or volunteer

For any concerns relating to adults, the Local Authority Adult Social Care will be contacted. The timing and method of any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the agency. This will cover communication with the worker, suspension, investigation and possible strategy meetings. A decision will be taken by the Local Authority Adult Social Care about when to inform the worker and the church will follow this advice. For Local Authority Adult Social Care contact details (see Key Contacts in Appendix 3).

In accordance with the law, a referral will be made to the Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) if the church withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with vulnerable adult OR would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a different position because the employer believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct, satisfied the harm test, or committed an offence that would lead to automatic inclusion on a barred list.

In such cases, a report will also be made to the Charity Commission, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and therefore require notification.

6 CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or compliments, please contact:

Name: Craig Hopkins

Telephone No: 01656 650500

Email: craig.hopkins@bracklatabernacle.org

It would be helpful to have complaints in writing, as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing, complaints will be acted upon. Any written complaint will be responded to within 10 (ten) days.

7 ADOPTION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Leadership Team will review this policy annually, amending and updating it as required, and informing the Church that this has been done.

Date of the most recent review: January 2022

Date of the next review: September 2022

Safeguarding Coordinator

Name: Craig Hopkins

Signature:

Date: January 2022

A copy of this policy is on the church website and also lodged with:

The Apostolic Church, Suite 110 Crystal House, New Bedford Road, Luton LU1 1HS